



Fact Sheet

Using Allowed Inputs

What constitutes an Allowed Input?

Allowed Inputs are materials used as a supplementary tool in a balanced organic farm management program. Allowed Inputs into an organic system are generally prohibited if synthetically compounded - a process which chemically changes a material extracted from naturally occurring plant, animal or mineral resources, excepting microbiological processes.

How to determine if a product is allowed

It is a certified operator's responsibility to determine if a material is acceptable for use in organic production, which can be done by checking in the Australian Organic Standard (AOS) 2006, Section 4, and the Annexes. Materials are listed as Allowed, Restricted or Prohibited.

The materials list included in the standard is by no means comprehensive but is a positive rather than negative list. It does not include notification of materials which are obviously prohibited, such as synthetically derived agrochemicals.

If a product is registered by the Biological Farmers of Australia (BFA) then it complies with the AOS (2006) and will bear an AI registration number along with the BFA Registered Product logo.

Onus is on you, as the certified operator, to ensure that the input complies with the AOS (2006). Any materials not listed in this Standard require written confirmation from your certification body that these products are allowed.

There are many conventional products that are available on the market where the active ingredient is allowed under the Standard, however the label often does not list the inactives or inerts and it can often be these inerts that prevent conventional products being allowed for use in organic systems. Inactives may be surfactants or wetters that aid the active ingredients efficacy. Active and inactive ingredients need to be assessed under the Standard.

Any formulated products used, which may contain more than just active ingredients listed in Annex I and II must first have been approved for use in writing to the operator by the certification office prior to use.

Considerations for export compliance

Even though an allowed input carries the Bud logo or the logo of another certifying body, this does not mean the product is compliant for clients accessing overseas markets (e.g. USDA NOP)

It is also a requirement that you assess where additional market requirements may apply. For operators wishing to access overseas markets, the minimum requirements of the importing country also need to be met.

Inputs not listed in the AOS

Consideration for the use of Inputs not listed in the AOS (2006) shall be assessed upon their compliance with the standard, specifically;

- The basis of necessity for organic production. The logic upon which such assessment will be based includes criteria such as yield, product quality, environmental safety, ecological protection, and human and animal welfare.
- Where they are sourced from. Generally allowed are naturally occurring mined substances, or when sourced from organic materials from animal, vegetable or microbiological sources. Ingredients may be subjected to mechanical, physical, microbiological or enzymatic processes and restricted chemical processes only.
- Assessment of production processes and end products shall also take into consideration consumer perception of such products, and may not be allowed where there is general perception of such products not conforming to the general opinion of what is natural or organic.

Record keeping

Where potential risk of contamination from ingredients or inputs is noted, random residue tests shall be carried out by the operator to verify that levels of pesticides and heavy metals, among other contaminants, are absent or below acceptable limits within the production system.

In cases where input ingredients for the end product are sourced from potentially contaminating areas or processes, a Quality Management system compatible with ACCP principles shall be documented, implemented and recorded by the input manufacturer to ensure the authenticity of manufactured end product.

At all times you will need to keep information on all products so your auditor can check the input with you during your audit.

Sourcing Allowed Inputs

An Allowed Inputs Register, detailing BFA registered clients, is listed on the ACO website (www.aco.net.au) and published quarterly in the Australian Certified Organic Magazine (ACOM). The register confirms approval for use in compliance with AOS (2006).

This fact sheet has been produced as an overview to the use of inputs. Please consult the Australian Organic Standard (AOS) 2006 for full requirements for compliance.

The AOS is available free to download from www.bfa.com.au.