



## NASAA Organic Certification Program Assurance

Assurance to consumers of fresh produce and manufactured or packaged products labelled as Certified Organic by NASAA comes from the package of measures that comprise the organic certification system and this is represented by the organic certificate awarded to the licensed operator. The certificate will be suspended or withdrawn if there are any compliance issues affecting organic integrity.

Organic certification is a whole system approach to organic integrity assurance. It involves a set of processes and practices together rather than relying on methods such as testing alone. Testing is part of the process and is mandatory for new producers in the system to ensure that the foundation of the production system (the soil) is not contaminated with unacceptable residues. Produce testing is mandatory for meat and livestock products (eggs, wool, milk etc). Additional soil or produce testing will be required due to known or suspected risk factors. This is managed through the inspection and surveillance systems.

Certified operators are contractually bound to abide by the NASAA Organic Standard and Certification Program rules. A range of documented sanctions are applied for minor and serious transgressions including requirements to make changes within set timelines, warnings, suspension of the certification, fines and/or decertification. NASAA Certified Organic makes notifications regarding operators under suspension or decertification to the trade to ensure that retailers and wholesalers are informed.

### **NASAA Organic Certification Program – Internationally Accredited**

NASAA Certified Organic (NCO) is accredited internationally by the IOAS (International Organic Accreditation Service) for organic certification according the IFOAM Accreditation Program (International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements) and ISO 65 Accreditation for General Requirements for Bodies Operating Product Certification Systems. ISO65 is required in the organic programs of all major countries with an organic regulation.

NCO is accredited by AQIS (Australian Quarantine Inspection Service) under the Organic Administrative Arrangements. NCO also holds accreditations with IOAS for the Canadian Organic Regime, the EU Regulation, the US Department of Agriculture, Agriculture Marketing Service for the US National Organic Program and the MAFF in Japan for Japan Agricultural Standard (Organic). Thus our system of certification is of the highest level achievable and internationally credible.

### **NASAA Organic Standard – Internationally Recognised**

The NASAA Organic Standard is the basis of our NASAA AQIS, IFOAM, and EU Programs. The NASAA Organic Standard is implemented by all operators licensed to use the NASAA label. All operators labelling their products as NASAA certified are of an internationally accepted standard. There are no lesser levels or programs operated by NASAA.

The NASAA certification system ensures that organic produce so labelled is genuinely organic and produced without synthetic fertilisers, pesticides, hormones, antibiotics, feed additives etc that

affect health of humans, livestock and /or the environment. There are many other materials generally used in conventional agriculture that are prohibited in organic plant and animal production. Prohibited materials are specified in the Standard. Where a material is not specified, it may not be used or must be assessed and approved by the NASAA Technical Committee. The inspection and certification process verifies that these prohibited materials have not been used in the production system from paddock to plate (or at least to final retail pack).

The strength of the NASAA system is that it is a voluntary, licensed operator-managed compliance to publicly documented, internationally recognised Organic Standards backed up by regular on-site verification. The system is augmented by a program of surveillance activities including unannounced inspections, market surveillance and investigation of complaints.

All steps in the chain are required to be covered by inspection and certification including transport systems, storage facilities, livestock spelling yards and processing facilities (including slaughterhouses).

Quality system materials for management of contamination and substitution risks include (amongst others):

The NASAA Organic Standard May 2008

P4.7 Sampling & Testing Policy

P4.2 Overspray and Spray Drift Policy

P5.3 Unannounced Inspection Policy

For example, the NASAA Organic Standard covers for all producer types in 3.1 Residues & Contamination; 3.3 Windbreaks & Buffer Zones; 3.4 Spray Equipment.

Standards for livestock management are comprehensively covered in Section 6. There are specific standards for sheep and cattle production in 7.1 Rangeland Livestock Production. In addition, different categories of livestock have individual standards which recognise the differences in production systems and risks. Transportation of livestock to processing works is covered for both humane management and contamination risks.

Genetically modified organisms and/or ingredients, processing aids or farm inputs are prohibited.

To read the detailed rules, the NASAA Standards are available on-line (free) at [www.nasaa.com.au](http://www.nasaa.com.au).

**NASAA Certified Organic P/L**

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