Welcome to the Natural Food Certifiers Organic-NOP certification program.

It is best to review the USDA-NOP regulations, NFC Program Manual and NFC forms for each application portion. The better you understand what is being asked of you, the less time you will have to invest in the process.

We wish you success in your business. At any time, please feel free to email or call our offices to clarify any questions or concerns you may have.

Continued good health and prosperity,

NFC Organic Team

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Section A: NFC - Who we are

In 2002 Natural Food Certifiers was accredited by the USDA-NOP as an organic certifier for the USDA National Organic Program.

Natural Food Certifiers is a family-run business dedicated to these three principles:

1. Our certification program is for the end user, the consumer whom our clients and we have in mind. The consumer must be able to trust that the product adheres to the standards of the organic seal.
2. We support choice in food plans, not suggest what to eat. We do recommend eating natural.
3. Certification should be as trusted, affordable, and swift as possible. NFC fees are flat and do not go up based on your success. We must have our clients in mind - they have a business to manage!

Section B: The Certification Process

1.0 Understanding the requirements:

When an operation is ready to conduct organic activities, the first step in the certification process is understanding the regulations defined by the National Organic Program (NOP) and implementing an Organic System Plan (OSP).

The official standard is contained in the Code of Federal Regulations, 7 CFR 205, and its periodic amendments and can be accessed through the Federal Regulations website at https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-7/subtitle-B/chapter-I/subchapter-M/part-205?toc=1

Certification is an annual cycle that includes an on-site inspection to verify the accuracy of the Organic System Plan and organic activities. Anyone seeking to receive or maintain organic certification must comply with the applicable organic regulations and standards. NFC works with the operation to help them understand the standards and ensure their practices meet the applicable organic regulations.

1.1 National List

A key part of the regulations mentioned in this manual is the National List of Allowed and Prohibited Substances (also referred to as "the National List").

The National List lists all materials and inputs allowed in organic production with any restrictions listed for each item. The National List is split between materials for (1) Crops, (2) Livestock, and (3) Handling as follows:

§205.601 **Synthetic substances are allowed for use in organic crop production.**
§205.602 **Nonsynthetic substances prohibited for use in organic crop production.**
§205.603 **Synthetic substances allowed for use in organic livestock production.**
§205.604 **Nonsynthetic substances prohibited for use in organic livestock production.**
§205.605 **Nonagricultural (nonorganic) substances allowed as ingredients in or on processed products labeled as "organic" or "made with organic (specified ingredients or food group(s))."**
§205.606 **Nonorganically produced agricultural products allowed as ingredients in or on processed products labeled as "organic."**

1.2 Application:

Once an operation has implemented an organic system plan and assessed its ability to comply with all requirements, the operation should submit the completed application forms and organic system plan to NFC with payment for the application fee. NFC application packets can be requested by reaching out to NFC at info@nfccertification.com. Operations can request that NFC mail an application package to them for a fee as described in the NFC fee schedule. Application packet will include all templates, forms, and documents relating to information needed to verify compliance.

It is encouraged throughout the process to reach out to NFC with any questions an operation may have. While NFC cannot consult with operations, NFC can help with questions and direct the operation to the regulations or public resources. NFC can also direct the operation to third-party consultants that can help create and implement an OSP.

Due to the importance and complexity of the application review, inspection, and compliance review process, NFC recommends that certification applications be submitted 15 weeks before the time certification is needed. Operations seeking certification in less than 12 weeks should request expedited service, which is offered for an additional fee.

Please note: Once an application is submitted, the operation is obligated to follow all requirements of the organic certification process. Should the operation wish to withdraw their certification application, they may do so in writing at any time. However, the application fee is non-refundable, and the operation is liable for the costs of services provided up to the time of withdrawal. Should the operation fail to respond to notices or requests for information from NFC, a noncompliance and denial of certification will be issued. An operation that withdraws their application prior to the issuance of a notice of noncompliance or certification denial, will not be issued the noncompliance or denial.

1.3 **Review:**

Once an application and application fee are submitted NFC will begin the review process. During the review NFC will issue an application received letter with the proposed fees and timeline of certification and invoice for application and expedite fees. Failure to submit payment for any fees due will delay the certification process and/or result in a denial of certification. All proposed fees follow the NFC fee schedule, and any discounts must be listed on the NFC fee schedule. As an accredited certifier, NFC can only charge fees as provided to the NOP as listed on the NFC fee schedule.

During the review process a portal will be set up for operations to access and view the status of certification, findings, certificates and be able to upload documents for review. Additional information on how to use the portal including tutorial recordings will be provided when the portal is issued to the operation.

Once the initial review is completed (generally within one week), a desk review will be issued with any items needed that may be missing or require additional clarification. The desk review is provided to the operation with an invoice for the annual fee. Should there be major compliance issues, NFC will issue a Notice of Noncompliance and state the deadline for the operator to respond to the findings.

If the operation applying for certification has previously applied with another agency, NFC will reach out to the other agency and verify that there are no outstanding noncompliances and/or fees due. If the operation received a notification of Noncompliance or Notification of Denial of Certification, the application must include documentation to support the correction of any noncompliance(s) identified in the Notice of Noncompliance or notice of Denial of Certification.

1.4 **Inspection:**

Once an application is submitted, an inspector will be identified by NFC to conduct the onsite inspection. NFC will provide all the necessary information for the inspector to conduct the onsite inspection and verify compliance. Once NFC confirms that the application is complete, all open items have been addressed (if applicable) and determines that the operation appears to be able to comply with the relevant regulations, an inspection will be scheduled. When an inspector is assigned, the operation will receive an email from NFC identifying the inspector and their contact information. Once assigned the NFC inspector or contracted inspector will reach out and schedule a time for the

inspection when (as applicable) the operation's land, facilities, and activities can be observed for compliance.

Brokers/Distributors/Importer/Brand Owners: For many operations not physically handling or processing organic product the inspection will be conducted at the operations office or location listed on the application. An inspection is not required at locations that are not part of the OSP or not operated by the operation (e.g., offsite warehouses not part of the OSP do not require an inspection. If the location requires certification like a copacker and some warehouses the facility will require its own certification and inspection). Location of inspection must be a permanent location of the operation.

NFC reserves the right to make all inspection assignments and use subcontractors as necessary. Operations may not influence the choice of inspector or contact inspectors directly to solicit inspection assignments. Operations have the right to be informed about the inspector's identity before the inspection visit. Operations may raise objections based on conflicts of interest or other reasons by submitting the objections, in writing, to NFC, who determines whether the reasons are accepted and whether to reassign the inspection.

The goal of the inspection is to verify that the OSP submitted to NFC is accurate and complies with the NOP Organic Production and Handling Requirements. As part of the inspection, the inspector will review the OSP, conduct a record review, various traceability exercises and complete a walkthrough of the operation (including location not being certified). The inspector will also verify that prohibited substances have not been applied or are in use currently. Access to all records and facilities is required for the inspector to review.

Concluding the inspection, the inspector will provide a written exit interview listing potential findings.

Please note: the inspector is not the decision maker but rather a fact finder and the eyes of the certifier. A potential finding is not necessarily a noncompliance.

NFC reserves the right to require additional information, including the collection and testing of soil, water, waste, seeds, plant tissue, and plant, animal, and processed products samples. At the time of the inspection, the inspector will provide the operation's authorized representative with a receipt for any samples taken by the inspector. There is no charge to the operation for the samples taken. NFC may also take photographs of an operation during on-site inspections and surveillance events.

1.5 Scheduling inspections:

During the initial application and annually thereafter, an NFC inspector will contact the operation to schedule an inspection. NFC expects operations to make a substantial effort to meet the inspector's schedule. NFC schedules inspections with an effort to minimize costs and provide timely service. Penalties may be applied when a client is non-responsive to an inspector's attempts to schedule an inspection.

All on-site inspections (other than unannounced inspections) must be conducted when an authorized representative of the operation who is knowledgeable about the operation is present. Failure to complete an annual inspection is cause for the issuance of a notification of Noncompliance and/or Proposed Suspension or Denial.

Operations and inspectors must ensure that there is ample time for the inspection. The duration of an inspection varies by operation and from inspection to inspection. The inspector needs to view all documents that form the operation's audit trail, and the operation must have available complete input, harvest, production, and sales records for no less than the five years prior.

The initial inspection must occur prior to the first "organic" harvest or organic production or activity that requires certification. All new fields/facilities added to the operation or any major facility updates, including new equipment, must be inspected before the first "organic" harvest or production from that field or facility/equipment. All on-site inspections must be conducted when land, facilities, and activities can show the operation's ability to comply with applicable organic regulations and standards (except during additional on-site inspections, such as unannounced inspections). Inspections must be conducted once in each calendar year (Between January 1st and December 31st). If the time between two regular inspections is more than twelve months, future inspections may be conducted in a shorter time frame to ensure that operations have one annual inspection per calendar year.

1.6 Final Review:

Once an inspection is completed, the inspector will submit the inspection report to NFC, which will be sent to the operation with the inspection invoice. A final review will be conducted, and a certification determination will be made. Determination can be one of the following:

1. Granting certification.
2. Granting certification with condition (minor noncompliance).
3. Notice of Noncompliance.
4. Combined Notice of Noncompliance and Denial of Certification.

If an operation receives a Notice of Certification with Condition, the operation will have 30 days to respond to any requests noted by NFC. Failure to submit responses within 30 days will result in a Notice of Noncompliance.

If an operation is issued a Notice of Noncompliance, the operation will have the ability to respond as defined in part 1.4 in section C of this manual.

For a Notice of Denial please see below in part 1.5 in section C4 of this manual.

1.7 Organic Certificates

Organic certificates are generated and issued to operations in two parts which includes (1) Certificate cover page and (2) Product addendum. The certificate cover page is a verification of the operations certification status and key dates for certification. The product addendum lists all the products the operation is certified for and its status.

Effective February 2023 the certificate cover page is generated and issued through the Organic integrity database and can be accessed by the public. The product addendum can be issued through the organic integrity database or by NFC. NFC publishes to the organic integrity database general product information which can be accessed by the public as a product addendum page to the certificate. For product information that is sensitive NFC will not publish to the organic integrity database and will be included on the product addendum page issue from NFC directly to the operation. Operation should inform NFC of any product information that should be kept private and not be published, this can include items like brand names. Unless otherwise notified NFC will publish the organic status and product name as listed on the NFC master product list.

1.8 Renewal:

When an operation receives its organic certificate, the operation should note the anniversary date which will be the date they are required to submit the annual update. Organic certificates do not expire; instead have a date when an annual update is required. 60 days prior to the anniversary date, NFC will send out a courtesy renewal email with all the documents to be completed and submitted with the annual fees.

The Annual Renewal requires the following information to be submitted to NFC:

A) Renewal application form.
B) Updated organic certificates from suppliers.
C) Updated water reports.
D) As applicable, updates to the Organic System Plan (OSP), detailing any deviations from, changes to, modifications to, or other amendments made to the previous year's and any additions or deletions intended to be undertaken in the coming year.

While NFC sends out reminders 60 days before the anniversary date, it is the operator's responsibility to submit the annual update by the anniversary date.

Once documents are submitted NFC will complete a review, schedule an onsite inspection, and conduct a final review as noted above for the initial process.

The certification cycle of renewal, application review, inspection, final review, and decision continues annually and must be completed once each calendar year until the certification is surrendered, suspended or revoked.

1.8 Surrendering Certification

An operation that wishes to no longer be certified submits a request to surrender its organic certification using the NFC surrender request form. Certification does not expire so it cannot lapse.

An operation that does not surrender or continue to submit annual updates will be issued a notice of noncompliance which can result in the suspension of certification.

1.9 Expedited Certification

NFC is proud to be from the fastest in the industry and will work hard to meet the needs and timelines of all operations. If an operation requires expediting the certification process, the operation should inform NFC during the initial contact whether expediting is needed, and a timeline will be agreed upon before processing the application. Additional fees will apply for the application and/or inspection as described in the NFC fee schedule. All expedited services are guaranteed contingent on the operation providing a complete application and barring any issues that may arise due to the operation's ability to comply or respond to the requested information.

1.10 **Additional/ Unannounced Inspections**

NFC may conduct additional on-site inspections of any client to determine compliance. Additional inspections may be announced or unannounced at the discretion of NFC or as required by the accreditation authorities, the USDA Administrator or State Organic Program's Governing State Official. Inspections can be onsite or via desk audit of records.

Operations subject to an unannounced inspection may be informed as to the reason they were chosen for an unannounced inspection, including but not limited to random selection, based upon risk, or as the result of a complaint or investigation. Clients are charged fees for announced additional follow-up inspections and are not charged fees for unannounced inspections unless otherwise notified. Reasons for NFC charging a client for an unannounced inspection may include but are not limited to the following:

1. Verification of corrective actions
2. Observations of specific production stages such as planting, weeding, harvesting, cleaning, packaging, etc.
3. A history of previous noncompliance
4. Complaint or other investigation
5. or other reasons deemed appropriate by NFC.

Operations must allow access to records and allow for copying and collecting by authorized representatives of the USDA Secretary, the state Organic Program's Governing State Official, NFC, or other private accreditation bodies during normal business hours for review and verification to determine compliance with the applicable regulations.

1.11 Changes to certification:

All operations are required to establish, implement, and maintain an Organic System Plan (OSP).

The OSP is a living document that must be updated any time practices and/or procedures regarding organic activities change or are planned to be changed. The OSP is essential to maintaining certification with NFC.

Certified operations are responsible for ensuring that the OSP is current and accurately reflects the organic practices of the operation. Updates to the OSP should be submitted to NFC at any time during the year and must be approved prior to implementation.

OSP updates should be submitted:

A) At renewal, with the submission of the Continuation of Certification Contract.
B) At any time during the year for changes such as when new input materials are considered for use or new ingredients are sourced.
C) At inspection if only minor changes are made.

Clients must immediately notify NFC concerning any:

A) Application, including drift, of a prohibited substance to any field, production unit, site, facility, livestock, or product that is part of the organic operation.
B) Change in the operation or any portion of the operation that may affect its compliance

Distributors/Warehouses: Operations that do not handle their own product or have their own labels that list NFC as the certifier (e.g., distributors, warehouses) are not required to submit updates to suppliers or products in real time. Provided that the operation has implemented an internal procedure approved by NFC to document all the required documents for new suppliers and products and update the OSP internally at the operation. In addition, new suppliers and/or products must be covered by the activities listed on the organic

If an operation wants to add or update any sections to their OSP including but not limited to new facilities, new products (including labels), new equipment, new parcel, new acreage, new address or new process operation must complete and/or revise the relevant section of the OSP including any supporting docs (e.g., supplier organic certificates) and submit to NFC for review.

Some additions may be completed with a review of paperwork only, while others require an onsite inspection. All additions must be submitted to NFC, reviewed, and approved before any products harvested or processed from the additions may be sold as organic. As soon as changes are anticipated, operations should contact NFC to discuss what paperwork is needed and if an inspection is required to ensure that the new areas of production are adequately covered by certification.

Once an operation submits an OSP update to NFC, a review will be completed, and the operation will be notified of a decision within 2 weeks. Additional information may be requested to determine compliance and issue an approval. If an expedited decision is needed, the operation should inform NFC when submitting the OSP update.

Facility or field changes including but not limited to new field or production facility, including a change of address for a current production facility, require an onsite inspection. To avoid additional fees, additional acreage applications or

facilities should be submitted to NFC at least 45 days before the annual inspection. NFC must review the document submitted for the new parcel or facility before the onsite inspection. Requests to add acreage or facilities submitted at inspection require an additional inspection after NFC has reviewed the application.

Please refer to the NFC fee schedule for any applicable fees related to OSP changes.

2.0 Business Changes

If a change to an organic business you manage or own results in a new Tax ID, business structure, or owner, an operation must inform NFC to confirm whether a new certification is needed.

3.0 NFC Certification Logos

NFC certification logos may be used by a certified operation on labels and marketing materials in accordance with USDA NOP requirements.

NFC offers the NFC logo in color or black and white formats below:

An operation looking to use the NFC logo should reach out to the NFC office to request the logos in high resolution.

Section C: Organic Program

Introduction

The NFC Organic Program Manual explains the requirements and standards that an Organic System Plan must meet to be managed in accordance with the USDA-NOP Organic Standards.

Who needs to be certified:

Any operation or specified portion of a production or handling operation that produces or handles crops, livestock, livestock products, or other agricultural products that are intended to be sold, labeled, or represented as "100 percent organic," "organic," or "made with organic (specified ingredients or food group(s))" must be organic certified through an NOP accredited organic certifier.

The definition of "handle" as defined in the regulations include to sell, process, or package agricultural products, including but not limited to trading, facilitating sale or trade on behalf of a seller or oneself, importing to the United States, exporting for sale in the United States, combining, aggregating, culling, conditioning, treating, packing, containerizing, repackaging, labeling, storing, receiving, or loading.

A rule of thumb is, unless otherwise clearly stated below all operations must be certified if they are part of the organic supply chain.

NFC is accredited by the USDA-NOP to certify operations for organic certification for the Crops and Handling Scopes. NFC accepts all applications for certification of foods, beverages, nutritional/supplements, and personal-care items that can meet the USDA-NOP Regulations and are located in the USA. Operations applying from locations outside the US will be considered based on administrative capacity. NFC does not certify grower groups. Consideration for certification does not depend on company size and is independent of other certifications that a company holds.

The following operations are not required to be certified and are exempt from certification:

- **Sales of less than $5,000:** An operation that sells products as "organic" but whose gross agricultural income from organic sales totals $5,000 or less annually. Provided that:
    a. Product sold from this operation cannot be used as an ingredient in a certified organic product.

- **Retail Establishment:** A Retail Establishment (see definition of retail establishment in the regulations section 205.2) that may or may not process organic product and sells directly to consumers/end-user. Provided that:
    a. Product must be sold directly to consumer/end-user (B2B does not qualify)
    b. Operation must have a physical location. If the Retail establishment sells virtually online, they must also have a physical location for consumers to purchase products.
    c. If operation processes organic product the products must be processed and sold in the same physical location.
    d. Processed products must not be represented as "certified" organic or used by another operation as a certified OG ingredient.

- **Storage facilities with sealed organic product:** An operation that only receives, stores, and/or prepares for shipment, but does not otherwise handle, organic agricultural products that:
    a. Are enclosed in sealed, tamper-evident packages or containers prior to being received or acquired by the operation; and
    b. Remain in the same sealed, tamper-evident packages or containers and are not otherwise handled while in the control of the operation.
    c. While this operation is not required to be certified they must meet the handling requirements, including commingling/contamination prevention and labeling, must maintain records demonstrating that agricultural products identified as organic were organically produced and handled and verify the quantities of organic agricultural products received and shipped or sold.
    d. **Example operations:** Storage/Warehouses that are receiving/storing/preparing for shipment bulk products that meet the above conditions.
    e. **Examples of preparing for shipment:** Applying internal tracking numbers, shrink-wrapping, breaking down pallets, placing individual retail packages into a retail display.

- **Handling of retail product:** An operation that only buys, sells, receives, stores, and/or prepares for shipment, but does not otherwise handle, organic products already labeled for **retail** sale that:
    a. Are enclosed in sealed, tamper-evident packages or containers that are labeled for retail sale prior to being received or acquired by the operation; and
    b. Remain in the same sealed, tamper-evident packages or containers that are labeled for retail sale and are not otherwise handled while in the control of the operation.
    c. **Example operations:** Intended for distributors but may include brand owners and brokers that purchase and/or receive products in their finished retail packaging according to the above conditions.
    d. Brand owner operations that import, source their ingredients, or conduct any activities including brokering of nonretail ingredients must be certified.

- **Customs Brokers:** A Customs broker that only conducts Customs business (as defined by 19 CFR 111.1) but does not otherwise handle organic agricultural products are not required to be certified.

- **Logistic brokers:** An operation that only arranges for the shipping, storing, transport, or movement of organic agricultural products but does not otherwise handle organic products are not required to be certified. However, if logistics broker also facilitates the sale of organic product (like a commodity broker) they are required to be certified.

If an operation is exempt or excluded from organic certification per NOP §205.101 NFC will accept a voluntary certification application but will inform the operation that it is not required per the requirements. Should the operation choose to certify they must adhere to all organic requirements as required for all other operations.

Section C1: Organic System Plan (OSP) - CROPS:

The following section is applicable for operations that are conducting activities that are related to planting and harvesting crops, operating a farm or other activities related to growing organic product (this includes farms, greenhouses, mushroom growers).
For operation conducting activities not related to growing organic crops (handling) or conduct other activities in addition to growing organic crops please see next section below for the organic system plan for Handlers.

1.1 What is an organic system plan.

A key component to organic certification is implementing and maintaining an Organic System Plan also called an OSP:

The OSP is defined in the regulations as follows in the organic regulations:

> *Organic system plan.* A plan of management of an organic production or handling operation that has been agreed to by the producer or handler and the certifying agent and that includes written plans concerning all aspects of agricultural production or handling described in the Act and the regulations in subpart C.

An OSP is a living document that represents the operation's organic program that is updated in real time. An OSP is not the same for each operation. The OSP is adapted to the needs of the operation within the requirements of the regulations. The role of the certifier is to verify that the OSP meets the regulatory requirements and is implemented according to the certifier's policies and procedures.

The regulations list the following in section §205.201(a) required as part of the OSP, as will be explained:

(1) A description of practices and procedures to be performed and maintained, including the frequency with which they will be performed.

This section will include any practices or procedures conducted at the operation including soil and crop fertility; weed, pest and disease management; crop rotation practices; natural resource conservation; prevention of commingling and contamination, and any other production practices related to Organic crop production.

(2) A list of each substance to be used as a production or handling input, indicating its composition, source, location(s) where it will be used, and documentation of commercial availability, as applicable;

This section includes information about all organic or nonorganic raw materials used in organic production that may have contact with organic products. This includes fertilizers, pest and disease control inputs, sanitizers or cleaners.

(3) *A description of the monitoring practices and procedures to be performed and maintained, including the frequency with which they will be performed, to verify that the plan is effectively implemented. This must include a description of the monitoring practices and procedures to verify suppliers in the supply chain and organic status of agricultural products received, and to prevent organic fraud, as appropriate to the certified operation's activities, scope, and complexity;*

This section will include any procedures in place to verify that your OSP is being properly implemented including procedures to detect and prevent fraud in the supplier chain. This includes any internal or external audits, training procedures, spot checks and any other procedure in place to oversee organic plan.

(4) *A description of the record-keeping system implemented to comply with the requirements established in § 205.103;*

This section will include all your record-keeping procedures to verify that all your practices and procedures are being documented. This can include traceability records, field activity logs, seed and fertilizer invoices, soil tests, settlement and shipment records. Documenting procedures help to prevent any noncompliance, demonstrates to the certifier that a practice is being followed and allows for verification of the operator's compliance to the regulation.

(5) *A description of the management practices and physical barriers established to prevent commingling of organic and nonorganic products on a split operation and to prevent contact of organic production and handling operations and products with prohibited substances; and*

This section includes measures in place to prevent organic products from coming in contact with nonorganic product and/or prohibited substances. These preventative measures should be implemented at every stage of production, in the field, harvest, storage and shipment.

(6) Additional information deemed necessary by the certifying agent to evaluate compliance with the regulations.

This section will include any information that NFC deems necessary to verify compliance that is not clearly stated in the regulations. An example of this is the requirement to submit legal verification of your company name etc.

The following is a detailed overview of a complete OSP. As noted above each operation must assess what is needed for their operation based on their activities and complexity.

2.1 OSP: General Information

An OSP must include the operation's business name, name of primary contact, contact information, name of individual overseeing and implementing OSP and address where operation is requesting certification. Primary contact must be affiliated with the operation (not a consultant). An operation using a consultant operation should include their information on the OSP to allow NFC to discuss certification information with them. While a consultant is encouraged, the operation must be familiar with the OSP and show compliance. An operation that cannot show the ability to implement the OSP completed by the consultant and be able to comply will be issued a notice of noncompliance.

NFC requires that a legal document be provided to verify the operation name. Legal verification can be in the form of a W9, corporation document or any other legally issued document.

The location of the operation must be either owned or leased by the operation. Operation must be in control of the operation during the time of their lease. A leased operation can be full-time or for a period of time.

3.1 OSP: Crops Summary and Field List

3.2 Land Eligibility

To be eligible for Organic Crop Certification, the land requested for Certification must be absent of prohibited inputs (i.e. Synthetic fertilizers, glyphosate, etc.) 36 months prior to harvesting an Organic crop. This must be verified with documentation, either with a 3 Year Field History (if the land has been under your management for that time) or a Prior Land Use Declaration (PLUD) (if the land has been under different management at any point in the last three years).

3.3 Annual Crop Summary

Operations requesting Certification for Crops must submit a summary of crops requested for Certification, stating the kind of harvest, expected yield, size of the acreage (or square footage) produced, and the location raised.

3.4 Field Map

A field map must be submitted for each field which verifies the fields identification, field acreage, adjoining land use, buffers, and facilities (greenhouse, storage, processing as applicable).

4.1 OSP: Annual Seed, Seedlings and Planting Stock

Operations seeking Organic Certification for crops, must submit an annual list of all seeds, seedlings, and planting stock used for raising crops requested for Organic Certification. This list includes the year used, the crop raised, the form (seed, seedling, or planting stock), variety name, source, and verification of Organic status.

4.2 Use of Organic Seed

The NOP Organic standards **require** the use of Organic seed if commercially available. As defined by the Organic Standards, Commercial availability is defined by: Form, Quality, and Quantity.
This means price is not an allowed reason to plant non-GMO/Untreated seed. However, if you require a specific variety which is not available in Organic (i.e. Grain type for milling), you may use non-GMO/Untreated seeds providing you have verified the specific form is not available.

To verify a seed is not commercially available, a seed search must be performed which demonstrates you have checked a minimum of three suppliers known to carry Organic seed that they did not have an Organic seed which had the needed form, quality or sufficient quantity required. Documented verification of this activity can be recorded in a variety of ways, but needs to have the date contacted, the company contacted, and the reasons Organic seed was not purchased.

4.3 Using Non-Organic Seed

If non-Organic seeds are used, and lack of Commercial Availability has been verified as noted above. Non-GMO and Untreated verification must be obtained and submitted for all non-Organic seeds used for Organic production.

5.1 OSP: Crop and Soil Fertility

Operations requesting Organic Certification must describe their practices for maintaining and improving soil and crop fertility. This includes describing the kinds of fertility management practices used, in addition to the kinds of fertility inputs planned for use.

Methods for monitoring and assessing the fertility of the operation need to be described in the OSP page.

6.1 OSP: Materials Inputs

6.2 Materials List

A Materials List must be completed upon initial application and whenever there are additions to inputs requested for use, this includes not only fertility inputs, but also sanitation, pest and disease control inputs also.

6.3 Use of Restricted Fertility Inputs

Not all inputs are allowed for Organic use. The National Organic Program has a list of allowed synthetics and prohibited naturals for crop production (see above section B). Even if a synthetic material is listed, it may have a restriction which limits and specifies how and where it can be used.

All inputs should be submitted to the NFC office for review and approval prior to use. Use prior to approval may risk losing Certification if the material is discovered to be prohibited after use.

At this time NFC approved third parties are: 1. OMRI (Organic Materials Review Institute), WSDA (Washington State Dept. of Agriculture) and CDFA (California Department of Food and Agriculture). Even if previously reviewed by one of these organizations, NFC must verify and approve prior to use.

The OSP requests information on specific forms of inputs to assess the intentions of the operation to use them or not.

6.4 Manure

The use of raw manure is restricted on crops grown for human consumption, requiring a minimum of 120 between application and harvest for all crops with the edible portion in contact to the ground and 90 days for crops without the edible portion in contact with the ground.

Manure must be verified with documentation to be free of prohibited inputs prior to use on the Organic operation.

6.5 Compost

For composts containing animal manures, the manure restrictions apply, unless it has been made using a process which established an initial C:N ratio of between 25:1 and 40:1 and maintained a temperature of between 131 °F and 170 °F for 3 days using an in-vessel or static aerated pile system; or maintained a temperature of between 131 °F and 170 °F for 15 days using a windrow composting system, during which period, the materials must be turned a minimum of five times.

7.1 OSP: Natural Resources and Biodiversity

Operations requesting Certification are required to describe how they will conserve and improve natural resources. This includes the practices and monitoring procedures for soil and water conservation, and how the operation encourages biodiversity.

7.2 OSP: Crop Management

The Crop Management OSP page asks the operation to define their crop management practices for crop rotation, pest, weed and disease management. Each of these sections require the addition of how sufficient these practices are considered by the operation and what monitoring practices are used.

7.3. OSP: Crop Rotation

The National Organic Standards requires a crop rotation which maintains or improves soil organic matter content; provides for pest management in annual and perennial crops; manages deficient or excess plant nutrients; and provides erosion control. This may include, but is not limited to, the use of sod, cover crops, green manure crops and catch crops.

Crop rotations can vary considerably based on the crops raised, the soil types and other environmental factors. Ideally, it should prevent raising the same crop or crop family repeatedly in the same location year after year. When an operation's crop rotation plan includes raising the same crop consecutively for more than two times the operation must document how the nutrient levels and soil organic matter content are maintained.

A crop rotation is not required for perennial production, or crops raised in pots and trays where the soil medium is replaced when a new crop is grown.

7.4 OSP: Weed Management

Weed management practices and problem weeds should be described in the OSP. If restricted weed management practices are used, they should be detailed in the OSP page, and any products used listed in the Materials List.

8.1 OSP: Pest Management

Pest management practices and notable problem pests should be described in the OSP. If restricted Pest management products are used, these should be listed in the Materials List. The standards require the use of preventative management practices to manage pests prior to escalating to the use of items on the national list of allowed and prohibited substances.

9.1 OSP: Disease Management

Disease management practices and notable problem diseases should be described in the OSP. If restricted disease management products are used, these should be listed in the Materials List. The standards require the use of preventative management practices to manage pests prior to escalating to the use of items on the national list of allowed and prohibited substances.

10.1 OSP: Maintenance of Organic Integrity

Practices used to prevent contamination and commingling of Organic crops and land from prohibited materials are to be described in the Maintenance of Organic integrity OSP Page.

10.2 Buffers

Whenever land requested for Organic use adjoins conventional agriculture, buffers, or a buffer harvest, are needed to prevent contamination from casual drift. This is a precaution required by the Organic standards to prevent the unintended application of prohibited substances from contact with Organic land or crops.

A land buffer, with ground left fallow and unfarmed between the Organic field and neighboring land may be used. However, this must be within the land managed by the operation. If there is a large area of uncultivated ground between you and the neighboring field, but most of it is on the neighbor's property, this is not considered sufficient as a buffer unless the neighbor has agreed, in writing, to maintain the buffer on his side of the property.

Buffers have no specific requirement for size, other than as "sufficient." Which means a wide space of 30 ft. of grass between Organic and non-Organic production may be sufficient, as could 15 ft. of a thick tree line or hedgerow.

10.3 Buffer Harvest

If a fallow land buffer is not established and the operation chooses to raise a crop in that space, a buffer harvest must be taken between the crop which may be harvested as Organic and the adjoining land. A minimum of 30 ft. of crop must be harvested as "buffer." This buffer harvest may not be sold as Organic and requires evidence of disposition, either through sale or use, verifying it was not represented or used as Organic.

10.4 Non-Organic Production

If non-Organic crops are raised in addition to Organic crops, these may include conventional or transition crops, the operation must disclose this to NFC. Practices used to prevent cross contamination between non-Organic and Organic crops will need to be described and verified through documentation and inspection.

11.1 OSP: Equipment

An equipment list must be submitted initially and updated whenever changes to equipment used for crop production occur. This list will include the equipment, ownership status, and Organic status. When equipment is shared between non-Organic and Organic crops, documentation will be used to verify cleaning occurred prior to Organic use.

In the OSP, brief questions about how equipment is used and maintained are requested. This only needed to be updated as changes occur.

12.1 OSP: Storage

If Organic crops are stored, a storage list in addition to the section of the Maintenance of Organic Integrity OSP must be completed. This provides a description of your storage facilities, the kinds of crops stored, and how commingling with non-Organic crops is prevented.

All storage facilities should also be noted on the farm maps.

13.1 OSP: Facility Pest Management

If pest management practices are used in storage or on-farm facilities, a Master Pest Control List must be submitted along with labels and SDS sheets for the products used. The OSP requests verification if products are used or not and how pests are managed in crop storage areas.

Frequency of monitoring of pests is determined by the operation as needed. Practices to prevent and control pest activity can include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Removal of pest habitat, food sources, and breeding areas. Prevention of access to handling facilities.
2. Management of environmental factors, such as temperature, light, humidity, atmosphere, and air circulation, to prevent pest reproduction.
3. Mechanical or physical controls including but not limited to traps, light, or sound.
4. Lures and repellents using non synthetic or synthetic substances consistent with the National List.

Should the above prevention and control procedures not be effective, an operation may resort to using substances listed on the National List (e.g., vitamin baits, boric acid, diatomaceous earth, essential oils etc.).

Should the above items be insufficient, an operation can use synthetic substance not on the National List. If items not on the list are needed, the operation must provide to NFC verification of methods used that were insufficient,

which substance will be used, how the substance will be used, and what steps are in place to prevent contamination of organic products.

Operations must update the OSP with new products and have them approved by NFC prior to their use.

14.1 OSP: Harvest – Post Harvest Handling and Transportation

14.2 Harvest

The operation's harvest practices must prevent accidental contamination of Organic land and crops. If custom harvest is hired, custom harvest equipment must be cleaned or verified as clean to prevent contamination with Organic crops.

The previous contents of harvest containers, if used, must be verified to prevent contamination with prohibited materials.

If binding materials are used, describe how they were used and if they are verified to be untreated or not.

14.3 Post- Harvest Handling

Basic Post-Harvest handling practices can fall under Crop Certification. However, if sufficiently complex, may require Organic Handling Certification and OSP to be completed. Generally if post-harvest activities include more than cleaning and packing harvested crops (e.g. mixing, peeling etc.) the operation would be required to be certified to the Handling scope (see section C2 below). To determine this, if Post Handling activity occurs, a flow chart and description of the activity must be submitted to NFC to be reviewed.

14.4 Off-Farm Post Harvest Handling

If another facility is contracted to perform the Post-Harvest Handling, verification of Organic status is required for the Product to maintain Certification once it has been processed by the off-farm operation.

14.5 Transportation

If Organic crops are shipped off the farm, descriptions of transportation practices must be added to the OSP. This includes who performs the transportation, assessment of the risk to Organic integrity in transportation, and the measures taken to prevent contamination in transport.

Records of transportation activities or samples of documentation may be requested to verify transportation practices.

15.1 OSP: Greenhouse

If the operation is requesting Certification for Greenhouse production, descriptions of greenhouse management and practices should be included in the OSP, including the type of greenhouse and production.

If in-ground production occurs, it requires a crop rotation plan to be established, as with any other in-ground Organic crop production.

When growing mediums are used, either for full production or establishing seedlings/starts, these materials need to be listed on the Master Material List for review and approval.

Operations with both Organic and non-Organic production in the same greenhouse must describe the management practices used to prevent cross contamination. Especially if nutrients or inputs are applied through shared irrigation lines.

All inputs used for Greenhouse production should be listed on the Materials List for review and approval by NFC prior to use.

16.1 OSP: Mushroom

Mushroom production requires the Mushroom OSP page be completed, detailing the practices and processes used to produce Organic mushrooms. Including descriptions of where mushrooms are raised, the form of production system, growing mediums and spawn origin.

If any non-Organic mushroom production occurs in the same operation, management practices used to prevent cross contamination must be described.

All inputs used for mushroom production should be listed on the Materials List for review and approval by NFC prior to use.

If mushroom is harvested at the operation and not sold pre harvest operation is required to be certified for both crops and handling.

17.1 OSP: Marketing

Describe the types of markets your crops are sold to. Farmer's Market, bulk commodity buyer, CSA/Subscription or retail, etc. Depending on the market, approval of labels or marketing materials may be needed from NFC prior to use.

If international markets are intended, crops planned for sale to export markets should be noted and the critical variances (if applicable) verified. Examples of critical variances are the requirement for export to Canada that crops cannot be grown in a soilless system and cannot be raised with Chilean Nitrate as a fertility input. Complete details on International Markets are noted in Section D below in the program manual.

18.1 OSP: Labeling

As part of the OSP NFC requires that the operation submit a copy of each label used to represent the product as organic including any non-retail containers or marketing material. An additional item to consider is an ingredient statement from the supplier to verify any ingredient breakdowns on the label.

For further information, read section C3 - Labels below.

19.1 OSP: Record Keeping

NOP §205.201(a)(4) and §205.103. require that certified operations maintain records, disclose and document all activities and transactions. Records must be maintained in a form that is easily understood, audited, and adapted to the specific needs of the certified operation. Records must demonstrate compliance with the NOP Regulations.

Certified operations must make records available for review by the NOP, the applicable State program's governing State official, and the certifying agent during normal business hours.

Records maintained by certified operations may include but not limited to:

1. Field activity records
2. Seed tags
3. Seed invoices
4. Fertility input purchase invoices
5. Soil Tests
6. Equipment cleaning records
7. Seed searches
8. Clean transport records
9. Sales settlements
10. Sales receipts
11. Harvest records
12. Storage records
13. Tissue tests
14. Compost production records
15. Transplant records
16. Bills of Lading
17. Transport cleaning logs.
18. Storage cleaning logs.
19. Pest observation logs.
20. Custom equipment Invoices
21. Off-Farm Manure Verifications.

19.1.1 Identifying products as organic on records.

The regulations identify records that operations must maintain in two categories, “internal records” and “external records” as follows:

- **Internal records** are defined as records that are used within the operations process and procedures to trace organic product within the operation, example of this would include production records, harvest logs, etc.
    - **Requirements:** The regulations require that internal records identify organic ingredients/products as organic or some form of way to identify the ingredient/product as organic (e.g. have all organic crops start with an “o” that helps identify that the material is organic).
- **External documents** are defined as records that are used to help trace ingredients/products to the last certified operation, example of this would include invoices, BOL’s, transaction certificates etc.
    - **Requirements:** The regulations require that in addition to identifying ingredients/products as organic external records must also identify the organic status (100% organic, organic, made with organic) on the records. Operations receiving and shipping organic ingredients/products will be responsible to verify that ingredients/products are identified as both organic and the organic status. The requirements allow for the organic status may be identified by abbreviations (e.g. ORG or MWO) or acronyms as long is it is clear that it is identifying the organic status.

19.2 Audit Trial and Mass Balance

Organic certified operations must demonstrate the ability to conduct an audit trail and mass balance on organic production as follows:

19.2.1 Audit Trail

An audit trail is like a mock recall. The goal of the audit trail is to be able to trace organic products throughout the process while in the possession of the certified operation. Records should be able to verify Organic integrity from the time the seed is received, planted to the point of shipment and sale. This includes, but may not be limited to: Seed invoices, field activity records, harvest records, storage logs, sales settlements, and shipping documents.

Operations should have the ability to link documents from planting to the point of sale and shipment. Link of documents can be through any method determined by the operation including but not limited to lot numbers, field locations, storage locations, etc.

19.2.2 Mass Balance

A mass balance of outputs or inputs is defined as the ability to select a particular raw material or product and to verify through records that there is a reasonable relationship established in the records between the amount produced and sold. This may include verifying the quantity of seed purchased and planted for raising crops.

A mass balance is conducted by the inspector reviewing the applicable records of the Certified operation for a raw material and a crop sold during a selected period of time. Frequently, but not always, it is based on auditing the total production of an annual crops complete harvest and sales from a given crop year. All sales of the selected product will be reviewed, along with any inventory still on-site. Planting rate and acreage will be assessed to verify the operation had sufficient crop to meet the quantity of Organic crop sold. This may vary based on the farm, the crop, and environmental factors.

To complete a successful mass balance, operation should document inventory of organic raw materials and finished product. Operation should determine (based on complexity of the operation) how often inventory should be documented to be able to sufficiently document a complete mass balance. Inventory can be documented annually, quarterly, monthly, weekly, daily or any other time as determined by the operation.

20.1 OSP: Monitoring and Fraud Prevention

Section 205.201(a)(3) requires all certified operations to maintain and implement practices to verify the organic status of suppliers and products in their supply chain and to prevent organic fraud. Often called “fraud prevention plans,” these procedures and practices support early detection, prevention, and mitigation of fraud, and strengthen integrity across organic supply chains.

A fraud prevention plan must be included in the operation's OSP. Not all fraud prevention plans are the same. A fraud prevention plan must be appropriate to the activities, scope, and complexity of the operation, and should be sufficient to address the verification and anti-fraud needs of the operation. For example, a producer who does not handle another operation's organic products may develop a simple fraud prevention that verifies purchased inputs comply with organic regulation. In contrast, a processor that receives many organic ingredients from numerous suppliers should develop a fraud prevention plan that describes practices to detect, prevent, minimize, and mitigate organic fraud risks in lengthy supply chains.

A fraud prevention plan should include the following items:

1. A map or inventory of the operation's supply chain that identifies suppliers.
2. Identification of critical control points in the supply chain where organic fraud or loss of organic status are most likely to occur.
3. A vulnerability assessment to identify weaknesses in the operation's practices and supply chain.
4. Practices for verifying the organic status of any product they acquire and/or use.
5. A process to verify suppliers and minimize supplier risk to organic integrity.
6. Mitigation measures to correct vulnerabilities and minimize risks.
7. Monitoring practices and verification tools to assess the effectiveness of mitigation measures. This can be in the form of internal or external audits, periodic oversight by management etc.
8. A process for reporting suspected organic fraud to NFC and the NOP.

Section C2: Organic System Plan (OSP) - HANDLING:

Thew following section is applicable for operations (including warehouses, brokers, private brand owners etc.) that are not certifying a farm for growing crops. This also includes producers that are certifying a farm but also conduct additional activities other than direct post-harvest activities.

1.1 What is an organic system plan.

A key component to organic certification is implementing and maintaining an Organic System Plan also called an OSP:

The OSP is defined in the regulations as follows in the organic regulations:

> *Organic system plan.* A plan of management of an organic production or handling operation that has been agreed to by the producer or handler and the certifying agent and that includes written plans concerning all aspects of agricultural production or handling described in the Act and the regulations in subpart C.

An OSP is a living document that represents the operation's organic program that is updated in real time. An OSP is not the same for each operation. The OSP is adapted to the needs of the operation within the requirements of the regulations. The role of the certifier is to verify that the OSP meets the regulatory requirements and is implemented according to the certifier's policies and procedures.

The regulations list the following in section §205.201(a) required as part of the OSP, as will be explained:

(1) A description of practices and procedures to be performed and maintained, including the frequency with which they will be performed.

This section will include any practices or procedures conducted at the operation including sanitation procedures, pest control procedures, product process, product information, labeling procedures, packaging information, sourcing procedures, equipment information, facility layout, receiving and shipping procedures and any other practice procedure that pertains to organic handling.

(2) A list of each substance to be used as a production or handling input, indicating its composition, source, location(s) where it will be used, and documentation of commercial availability, as applicable;

This section includes information about all organic or nonorganic raw materials used in organic production that may have contact with organic products. This includes ingredients, processing aids, sanitizers/cleaners, and pest products.

(3) *A description of the monitoring practices and procedures to be performed and maintained, including the frequency with which they will be performed, to verify that the plan is effectively implemented. This must include a description of the monitoring practices and procedures to verify suppliers in the supply chain and organic status of agricultural products received, and to prevent organic fraud, as appropriate to the certified operation's activities, scope, and complexity;*

This section will include any procedures in place to verify that your OSP is being properly implemented including procedures to detect and prevent fraud in the supplier chain. This includes any internal or external audits, training procedures, spot checks and any other procedure in place to oversee organic plan.

(4) *A description of the record-keeping system implemented to comply with the requirements established in § 205.103;*

This section will include all your record-keeping procedures to verify that all your practices and procedures are being documented. This can include traceability records, inventory records, sanitation records, pest control records, training records etc. Documenting procedures helps to prevent any noncompliance, demonstrates to the certifier that a practice is being followed and allows for verification of the operator's compliance to the regulations

(5) *A description of the management practices and physical barriers established to prevent commingling of organic and nonorganic products on a split operation and to prevent contact of organic production and handling operations and products with prohibited substances; and*

This section includes measures in place to prevent organic product from coming in contact with nonorganic product and/or prohibited substances. These preventative measures should be implemented at every stage of production which include, but are not limited to, receiving storage, transport, production, packaging, sanitation and pest control.

(6) Additional information deemed necessary by the certifying agent to evaluate compliance with the regulations.

This section will include any information that NFC deems necessary to verify compliance that is not clearly stated in the regulations. An example of this is the requirement to submit legal verification of your company name etc.

The following is a detailed overview of a complete OSP. As noted above each operation must assess what is needed for their operation based on their activities and complexity.

2.1 OSP: General Information

An OSP must include the operation's business name, name of primary contact, contact information, name of individual overseeing and implementing OSP and address where operation is requesting certification. Primary contact must be affiliated with the operation (not a consultant). An operation using a consultant operation should include their information on the OSP to allow NFC to discuss certification information with them. While a consultant is encouraged, the operation must be familiar with the OSP and show compliance. An operation that cannot show the ability to implement the OSP completed by the consultant and be able to comply will be issued a notice of noncompliance.

NFC requires that a legal document be provided to verify the operation name. Legal verification can be in the form of a W9, corporation document or any other legally issued document.

The location of the operation must be either owned or leased by the operation. Operation must be in control of the operation during the time of their lease. A leased operation can be full-time or for a period of time (e.g., community kitchen). When an operation is leasing a kitchen for a period of time the operation must demonstrate protocols in place to prevent commingling and contamination of organic products and provide an additional mailing address for the operation.

The operation cannot apply for certification for their co-packer. A co-packer must submit their own application for certification.

3.1 OSP: Product Information

The NOP Rule has four categories of products which can use the word "organic". These are:

1. 100% Organic
2. Not Less than 95% Organic (also referred to as "organic")
3. Made with Organic (At least 70% Organic)
4. <70% organic ingredients.

The % of organic ingredients is calculated by dividing the total net weight or volume (excluding salt and water) of combined organic ingredients by the total weight or volume of all ingredients. Please see below 3.1.7. for details on determining organic percentage.

3.1.1 **100% Organic:**

Products labeled "100% organic" must contain 100% organic ingredients, including processing aids. Please note that although a product can contain only organic ingredients it does not render it 100% organic. Suppliers may have processes that include inputs that can render the product as no longer 100% organic.

To meet the 100% organic category, NFC requires that supplier certificates list the raw material as "100% organic" except where NFC can verify that the raw materials is single ingredient and sourced unprocessed from the producer.

3.1.2 **Not Less Than 95% Organic (also referred to as "Organic")**

Products labeled "organic" must contain at least 95% organic ingredients (excluding salt and water). Remaining 5% of nonorganic ingredients and any processing aids must be listed on the National List in section 205.605 or 205.606. Final product must not contain organic and nonorganic forms of the same ingredient. Any nonorganic agricultural ingredients must not be commercially available in organic form (see NOP regulations section 205.1 for definition of commercial availability).

3.1.3 **Made with Organic**

Products labeled "made with organic (specified ingredients or food group(s))" must contain at least 70% organic ingredients (excluding salt and water). Remaining ingredients can be any nonorganic agricultural ingredient or nonagricultural ingredient listed on the National List §205. 605.

3.1.4 **<70% Organic**

The organic ingredients in multi-ingredient agricultural product containing less than 70% organically produced ingredients (excluding water and salt) must be produced according to the organic requirements however is not required to be certified. There is no restriction on the nonorganic organic ingredients used. Organic with less than 70% can only label the ingredients as organic in the ingredient panel.

3.1.5 **Nonorganic Ingredients Restrictions**

"Organic," and "made with organic…" products, nonorganic ingredients must not be produced using excluded methods, sewage sludge, or ionizing radiation.

3.1.6 **OSP Documents**

As part of the OSP, NFC requires that the operation submit a:

(1) NFC Master Supplier List
(2) NFC Master Product List
(3) Product Profile Form, only if the operation is mixing ingredients, using processing aids or renames single ingredient materials.
(4) Organic certificate for all organic raw materials
(5) NFC Nonorganic Affidavit accompanied with a spec sheet, COA or SDS for any nonorganic ingredient used in an organic product.
(6) If a raw material is sourced from outside the US please refer to the About International Organic Trade Arrangements of the USDA for additional requirements.

Uncertified handlers: If an operation is using an uncertified handler as part of their supply chain (including brokers, warehouses etc.) the operation must provide a complete uncertified handler affidavit to verify that the uncertified handler is indeed exempt from certification and meets the requirements.

3.1.7 **Calculating the Percentage**

The percentage all organic products must be calculated by: Dividing the total net weight of the combined organic ingredients at formulation by the total weight of all ingredients of the product at formulation. Water and salt added as ingredients at formulation are excluded from the calculation.

The percentage of all organically produced ingredients in an agricultural product must be rounded down to the nearest whole number.

The percentage must be determined by the operation who affixes the label on the consumer package. The operation may use information provided by their supplier in determining the percentage (e.g., an ingredient statement).

3.1.8 **Calculating multi-ingredient products containing multi-ingredient materials.**

When an operation has a formula that is a multi-ingredient, but the ingredients are also multi-ingredient the operation must determine the organic percentage of the raw material in determining how it contributes to the organic percentage of the complete formula. For example, if a raw material in the organic formula is an organic flavor that 1lb of the formula but the flavor contains 5% nonorganic ingredients then the flavor can only contribute .95lb to the final formula. This can be consequential when a formula also contains nonorganic ingredients in addition to the other ingredients not being fully organic. Below is a sample for illustration:

Product Name:	Cherry Flavored Tea

1: Ingredient Name (must match 4.71 NFC Master supplier list) (do not list salt or water)	2: Quantity	3: Weight (lb., oz etc.)	4: Organic content of ingredient	5: Contribution of organic content in final product (Multiply quantity by Organic content)
Black Tea	45	lb	100%	45
Green Tea	45	lb	100%	45
Dried Cherry (contains citric acid)	5	lb	97%	4.85
Natural Cherry Flavor	5	lb	0	0
6: Total content excluding salt/water:	100	lb	10: Total of Organic Content:	94.85
7: Total content of Salt:	0	lb		
8: Total content of Water:	1000	lb	11: Total Organic percentage (divide box 10 by box 6):	94%
9: Total ingredient content with Salt and Water:	1100	lb		

12: List all processing aids used in production of this product: Nitrogen, CO2

As seen in the sample above the dried cherry contains citric acid making the ingredient less than 100% organic content and since the operation also has 5lb of nonorganic flavor the percentage drops to 94.85% and as required by the regulations the final percentage is rounded down to 94%. This product would not be approved for the “organic” status rather “made with organic”. For additional information in determining the organic percentage please see the instructions on the NFC organic product profile form.

3.2 Labeling

As part of the OSP NFC requires that the operation submit a copy of each label used to represent the product as organic including any non-retail containers or marketing material. An additional item to consider is an ingredient statement from the supplier to verify any ingredient breakdowns on the label.

Please see Section C3 below for a detailed description of the organic labeling requirements.

4.1 OSP: Facility and Best Practices

Operation applying for organic certification must implement and disclose all practices and procedures in the certified facility related to organic production and must demonstrate that practices and procedures prevent the contamination and commingling of organic product.

Procedures at the facility should address at a minimum (as applicable), but not limited to, the following: receiving, storage, production, sanitation, pest control, packaging, shipping.

4.1.1 Receiving and Storage

Operation must implement and provide protocol to prevent commingling and contamination of organic product at the receiving and storage of raw materials. Measures can include inspections of materials received, physical segregation or clear markers separating organic from nonorganic product and employee training on prevention of contamination of organic product. Operations should review their facility practices and determine where measures must be implemented to ensure that organic integrity is being kept. No two operations are the same and, as the certifier, NFC cannot recommend what specific measures must be implemented. Documentation of all protocols including location of organic product in the facility should be included as part of the OSP submitted.

4.1.2 Production

Operation must implement and provide protocol in place to prevent commingling and contamination of organic product during production of organic production. Questions to consider implementing the protocol are:

1. Is organic production taking place at the same time as nonorganic production? What measures are in place to prevent the commingling between the organic and nonorganic?
2. Does organic and nonorganic production include the same type of raw materials? What measures are in place to prevent confusion between of organic and nonorganic products?
3. Is the same equipment used for organic and nonorganic production? What pre-production measures are in place to prevent contamination of organic products from previous nonorganic production?

4.1.3 Sanitation

Sanitation of equipment and the facility is an important part of an organic system plan. Organic regulations do not require any specific method of cleaning or sanitation. The organic standards simply require a process that prevents organic food from commingling with non-organic food and contamination from prohibited substances.

The *typical* process for cleaning and sanitizing food contact surfaces and equipment is a liquid process and

follows this sequence of steps: clean, rinse, sanitize but note that effective cleaning does not necessarily require liquid processes to comply with the organic standards or food safety standards. It is the responsibility of the operation to demonstrate that the sanitation procedures are both effective and do not contaminate organic product. For instance, if a piece of equipment cannot be cleaned with cleaners and can only be purged, the operation must demonstrate the procedure is sufficient to prevent contamination of organic product.

CLEAN: Cleaning agents, such as dish soap made from synthetic detergents, are used to remove dirt, germs, objects or impurities from food contact surfaces and equipment. **The cleaning agent itself is not required to be organic.** Any cleaner or detergent may be used *provided that* the cleaning agent is disclosed in the handler's organic system plan and also meets the Food & Drug Administration's (FDA) requirements. Unlike sanitizers (discussed below), cleaners and detergents are designed to be rinsed off, and a subsequent rinse step is sufficient to prevent contamination of organic foods from synthetic cleaner residues.

RINSE: A rinse with potable water removes the cleaning agents. Potable water is simply water deemed safe for drinking and food preparation.

SANITIZE: Sanitizers are applied to cleaned surfaces to ensure that the surface is free of pathogenic microbes. The sanitizing step is a mandated part of most state and federal food safety protocols for food contact surfaces. Sanitizers merit more scrutiny than cleaners in an organic process because some sanitizers are designed to leave a faint anti-bacterial residue on food contact surfaces. Such residues are usually not allowed in contact with organic food. Therefore, procedures in an organic operation must ensure that organic foods do not contact any prohibited sanitizer residues. Because of the need to ensure a safe food system, regulations allow the use of some synthetic sanitizers for food contact surfaces, discussed below.

4.1.3.1 Approved sanitizers:

The following active ingredients are allowed in sanitizers used on organic food contact surfaces and equipment (with a noted restriction on chlorine sanitizers) and do not require any additional steps to prevent sanitizer to come in contact with organic product:

- Chlorine Materials (see notes below)
- Hydrogen peroxide
- Ozone
- Peracetic acid/peroxyacetic acid
- Phosphoric acid
- Potassium hydroxide
- Sodium hydroxide

A Note About Chlorine Materials

Chlorine is listed on the National List of Approved and Prohibited Substances as an allowed sanitizing substance (7 CFR 205.605). Sodium hypochlorite is the active ingredient in what's commonly known as bleach or chlorine bleach. Chlorine-based sanitizing solutions are effective and allowed sanitizers under the organic standards, provided that the manufacturer's instructions are followed, particularly with regard to sanitizer concentration. The National Organic Program's July 22, 2011 Guidance Document 5026 clarified

that under such circumstances, there is no requirement to follow a chlorine sanitizer with a water rinse. Such a rinse would undermine the sanitizer's role in ensuring food safety.

4.1.3.2 Other Sanitizers

Other active sanitizing agents may be used in organic handling operations, **provided** measures are taken to prevent the sanitizers from coming into contact with organic food products. Because the active removal of sanitizers from food contact equipment can raise food safety issues, the use of sanitizers other than those allowed by the National List of Approved and Prohibited Substances should be considered only as a last resort and only in compliance with food safety regulations. Operations will be required to show that no prohibited sanitizer residues remain on the food contact surfaces prior to food processing. These sanitizers include but not limited to:

- Acetic acid
- Ethyl alcohol
- Isopropyl alcohol
- Citric products/limonene
- Potassium permanganate
- Sulfuric acid
- Vinegar
- Quaternary ammonia (ammonium chloride materials)

A note about Quaternary Ammonia
Special measures must be taken when utilizing quaternary ammonia-based sanitizers. This sanitizing substance is designed to leave persistent anti-microbial residues on food contact equipment. Measures can include testing surfaces for any residue that may be left post the sanitation procedure.

4.1.3.3 Mixed Operations

Operations producing organic and nonorganic products must disclose to NFC whether sanitation procedures are the same for both organic and nonorganic. If procedures differ for organic, the operation must document the measures in place and submit verification that the correct sanitation procedures are being done.

4.1.3.4 Water

Operations that have the use of water included as part of the OSP (e.g. ingredient, processing aid, cleaning etc.) must include procedures in place for any treatment used for the water. Operations must provide a water report on the quality of the water. If water is sourced from the municipality, then a municipal water report is sufficient.

Any water that has direct food contact with organic product may only use substances listed on the National List. This includes any water used as steam in a boiler system with direct contact with organic product. Operations must include an SDS for each substance used and include the substance on the sanitation list.

4.1.3.5 OSP Documents

Operations will be required to submit internal protocol regarding the procedures of organic production, an NFC master sanitation list disclosing all cleaners/sanitizers used, SDS for all products disclosing active ingredients, and any information on how sanitation is documented (required for mixed used operations as noted above).

Warehouses/Distributors: Warehouses or other operations with a facility that only stores product and does not have food contact equipment will not be required to submit information on the sanitation procedures or water report. Provided that the organic product is not exposed at any time to surfaces in the facility that may come in contact with cleaning or sanitizing agents.

Third Party Verification

If a cleaner/sanitizer is approved by a third party for organic compliance, the operation can provide the valid product certificate and NFC may approve use of the product. Operations must follow any notation listed on the certificate provided.

At this time NFC approved third parties are: 1. OMRI (Organic Materials Review Institute), WSDA (Washington State Dept. of Agriculture) and CDFA (California Department of Food and Agriculture).

4.1.4 Pest Control

A certified organic operation must demonstrate practices in place to monitor the activity of pests and implement practices to prevent pests in the organic operation. Operations that have no pest issues must document the monitoring of pest activity. Frequency of monitoring of pests is determined by the operation as needed. Practices to prevent and control pest activity can include, but are not limited to, the following:

5. Removal of pest habitat, food sources, and breeding areas. Prevention of access to handling facilities.
6. Management of environmental factors, such as temperature, light, humidity, atmosphere, and air circulation, to prevent pest reproduction.
7. Mechanical or physical controls including but not limited to traps, light, or sound.
8. Lures and repellents using non synthetic or synthetic substances consistent with the National List.

Should the above prevention and control procedures not be effective, an operation may resort to using substances listed on the National List (e.g., vitamin baits, boric acid, diatomaceous earth, essential oils etc.).

Should the above items be insufficient, an operation can use synthetic substance not on the National List. If items not on the list are needed, the operation must provide to NFC verification of methods used that were insufficient, which substance will be used, how the substance will be used, and what steps are in place to prevent contamination of organic products.

Operations must update the OSP with new products and have them approved by NFC prior to their use.

4.1.4.1 OSP Documents

Operation will be required to submit internal protocol regarding the procedures of monitoring pests (regardless of whether pest control products are used). An NFC Master Pest Control List disclosing all pest control products used and how the efficacy of the pest control procedures are monitored and documented must be provided, along with the SDS for all products disclosing active ingredients.

4.1.4.2 Pest Control Contractors

Operation using the services of a pest control contractor will need to provide (in addition to the items listed above) the pest control plan implemented and a statement from the contractor confirming their commitment to meet organic requirements and notify NFC prior to any changes. If needed NFC can provide an affidavit for the contractor to complete. Operations using a pest control contractor are responsible for verifying that the contractor follows the OSP and meets all the requirements.

4.1.4.3 Third Party Verification

If a pest control product is approved by a third party for organic compliance, the operation can provide the valid product certificate and NFC may approve use of the product. Operation must follow any notation listed on the certificate provided.
At this time NFC approved third parties are: 1. OMRI (Organic Materials Review Institute), WSDA (Washington State Dept. of Agriculture) and CDFA (California Department of Food and Agriculture).

4.1.5 Shipping

Operation must implement and provide the protocol in place to prevent commingling and contamination of organic product during the shipping of finished product. Measures can include physical segregation, employee training on prevention of contamination of organic product, and verification of clean truck. Operations should review their facility practices and determine where measures must be implemented to ensure that organic integrity is being maintained.

4.1.5.1 Third Party Storage

If an operation is utilizing the services of a third-party storage, the operation must include the information of the warehouse in the OSP and the status of organic certification for the warehouse. The operation should submit an organic certificate for the warehouse or an NFC Warehouse Affidavit to verify that organic integrity is being maintained.

Third party warehouses do not require certification if they only receive, store, and/or prepare for shipment, but do not otherwise handle organic product and the products are enclosed in sealed, **tamper-evident** packages or containers prior to being received or acquired by the operation; and Remain in the same sealed, tamper-evident packages or containers and are not otherwise handled while in the control of the warehouse. While certification is not required the warehouse must meet all requirements for labeling and prevention of commingling and contamination. In addition, they must keep records of all organic transactions and make them available for review upon request.

Examples of preparing for shipment include applying internal tracking numbers, shrink-wrapping, breaking down pallets, placing individual retail packages into a retail display.
Tamper evident is defined as sealed packaging so that if someone were to open the packaging it would be clear that it was opened.
If an operation is using a third-party warehouse, the operation is responsible to be able to complete a traceback of organic product to the last certified operation. This may include requesting records from the warehouse that are documented for traceability. Failure to provide records due to the warehouse not giving access can result in noncompliance for the certified operation.

4.1.6 OSP: Record Keeping

NOP §205.201(a)(4) and §205.103. require that certified operations maintain records, disclose and document all activities and transactions. Records must be maintained in a form that is easily understood, audited, and adapted to the specific needs of the certified operation. Records must demonstrate compliance with the NOP Regulations and must span the time of purchase or acquisition, through production, to sale or transport and be traceable back to the last certified operation.

Certified operations must make records available for review by the NOP, the applicable State program's governing State official, and the certifying agent during normal business hours.

Records maintained by certified operations may include but not limited to:

22. Certificates and ingredient affidavits.
23. Receiving records of raw materials. Records should verify that product received was organic and records that verify the amount of organic product received
24. Supplier invoices and BOL.
25. Ingredient COA.
26. Ingredient inventory records.
27. QA reports.
28. In process product inventory.
29. Batch records.
30. Productions records.
31. Equipment cleaning records.
32. Product right off records.
33. Packing reports.
34. Finished product inventory.
35. Shipping logs.
36. Shipping reports. Records that verify type and amount of organic product shipped
37. Sales report and invoices.
38. Transport cleaning logs.
39. Storage cleaning logs.
40. Pest observation logs.
41. Clean truck affidavits. Verifies that truck was cleaned prior to hauling organic products
42. Pest control product use log.
43. Complaint logs.
44. Employee Training Log.
45. Affidavits of nonorganic inputs and supplier declarations.
46. Approved pest control list.
47. Real time inventory records.
48. Incoming ingredient lots.
49. Outgoing product lots.
50. Approved ingredient supplier list.
51. Approved sanitation and/or pest control list.
52. Master recipe formulas.

4.1.6.1 Identifying products as organic on records.

The regulations identify records that operations must maintain in two categories, "internal records" and "external records" as follows:

- **Internal records** are defined as records that are used within the operations process and procedures to trace organic product within the operation, example of this would include production records, inventory records etc.
    - **Requirements:** The regulations require that internal records identify organic ingredients/products as organic or some form of way to identify the ingredient/product as organic (e.g. have all organic ingredient codes start with an "o" that helps identify that the material is organic).

- **External documents** are defined as records that are used to help trace ingredients/products to the last certified operation, example of this would include invoices, BOL's, receiving logs, transaction certificates etc.
    - **Requirements:** The regulations require that in addition to identifying ingredients/products as organic external records must also identify the organic status (100% organic, organic, made with organic) on the records. Operations receiving and shipping organic ingredients/products will be responsible to verify that ingredients/products are identified as both organic and the organic status. The requirements allow for the organic status may be identified by abbreviations (e.g. ORG or MWO) or acronyms as long is it is clear that it is identifying the organic status.

4.1.6.2 Traceability: Audit Trial and Mass Balance

Organic certified operations must demonstrate the ability to conduct an audit trail and mass balance on organic production to allow for complete traceability within the certified operation, one step backwards to the supplier, one step forward to the customer and the ability for certifiers to conduct traceability audits across the supply chain.

A. Audit Trail

An audit trail is like a mock recall. The goal of the audit trail is to be able to trace organic product throughout the process while in the possession of the certified operation. Records should be able to verify the status of organic ingredients (stating ingredients as organic) throughout the process. Records used for this process could include invoices, BOL, receiving logs, production records, shipping records etc.

Operations should have the ability to link documents from receiving an organic ingredient through the shipping of the final product. Link of documents can be through any method determined by the operation including but not limited to supplier lot numbers, internal lot numbers, final lot number, date received etc. Chain of documents should include any third-party warehouses organic product may be stored in.

If the operation is receiving raw materials through an uncertified handler, the operation should be able to link the raw materials to the last certified entity.

B. Mass Balance

A mass balance of outputs or inputs is defined as the ability to select a particular raw material or product and to verify through records that there is a reasonable relationship established in the records between the amount of received, packed, shipped, and sold.

A mass balance is conducted by the inspector reviewing inventory records of the certified operation for both a specific raw material and a finished product during a selected time period. Once a starting and ending inventory is confirmed the inspector will review all purchases and sales during the time period and verify that operation has had sufficient organic raw material to produce and sell the amount of organic product sold. In addition, the mass balance

will verify the formula of organic products that it is accurately disclosed on the organic production profile form. Mass balance is conducted on a raw material through the finished product containing the raw material.

To complete a successful mass balance, operation should document inventory of organic raw materials and finished product. Operation should determine (based on complexity of the operation) how often inventory should be documented to be able to sufficiently document a complete mass balance. Inventory can be documented annually, quarterly, monthly, weekly, daily or any other time as determined by the operation.

5.1 OSP: Monitoring and Fraud Prevention

Section 205.201(a)(3) requires all certified operations to maintain and implement practices to verify the organic status of suppliers and products in their supply chain and to prevent organic fraud. Often called “fraud prevention plans,” these procedures and practices support early detection, prevention, and mitigation of fraud, and strengthen integrity across organic supply chains.

A fraud prevention plan must be included in the operation's OSP. Not all fraud prevention plans are the same. A fraud prevention plan must be appropriate to the activities, scope, and complexity of the operation, and should be sufficient to address the verification and anti-fraud needs of the operation. For example, a producer who does not handle another operation's organic products may develop a simple fraud prevention that verifies purchased inputs comply with organic regulation. In contrast, a processor that receives many organic ingredients from numerous suppliers should develop a fraud prevention plan that describes practices to detect, prevent, minimize, and mitigate organic fraud risks in lengthy supply chains.

A fraud prevention plan should include the following items:

1. A map or inventory of the operation's supply chain that identifies suppliers.
2. Identification of critical control points in the supply chain where organic fraud or loss of organic status are most likely to occur.
3. A vulnerability assessment to identify weaknesses in the operation's practices and supply chain.
4. Practices for verifying the organic status of any product they acquire and/or use.
5. A process to verify suppliers and minimize supplier risk to organic integrity.
6. Mitigation measures to correct vulnerabilities and minimize risks.
7. Monitoring practices and verification tools to assess the effectiveness of mitigation measures. This can be in the form of internal or external audits, periodic oversight by management etc.
8. A process for reporting suspected organic fraud to NFC and the NOP.

Section C3 - Labeling

The following is a description of the organic labeling requirement.

1. **“100% organic” or “organic”**

Product labeled “100% Organic” or “organic” are required to have:

(1) the organic ingredients identified as organic in the ingredient panel with the word, “organic,” or with an asterisk or other reference mark which is defined below the ingredient statement to indicate the ingredient is organically produced. The exception is for products labeled “100% organic” and include the statement on the label do not require the ingredients to be listed as organic.
(2) on the information panel, below the information identifying the certified operation there should be a statement “Certified Organic by Natural Food Certifiers” (operation may substitute “Natural Food Certifiers” with ”NFC”).

Product labeled 100% Organic and Organic can use statements representing the product as organic, use the NFC or USDA logo, and/or modify the product name using the word organic.

If the product name refers to a nonorganic ingredient (e.g. “Organic coconut cake” where the coconut is nonorganic) the product cannot be modified with the word organic to represent the nonorganic ingredient as organic.

If the NFC and USDA logos are used the NFC logo cannot be more prominent than the USDA logo.

Product labeled “100% organic” may use the statement “100% organic” on the label.

2. **Made with Organic – At least 70% Organic**

Product labeled Made with Organic are required to have:

(1) the organic ingredients identified as organic in the ingredient panel with the word, “organic,” or with an asterisk or other reference mark which is defined below the ingredient statement to indicate the ingredient is organically produced.
(2) on the information panel, below the information identifying the certified operation there should be a statement “certified organic by Natural Food Certifiers” (operation may substitute “Natural Food Certifiers” with ”NFC”.

Product labeled “made with organic" can use statement “Made with organic (specified ingredients)” or “Made with organic (specified food groups)”. Statement cannot list more than 3 ingredients or groups or a combination of the two. Statement cannot exceed one-half the size of the largest type size on the panel and statement must appear in its entirety in the same type size, style, and color without highlighting.

Product labeled “made with organic" can use statement with the % of organic ingredients. Statement cannot exceed one-half the size of the largest type size on the panel and statement must appear in its entirety in the same type size, style, and color without highlighting.

Product labeled “made with organic" are prohibited from using the USDA logo and the statement “made with organic

Ingredients." Statements that represent the product as "organic" certified must not be used.

A product labeled "made with organic" may use the NFC logo if it is on the back panel and not prominently displayed where the product could be represented as organic.

Labels certified to the "made with Organic category using the NFC logo must include a "made with…" statement to make clear product is not certified "organic".

For brands with the word organic in the name please refer to this link for additional requirements.

3. **Nonretail Containers/Labeling**

NOP regulations define "Nonretail Containers" as "Any container used for shipping or storage of an agricultural product that is not used in the retail display or sale of the product." Nonretail containers are used to ship or store either packaged or unpackaged organic products; they are not used to display organic products for sale to consumers at retail establishments.

Examples of nonretail containers include: - produce boxes, totes, bulk containers, bulk bags, flexible bulk containers, harvest crates and bins - boxes, crates, cartons, and master cases of wholesale packaged products - trailers, tanks, railcars, shipping containers, vessels, cargo holds, freighters, barges, grain elevators, silos, grain bins, or other methods of bulk transport or storage.

Nonretail containers/Labels (regardless of size, shape, or use) of organic products require traceability information and must include information that identifies the product as organic. This includes statements like 100% organic, Organic or Made with Organic.

In addition, nonretail labels must contain unique information (i.e. lot numbers etc.) that links the product to audit trail documentation that accompanies the shipment and that provide information on the product. The traceability documents linked to the product must identify the last certified operation that handled the product.

If the nonretail label includes other organic statements it must comply with the specific category it is certified to as described in part 1 and 2 above.

4. **USDA Seal**

When using the USDA seal it must replicate the form and design of the examples below as follows:

1. On a white background with a brown outer circle and with the term, "USDA," in green overlaying a white upper semicircle and with the term, "organic," in white overlaying the green lower half circle; or
2. On a white or transparent background with black outer circle and black "USDA" on a white or transparent upper half of the circle with a contrasting white or transparent "organic" on the black lower half circle.

3. The green or black lower half circle may have four light lines running from left to right and disappearing at

the point on the right horizon to resemble a cultivated field.

Section C4 Noncompliance and adverse action procedure

1.1 Noncompliance and adverse action procedure

1.2 Noncompliance Notice

When an inspection, review, or investigation of a client by NFC reveals that a client is not in compliance with the standards, NFC will issue a notification of Noncompliance. The notification of Noncompliance includes:

A. Description of each Noncompliance;
B. The facts upon which the notification of Noncompliance is based; and
C. The date by which the client must rebut or correct each Noncompliance when correction is possible.

Noncompliances may be issued for administrative issues, such as failure to pay invoices, failure to return the Annual Renewal Application or issues related to activities that compromise organic integrity.

All Noncompliances must be resolved by the date noted on the letter (unless extension is provided by NFC) and closed before an applicant is granted certification or a client is notified of continuing certification.

Noncompliances that are not adequately resolved result in additional adverse action.

1.3 Extensions

An operation that requires an extension to submit a response to the notice of noncompliance must submit a request to NFC in writing before the due date of the noncompliance. With the request the operation must include the reason for the extension and how long the extension is needed.

NFC will review the request for extension and follow up whether it has been approved or denied.

1.4 Noncompliance Resolution

Operation submitting corrective actions should verify that the following points are addressed in the response:

1. Identify the root cause of the noncompliance. Describe the reason the noncompliance occurred. This can include lack of training, lack of knowledge of the requirements, insufficient steps in procedure.
2. Correcting the cause of the noncompliance. Describe the verifiable action that will bring the certified operation into compliance. This includes correcting label issues, corrective procedures, ceasing processing prohibited products. **Corrective actions are immediate actions that bring the operation into compliance.**
3. Providing objective evidence supporting how the noncompliance was corrected. Provide documented evidence to NFC indicating that the noncompliance was corrected and implemented.
4. Preventing the recurrence of the noncompliance in the future. Describe the verifiable action that will prevent a recurrence of the event. This includes any new checklists, training and or procedures implemented or planned to be implemented**. Preventive actions are actions to address the root cause of why the noncompliance occurred. Actions can be immediate or future actions to be implemented**

5. Providing objective evidence supporting how noncompliance will be prevented in the future. Provide documented evidence to NFC indicating the implemented actions are effective in preventing a recurrence?
6. Controlling non-compliant products, when appropriate. Describe what verifiable actions have been taken to correct non-compliant products. Examples of this may be correcting product labels, removing products from distribution, etc.

When submitting corrective actions responses should be submitted in one package with a complete corrective action report addressing each noncompliance. Corrective actions should be easily understood by NFC and be verifiable onsite by NFC.

Below are examples of noncompliances and corrective actions:

Category	Noncompliance	Root Cause	Corrective Actions	Preventive Actions	Supporting Documents
Labels	*Label submitted was noted missing the COB statement*	*Designer approved the label and was unaware of the organic requirements.*	*Labels have been corrected.*	*1. Operation implemented a label approval checklist with verification that the COB statement is in place.* *2. The QA manager must sign off before the designer approves the label.* *3. Staff have been trained on the new policy*	*1. Corrected label.* *2. Label approval checklist.* *3. Training log for the new protocol.*
Renewal	*Failure to submit renewal by anniversary date*	*Due to a change in personnel, the operation did not initiate the recertification process in a timely manner.*	*Organic renewal documents submitted*	*1. Operation added calendar reminders for future recertification dates.* *2. Email auto-forwards have been set up from QC manager to personnel for emails from NFC to ensure that all necessary parties from operation are notified of upcoming recert dates and messages.*	*1. Renewal documents* *2. Google Calendar Screenshot* *3. Copy of auto generated emails.*
Labels	*During the inspection, it was noted that organic ingredients used in non-organic production are not documented causing discrepancies in the mass balance.*	*Tracking of organic ingredients used for non-organic production were not always properly logged on the recipe cards.*	*A new organic ingredient log has been created to log the usage of organic ingredients in non-organic production.*	*1. Operation implemented an organic ingredient log with verification that organic ingredients were used.* *2. QC manager will now verify usage was logged properly.* *3. Staff have been trained on the new log.*	*1. Organic Ingredient Usage Log with verification by QC manager.* *2. Training Log for the new protocol.*
OSP Deviation	*The operation deviated from the OSP and did not update the OSP documentation accordingly or notify NFC. Specific, operation made changes to both pest control and sanitation procedures by adding new materials and did not update the OSP*	*OSP was not updated due to lack of oversight.*	*Sanitation and pest control lists have been updated to reflect current products used.*	*1. Operation implemented internal form to be completed prior to any change which includes verification that the OSP has been updated.*	*1. Copy of the revised sanitation and pest control lists* *2. Copy of the internal form tracking changes* *3. Revised SOP reflecting change to procedure to require log completed prior to changes.* *4. Copy of internal staff training log*

Contamination/Commingling	*Operation sanitation procedures were noted insufficient to prevent contamination of organic product. Specifically, sanitation procedure includes prohibited materials (Quaternary Ammonium Chloride) that is applied on food contact surfaces to remove and verify that all residue has been removed.*	*Operation noted issue due to lack of knowledge of the requirements*	*Operation no longer uses quat in the facility and has switched to a PAA based product that is allowed on the national list. PAA will be used for all production in the facility whether organic or not.*	*1. Operation updated internal SOP to reflect new policy of only PAA used and updated its internal logs to verify that PAA is used.* *2. Training has be provided to all personnel on the organic sanitation requirements*	*1. Updated master sanitation list listing PAA and removing quat material.* *2. SDS for PAA.* *3. Revised internal SOP with new procedures.* *4. Updated sanitation log.* *5. Copy of training sign off sheet and minutes of training conducted January 1, 2020.*

If the noncompliance was determined not appropriate by the operation (e.g., labels were indeed compliant etc.), an operation can choose to submit a rebuttal. When submitting the rebuttal, the operation should provide the reason for rebuttal and objective evidence to support the rebuttal. An operation can submit corrective actions for some noncompliance and a rebuttal for other noncompliance's.

Once a corrective action report or rebuttal and supporting documents are submitted NFC will review corrective action to determine if it is sufficient to resolve the issue. If necessary, NFC will conduct an on-site inspection to verify corrective actions or information provided in the rebuttal.

If NFC verifies that the correction or rebuttal is sufficient to resolve the Noncompliances, NFC notifies the client in writing that the Noncompliances has been resolved.

If NFC determines that the correction requires additional clarification, NFC may notify the operation and provide additional time to clarify the question in resolving the noncompliance.

If the corrective actions or rebuttal is not sufficient to resolve the Noncompliances, or the operation fails to respond to the Noncompliance in the time allowed, NFC moves to an adverse action by either denying certification to a new applicant or proposing suspension or revocation of existing operation.

1.5 Denial of Certification (New Applicants)

When a new applicant for certification has been issued a notification of Noncompliance and the corrective action or rebuttal is not sufficient for the applicant to qualify for certification, NFC will issue a written notification of Denial of Certification. If correction of a Noncompliance is not possible, the notification of Noncompliance and the notification of Denial of Certification will be combined in one notice.

The notification of Denial of Certification will state the reason for denial and the applicant's right to:

1. Reapply for certification.
2. Request mediation (as described below)
3. File an appeal (as described below)

1.6. Proposed Suspension and Proposed Revocation (Clients)

When a certified operation is issued a notification of Noncompliance and the correction or rebuttal is unsuccessful or not completed by the specified due date, NFC will issue the operation a written notification of Proposed Suspension

or Proposed Revocation. The Proposed Suspension or Revocation may be of the entire operation or of a portion of the operation.

When correction of a Noncompliance is not possible or if the violation was willful, a notification of Noncompliance and notification of Proposed Suspension or Proposed Revocation may be combined in one notification. The notification of Proposed Suspension or Proposed Revocation will include:

1. The reasons for the proposed suspension or revocation;
2. The proposed effective date of such suspension or revocation;
3. The impact of a suspension or revocation on future eligibility for certification;
4. The right to request mediation (as described below)
5. The right to file an appeal (as described below).

1.7. Mediation

An operation that has been issued a notice of proposed suspension or revocation can submit a request to mediate with NFC and enter into a settlement agreement. Said request must be submitted to NFC within 30 days of the relevant notice.

Operation submitting a request for mediation should complete the NFC mediation request form and provide all actions taken to address the open noncompliances.

Once NFC receives a request for mediation, NFC will review the request and determine if mediation is appropriate. NFC accepts an operation's mediation request if it appears that there is the potential for the operation and NFC to come to an agreement in a timely manner and that the agreement meets the requirements of all applicable standards and/or regulations.

NFC may deny an operation's mediation request if NFC has evidence that the operation is either not acting in good faith, has provided false or fraudulent information or documentation, or has shown no willingness to come into compliance, if there is no possibility of coming to an agreement that meets the requirements of all applicable regulations, or for other reasons as determined in the NFC internal procedures. If the request for mediation is denied, NFC will notify the operation the reason for the rejection and the right to request an appeal within 30 days of the date of the written notification of rejection of the request for mediation.

If the request for mediation is accepted by NFC, mediation may be conducted by the appropriate state organic agency or other qualified mediator mutually agreed upon by NFC and the operation. (In the state of California, mediations may be handled by the CDFA State Organic Program Administrator, and in accordance to procedures established by the CDFA State Organic Program).

Alternatively, where both parties agree, informal mediation may be utilized. The goal of informal mediation is to resolve issues through constructive dialogue with the operation directly with NFC staff. Informal mediation can be conducted through email or by phone.

Where appropriate, NFC may offer proposed settlement agreement terms and informal mediation proactively.

Once a settlement agreement is agreed upon, NFC will draft the agreement for the operation to review, sign and submit with any additional information as described in the mediation agreement and any fees due. Any agreement reached during or because of the mediation process must be in compliance with organic regulations and standards.

Settlement agreements must be signed within 30 days of the start of mediation.

If mediation is unsuccessful, the operation has 30 days from termination of mediation to appeal the NFC decision.

Following a successful mediation, NFC will monitor during future renewals and audits that the settlement agreement is being followed by the operation. Failure by the operation comply with the terms of the settlement agreement can result in NFC issuing a notice of proposed suspension.

The USDA Secretary may review any settlement agreement for compliance to the NOP and may reject any agreement or provision not in compliance with the NOP.

1.8 Suspension and Revocation (Certified Operation)

If an operation has been issued a notice of proposed suspension or proposed revocation and the operation has failed to resolve the issue through mediation or appeal, NFC will issue a notice of suspension or revocation. Notice of suspension will include:

1. Reason for suspension.
2. Obligation of operation once suspended.
3. Ability for operation request reinstatement by NFC or any other accredited certifier.

An operator that is subject to revocation and responsibly connected persons will be ineligible for organic certification for 5 years after the effective date on the Notice of Revocation.

1.9 Reinstatement

Unless stated otherwise on the notice of suspension, a suspended operation may submit an application and request for reinstatement as soon as the issue(s) leading to suspension have been resolved.

An operation seeking to be reinstated through NFC should submit a complete application as a new operation and be accompanied by a letter requesting reinstatement. Letter requesting reinstatement should include evidence demonstrating correction of each Noncompliance and Corrective Actions taken to comply with and remain in compliance with the organic regulations and standards. If suspension was issued by another certifier NFC will reach out to the other certifier to verify all noncompliances that are open and any fees that have not been paid.

Once an application and request for reinstatement is submitted NFC will conduct an inspection and review of the operation to ensure that the client is compliant and capable of ongoing compliance. During the inspection NFC will verify that operation did not process, sell, or market product is organic during the suspension period. If operation has produced organic product NFC will verify that products are not sold, represented or marketed as organic.

If during the inspection or review any additional noncompliances are noted NFC will issue a notice of noncompliance which needs to be resolved by the operation prior to submitting the request for reinstatement. Operation that fails to resolve the notice of noncompliance or fails to respond NFC will submit to the USDA a recommendation to not reinstate.

Once the inspection and review are completed and the operation has been found to have successfully implemented corrective actions for all noncompliances subject to the suspension, NFC will submit the reinstatement request to the USDA with a recommendation to reinstate. If the USDA provides a decision to reinstate the operation, then NFC will issue certification.

All reinstatement requests must be submitted to the NOP within 90 days from the inspection.

Reinstatement requests can be submitted to the USDA by either the operation or NFC. Please refer to NOP guidance document 2605 on the process to submit a request for reinstatement.

Once the USDA receives a reinstatement request, a decision generally made by the NOP within 30 days. Incomplete reinstatement requests may take longer.

1.10 Appeals

An operation may appeal a notification of Denial of Certification, Proposed Suspension, Proposed Revocation, Denial of Mediation or unsuccessful Mediation. Notification of Noncompliance, Suspension, Revocation or other decisions made by NFC may not be formally appealed.

A decision to deny, suspend, or revoke certification becomes final unless the decision is appealed in a timely manner. An appeal must be filed within the time period provided in the notice or within 30 days from receipt of the notice, whichever occurs later.

The appeal is considered “filed” on the date received by the USDA. It is recommended that appeal be submitted by email to:

USDA-AMS- Administrator, c/o NOP Appeals Team
NOPAppeals@ams.usda.gov

Appeals can also be mailed to 1400 Independence Ave. SW, Room 2642, Stop 0268, Washington, DC 20250,

All appeals must include a copy of the adverse decision and a statement of the appellant’s reasons for believing that the decision was not proper or made in accordance with the USDA NOP requirement and regulations.

All written communications between parties involved in appeal proceedings must be sent to the recipient's place of business by a delivery service that provides dated return receipts. All appeals shall be reviewed, heard, and decided by persons not involved with the decision being appealed.

Once an appeal is submitted if the USDA Administrator sustains an operation’s appeal, the operation is issued new or ongoing organic certification, as applicable. If the USDA Administrator denies an appeal, a formal administrative

proceeding is initiated to deny, suspend, or revoke the certification. Such proceeding shall be conducted pursuant to the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Uniform Rules of Practice or the State Organic Program's rules of procedure.

For additional information on the appeals process please refer to the NOP guidance document 4011 for the appeals process

1.11 Willful Violations

If NFC has reason to believe that an operation has willfully violated any standards, NFC will take the appropriate adverse action. This may include issuing a notification of Proposed Suspension or Proposed Revocation, or a combined notification of Noncompliance and Proposed Suspension or Revocation/ Denial.

NFC will notify the USDA Administrator of all willful violations under the standard.

Under the USDA NOP regulations, any operation that knowingly sells or labels a product as organic in the United States, except in accordance with the organic regulations, shall be subject to a civil penalty up to the maximum amount stated in the United States Code of Federal Regulations Title 7 section 3.91 (b)(xxxvi).

Under the USDA NOP regulations, any operation that makes a false statement to the USDA NOP Secretary or a State Organic Program's Governing State Official shall be subject to the provisions of section 1001 of title 18, United States Code.

Section D: International Compliance

Operations seeking to import organic products and be processed, sold and/or labeled as organic must meet all organic requirements and be certified by an NOP accredited organic certifier unless a trade agreement has been made with the specific country.

Import Certificates

In addition to organic certificates all organic products imported into the US must be accompanied by an import certificate verifying the shipment. Organic import certificates are a type of transaction certificate that contain detailed information about the quantity, origin, and organic status of imported products. The purpose of import certificates is to provide trackable and auditable documentation to demonstrate organic compliance and to support investigations of misrepresented products.

The exporter's certifier must generate the NOP Import Certificate in the Organic Integrity Database (OID). NOP Import Certificate may cover a specific shipment, or for a timeframe (limited or unlimited) up to an amount or volume ceiling. The certifier will determine the scope of the certificate based on the administrative capacity and documented control systems of both the certifying agent and the certified operation that allows them to verify the integrity of the specific type and volume of import.

The following is the process of generating and verifying the NOP Import Certificate:

1. Exporter requests Import Certificate from their certifier.
2. Certifier (of exporter) evaluates request and (if approved) generates Import Certificate in the OID
3. Certifier provides the Import Certificate back to exporter that requested it (may be paper or electronic)
4. Exporter sends Import Certificate to the U.S. Importer
5. Importer or its designated Customs broker enters Import Certificate data into CBP's Automated Commercial Environment (ACE) system as part of its standard import filing process.

When the shipment is received the importer must upload the Import Certificate data into the CBP-ACE system (or delegate it to a Customs Broker). Importers must Verify that products received are associated with a valid Import Certificate and have not been treated with a prohibited substance (fumigation) or exposure to irradiation. The importer must maintain records of Import Certificates and make them available during inspections.

International Agreements

The National Organic Program works with the Foreign Agricultural Service and Office of the United States Trade Representative to establish international trade arrangements for organic products. Currently there are two types of organic trade arrangement:

A. Organic Equivalency Arrangement
B. Recognition Agreement

Equivalency arrangement: An equivalency arrangement is when the USDA-NOP and another country come to an agreement that product from each country will be accepted if it meets the other country's organic standards and any specific notation for that arrangement. For example, in the US-CAN arrangement, if a product is certified

to the USDA- NOP standards and meets the specific notations, the product can be exported to Canada. So to in reverse, if a product is certified to the Canada standards (AKA COR) and it meets specific notations, it can be imported into the US.

In general, international equivalency agreements have to meet three parts:

1. Product compliance
2. Labeling requirements and
3. Documentation.

On the next page you will find the specific requirements for each equivalency agreement.

Recognition Agreement: A recognition agreement is when the USDA allows the government of another country to accredit certifiers to certify to the NOP standards. In this case operations certified in the specific country are not certified by an NOP accredited certifier, will not be listed on the organic integrity database and the USDA-NOP does not have direct oversight over certifiers and operations.

The USDA currently has organic equivalence with the following governments:

1. Canada
4. European Union
5. Japan
6. Republic of Korea
7. Switzerland
8. Taiwan
9. United Kingdom

The USDA-NOP currently has organic recognition agreement with the following governments:

1. Israel
10. New Zealand.

Below are the specific requirements for each international agreement.

A. Canada (COR)

1.1 Exporting

Organic product certified to the USDA-NOP standards that will be exported to Canada must meet the following requirements:

Product: In addition to USDA NOP requirement agricultural products:

1. Cannot be produced with the use of sodium nitrate.
2. Cannot be produced by hydroponic or aeroponic production methods.
3. Derived from animals (with the exception of ruminants) must be produced according to livestock stocking rates as set out in CAN /CGSB32.310-2006.

Certified operation can provide NFC with either certificates from suppliers stating that raw materials meet the US-CA equivalency arrangement or provide affidavits that the raw materials meet the above requirements.

Labeling: All organic certified products exported to Canada must meet all Canadian labeling requirements as described below.

Documentation: All organic products exported to Canada must be accompanied by certifier issued organic certificate with the statement "Certified in accordance with the terms of the US-Canada Organic Equivalency Arrangement".

The following are the labeling requirements for organic product sold in Canada:

Organic Category	Labeling Requirements
100% Organic	- Phrase is prohibited. Products containing 100% organic ingredients may be labeled as "Organic". - Organic ingredients must be identified as organic in the ingredients list.
95% organic or more	- May be labeled "Organic", "organically grown" etc. - Organic ingredients must be identified as organic in the ingredients list. - An organic ingredient percentage statement (such as "98% organic ingredients") in addition to the term "organic" is allowed. - The statement "Certified Organic" is prohibited, except when identifying the certifier.

Organic Category	Labeling Requirements
70-95% Organic	- Only allowed to state "X% organic ingredients" or "contains X% organic ingredients". - If either statement is used, the words "organic ingredients" must be of the same size and prominence as the preceding words, numbers, signs or symbols that indicate the applicable percentage. - Organic ingredients must be identified as organic in the ingredients list. - - Use of the USDA logo and COR seal are prohibited. - Statement "made with organic….." Is prohibited.
Less than 70% Organic	- Only allowed to indicate organic ingredient(s) in the product's ingredient list. - Use of the USDA logo and COR seal are prohibited. - These products do not require certification.
Wholesale products not sold to direct consumer	- Must contain Traceability information, such as lot numbers, where applicable. - Must identify certifier - When not NOP compliant, containers & shipping documents must be labeled for "export only"
	Additional General Labeling Requirements
	- The COR seal is optional and may be used on products that are compliant or equivalent to the COR standards. - The seal must be used in the specific format and colors as defined by the COR regulations (see below): "The logo is displayed in either black with a white background, in black with a transparent background or in color. If displayed in color, the background is white or transparent, the outer and inner borders are green (Pantone no. 368), the maple leaf is red (Pantone no. 186) and the lettering is black." - All products imported into Canada using the COR Seal must include the phrase "Imported" or "Imported From (country of origin)", or "Product of (listed country of origin)" in the same visual field as the seal. - Parties wishing to use the logo for any use other than product labeling (i.e., in retail marketing/advertising for informational purposes), must apply for a license to do so. Requests for an application form may be sent to OPR.RPB@inspection.gc.ca - Wines produced to US NOP standards using Sulfur Dioxide may be labeled "organic" under COR labeling requirements. Master cases or other markings for these products must state "for export only". Wines may only utilize the COR seal when they are composed of 95% or more organic ingredients. - All labels must identify NFC (unless otherwise approved) as the certified by stating "certified organic by Natural Food Certifiers" or "Certified organic by NFC"

1.2 Importing
Organic product certified to the Canada standards that will be imported to the US must meet the following requirements:

Product: Agricultural products derived from animals treated with antibiotics shall not be marketed as organic in the US

Documentation: In addition to an import certificate as noted above operation must provide written attestation from the supplier's certifier is required on the organic certification to verify that product meets the US-CA equivalency as follows: "Certified in accordance with the terms of the US-Canada Organic Equivalency Arrangement".

Labeling requirements. Products must meet all USDA NOP labeling requirements.

B. European Union

1.1 Exporting
Organic product certified to the USDA-NOP standards that will be exported to the EU must meet the following requirements:

Product: In addition to USDA NOP requirement:

1. Organic apples, pears, and ingredients from organic apples and pears must be produced without antibiotics. Antibiotics may not be used for at least 3 years prior to the harvest of the organic apple or pear.
11. Products must be either produced or have had final processing or packaging occur within the US.

Labeling: All organic certified products exported to the EU must meet all EU labeling requirements as described below.

Documentation: All organic products exported to the EU must be accompanied by a Certificate of Inspection (COI) issued by NFC through the EU Traces System. Operations looking to export to the EU should reach out to the NFC office regarding setting up a Traces account.

Organic Category	Labeling Requirements
100% Organic	- Phrase is prohibited. - Products containing 100% organic ingredients may be labeled as “Organic”. - Organic ingredients must be identified as organic in the ingredients list.
95% organic or more	- May be labeled “Organic”, “organically grown” etc. - Organic ingredients must be identified as organic in the ingredients list. - An organic ingredient percentage statement (such as “98% organic ingredients”) in addition to the term “organic” is allowed.
70-95% Organic	- Only allowed to state “X% organic ingredients” or “contains X% organic ingredients”. - If either statement is used, the words “organic ingredients” must be of the same size and prominence as the preceding words, numbers, signs or symbols that indicate the applicable percentage. - Organic ingredients must be identified as organic in the ingredients list. - - Use of the USDA logo and EU seal are prohibited. - Statement “made with organic…..” Is prohibited.
Less than 70% Organic	- Only allowed to indicate organic ingredient(s) in the product's ingredient list. - Use of the USDA logo and EU seal are prohibited. - These products do not require certification.

Organic Category	Labeling Requirements
Wholesale products not sold to direct consumer	Must contain Traceability information, such as lot numbers, where applicable When not NOP compliant, containers & shipping documents must be labeled for "export only"
	Additional General Labeling Requirements
   	- The EU seal is optional and may be used on products that are compliant or equivalent to the EU standards. - The EU organic seal must be used in specific format and colors as defined by EEC 271/2010 (see images to the left). The seal is a green (Pantone no. 376) rectangle with white stars in the shape of a leaf. Rectangle must be at least 9mm high by 13.5mm wide and maintain a height to width ratio of 1 to 1.5. Variations, such as modified color schemes (including black and white, different shades of green, delineating borders, etc) or smaller size, may be permissible in certain situations. - All products imported into the EU using the EU Seal must indicate the source of ingredients within the same visual fields as the seal, using one of these statements: • "EU Agriculture" if the agricultural raw material has been farmed in the EU, • "Non-EU Agriculture", if the agricultural raw material has been farmed outside the EU • "EU/non-EU Agriculture", if part of the agricultural raw materials has been farmed in the EU and part outside the EU. The name of a specific country may be used instead of the terms 'EU' or 'non-EU' where all agricultural raw materials have been farmed in the same country. - All products imported into the EU must identify the certifier and include the certifier country code. NFC Code is US-ORG-030.

1.2 Importing

Organic products certified to the EU standards that will be imported to the US must meet the following requirements:

Product: Livestock must be produced without antibiotics. Aquatic animals may not be exported to the U.S. Products must be either produced or have had final processing or packaging occur within the EU.

Documentation: Products must travel with a NOP import certificate that has been completed by an EU-authorized body. The certified operation must document an import certificate for each shipment received from the EU. See above additional information regarding import certificates.

Labeling requirements. Products must meet all USDA NOP labeling requirements.

C. Japan (JAS)

1.1 Exporting
Organic product certified to the USDA-NOP standards that will be exported to Japan must meet the following requirements:

Product: Product must be either Plant based (including fungi) or Processed foods of plant origin, such as grape juice or corn meal. All organic products exported to Japan must either be produced or have had final processing or packaging occur within the US.

Documentation: Products exported to Japan must be accompanied by an NOP TM-11 Certificate issued by NFC. The operation should reach out to the NFC office for a copy of the certificate including NFC information prefilled.

Labeling: All organic certified products exported to Japan must meet all Japan organic labeling requirements as described below.

Excluded products: Other USDA Organic certified Products Exported to Japan which is not included in the equivalency agreement (e.g., meat, dairy, honey, textiles) can be exported to Japan. Products must comply with the USDA organic regulations, including labeling requirements for the use of the USDA organic seal. These products may be labeled with the word "organic" in English or Japanese. An export certificate is not required. Non-JAS eligible products may be sold as organic in Japan; however, they may not use the JAS seal. The U.S. product may display the USDA organic seal if compliant with USDA organic labeling requirements.

Organic Category	Labeling Requirements
100% Organic	- Phrase is discouraged. Japan does not have a "100%" labeling category. Although this is not a recognized claim, it is not prohibited, and labels may contain either "Organic" or "100% Organic".
95% organic or more	- - May be labeled "Organic", "organically grown" etc.
70-95% Organic	- Phrase is prohibited. Japan does not have a "made with" labeling category. Only products with 95% or more organic content may be labeled as organic in Japan.
Wholesale products not sold to direct consumer	Must contain Traceability information, such as lot numbers, where applicable When not NOP compliant, containers & shipping documents must be labeled for "export only"

Organic Category	Labeling Requirements
Japan (JAS) Organic Seal	- Products sold as organic in Japan are required to display the JAS seal. The JAS seal is the Japanese seal for quality and standards that applies to a variety of food laws, with a unique version for organic products. - The seal may be applied in Japan by a JAS-certified importer, exporter, or processor, or applied by foreign companies through a consignment contract with a JAS-certified importer, wherein Japan recognizes the exporter's standards as equivalent to their own. - The JAS seal is unique for every JAS accredited certifier. - NFC is required to verify where the logo is being placed and receive a copy of the label and certificate of the importer certified in Japan. - When exporting USDA organic products to Japan under this arrangement, operations should replace "Name of RCB" with the name of their organic certifier or JAS-certified importer.

1.2 Importing

Organic products certified to the Japan (JAS) standards that will be imported to the US must meet the following requirements:

Product: The product must be either Plant-based (including fungi) or Processed foods of plant origin, such as grape juice or corn meal. All organic products imported from Japan must either be produced or have had final processing or packaging occur in Japan.

Documentation: Products must travel with a NOP import certificate that has been completed by a certifying body in Japan. Certified operations must document an import certificate for each shipment received from Japan. See above additional information regarding import certificates.

Labeling requirements. Products must meet all USDA NOP labeling requirements.

Excluded products: Other Organic certified Products Imported from Japan which is not included in the equivalency agreement (e.g., meat, dairy, honey, textiles) can be imported to the US. Products must comply with the USDA organic regulations, including labeling requirements for the use of the USDA organic seal. These products do not require a NOP import certificate.

C. Taiwan

1.1 Exporting

Organic product certified to the USDA-NOP standards that will be exported to Taiwan must meet the following requirements:

Product: All organic products exported to Taiwan must either be produced or have had final processing or packaging occur within the US. In addition:

1. U.S. fresh milk – Fortified organic milk (milk with added vitamins and minerals) products to be sold in Taiwan must use the term "fortified milk" on labels and not be labeled as "fresh milk".
2. U.S. livestock products – Organic livestock products or any livestock products used as ingredients (e.g. eggs, milk, meat) in any products to be sold in Taiwan as organic must be derived from animals not treated systemically with analgesics, including procaine and lidocaine.

Documentation: Product exported to Taiwan must be accompanied by an NOP TM-11 Certificate issued by NFC. The operation should reach out to the NFC office for a copy of the certificate including NFC information prefilled.

Labeling: All organic certified products exported to Taiwan must meet all Taiwan organic labeling requirements as described below.

Excluded products: Aquatic animals, personal care products, pet food products, and single-ingredient (100 percent) honey products are outside of the scope of this arrangement. USDA National Organic Program certified organic products within these scopes may be labeled/sold as USDA organic in Taiwan however, they may not bear the Taiwanese organic mark.

Organic Category	Labeling Requirements
100% Organic	- "100% Organic" is not permitted. - Products containing 100% organics may be labeled as "Organic." - Exported products must state the name of the U.S. or Taiwan certifying agent
95% organic or more	- - May be labeled "Organic", "organically grown" etc. - Exported products must state the name of the U.S. or Taiwan certifying agent
70-95% Organic	- 70-95% organic labeling category does not exist in Taiwan. Only products with 95%or more organic content may be labeled as organic in Taiwan.
Wholesale products not sold to direct consumer	Must contain Traceability information, such as lot numbers, where applicable When not NOP compliant, containers & shipping documents must be labeled for "export only"

1.2 Importing

Organic products certified to the Taiwan standards that will be imported to the US must meet the following requirements:

Product: The product must not be an agricultural product derived from animals treated with antibiotics. In addition, products cannot be aquatic animals. All organic products imported from Taiwan must either be produced or have had final processing or packaging occur in Taiwan.

Documentation: Products must travel with a NOP import certificate that has been completed by a certifying body in Taiwan. Certified operations must document an import certificate for each shipment received from Taiwan. See above additional information regarding import certificates.

Labeling requirements. Products must meet all USDA NOP labeling requirements.

D. Republic of Korea

1.1 Exporting

Organic product certified to the USDA-NOP standards that will be exported to Republic of Korea must meet the following requirements:

Product: Product must be processed food as defined by Korea Law. All organic products exported to Republic of Korea must either be produced or have had final processing or packaging occur within the US.

Documentation: Product exported to Republic of Korea must be accompanied by an NAQS Import Certificate issued by NFC through the Korea e-NAQS Import Certificate System. Operations looking to export to Republic of Korea should reach out to the NFC office regarding setting up an account with the e-NAQS Import System.

Labeling: All organic certified products exported to Republic of Korea must meet all Korea organic labeling requirements as described below.

Excluded Products: Raw or unprocessed products are not allowed to be exported to Korea under the terms of this equivalence. To export these products your operation requires direct certification to the Korean standard. Products not covered under the arrangement cannot list individual organic ingredients as organic in the ingredient statement.

Organic Category	Labeling Requirements
100% Organic	- Phrase is prohibited. - Products containing 100% organic ingredients may be labeled as "Organic". - Organic ingredients must be identified as organic in the ingredients list.
95% organic or more	- - May be labeled "Organic", "organically grown" etc.
70-95% Organic	- Phrase is prohibited. Republic of Korea does not have a "made with" labeling category. Only products with 95% or more organic content may be labeled as organic in Korea.
Retail Labels	Retail labels must include at least the following information: a) Name and address of final manufacturer listed as "Manufactured by…" b) "Packaged in: USA" c) Manufacturer's certifier d) Manufacturer's 10 Digit NOP ID. a) ID must match the number listed on the NAQS export certificate. b) Certified private label owners are responsible for verifying with your importer which NOP ID is required to be listed on your labels. e) Telephone number of the seller or importer

Organic Category	Labeling Requirements
Certifier Identification	The manufacturer's accredited certifier must be identified on the label, by name or seal.
Wholesale products not sold to direct consumer	Non-retail containers/produce boxes or accompanying documents (e.g. invoices, BOLs) must contain: a) The name and address of the final certified manufacturer b) The name of the product and its organic status c) Identify the manufacturer's certifier d) Manufacturer's 10 Digit NOP ID. a) ID must match the number listed on the NAQS export certificate. b) Certified private label owners are responsible for verifying with your importer which NOP ID is required to be listed on your labels. e) Traceability information, such as lot numbers, where applicable
Korea Organic Seal	- Use of the Korean organic seal is optional for products compliant or equivalent to the Korean organic standards. - The Korean organic logo must be used in specific format and colors as defined by the MAFRA Food Code: - The seal is a green (C80+Y100) rectangle with a white taegeuk shape within. The height of the logo is 0.95xW. The space between the white figure and the delimiting outer lines (left, upper, and right lines) is 0.1xW. The starting point of the taegeuk circle in the lower white section of the logo on the left is 0.55xW below from the upper section, and the end point if the taegeuk circle on the right is 0.75xW below the upper section. - Typeface is Gothic and the color for "organic" should match the logo, while "MAFRA KOREA" is white. - Variations on color are: blue (C100+M70), red (M100+Y100+K10), and black. - The size of the logo can change according to packaging size. - Operations using the Korean logo are strongly advised to work with your importer to ensure compliance to the Korean labeling laws.

1.2 Importing

Organic products certified to the Korea standards that will be imported to the US must meet the following requirements:

Product: Agricultural products derived from animals treated with antibiotics may not be exported to the United States as certified organic. All organic products imported from Korea must either be produced or have had final processing or packaging occur in Korea.

Documentation: Products must travel with a NOP import certificate that has been completed by a certifying body in Korea. The certified operation must document an import certificate for each shipment received from Japan. See above additional information regarding import certificates.

Labeling requirements. Products must meet all USDA NOP labeling requirements.

Section E: General Policies

Fees:

NFC fees are set as described in the NFC fee schedule. No discounts can be offered that are not disclosed on the NFC fee schedule. Payment plans can be offered at no additional cost up to 6-month payments.

Contractors

NFC may hire inspectors or reviewers on a contractual basis and uses other contract workers to work on specific projects. Whenever contract services are utilized during the certification process, NFC retains final authority and responsibility for all certification decisions.

Confidentiality

NFC safeguards the confidentiality of any business-related information concerning any client, products, or suppliers obtained during the course of certification. NFC does not disclose any proprietary information to third parties without the operation's written consent prior to release, except to the authorized representatives of the Secretary, the applicable State Organic Program's Governing State Official, or other authorized representatives of accreditation agencies where necessary to implement the NOP program. NFC may disclose proprietary information as required by other laws of the United States, State law or other laws of local governments.

NFC also makes public upon request all certificates, and any results of laboratory analyses for residues of pesticide and other prohibited substances conducted during the current and 3 preceding calendar years, unless the testing is part of an on-going compliance investigation.

Public information about certified operations is made available by NFC and the National Organic Program for organic operations through the NFC website, NFC social media, and/or Organic Integrity Database. The following information will be publicly listed by NFC and the NOP:

- Business name
- Mailing Address
- Contact information, including phone number, main contact's email, and website.
- Effective date of certification
- Scope of certification
- Details about products certified.
- Status of certification

Unless otherwise requested by the operation, NFC does not make public on the website or through the organic integrity database the information on any brand names that the operation may be copacking for.

Conflict of Interest

NFC is committed to maintaining impartiality of certification ensuring the structure and management of certification prevents conflicts of interest. NFC requires all staff and contractors who is involved in the process of organic certification, to complete an annual conflict of interest disclosure report. NFC ensures that the decision to certify an applicant is made by a person different from those who conducted the on-site inspection.

NFC excludes any person with direct conflicts of interest, including contractors, from work, discussions, and decisions in all stages of the certification process, and the monitoring of applicants and clients for all entities in which such person has or has held a commercial interest, including an immediate family interest with the certified operation. NFC may also exclude any persons with direct or indirect conflicts, such as self-interest, over-familiarity, intimidation, and competition. Other risks taken into account may also include and are not limited to: the objectives of the inspection, the type(s) of samplings performed during an inspection, the real and perceived impartiality, legal, regulatory and liability issues, the client's organization and its operating environment, impact of the inspection on the client and its activities, the health and safety of its inspection teams, perception of interested parties, misleading statements by the certified client and the use of marks.

NFC does not certify an operation if NFC or a responsibly connected party of NFC has or has held a conflict of interest in the operation. If it is determined, within 12 months of certifying an operation to the NOP that a person participating in the certification process had or has a conflict of interest, NFC reconsiders the application for certification and, if necessary, performs a new on-site inspection or refers an operation to a different certification agency.

Behavior Standard

NFC strives to offer certification services at a high professional standard. NFC does not tolerate any threatening or abusive language and/or inappropriate advances of a sexual or other nature by either NFC staff or certified operation at any stage of the certification process. As the inspection and certification environment constitutes a workplace, safe workplace guidelines and statutes apply to all involved. Clients who engage in inappropriate behavior are deemed to be refusing service, cannot be inspected, and may face non-compliance and/or adverse actions, including the potential for suspension or revocation of certification.