



Industry Notice

Title: Unannounced audits for EU listed operators		Number: 2016/01
Date issued: October 2016	Date of Expiry: Until Further Notice	
Distributed to: Approved Certifying Organisations Organic Federation of Australia	Last Notice in the category: Nil	
Relevant legislation: <i>Export Control (Organic Produce Certification) Orders</i>		Contact details: NPGExports@agriculture.gov.au

PURPOSE

1. To clarify and set parameters within the export chain for conducting “unannounced audits” on certified operators.

BACKGROUND

2. Changes to European laws require unannounced inspections along with a host of other audit and risk assessment processes to be implemented by European Commission listed control bodies.
3. Audits conducted by the department have highlighted occurrences whereby only a partial unannounced audits were performed by the organic inspector. Justifiable reasons for a partial audit could not be provided to the departmental auditor.

CONSIDERATION

4. *Unannounced audit* means a systematic and objective review of all aspects of a certified operation with no prior notice; based on the general evaluation of the risk of non-compliance with the organic production rules, taking into account at least the results of previous controls, the quality of products concerned and the risk for exchange of products.
5. An unannounced audit can be a “partial audit” provided that all components of the certified operation are audited in the 12 months period.
6. Certification decisions should not be based on findings of a partial audit.

ACTION

Approved certifying organisations must:

7. audit all key aspects of a certified operation within a 12-month period.
8. have a documented schedule for announced and unannounced audits.
9. have a policy and instructional material to ensure organic inspectors record details where an audit cannot be fully completed.
10. not grant or issue a certificate of compliance to an operator that was not audited completely during a 12-month period.