



Industry Notice

Title: contamination in the organic export chain		Number: 2016/02
Date issued: July 2016	Date of Expiry: Until Further Notice	
Distribution: 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 present a series of guiding principles on how contamination could be managed in the organic export chain.

BACKGROUND

2. Australian governments administer laws and standards relating to the contamination of products or environments and their levels.
3. On-line; 'contamination' is reported as being unwanted pollution of something by another substance.
4. The Export Control (Organic Produce Certification) Order 2005 is the legal basis for produce/goods labelled as organic or biodynamic.
5. The National Standard for Organic and Biodynamic Produce (national standard) details primary production and processing requirements for organic and biodynamic produce/goods for export. It includes permitted lists of farming inputs, processing aids and additives.
6. Certifying organisations approved by the Department of Agriculture and Water Resources to audit-inspect and certify operators in the organic export chain using importing country requirements as the basis.
7. Certified operators in the export chain should not intentionally use substances, compounds or organisms that are not in compliance with importing country requirements.
8. Approved certifying organisations must not issue government certification for certified organic products if importing country requirements are not met prior to export.

PRINCIPLES

9. When unintentional contamination by non-permitted substances, compounds or organisms is evident, the certified operator in the export chain must take immediate corrective action to ensure the operation and/or products are not further contaminated.
10. When unintentional contamination by non-permitted substances, compounds or organisms is evident, the certified operator in the export chain must immediately notify their approved certifying organisation.
11. Certified products or land contaminated by non-permitted substances, compounds or organisms should be managed by the certified operator with guidance and direction from their approved certifying organisation.

12. Where contamination of certified products and/or land is confirmed, the levels of contamination must not exceed importing country requirements.
13. If there is a contamination incident, the approved certifying organisation should determine whether the level and kind of contamination is permitted under its documented system, which may include importing country requirements.
14. A decision to issue or not issue a government organic produce certificate for export is subject to review by Administrative Appeals Tribunal.

CONSIDERATION

In relation to unintended contamination by non-permitted substances, compounds or organisms in the organic export chain, approved certifying organisations should consider principles 9 to 13 [above] when undertaking any corrective action and certification decision.