

THE ORGANIC FOOD CHAIN PTY LTD

ABN 32 075 532 857

Operator Information Kit



Contents

- Introduction to the OFC
- What can the OFC do for you?
- Two Levels of Organic Certification
- What is Organic?
- How long does it take?
- Information Regarding Fees

Related Documents

- Application Form
- OFC Certification Policies for Operators
- Fee Structure

No Industry Development Levies or Marketing Levies

Phone: 0400 979 435

Email: ofc@organicfoodchain.com.au

Introduction to OFC

The Organic Food Chain Pty Ltd (OFC) is an Approved Certifying Body recognised *by the* Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (DAFF) under *The Export Control (Organic Goods) Rules 2021*. We offer certification to Australia's national organic export standard, the *National Standard for Organic and Bio-Dynamic Produce*.

OFC are committed to fast, friendly service while ensuring our operators are compliant to the national organic standard of Australia and other international organic certification standards. We achieve this through regular inspection and sampling of our certified operators.

OFC is a family owned and operated business. OFC's Founder, Keith Morris, was a Director of OFC since OFC started organic certification services in 1996, until retirement in 2023.

Keith and his wife Rhondda are retired certified organic farmers with extensive farming knowledge spanning more than 40 years, 35 years of which were spent practicing organic farming principles. Rhondda was raised on a sugarcane farm in Tully, Queensland. Keith and Rhondda started farming that same sugarcane farm in 1977 and soon after became interested in farming organically and started applying those principals to their sugarcane farm. They later started farming pawpaws (papaya), bananas and a variety of tropical fruit and vegetables using those same organic principles, much to the amusement of their farming neighbours who thought they were crazy and would never be able to farm successfully without the use of chemicals. Being organic certainly wasn't fashionable in the early 1980's!

Of course, Keith and Rhondda proved them wrong and went on to become certified organic farmers in 1994. Over the years, they have organically farmed pawpaw, banana, sweet potato, pumpkin, a variety of exotic fruits and vegetables, cattle, goats and sheep.

Keith was involved in the writing of the OFC organic standard and this was later incorporated into the current Australian national organic standard, the *National Standard for Organic and Bio-Dynamic Produce*.

In 2012, Keith was awarded a Lifetime Achievement Award by the Organic Federation of Australia in recognition of his services to the organic industry in Australia.

Keith and Rhondda's daughter, Kari Martin, is a Director of OFC and has been the General Manager since 2016. Kari is a Chartered Accountant who worked in public practice in business services for over 20 years prior to joining OFC. Kari spent her primary and secondary school years working on the family's certified organic farm. More recently, Kari and her husband Jason operated a vermiculture business for three years.

The OFC *Product Certification Management System* meets the rigorous requirements of The Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, allowing OFC to be an Approved Certifying Body.

OFC is accredited to *ISO/IEC 17065: 2013 Conformity assessment - Requirements for bodies certifying products, processes and services*.

OFC is registered with the European Union as an Organic Certifying Body complying with *Regulation EC 2018/848*.

What can the OFC do for you?

- Help you become certified under an organic management system, as one of or a combination of: producer, processor, wholesaler and retailer
- Assist you to overcome the common problems that arise with implementing an organic system
- Provide the nationally and internationally recognised OFC logo
- Provide a confidential and professional service

OFC will keep you up to date via our webpage and other communications on changing policies and procedures related to organic certification in Australia.

Our aim is to make the OFC brand synonymous with quality organic products.

Two levels of organic certification

If you grow or produce products that may end up in the export market, including as ingredients in other products, you must be certified as eligible for export. Certification to the National Standard ensures you meet this requirement. We offer two levels of certification, with eligibility determined by your business turnover. Both levels of certification are valid in domestic and international markets.

Small Operator

Affordable organic certification perfect for new or small business. It is ideal for a start-up business wanting to be certified organic to reduce the costs in the start-up phase of business.

To be eligible for Small Operator organic certification, your turnover must not exceed \$100,000 p.a. excluding GST. You will be asked to sign a statutory declaration regarding your turnover prior to each annual inspection to ensure your compliance with this requirement.

When your business grows above a turnover of \$100,000 p.a. excluding GST, there is an increase in certification fee as you will move across to the 'General' certification level.

General

Even if you are not exporting, you must have this level of certification with OFC if your turnover is greater than \$100,000 p.a. excluding GST.

All operators regardless of turnover will use the following logo. Once certified and eligible for a certificate, you will receive a personalised logo with your own certification number:



If you wish to export more than 10 kilograms or 10 litres per consignment, there are strict rules that you must follow. These rules are set by DAFF, not OFC. Please contact our office for more information.

What is Organic?

Organic and bio-dynamic farming and processing is focussed on working with natural inputs and minimising adverse environmental impact. A key principle in organic production systems is to direct farming activity to reduce the environmental impact of farming processes, by improving the soil and land biodiversity so that plants and animals are provided with an abundance of naturally occurring nutrients rather than synthetic substances.

Organic certification with OFC offers you:

- Access to the rapidly growing global and domestic market for organic products
- Well known logo associated with product integrity
- The potential of receiving a premium price for your product
- Consumer reassurance that products are produced organically while being monitored by a third party inspection process

Organic and bio-dynamic food products certified to the National Standard of Australia do not allow:

- Genetically Modified Organisms (GMO's)
- Chemical insecticides, herbicides or fungicides
- Treatment with ionising radiation
- Manufacturing/production using nanotechnology
- "Nature identical" synthetic substances
- Synthetic substances primarily considered as being unnatural or as a "new construction" of food compounds such as acetylated cross-linked starches
- Additives or processing aids produced using genetic engineering techniques
- Synthetic colouring and synthetic preservatives

How do I become certified organic or certified bio-dynamic?

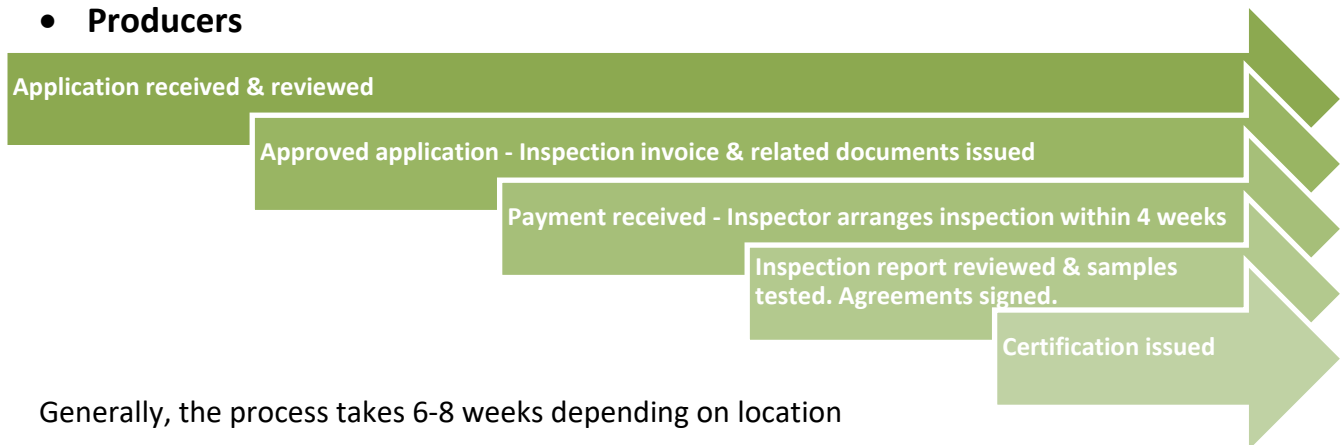
Certified organic or bio-dynamic operators require an Organic Management Plan that identifies how they are planning to operate, supported by records that are inspected annually. OFC certification provides an objective assessment of your operation's compliance with the Standard against which we inspect.

When you apply to become a certified operator, you receive the following information as required:

- **National Standard for Organic and Bio-Dynamic Produce**
- **Administrative Arrangements** – Managing inspection and certification operations for the export of certified Australian organic and bio-dynamic goods.
- **Organic Management Plan (OMP) template/s** applicable to your certification.
- **Organic Goods Certificate (OGC) template** – This is required to export certified organic product shipments over 10kg/10L.
- **Formulation Calculators** – These calculate the certified organic percentage of your products and are used to submit your product formulation to OFC for approval.
- **Templates** for sales register, primary production inputs, crop production records, livestock production records, cleaning register, training register, pest control register, product recall, complaints register and neighbour notification letter to get you started with compliant record keeping.

How long does it take?

• Producers



Generally, the process takes 6-8 weeks depending on location and inspector availability.

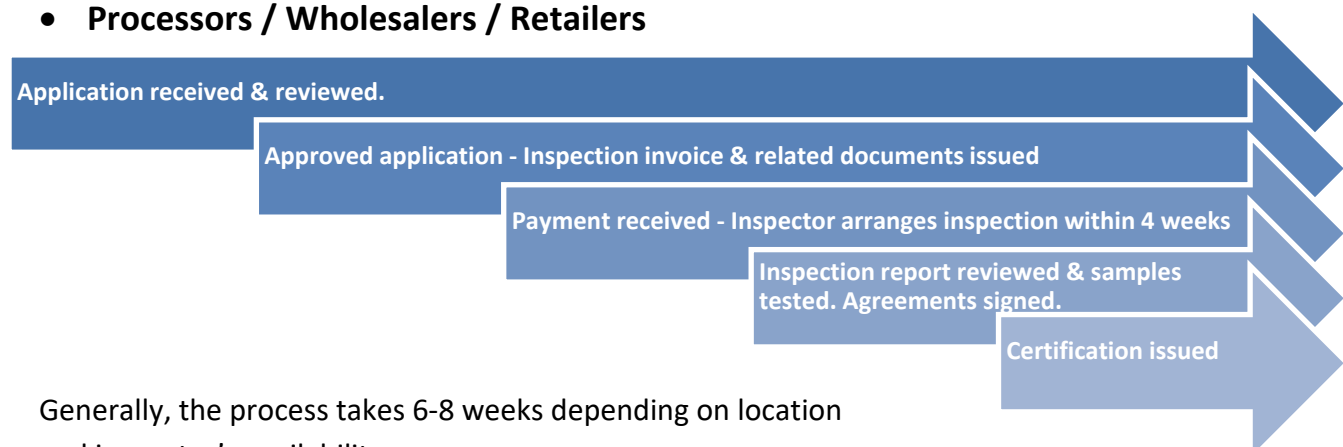
All new producers have a sample taken at inspection which is sent for residue testing. Samples are taken at each subsequent inspection and may be tested. Sampling testing at cost is charged to you.

As part of the certification process, recipes/formulations and labels may also need to be approved.

Full organic certification for new producers is a three-year process.



• Processors / Wholesalers / Retailers



Generally, the process takes 6-8 weeks depending on location and inspector's availability.

As part of the certification process, recipes/formulations and labels also need to be approved.



Information Regarding Fees

Certification fees are charged upfront

- No industry development levies or marketing levies.
- No hidden costs – all costs are outlined in our fee schedule.
- You know when your annual certification fees are due as invoices are issued 4-6 weeks prior to certification expiry.
- Flexible payment arrangements can be made to help you maintain certification through times of financial difficulty.
- Fees vary depending on the size of your operations, with small operators having a low cost certification option.

Upfront annual certification fee covers:

- An annual inspection conducted by independent professionals, excluding travel and accommodation.
- Travel and accommodation expenses for our inspectors are charged separately as they can be highly variable, particularly if you are in a remote location. Where possible, we organise inspections in the same area at the same time to minimise costs by sharing inspector travel and accommodation expenses with other operators.
- Written inspection report.
- Review and approval of organic management plan and updates as they occur throughout the year.
- Review and approval of derogation applications as they occur throughout the year.
- Certificate of compliance.
- Listing of your certification status and products on OFC's webpage.
- Personalised OFC logo for use on your labels, webpage and marketing materials.
- Experienced staff to answer your questions.
- Access to major international markets:
 - European Union: Australian grown plant and plant products exported as food (excluding wine & yeast), unprocessed plant products, vegetative propagating material and seeds for cultivation. Excludes beekeeping products and livestock products. Separate certification is required for entry of the above excluded certified product to the EU. OFC does not offer that certification.
 - Great Britain: Australian grown plant and plant products exported as food (excluding wine & yeast), unprocessed plant products, vegetative propagating material and seeds for cultivation. Excludes beekeeping products and livestock products. Separate certification is required for entry of the above excluded certified product to Great Britain. OFC does not offer that certification.
 - Japan: products of plant origin, livestock products excluding beekeeping products, processed foods.
 - Taiwan: organic products produced or processed in Australia, including crops, livestock, aquatic plants and processed foods. Excludes beekeeping products and in-conversion products.
 - Many other international markets, excluding USA. Separate certification is required for entry of your certified product to the USA. OFC does not offer that certification.