

About USDA Organic Certification

Under the federal National Organic Program (NOP), a farm can market its products as organic only if they are certified. Certification is a process that requires farms to follow certain production practices, keep records, and be inspected by an independent certification agency. Farms that sell less than \$5000 per year may use the term Organic without formal certification, but they are still required to follow all recordkeeping and other rules of the NOP in order to describe their products as Organic.

Farms that are not certified organic sometimes say they follow organic practices, or they may have the word 'organic' in their farm name. This is not the same as being Certified Organic. Farmers using these terms may or may not use growing practices that conform to USDA NOP requirements, so ask questions. Most farmers will be glad to have an informed and interested customer.

Organic certification agencies must be accredited by the USDA as well as registered with the State of Michigan. The agencies listed here meet the criteria. This list is current as of September, 2017, but may change in the future. An up-to-date list is available at organic.ams.usda.gov/integrity/Certifiers/CertifiersLocationsSearchPage.aspx.

About MOFFA

The Michigan Organic Food and Farm Alliance was organized in 1992 as a non-profit organization with the mission of promoting organic agriculture and the development and support of food systems that revitalize and sustain local communities. MOFFA was one of the first organizations in Michigan and in the nation to actively promote these principles.

MOFFA welcomes new members to join us and get involved in creating a better food system for Michigan. Our members include organic and other farmers, food coops, educators, environmentalists, food businesses, food and farm activists and concerned citizens throughout Michigan and elsewhere.

Each year MOFFA sponsors and/or exhibits at a number of major conferences and festivals in Michigan, which allows us to reach many more individuals with our limited resources. We publish a Guide to Organic and Ecologically Sustainable Growers and Farms, and monitor public policy issues that relate to regenerative farming. We also maintain a website and a Facebook page, and publish a quarterly newsletter.

All of this activity is made possible by the contributions of our members. If you haven't joined for 2018, we hope you will take a few minutes to lend your support.

MOFFA

P.O. Box 26102 · Lansing MI 48909
moffaorganic@gmail.com
www.moffa.net



Organic Certification in Michigan



A Bee Organic (ABO)
abeeorganic.com

Americert International (AI)
americertorganic.com/home

CCOF Certification Services, LLC (CCOF)
www.ccof.org

ECOCERT ICO (ECO ICO)
ecocertico.com

Global Organic Alliance, Inc. (GOA)
www.goa-online.org

International Certification Services, Inc. (ICS)
www.ics-intl.com

Midwest Organic Services Association, Inc. (MOSA)
www.mosaorganic.org

Minnesota Crop Improvement Association (MCIA)
mciaorganic.org

Natures International Certification Services (NICS)
naturesinternational.com

Ohio Ecological Food and Farm Association (OEFFA)
www.oeffa.org

Oregon Tilth Certified Organic (OTCO)
www.tilth.org

Organic Certifiers, Inc. (OC)
www.organiccertifiers.com

Organic Crop Improvement Association (OCIA)
www.ocia.org

Pro-Cert Organic Systems Ltd. (PRO)
www.pro-cert.org

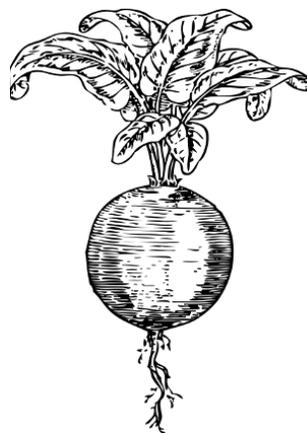
Quality Assurance International (QAI)
www.qai-inc.com

Quality Certification Services (QCS)
www.qcsinfo.org

SCS Global Services (SCS)
www.scsglobalservices.com/organic-certification/

Stellar Certification Services (STEL)
www.demeter-usa.org/stellar-certification/

Washington State Department of Agriculture (WSDA)
ag.wa.gov/FoodAnimal/Organic



Organic certification verifies that a farm or handling facility complies with the USDA organic regulations. These regulations describe the specific standards required to use the word “organic” or the USDA organic seal on food, feed, or fiber products.

USDA organic regulations recognize four categories of organic products:

Crops: A plant that is grown to be harvested as food, livestock feed, fiber, or used to add nutrients to the field.

Livestock: Animals that can be used for food or in the production of food, fiber, or feed.

Processed products: Items that have been handled and packaged (e.g. chopped carrots) or combined, processed, and packaged (e.g. soup).

Wild crops: Plants from a growing site that is not cultivated.

There are five basic steps to organic certification:

1. The farm or business adopts organic practices, selects a USDA-accredited certifying agent, and submits an application and fees to the certifying agent.
2. The certifying agent reviews the application to verify that practices comply with USDA organic regulations.
3. An inspector conducts an on-site inspection of the applicant’s operation.
4. The certifying agent reviews the application and the inspector’s report to determine if the applicant complies with the USDA organic regulations.
5. The certifying agent issues organic certificate.

Typically, it takes three years to complete the initial certification process. To maintain organic certification, a certified organic farm or business must go through an annual review and inspection process.

More information about becoming certified:

<https://www.ams.usda.gov/services/organic-certification/becoming-certified>

<http://www.moffa.net/resources.html#certification>

USDA database of certified operations:

<https://organic.ams.usda.gov/integrity/>