What is Organic?

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Organic Corn Growers Meeting
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Bowling Green, Kentucky
Certification:
Who can use the word “organic”?

• >$5,000 annually?
  – Must certify.

• <$5,000 annually?
  – Certification optional if sales direct to consumer
  – Must follow standards
  – Subject to audits (NOP pays)

• Misuse of “organic”
  – $10,000 fine
Organic Certification Requirements

1. Management plan, approved by certifier
   – Required:
     • Boundaries, buffer zones separate organic from conventional
     • Organic seed, transplants
     • Maintain/improve soil fertility, organic matter
     • Rotation
   – Prohibited:
     • Synthetic fertilizers and pesticides
     • Genetically modified organisms
     • Sewage sludge
     • Burning (some exceptions)

2. Record keeping
Organic Production Standards

Organic agriculture is “a production system that is managed in accordance with the Act and regulations in this part to respond to site-specific conditions by integrating cultural, biological, and mechanical practices that foster cycling of resources, promote ecological balance, and conserve biodiversity.”
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**Site specific conditions**

- not a cookbook
- plans reflect unique characteristics of each operation
Organic Production Standards

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- crop timing
- crop selection
- resistance
- interplanting
- spacing
- orientation
- etc...
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**Biological practices**

(Use your friends)

- release biocontrols
- develop beneficial habitat
- livestock grazing
- rhizobial inoculation
- etc...

(USDA Organic)

(Kentucky State University)
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Mechanical practices (use tools)
- till
- weed
- mow
- flame
- fence
- etc...
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Ecological Balance

- achievement of steady state by ecosystem
- dynamic equilibrium between organisms and environment
- reduced outbreaks / extinctions (symptoms of imbalance)
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Biodiversity

Diversity of living organisms

Consider scale:
- range from cellular to biome
- applies to genes, species, ecosystems
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Cycling of Resources
• Re-use on-farm resources
• Avoid inputs and waste
Organic Production Standards

• Land is certified by government-approved agencies
  – Inspected annually by trained inspector
• Farmer develops and follows organic farm plan
• Synthetic substances prohibited
  – Includes synthetic organics
• Natural substance allowed
  – Includes natural inorganics
• Maintain or increase soil organic matter content
• Separation from conventional products
  – In time – 3 year transition period; different pollination times
  – In space – buffer zones, barriers, separate containers, equipment cleaning etc.
• $10,000 fine for misuse of word

Exceptions!
Products List Search: nature, safe

6 results
Click on the arrow or the product name to show more details about each product.
The OMRI Products List data was updated 01/11/2013.

Open All | Close All

- **Nature Safe® 10-2-6 All Season Fertilizer**
  - Classification: Crop Fertilizers and Soil Amendments
  - Category: Fertilizers, Blended
  - Search for more details on Fertilizers, Blended in our Generic Materials List
  - Restriction: 
  - Company: Griffin Industries, Inc.

- **Nature Safe® 13-0-0 Blending Base Fertilizer**

- **Nature Safe® 5-6-6 Starter Fertilizer Fine Grade**

- **Nature Safe® 8-3-5 Stress Guard Fertilizer**

- **Nature Safe® 8-5-5 Landscape Fertilizer Pelleted Granular**

- **Nature Safe® 8-6-1 Fertilizer**
Clear Boundaries & Buffers

Conventional

Buffer

Organic

Conventional
Organic Seed

- Grown on certified organic land
- No GMOs
- Hybrids OK
- No synthetic seed treatments
- Expect premium price
Soil Fertility: Animal Waste

- Raw manure pre-harvest interval:
  - > 90 days if edible portion does not contact soil
  - > 120 days if edible portion contacts soil
Soil Fertility: Compost

- No pre-harvest interval
- Strict requirements for manure-based compost
  - 131-170°F for 15 days in windrows
  - C/N = 25-40
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Purpose</th>
<th>Crops</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N source</td>
<td>Hairy vetch, crimson clover, subterranean clover, berseem clover, cowpea</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soil builder</td>
<td>Rye, sudex, subterranean clover</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Erosion fighter</td>
<td>Subterranean clover, cowpea, rye</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subsoil loosener</td>
<td>Sudex, forage radish, sweet clover</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pest fighter</td>
<td>Rye, sudex, mustard/rape</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weed fighter</td>
<td>Buckwheat, subterranean clover, rye, sudex</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Adapted from SARE, 2007. Managing Cover Crops Profitably.
Organic Marketing

The Kentucky Department of Agriculture (KDA) is the state agency responsible for the regulation and oversight of organic agriculture. Organic products are produced using specific practices and standards that are certified by a third-party organization. KDA currently certifies only entities located within the state of Kentucky.

2013 Applications available early January 2013.

Regulations and Resources:
- USDA organic regulations: 7 CFR Section 205 includes all USDA organic standards, including prohibited practices, requirements, and the National List of Allowed and Prohibited Materials.
- National Organic Program Handbook: This compilation of guidance documents, policy memos, and instructions is intended to clarify policies and assist those who own, manage, or certify organic operations with complying with NOP regulations.
- ATTRA: Guide to Organic Crop Production
- ATTRA: Guide to Organic Livestock Production
- ATTRA: Guide to Organic Processing
- ATTRA: Guide to Organic Certification

USDA NOP Certified Operations:
- USDA NOP: What Is Organic Certification
- USDA NOP: Do I Need To Be Certified Organic?

Additional Links:
- National Organic Program Handbook
- USDA National Organic Program
- Organic Association of Kentucky
- eOrganic
- ATTRA - National Sustainable Agriculture Information Service
- USDA List of Certified Operations Database
Organic Marketing

The Kentucky Department of Agriculture is accredited by the United States Department of Agriculture National Organic Program as a Certifying Agent for the supervision of organic Sods, Wild Crops, Livestock, and Handling Operations.

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2013 Applications Available early July 2013.

Regulations and Resources:
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- National Organic Program Handbook: This compilation of instructions is intended to clarify policies and assist those operations with complying with NOP regulations.
- ATTRA: Guide to Organic Crop Production
- ATTRA: Guide to Organic Livestock Production
- ATTRA: Guide to Organic Processing
- ATTRA: Guide to Organic Certification

USDA NOP Certified Operations:
- USDA NOP: What is Organic Certification
- USDA NOP: Do I Need To Be Certified Organic?
Certification Paperwork

- **General**
  - Name, address, farm type

- **Land**
  - Crops, fields, 3 years of organic management

- **Seed, seedlings, planting stock**
  - Source, organic availability, treatments, GMO free

- **Soil & fertility management**
  - Composts, manures, fertilizers, irrigation

- **Crop management**
  - Rotation, weeds, pests, diseases

- **Organic integrity**
  - Buffers, barriers, handling, storage, transport

- **Records**
  - Maps, history, management, inputs, harvest, sales

[USDA Organic logo]
KDA Organic Program Fees

- In state only
  - $125 to file plan
    - Crop Production
    - Livestock Production
    - Processor/Handler
  - Free inspection
  - $25 to register as exempt
  - Lowest price in USA?
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