

Brief information about the reception procedure for organic materials required by Regulation (EC) 834/07 (and also applicable to other organic standards)

1. Legal background:

Art. 33 of Regulation 889/08 ("Reception of products from other units and other operators"):
"On receipt of an organic product, the operator shall check the closing of the packaging or container where it is required and the presence of the indications provided to in Article 31. The operator shall crosscheck the information on the label referred to in Article 31 with the information on the accompanying documents. The result of these verifications shall be explicitly mentioned in the documentary accounts referred to in Article 66."


2. What this means:

- Each organic operator is **responsible** for making sure, that any organic product, which he receives, complies with the standard.
- For assuring this, the operator has to verify, as a minimum, certain formal requirements, which include:
 - Does the supplier have an organic **certificate**? Details to be checked, include:
 - Is the certificate **valid** (not expired)?
 - Does it cover the **specific product**?
 - Is it issued by an **accredited** certification body?
 - Does it clearly refer to compliance with Regulation (**EC**) **834/07** (respectively **EC 2092/91**, if still issued in 2008)?

In case of doubts, please contact the respective certification body!
 - Is the product **packaged or sealed** for transport? If not, does the supplier have a **special permit** for open transport from his certification body, according to Reg. (EC) 889/08, Art. 30.2?
 - Is the product properly **labeled**, or, in case of non-packaged products, **accompanied by papers** (e.g. delivery notes), which are clearly linked to the respective lot?
 - Does the label respectively delivery note include, at least, information on: **Producer** (or supplier), **organic condition**, quantity, organic **certification body** (or, inside the EU, certifier ID number)? (In addition, a lot numbering system is desirable!)
 - Does the **invoice** also clearly refer to the **organic condition** of the product and contain the necessary information about the certification body?
- If any of these details is missing, the operator should **either reject reception** of the products as organic, **or ask the supplier to correct** the mistake.
- If everything is correct, the operator **documents the result** of this verification. This can be done by simply writing the date of reception on the invoice or delivery note, and **signing** it, or using a special checklist or form developed by the operator for this purpose. The procedure should be appropriate to the size and complexity of the operation.

3. For whom and for what this is relevant:

- Such a reception procedure is required for **any operation purchasing organic materials** from other certified operations: Processors, traders, farmers, beekeepers.
- Examples:
 - A processor buying **organic raw material** from farm or from other processors or traders.
 - A farmer buying **organic animals or animal feed** from other farmers or traders (**including commercial compound feed** suppliers!).

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- A beekeeper purchasing organic beeswax or colonies.
- ⌋ **Also subcontracted units** have to establish a reception procedure, in case they receive such materials directly, not through the certificate holder.
- ⌋ It is **not applicable** for materials like **seeds, fertilisers**, allowed **pesticides**, or **non-agricultural ingredients** for processed food. For these materials, "just" compliance with the specifications established in the standard needs to be checked.

4. Applicability to other organic standards:

- ⌋ Other organic standards do not define this requirement as explicitly as the EU-Regulation. Nevertheless, it is **highly recommended** to establish similar procedures also for NOP or JAS. For JAS, a similar procedure should be part of the "Grading System".