

# Brief Information about Organic Certification of Micro Algae

## 1. Introduction

In terms of biological systematics, micro algae belong to completely different groups. While the genus *Spirulina* belongs to bacteria, *Chlorella* belongs to the “real algae”, and is thus closely related to terrestrial plants. However, neither NOP nor Regulation (EC) 834/2007 are very consistent regarding biological systematics. In terms of organic certification:

- a. Under **NOP**, CERES considers micro algae to fall under the scope of “crop production”.
- b. Regarding **Regulation (EC) 834/07**, the European Commission has now decided to consider micro algae in the same chapter and with the same provisions as seaweeds. Rules for organic seaweed and micro-algae production are established in Articles 6a through 6e of Regulation (EC) 889/08.

## 2. Rules for Environmental Management, Cultivation and Processing

In our document 4.1.14, we have summarised the applicable rules according to Regulation (EC) 889/08, NOP and specific CERES Policy. This policy is part of the CERES "equivalent standard for organic certification in third countries".

## 3. Import into the European Union, Transitional Rules

Until recently, micro-algae were not under the scope of Regulation (EC) 834/07. CERES had considered them to be under the scope of crop production. This interpretation was supported by many competent authorities in the EU. According to the recent changes, micro-algae are to be considered under the aquaculture scope. CERES has applied to the European Commission for being approved as certification body for aquaculture. While this application is being processed, and considering a one year transition period has been granted, we understand that imports of organic micro-algae products under the scope of crop production can continue in the meanwhile. However, we cannot guarantee that all national authorities in EU member countries will share this interpretation.