

## COIs for Imports of Organic Products into Great Britain after BREXIT

Abbreviations		
AWB	<b>A</b> ir <b>W</b> aybill	Official air transport document
B/L	<b>B</b> ill of <b>L</b> ading	Official maritime transport document
CMR	<b>C</b> onvention Relative au Contrat de Transport International de <b>M</b> archandises par <b>R</b> oute	Official road transport document
COI	<b>C</b> ertificate of <b>I</b> nspection	Previously called "TC = Transaction Certificate"
ETD	<b>E</b> stimated <b>T</b> ime of <b>D</b> eparture	
ETA	<b>E</b> stimated <b>T</b> ime of <b>A</b> rrival	
TRACES	<b>T</b> rade <b>C</b> ontrol and <b>E</b> xpert <b>S</b> ystem	Official traceability system for organic imports into the EU (as well as the whole European Economic Area (EEA), Switzerland (CH) and Northern Ireland(NI))

### 1. Background

The United Kingdom has left the European Union. Negotiations are partly still ongoing. The following summarizes the information that has been made available to CERES GmbH so far. **Please make sure to always check the latest updates on the official UK government website:**

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/importing-and-exporting-organic-food>

### 2. Trade of Organic products between the UK and EU (+ EEA and CH)

- ✓ New rules apply from 1 January 2021
- ✓ Great Britain (England, Scotland and Wales) recognises organic products from EU member countries, the EEA and Switzerland as equivalent until 31 December 2023. Vice-versa, the EU also recognises organic products from Great Britain as equivalent until 31 December 2023.
- ✓ Until 1 July 2022 imports from the EU, Norway, Iceland, Liechtenstein and Switzerland to Great Britain can be done without a COI. From 1 July 2022 GB-COIs will be mandatory for imports to Great Britain from these countries, too.

### 3. Imports from Third Countries, Certificates of Inspection

- ✓ New rules apply from 1 January 2021

- ✓ The UK still recognises as "equivalent" certifiers approved by the EU Commission in Annexes III and IV of Regulation (EC) 1235/2008
- ✓ Since 1 January 2021, Great Britain (GB) does no longer participate in the TRACES system. **GB Certificates of Inspection (GB-COIs) have to be requested for organic imports from third countries into GB.** These have to be **issued on paper and sent in original to the GB customs.**  
Northern Ireland, by contrast, still participates in the TRACES system and organic imports into Northern Ireland still need the official EU-COI, issued via TRACES NT.
- ✓ **GB-COIs (just like EU-COIs) must be issued BEFORE the goods leave the country of export.**

This means that:

- The exporter must **apply for the GB-COI as early as possible with enough time for us to check the documents and rule out any doubts before the shipment.**  
Please take into account our usual processing times for COI-applications and, in case an application cannot be submitted with sufficient time in advance, also consider using the EXPRESS service option that we offer for national sales and international vessel shipments (NOT applicable for international air- and land freight; generates additional costs, see our price list). For international vessel shipments the application should be sent at least 10-14 days prior to the shipment. International air- and land freight should be submitted at least 2-5 working days before the shipment and need to be marked as Flight/AWB or Truck/CMR in the subject line of the email so that they can be handled with priority.
- Exporters must be aware that **GB authorities may reject organic imports if the COI is issued after the consignment has left the country.** CERES cannot assume any responsibility for any potential consequences.
- Mentioning the **correct ETD, the country of destination as well as the transport mode (BL / AWB / CMR) in the subject line of the application email** is of special importance.  
In case you are choosing **EXPRESS service** (only applicable for international vessel shipments), please **always mention this in the subject line**, too. Without these details your application might not be correctly prioritized, leading to a delay in issuance.
- For GB-COI applications (same as for EU-COIs) **we accept draft / proforma versions of the waybill (BL / AWB / CMR) and commercial invoice** (from exporter to importer) if necessary.  
If the (draft) BL / AWB / CMR is not available in time before the shipment, the application can be submitted without this document and the GB-COI will then be issued without the shipping details.  
However, please keep in mind that for GB-COIs there is no electronic system and therefore **later updates of shipping details in the COI are not possible.**

- The exporter must **make sure that all final documents (BL / AWB / CMR + sales invoice) are provided automatically and as soon as they are available.**  
**Any changes** between proforma and original version of invoice or BL/AWB/CMR **must be pointed out when sending the final documents.**  
If we do not receive the final documents, we may refuse to issue any new COIs until the documentation for previous COIs is completed.
- ✓ **GB-COIs (same as EU-COIs) shall be issued "by the (...) control body of the operator carrying out the last operation for the purposes of preparation".** Please check our Brief Info on TRACES NT and EU-COIs (3-2-8-1\_EN\_TRACES\_Inf) for a more detailed explanation of this rule.
- ✓ When filling in a **GB-COI application**, please be particularly careful to **insert all information fully and correctly, seeing as we cannot rely on an electronic system** to complete any missing details. Make sure to always include the importer's EORI number, the full name, address and code of the responsible customs office in GB (point of entry) as well as the complete and correct CN code.
- ✓ **Please kindly support us by including the following information in the subject line of all COI application emails:**
  - Destination / country of import (GB or EU / EEA (European Economic Area) / NI (Northern Ireland) or other countries)
  - Transport mode (Vessel/BL, Airfreight/AWB, Land freight/truck / CMR)
  - For vessel transport only: Service option (EXPRESS or STANDARD)
  - Exporter company name
  - Importer company name
  - For shipments to GB or EU, EEA, Northern Ireland: ETD (estimated time of departure = date when the shipment is planned to leave the country of export)
  - For shipments to other countries: ETA (estimated time of arrival = date when the shipment is planned to reach the point of destination)

Example: COI to GB\_BL EXPRESS\_Exporter x Importer\_ETD 03.10.