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Brief information about the reception procedure for organic materials required by Regulation (EU) 2018/ 848 (and also applicable to other organic standards)

1. Legal background:

Reg (EU) 2018/848 Annex III (5)

Reception of products from other operators of units:

On receipt of an organic or in-conversion product, the operator shall check the closing of the packaging, container or vehicle where it is required and the presence of the indications provided for in Section 2.

The operator shall cross-check the information on the label referred to in Section 2 with the information on the accompanying documents. The result of those verifications shall be explicitly mentioned in the records referred to in Article 34(5).

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 **(EU) 2018/848**

In case of doubts, please contact the respective certification body!

- Is the product **packaged or sealed** for transport?
- 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:
 - The name and address of the operator and, where different, of the owner or seller of the product
 - The name of the product or a description of the compound feedstuff accompanied by a reference to organic production
 - The name or the code number of the control body to which the operator is subject .
- ✓ 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.

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✓ 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 (**in-cluding commercial compound feed** suppliers!).
- 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.

Acceptance of raw materials upon first certification:

The following procedure applies during the initial on-site inspection of any operation seeking organic certification.

If the client has purchased raw materials prior to first certification:

The raw material may be accepted by CERES if during the inspection the following requirements are met:

- Complete traceability (lot numbers, supplier documentation)
- No critical or major non-conformities affecting organic integrity
- Compliance with the OMP
- Plausible mass-balance

• *NOP Regulatory Reference: § 205.403(d)(5) - Onsite Inspection*

The inspector must verify that the operation "has sufficient control and oversight over its production system, including inputs and raw materials," and that processes for traceability are in place.

• *EU Organic Regulation Regulatory References: Reg. (EU) 2018/848, Article 38 & 39 - Initial Inspection:*

The control body must verify at the first certification that all raw materials received are supported by appropriate documentary evidence (e.g., Certificate of Inspection (COI), supplier organic certificates), and that there are documented procedures for receiving, storing, and using raw materials of organic status only.

• *EU Organic Regulation Reg. (EU) 2021/279, Article 34 and Annex IV (on recordkeeping and traceability):*

Operators must maintain records "at every stage of production, preparation and distribution" to ensure the traceability of products from receipt through processing to the customer, as required by Article 34.

Raw materials of organic and non-organic status must be kept separate, physically and by records.

4. Applicability to other organic standards:

- ✓ Other organic standards do not define the requirement for "reception-procedure" 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".