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Module-3

National Standards for Organic Production



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ANIMAL HUSBANDRY



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1. Animal Husbandry Management

The certification programme shall ensure that the management of the animal environment takes into account the behavioural needs of the animals and provides for:

- Sufficient free movement, fresh air and natural daylight according to the needs of the animals.
- Protection against excessive sunlight, temperatures, rain and wind according to the needs of the animals.
- Enough lying and/or resting area according to the needs of the animal. For all animals requiring bedding, natural materials shall be provided.
- Ample access to fresh water and feed according to the needs of the animals .
- Adequate facilities for expressing behaviour in accordance with the biological and ethological needs of the species.



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All animals shall have access to open air and/or grazing appropriate to the type of animal and season taking into account their age and condition, to be specified by the certification programme.

- The specific farm or settlement structure prevents such access provided animal welfare can be guaranteed.
- Areas where feeding of animals with carried fresh fodder is a more sustainable way to use land resources than grazing, provided animal welfare is not compromised.
- Restrictions shall always include a time limit which shall be set for each exception.
- Poultry and rabbits shall not be kept in cages.
- Landless animal husbandry systems shall not be allowed.



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2. Length of Conversion Period

- Animal products may be sold as "product of organic agriculture" only after the farm or relevant part of it has been under conversion for at least twelve months and provided the organic animal production standards have been met for the appropriate time.
- The certification programme shall specify the length of time by which the animal production standards shall be met. With regard to dairy and egg production, this period shall not be less than 30 days.
- Animals present on the farm at the time of conversion may be sold for organic meat if the organic standards have been followed for 12 months.



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3. Brought-in Animals

When organic livestock is not available, the certification programme shall allow brought-in conventional animals according to the following age limits:

- 2 day old chickens for meat production
- 18 week old hens for egg production
- 2 week old for any other poultry.
- piglets up to six weeks and after weaning
- calves up to 4 weeks old which have received colostrum and are fed a diet consisting mainly of full milk.



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4. Breeds and Breeding

- The certification programme shall ensure that breeding systems are based on breeds that can both copulate and give birth naturally.
- Artificial insemination is allowed.
- Embryo transfer techniques are not allowed in organic agriculture.
- Hormonal heat treatment and induced birth are not allowed unless applied to individual animals for medical reasons and under veterinary advice.
- The use of genetically engineered species or breeds are not allowed.



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5. Mutilations Standards

Mutilations are not allowed. The certification programme shall allow the following exceptions:

- Castrations
- Tail docking of lambs
- Dehorning
- Ringing
- Mulesing

Suffering shall be minimised and anaesthetics used where appropriate.



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6. Animal Nutrition

- The certification programme shall draw up standards for feed and feed ingredients.
- The prevailing part (at least more than 50%) of the feed shall come from the farm unit itself or shall be produced in co-operation with other organic farms in the region. The certification programme shall allow exceptions with regard to local conditions under a set of time limit for implementation.



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The certification programme shall allow exceptions to these percentages, with specific time limits and conditions in the following cases:

- Unforeseen severe natural or man-made events
- Extreme climatic or weather conditions.
- Areas where organic agriculture is in early stages of development



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The following products shall not be included nor added to the feed given to farm animals:

- Synthetic growth promoters or stimulants and Synthetic appetisers .
- Preservatives, except when used as a processing aid and Artificial colouring agents.
- Urea and Farm animal by-products (e.g. abattoir waste) to ruminants.
- Droppings, dung or other manure (all types of excreta) even if technologically processed.
- Feed subjected to solvent (e.g. hexane), extraction (soya and rape seed meal) or the addition of other chemical agents.
- Pure amino acids and Genetically engineered organisms or products thereof



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- All ruminants shall have daily access to roughage.

The following fodder preservatives shall be used:

- Bacteria, fungi and enzymes.
- By-products of food industry (e.g. molasses).
- Plant based products.
- The certification programme shall set minimum weaning times taking into account the natural behaviour of the relevant animal species



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7. Veterinary Medicine Standards

- The well-being of the animals is the primary consideration in the choice of illness treatment. The use of conventional veterinary medicines are allowed when no other justifiable alternative is available.
- Where conventional veterinary medicines are used, the withholding period shall be at least double the legal period.
- Vaccinations shall be used only when diseases are known or expected to be a problem in the region of the farm and where these diseases cannot be controlled by other management techniques. The certification programme shall define conditions for such cases. Legally required vaccinations are allowed.



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Use of the following substances is prohibited :

- Synthetic growth promoters.
- Substances of synthetic origin for production, stimulation or suppression of natural growth.
- Hormones for heat induction and heat synchronisation unless used for an individual animal against reproductive disorders, justified by veterinary indications



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Transport and Slaughter

The certification programme shall set slaughter and transportation standards that will take into consideration:

- Stress caused to the animal and person in charge.
- Fitness of the animal.
- Loading and unloading.
- Mixing different groups of animals or animals of different sex .
- Quality and suitability of mode of transport and handling equipment.
- Temperatures and relative humidity .
- Hunger and thirst.
- Specific needs. of each animal