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Center for Smart Agriculture

Organic Certification and Inspection Systems



Module 2: Organic Certification Session 1: Certification, Purpose, Process



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Organic Certification

- ✓ It is a certification process for producers of organic food and other organic agricultural products.
- ✓ In general, any business directly involved in food production can be certified, including seed suppliers, farmers, food processors, retailers and restaurants.
- ✓ Requirements vary from country to country, and generally involve a set of production standards for growing, storage, processing, packaging and shipping.



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- Avoidance of synthetic chemical inputs (e.g. fertilizer, pesticides, antibiotics, food additives, etc) and genetically modified organisms;
- Use of farmland that has been free from chemicals for a number of years (often, three or more);
- Keeping detailed written production and sales records (audit trail);
- Maintaining strict physical separation of organic products from non-certified products;



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Purpose of certification

- ❖ Organic certification addresses a growing worldwide demand for organic food.
- ❖ It is intended to assure quality and prevent fraud. For organic producers, certification identifies suppliers of products approved for use in certified operations.
- ❖ For consumers, "certified organic" serves as a product assurance, similar to "low fat", "100% whole wheat", or "no artificial preservatives".



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- ❖ Certification is essentially aimed at regulating and facilitating the sale of organic products to consumers.
- ❖ Individual certification bodies have their own service marks, which can act as branding to consumers.
- ❖ Most certification bodies operate organic standards that meet the National government's minimum requirements.



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The certification process

In order to certify a farm, the farmer is typically required to engage in a number of new activities, in addition to normal farming operations:

- ✓ **Study** the organic standards, which cover in specific detail what is and is not allowed for every aspect of farming, including storage, transport and sale.
- ✓ **Compliance** - farm facilities and production methods must comply with the standards.



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Documentation - extensive paperwork is required, detailing farm history and current set-up, and usually including results of soil and water tests.

Planning - a written annual production plan must be submitted, detailing everything from seed to sale

Record-keeping - written, day-to-day farming and marketing records, covering all activities, must be available for inspection at any time.



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Inspection - annual on-farm inspections are required, with a physical tour, examination of records, and an oral interview.

Fee – A fee is to be paid by the grower to the certification body for annual surveillance and for facilitating a mark which is acceptable in the market as symbol of quality.



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THANK YOU