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POLICY MANUAL

PREAMBLE

GOA policies set forth herein are established by means of agreement and consensus of the Executive Body of Global Organic Alliance, Inc.; hereafter, known as GOA. Policies apply to all operations certified through GOA. Policy changes and additions may be recommended or requested by certified operations, Board of Advisors, staff, or as required to maintain compliance with accreditation provisions.

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DEFINITIONS

Accreditation: A procedure by which an authoritative body (i.e. USDA, ISO) gives formal recognition that a body or person is competent to carry out specific activities.

Accreditation Certificate: A document issued by an accreditation body to confirm a certification body's accreditation.

Appeal: Procedure where an applicant or certified operation or member of the public contests a certification decision and requests a review.

Certificate: The document issued by GOA that identifies the organic status and organic products of an applicant or certified operation.

Certification: Procedure by which a third party gives written assurance that a clearly identified process has been methodically assessed, such that adequate confidence is provided that specified products conform to specified requirements.

Certification Decision: Systematic assessment based on all relevant information obtained, including the inspection, in order to make a decision.

Certification Program: System operated by a certifying agent with its own policies, procedures and administration to carry out certification activities.

Certification Scope: The areas in which the certifying body has been accredited to provide certification services. Administration

Certifying Body: A body that provides third-party certification services that is independent from inspections.

Complaint: An objection to policies, procedures, or performance of the certifying agent or an objection to the performance or activities of an applicant or certified operation.

Conflict of Interest: The situation where an individual's capacity for objectivity is put at risk by financial or personal interests that are in conflict with their interest in conducting fair and impartial inspection or certification.

Declaration of Interest: A statement of direct, indirect, or perceived personal and/or commercial interests in the organic industry made by those individuals involved in inspections or the certification decision process.

Handling Operation: Any operation or portion of an operation (except final retailers of agricultural products that do not process agricultural products) that receives or otherwise acquires agricultural products and processes, packages, or stores such products.

Inspection: The act of examining and evaluating the production and handling operation of an applicant for certification or certified operation to determine compliance.

Inspector: Any person retained or used by GOA to conduct inspections or certification applicants or certified production or handling operations.

Internal Audit: A periodic self-review and self-assessment of the objectives and performance of the GOA certification program.

ISO: International Organization for Standardization.

Quality System: Documented procedures that are established, implemented, and audited to assure that production, handling, management, certification, and other systems meet specific requirements and results.

Responsibly Connected: A person that is a partner, officer, director, holder, manager, or owner of ten (10) percent or more of voting stock of an applicant or a recipient of certification.

State Organic Program: A state program that meets the requirements of section 6506 of the Act, is approved by the Secretary, and is designed for the purposes of certifying organic production and handling operations in the State.

1. STRUCTURE

1.1 GOA is an Equal Opportunity Employer (EOE) and certification agency. GOA does not require membership of any entity seeking certification.

1.2 GOA is open to all production and handling operations that fall within its areas of accreditation and/or standards and will certify all qualified applicants, to the extent of its administrative capacity regardless of size, income, creed, color, religion, gender, sexual orientation, or membership in any association or group, nor is certification conditional upon the number of certificates already issued. Policies and procedures shall not impede or inhibit access to certification.

1.3 GOA has utilized a standard "For Profit" Articles of Incorporation, Bylaws for the State of Ohio and specific GOA Bylaws. GOA Bylaws are available upon request.

1.4 GOA is open to individuals or companies who desire to utilize GOA certification services providing the operation meets the applicable standards, criteria, policies, and procedures of the certification program(s). Applications for organic certification are processed in the order in which they are received.

1.5 GOA conducts certification activities in the United States.

2. ADMINISTRATION

2.1 The organizational structure of GOA is designed to build confidence and provide for impartiality and transparency in the efficient execution of the certification process. A committee and/or individual delegated to evaluate or perform activities will be provided all necessary information, including the basis for decisions, actions, and the selection of persons appointed or contracted to conduct specific tasks in the certification process, to make informed, transparent, impartial decisions regarding certification. When the advice or decision is not respected from a committee or individual, the committee or individual shall take appropriate measures, including notifying the accreditation body.

2.2 Committees are established as needed by the Chief Executive Officer for a specific, defined task or job whose activities and decisions are documented. GOA has sole authority to appoint or remove committee members. Committees must be composed of members that provide a balance of interests where no single interest predominates and be free from any commercial, financial, and other pressures that might influence the decision.

2.3 Responsibly connected persons, employees, and subcontractors that have analysis, inspection, or decision-making responsibilities must have the capability, competence and sufficient expertise to carry out the assigned task(s). Certification activities will be declined for any type of product or process that GOA does not have the capability or competence to undertake.

2.4 Responsibly connected persons and employees with analysis, and decision-making responsibilities are required to attend workshops, seminars, etc. to enhance their knowledge and expertise in organic production and handling and organic certification activities.

2.5 An annual performance evaluation will be performed of all persons who review and/or evaluate applications/documents for certification, perform on-site inspections, or make certification decisions.

2.6 Management continually monitors the Quality System and activities, reviews, and major events involving the Quality System are recorded. Preventive or corrective actions are implemented without delay when a non-conformance or potential non-conformance is identified.

2.7 Error and omission insurance is maintained to prevent financial loss in the event of a lawsuit against GOA. GOA will hold the Secretary harmless for any failure while carrying out the provisions of the Act and 7 CFR Part 205.

2.8 GOA recruits, when necessary, and selects the most qualified individuals for open positions. GOA uses a variety of recruitment efforts, when necessary, to attract qualified applicants and hires and promotes individuals solely on the basis of their job-related qualifications. GOA prohibits discrimination in the hiring process on the basis of race, color, religion, disability, age, sex, sexual orientation, national origin, or veteran status.

2.9 The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) or President will coordinate recruitment and selection processes to fill new or vacant staff positions in consultation with applicable department.

2.10 GOA will comply with the accreditation requirements of its accreditation bodies and will only make claims in respect to the scope of accreditation that has been granted and will not use the accreditation in a misleading manner or in a way that will bring disrepute to the accreditation body. Directives received from the accreditation body will be implemented without delay and communicated to affected parties.

2.11 GOA will maintain required information, documentation, and records and provide access to the information, documentation, and records and key locations where activities are taking place as needed by the accreditation body to evaluate and maintain accreditation. Documents and reports required to maintain accreditation will be submitted as directed by the accreditation body without delay. Annual certification activities will be reported as required by the accreditation body.

2.12 Accreditation bodies will be notified of any changes in GOA that may affect compliance with accreditation requirements. This includes ownership/legal status, changes in top management or key personnel, main policies, location of business activities.

2.13 All personnel involved in certification activities and appointed committees will have access to the parts of the management system documentation and related information that are applicable to their responsibilities.

2.14 Transfer to the Administrator and make available to any applicable State organic program's governing State official all records or copies of records concerning an operation's certification activities in the event GOA dissolves or loses its accreditation.

3. CONFIDENTIALITY

3.1 Personnel shall maintain strict confidentiality with respect to the applicants' or certified operations' activities, suppliers, and products and will not disclose to third parties any business-related information obtained during the certification process without written consent of the applicant or certified operation. When information is required by law to be disclosed to a third-party, the applicant or certified operation shall be informed as permitted by law.

3.2 All certification files are confidential. Access is only permitted to staff, inspectors, file clerks, outside evaluators or accreditation agents, or law officers who have signed a Confidentiality Statement.

3.3 Individuals that review and/or evaluate applications/documents for certification or perform on-site inspections, make certification decisions and all parties responsibly connected to GOA must complete a Confidentiality Statement annually.

3.4 Information about an applicant or certified operation obtained from sources other than the applicant or certified operation must be treated as confidential. (i.e. from a complainant or accreditation body)

4. CONFLICT OF INTEREST

4.1 Individuals that review and/or evaluate applications/documents for certification, perform on-site inspections, make certification decisions and all parties responsibly connected to GOA must complete an annual Conflict of Interest disclosure report (direct, indirect, or

perceived). Failure to disclose a conflict of interest by inspectors or certification staff is sufficient cause to be removed from the inspector list or dismissal from certification activities. The Conflict of Interest Declaration will be updated during the formal annual evaluation of certification staff.

4.2 No staff member, including a subcontracted individual or body, shall actively solicit for or against certification of any individual or entity seeking certification. In the event of such an occurrence, the contacted individual shall report the incident in writing to the Executive and Board of Advisors.

4.3 Individuals that perform on-site inspections or involved in the certification decision-making process of a production or handling operation may not have had a commercial/financial interest, including immediate family interest or the provision of consulting services, within the 12-month period prior to the application for certification.

4.4 No responsibly connected persons with decision-making responsibilities shall be engaged in the purchasing and reselling of organic products.

4.5 Individuals, including subcontractors, with conflicts of interest must be excluded from work, discussions and decisions in all stages of the certification process and the monitoring of certified production and handling operations for all entities in which such person has or has held a commercial interest, including immediate family interest or the provision of consulting services within the 12-month period prior to the application for certification.

4.6 No staff member, inspector, subcontract, or other personnel shall accept payment, gifts, or favors of any kind, other than prescribed fees, from any business inspected.

4.7 No staff member, committee member, subcontract, or other personnel may provide consultancy services to certification applicants or certified operations to overcome identified barriers to certification. Specific advice shall be limited to explanations of the standards or certification requirements. This information shall not be offered for additional fees and shall not prescribe solutions.

4.8 The decision to certify an operation must be made by a qualified person different from those individuals who conducted the review of the documents or the on-site inspection.

4.9 GOA shall reconsider a certified operation's application for certification and, if necessary, perform a new on-site inspection when it is determined within 12 months of certifying the operation, that any person participating in the certification process has or had a conflict of interest (commercial interest, including immediate family interest, or the provision of consulting services) involving the applicant.

4.10 GOA will refer a certified operation to a different accredited certifying agent for recertification and reimburse the operation for the cost of the recertification when it is determined that any person with a conflict of interest (commercial interest, including immediate family interest, or the provision of consulting services) at the time of certification of the applicant.

5. IMPARTIALITY

5.1 Individuals serving on the Board of Advisors will be appointed to serve on the committee for safeguarding impartiality. The individuals are external to the management of GOA. Any change in the structure for safeguarding impartiality should take into account advice from the Executive, Administrative, and Certification Staff, when applicable.

5.2 The Impartiality Committee will assist in developing policies relating to impartiality of certification activities, counteract activities that affect or prevent impartial or objective certification decisions, advise on matters that affect confidence in the certification program, including openness and public perception, and review the impartiality of the annual internal audit, certification and decision-making processes.

5.3 Top management and certification staff shall not participate in the review or certification decision of a separate entity that offers or produces a product that is or will be certified or offers or provides consulting services in which the person is involved in the activities or has a financial or commercial interest or other pressures that may influence the certification process of that entity. Top management shall be committed to monitoring and ensuring impartiality in certification work. Identified risks to impartiality will be forwarded to the Impartiality Committee. If there is no impartiality committee seated at the time, one will be appointed as per GOA Policy Manual section 2.2.

6. REGISTRATION, CERTIFICATION & ROYALTY FEES

6.1 Applicants and certified operations must pay the annual registration, certification and inspection fees based on their type of association with GOA (i.e. member or client) and the applicable certification and compliance program(s) and category or categories (i.e. crop, livestock, processor, handler, broker, etc.) of certification being requested. If for any reason the application for certification process does not continue to completion, any unused portion of the fees will be returned to the applicant.

6.2 Applicants and certified operations are responsible for the registration, certification/inspection, and royalty fees associated with the certification of a contracted operation certified under their operation.

6.3 The annual certification fee must be submitted with the applicable Organic Plan(s).

6.3.1 Applicants seeking initial organic certification, who submit the applicable Organic Plan(s) within 30 days from the date the New Member Booklet is mailed from the office, are not be subject to the submission deadline for certified operations.

6.3.2 Certified operations seeking renewal certification are subject to the submission deadline of the renewal year to avoid additional late fees regardless of the date of the last inspection.

6.4 Non-payment of registration, certification, inspection, and/or royalty fees or any open invoice over ninety (90) days old is grounds for issuing a Notice of Noncompliance, as well as the loss of all Product Inventory Certificate (PIC) services.

6.4.1 Invoices for the registration, certification and inspection fees will be sent via US Mail with the net due within 30 days from the invoice date. A reminder notice will be sent via US Mail on outstanding accounts of 60 days. Accounts in arrears of 90 days will be notified via certified, return receipt.

7. INSPECTION FEES

7.1 An applicant or certified operation shall not pay certification or inspection fees directly to the inspector. GOA assumes the responsibility of securing payment from the applicant or certified operation for the inspector.

7.2 An inspection deposit/fee as specified in the GOA Schedule of Fees must be paid to the GOA office prior to assigning a qualified inspector. Applicants and certified operations who are direct Licensees of GOA are responsible for the inspection fees associated with the announced or unannounced on-site inspection of a contracted operation certified under their operation.

7.3 Inspection fees and expenses are the responsibility of the applicant or certified operation being inspected. Fees and expenses may vary due to the distance that must be traveled by the assigned inspector, complexity of the operation to be inspected, and the location of the operation as living cost vary depending on the region.

7.3.1 Overpayment of inspection fees will be reimbursed within two weeks from receipt of the invoice, inspection, report, and inspection affidavit and exit interview.

7.3.2 Outstanding inspection fees are invoiced to the inspected operation. Payment must be made to the GOA office.

7.3.3 Nonpayment of outstanding inspection fees may result in suspending or revoking certification and/or assessing additional late fees allocated by the inspector and/or GOA.

7.4 Unannounced inspections: Fees for unannounced inspections are disclosed in the Schedule of Fees (W004). There may be situations where GOA pays the mileage, meals, and lodging from the inspector's home state to the first town of the state that the unannounced inspection(s) will take place. All mileage, meals, and lodging expenses incurred in the state of the unannounced inspections is expensed to the inspected operations in the state and added to the inspection fee, including unannounced inspections occurring in the home state of the inspector. Overpayment, underpayment, or nonpayment of inspections fees will be handled as stated in 6.3.1, 6.3.2, and 6.3.3.

8. SUBCONTRACTORS

8.1 GOA takes full responsibility for subcontracted work (i.e. inspection or testing) and maintains full responsibility for granting, maintaining, extending, suspending, or revoking certification.

8.2 The subcontracted entity must comply with applicable provisions of ISO Guide 17065 and other standards and criteria relevant to testing and inspection or as required by the applicable certification program.

8.3 The subcontracted entity shall abide by GOA confidentiality and conflict of interest policies and when applicable sign the Confidentiality Statement (F005) and the Conflict of Interest Declaration (F006).

8.4 Applicants and certified operations are informed of GOA's intent to hire a subcontractor to perform a specified task. The applicant and certified operation may exercise their right to refuse the contracted individual/operation with just cause. The rejection of the selected subcontractor must be in writing and provide the reason for refusal and include supporting documentation.

8.5 Corrective actions will be implemented to correct breaches in the contract or subcontracted activity that may affect or influence the credibility of the results or decision. The issue and corrective action will be documented.

9. INSPECTORS

9.1 GOA takes full responsibility for contracting an inspector to conduct the on-site inspection and maintains full responsibility for granting, maintaining, extending, suspending, or revoking certification. The inspector shall not be selected, recommended, or hired by the operator.

9.2 Inspectors are independent contractors engaged by GOA to perform specific duties and to submit reports documenting their observations and discussions on the operations' compliance to the requirement of the certification program.

9.3 Inspector assignment is based on education, experience or expertise in the specific area of production or handling to be inspected, geographic location, and review of the Conflict of Interest Declaration. When the nearest inspector is not qualified to perform the inspection or there is a conflict of interest that inspector will not be hired.

9.4 Applicants and certified operations will be informed who the assigned inspector is and has the right to refuse the inspector with just cause. The request for a different inspector must provide the basis for refusal, supporting documentation (when applicable) and submitted in writing. The final decision to reassign a different inspector rests with GOA. (Applicants may not refuse one inspector after another.) The basis and reasoning behind the final decision will be documented.

9.5 Inspectors are evaluated annually and undergo a witness audit every three years by qualified staff or authorized representative of GOA. Additional witness audits may be with or without notice as a result of complaints or other factor that may compromise or impact the integrity of the inspection service provided.

9.6 Inspectors shall annually sign a Confidentiality Statement, declare all conflicts of interests, provide a c.v./resume, and evidence of continuing education (when applicable). These documents shall be maintained in the GOA office.

9.7 Inspectors must conduct an exit interview with the individual(s) who are knowledgeable in the organic production/handling practices and recordkeeping of the operation to confirm accuracy and completeness of inspection observations and information gathered during the on-site inspection utilizing the applicable GOA document(s). The inspector must address the need for any additional information as well as any issues of concern.

9.8 GOA will provide the inspector with the applicants or certified operation completed Plan, supporting documentation (i.e. maps, histories, labels, flow charts, etc.), previous inspection report and assessment form.

9.9 Inspectors shall submit an inspection report as a result of the inspection, within the timeframe designated in the Inspector Contract and provide additional information when requested by Certification Staff.

9.10 GOA will notify the inspector of the certification decision and any conditions for continued certification identified.

10. ON-SITE INSPECTIONS

10.1 An initial on-site inspection of each production unit, facility, and/or site that produces or handles an organic product and is included in an operation for which certification is requested must be conducted.

10.1.1 An operation seeking initial certification or maintaining certification must permit complete access to the production or handling operation, including non-certified production and handling areas, structures, and offices.

10.2 An on-site inspection shall be conducted annually of each production unit, facility, and/or site of a certified operation that produces or handles organic products to determine whether the certification of the operation should continue.

10.2.1 Operations that appeal a proposed suspension for submitting an incomplete Organic System Plan (OSP) and/or fail to respond to a request for additional information that is needed to determine compliance for continued certification will be subject to the annual on-site inspection regardless of the time of year. The operation is responsible for the costs of the inspection.

10.3 The on-site inspection must occur at a time when land, facilities, and activities that demonstrate the operation's compliance with or ability to comply with the applicable requirements can be observed, except that this requirement does not apply to unannounced on-site inspections.

10.4 On-site inspections must be conducted when authorized individuals who are knowledgeable of the organic production/handling practices and recordkeeping of the operation being inspected are present and available to accompany the assigned inspector. This does not apply to unannounced on-site inspections.

10.5 The initial on-site inspection must be conducted within a reasonable time upon determination by GOA that all required documentation has been submitted and the operation appears to be able to comply with the certification requirements. GOA may delay the initial

inspection up to 6 months to ensure the inspection is conducted when the land, crops, facilities, and/or activities requested for certification can be observed and verified to be in compliance with the certification requirements.

10.6 Additional and unannounced inspections may take place at the discretion of GOA or as required or directed by an authorized representative of the accreditation or certification program.

10.7 The on-site inspection of an operation must verify:

10.7.1 Compliance to the applicable certification program standards and requirements;

10.7.2 The information supplied in the Organic Plan accurately reflects the management practices employed, materials in use, field histories, maps/floor plans, and product flow charts accurately depict the operation and/or movement of product, and field histories, field maps, and acreages are accurate;

10.7.3 Prohibited substances have not been and are not being applied to the operation, which may include the collection and testing of soil, water, manure/compost, seeds, plant tissue, or animal or processed animal or livestock product samples.

10.7.4 Verification that corrective actions to bring previously identified noncompliances into compliance have been implemented.

10.7.5 Changes in the standards and requirements have been effectively implemented by the operator.

10.8 A copy of the on-site inspection report, the certification decision with the areas needing improvement or that require corrective action identified, and test results as applicable, is sent to the inspected party.

11. STANDARDS

11.1 Each operation is furnished with a copy of the certification program standards and requirements at the time they apply for initial certification and annually thereafter in the certification packet to maintain certification.

11.2 New or revised standards will be communicated to operators and implementation verified as required by the certification program.

12. CERTIFICATION

12.1 All certification activities, including decision-making, must go directly through the GOA Certification Staff delegated to make certification decisions. GOA is responsible and retains authority for certification decisions. Chapters are not authorized to conduct decision-making activities related to certification. Certification decisions are based upon the standards and requirements of the certification or program for the scope of certification to which application has been made.

12.2 GOA recognizes and accepts certification decisions made by other certification agencies accredited or accepted by the applicable certification program. GOA will exchange information with other certification bodies and/or accreditation bodies to verify information on the operator.

12.3 Applicants and certified operations are responsible for providing the current standards, policies, and other documents required by the applicable certification program to a contracted operation certified under their operation.

12.4 In the event of changes to a certification or compliance program, GOA will provide written notification of the change and the effective date of the change without delay. Changes to a certification or compliance program are published in the GOA newsletter. The effective date is as directed by the accreditation body, relevant international body, or the registration body when provided. Affected policy and procedures, work instructions, and forms will be revised without delay to reflect the change.

12.5 Operations must be in compliance with the standards/regulations of the certification and/or compliance program to which application has been made. Certification requirements, evaluation, review, decision, and surveillance activities shall be confined to the scope of certification to which application has been made and based upon the observations and information/documentation supplied, gathered and obtained during the certification and inspection process.

12.6 Applicants or certified operations seeking certification of a production or handling operation must submit as applicable:

12.6.1 Organic production or handling plan with field/facility map, three-year field histories, process flow charts and product composition sheets (handling), ingredient labels for inputs, and seed/planting stock documentation and additional information when requested to determine compliance.

12.6.2 Name(s) of organic certifying agent(s) to which application has previously been made; the year(s) of application, outcome of the application(s), including any notification of noncompliance or denial of certification.

12.7 Applicants seeking initial certification or certified operations maintaining certification must notify GOA immediately of any:

12.7.1 Application, including drift, of a prohibited substance to any field, production unit, site, facility, livestock, or product that is part of the operation.

12.7.2 Change in a certified operation or any portion of a certified operation that may affect compliance or ability to comply, including the discontinuation of business activities.

12.8 Production (crop, livestock) - Operations that have not submitted a renewal organic plan by the due date or have not notified Global Organic Alliance of their intent to withdraw from or surrender certification will be subject to noncompliance proceedings. If the operation does not respond to the notification of noncompliance, Global Organic Alliance will proceed with proceed with measures to suspend or revoke certification.

12.9 Handlers - Operations that have not submitted a renewal organic plan no later than 30 days prior to the inspection date recorded on the organic certificate or have not notified Global Organic Alliance of their intent to withdraw from or surrender certification will be subject to noncompliance proceedings. If the operation does not respond to the notification of noncompliance, Global Organic Alliance will proceed with measures to suspend certification. In the event, the interval between inspections exceeds 12 months, subsequent inspections must be scheduled over a set period of time to make the number of inspections and number of certified years uniform.

12.10 Operations changing certification agents must submit the applicable Organic System Plan and supporting documentation including any unresolved noncompliances from the prior certifier and successfully complete the certification process, including undergoing the on-site inspection.

12.10.1 Operators must notify their current certification agent that they are transferring their certification and maintain their certification with the former certification agent until certification documents are issued by their new certifying agent.

12.11 Operations must notify GOA immediately of any changes in the operation or portion of the operation that may affect its compliance with the applicable certification or compliance program. Additional on-site inspections at the operation's expense may be required to determine continued compliance.

12.12 The Licensing Agreement must be signed and returned annually.

12.13 GOA will be required to make the appropriate notifications regarding the surrender, withdrawal, suspension or revocation, and reinstatement of certification by an operation, which includes posting on the GOA website.

13. WITHDRAWAL FROM ORGANIC CERTIFICATION

13.1 Applicants who wish to withdraw from organic certification must notify the GOA office in writing.

13.2 Applicants may withdraw from organic certification at any time; however, the applicant is liable for costs and/or services provided by GOA up to the time the withdrawal notification is received in the GOA office.

13.2.1 Withdrawal notifications received during the certification and/or inspection process, will be assessed costs for time, expenses incurred (i.e. phone, copying, etc.), and inspector fees billed by the inspector. Applicants are responsible for all inspection fees and expenses in the event an inspector has arrived at the farm or facility regardless if the inspection has commenced or not.

13.2.2 Withdrawal notifications received after an inspection has occurred and before a certification decision has been made are responsible for all applicable certification and inspection fees and expenses; however, a written certification assessment will not be forthcoming.

14. SURRENDER ORGANIC CERTIFICATION

14.1 Certified operations who wish to surrender their organic certification must notify the GOA office in writing or sign the Notification of Surrender form (F040).

14.2 Certified operations may surrender their organic certification at any time; however, the certified operation is liable for costs and/or services provided by GOA up to the time the notification of surrender is received in the GOA office.

14.2.1 Surrender notifications received during the certification and/or inspection process, will be assessed costs for time, expenses incurred (i.e. phone, copying, etc.) and inspector fees billed by the inspector. Certified operations are responsible for all inspection fees and expenses in the event an inspector has arrived at the farm or facility regardless if the inspection has commenced or not.

14.2.2 Surrender notifications received after an inspection has occurred and before a certification decision has been made are responsible for all applicable certification and inspection fees and expenses; however, a written certification assessment will not be forthcoming.

14.3 Certified operations who voluntarily surrender their organic certification must immediately discontinue selling, labeling, or representing product as organic, identifying GOA as the certifying agent, and use of the applicable program seal/mark.

15. CERTIFICATE TERMS

15.1 Organic certification is effective as of the date that certification is granted by GOA. GOA issues an organic certificate at the time certification is granted and annually thereafter upon verification of continued compliance of the certification program requirements and successful completion of the inspection and certification process.

15.2 Organic certificates will be issued on or after the date certification has been granted or continued, provided certification requirements have been fulfilled and the annual Licensing Agreement has been signed and returned. Organic certificates will be revised when the scope of certification or the certified product list is expanded or reduced.

15.3 Once certified, a production or handling operation's organic certification continues in effect until surrendered by the organic operation or suspended or revoked by GOA, the State organic program's governing State official, or the Administrator of the National Organic Program.

15.4 The certificate will be in English and will include the following:

15.4.1 Name and physical address of the certified operation;
15.4.2 Name, address, and phone number of GOA;
15.4.3 Certification or Compliance Program;
15.4.4 Effective date of certification (when the current or initial certifying agent first certified the operation to the USDA organic regulations);
15.4.5 Issue date (when the certifying agent issued the certificate);
15.4.6 Anniversary date (when the certified operation must submit its annual update). NOP organic certificates cannot include expiration dates.
15.4.7 Scope of certification - crops, wild crops, livestock, processing, or handling;
15.4.8 Term of the certificate (when applicable);
15.4.9 Revision Date (when applicable);
15.4.10 Specific certified organic products covered by the certificate, allowing auditors and buyers to verify whether the operation is certified to produce or handle the product (e.g. hay, granola);
15.4.11 Labeling category for each product certified under the handling/processing certification category (not required for products in crops or livestock certification categories).
15.4.12 Any other information required by the certification program.

16. MEDIATION

16.1 Any dispute with respect to denial of certification or proposed suspension or revocation of certification under this part may be mediated at the request of the applicant for certification or certified operation and with acceptance by the GOA. Mediation shall be requested in writing to GOA. If GOA rejects the request for mediation, GOA shall provide written notification to the applicant for certification or certified operation. The written notification shall advise the applicant for certification or certified operation of the right to request an appeal, pursuant to §205.681, within 30 days of the date of the written notification of rejection of the request for mediation. If mediation is accepted by the GOA, such mediation shall be conducted by a qualified mediator mutually agreed upon by the parties to the mediation. If a State organic program is in effect, the mediation procedures established in the State organic program, as approved by the Secretary, will be followed. The parties to the mediation shall have no more than 30 days to reach an agreement following a mediation session. If mediation is unsuccessful, the applicant for certification or certified operation shall have 30 days from termination of mediation to appeal GOA's decision pursuant to §205.681. Any agreement reached during or as a result of the mediation process shall be in compliance with the Act and the regulations in this part. The Secretary may review any mediated agreement for conformity to the Act and the regulations in this part and may reject any agreement or provision not in conformance with the Act or the regulations in this part.

16.2 GOA's decision to accept or reject the request for mediation may include but is not limited to the type and severity of the noncompliance, the operation's compliance history and the probability of reaching a settlement agreement. If the violation is willful and/or is not correctable (i.e. application of a prohibited substance, nonorganic feed fed, etc.) mediation will be rejected.

17. APPEALS

17.1 Applicants, certified operations, and third parties have the right to appeal or dispute a certification decision. The appeal must be made in writing to the GOA office within thirty (30) days of the date of the certification decision notification. Disposition of the appeal must be completed within 120 days of receipt of the written appeal. Please contact the GOA office for a copy of the appeal procedure and application form.

17.2 Appeals must be submitted directly to the Administrator of the National Organic Program. During the appeal process, operations are responsible for submitting subsequent updated Organic System Plans along with required supporting documentation and undergo the inspection and certification process to maintain their organic certification. GOA will ensure the annual on-site inspection to verify ongoing compliance occurs.

17.3 GOA will maintain a record of appeals received concerning its certification activities and their resolution, including actions implemented to resolve them applicable the certification program. Appeals records will be available to accreditation bodies upon request.

18. COMPLAINTS

18.1 A Complaint Procedure is in place to encompass “problems”, concerns, disputes, etc., other than certification appeals. Complainants must request a copy of the Complaint Procedure and Application from the GOA office. Complaint applications must be resolved within the timeframe specified in the complaint procedure.

18.2 Written complaints received against a certified operation will be investigated and investigation activities and results documented. Investigations that result in finding a potential major noncompliance may result in an additional inspection at the expense of the certified operation or noncompliance proceedings applicable to the certification program. Anonymous complaints without sufficient documentation cannot be investigated.

18.3 GOA will maintain a record of complaints received concerning its certification activities and their resolution, including actions implemented to resolve them applicable to the certification program. Complaint records will be available to accreditation bodies upon request.

19. COMPLAINTS RECEIVED BY CERTIFIED OPERATIONS

19.1 Certified operations are required to develop and maintain a register of complaints for the organic portion of the operation that are received from buyers or consumers of the crop(s) grown, product manufactured, crops or products sold, service that is offered, or certified production/handling systems owned by the operation.

19.2 On receipt of the complaint, the certified operation must investigate the complaint; document the results of the investigation, and the action taken to remedy the complaint. Investigations that result in changes to the Organic Plan or finding a potential major noncompliance must be reported immediately to GOA. GOA may determine an additional inspection at the expense of the certified operation is required.

19.3 Certified operations must report all complaints regarding their operation or product annually with the applicable Organic Plan(s) and make the complaint log available to the inspector during the inspection or when requested by authorized representatives of GOA or the applicable accreditation body.

19.4 Compliance to the complaint policy will be assessed during the annual on-site inspection.

20. LABELING AND MARKETING

20.1 GOA does not require use of the seal/mark on any product sold, labeled, or represented as organically produced as a condition of certification. Operations that voluntarily use the GOA seal/logo must submit samples or copies of labels that are in use or are intended for use for approval by GOA. Approval must be obtained before the label is applied to product entering the stream of commerce.

20.2 An organic seal/mark may only be used by certified operations holding a valid organic certificate for the certification scheme of the seal/mark being displayed. Use of the seal/mark must be in compliance with the regulations, laws, and/or standards of the applicable certification program.

20.3 Use of the certification program seal is subject to the following conditions:

- 20.3.1 The certified operation must be in good standing, including payment of all applicable fees.
- 20.3.2 The certified operation must have a valid current certificate. The certificate is reissued annually.
- 20.3.3 The certified operation must have signed and returned the GOA Licensing Agreement.

20.4 Operations who withdraw from or surrender certification, cease business with GOA, or whose certification is suspended, cancelled, or revoked must immediately discontinue identifying GOA as the certifying agent and use of the organic seal/mark of the applicable

certification or compliance program. Operations will be notified in writing that they may not sell, label, or represent the product as organic or identify GOA as the certification agent.

20.5 Certified operations found to be using the certification or compliance program name or seal in an inappropriate, illegal, or fraudulent manner, or in any way that is inconsistent with the regulations and/or standards of the applicable certification or compliance program and the alleged violation is found to be true, the following penalties apply:

20.5.1 Adverse actions will commence as applicable to the certification program and the accreditation body may be notified.

20.5.2 Noncertified entities using the GOA name, seal or derivative thereof, will be notified via mail that they are in error, and invited to apply for certification.

20.5.3 USDA National Organic Program Seal misuse, NOP §205.100(c)(1)&(2) applies; *"(c) Any operation that:*

(1) Knowingly sells or labels a product as organic, except in accordance with the Act, shall be subject to a civil penalty of not more than the amount specified in §3.91(b)(1) of this title per violation.

(2) Makes a false statement under the Act to the Secretary, a governing State official, or an accredited certifying agent shall be subject to the provisions of section 1001 of title 18, United States Code."

21. ETHICS

21.1 Applicants and certified operations shall not submit false or misleading documentation or reject, obstruct, or avoid inspections.

21.2 Certified operations must cooperate with investigations undertaken by GOA or authorized representatives of accreditation programs administered by GOA.

21.3 Certified operations shall only make claims regarding organic certification in respect to the scope for which certification has been granted or renewed.

21.4 Certified operations must not use the product certification in such a manner that brings GOA or the applicable certification program into disrepute and must not make any statement regarding product certification that GOA considers misleading or unauthorized. Operations shall immediately comply and respond to directives to correct, improve, or discontinue marketing materials or labeling from GOA or governing official of the certification program.

22. TESTING AND INSPECTION

22.1 GOA reserves the right to request the collection and testing of soil, water, waste, seeds, plant tissues, and plant, animal, and processed product samples if historical land use, inspector observations, or other information indicates possible contamination by prohibited substances. The operation will be supplied with a receipt for any samples taken by the inspector at GOA's request. There will be no charge to the operator for the samples taken.

22.2 The Certification Department may request a random soil test by an inspector who is in the area for another applicant/certified operation or from the inspector of record, in the event GOA receives written information that justifies such action.

22.3 Samples will be taken by the inspector in the presence of the operator. The inspector will take charge of the evidence, document the collection, and mail it to the designated lab. Documents must include the name or initials of the individual collecting the specimen, name of person having custody of it throughout the chain, the collection date, and mailing date and where it was sent, and brief description of the specimen.

22.4 The laboratory used for testing must be accredited to ISO 17025 or the laboratory designated by the USDA National Organic Program.

22.5 Inspection and testing of Agricultural Products to be sold or labeled organic:

22.5.1 All agricultural products that are to be sold, labeled or represented as "100 percent organic", "organic" or "made with organic (specified ingredients or food group(s)" must be made accessible by certified organic production or handling operations for examination by GOA.

22.5.2 GOA may require pre-harvest or post-harvest testing of any agricultural input used or agricultural product to be sold, labeled or represented as "100 percent organic", "organic" or "made with organic ingredients or food group(s)" when there is reason to believe that the agricultural input or product has come into contact with a prohibited substance or has been produced using excluded methods. Samples may include the collection and testing of soil; water; waste; seeds; plant tissue; and plant, animal, and processed products samples. Such tests must be conducted by an authorized representative of GOA and at GOA's own expense.

22.5.3 An inspector appointed by GOA must perform the pre-harvest or post-harvest tissue test sample collection pursuant to 11.2.2 of this section. Sample integrity must be maintained throughout the chain of custody, and residue testing must be performed in an accredited laboratory. Chemical analysis must be made in accordance with the methods described in the most current edition of the of the Official Methods of Analysis of the AOAC International or other current applicable validated methodology determining the presence of contaminants in agricultural products.

22.5.4 Results of all analyses and tests performed under this section will be maintained by GOA and will be available for public access, unless the testing is part of an ongoing compliance investigation.

22.5.5 If test results indicate a specific agricultural product contains pesticide residues or environmental contaminants that exceed the Food and Drug Administration's or the Environmental Protection Agency's regulatory tolerances, GOA must promptly report such data to the Federal Health Agency, whose regulatory tolerance or action level has been exceeded.

23 EXCLUSION FROM ORGANIC SALE

23.1 When residue testing detects prohibited substances at levels that are greater than 5 percent of the EPA's tolerance for the specific residue detected or unavoidable residual environmental contamination, the agricultural product must not be sold, labeled or represented as organically produced. GOA may conduct an investigation of the certified operation to determine the cause of the prohibited substance.

24. EMERGENCY PEST OR DISEASE TREATMENT

24.1 When a prohibited substance is applied to a certified operation due to a Federal or State emergency pest or disease treatment program and the certified operation otherwise meets the requirements of this part, the certification status of the operation shall not be affected as a result of the application of the prohibited substance, provided that:

24.1.1 Any harvested crop or plant part to be harvested that has contact with a prohibited substance applied as the result of a Federal or State emergency pest or disease treatment program cannot be sold, labeled, or represented as organically produced, and:

24.1.2 Any livestock that are treated with a prohibited substance applied as the result of a Federal or State emergency pest or disease treatment program or product derived from such treated livestock cannot be sold, labeled or represented as organically produced: Except that,

24.1.2.1 Milk or milk products may be sold, labeled or represented as organically produced beginning 12 months following the last date that the dairy animal was treated with the prohibited substance: and,

24.1.2.2 The offspring of gestating mammalian breeder stock treated with a prohibited substance may be considered organic, if the breeder stock was not in the last third of gestation on the date that the breeder stock was treated with the prohibited substance.

25. ACCESS TO INFORMATION

25.1 Upon request, GOA shall make the following information available to any member of the public:

25.1.1 Certification certificates issued during the current and three (3) preceding calendar years;

25.1.2 A list of producers and handlers whose operations are certified by GOA, including the name of the operation, type(s) of operation, products produced, and the effective date of the certification during the current and three (3) preceding calendar years;

25.1.3 Results of laboratory analyses for residues of pesticides and other prohibited substances conducted during the current and three (3) preceding calendar years; and

25.2 Updates to documents available on the GOA website are sent annually to the webmaster for posting. The date the updated document is sent to the webmaster is documented and the GOA web site is monitored for access to the new documents.

25.3 Directories of certified operations are available to the public on the GOA website and on request. The directory must contain at least the name of the certified operation, applicable certification and/or compliance program(s), and list of certified products. This information is also dispersed to all members/clients with the documents for the annual updating. The electronic version of the master directory is updated annually in January and the hard copy is updated at least annually in January and if necessary, as needed during the year. The electronic version of operator/operation directories for specific certification programs are updated as required by the applicable certification program.

25.4 Requirements for specific certification or compliance programs are available to an applicant or certified operation and on request to the public. These may include documents defining activities such as sampling, testing, inspection, surveillance of the management system as appropriate. Scheme documents will be developed and maintained taking into consideration the views of interested parties.

25.5 A list of certified operations and/or a summary report of the certification activities carried out throughout the calendar year is maintained for each certification program administered by GOA and will be available to the authorized representatives of the certification program or accreditation body upon request or as required by the certification program and/or accreditation body.

26. RECORD RETENTION

26.1 Records are maintained according to the following schedule:

26.1.1 Records *obtained from applicants for certification and certified operations* are maintained for not less than 5 years beyond their receipt or as required by the applicable accreditation body.

26.1.2 Records *created by GOA regarding applicants for certification and certified operations* are maintained for not less than 10 years beyond their creation or as required by the applicable accreditation body.

26.1.3 Records created or received by GOA pursuant to *accreditation* requirements are maintained for no less than 5 years beyond their creation or receipt or as required by the applicable accreditation body.

26.2 Records for certified operations will remain in the active file for one year and replaced with updated plans and supporting documentation annually.

26.3 Records are available for inspection and copying during regular business hours by authorized representatives of the certification program and accreditation body.

27. INTERNAL AUDIT

27.1 GOA will conduct an annual internal audit covering all procedures to verify that the quality system is implemented and effective.

27.2 Personnel responsible for the audited department are informed of the audit results and are responsible for proposing and implementing corrective actions in a timely manner.

27.3 Results of the internal audit are documented and available to accreditation bodies upon request or as required by the certification program.

27.4 Executive management continually monitors the efficiency, impartiality, and effectiveness of the Quality System. Activities involving the Quality System are documented and preventive or corrective actions are implemented without delay when a non-conformance or potential non-conformance is identified.

28. INTERNATIONAL TRADE

28.1 Japan

28.1.1 The equivalence arrangement is limited to organic products that have been either produced within the United States or Japan, or products for which final processing or packaging occurs in the United States or Japan. This includes product processed or packaged in the US or Japan that contain organic ingredients from third countries that are certified to the USDA or Japan organic standards. Product categories: Crops, Wild Crops, Livestock, Processed Products of plant origin.

28.1.2 The equivalence arrangement only covers USDA organic products that fall under the scope of the Japan organic regulations. Organic products that are not regulated under the Japan organic regulations, yet are certified to the USDA National Organic Program can be exported to Japan. Non-regulated products such as meat, dairy, and honey, with the exception of alcoholic beverages, may be exported to Japan under the conditions specified in the Japanese MAFF equivalence letter dated 20 September 2013. The export certificate (TM-11) is not required for exporting non-regulated organic product to Japan. Agricultural products derived from animals treated with antibiotics may not be exported to the United States as certified organic.

a. An alcoholic beverage exported to Japan that is labeled with the word “organic” in the Japanese language, should be accompanied with a certificate issued by a certification body that includes the name of the certified alcoholic beverage, the name and address of the certified operation and name and address of the operator, number and date of certification, country of origin, and the name and address of the certifying body. The alcoholic beverage may display the USDA organic seal if it is compliant with USDA organic labeling requirements.

28.1.3 Documentation

a. USDA Organic Products. Products exported to Japan that fall under the scope of the arrangement (crops, wild crops, livestock, processed products of plant origin) must be accompanied by an export certificate, also known as a TM-11, that has been completed by a USDA accredited certifying agent. This certificate verifies that the product complies with the terms of the trade arrangement. This statement must be included on the Export Certificate: "Certified in compliance with the terms of the US-Japan Organic Equivalency Arrangement."
b. Japanese Organic Products. Products that fall under the scope of the arrangement (crops, wild crops, livestock, processed products) must travel with a NOP import certificate that has been completed by a certifying body in Japan. This certifying body must be accredited either by the Japanese Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry & Fisheries (MAFF) or the USDA. This statement must be included on the Import Certificate: "Certified in compliance with the terms of the US-Japan Organic Equivalency Arrangement."

28.2 Taiwan

28.2.1 The equivalence arrangement is limited to USDA organic products that are grown and produced in the United States or Taiwan or have their final processing or packaging in the United States or on Taiwan. This includes product processed or packaged in the US or on Taiwan that contain organic ingredients from third countries that are certified to the USDA or Japan organic standards. The equivalence arrangement only covers products exported from and certified in the United States or on Taiwan. Livestock products or livestock products used as ingredients in any product may not be derived from animals that were treated with antibiotics and aquatic animal products may not be exported to the United States as certified organic. Livestock products or livestock products used as ingredients in any product imported on Taiwan may not be derived from animals that were treated with antibiotics, or systemic use of pain killers or analgesics, including the use of Lidocaine or Procaine. Product Categories: Crops, Wild Crops, Livestock, Processed Products of plant origin.

28.2.2 Documentation

a. USDA Organic Products. Products exported to Taiwan that fall under the scope of the arrangement (crops, wild crops, livestock, processed products of plant origin) must be accompanied by an export certificate, also known as a TM-11, that has been completed by a USDA accredited certifying agent. This statement must be included on the Export Certificate: "Certified in compliance with the terms of the AIT/TECRO-NOP/AFA Organic Equivalency Arrangement."
b. Taiwan Organic Products. A certifying agent supervised by Taiwan's Agriculture and Food Agency (AFA) and accredited in compliance with Taiwan organic regulations must complete the NOP Import Certificate for all organic products traded under the arrangement. This statement must be included on the Import Certificate: "Certified in compliance with the terms of the AIT/TECRO-NOP/AFA Organic Equivalency Arrangement."

28.3 US/Canada Equivalence Agreement

28.3.1 The equivalence arrangement includes all USDA organic products, whether they are produced and certified in the U.S. or around the world. USDA-authorized certifying agents may not certify Canada-based operations to USDA organic standards.

28.3.2 The following US organic products may not be exported to Canada.

a. Agricultural products produced with the use of sodium nitrate shall not be sold or marketed as organic in Canada.
b. Agricultural products produced by hydroponic or aeroponic production methods shall not be sold or marketed as organic in Canada.
c. Agricultural products derived from animals (with the exception of ruminants) must be produced according to livestock stocking rates as set out in CAN/CGSB-32.310.

28.3.3 The following Canada organic products may not be exported to the US.

a. Agricultural products derived from animals treated with antibiotics shall not be marketed as organic in the United States.

28.3.4 Documentation - Compliance to the terms of the U.S.-Canada organic equivalence must be verified and the organic certificate issued by GOA must include the following attestation statement for USDA organic products exported to Canada: "Certified in compliance with the terms of the US-Canada Organic Equivalency Arrangement".

28.4 European Union

28.4.1 As of June 1, 2012, the equivalence arrangement only covers products exported from and certified in the United States or the European Union. Effective as of

28.4.2 The following U.S. organic products may not be exported to the EU

a. Apples and Pears produced using antibiotics (Antibiotic use is prohibited in the U.S. as of 21 October 2014).
b. Wine containing any nonorganic grapes or not produced using the practices and substances for winemaking in EU regulations EEC 203/2012.

28.4.3 The following EU organic products may not be exported to the U.S.

a. Agricultural products derived from animals treated with antibiotics.

b. Aquatic animals (e.g. fish, shellfish).

28.4.4 Documentation

a. USDA Organic Products. A USDA-accredited certifying agent must complete an EU import certificate for all USDA organic products traded under the arrangement. As of 19 October 2017, EU requires electronic export certificates (Certificate of Inspection (eCOI) via the Trade Control and Expert System (TRACES). A physical Certificate of Inspection must accompany the shipment or be sent directly to the importer.

b. EU Organic Products. An EU-accredited certifying agent must complete a U.S. import certificate for all EU organic products traded under the arrangement.

28.5 Korea

28.5.1 As of July 1, 2014, the arrangement covers products which:

a. Are certified to the USDA or Korean organic regulations

b. Only "processed products" as defined by the Korean Food Code may be exported.

c. Products must contain at least 95 percent organic ingredients.

d. Have their final processing (as defined in the Korean Food Code) occur in the U.S. or Korea

28.5.2 U.S. products cannot contain apples or pears produced with the use of antibiotics. (Antibiotic use is prohibited in the U.S. as of 21 October 2014)

28.5.3 Korean products may not contain livestock products produced with the use of antibiotics.

28.5.4 Documentation

a. U.S. Organic Products. Products exported to Korea under the arrangement must be accompanied by a NAQS Import Certificate of Organic Processed Foods. Certifying agents will complete the form, and return them to the operator for inclusion with their shipment of organic products. The documentation must include this statement: "Certified in compliance with the terms of the US-Korea Organic Equivalency Arrangement."

b. Korean Organic Products. Products exported to the U.S. under the arrangement must be accompanied by a NOP Import Certificate, issued by a Korean Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (MAFRA)-accredited certification body.

28.6 Switzerland

28.6.1 Beginning July 10, 2015, the arrangement covers products which:

a. Are certified to the USDA or Swiss organic regulations

b. Have their final processing occur in the U.S. or Switzerland

c. Swiss products may not contain livestock products, or any ingredient used in such products, produced with the use of antibiotics

d. Organic wine must be produced and labeled to the regulations of the importing country.

27.6.2 Documentation

a. U.S. Organic Products. A USDA-accredited certifying agent must complete a Swiss Certificate of Inspection for all USDA organic products traded under the arrangement.

b. Swiss Organic Products. A Swiss-accredited certification body must complete a NOP Import Certificate for all Swiss organic products traded under the arrangement.

28.7 India –Recognition Agreement ended by the USDA. By 12 July 2021 to continue to export to the United States, current organic operations in India will need to have applied for certification with a USDA accredited organic certifier. After 12 July 20**22**, USDA organic certification will be required to import organic products from India to the United States. By mid-March 2021, USDA certifiers will be able to list these applicants for organic certification in India in the Organic Integrity Database, to help US buyers verify that a farm or business in India has applied for NOP certification.

28.7.1 Recognition Agreement – Import Only. Agreement covers all USDA organic products produced in India. The organic products must be certified to the USDA organic regulations and certified by a Indian government-accredited certifying agent.

a. Products produced under the agreement must meet all USDA Organic labeling requirements.

28.7.2 Documentation

a. Organic certificates must be issued by the certifier from Tracenet (since June 2010).

b. A Transaction Certificate issued by the certifier from Tracenet must accompany each shipment (since November 2014).

c. Standard import documentation (i.e. shipment records, purchase records - purchase order, invoice).

28.8 Israel

28.8.1 Recognition Agreement – Import Only. Agreement covers all USDA organic products produced in Israel. The organic products must be certified to the USDA organic regulations and certified by a Israeli-accredited certifying agent.

a. Products produced under the agreement must meet all USDA Organic labeling requirements.

b. Standard import documentation (i.e. shipment records, purchase records - purchase order, invoice).

28.9 New Zealand

28.9.1 Recognition Agreement – Import Only. Agreement covers all USDA organic products produced in New Zealand. The organic products must be certified to the USDA organic regulations and certified by a New Zealand government-accredited certifying agent.

a. Products produced under the agreement must meet all USDA Organic labeling requirements.

b. Standard import documentation (i.e. shipment records, purchase records - purchase order, invoice).

28.10 Mexico

28.10.1 Organic products imported to the United States must be certified to the USDA organic regulations by a USDA Organic Certifying Agent.

a. Retail product labels or stickers must state the name of the U.S. certifying agent and may use the USDA organic seal.

b. Standard import documentation (i.e. shipment records, purchase records - purchase order, invoice).

28.11 United Kingdom

28.11.1 Equivalence Arrangement – Effective January 1, 2021, the United States has an equivalence arrangement with the United Kingdom which includes Great Britain (England, Scotland, Wales) and Northern Ireland. Organic products certified to either the USDA or UK organic standards may be sold in both countries, as long as the products meet the terms of the arrangement.

a. Limited to organic products that have been raised within the US or UK, or products for which the final processing or packaging occurs within the US or UK. The equivalence arrangement only covers products certified in and exported from the US or the UK.

b. Allowed product categories: Crops, Wild Crops, Livestock, Processed Products.

c. Wine must be labelled according to the organic regulations of the destination country.

d. Agricultural products derived from animals treated with antibiotics and Aquatic animals (e.g., fish, shellfish) may NOT be exported to the US as certified organic.

28.11.2 Exports of USDA Organic Products

a. **To the UK-Great Britain** – GOA must issue a paper Certificate of Inspection (COI) before products leave the US and send to the UK Port Health Authority (PHA)/Local Authority (LA), usually by courier. The PHA/LA can endorse a copy if the original hasn't arrived in order to clear the goods, though the original will need to be endorsed within 10 working days for the consignment to be sold on as organic.

b. **To the UK-Northern Ireland** – Pursuant to the Northern Ireland/Ireland Protocol, the EU organic regulations will remain applicable in Northern Ireland. Exports from the U.S. to Northern Ireland will continue to adhere to the EU procedures and will continue to require an EU COI. A USDA-accredited certifying agent must complete an electronic Certificate of Inspection (COI) through the European Union's Trade Control and Expert System (TRACES) before the product leaves the U.S. Certain edits to the COI may only be made within 10 days of issuing the original COI.

U.S. organic businesses that encounter issues with USDA organic exports arriving in the UK are encouraged to work with their UK importer. You may also email the UK authorities at Organic.Imports@defra.gov.uk.

28.11.3 Imports of UK Organic Products - A certifying agent supervised by the UK's Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) and accredited in compliance with the UK's organic regulations must complete a U.S. National Organic

Program (NOP) Import Certificate, Form 2110-1, for all UK organic products traded under the arrangement whether originating from Great Britain or Northern Ireland.

28.11.4 Labeling - Exported products must meet the labelling requirements in the destination country. For UK retail products destined for the U.S., the labels must state the name of the UK certifying agent.

Visit the Government of the UK website for more information about labelling. https://www.gov.uk/guidance/trading-and-labelling-organic-food-from-1-january-2021.