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# OrganicFarmNZ

## Compliance Procedures

### Incorporates:

- General certification requirements for all producers
- Certification systems for:
  - Orchards
  - Crops
  - Livestock
  - Non-primary production

The production rules for Organic Farm NZ are those of BIOGRO NZ thus these standards should be read in-conjunction with the BIOGRO NZ Standards Production Modules for Orchards, Livestock and Crops and Annexes 2-5.

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# Organic Farm NZ Standards Certification System

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## 1 Scope and purpose

The ORGANIC FARM NZ standards contain the systems and audit requirements for the certification of Producers registered with ORGANIC FARM NZ.

The ORGANIC FARM NZ Certification Standards specify the systems and audit requirements that must be met by all:

- organic producers and producer groups certified by a ORGANIC FARM NZ Regional Body; and
- organic producers registered by a ORGANIC FARM NZ Regional Body to use the ORGANIC FARM NZ trademark/logo.

All ORGANIC FARM NZ certified organic produce shall be produced in accordance with this standard.

Information on the requirements of the ORGANIC FARM NZ Production Standards for inputs to organic production and organic production systems can be obtained from other ORGANIC FARM NZ modules.

## References

This standard refers to the following documents:

- *Employment Relations Act 2000*
- *Health and Safety in Employment Act 1992*
- *Resource Management Act 1991*

## Definitions

ORGANIC FARM NZ

*Annex One: Glossary of Terms.*

RMA Resource Management Act  
Pod Producer group

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## **Certification of primary producers of orchards, crops, and livestock.**

**Overview of certification (flow chart)**  
(To be developed)

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## Registration year Conversion to Organic (C0)

ORGANIC FARM NZ certification for primary producers of plant and livestock products usually takes a minimum of 36 months from the start of registration to harvest of a fully certified product. Retrospective consideration of the organic certification status of an applicants property can be applied for under section 4.2.8 (b) (iii).

Registration is not automatic just because fees are paid and audits carried out. Applicants must demonstrate the implementation of a positive management system based on the principles and requirements of the ORGANIC FARM NZ Certification Standards and BIO-GRO NZ Production Standards (Livestock, Crops and Orchards).

### Overview of the registration year

The applicant obtains the ORGANIC FARM NZ Certification Standards and BIO-GRO Production Standards and Applicants' Pack from their local ORGANIC FARM NZ Regional Body. If there is no established Regional Body contact the National Office.

The applicant then completes the Applicants' Pack and supplies it with all the required documentation as below.

For applicants who want to apply as individual producers they must send their application to their ORGANIC FARM NZ Regional Body. The ORGANIC FARM NZ Regional Body Certification Manager passes the application on to an appointed auditor who then arranges the initial registration audit with the applicant(s).

For applicants wanting to become certified as a member of a producer group they must send their application to their ORGANIC FARM NZ Regional Body. As part of the group audit process the applicant must also lodge a copy of their farm management plan with their producer group coordinator. The Regional Body Certification Manager will then pass the application for producer group certification back to the group coordinator. The coordinator will then arrange the initial registration audit with the applicants.

### Timing of the initial application

To ensure that any products harvested 36 months after the start of registration are eligible for full ORGANIC FARM NZ certification, applicants must submit their initial application for registration in time for their audit to be carried out and finalised, for example:

- **For individuals prior** to their last conventional harvest for crops and orchards; or
- **For individuals prior** to the start of their registration year production season for meat and dairy.
- **For Producer Groups** applications must be made collectively as per the group certification requirements.

### Information provided to the applicant by ORGANIC FARM NZ

When a ORGANIC FARM NZ Regional Body receives a request for an application, the Regional Body will send the applicant/s the following material:

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- i. the Applicants' Pack containing templates and guides for all the information specified in section 4.2.6 below;
  - ii. a schedule of fees (fees have not yet been set for ORGANIC FARM NZ).

#### **Information to be held by applicants**

Applicants must have a current copy of the ORGANIC FARM NZ Certification Standards and BIO-GRO Production Rules.

#### **Applications to a ORGANIC FARM NZ Regional Body**

Before the audit can proceed, the applicants Regional Body must receive the following from the applicant:

- a. the appropriate application fees; and
- b. completed application forms supplying a full set of information as specified in section 4.2.6 below.

The applicant must sign the application forms and information provided as being correct, and as an undertaking to comply with the requirements of the ORGANIC FARM NZ Certification Standards and BIO-GRO Production Rules.

#### **Information provided by the applicant**

The applicant provides the following information to their Regional Body by completing the forms and templates provided:

- ii. **Property maps *Form MP1- and MP2***  
The applicant must fill out maps of the entire property, drawn approximately to scale, and based on the ORGANIC FARM NZ templates provided in the applicant pack.

- iii. **Farm Management Plan Template**

The Farm Management Plan Template and following additional information must be provided as per the requirements below.

Additional information to be supplied with the management plan to include:

##### **i. Soil tests**

Soil tests are required for groups of 1-4 producers at 1 property per year and for 4-8 producers at 2 properties per year. Properties in the group must be tested until all properties have been covered or until such time as the Regional Body stops the process. To start the process the group will nominate the properties to be tested.

For individual producers each property must be tested in the first year of application.

##### **Tests required**

- At least one representative fertility analysis, including organic matter content, which is less than 12 months old; and

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- A measure of the total DDT, DDD and DDE residues in the soil for the property, carried out under a soil sampling program approved by ORGANIC FARM NZ; and
  - If pesticides prohibited by the ORGANIC FARM NZ Production Standards have been used in the last 2 years, a multi pesticide residue analysis is required on a representative composite soil sample; and
  - For properties such as orchards which have been under conventional management prior to conversion, or other properties where heavy metal contamination of soils is suspected, a heavy metal analysis for the relevant heavy metals, (e.g. arsenic, cadmium, chromium, copper, lead, mercury, nickel, and zinc), is required on a representative composite soil sample.

A qualified independent person such as an auditor or an agricultural consultant must take or supervise the taking and dispatch of the samples for residue testing for DDT, pesticides, or heavy metals. If necessary, contact the local ORGANIC FARM NZ Regional Body for a guideline on the taking of representative samples.

#### **ii. Environmental Management Planning for the whole property**

Any new operations must be identified and noted as additions to the Farm Management Plan when required as necessary in order to ensure compliance with the *Resource Management Act* District and Regional Council's Management Plans, e.g. non-grazing of riparian zones or erosion prone land, soil conservation, pollution control.

Where there is the likelihood of drift of synthetic chemical pesticides, fertilisers, or other prohibited materials from neighbouring properties then the plan must include all of the following:

- description of the steps being taken for the establishment and/or maintenance of living and/or artificial shelter as a physical barrier(s);
- setting up a buffer zone(s) between the certified crop/pasture and the source of any drift;
- written communications between the applicant and the neighbour(s), informing the neighbour of the potential loss of certification if prohibited materials drift onto the certified property and ideally gaining the neighbour's agreement that they will actively take steps to minimise the risk of drift by methods such as carrying out spraying, fertiliser spreading, etc. when the wind direction is away from the certified property.

Producer group members or the auditor will consider the situation and determine whether residue tests are also required to assess whether the controls defined in the plan have prevented drift.

#### **Initial audit (registration audit)**

When an initial producer group member or individual application is lodged with the applicants ORGANIC FARM NZ Regional Body and all fees are paid, the producer

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group member's application and the individual producer application will be issued to the Regional Body Certification Manager for assessment.

The Regional Body appointed Certification Manager will first conduct a document review and will contact the producer group coordinator or applicant(s) if any further information is required. After assessment by the Certification Manager the Applicant Pack information will then be forwarded to either the producer group member's group coordinator or the individual applicants auditor.

**Group Certification (POD)**

At the completion of the group peer review of a members farm, the producer group will list (if necessary) any Corrective Action Requests (CARs) detailing recommended corrective actions referenced against the standards. These CARs should be seen as signals to the Certification Panel, not all group members need to agree as to status of a CAR, if some group members identify a CAR and others not this should be reported in the Group Peer Review check list. This will also inform the applicant(s) of the C0 certification recommendation that will be made to the Certification Panel on whether the property (or any part thereof) can receive C0 certification status. The Group Peer Review Checklist, any CARs and certification recommendation will be signed by all the producer group members present to confirm their accuracy and attendance at the inspection. A copy of the checklist will be provided to the group member whose property this applies to.

**Individual Certification**

At the completion of the individual audit, the auditor provides the applicant(s) with copies of any Corrective Action Requests (CARs) detailing recommended corrective actions. The auditor will also inform the applicant(s) of the C0 certification recommendation that will be made to the Certification Panel on whether the property (or any part thereof) can receive C0 certification. The Audit Record Sheet, any CARs and certification recommendation will be signed by the applicant(s) and the auditor to confirm their accuracy. A copy of this will be provided to the applicant.

**Standards Compliance**

For both producer group members and individual applicants the onus is on them as individuals to demonstrate that they are complying with the ORGANIC FARM NZ Certification Standards and BIO-GRO Production Rules. Provision of inadequate information or the need for further visits to finalise corrective actions may lead to further fees being charged.

Applicants are encouraged to carry out self-audits prior to the audit as a beneficial management tool to assist in the early identification of non-compliances, refer to *Audit Checklists*.

**ORGANIC FARM NZ registration**

- a. **Review by the ORGANIC FARM NZ Regional Body Certification Panel**  
The group peer review or auditor's report and recommendation(s) for certification are reviewed by the Regional Body Certification Panel. The Panel advises the applicant(s) of its decision(s) in writing. Once approved,

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the applicant can be registered with their ORGANIC FARM NZ Regional Body.

**b. Registration date**

The registration start-date will usually be the date that the initial audit is finalised to the satisfaction of the Regional Body Certification Panel. Three exceptions are allowed, as follows:

**i. Compliant first audit**

If no Corrective Action Requests are raised from the first audit then the registration start-date can be set at the date on which the application was lodged with the Regional Body and all application fees were paid.

**ii. Delayed registration audit**

If the Regional Body Certification Panel is unable to schedule the audit within one month of the lodging of the application and payment of fees, then the registration start-date can be backdated. Backdating is limited to one month after the date that the application was lodged, plus any subsequent time between the audit and the closing out of any Corrective Action Requests.

**iii. Retrospective registration period**

Where the applicant can supply conclusive proof that the property has been effectively managed to the ORGANIC FARM NZ Production Standards or equivalent for a given period (usually 36 months) prior to the registration audit, then the registration start-date can be backdated as deemed appropriate by the Regional Body Certification Panel.

To qualify for this exception the applicant will have to supply full records on all farm inputs and farm management practices for the period of time that retrospective registration is being applied for. A guideline will be available from the applicants Regional Body for this. Where required, affidavits must be provided by other reputable parties such as farm consultants, farm supply representatives, Justices of the Peace, etc., to attest to the validity of the documentation. As part of the initial producer group peer review or audit, the producer group or auditor will then review this documentation and write down their recommendation(s) on any possible retrospective certification.

The final decision to accept the validity and completeness of the records and to backdate the registration start-date will be at the Certification Panels sole discretion. Review fees may be charged in addition to the normal initial application fees.

**iv. Deed of Licence**

Upon receipt of the Deed of Licence and a copy of the ORGANIC FARM NZ Code of Practice the applicant must sign the Deed of Licence and return it to their Regional Body before the registration letter can be issued.

**Labelling of Conversion to Organic produce**

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No claims of organic or certified organic status may be made for any products during the C0 Registration year. The ORGANIC FARM NZ trademark/logo cannot be used in any way as a description of any products.

The registered producer may refer to ORGANIC FARM NZ on products and in promotional information as part of their contact details using wording such as “Registered with ORGANIC FARM NZ (Name) Regional Body to commence conversion to certified organic production”. Such references must be significantly less prominent than any associated product description. All such use of the word ORGANIC FARM NZ must be approved in writing by the producers Regional Body or National Office prior to printing.

### **Conversion year 1 (C1)**

Three months before the expiry date of the registration year (C0) the producer group members and individual producer(s) will be sent an Applicants’ Pack to apply for conversion year 1 (C1). The producer must complete this and return it their Producer Group leader or in the case of individual applicants to the ORGANIC FARM NZ Regional Body. The Regional Body must receive it at least two months before the expiry date of the C0 year to ensure there is adequate time to carry out the audit.

Application documentation for conversion year 1 (C1) must include:

- i. An update to the information submitted in the previous Farm Management Plan and its associated forms. Any amendments must be clearly referenced and attached as appendices or, alternatively, the update may be a new set of documentation.
- ii. All other required information, such as:
  - *Producer Group Checklists for all group members*
  - *Form A1-13 Animal Treatment Record Sheets;*
  - *Form A1-12 Bought-in Stock Quarantine Records; and*
  - *Form A1-10 Application for Use of Restricted Inputs, etc.*

When the producer group member or individual audit application for C1 status is lodged with their ORGANIC FARM NZ Regional Body and all fees are paid, the producer group member application and the individual audit application will be issued to a Certification Co-ordinator for assessment.

The Regional Body appointed Certification Manager will first conduct a document review on the updated and new information and will contact the producer group coordinator or applicant(s) if any further information is required. After assessment by the Certification Manager the licensee(s) Applicant Pack information will then be forwarded to either the producer group members group coordinator or the individual applicants auditor who will then arrange a time for the on-site audit.

#### **C1 Group Certification**

At the completion of the group peer review of a members farm, the producer group members will list any Corrective Action Requests (CARs) referenced against the standards detailing recommended corrective actions. These CARS should be seen as signals to the Certification Panel, not all group members need to agree as to status of a CAR, if some group members identify a CAR and others not this should be reported in the Group Peer Review check list. The Group Peer Review

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Checklist, any CARs and certification recommendation will be signed by all the producer group members present to confirm their accuracy and attendance at the audit. A copy of this will be provided to the group member whose property this applies to.

#### C1 Individual Certification

At the completion of the individual audit, the auditor provides the applicant(s) with copies of any Corrective Action Requests (CARs) detailing recommended corrective actions. The auditor will also inform the applicant(s) of the C1 certification recommendation that will be made to the Certification Panel on whether the property (or any part thereof) can receive C1 certification. The Audit Record Sheet, any CARs and certification recommendation will be signed by the applicant(s) and the auditor to confirm their accuracy. A copy of this will be provided to the applicant.

#### Certification Panel Decision

On satisfactory review by the Certification Panel the applicant will be issued with certification as “in conversion to ORGANIC FARM NZ certified organic production” and “having met the requirements of the ORGANIC FARM NZ Standards for a minimum of 12 months”.

### 4.3.1 Labelling of C1 produce

Any labelling of C1 produce which refers to ORGANIC FARM NZ in any way must comply with the following requirements.

**c. Approved labels**

Products produced from the property at this stage can only be labelled as:

- “ORGANIC FARM NZ certified conversion”; and/or
- “product under conversion to organic farming certified by ORGANIC FARM NZ”; and/or
- “having met the requirements of the ORGANIC FARM NZ Standards for a minimum of 12 months”.

C1 products cannot be labelled with the ORGANIC FARM NZ logo, but can use the trademark word ORGANIC FARM NZ as part of the above phrases.

**d. Format**

No words in the phrase above shall be more prominent, e.g. by the use of bold letters, colour or size etc., than the other words in the phrase. The phrase shall appear in a colour, size and style of lettering that is no more prominent than the sales description of the product.

**e. Ingredients of agricultural origin**

In-conversion products can contain only one ingredient of agricultural origin.

**f. Other labelling requirements**

All other labelling requirements as specified in the ORGANIC FARM NZ Certification Standards shall be complied with.

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- g. Use of the ORGANIC FARM NZ label**  
Any use of, or reference to, the “ORGANIC FARM NZ Label” on labels or other printed material must be approved in writing by the producers Regional Body or National Office prior to printing.

### **Conversion year 2 (C2)**

Three months before the expiry date of the first conversion year 1 (C1) the licensee(s) will be sent an Applicants’ Pack to apply for conversion year 2 (C2). This must be completed and received by the licensee(s) Regional Body at least two months before the expiry date of the C1 year to ensure there is adequate time to carry out the audit.

Application documentation for conversion year 2 (C2) must include:

- i. An update to the information submitted in the previous Farm Management Plan and its associated forms. Any amendments must be clearly referenced and attached as appendices or, alternatively, the update may be a new set of documentation.
- ii. All other required information, such as:
  - *Producer Group Checklists for all group members*
  - *Animal Treatment Record Sheets;*
  - *Off-farm inputs;*
  - *Bought-in Stock Quarantine Records; and*
  - *Application for Use of Restricted Inputs, etc.*

When the producer group member or individual audit application for C2 status is lodged with a ORGANIC FARM NZ Regional Body and all fees are paid, the producer group member application and the individual audit application will be issued to a Certification Manager for assessment.

The Regional Body appointed Certification Manager will first conduct a document review on the updated and new information and will contact the producer group coordinator or applicant(s) if any further information is required. After assessment by the Certification Panel the licensee(s) Applicant Pack information will then be forwarded to either the producer group members group coordinator or the individual applicants auditor who will then arrange a time for the on-site audit.

#### **C2 Group Certification**

At the completion of the group peer review of a members the producer group will any Corrective Action Requests (CARs) referenced against the standards detailing recommended corrective actions. These CARS should be seen as signals to the Certification Panel, not all group members need to agree as to status of a CAR, if some group members identify a CAR and others not this should be reported in the Group Peer Review check list. The Group Peer Review Checklist, any CARs and certification recommendation will be signed by all the producer group members present to confirm their accuracy and attendance at the audit. A copy of this will be provided to the group member whose property this applies to.

#### **C2 Individual Certification**

At the completion of the individual audit, the auditor provides the applicant(s) with copies of any Corrective Action Requests (CARs) detailing recommended corrective actions. The auditor will also inform the applicant(s) of the C2

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certification recommendation that will be made to the Certification Panel on whether the property (or any part thereof) can receive C2 certification. The Audit Record Sheet, any CARs and certification recommendation will be signed by the applicant(s) and the auditor to confirm their accuracy. A copy of this will be provided to the applicant.

#### Certification Panel Decision

On satisfactory review by the Certification Panel the operation will be issued with certification as “in conversion to ORGANIC FARM NZ certified organic production” and “having met the requirements of the ORGANIC FARM NZ Standards for a minimum of 24 months”.

#### Labelling of C2 produce

Products produced from the property at the C2 stage can only be labelled as:

- “ORGANIC FARM NZ Certified Conversion”; and/or
- “product under conversion to organic farming certified by ORGANIC FARM NZ”; and/or
- “having met the requirements of the ORGANIC FARM NZ Standards for a minimum of 24 months”.

C2 products cannot be labelled with the ORGANIC FARM NZ logo, but can use the trademark word ORGANIC FARM NZ as part of the above phrases.

Labelling must comply with all the other requirements of section 4.3.1 b – e above.

#### ORGANIC FARM NZ certification

Three months before the expiry date of the conversion year 2 (C2) the licensee will be sent an Applicants' Pack to apply for ORGANIC FARM NZ certification. This must be received by the applicants Regional Body at least two months before the expiry date of the C2 year to ensure there is adequate time to carry out the audit.

Application documentation for certification with a Regional Body must include:

- i. An update to the information submitted in the previous Farm Management Plan and its associated forms. Any amendments must be clearly referenced and attached as appendices or, alternatively, the update may be a new set of documentation.
- ii. All other required information, such as:
  - *Producer Group Checklists for all group members*
  - *Animal Treatment Record Sheets;*
  - *Off-farm inputs record sheet;*
  - *Bought-in Stock Quarantine Records;* and
  - *Application for Use of Restricted Inputs, etc.*

When the producer group member or individual audit application for full ORGANIC FARM NZ certification status is lodged with a ORGANIC FARM NZ Regional Body and all fees are paid, the producer group member application and the individual audit application will be issued to a Certification Co-ordinator for assessment.

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The Regional Body appointed Certification Manager will first conduct a document review on the updated and new information and will contact the producer group coordinator or applicant(s) if any further information is required. After assessment by the Certification Manager the licensee(s) Applicant Pack information will then be forwarded to either the producer group members group coordinator or the individual applicants auditor who will then arrange a time for the on-site audit.

#### Full Group Certification

At the completion of the group peer review of a members farm, the producer group will list any Corrective Action Requests (CARs) detailing recommended corrective actions referenced against the standards. These CARs should be seen as signals to the Certification Panel, not all group members need to agree as to status of a CAR, if some group members identify a CAR and others not this should be reported in the Group Peer Review check list. The Group Peer Review Checklist, any CARs and certification recommendations will be signed by all the producer group members present to confirm their accuracy and attendance at the review. A copy of this will be provided to the group member whose property this applies to.

#### Full Individual Certification

At the completion of the individual audit, the auditor provides the applicant(s) with copies of any Corrective Action Requests (CARs) detailing recommended corrective actions. The auditor will also inform the applicant(s) of the full ORGANIC FARM NZ certification recommendation that will be made to the Certification Panel on whether the property (or any part thereof) can receive full ORGANIC FARM NZ certification. The Audit Record Sheet, any CARs and certification recommendation will be signed by the applicant(s) and the auditor to confirm their accuracy. A copy of this will be provided to the applicant.

#### Certification Panel Decision

On satisfactory review by the Certification Panel, the licensee will be issued with ORGANIC FARM NZ certification and is then licensed to apply and direct the application of the ORGANIC FARM NZ trademark and logo as specified in section 7.8 of this module.

### **Ongoing renewal audit requirements**

Three months before the expiry date of the ORGANIC FARM NZ certificate each year, the licensee(s) will be sent an Applicants' Pack to apply for renewal of ORGANIC FARM NZ certification by the licensee(s) Regional Body. The completed pack must be received by the licensee(s) Regional Body at least two months before the expiry date to ensure there is adequate time to carry out the audit.

Applications for renewal of certification must update information sent with the previous year's application. The update may be either a new set of documentation, or a clear outline of the changes that have occurred since the last application.

When the producer group member or individual audit application for renewal of ORGANIC FARM NZ certification status is lodged with the producers Regional Body and all fees are paid, the producer group member application and the individual audit application will be issued to a Certification Co-ordinator for assessment.

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The Regional Body appointed Certification Co-ordinator will first conduct a document review on the updated and new information and will contact the producer group coordinator or applicant(s) if any further information is required. After assessment by the Certification Co-ordinator the licensee(s) Applicant Pack information will then be forwarded to either the producer group members group coordinator or the individual applicants auditor who will then arrange a time for the on-site audit.

#### Group Certification

At the completion of the group peer review of a members farm, the producer group will list any Corrective Action Requests (CARs) detailing recommended corrective actions referenced against the standards. These CARs should be seen as signals to the Certification Panel, not all group members need to agree as to status of a CAR, if some group members identify a CAR and others not this should be reported in the Group Peer Review check list. The Group Peer Review Checklist, any CARs and certification recommendation will be signed by all the producer group members present to confirm their accuracy and attendance at the review. A copy of this will be provided to the group member whose property this applies to:

#### Individual Certification

At the completion of the individual audit, the auditor provides the applicant(s) with copies of any Corrective Action Requests (CARs) detailing recommended corrective actions. The auditor will also inform the applicant(s) of whether a recommendation on maintaining full ORGANIC FARM NZ of the property (or any part thereof) will be made to the Certification Panel. The Audit Record Sheet, any CARs and certification recommendation will be signed by the applicant(s) and the auditor to confirm their accuracy. A copy of this will be provided to the applicant.

#### Certification Panel Decision

On satisfactory review by the Certification Panel, the licensee will be issued with a renewed ORGANIC FARM NZ certification and will be able to continue to apply and direct the application of the ORGANIC FARM NZ Label and logo.

#### **Random and surveillance audits**

In addition to the annual audit, each licensee may receive random audit(s) or surveillance audit(s) during the year. Random and surveillance audits will usually be carried out with minimal prior notification, and samples of produce may be taken for residue testing where contamination is a concern, e.g. where there may be spray drift from neighbouring properties, or to follow up on complaints. Any such tests, if required, will be at the expense of the licensee. Any findings of concern and the need for any new audit or tests will be discussed with the licensee at the time.

#### **Partial certification**

A property may be awarded partial certification when certification of a clearly defined designated portion of the property is considered an appropriate means of facilitating and encouraging the conversion of the entire property to ORGANIC

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FARM NZ Production Standards. Partial certification of a property is viewed as a stepping stone to the entire property becoming certified. A condition of partial certification is the implementation of a plan, agreed with by the licensee's ORGANIC FARM NZ Regional Body, to convert the entire property to certified status over time. As a condition of partial certification, it is expected that each year there will be positive progress towards the conversion of the whole property, such as a reduction in chemical usage on the uncertified portion of the property.

Where land has been certified and is then withdrawn from certification, either to be returned to conventional production or through loss of its certified status on instruction by the producer's Regional Body, then the Regional Body reserves the right to terminate the certification of the entire property and/or all land under the same licensee's management.

Where the licensee has other production units under their daily management, those units producing uncertified crops or products may also be subject to audit under the same conditions as for parallel production. ORGANIC FARM NZ expects these additional uncertified production units to be converted in time, though family interests or commercial/market considerations will be taken into account.

#### **1.1.1 Partially certified livestock**

ORGANIC FARM NZ certification will never be obtained for the meat of uncertified livestock (with the exception of up to 7 day-old calves and up to 2 day-old chicks) brought on to the certified property. After the required quarantine period plus an additional 12 months, uncertified livestock will gain partial certification. This means that their progeny and/or their products (other than meat), such as milk and wool, will have ORGANIC FARM NZ certification, refer *Module 4.3 Livestock Production BIO-GRO Production Rules*.

#### **1.2 Parallel production**

Parallel production is the growing, harvesting, processing, or storage by a licensee of at least two of the following:

- a. ORGANIC FARM NZ certified produce;
- b. conversion C2 produce;
- c. conversion C1 produce;
- d. registration C0 produce; or
- e. conventional produce.

A producer is not allowed to engage in parallel production of conventional and ORGANIC FARM NZ certified produce on the same property when it occurs within the same time period, relates to the same kind of produce, the produce is not clearly different by type, breed or cultivar characteristics, and the licensee wishes the produce having the higher status to retain that status.

Parallel production of the same types of products from differing areas of a property with different levels of ORGANIC FARM NZ certification requires prior written approval from the licensee's Regional Body and extra surveillance audits may be required. The requirement for these extra surveillance audits is solely at the discretion of the Regional Body, and if required may incur extra fees.

#### **1.9 Extension of scope to include non-primary production**

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Where a primary producer's operation includes non-primary production activities such as processing, storage or retailing of their own primary produce, then they can apply to their Regional Body to extend the scope of their certification to include this non-primary production. The relevant Applicant Packs may be obtained from the producers Regional Body, and the fees for extended scope are detailed in the Criteria for Fee Reductions for Multiple Properties/Operations.

#### **1.10 Certification of primary production other than orchards, crops, and livestock**

The certification systems for honey, aquaculture, wild and natural products, and traditional agriculture are detailed in the relevant modules of the BIO-GRO Production Rules.

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## Principles of sustainable land management

### Introduction

Through an absence of artificial inputs, organic production aims to minimise the potential adverse effects of farming on the environment, both on-farm and off-farm. Organic producers also need to address the wider issues of natural resource sustainability, as outlined below. These need to be assessed not only in relation to the maintenance of future farm production potential but also in-line with market access issues, consumer demand, and the influences of each on the economic and social sustainability of organic production units.

### Resource Management Act requirements

All primary producers in New Zealand are obliged to meet the requirements of section 5 (2) of the *Resource Management Act 1991*(RMA), which defines the sustainable management of natural and physical resources such as land to mean:

*“managing the use, development, and protection of natural and physical resources in a way, or at a rate, that enables people and communities to provide for their social, economic and cultural well being and for their health and safety while-*

- a) Sustaining the potential of natural and physical resources (excluding minerals) to meet the reasonably foreseeable needs of future generations; and*
- b) Safeguarding the life-supporting capacity of air, water, soil and ecosystems; and*
- c) Avoiding, remedying or mitigating any adverse effects of activities on the environment.”*

The principle way in which the concept of sustainable management in the RMA is promoted is through District and Regional Council Policy Statements and Plans. ORGANIC FARM NZ producers must be in legal compliance with their local District and Regional Council Policy Statements and Plans. Failure by a ORGANIC FARM NZ producer to comply with RMA legal requirements will mean that certification by a ORGANIC FARM NZ Regional Body is not possible.

### Sustainable land management guidelines

Licensees must demonstrate their adoption of an ongoing management strategy designed to:

- a. Embrace management practices that maintain or enhance the quality of soils, water and air.
- b. Avoid, mitigate or remedy land-related hazards, such as:
  - i. damage to soil structure;

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- ii. pollution of soil, air and water;
    - iii. flooding;
    - ii. subsidence; and
    - v. erosion.
  - c. Encourage maximum biodiversity on their properties, through protecting natural areas and managing pests and weeds that threaten this biodiversity.
  - d. Maintain cultural values associated with land and water, including the relationship of Maori and their traditions with their ancestral lands, water sites, waahi tapu, and other taonga.
  - e. Maintain aesthetic, ecological and conservation values related to land and water.
  - f. Provide habitats in which stock can be raised in comfort and with minimal stress.
  - g. Minimise wastage, through appropriate recycling and energy conservation practices.

## **Sustainable land management requirements**

### **Introduction**

Issues that pose a threat to the sustainability of the farm/business's natural resources must be identified in the Farm Management Plan. Future strategies to deal with these issues in compliance with the ORGANIC FARM NZ Production Standards must be developed and presented. A means of managing and monitoring these must be included in the sections of the Farm Management Plan that provide the Environmental Management Plan.

### **Requirements of the Farm Management Plan and its associated Sector Sheets**

A program of work will be outlined which demonstrates the intention to address the following issues over a given period of time. Progress will be reviewed by the producers Regional Body Certification Panel at each annual audit.

- h. Soil conservation**
  - i. On the farm map, highlight areas of the farm where "soils require specific management", i.e. where soils vulnerable to structural damage, e.g. pugging, compaction, poor drainage, wind-blow, gully erosion, slipping etc., are located.
  - ii. For good soil management, land use must be matched with each soil's capability, i.e. its strengths and weaknesses. Management practices that pose a threat to the structure and long-term health of any soils must be avoided. Licensees must demonstrate a satisfactory knowledge of their soils' capabilities. Evidence is required of management practices being carried out to minimise potential soil damage and erosion on these areas.

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- iii. The Farm Management Plan should address areas where particular attention needs to be paid to avoid soil structural damage, soil erosion and loss and declining soil health<sup>1</sup>. These areas might include, for example, certain soil types, wet valley-bottom paddocks, wind erosion prone soils in cultivated paddocks, significantly sloping land, areas already planted with conservation species or forestry, protected riparian areas etc.
  - iv. Indicators of soil quality shall be monitored and the results made available to the producers Regional Body Certification Panel, e.g. available carbon pool (Total Carbon), nutrient pool, soil fauna and flora etc.
  - v. **Natural areas**  
Successful organic farming relies on the maintenance and development of a diverse and ecologically balanced environment, e.g. the establishment of mixed species tree planting where appropriate. On the property map, identify areas of the property that are not farmed, such as gullies, tracks and road sides, the sides of watercourses, fence and hedge boundary lines, rough field corners etc. Management practices must be planned and adopted which protect these areas and encourage maximum biodiversity.

Primary native ecosystems must not be destroyed, e.g. forests or wetlands.

- i. **Water quality and availability:**  
Some farming practices have the potential to harm the aquatic environment, both on and off the farm. Adoption of management strategies that minimise the potential for this harm shall be demonstrated.
  - i. Applicants must identify any management practices with the potential to reduce surface and ground water quality, and develop alternative strategies.
  - ii. Applicants must be able to demonstrate an awareness of potential adverse effects to surface and groundwater quality from practices being carried out on the property. They shall identify long-term remedial strategies that are being adopted to protect water and aquatic environments, e.g. preventing stock access, development of riparian margins, avoidance of discharges and pollution run-off, leaching, etc.
  - iii. Where irrigation is practiced a policy of “optimum irrigation application rates” should be adopted. If requested, the manager must be able to demonstrate how they calculate “optimum irrigation application rates” for each crop and soil type. The manager must also be able to provide information on how irrigation rates are controlled and monitored.

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<sup>1</sup> Advice on erosion and riparian margin management, and in some cases also financial assistance is available from many Regional Councils.

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- vi. **Recycling and energy use**  
Organic farming promotes the recycling of resources and minimum reliance on brought-in products.
- i. **Recycling** must be demonstrably carried out wherever practicable.
  - ii. **Energy conservation.** The applicant must demonstrate positive energy conservation.
  - iii. **Choice of suppliers.** Where a choice of suppliers is available the applicant must identify, and thus support, those adopting the most environmentally responsible strategies.
  - iv. **Greenhouse gas emissions** must be actively minimised by such things as avoiding burning of waste.

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## **Certification of non-primary producers**

This section details the certification process for non-primary producers including processors, stores, wholesalers, retailers and exporters. It also includes the approval process for packhouses and service providers, which are “approved”, not “certified”.

Certification is not automatic just because fees are paid and audits carried out. Applicants must demonstrate the implementation of positive management systems that will clearly protect the integrity of all certified organic products.

### **Initial application**

#### **Obtaining Standards and Applicants’ Pack**

The first step in applying to a ORGANIC FARM NZ Regional Body for certification/approval is to obtain a current copy of the relevant modules of the ORGANIC FARM NZ Certification Standards and BIOGRO production Rules for the appropriate areas of production and an Applicants’ Pack from the applicants Regional Body.

#### **Information provided to the applicant by ORGANIC FARM NZ**

Once a request for an application has been received by the Regional Body, the applicant will be sent the following:

- i. the Applicants’ Pack;
- ii. a schedule of fees; and

#### **Information to be held by applicants**

Applicants must have a current copy of the relevant modules of the ORGANIC FARM NZ Certification Standards.

#### **Applications to a Regional Body**

Before the audit can proceed, the applicants Regional Body must receive the following from the applicant(s):

- a. the appropriate application fees; and
- b. completed application forms, supplying the full set of information as specified in section 6.1.5 below.

The applicant(s) must sign the application forms and information provided as correct and as an undertaking to comply with the requirements of the ORGANIC FARM NZ Certification Standards.

#### **Information provided by the applicant**

The applicant provides the following information to their Regional Body with the completed application forms:

- a. Documentation of all organic production processes, signed by the day-to-day manager of the operation to be certified, as a guarantor that the information is correct.

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- b. A site plan and floor plan of the entire operation, drawn to scale, and clearly showing the equipment and processes that are to be used. These plans and the associated documentation should clearly show the processing flow from the receipt and storage of all ingredients/inputs through to the production and dispatch of the final product(s).
  - c. A complete chain of custody must be demonstrated for all certified products from the certified producer(s) of all ingredients/inputs through to the final certified product(s).
  - d. Where there is processing of certified lines of different status and/or certified lines and conventional lines, this is classed as parallel processing, and procedures must be provided that demonstrate that:
    - i. all organic ingredients/inputs and partially finished and completely processed organic products are identified and separated from conventional products and protected from contamination or mixing; and
    - ii. all equipment, machinery and contact surfaces are cleaned prior to processing runs of organic lines; and
    - iii. staff are aware of the importance of maintaining the integrity of certified organic products.

#### **Initial audit**

As soon as the initial application is lodged with the applicants Regional Body and the relevant fees are paid, the application will be issued to an auditor.

The auditor will first conduct a document review and will contact the applicant if any further information is required before the on-site audit. The auditor then arranges to visit the facility and interview the applicant, inspect the operation and examine any necessary documents and paperwork.

The initial audit will comprise more than one on-site visit where different aspects of the audited operation are carried out on different days, e.g. meat processors may carry out preparation, killing and boning at different times. If more than one visit is required additional fees may be charged at the discretion of the Regional Body.

The onus is on the applicant to prove that they are complying with the ORGANIC FARM NZ Standards. Provision of inadequate information or the need for further visits to finalise corrective actions may lead to further fees being charged.

At the completion of the audit, the auditor will provide the applicant with copies of any Corrective Action Requests (CARs) detailing recommended corrective actions. The auditor will also inform the applicant of the recommendation that will be made to the Certification Panel.

Applicants are encouraged to carry out self-audits prior to the audit as a beneficial management tool to assist in the early identification of non-compliances, refer to *Annex Six: Audit Checklists*.

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## **ORGANIC FARM NZ Regional Body certification/approval**

The auditor's report and recommendation are reviewed by the Regional Body Certification Panel, who then informs the applicant in writing of their decision. Once certified/approved, the applicant will be required to sign the Deed of Licence and will be issued with a copy of the ORGANIC FARM NZ Code of Practice. On returning the signed Deed of Licence, the applicant will be issued with ORGANIC FARM NZ certification and will be licensed to apply and direct the application of the ORGANIC FARM NZ label and logo.

### **Surveillance audits**

Further surveillance audits will be carried out as required either before or after the issuing of certification to check on specific aspects of production, particularly where there is parallel processing.

In the case of processors and packhouses, audits of the first organic run will be required in addition to the audit of the procedures, unless these can be carried out together. The need for ongoing audits of organic runs is at the sole discretion of the licensees Regional Body.

Where these additional surveillance audits are required, licensees must provide auditors at least 5 days notice of the commencement of the pending organic run. Additional fees may be charged if less notice is provided.

### **Ongoing renewal audit requirements**

Three months before the expiry date of the ORGANIC FARM NZ certificate each year, the licensee will be sent an Applicants' Pack to apply for renewal of their ORGANIC FARM NZ certification/approval. The completed pack must be received by the licensees Regional Body at least two months before the expiry date to ensure there is adequate time to carry out the audit.

On receipt of the application and fee by the Regional Body, the auditor will conduct a document review on the updated information and will contact the licensee if any other information is required. The auditor will then arrange a time for the on-site audit.

On satisfactory completion of the audit and Certification Panel review, the licensee will be issued with a renewal of their ORGANIC FARM NZ certification/approval and will be able to continue to apply and direct the application of the ORGANIC FARM NZ trademark/logo.

In addition to the annual audit, certified and approved licensees may receive random audit(s) or surveillance audit(s) during the year. Random audits or surveillance audits may be carried out with minimal prior notification. Surveillance audits will usually be targeted at specific areas of concern, such as parallel processing. Any findings of concern or the need for the audit or residue tests will be discussed with the licensee at the time.

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## **Labelling of ORGANIC FARM NZ certified products**

All label claims must comply with the requirements of section 7.8 of this module.  
For specific labelling requirements for processed products, see section 4.5 of *Module 4.4 Processing Standard*.

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## **General certification requirements: All primary and non-primary producers**

### **Deed of Licence/Code of Practice**

ORGANIC FARM NZ Regional Bodies can issue certification to licensees, and this specifies the person(s) who has signed the Deed of Licence, i.e. the authorised person, such as the day-to-day manager, nominated by the licensee. The certification also specifies the operation and the products.

The Code of Practice will be issued at the completion of each year's audit. This will act as a reminder of both the Regional Body and the licensees' responsibilities for the coming twelve-month certification period.

The licensee must sign the Deed of Licence as proof of an undertaking to carry out all operations in accordance with the ORGANIC FARM NZ Certification and Production Standards, and to accept the licensing disputes procedure, refer to *Annex Five: Appeals Procedure and Suspension of Licence*. The licensee must also countersign the Group Peer Review Checklist or Audit Record Sheet and any Corrective Action Requests, which they will also receive a copy of at the time.

The licensee must have full day-to-day management control over all aspects of the certified operation.

### **Period of validity of certification**

Certificates are valid for a period of twelve months, subject to continued satisfactory performance by the licensee.

#### **1.11 Quality management**

Both primary and non-primary production operations must have a high standard of management, and must present a positive public image for certified organic production.

The licensee must maintain a quality management system which ensures that any certified products sold are of a standard acceptable to the consumer and do not bring the ORGANIC FARM NZ label into disrepute.

### **Contractual obligations regarding change of procedures, facilities, or management**

The licensee is the guarantor that production will continue according to the ORGANIC FARM NZ Production Standards and according to the documented procedures. The licensee undertakes to promptly inform their Regional Body verbally and in writing, if any changes to the procedures occur. If the manager, farm/facility or agreed production criteria is to change, then the Regional Body must be informed prior to these changes occurring. The licence to use the ORGANIC FARM NZ label is suspended unless the new conditions are approved in writing by the licensee's Regional Body.

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### **Addition of new products, i.e. scope extension**

The licensee can apply to their Regional Body to have extra products added to the certificate, subject to appropriate documentation being supplied, and a documentation review and (if required) extra audits being carried out as determined by the Regional Body.

### **Change of ownership**

#### **Property ownership/management changes**

The certificate is not transferable.

When the management and/or ownership of a property or site changes, the ORGANIC FARM NZ certificate becomes void. The new manager/owner may then apply for certification under their own name. Transference of certification is not guaranteed and is subject to a satisfactory audit by the Regional Body. A Regional Body will only accept transference of a license where the new licensee can demonstrate to the Regional Body's satisfaction that they have adequate knowledge of organic management and the associated skills. Where this knowledge or these skills are lacking, a Regional Body will consider transference only where inexperienced new managers/owners of primary production operations have an existing ORGANIC FARM NZ -approved manager, such as the previous owner, involved in the day-to-day management control of the operation for at least one year.

#### **Product ownership changes**

Certified products retain their certification as long as it can be proved that responsibility and ownership of the product does not move to an uncertified operator at any stage during its production. Certification will end:

- a. at the point the product leaves the responsibility of a certified operator or sub-licensee; and/or
- b. where the licensee's Regional Body has not been provided with satisfactory evidence to demonstrate that the integrity of the product has been retained.

All stages of production and handling must be able to be audited to maintain this chain of custody, including sub-licensees for transport, storage, packing etc.

### **Economic implications**

When making a licensing decision, a ORGANIC FARM NZ Regional Body cannot consider the potential economic consequences for the licensee.

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## Labelling

The licensee responsible for the production of organic products must be identifiable on the label. All labelling on ORGANIC FARM NZ certified products must meet the requirements of the labelling regulations in New Zealand law and must also carry:

- a. the licensee's ORGANIC FARM NZ licence number; and
- b. the name and physical address of the licensee as a safeguard to the consumer and producer. In certain cases, prior written approval can be given for just the ORGANIC FARM NZ licence number to be shown.

All proposed labelling using the ORGANIC FARM NZ trademark/logo, must be supplied to the licensee's Regional Body office for written approval prior to printing.

Where a product passes through a change of ownership, the final licensee in the fully certified chain of custody is the only entity required to show the ORGANIC FARM NZ licence number on the label.

No ORGANIC FARM NZ licensee may label a ORGANIC FARM NZ certified product, which is within the scope of their ORGANIC FARM NZ certification, as organic or certified organic or certified conversion without also including the ORGANIC FARM NZ trademark/logo on the label and complying with all the other requirements of this section.

## Export requirements

ORGANIC FARM NZ is not an export standard. Producers wishing to export must be registered and certified by one of the certification agencies which provide this service such as BIOGRO NZ, Demeter or CERTENZ.

## Genetically modified/engineered organisms

The use of genetic engineering or genetically modified organisms (GMOs) is expressly prohibited for the production of ORGANIC FARM NZ certified products. No level of GMO contamination, whether accidental or otherwise, of crops, animals, food products, land or water is acceptable on a ORGANIC FARM NZ certified property. It is now known that there has already been widespread GMO contamination of conventional and organic crops in North America, for example, in open pollinated crops such as canola, soya bean and corn. Where GMO contamination has been proven to occur in a ORGANIC FARM NZ certified product or property then that product and the property (or part thereof if it can be proven that the contamination can be contained) automatically loses ORGANIC FARM NZ certification. The responsibility is solely on producers to ensure that they do not use GMO contaminated seed, animals, other products or suffer contamination from off farm GMO pollution and thereby lose ORGANIC FARM NZ certification.

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## **1.12 Employment, health and safety, and social justice**

All licensees operating in New Zealand must comply with the requirements of the *Employment Relations Act 2000*, and the *Health and Safety in Employment Act 1992*.

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## The Producer Group and Individual Audit Process

There are two different ORGANIC FARM NZ certification processes, one for producer group members and the other for individual applicants.

### **Producer Group audit process**

Producer group members go through a certification process that involves a peer review of each member's property by all members of the producer group. The date of the producer group registration audit each year is facilitated by the group coordinator in consultation with the Regional Body Certification Co-ordinator.

All of the producer group members properties are visited for audit and the group members take turns to facilitate the peer review of another member's property and operations. This peer review involves carrying out an on site inspection while filling out the Group Peer Review Checklist, assessing the relevant Farm Management Plan and section 8 issues outlined below from 8.1 to 8.4.3.

The peer review is also of the applicant/licensee and their management system(s), including records, the property, the operation and the product. The applicant/licensee and anyone else with day-to-day responsibility for and management control of the operation must be in attendance during the audit.

The applicant/licensee must give their peer reviewer and all other members of the producer group present at the time access to storage and production premises at all times and to all areas to be covered under the licence, as well as to the accounts and relevant supporting documents (as required). The applicant/licensee must provide their Regional Body and group coordinator with any information deemed necessary for the purposes of all audits, including annual, surveillance or random audits.

The applicant/licensee has the right to choose their peer reviewer, and if they wish to consider a peer reviewer other than the one who is assigned to their application, then they should discuss this with their group coordinator and if necessary their Regional Body Certification Manager. The group coordinator is responsible for administering the certification documentation and passing on a copy of all members peer review ORGANIC FARM NZ certification documentation to the Regional Body.

### **Individual audit process**

For the individual applicant/licensee a ORGANIC FARM NZ Regional Body auditor carries out the audits of their property and operations. The auditor arranges to visit the property(s) and to interview the applicant/licensee. The audit is of the applicant/licensee and their management system(s), including records, the property, the operation and the product. The applicant/licensee and anyone else with day-to-day responsibility for and management control of the operation must be in attendance during the audit. Auditors carry Regional Body identification and provide this on request.

Applicants/licensees must give the Regional Body auditors access to storage and production premises at all times and to all areas to be covered under the licence, as well as to the accounts and relevant supporting documents.

Applicants/licensees must provide their Regional Body with any information deemed necessary for the purposes of all audits, including annual, surveillance or random audits.

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The applicant/licensee has the right to choose their auditor, and if they wish to consider auditors other than the one who is assigned to their application, then they should discuss this with their Regional Body Certification Panel or National Office when the Regional Body has yet to establish the certification functions.

### **Applicant assessment**

The applicant assessment ensures that the manager has sufficient knowledge of the requirements of the ORGANIC FARM NZ Certification and Production Standards to ensure that practices will remain compliant at all times. The active implementation of the Production Standards is also assessed. During the assessment, the information contained in the application forms is clarified and verified as to:

- a. its compliance with the ORGANIC FARM NZ Production Standards; and
- b. its accurate reflection of the daily operations.

### **Operation assessment**

The operation assessment is an inspection tour of the property. It is carried out to examine any production and management system protocols, and to determine that they are being complied with.

Protocols approved by ORGANIC FARM NZ and the applicants Regional Body to protect the integrity of certified produce must be followed faithfully at all times. Failure to do so, even in small respects, may jeopardize certification status as the Regional Body may consider such failure to be evidence that adherence to protocols is not reliable.

Storage of prohibited materials (apart from interim animal health remedies) on the property is prohibited, except for partially certified properties. On partially certified properties these materials must be segregated in storage from materials used in the certified area.

### **Additional analytical tests**

At the request of the applicants Regional Body the applicant will undertake additional analytical tests on soil, water, plant or product. Additional analytical tests will be required at any time that the Regional body has reason to suspect the use of unauthorised products, and may be required at other times as part of on-going random audit requirements.

Any such tests are at the expense of the applicant/licensee except where they are part of the ORGANIC FARM NZ Certification Standards and BIOGRO Production Rules ongoing random audit requirement.

Tests showing no detectable prohibited material in the product are not necessarily evidence that the ORGANIC FARM NZ Certification Standards have been followed.

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## **Record keeping**

All records relating to production, inputs and sales may be requested and must be available during the audit.

## **Past production levels and methods**

The group peer reviewer or auditor may examine the records of past production levels and production methods used on the property/operation.

## **Inputs**

Records must be kept which enable the applicants/licensees Regional Body to trace the origin, nature and quantities of all raw materials and livestock brought in, and the use of such materials.

## **Sales**

Records must be kept of the nature, quantities and consignees of all certified products sold. Quantities sold direct to the final consumer shall be able to be accounted for on a daily basis.

### **1.13 Peer Review & Audit findings**

Applicants/licensees must countersign their Group Peer Review Checklist or Audit Record Sheet, any CARs and recommendation(s).

#### **Right of Appeal on Peer Review & Audit**

If any applicant does not agree with their peer review or individual audit, CARs and/or recommendation(s) regarding their property then they can state their case in a written submission and send it to their Regional Body Certification Panel for consideration. This submission must be received by the Regional Body within ten working days on completion of the applicant's audit. Sending a submission within the specified time limit also entitles the applicant to speak to their submission at the meeting where the Certification Panel deals with their application.