Welcome to

Florida Small Farms and Alternative Enterprises

CONFERENCE

Transitioning to USDA Organic Certification
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For more information on Small Farms, visit our website at: http://smallfarms.ifas.ufl.edu/ or contact your local County Extension Agent.

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- What records do I need to keep?
- What's the cost to certify?
- How do I farm organically?
- What is organic?
- Is it too expensive to certify organic?
- How do I market my organic products?
- Why transition?
- How do I become certified?
- How do I transition?
- How can I understand the standards?
What is Organic?

A Production System...

managed to respond to site-specific conditions
integrating cultural, biological, and mechanical practices
to foster cycling of resources
promote ecological balance
and conserve biodiversity

USDA definition
As of the end of 2012...

17,750 U.S. organic farms & processing facilities were certified.

$31.4 billion U.S. organic industry!

$63.8 billion Worldwide sales

*This data is from the OTA 2012 Survey Report*
Florida Agriculture generates $7.701 billion of products.

2nd leading producer of fresh fruits & vegetables in the country.

*This data is from the 2012 US Census of Agriculture*
210 farms out of 47,740 farms are organic.
The average age of Florida farmers is now 59.8 years.

Over 60% of conventional Florida farmers have considered organic production.

*This data is from the 2012 US Census of Agriculture

*This data is from the FOG· SCBG 2009 grant.
Why Transition to USDA Certified Organic Production?
§205.103
Record keeping

Fully disclose all activities and transactions of the certified operation in sufficient detail to be readily understood and audited.

e.g. purchase invoices, field activity records, input application, spray records, planting records, harvest, and sales records.
§205.201
Organic System Plan

Description of:
- Management practices and procedures
- Record keeping system
- List of inputs in use

QCS Application = OSP
§205.202
Land requirements

- Managed organically per regulations.
- Have had no prohibited substances applied to it for a period of 3 years.
- Have distinct, defined boundaries and buffer zones to prevent unintended application of prohibited substances.
§205.205 Crop Rotation

"A planned pattern or sequence in successive crop years so that crops of the same species or family are not grown repeatedly without interruption in the same field"

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Field Number</th>
<th>Crop</th>
<th>Plant Notation</th>
<th>NBR 1</th>
<th>NBR 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Sod &amp; Cover</td>
<td>25,000</td>
<td>20,000</td>
<td>10,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Green Manure</td>
<td>45,000</td>
<td>35,000</td>
<td>20,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Catch Crop</td>
<td>27,000</td>
<td>22,000</td>
<td>15,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Hay &amp; Berse</td>
<td>35,000</td>
<td>30,000</td>
<td>25,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sod &amp; Cover</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

- Sod, cover crops, green manure crops, and catch crops that...
  - maintain or improve soil organic matter
  - pest management
  - manage nutrients
  - provide erosion control

Perennial cropping systems employ alley cropping, intercropping, and hedgerows... in lieu of crop rotation.
**Must implement a crop rotation plan!**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Field</th>
<th>Crop</th>
<th>Season</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Rye Aisles</td>
<td>Winter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Potatoes</td>
<td>Spring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sudex/Soybeans</td>
<td>Summer</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Garlic</td>
<td>Fall</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Late Squash and Beans</td>
<td>Winter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Wheat/Crimson Clover</td>
<td>Spring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Summer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Cabbage and Kale</td>
<td>Winter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Buckwheat</td>
<td>Spring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cabbage and Kale</td>
<td>Summer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Fall</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Rye and Clover</td>
<td>Winter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Spring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Peppers/Eggplant</td>
<td>Summer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Oats/Winter Peas</td>
<td>Fall</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sod, cover crops, green manure crops, and catch crops that...

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Perennial cropping systems employ alley cropping, intercropping, and hedgerows... in lieu of crop rotation
§205.204 Seeds and Planting stock

What must be organic?

- Organic seeds to produce edible sprouts.
- Annual seedlings- unless a temporary variance is granted.

When can non-organic be used?

- Untreated non-GMO seeds and planting stock may be used when an equivalent variety is not commercially available.
- Non-organic perennial planting stock must be managed organically for 1 year before it can be represented, labeled, and sold as organic.
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§205.203 Soil Fertility and Nutrient Management

Soil and Crop Fertility Management

- Biological:
  Cover crops, compost, animal products

- Mechanical:
  Ground rock: lime, phosphate, greensand, etc.

- Cultural:
  Rotations, legumes, contour plowing, etc.
Soil and Crop Fertility Management

Compost and manure use

- Natural resources
- Conservation practice
- Water quality and sources
Animal Manure Usage

- Soil contact: 120 days before harvest
- No direct soil contact: 90 days before harvest
Composting

A managed process...

that combines plant and animal materials
with an initial C:N ratio between 25:1 and 40:1

• Static pile: between 131F and 170F for 3 days

• Windrow: 131F and 170F for 15 days, turned at least 5 times

Keep records and take temperatures!!
Crop Management

§205.206 Crop Pest, Weed, and Disease

How do you confront challenges?

- Weed Management
- Pest Management
- Disease Management

Evaluation of all areas
Weed Management

What are the problem weeds on your farm?

- Cultivation
- Mulching
- Plastic mulch must be removed at season's end
- Natural materials decompose to improve soil
- Flame weeding
- Rotations and crop timing
Pest Management

Systems approach
  • Rotations, cover crops, diversity, attracting beneficials

Limited use of OMRI and WSDA approved products
  • Bt for cabbage worms
  • Insecticidal Soap for aphids

Hand picking and trap cropping

  Monitoring (scouting) is most important!
Disease Management

- Disease resistant varieties
- Clean equipment and greenhouses
- Rotations to break disease cycles
- Water management
  - Good drainage and air flow
- Proper fertility management
What Fertility or Pest Control Input Can I Use?

§205.601 Synthetic substances allowed for use in organic crop production

§205.602 Nonsynthetic substances prohibited for use in organic crop production

OMRI LISTED
For Organic Use

No new installations of treated lumber

Sewage sludge is prohibited!

Always contact your certifier to approve inputs!
Colorado Potato Beetle Beater Concentrate

Kills Colorado Potato Beetle
Controls certain insects in vegetable gardens

ACTIVE INGREDIENT
spinosad (a mixture of spinosyn A and spinosyn D) ........ 0.5%
OTHER INGREDIENTS .......................................... 99.5%
TOTAL .......................................................... 100.0%

Keep Out Of Reach Of Children

CAUTION

Not Contents 16 FL OZ (473 ML.)

FOR ORGANIC PRODUCTION
Maintaining Organic Integrity

- Adjoining Land Use
- Adequate buffers
- Split operations
- Prevent commingling
- Storage of crops including pest control
- Transportation and marketing
- Documented cleaning vs. dedicated organic
Marketing Your Products...

**Retail**
- Community Supported Agriculture (CSA)
- Farmer's Markets
- U-Pick

**Non-retail**
- Grocery Markets
- Brokers/Distributors
- Restaurants
100% Organic

- All ingredients and processing aids must be certified organic.

Organic

- All agricultural ingredients must be certified organic.
- Non-organic ingredients allowed per National List up to a combined total of 5% of non-organic content (excluding salt & water).

Made with Organic

- At least 70 percent of the product must be certified organic ingredients (excluding salt & water).
§205.236 Origin of Livestock

Must be managed organically from last third period of gestation for meat production

Poultry must be managed from 2nd day of life.
§205.237 All feed must be grown on certified organic land or purchased certified organic.

- Conventional dairy herd can be transitioned into organic after being managed for 1 year on certified organic pasture.
  
  *(Additions to herds must be from on-farm breeding or buying certified animals.)*

- Ruminants 30% of DMI must come from rooted pasture, 70% from certified hay, silage, or grain. Pasture grazing must be at least 120 days per year minimum *(dependent on geographical location).*
§205.238 Livestock Health Care

Preventative health care practices such as

- Breed suitability and disease/parasite resistance
- Nutrition, sanitation, appropriate housing
- Vaccines are allowed
- Antibiotics are prohibited
- Restrictions on use of parasiticides in dairy animals.
- Not allowed for meat or poultry
§205.239 Living conditions

Year round living conditions that support health and the natural behaviors of animals...
Year round access for all animals to
  • Shade and shelter
  • Outdoors
  • Exercise area
  • Direct sunlight
  • Clean water
  • Fresh air

Note animals may be temporarily denied access to the outdoors but reasons must be documented. Suitable to stage of life and environment.
§205.240 Pasture Practice

Pasture = crop
Minimize disease and parasites
Stocking density, size of pastures, type (annual or perennial)
e.g. mob grazing and MIG grazing
How do I get certified?
Stage 1: Completing and Submitting Application
Stage 2: Initial Review of Application
Stage 3: The On-site Organic Inspection
Stage 4: Final Review of the Application
Stage 5: Continuing Obligations of Certification
What's the Cost?
Total Certification Cost

- Inspection: Depending on the location, size, and complexity
- Certification: Depending on type of operation
- Assessment: 0.005 x total organic sales (0.5%)
Cost Share
Covers 75% of Certification Costs up to $750!
qcs certifications
for the global organic and ethical marketplace.
Qualified Staff.....

to assist our clients with their certification requirements
qcs certifications
for the global organic and ethical marketplace.
Resources

- OMRI listings at www.omri.org
- National Organic Program at www.ams.usda.gov/nop/
- Appropriate Technology Transfer to Rural Areas www.attra.org
- Quality Certification Services qcsinfo.org
- Florida Organic Growers foginfo.org