



**Ensuring Upper Midwest
Organic Integrity Since 2002**



**MINNESOTA CROP IMPROVEMENT
ASSOCIATION**



We are proud to be a USDA National Organic Program (NOP) accredited certifier since 2002.

We are members of the Accredited Certifiers Association (ACA).

We are located in Minnesota and focus on the Upper Midwest.

For more information contact:

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Organic Certification Services

**Local
Responsive
Committed to Service**



Organic Certification for Processors and Handlers

Many food processors and handlers see the value in organic certification as a way to better serve their customers, add value to their products, and access new markets.

The National Organic Program (NOP) requires processors/handlers to have measures in place to prevent commingling of organic and nonorganic ingredients and finished products and prevent contamination by prohibited substances.

For pest control, facilities must use a stepped approach beginning with prevention and exclusion.

Production records are required and must be available during the inspection- usually a mass balance and/or in-out audit is done.

Processors who have quality assurance programs in place, such as HACCP or SQF, usually find it very easy to add organic production to their operation.



What Are the Requirements?

Any business or organization that processes or packages organic food products must be certified under the USDA's National Organic Program. These processor/handlers must create an Organic System Plan (OSP). The OSP must include

- A description of the practices and procedures to be performed and maintained.
- A list of of each substance to be used as a production or handling input. Non-organic ingredients must be on the National List.
- A description of the record keeping system from ingredient sourcing to final product shipment.
- A description of the management practices and physical barriers established to prevent commingling of organic and non-organic products and prevent contamination by prohibited substances.
- A description of the pest management plan. Under the NOP, pest control must start with preventative measures. If these methods are not sufficient, then processor/handlers can use pest control products allowed under the NOP to control pests.

Steps to Organic Certification

1. **Apply.** Contact MCIA Organic for an application packet or download the *Organic Certification Handbook* and application forms on-line at www.mc-iaorganic.org.
2. **Read and Submit.** Read the *Organic Certification Handbook* and when ready, submit the application and fees to MCIA. The application will become your Organic System Plan (OSP). Contact MCIA if you have any questions.
3. **Review.** MCIA Organic will review the application and may contact you for additional information.
4. **Inspection.** MCIA Organic will arrange for an inspector to schedule an on-site inspection. You or a person knowledgeable about your operation must be present. The inspector will complete an inspection report, which will be sent to MCIA and to you.
5. **Review.** MCIA Organic will review the inspection report to ensure compliance with the NOP standards. There may be additional questions for you or for the inspector.
6. **Certificate.** After all final issues are satisfied and all fees are paid, MCIA Organic will issue an Organic Certificate for the products grown or processed.