

Notice to the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) accredited Certification Bodies on how to issue import certificate for products exported to the U.S. under the US-Canada Organic equivalency arrangement

To: All regulated parties under Canada Organic Regime (COR)

Date: February 5, 2024

This notice provides guidance to the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) accredited Certification Bodies (CBs) on how to issue import certificate for products exported to the U.S. under the US-Canada Organic equivalency arrangement.

Under the USDA National Organic Program (NOP)'s "Strengthening Organic Enforcement" Rule, which goes into effect on March 19, 2024, all exports to the US must be accompanied by an Import Certificate generated by the exporter's organic certification body.

For organic products certified under the Canada Organic Regime, both in Canada and outside Canada, generating the NOP Import Certificate is a responsibility of the CFIA accredited Certification Bodies.

The CFIA accredited CBs will generate import certificates in the NOP Organic GLOBAL INTEGRITY Database, by request of exporters of organic agricultural product to the U.S.

The organic products for which the CFIA accredited Certification Bodies issue import certificates are certified to the [Canadian organic standards](#) as referenced in Part 13 of the [Safe Food for Canadians Regulations](#) (SFCR).

The SFCR outlines the requirements for sending, conveying, importing or exporting of organic food commodities in accordance with SFCR.

As per s. 4.4.1 of CAN/CGSB 32.310, the operators shall maintain records and relevant supporting documentation concerning inputs and details of their use, production, preparation and transport of organic crops, livestock and products.

The operators shall maintain the organic integrity of products and shall fully record and disclose all activities and transactions in sufficient detail to be easily understood and sufficient to demonstrate compliance with this standard.

Under the Canada Organic Regime, the CFIA accredited CBs must perform products/ingredients trace back audits to verify that the integrity of the organic product is maintained. Products and/or their ingredient components must be traceable to the operators own production locations (fields/plots) or suppliers as applicable to the product and nature of the operation.

The CFIA accredited CBs have the option to issue an import certificate for every shipment or to issue an import certificate that will cover a "period of time" .

The CFIA accredited CBs shall consider the risks listed in clause [C.2.6.4 of the COR Operating Manual](#) when deciding on the frequency of issuing the import certificate and shall fully document the justification for their decision.

The CFIA accredited CBs are responsible for maintaining up-to-date certified operation data in GLOBAL INTEGRITY for those operations exporting to U.S., including the scope and products certified for each operation.

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