



# Organic Policy Statement US – EU Equivalency Arrangement

June 2012

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## EXPORT OF ORGANIC PRODUCTS INTO THE EUROPEAN UNION

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### Background

Beginning June 1, 2012, under an equivalency arrangement signed by the USDA and the European Union Commission (EU), certified organic products of the United States and the European Union can be represented as organic in each other's markets. Raw agricultural products and processed products certified to the USDA National Organic Standards are not required to have additional certification to market the products as organic in the EU.

### Requirements

After June 1, 2012, in addition to certification to the USDA organic regulations, products must meet the following requirements in order to be sold as organic in the European Union:

1. Apples and pears must be produced without antibiotics.
2. Products must travel with an EU import certificate that has been completed by a USDA-accredited certifying agent.
3. Products must be either produced within the U.S. or have had final processing or packaging occur within the U.S.

### Additional Export Requirements

In addition to meeting the organic production requirements listed above, an operation must meet state and federal Phytosanitary requirements to ship raw agricultural products out of the state of Colorado.

Please contact the CDA Phytosanitary Certification Program for further information.

### Scope

The use of antibiotics in USDA organic crop production is limited to fire blight control in apples and pears. To ensure the US-EU verification process is as simple and efficient as possible, CDA limits the scope of EU equivalency evaluations to CDA certified organic apple and pear producers and handlers.

All other CDA certified organic crops and products may be approved as compliant with the US-EU Equivalency Arrangement provided they are produced, processed or packaged in the US.

### Evaluating Producer Compliance – *Apple and Pear Producers only*

CDA program staff will review the tree fruit producer's Organic System Plan Input List as well as the most recent CDA organic inspection report to determine compliance with the US-EU Equivalency Arrangement. Use of antibiotics for tree fruit must be disclosed by the producer and reviewed by the organic inspector during an on-site inspection.

Producer compliance is granted on a crop variety basis, not overall operation basis. Parallel organic production of the same crop variety is prohibited; in order for a variety to be approved

for export, all organic production of that variety by the producers must be managed in accordance with the equivalency arrangement. This means that operations must have a system in place to physically separate and distinguish EU compliant crops from those that are certified for US markets only. Additional information may be requested to show compliance.

### **Evaluating Handler Compliance – Apple and Pear Handlers Only**

CDA program staff will review the operation’s supplier list as well as the most recent CDA organic inspection report to determine compliance with the US-EU Equivalency Arrangement. Sources of organic products must be disclosed by the producer and reviewed by the organic inspector during the on-site inspection.

Organic handlers do not have to have an entire operation or product line evaluated for export; individual varieties and suppliers may be approved under this program.

Certified handlers must keep records regarding compliance with these additional requirements as well as compliance with the USDA National Organic Standards.

### **Labeling**

For retail products, labels or stickers must state the name of the U.S or EU certifying agent and may use the USDA organic seal, the EU organic logo or both. Retail labels must include the EU assigned certifier code. The certifier code assigned to the Colorado Department of Agriculture is: US-ORG-007.

The EU does not have a labeling category for 100% organic products. These products could be labeled as “organic”.

The EU does not have a labeling category for “made with organic” products. For products

containing less than 95% organic ingredients, a percentage statement of organic content may be displayed on the label.

### **Export Documents**

A USDA-accredited certifying agent must complete an EU import certificate (Certificate of Inspection) for all USDA organic products traded under the arrangement. This requirement is in place regardless of organic crop or product being shipped.

Apples and pears produced with antibiotics, or products that have not been produced, processed or packaged in the United States will not be issued a Certificate of Inspection.

Contact the CDA Organic Program to request a Certificate of Inspection.



**European Organic Food Label (E.U)**



**USDA Organic Seal**

### **More Information:**

National Organic Program website:  
<http://www.ams.usda.gov/NOP>

CDA website: <http://www.colorado.gov/ag>