

WHY GROW CERTIFIED ORGANIC?

It's a fact: grow organic and everything comes up green.

Consumers are more interested in buying organic produce than ever before—so much, in fact, that Americans spent \$16.9 billion on organic foods in 2006.¹

There are a number of reasons why. Many consumers have growing concerns about artificial fertilizers and pesticides, and the effect they have on the environment. People are also increasingly conscious of dangerous chemicals and additives in the food they consume. And overall, Americans today are seeking out healthier foods and lifestyles, which naturally points them to organic produce.

To learn more about the profitable advantages of growing certified organic, or for more information about Plug Connection's range of organic herb and vegetable programs, contact us at 760.631.0992 or infor@plugconnection.com, or speak to your favorite broker.

¹U.S. Organic Trade Association, 2007 Manufacturing Survey

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[the grower's guide to
going organic]
9 simple steps for organic certification from
the experts at Plug Connection



YOUR CHECKLIST FOR ORGANIC CERTIFICATION

From registration and inputs to equipment and harvests, these nine steps outline everything that finish growers need to earn organic certification.

- 1. Register as an organic producer** with the state in which your operation is located. If your gross sales are greater than \$5,000, you must also register with a second certifier (see list to the right).
- 2. Make a map**, breaking down production areas into blocks that can be cross-referenced with planting and harvesting records.
- 3. Verify that all inputs you use** (fertilizers, plugs, seeds, pesticides, soil) are NOP (National Organic Program) compliant. This means they must be listed in one of the following:
 - OMRI Generic Materials List: www.OMRI.org
 - OMRI Brand Name Product List: www.omri.org/OMRI_brand_name_list.html
 - Washington Brand Name Product List: agr.wa.gov/FoodAnimal/Organic/MaterialsLists.htm

Keep copies of receipts of all products purchased. This is very important because you can lose your certification just by using a product that you have not verified. This is the responsibility of the grower, not the certification company.

- 4. Verify Plugs, Young Plants and Seeds.** All plant, cuttings and seeds must be certified organic, or you must be able to verify that they were grown according to the certified organic standards.
 - Keep accurate records of all plants.
 - Log greenhouse activities: transplanting, soil use, fertilizers, chemical applications, dates, etc.
- 5. Pest Control.** Keep a record of all pest control methods and materials you use.
- 6. Equipment.** If you use equipment that was previously used in a non-organic area, or if you rent equipment, you must clean it and keep a record that it was cleaned before use in your organic production.
- 7. Harvest.** Maintain a log of all production and/or harvested products.
- 8. Maintain records of all sales.** If there is a problem or question, there must be traceability from shipping all the way back through your production cycle.
- 9. Make sure your labels are compliant** with the NOP standards. Send proof to your certification company prior to printing.

USDA ACCREDITED CERTIFYING AGENTS*

STATE	ACCREDITED CERTIFYING AGENTS	PHONE	WEB URL
CA	Agricultural Services Certified Organic California Crop Improvement Association California Organic Farmers Association CCOF Certification Services Global Culture Guaranteed Organic Certification Agency Marin County Department of Agriculture – Weights & Measures Monterey County Certified Organic Scientific Certification Systems Organic Certifiers, Inc. Primuslabs.com Quality Assurance International Yolo County Department of Agriculture	831-449-6365 530-752-0544 866-305-5771 831-423-2263 707-464-6913 951-676-5154 415-499-6700 831-759-7325 510-452-8000 805-684-6494 805-922-0055 858-792-3531 530-666-8141	www.ccia.ucdavis.edu www.cofa.net www.ccof.org www.goca.ws/ www.co.marin.ca.us www.co.monterey.ca.us/ag www.scs-certified.com www.primuslabs.com www.qai-inc.com www.yolocounty.org www.ag.state.co.us www.qcsinfo.org
CO	Colorado Department of Agriculture	303-239-4149	www.ag.state.co.us
FL	Quality Certification Services	352-377-0133	www.qcsinfo.org
GA	Georgia Crop Improvement Association, Inc.	706-542-2351	
HI	Hawaii Organic Farmers Association	877-674-4632	www.hawaiiorganicfarmers.org
IA	Certified Organic, Inc. Iowa Department of Agriculture Maharishi Vedic Organic Agriculture	866-581-6428 515-281-5783 641-209-6578	www.certifiedorginc.org www.agriculture.state.ia.us www.mvoai.org
ID	Idaho State Department of Agriculture	208-332-8620	www.idahoag.us
IL	Organic National and International Certifiers	847-763-0218	www.on-ic.com
IN	Indiana Certified Organic	317-539-4317	
KY	Kentucky Department of Agriculture	502-564-0290	www.kyagr.com
LA	Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry	225-952-8047	www.ldaf.state.la.us
MA	Baystate Organic Certifiers	978-297-4171	
MD	Maryland Department of Agriculture	410-841-5769	www.mda.state.md.us
ME	MOFGA Certification Services, LLC	207-568-4142	www.mofga.org
MN	Minnesota Crop Improvement Association	612-625-7766	www.mncia.org
MS	Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce	601-483-3451	www.mdac.state.ms.us
MO	Montana Department of Agriculture	406-444-3730	www.agr.state.mt.us
NC	North Carolina Crop Improvement Association	919-513-3444	www.nccrop.com
ND	International Certification Services, Inc.	701-486-3578	www.ics-intl.com
NE	OneCert Organic Crop Improvement Association	402-420-6080 402-477-2323	www.onecert.net www.ocia.org
NH	New Hampshire Department of Agriculture, Division of Regulatory Services	603-271-3685	http://agriculture.nh.gov/
NJ	New Jersey Department of Agriculture	609-984-2225	www.jerseyageducation.nj.gov
NM	New Mexico Organic Commodity Commission	505-841-9070	nmocc.state.nm.us
NV	Nevada State Department of Agriculture	775-688-1182	www.agri.state.nv.us
NY	NOFA – New York, LLC Natural Food Certifiers	607-724-9851 845-426-5098	www.nofany.org www.nfccertificaticom
OH	Global Organic Alliance, Inc. Ohio Ecological Food and Farm Administration	937-593-1232 419-853-4060	www.oeffa.org
OK	Oklahoma Department of Agriculture	405-522-5924	www.oda.state.ok.us/
OR	Oregon Tilth Stellar Certification Services, Inc.	503-378-0690 541-929-7148	www.tilth.org
PA	Pennsylvania Certified Organic	814-364-1344	www.paorganic.org
RI	Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management	401-222-2781	www.dem.ri.gov
SC	Department of Plant Industry Clemson University	864-646-2140	http://dpi.clemson.edu/
TX	Texas Department of Agriculture Organic Certification Program	512-475-1641	http://agr.state.tx.us
UT	Utah Department of Agriculture	801-538-7141	http://ag.utah.gov/
VT	Vermont Organic Farmers, LLC	802-434-4122	www.nofavt.org
WA	Washington State Department of Agriculture	360-902-1924	agr.wa.gov/foodanimal/organic
WI	Midwest Organic Services Association, Inc. Natures International Certification Services	608-637-2526 608-637-7080	www.mosaorganic.org www.naturesinternational.com/

for most current listing visit

<http://www.ams.usda.gov/NOP/CertifyingAgents/Accredited.html>