

The China Organic Standard GB/T 19630

The basis for sales of organic products to China

This document is an introduction to China Organic Standard and its basic certification requirements, but organic product producers, processors and handlers (hereafter called “certification mandatory”) shall further understand relevant regulations and meet the requirements of the entire standard.

1 What is an Organic Product?

An Organic Product is defined as a plant and/or animal product intended for human consumption and/or animal feeding, which is produced, processed and handled in accordance with GB/T 19630 Organic Standard. The current version of the standard was published in December 2011. A recent update was published on August 30, 2019 and will become effective on 1 January 2020. A summary of the changes in the GB/T standard can be found in the Annex to this document.

The new Organic Product Standard GB/T 19630-2019 includes 7 parts and 8 normative appendices, integrating the Production, Processing, Labelling, Marketing and Management System parts of the former GB/T 19630.1-2011 ~ 19630.4-2011.

In addition, two organic-related regulations, the *<Regulatory Measures on the Administration of Organic Product Certification>* and the *<Implementation Rules of Organic Product Certification>* shall also be complied with by organic producers, processors, and handlers.

2 Who Needs Certification?

As required by the *<Regulatory Measures on the Administration of Organic Product Certification>*: “Any company or individual engaged in organic product production, processing, import and sales* activities inside the People’s Republic of China, shall obtain a China Organic Product Certification.” Below objects all need certification according to GB/T 19630-2019 (hereafter called “GB/T 19630”) by a certification body approved by CNCA (Certification and Accreditation Administration of P. R. China):

- **Organic product producer:** company or individual who is engaged in the production of plant, animal and microbial products that are organic certified and authorized to use China organic certification seal.
- **Organic product processor:** company or individual who is engaged in the processing of food, feed and textile products that are organic certified and authorized to use China organic certification seal.

- **Organic product trader:** company or individual who is engaged in the transport, storage, packing and sales of products that are organic certified and authorized to use China organic certification seal.
- **Organic product seller:** company who is engaged in wholesale, direct sales, exhibition consignment, distribution, retail of organic products or any other channel to put organic products on the market.

3 Certification Scope

The applied for products should be listed in the <Organic Products Certification Catalogue>. Below types of product are in the category:

- Plant and edible mushroom: such as field crops, edible mushroom and flowers, wild harvest plants, cotton, linen and other fibres, green fodder plant, Chinese medicinal herbs, etc.;
- Livestock and poultry: live animals, livestock products and by-product;
- Aquatic products: algae and aquatic animals such as fish, shrimps and crabs;
- Processed food: processed products and by-products of plants, livestock, aquatic products as raw materials and ingredients;
- TCM processing: plant-based Chinese traditional medicinal processing products;
- Feed: by-products of food processing, vegetable or livestock fodder;
- Textile: natural fibres for spinning and textiles.

Note: Plant products once certified as organic may include the entire plant or part of the plant. For example, organic certified grapes can include grape seeds and grape leaves.

4 Information on Organic Production

4.1 Essential Features

- Raw material origins from organic agricultural production systems that have not used prohibited substances in the past 26, respectively 36 months;
- Do not use substances prohibited by GB/T 19630 and/ or biological products obtained through genetic engineering in production and processing;
- No contamination during production, processing, packaging, transportation, storage and marketing;
- Complete quality control and traceability system;
- Certification is issued by CNCA approved certification body.

4.2 General Principle of Organic Production

Serial	Control point	Requirement
1	Production unit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clear boundaries, ownership and management rights of the organic production unit, whose organic production management system has been established and has been implemented in accordance with GB/T19630.
2	Conversion period	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It takes a conversion period of 2 respectively 3 years from conventional farming to organic farming. Plants which were sown respectively harvested after conversion period. Animals must have undergone the conversion period before being allowed to be labelled as organic.
3	Genetic engineering	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Genetically engineered organisms (GMOs) and their derivatives shall not be introduced into or used in organic production units, nor in conventional units where organic production also takes place.
4	Radiation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No use of radiation technology during organic production.
5	Input	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Only inputs listed in Appendix A and B of GB/T 19630 are allowed to be used, and conditions of use shall meet the relevant requirements of the appendix. Active ingredients of the compound preparation of plant protection product should be the substances listed in Appendix A.2. Auxiliaries must not use substances that are carcinogenic, teratogenic, mutagenic and neurotoxic. Use of chemically synthesized plant protection products, fertilizers and municipal sludge is prohibited. Prohibited substance in organic production shall not be detected in organic products.

4.3 General principles of Organic Processing

Serial	Control point	Requirement
1	Processing unit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organic food processing plants shall meet the requirements of GB 14881 <General health code for food enterprise>, the other organic product processing plants shall meet the relevant regulations of the state and their industrial authorities.
2	Raw materials and ingredients	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The content (weight or volume) of organic ingredients shall not be less than 95% of the final product. The water and salt used as ingredients shall meet the requirements of GB 5749 <Hygienic standard for Drinking Water> respectively GB 2721 <National Food Safety Standard for Edible Salt>, and not be counted as organic ingredients.

3	Additives and aids	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Only food additives listed in Appendix E.1, E.2 of GB/T 19630 are allowed to be used, and conditions of use shall meet the GB 2760 < National Food Safety Standard: Applicable Standard for Food Additives> ▪ Flavouring agents, microbial products, enzyme preparations and other ingredients used in food processing shall meet the requirements of Appendix E.4, E.5 and E.6.
4	Prevent commingling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Avoid commingling or contamination with conventional products during processing, packaging, storage and transportation.
5	Radiation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ No use of radiation technology during processing and storage.

5 Environment of Production Area

Environmental requirements of the producing area are part of the Chinese Organic Standard. There are clear parameters for the quality of the air, soil, irrigation, production and processing water, which requires operators to supply their certification body (CB) with the respective test results.

- Date of issuance of the monitoring/test report for **soil, irrigation water** and **producing area air** quality should be within 24 months of the date of the on-site inspection:
 - 1) The soil monitoring/test report may be omitted if a soil environment background monitoring has been carried in the production area by a qualified authority in the past three years, and the data reveals that soil quality has continuously met the organic standard on soil quality;
 - 2) The producing area air monitoring/test report may be omitted if the local environmental protection authority at or above county level can provide air quality monitoring data or information for the past 6 months, and the data shows that air quality has continuously met the organic standard on air quality.
- Date of issuance of the monitoring/test report of **sprout production processing water** should be within 12 months prior to the date of the on-site inspection.
- The mandator of all test report shall be the certification mandator or their production or processing subcontractors.

6 Management System

Different from the (EC) Reg. 834/2007 or the USDA Organic standards, China organic product standard requires a quality control system, the so called “management system” is defined in GB/T19630 as:

- Organic producer, processor and handler shall have legal land use right and legal business certificate.
- Organic producer, processor and handler shall establish, implement and keep the management system.

- The management system series documents shall include location map of production, processing and handling sites, management manual, Standard Operation Procedures (SOPs) and records.
- The Management system must include **document management, (human) resources management, internal inspections, traceability system and product recall procedures, complaint management, and a system for continuous improvement.**

7 Organic Product Seal and Marketing

7.1 China Organic Product Seal

- China organic product seal can be printed on the label, instruction manual, advertisement and other materials of certified products, it may be enlarged or reduced in proportion but shall not be deformed or discoloured.



- Products that are certified as “in conversion to organic” can only be sold as conventional, and the China Organic Product Seal, words and patterns such as “有机”, “Organic” shall not be used on such products.

7.2 Organic Traceability Label (also called “Organic Code”)

- While using the China Organic Product seal, a label with unique traceability code shall be attached to the minimum sales package of the certified products. The organic traceability label includes the specifications of organic products, traceability information, the name of certification body and its seal.
- Organic processing materials that are not directly retailed may be not applied.
- Interested parties can scan the QR code through the organic code or search the information of certified products through www.food.cnca.cn.
- SRS Shanghai cannot issue the organic code to an operator who is only certified as handler.



7.3 Transaction Certificate

- Transaction certificate (hereafter called “TC”) is a sales certificate provide by the product owner to the buyer.
- A certified operator shall apply to SRS Shanghai for a TC before sales of certified products. For the sales of certified products already with Organic Code, no TC may be applied for.
- SRS Shanghai will issue a TC based on series of documents such as supply agreement, invoice, delivery notice, etc.

8 Onsite Inspection

- On-site inspection shall be arranged at high-risk stages during production, processing and/or handling period of the products to be certified. If the **first** on-site inspection is not able to cover **all products** to be certified due to production season, **an additional inspection** shall be arranged within certificate validity.
- After certification, on-site inspection will be arranged for the certification mandatory **at least once a year**.
- In case the same certified product has multiple production seasons (vegetables, grains, etc.) within a certificate validity, at least one on-site inspection must be arranged after certification.
- SRS Shanghai may also conduct supervision or unannounced inspections on the basis of risk assessment.

9 Sampling and Testing

- SRS Shanghai will sample and test all products applying for production and processing certification and determine the items to be tested on the basis of risk assessment.
- When necessary, SRS Shanghai may sample crops in the field, finished products, the soil, fertilizers or plant protection substances used in production for testing.
- Substances prohibited in organic production and processing **shall not be detected**. Residue of permitted substances in organic production and processing shall comply with the relevant laws and regulations or mandatory standards of China.

10 Applicant Preconditions

The certification mandator shall:

- a) have the qualification for legal business activities and, when applicable, have special administrative license (such as Food Production Permit License, Food Circulation License) which is required by relevant laws and regulations;
- b) ensure that the products produced, processed and handled shall meet the requirements of relevant laws, regulations, standard and specifications;

- c) have the **ownership** of the product applying for certification*;
- d) have established and implemented a management system on organic production, processing or/and handling and be effectively operating for **more than 3 months**;
- e) not be in the situation where their organic/conversion certificate was revoked due to providing false information, using prohibited substances, using organic certification seal beyond the certification scope and major product quality and safety accidents within 5 years;
- f) not be in the situation where the organic/conversion certificate was revoked due to reason other than those listed in e) within 1 year;
- g) not be listed in National Serious Credit Entity Directory.

* Ownership refers to the fact that certification mandator has the rights to possess, use, profit and dispose of the products.

11 Certification Steps

Serial	SRS Shanghai	Certification Mandator
1	Send initial documents to potential clients such as standard, application form and relevant documents list, communicate when necessary.	Fill out the application form to receive offer.
2	Make offer according to application information.	Agree on the offer then sign the contract, meanwhile fill out the survey form(s) and submit relevant application documents such as legal licenses, mandatory/operator profile and organic management system of production / processing / handling, etc.
3	Review application and give applicant feedback within 10 working days.	Provide supplementary information, if necessary.
4	Sign the contract. Make certification scheme and assign inspection team.	Cooperate when necessary.
5	On-site inspection to verify the compliance of operation with standard, the consistency and effectiveness with the management system implementation, and sample all applied products.	Cooperate to give access to all relevant operation sites and facilities.
6	Inspection team writes inspection report and sends it to certification body for review.	When there are non-compliances, make corrections and send relevant evidences to inspector. For 1 st certification, mandator shall make corrections and send evidences to the inspector within 3 months after inspection; For re-certification, corrections shall be made and sent within 30 days after inspection.
7	Send certification decision to mandator after all non-compliances are verified and closed. Issue certificate according to decision.	

	In case of refusal of certification or need to take further measures, mandator will be notified.	
8	Upload required information of inspection and certification to CNCA official website.	Can search certification information at "http://cx.cnca.cn/CertECloud/index/index/page"
9	Arrange at least 1 on-site inspection after certification per year. Conduct supervision or unannounced inspection when necessary.	Apply for re-certification 3 months before the certificate expires. Cooperate when informed of supervision or unannounced inspection.
10	Verify documents and issue TC or organic code in accordance with application.	Organic certified mandator (excl. conversion or handler-only certified mandator) may apply for TC and/or organic traceability label when necessary from SRS Shanghai.

12 About Imported Organic Product

Imported organic product refers to the organic certified products which are produced overseas and enter China through customs clearance.

- Legal entity such as producer, seller, importer or agency of imported products, overseas enterprise and domestic enterprise may apply for certification as mandator of imported organic products (hereafter called "import mandator").
- Application: at least application forms, survey forms, processing flowchart, product formula and information on inputs used during production and processing shall be submitted in **Chinese**.
- Onsite inspection: site where export, storage and other handling activities are carried out, outside of China, as well as site where so-called Organic Codes are applied will be part of the on-site inspection.
- Environmental quality: inspector may evaluate the local situation and assess whether available quality reports for soil, irrigation water, production and processing water, etc., or relevant data or reports issued by local competent authority (e.g. official website) are acceptable or not. If not, the test should be conducted in accordance with the requirement of GB/T 19630.
- Sample and testing shall be done for every product for which certification is applied for. If tests show positive result, it will lead to failure of certification, not matter if the residue is caused by the operator or not. For already certified product, the relevant certification may be suspended or revoked immediately.
 - a) If the product sample cannot be sent to China for testing due to entry-exit inspection and quarantine reason, an oversea third-party laboratory with ISO/IEC 17025 qualification may be entrusted to perform the test.
 - b) For re-certified products, samples can be taken by SRS Shanghai after organic products imported into China and sent to Chinese laboratory for testing.
- Conversion period maybe be exempted when:

- a) an overseas organic farm has been organic certified for **at least 4 consecutive years** and;
 - b) import mandator applied for exemption, and;
 - c) on-site inspection confirms that the farm meets the requirements of GB/T 19630.
- Packaging and Labelling of imported organic products shall first meet the *<General rules of inspection for imported and exported repackaged food>* and relevant requirements of Entry-exit Inspection and Quarantine of China (CIQ).
- a) During organic products declaration of entry for inspection and quarantine, a copy of the organic product certificate, the TC for the declared products and the products with Organic Code (sample) shall be submitted to CIQ.
 - b) If necessary, the CIQ may sample and test the imported organic products to verify the it meets the requirements of GB/T 19630.

For further information, you are welcome to contact:

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