

Glossary

Updated May 2026

Term	Definition
Action Summary Form	details the outcome of your inspection. It includes any areas that do not comply with the standards and asks how you will correct them. It may also ask for extra information to complete the approval process.
ad lib	non-restrictive feeding.
advertising	any representation to the public, by any means other than a label, that is intended or is likely to influence and shape attitude, beliefs and behaviours in order to promote directly or indirectly the sale of organic product.
aquaculture	the rearing or cultivation of aquatic organisms using techniques designed to increase the production of the organisms in question beyond the natural capacity of the environment; the organisms remain the property of a natural or legal person throughout the rearing or culture stage, up to and including harvesting.
aquatic plant production	plants which are adapted to live in aquatic environments, such as watercress.
ATP testing	a process of rapidly measuring actively growing microorganisms through detection of adenosine triphosphate, or ATP.
biodiversity	the variety of plant and animal life in the world or in a particular habitat, a high level of which is usually considered to be important and desirable.
bivalve mollusc	a class of marine and freshwater molluscs that have laterally compressed bodies enclosed by a shell consisting of two hinged parts. Bivalves have no head, and they also lack a radula. They include clams, oysters, cockles, mussels, scallops, and numerous other families that live in saltwater, as well as a number of families that live in freshwater.
brashings	piles of dead tree branches.
certification body	an independent private third party carrying out inspection and certification of organic production. All foods sold as organic must originate from growers, processors and importers who are registered with an approved certification body and subject to regular inspection. The certification body that is currently accredited to carry out inspection and certification to Soil Association standards in the UK is Soil Association Certification Limited. You can find a list of all approved certification bodies for organic food in the UK on the Defra government website.

certification committee	the certification committee is responsible for non-routine Soil Association certification decisions. The certification committee is comprised of a minimum of four members from the certification, inspection and technical teams, three of which must be key members. Key members include; Operations Director, Senior Certification Managers, Senior Inspector Managers, Senior Technical Managers, Veterinary Advisor, Specialist Certification Officers, External Experts.
certification documents/documentation	those documents issued by a certification body to their operators as evidence of their meeting the requirements of the Regulation.
Certificate of Inspection (COI)	required document for the importing of organic goods into the EU. The original COI must be issued and endorsed by the certification body in the third country.
chemically synthesised allopathic medicines	chemically produced pharmacologically active agents such as anti-parasitic drugs, antibacterial drugs, hormones or similar substances to control reproduction, anti-inflammatory and analgesic drugs, drugs which affect the nervous system (e.g. sedatives and anaesthetics) and drugs with a specific effect on target organs.
chiquette	off cuts of leather and hide trimmings.
Cleaning in Place (CIP) system	a method of cleaning interior surfaces of pipes, vessels and process equipment without disassembly. It is usually achieved using a mix of chemicals, heat and water through an automated process.
closed recirculation aquaculture facility	a facility where aquaculture takes place within an enclosed environment on land or on a vessel involving the recirculation of water, and depending on permanent external energy input to stabilize the environment for the aquaculture animals.
Community	this is the EU community; outside the EU this would be the country of production.
competent authority	authorised by EU Member States to make rulings on organic legislation. In the UK the Competent Authority is usually Defra or one of its devolved agencies.
composted or fermented mixture of household waste	a mixture of decayed or decaying organic matter used to fertilize soil. Compost can be made from vegetable peels and wastage or can also include household waste such as; teabags, toilet roll tubes, cereal boxes and eggshells.
composted or fermented mixture of vegetable matter	
consignee	the natural or legal person to whom an imported consignment is delivered.

conversion	the transition from non-organic to organic farming within a given period of time, during which the provisions concerning the organic production have been applied.
crustacean	an arthropod of the large, mainly aquatic group Crustacea, such as a crab, lobster, shrimp, or barnacle.
degree days	sea temperature x days.
echinoderm	a marine invertebrate of the phylum Echinodermata, such as a starfish, sea urchin, or sea cucumber.
elemental chlorine free (ECF)	ECF papers are produced from pulp that has been bleached with a chlorine derivative such as chlorine dioxide (ClO ₂), but without elemental chlorine (Cl).
energy from renewable resources	renewable non-fossil energy sources: wind, solar, geothermal, wave, tidal, hydropower, landfill gas, sewage treatment plant gas and biogases.
equivalent	in describing different systems or measures, means that they are capable of meeting the same objectives and principles by applying rules which ensure the same level of assurance of conformity.
EU countries	all the member states of the European Union.
Farrowing crate	a narrow crate in which piglets suckle from the sow. The crate confines the sow, prevents her from performing important nesting behaviours and prevents from turning around.
feed	(or "feedingstuff") means any substance or product, including additives, whether processed, partially processed or unprocessed, intended to be used for oral feeding to animals.
feed additives	substances, micro-organisms or preparations, other than feed material and premixtures, which are intentionally added to feed or water in order to perform, in particular, one or more of the following functions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - favourably affect the characteristics of feed, - favourably affect the characteristics of animal products, - favourably affect the colour of ornamental fish and birds, - satisfy the nutritional needs of animals, - favourably affect the environmental consequences of animal production, - favourably affect animal production, performance or welfare, particularly by affecting the gastro-intestinal flora or digestibility of feedingstuffs, or - have a coccidiostatic or histomonostatic effect.
first consignee	the natural or legal person to whom the imported consignment is delivered and who will receive it for further preparation and/or marketing.

Flat deck	a piglet rearing pen with more than 25% slatted/perforated floor and little or no bedding.
food	(or "foodstuff") means any substance or product, whether processed, partially processed or unprocessed, intended to be, or reasonably expected to be ingested by humans. It includes drink, chewing gum and any substance, including water, intentionally incorporated into the food during its manufacture, preparation or treatment.
food additive	any substance not normally consumed as a food in itself and not normally used as a characteristic ingredient of food whether or not it has nutritive value, the intentional addition of which to food for a technological purpose in the manufacture, processing, preparation, treatment, packaging, transport or storage of such food results, or may be reasonably expected to result, in it or its by-products becoming directly or indirectly a component of such foods.
FYM	farmyard manure.
GMO	'genetically modified organism' means an organism in which the genetic material has been altered in a way that does not occur naturally by mating and/or natural recombination; This does not include organisms resulting from techniques such as conjugation, transduction, natural hybridization, and marker assisted breeding.
GMO declaration	a form to be completed by your suppliers if using products that may be a GM risk.
Gy	gray (symbol: Gy) is a derived unit of ionizing radiation dose.
hatchery	a place of breeding, hatching and rearing through the early life stages of aquaculture animals, finfish and shellfish in particular.
holding	all the production units operated under a single management for the purpose of producing agricultural products; The units should be self-sufficient and not reliant on the other holding for anything (separate buildings, land, storage facilities etc) and the separate holding for the non-organic animals has to provide for all the needs of the non-organic animals without recourse to the organic holding in any way.
homeopathy	treatment based on the use of highly diluted substances that if given in stronger doses would allegedly produce the symptoms the medicine is prescribed for.
homeopathic medicinal products	homeopathic medicinal products are prepared from homeopathic stocks according to specific homeopathic manufacturing procedures. These

	procedures are defined in the European Pharmacopoeia or, in the absence thereof, by the pharmacopoeias currently used officially in a member state of the European Economic Area.
hydroponic production	the method of growing plants with their roots in a mineral nutrient solution only or in an inert medium, such as perlite, gravel or mineral wool to which a nutrient solution is added.
importer	the natural or legal person within the community who presents a consignment for release for free circulation into the Community, either in person, or through a representative.
in-conversion feedingstuffs	feedingstuffs produced during the conversion period to organic production, with the exclusion of those harvested in the 12 months following the beginning of the conversion as referred to in standard 2.1.1 of the Farming and Growing standards.
ingredients	any substance, including additives, used in the manufacture or preparation of a foodstuff and still present in the finished product, even if in altered form; However, this does not apply to additives: - whose presence in a given foodstuff is solely due to the fact that they were contained in one or more ingredients of that foodstuff, provided that they serve no technological function in the finished product, - which are used as processing aids; It also does not apply to substances used in the quantities strictly necessary as solvents or media for additives or flavouring.
inspector	an official employed to ensure that official regulations are obeyed.
ionising radiation	the transfer of energy in the form of particles or electromagnetic waves of a wavelength of 100 nanometer or less or a frequency of 3×10^{15} Hertz or more capable of producing ions directly or indirectly; This excludes foodstuffs exposed to ionising radiation generated by measuring or inspection devices, provided that the dose absorbed is not greater than 0,01 Gy for inspection devices which utilise neutrons and 0,5 Gy in other cases, at a maximum radiation energy level of 10 MeV in the case of X-rays, 14 MeV in the case of neutrons and 5 MeV in other cases.
labelled as organic	'by 'labelled as organic' we mean that the word organic may be used in the sales description e.g. the product's name and description, other marketing text, as well as the ingredients list.
labelling	any terms, words, particulars, trademarks, brand

	name, pictorial matter or symbol relating to and placed on any packaging, document, notice, label, board, ring or collar accompanying or referring to a product.
licensee	operator; natural or legal persons responsible for ensuring that the requirements of these standards are met within the organic business under their control.
livestock production	the production of domestic or domesticated terrestrial animals (including insects).
locally grown species	<p>in the framework of aquaculture and seaweed production, means those which are neither alien (occurring outside its known natural range and the area of its natural dispersal potential; or polyploid organisms, and fertile artificially hybridised species irrespective of their natural range or dispersal potential) or locally absent species (locally absent from a zone within its natural range of distribution for biogeographical reasons);</p> <p>The following species may be considered as locally grown species in the European Community:</p> <p>Rainbow trout, <i>Oncorhynchus mykiss</i> Brook trout, <i>Salvelinus fontinalis</i> Common carp, <i>Cyprinus carpio</i> Grass carp, <i>Ctenopharyntgodon idella</i> Silver carp, <i>Hypophthalmichthys molitrix</i> Big head carp, <i>Aristichthys nobilis</i> Pacific cupped oyster, <i>Crassostrea gigas</i> Japanese or Manila clam, <i>Ruditapes philippinarum</i> Large-mouth bass, <i>Micropterus salmoides</i> Arctic char, <i>Salvelinus alpinus</i>.</p>
malt culms	By-product from the malting industry, predominately barely rootlets.
mass catering operations	the preparation of organic products in restaurants, hospitals, canteens and other similar food business at the point of sale or delivery to the final consumer.
MeV	mega-electric. volt = 1,000,000 eV.
Member state	a country that is member of the European Union.
mutatis mutandis	the necessary changes.
non-organic	not coming from or not related to a production in accordance to the Soil Association standards.
nursery	a place where an intermediate farming system, between the hatchery and grow-out stages is applied. The nursery stage is completed within the first third of the production cycle with the exception of species undergoing a smoltification process.
operator	The natural or legal persons responsible for ensuring that the requirements of this Soil

	Association standards are met within the organic business under their control.
organic	coming from or related to organic production.
organic production	the use of the production method compliant with the Soil Association standards, at all stages of production, preparation and distribution.
outdoor range	an outdoor area to which livestock have access. It is mainly covered in vegetation, and includes soil connected to subsoil and bedrock. For poultry, part or all of the outdoor range may comprise a fenced area, or 'run' . The use of 'verandas' or other screened in and/or roofed structures attached to a fixed poultry house does not qualify as outdoor range.
parallel production	the simultaneous production, preparation or handling of organic and non-organic (including transitional) crops, livestock and other organic products of the same or similar, visually indistinguishable varieties.
PCR testing	polymerase chain reaction is a technique that allows technicians to create millions of precise DNA replications from a single sample of DNA.
phytotherapeutic medicinal products	those derived from plants.
phytotherapy	treatment with plants or plant components for medicinal purposes; (e.g. plant extracts [excluding antibiotics], essences, etc.), homeopathic products (e.g. plant, animal or mineral substances).
piglet cage	a cage housing structure which confines piglets into small groups with approximately 0.20m ² per piglet and more than 25% slatted/perforated floor.
placing on the market	the holding of food or feed for the purpose of sale, including offering for sale or any other form of transfer, whether free of charge or not, and the sale, distribution, and other forms of transfer themselves.
plant production	production of agricultural crop products including harvesting of wild plant products for commercial purposes.
plant propagation	growing new plants from a variety of different sources e.g. seeds, cuttings, bulbs, which are intended to be grown on in an organic production system within the soil before being harvested and sold as organic.
plant protection products	active substances and preparations containing one or more active substances, put up in the form in which they are supplied to the user, intended to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - protect plants or plant products against all harmful organisms or prevent the action of such organisms, in so far as such substances or preparations are not otherwise defined below;

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - influence the life processes of plants, other than as a nutrient, (e.g. growth regulators); - preserve plant products, in so far as such substances or products are not subject to special Council of Commission provisions on preservatives; - destroy undesired plants; or - destroy parts of plants, check or prevent undesired growth of plants.
pollution	in the framework of aquaculture and seaweed production means the direct or indirect introduction into the aquatic environment of substances or energy, including human-induced marine underwater noise, which results or is likely to result in deleterious effects such as harm to living resources and marine ecosystems, including loss of biodiversity, hazards to human health, the hindering of marine activities, including fishing, tourism and recreation and other legitimate uses of the sea, impairment of the quality for use of sea water and reduction of amenities or, in general, impairment of the sustainable use of marine goods and services.
polyculture	the framework of aquaculture and seaweed production, means the rearing of two or more species usually from different trophic levels in the same culture unit.
poultry house	a fixed or mobile building for accommodating flocks of poultry, which includes all surfaces covered by roofs, including a veranda. The house may be subdivided into separate compartments, each accommodating a single flock, these must be separated by solid partitions; each flock must have access to separate air space, ventilation, feed, water and outside range area.
Precautionary principle	to err on that side of caution. When an activity raises threats of harm to human health or the environment, precautionary measures should be taken even if some cause and effect relationships are not fully established scientifically.
premises	a house or building, together with its land and outbuildings, occupied by a business.
pre-packaged foodstuff	any single item for presentation as such to the ultimate consumer and to mass caterers, consisting of a foodstuff and the packaging into which it was put before being offered for sale, whether such packaging encloses the foodstuff completely or only partially, but in any case in such a way that the contents cannot be altered without opening or changing the packaging.
preparation	the operations of preserving and/or processing of organic products, including slaughter and cutting

	for livestock products, and also packaging, labelling and/or alterations made to the labelling concerning the organic production method.
process chlorine free (PCF)	no chlorine or chlorine derivatives were used in the recycling process, but papers which were originally bleached with chlorine or chlorine derivatives may have been used as feedstock.
processing	any action that substantially alters the initial product, including heating, smoking, curing, maturing, drying, marinating, extraction, extrusion or a combination of those processes. This includes the use of additives, processing aids, flavourings, water, salt, preparations of micro-organisms and enzymes, minerals, trace elements, vitamins, amino acids and other micronutrients in foodstuffs. Packaging or labelling operations are not considered as processing.
processing aid	any substance not consumed as a food ingredient by itself, intentionally used in the processing of raw materials, foods or their ingredients, to fulfil a certain technological purpose during treatment or processing and which may result in the unintentional but technically unavoidable presence of residues of the substance or its derivatives in the final product, provided that these residues do not present any health risk and do not have any technological effect on the finished product.
processing unit	all assets to be used for a processing sector such as processing premises, the premises for the storage of ingredients, food products, feed products, and any other input relevant for this specific processing sector.
produced by GMOs	derived by using a GMO as the last living organism in the production process, but not containing or consisting of GMOs nor produced from GMOs.
produced from GMOs	derived in whole or in part from GMOs but not containing or consisting of GMOs.
production cycle	the framework of aquaculture and seaweed production, means the lifespan of an aquaculture animal or seaweed from the earliest life stage to harvesting.
production unit	all assets to be used for a production sector such as production premises, land parcels, pasturages, open air areas, livestock buildings, fish ponds, containment systems for seaweed or aquaculture animals, shore or seabed concessions, the premises for the storage of crops, crop products, seaweed products, animal products, raw materials and any other input relevant for this specific production sector.
rotifer	microscopic aquatic invertebrate with circular

	arrangement of moving cilia at front end.
same visual field	the area within a 180 degree view. For example, with a box, the area within the same visual field as the sales description would be either the side panels, or the top or bottom of the box. It would not include the back of the box.
stages of production, preparation and distribution	any stage from and including the primary production of an organic product up to and including its storage, processing, transport, sale or supply to the final consumer, and where relevant labelling, advertising, import, export and subcontracting activities.
stocking density	In the framework of aquaculture, means the live weight of animals per cubic metre of water at any time during the grow-out phase and in the case of flatfish and shrimp the weight per square metre of surface.
supers	boxes placed on a hive with frames of comb to collect honey from a honey bee hive.
terrestrial species	Land-based animal (rather than water-based).
totally chlorine free (TCF)	TCF paper is produced with pulp that has been bleached without any type of chlorine, or that has not been bleached at all.
transhumance	the action or practice of moving livestock from one grazing ground to another in a seasonal cycle, typically to lowlands in winter and highlands in summer.
transplant	young plants grown in greenhouses or nursery beds ready for planting out. For the purposes of these standards, transplants are not plant propagating material, but represent a stage of plant production and therefore must be grown to organic standards.
veranda	an additional, roofed, uninsulated, outdoor part of a building intended for poultry, the longest side usually being equipped with wire fencing or netting, with an outdoor climate, natural and, where necessary, artificial illumination, and a littered floor.
veterinary medicinal products	(a) any substance or combination of substances presented as having properties for treating or preventing disease in animals; or (b) any substance or combination of substances which may be used in or administered to animals with a view either to restoring, correcting or modifying physiological functions by exerting a pharmacological, immunological or metabolic action, or to making a medical diagnosis.
veterinary treatment	all courses of a curative or preventive treatment against one occurrence of a specific disease.
we/us	Soil Association Certification Limited.
you	Licensee; natural or legal persons responsible for



	ensuring that the requirements of these standards are met within the organic business under their control.
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