

# **Guidelines for Imports of Organic Products from Third Countries into the European Union**

**Legal bases:**           **Regulation (EC) No. 834/2007 as amended**  
                                  **Regulation (EC) No. 1235/2008 as amended**

All products in accordance with Article 1 of Regulation (EC) No. 834/2007 imported from a third country and intended for marketing in the EU and bearing indications referring to the organic production method must conform to established rules, and compliance with these rules must be ensured in all enterprises involved in the production, preparation, storage and marketing in the third country.

- Organic products within the EU may be traded freely in all EU member states, provided they have been produced, processed or imported in accordance with the provisions on the organic production method (Reg. (EC) No. 834/2007).
- The Commission has recognized that a number of third countries apply production rules and inspection systems equivalent to those applied in the EU. The countries in question, the inspection bodies recognized by these countries, and the respective product categories are set out in Annex III to Regulation (EC) No. 1235/2008 in the so-called “List of third countries”.
- In Regulation (EC) No. 1235/2008, the EU Commission draws up the list of control bodies / control authorities which have demonstrated to the Commission that in third countries they apply a standard with which established product categories are controlled and certified in a manner equivalent to EU legislation on organic farming. These bodies are set out in in the so-called “List of control bodies and control authorities for the purpose of equivalence and specifications” (Annex IV of Regulation (EC) No. 1235/2008).

## **Registration and Control of Importer Firms in Germany**

Importers of organic products shall register with the competent authorities in their respective Federal State. Moreover, an approved control body and which is accredited according to ISO Standard 17065 must confirm that import activities are in compliance with the provisions of Regulation (EC) No. 834/2007 and its implementing acts.

The competent authority is available as a contact for potential importers. For a list of these bodies, please refer to the BLE website at organic farming.

## **Procedures for Importing Organic Products from Third Countries into the EU pursuant to Reg. (EC) No. 834/2007**

### **Imports of organic products from third countries which have been recognized by the European Commission (Article 33 (2)); list of third countries**

Each import shall be accompanied by a certificate of inspection (Annex V of Regulation (EC) No.1235/2008), and upon entry into the EU shall be endorsed in box 17 by a competent German customs authority or a competent body in another Member State of the European Union. The certificate of inspection may only be issued by a control body / control authority designated in the “List of third countries”. In box 2 of the certificate of inspection the import procedure chosen pursuant to Article 3(2) must be ticked.

### **Imports of organic products with certifications by a recognized control body in a third country (Article 33 (2)); list of equivalent control bodies**

Imported products which have been certified by a control body included in the list of equivalent control bodies shall also be accompanied by a certificate of inspection. This procedure equally requires that the competent authority endorses the certificate of inspection upon entry into the EU.

## **Certificates for Importing Organic Products from Third Countries**

### Certificate of inspection

The certificate of inspection shall be issued by the control body in the third country. The latter thus confirms that the organic goods intended for import comply with requirements equivalent to those provided for in Reg. (EC) No. 834/2007. The goods need not be directly accompanied by the certificate of inspection. Prior to releasing imported organic products for free circulation on the territory of the EU, the customs authority of the importing member state shall endorse the certificate of inspection. This applies to any kind of imports of organic products from third countries.

The model of the certificate of inspection as set out in Annex V of Regulation (EC) No.1235/2008 is determined with regard to:

- the text,
- the format (on one single sheet)
- the layout and the dimensions of the boxes

### Extract of the certificate of inspection

Where a consignment coming from a third country into the EU is intended to be submitted to a splitting into different batches before its release for free circulation in the Community, the competent authority will first verify and endorse the original certificate of inspection (pursuant to Article 13(1)). For each of the batches the importer or the competent inspection body (in Germany) shall issue and present an extract of the certificate of inspection to the customs authorities at the time of customs clearance. The competent customs authority must endorse box 14. The original of the extract of certificate of inspection shall accompany the batch. A copy of each endorsed extract from the certificate of inspection and which is marked “COPY” shall be included with the original certificate of inspection. These must be kept by the person

identified as the original importer of the consignment and mentioned in box 11 of the certificate of inspection.

The model of the extract of the certificate of inspection as set out in Annex VI of V Regulation (EC) No.1235/2008 is determined with regard to:

- the text,
- the format,
- the layout and the dimensions of the boxes

Companies frequently also refer to certificates of inspection as transaction certificates or import certificates.

Since 1 July 2014 it is no longer possible to issue import authorizations in accordance with the procedure indicated in Article 19 of Regulation (EC) No.1235/2008. Import authorizations granted before July 2014 shall be valid until 30 June 2015 at the latest.

Should you have any questions regarding imports into Germany, please feel free to contact us:

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