

# International Organic Trade Requirements



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ORGANIC FACT SHEET

## International Trade Partners

The United States has trade agreements with many other governments to facilitate the exchange of organic products. These agreements provide additional market opportunities for MOSA-certified organic producers and processors, and they make available organic products for import.

The US now has 10 international organic trade agreements. Each agreement has specific terms. For the *equivalence* arrangements described below, when terms are met, MOSA-certified organic products, and products certified to a trade partner's organic standards can be labeled and sold in either country.

International supply chains for organic products can be complex, often involving multiple businesses, some uncertified, working across international borders. Operations involved in international organic trade must follow requirements as described in [NOP Instruction 4013](#) and [NOP Training](#) on Organic Integrity in the Supply Chain.

### Canada

In 2009, The US established this first organic *equivalence* arrangement.

- Canada-based operations must be certified to the [Canada Organic Regime standards](#).
- Products produced with the use of sodium nitrate are not allowed.
- Products produced by hydroponic/aeroponic methods are not allowed.
- Products derived from animals (with the exception of ruminants) must be produced with specific livestock stocking rates required in the Canadian Organic regulations.
- The above terms also apply to processed products, with verified compliance of the full supply chain, back to the farms.
- All products must be accompanied by verifiable documentation, stating, "Certified in compliance with the terms of the US-Canada Organic Equivalency Arrangement."
- For retail products, labels or stickers must identify

## Quick Facts

- The US has organic trade agreements with: Canada, the EU, Japan, Korea, Switzerland, Taiwan, India, Israel and New Zealand.
- For a full description of all USDA organic trade arrangements visit the USDA Organic International Trade Partners page at: <https://www.ams.usda.gov/services/organic-certification/international-trade>

MOSA or Canadian certifying agent and may use the USDA Organic Seal or the Canada Organic Biologique logo. All product labels must be in English and French.

- Wholesale products only require lot numbers. [More specific requirements](#) are detailed on the USDA Organic website.

### European Union

This *equivalence* arrangement began in 2012.

- The equivalence arrangement only covers products exported from and certified in the United States or the EU.
- Apple or pear products that used antibiotics for fire blight control may not be exported to the EU. (Note: As of late 2014, this control method is no longer allowed for US organic production.)
- Organic products from livestock treated with antibiotics, and from fish or shellfish may not be imported to the US.
- Export shipments must be accompanied by a Certificate of Inspection, signed by MOSA. These are created through [TRACES \(Trade Control and Expert](#)

[System](#)). MOSA is registered as a certification body within TRACES, and handlers and border authorities must register as well.

- For imports, the EU-authorized certifier must complete an [NOP Import Certificate](#).
- For retail products, labels or stickers must identify MOSA, or the EU certifying agent, and may use the USDA Organic Seal or the EU organic logo.
- Exported products must meet [EU Organic Labeling Requirements](#)
- Wine exported from the US must meet the EU organic regulations. This does not include a “made with organic...” claim. Wine may only use organic grapes, and may not use any “prohibited” practices. Compliant wine products may use the US and EU organic logos.

### [Japan](#)

This *equivalence* arrangement began Jan 1, 2014.

- Products must be produced in, or have final processing / packaging occur in the US or Japan.
- This arrangement only applies to certified organic plant (including fungi) and plant based processed products. Other organic products, like meat, dairy products, and alcoholic beverages, may also be exported to Japan, without having to meet the added equivalence arrangement terms.
- Plant and plant-based processed products exported to Japan must be accompanied by a [TM-11 export certificate](#), completed by MOSA for each shipment. This must include the statement, “Certified in compliance with the terms of the US-Japan Organic Equivalency Arrangement.”
- Plant and plant-based processed product shipments imported from Japan must be accompanied by an [NOP Import Certificate](#), completed by an approved certifier in Japan.
- Exported plant and plant based processed products must carry the JAS seal in partnership with a JAS-certified importer. MOSA must verify that the label, including bulk labels, meet the JAS requirements, and that the exporter has a contract with JAS-certified importer.
- Products NOT covered by the arrangement may carry the USDA Organic Seal, but must NOT use the JAS organic logo. These must be certified to the NOP regulations by an NOP accredited certifier, like MOSA.

### [Republic of Korea](#)

This *equivalence* arrangement began July 1, 2014.

- This covers products which are certified to the NOP or Korean organic regulations, are processed products as defined by the Korean Food Code, which contain at least 95% organic ingredients, and have their final processing occur in the US or Korea.
- Exported products must not contain apples or pears produced using antibiotics.
- Imported products must not contain livestock

products produced with the use of antibiotics.

- Shipments exported to Korea under the arrangement must be accompanied by [NAQS Import Certificate of Organic Processed Foods](#), completed by MOSA. This must include the statement, “Certified in compliance with the terms of the US-Korea Organic Equivalency Arrangement.”
- Products imported to the US under the arrangement must be accompanied by an [NOP Import Certificate](#), issued by a Korean Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (MAFRA)-accredited certification body.
- MOSA-certified products for export must be labeled according to MAFRA’s organic labeling requirements and may display the Korean organic food label and/or USDA Organic Seal.

### [Switzerland](#)

This *equivalence* arrangement began July 10, 2015.

- Covers products that are certified to the NOP or Swiss organic regulations, and which have their final processing occur in the US or Switzerland.
- Swiss products must not contain any livestock products or ingredients produced with the use of antibiotics.
- Organic wine must be produced and labeled to the regulations of the importing country.
- Exported MOSA-certified products must be accompanied by a [Swiss Certificate of Inspection](#).
- Imported products must be accompanied by an [NOP Import Certificate](#), issued by an authorized Swiss certifying body.
- U.S. organic products imported into Switzerland must be labeled according to [Swiss organic labeling requirements](#) and may display the USDA Organic Seal.

### [Taiwan](#)

The United States also has an *export* trade relationship with Taiwan, which allows MOSA-certified products to be sold as organic in Taiwan.

- Organic products from outside the United States or its territories are not included.
- When exported to Taiwan, products must be accompanied by an organic transaction certificate ([TM-11](#)), issued by MOSA for each shipment. This must include specified compliance statements, which are differentiated for processed products and crops, and for livestock and meat products.

### **Recognition Agreements**

The US also has *recognition* agreements with [India](#), [Israel](#) and [New Zealand](#). Recognition agreements allow a foreign government to accredit certifying agents in that country to the USDA organic standards. These foreign certifying agents are authorized to certify organic farms and processing facilities, ensuring that USDA organic products meet or exceed all NOP regulations. These products can then be sold as organic in the United States.