



ORGANIC FACT SHEET

# INTERNATIONAL ORGANIC TRADE REQUIREMENTS

## QUICK FACTS

- The US has organic trade agreements with: Canada, the European Union, the United Kingdom, Japan, the Republic of Korea, Switzerland, Taiwan, Israel, New Zealand and Mexico.
- For a full description of all USDA organic trade arrangements visit: <https://www.ams.usda.gov/services/organic-certification/international-trade>



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## 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 ten international organic trade agreements. Each agreement has specific terms. For the equivalence arrangements described below, when terms are met, specified 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 the [NOP Instruction 4013](#) and [NOP Organic Integrity Learning Center Course on Import Oversight Essentials](#).

## CANADA

- The US and Canada established this organic equivalence arrangement in 2009. This grants USDA certified organic products access to Canada's market and grants Canada Organic Regime (COR) certified organic products access to U.S. markets.
- Product categories under the arrangement include crops, wild crops, livestock, and processed products.
- Products exported to Canada must not be produced with the use of sodium nitrate nor by hydroponic/aeroponic methods, and non-ruminant livestock products must be produced with the Canadian Organic regulations' livestock stocking rates.
- All products must be accompanied by organic certificates, stating, "Certified in accordance with the terms of the US-Canada Organic Equivalency Arrangement."
- For retail products, labels or stickers must state the name of the U.S. or Canadian certifying agent and may use the USDA organic seal or the Canada organic logo. Labels for USDA exports to Canada must be in English and French and must meet the Canadian labeling requirements.

## EUROPEAN UNION

- The equivalence arrangement only covers products certified in and exported from the United States or the EU.
- 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, created through TRACES (Trade Control and Expert System) and completed by MOSA.
- For imports, the EU-authorized certifier must complete an NOP Import Certificate.
- For retail products, labels or stickers must state the name of the U.S. or EU certifying agent and may use the USDA Organic seal or the EU organic logo. Exported products must meet the labeling requirements in the destination country.

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## JAPAN

- This equivalence arrangement is limited to organic products that have been either produced within the United States or Japan, or products for which final processing or packaging occurs in the United States or Japan.
- Products derived from animals treated with antibiotics may not be exported to the United States as certified organic.
- For organic products exported to Japan, this equivalence covers only USDA organic products that fall under the scope of the Japan organic regulations. Organic products not regulated under the Japan organic regulations (such as organic meat, honey, and dairy products), and alcoholic beverages, yet are certified by a USDA accredited certifier can be exported to Japan with special conditions.
- USDA organic products exported to Japan that fall under the scope of the arrangement must be accompanied by a USDA Export Certificate, Form TM-11, issued by a USDA accredited certifier. The export certificate must include the following statement: "Certified in compliance with the terms of the US-Japan Organic Equivalence Arrangement."
- Japan organic products that fall under the scope of the arrangement must be accompanied by a NOP Import Certificate, Form 2110-1, that has been completed by a certifying body accredited either by MAFF or the USDA.
- Products traded under this arrangement may use the USDA or the Japanese Agricultural Standard (JAS) organic seal and must meet the labeling requirements in the destination country.

## REPUBLIC OF KOREA

- This arrangement covers products which are certified to the NOP or Korean organic regulations, are "processed foods" as defined by the Korean Food Code, contain at least 95% organic ingredients, and have their final processing occur in the US or Korea.
- Korean products must not contain livestock products produced with the use of antibiotics.
- Products 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 arrangement covers products that are certified to the NOP or Swiss organic regulations and 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

- This equivalence arrangement is limited to organic products that have been either raised within the United States or on Taiwan, or products for which final processing or packaging occurs within the United States or on Taiwan.
- Product categories under the arrangement include crops, wild crops, livestock, and processed products.
- Products derived from animals treated with antibiotics, and aquatic animals may not be exported to the U.S as certified organic.
- When exported to Taiwan, products must be accompanied by an organic transaction certificate (TM-11), issued by MOSA, and including the statement "Certified in compliance with the terms of the AIT/TECRO-NOP/AFA Organic Equivalence Arrangement."
- For retail products, labels or stickers must state the name of the U.S. or Taiwan certifying agent and may use the USDA Organic seal. Exported organic products must meet the labeling requirements in the destination country. Use of Taiwan's organic mark is restricted for use only by Taiwan businesses and may not be applied to USDA organic products.

## UNITED KINGDOM

- This equivalence is limited to organic products that have been either raised within the U.S. or UK (which includes Great Britain - England, Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland), or products for which the final processing or packaging occurs within the U.S. or UK.
- Product categories under the arrangement include crops, wild crops, livestock, and processed products.
- Products derived from animals treated with antibiotics, and aquatic animals may not be exported to the U.S as certified organic
- Wine must be produced and labelled according to the organic regulations of the destination country.
- For USDA organic products exported to Great Britain: MOSA must issue a paper Certificate of Inspection (COI) before the products leave the U.S. and send to the UK Port Health Authority (PHA)/ Local Authority (LA).
- For USDA organic products exported to Northern Ireland, the EU organic regulations are applicable. Exports from the U.S. to Northern Ireland adhere to the EU procedures. MOSA must complete an electronic Certificate of Inspection (COI) through TRACES before the product leaves the U.S.
- For imports of UK organic products, a certifying agent supervised by the UK's Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) and accredited in compliance with the UK's organic regulations must complete an NOP Import Certificate.
- Exported products must meet the labelling requirements in the destination country. For UK retail products destined for the U.S., the labels must state the name of the UK certifying agent.

## **OTHER AGREEMENTS**

The US also has recognition agreements allowing the Israel and New Zealand governments to accredit certifying agents to the USDA organic standards. Products certified by these accredited certifiers can then be sold as organic in the United States.

The U.S. and Mexico hope to sign an arrangement to allow USDA-certified products to continue to be sold in Mexico under an organic equivalency arrangement. Trade talks continue, but equivalence is not expected before June 26, 2021. Then, US organic businesses should be prepared to obtain certification to Mexico's standards to export to Mexico.

## **RESOURCES:**

**MOSES Guidebook for Certification:** <https://mosesorganic.org/publications/guidebook-forcertification/>

USDA AMS Trade & Equivalency Arrangements: <https://www.ams.usda.gov/rules-regulations/organic/trade>