

Evaluation Scheme – Food Processing

Statutory information is for guidance only and is correct at time of going to print

The Organic Regulations

The processing, labelling and marketing of organic products in the UK are controlled by EC Regulations (EC) No. 834/2007 and (EC) No. 889/2008 which define how organic food must be produced and processed. It also lists the conventional materials that are permitted in organic food processing. These include the following:

- Salt
- Additives such as stabilisers, thickeners, emulsifiers
- Natural flavourings
- Certain non-hydrogenated fats
- Certain non-chemically-modified starches
- Certain processing aids

The permitted ingredients and any restrictions applied to them are listed in the Organic Farmers & Growers Control Manual Section 10. This can be seen on the OF&G website (www.organicfarmers.org.uk) or a paper or CD copy obtained from the OF&G office.

Evaluation and Approval of Ingredients

Suppliers of the types of ingredient/additive listed above are not under any obligation to have their products approved by OF&G or any other organic control body. The onus is on the food processor to check whether a product is permitted for use in organic foods.

However, to help processors identify permitted products and to give recognition to those products that are compliant with the Organic Standards, OF&G has established an Evaluation Scheme.

The supplier needs to complete an application form and supply a dossier containing details of the products and proposed labels.

The dossier is then evaluated by the OF&G certification office and if found to be compliant with the standards:

- The supplier is issued with a certificate confirming that the products are approved for use in organic systems
- The product is added to a database of approved products which we use to advise processors and which we are planning to publish on our website
- The supplier is able to use a modified version of the OF&G logo on the product

Please be aware that:

- Any changes in the formulation or production must be reported to OF&G before changes take place
- The dossier must be renewed annually.

Genetically Modified Organisms

Genetically modified organisms, or materials derived from them, are not permitted in organic food products. They must not be produced or derived from genetically modified organisms and declarations to this effect are required. (Pro-forma non-GM declaration forms are available from OF&G.)

Labelling Approved Products

- The “Approved for use in Organic Systems” logo may be used for products approved under this scheme.
- Products approved under the OF&G Evaluation Scheme may not be called “Organic” and it must not be implied that they are organic. However the label can state that the ingredient is approved for use in organic food processing, as long as it is used in compliance with the OF&G organic standards.
- The code ‘GB Organic Certification 2’ cannot be used on any non-organic products because it is specific to organic food/feed products.
- All statutory labelling requirements must be complied with.

An Introduction to Organic Farmers & Growers Ltd.

Organic Farmers & Growers Ltd (OF&G) is one of Britain’s largest organic control bodies. It is approved by Defra to inspect a wide variety of organic operations in the UK.

How to have a product Evaluated

Request an Application Pack

Ring the OF&G office to request an application form, list of charges and a copy of the OF&G Control Manual if not enclosed. The relevant chapters (particularly Section 10) should be studied and understood before an application is made. If there are any questions, contact the OF&G certification office, (see contact details below).

Complete the Evaluation Scheme Application Form (RD111)

Complete the application form and send it to the certification office with appropriate information and the application fee. (Please refer to the OF&G charges sheet RD258 for current fees. These are charged at application and re-charged annually)

Evaluation

The certification office will evaluate the products and confirm whether or not they comply with the Organic Standards. Where they are not compliant, the applicant will be notified of the reasons, and then has an opportunity to amend the formulation and/or process. We are unfortunately unable to refund the application fee in cases where the product is not judged acceptable, (even after amendment), because of the time we will already have committed to its evaluation.

Be Issued with a Certificate of Evaluation for Use in Organic Systems

Once all the above stages have been completed, compliant products will be registered and an Evaluation Certificate issued. The OF&G Approval logo will be provided in digital format for inclusion on product labels and advertising material. NOTE: All labels and marketing materials must be submitted to OF&G for approval at the proof stage.

Re-registration is required each year and a fee will be charged

Further Information

For an information pack and further guidance please contact the OF&G Office.

T: 01939 291800 / 0845 330 5122 ext 232
F: 01939 291250 / 0845 330 5123
E: katie.owens@organicfarmers.org.uk
W: www.organicfarmers.org.uk