



TS24(EC)V03en_Plant Production

ORGANIC PLANT PRODUCTION

Guidelines no. 24:

Plant Production & Organic Farming

Ecocert Organic Standard (EOS)



I. Rules for organic conversion

If you have not started the process of conversion yet:

- ✓ Get in touch with our Certification Department
- ✓ Fill out the *Application Form and Unit Description*
- ✓ Refer to *Guidelines* document.

Organic conversion should only be started once a monitoring contract has been put in place with the certification body.

If you are already certified and start the process of conversion for a new plot :

- ✓ Notify us of the conversion of a designated plot of land, filling out the *Application Form and Unit Description*. Conversion start date will match notification date.

A. Conversion period

Conversion of a designated plot of land starts when organic production standards are strictly met on the operational side and at the date of the notification to the certification body.

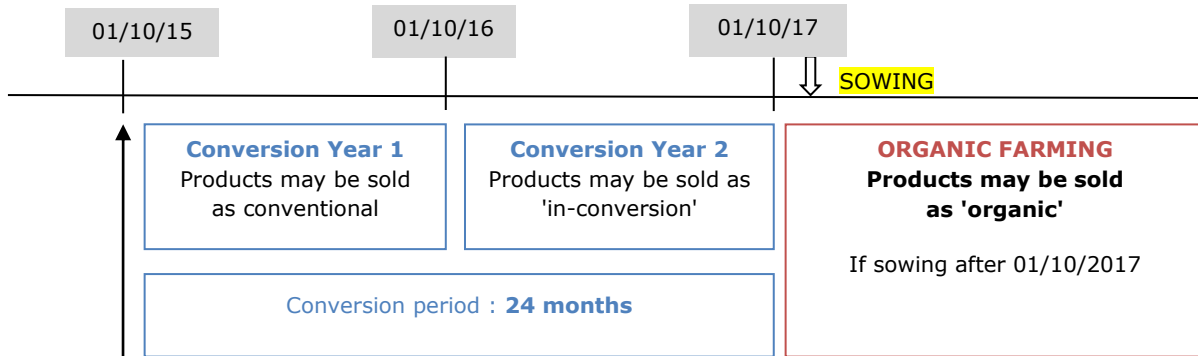
Types of crops	Conversion Period	Products may be sold as 'in-conversion C2'	Products may be sold as 'organic'
Annual & semi-perennial	24 months	If <u>harvest</u> falls 12 months after conversion start date on a designated plot of land	If <u>sowing</u> falls 24 months after conversion start date on a designated plot of land
Grassland and Perennial forage	24 months	If use as feed after 12 months, feed is in conversion to organic farming	If use as feed after 24 months, feed is organic
Perennial	36 months	If <u>harvest</u> falls 12 months after conversion start date on a designated plot of land	If <u>harvest</u> falls 36 months after conversion start date on a designated plot



Due of the conditions listed above, we strongly recommend that you start conversion:

- before sowing, for annual & semi-perennial types of crops
- before harvesting, for perennial types of crops.

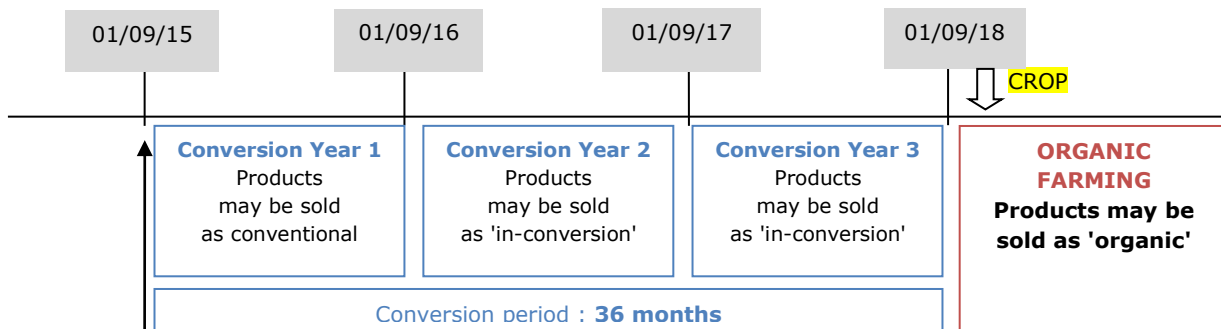
Annual types of crops :



Plot registered as 'in-conversion'

'Organic Farming' certification depends on sowing date. If sowing is done before 01/10/2017 then products may be sold as 'in organic conversion' even though it has been harvested after month 24.

Perennial Crops:



Plot registered as 'in-conversion'

'Organic Farming' certification depends on crop year.



B. Operation time prior to conversion (EOS IV.A.2.1.2)

1. Previous Crops

Ecocert may decide to recognize retroactively as being part of the conversion period any immediately preceding period with the following crops:

a) Natural or agricultural areas not treated with disallowed inputs (Article IV.A.2.1.2.b)

Some areas and agricultural practices can allow a retroactive recognition as there must be no doubt on the absence of non-authorized products and strong evidence to support it. Indeed satisfactory proof shall be furnished to Ecocert allowing it to satisfy itself that the conditions were met for a period of **at least three years**.

Preserved areas where the absence of use of non-authorized products (GMOs, inputs not listed in Annexes I and II of EOS applied directly or incidentally) is a usual and generalized cultural practice allow a retroactive recognition of a previous period as being part of the conversion period. An attestation on that subject shall be issued by a reliable and independent third party (e.g : research or development organization, certification body or local authority).

Examples of such preserved area:

- i) Non cultivated land (e.g. fallows, technical fallows, natural meadows,...) .
- ii) Abandoned crops (orchards where there has been no human action (pruning, treatment, irrigation, harvesting) during at least 3 years).
- iii) Traditionally farmed crops : Land cultivated under extensive traditional agriculture, using techniques that have been developed over decades or centuries in a specific area or region.

Ecocert must conduct an inspection and an examination of the land in order to find the evidence of the preservation of the area. This inspection must take place prior to the cultivation of the land for non-cultivated land and must include a review of the agricultural records. If the inspection concludes to the preservation of the land and absence of use of non-authorized substances, a retroactive recognition of a previous period as being part of the conversion period may be granted.

b) Parcel under a program implemented for the protection of environment (Article IV.A.2.1.2.a)

Parcels that were subject of measures defined in a program implemented for the protection of environment or in another official equivalent program can benefit



from a retroactive recognition of a previous period as being part of the conversion period provided that the following conditions are met:

- i) A detailed description of the program is available and its evaluation by Ecocert concludes that the program is equivalent to EOS.
- ii) The operator provides an attestation from the body running the program stating that the land has been part of the program for at least 36 months.
- iii) An inspection and an examination of the land and of agricultural records conducted by Ecocert show evidence of the implementation of the program.

II. Organic wild collection (EOS IV (B).7)

The collection of wild plants growing naturally can be considered as an organic production if it complies with the following requirements:

- ⇒ Only approved material (i.e. listed in Annex I & II of EOS) has been applied to the area during the 3 consecutive years prior to collection;
- ⇒ Collection does not have any impact on the environment or on the preservation of the species in the collection area (plants shall not be protected species and/or forbidden for collection by national law).
- ⇒ The collectors shall be trained and supervised by local experts responsible for the sustainable collection within the determined area

For further details, please refer to our "Organic Wild Collection, Guidelines no.25".

III. Inputs: origin and guarantees

A. Seeds and seedlings:

Only organically produced seed and propagating material must be used.

If organic seeds or vegetative propagating material are not commercially available, it may be possible to replace them with seeds or vegetative propagating material produced through conventional farming, providing specific requirements are met.



Types	Definition	Special authorisation granted for organic use of conventional seeds	Conditions
<p>Seeds and seed potatoes</p>	<p>Seeds used for the production of annual and perennial crops: cereals, legumes, cotton, vegetables...</p>	<p>Granted by Ecocert SA</p>	<p>Non-organic seed potatoes and seeds may be used providing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - There is a proof that the organic variety is not commercially available. - They are untreated (except if prohibited for phytosanitary reason by the local competent authorities). <p>Dispensation must be granted before purchase and before sowing. GM-free guarantee must be checked at supplier level.</p>
Types	Definition	Special authorisation granted for organic use of conventional seeds	Conditions



<p>Vegetative propagating material</p>	<p>Strawberry stems, transplanted tomatoes, young onion bulbs, artichoke stem, young fruit bushes, banana rhizome, pineapple shoots, vanilla cutting, sugar cane cutting, vine stock...</p>	<p>Granted by Ecocert SA</p>	<p>Non-organic vegetative propagating material may be used providing there is a proof that the organic variety is not commercially available.</p>
<p>Annual seedlings</p>	<p>Seedlings (naked roots or with soil): vegetable & rice young plant.</p>	<p>Not applicable. Cannot be granted.</p>	

B. Fertilizers and soil amendments:

Hydroponics is prohibited (method of growing plants with their roots in nutrient solution or in an inert medium).

Soil fertility must be maintained according to requirements listed in Chapter (B).1 of Title IV in EOS:

- ⇒ Organic cultivation techniques should contribute to maintaining or increasing soil organic matter.
- ⇒ Multiannual crop rotation including legumes and other green manure crops
- ⇒ The application of organic material from organic production
- ⇒ Use of biodynamic preparations

Only "fertilizers and soil amendments" listed in Annex I of EOS may be used. Mineral nitrogen fertilizers are forbidden.

1. Use of livestock effluents:

Limitation of Nitrogen release: the total volume of effluent utilized over the farming land and facilities, whether in the context of "mixed or 100% organic farming", should not go over 170Kg nitrogen per year per ha. All effluents, whether raw or composted, produced on the farm or bought out, originating from organic or conventional farming, should be accounted taken into account.



Designation	Restrictions on use
Manure (composting of animal excrements and vegetable material -litter-)	Factory farming origin prohibited : Mandatory composting if originating from intensive farming. Prohibited if originating from battery farming.
Dried Poultry Waste (DPW) & Dried Manure Solids (DMS)	Factory farming origin prohibited : Mandatory composting if originating from intensive farming. Prohibited if originating from battery farming.
Liquid animal excrements	Factory farming origin prohibited : May be used after controlled fermentation process and/or proper dilution. Prohibited if originating from battery farming.

2. Organic material and soil amendments prohibited as fertilizers in organic farming:

- ⇒ Sewage sludge originating from wastewater treatment plant,
- ⇒ Sludge originating from the food and agriculture industry,
- ⇒ Household composting where domestic rubbish has not been sorted,
- ⇒ Any raw material containing GMO and derivatives
- ⇒ Burnt lime or lime; only ground limestone (calcium carbonate) or residual lime from sugar or salt manufacturing plants are allowed.

C. Phytopharmaceuticals:

According to Chapter (B).5 of Title IV in EOS, prevention of damage caused by pests, diseases and weeds shall rely primarily on the choice of species and varieties, crop rotation, cultivation techniques, thermal methods and biodynamic preparations.

In the case of threat to a crop (pests, disease), phytopharmaceuticals may be used if :

- listed in Annex II of EOS, **and**
- comply with the conditions for use as specified in the Annex to the Commission Regulation (EU) N° 540/2011

In order to use these products, a marketing authorization must be granted.



D. Vendor guarantee checklist before purchase:

Seeds (packed & labelled)	Seeds (in bulk)	Annual Seedlings	Livestock effluents	Fertilizers & soil amendments	Phytopharmaceuticals
<p>Guarantee stated on label, invoice and certificate if organic.</p> <p>If non-organic, treatment-free guarantee (unless treated with an approved product listed in Annex II) + GMO-free</p>	<p>Guarantee stated on invoice and certificate if organic.</p> <p>If non-organic, treatment-free guarantee (unless treated with an approved product listed in Annex II) + GMO-free</p>	<p>Organic guarantee stated on invoice and certificate.</p>	<p>Organic guarantee</p> <p>If non-organic, guarantee:</p> <p>- not from factory farming + non GM guarantees for plant products present in the manure</p>	<p>"May be used for Organic Farming according to EU regulation 834/2007" statement on invoice or labels and/or check of conformity on product commercial factsheet + GMO-free</p>	<p>"May be used for Organic Farming according to EU regulation 834/2007" statement on invoice or labels and/or check of conformity on product commercial factsheet + Marketing authorization + non GM attestation for organic matter and microorganisms</p>

IV. Mixed Organic-Conventional Farming

As per Chapter (A).1 of Title IV in EOS, an operator farming a mix of organic and conventional annual crops shall only produce plants of different varieties, which may be easily differentiated. Moreover, organic and conventional facilities should be adequately separated with regards to inputs as well as products.



On a mixed organic-conventional farming basis, cultivating identical or not easily differentiated annual varieties during the same year may cause the whole of the production to be downgraded as conventional.

NB: If organic and non-organic production units are located in the same area, non-organic units and storage facilities for inputs (such as fertilizers, phytopharmaceuticals and seeds) also have to meet the same requirements: full unit description, full records of measures taken to ensure on-site separation and full audit trail records, provision of financial statements.

As per Chapter (B).2 of Title IV in EOS, dispensations may be granted for farming identical or not easily differentiated varieties to mixed organic and conventional unit providing they meet the following requirements:

Conditions / Types	Agronomic research: Identical or not easily differentiated varieties	Production of seeds, vegetative propagation material and seedlings: Identical or not easily differentiated varieties	Grassland: Identical or not easily differentiated varieties	Perennial crops Identical or not easily differentiated varieties
Drawing up a Conversion Plan (to be submitted each year for approval to Ecocert SA)	No	No	No	Yes. Deadline for conversion start date of the very last area of the designated plot is 5 years max.
Control measures to be approved by Ecocert SA	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
Implementing adequate separation measures	Yes	Yes	Yes, if organic and non-organic grassland used exclusively for	Yes



			pasture purpose (no hay production) + implementation of a register indicating the dates of animal presence on parcels	
Notifying control bodies at least 48 hours before harvesting each crop	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
Notifying control bodies as soon as harvest is over on quantities harvested on all units and on adequate separation implemented	Yes	Yes	No	Yes

V. Mushroom production (EOS IV (B).8)

For production of mushrooms, substrates may be used, if they are composed only of the following components:

- ⇒ Farmyard manure and animal excrements:
 - Either from holdings producing according to the organic production method;
 - or referred to in Annex I, only when the product referred to above is not available; and when they do not exceed 25 % of the weight of total components of the substrate, excluding the covering material and any added water, before composting;
- ⇒ Other products of agricultural origin, from holdings producing according to organic production method;
- ⇒ Peat not chemically treated;
- ⇒ Wood, not treated with chemical products after felling;
- ⇒ Mineral products referred to in Annex I, water and soil.



VI. Definitions

Farm:

Means all the production units as whole, operated as a single legal entity for agricultural production purpose.

Production Unit:

Means all the resources used to farm a designated production area, such as farming facilities, plots of land, grassland, open air areas, livestock facilities, moors, confinement zones & facilities used for farming algae and aquaculture, animal enclosure on land or on seabed, crop storage facilities, plant product, products derived from sea algae, animal products, raw materials and all other input used for operation.

Conversion:

Means 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.

Plant Production:

Means production of agricultural crop products including harvesting of wild plant products for commercial purpose.

Composting:

Means a controlled process in which organic material, originating from plants or animals, decays through aerobic decomposition.

"Mixed" Farming:

Means plant production in compliance with the requirements of both organic and conventional farming. Cultivation of plants of identical varieties or which may not be easily differentiated by inexperienced eyes is identified as a "parallel production".



VII. References in EOS

Ecocert Organic Standard

- IV.(A).1 - Mixity and parallel production
- IV.(B).6 - Seed and planting material
- IV.(A).2.1 - Conversion rules
- IV.(B).3 + annexe I - Fertilisers and soil conditioners
- IV.(B).8 - Mushroom production
- IV.(B).5 + annexe II - Measures to control pests, diseases and weed.

These documents are available upon request to ECOCERT or may be downloaded from our website www.ecocert.com

