

China Organic Product Certification Program

At a glance

This document provides an overview of the China Organic Product Certification Program.

The China Organic Product Certification program is one of the several certification programs that are referenced in [Standards Map](#), the interactive web-based tool on private standards developed by the T4SD program of ITC.

What is China Organic Product Certification

Chinese organic agriculture began in the late 1980s, driven initially by environmental concerns and later by export opportunities. The sector's growth was remarkable, reaching over million hectares within five years. The Chinese government was quick to move to regulate the organic sector through a series of rules and regulations introduced since the mid-1990s. By 2005, compulsory organic standards and supervision systems were introduced for organic certification bodies operating in China, and as a consequence all organic products, including imports, must comply with the national rules and standards.

There are various regulations and agencies in the Chinese regulatory system for organic agriculture. At the forefront is the Certification and Accreditation Administration of the People's Republic of China (CNCA), the national administrative body overseeing all types of certification and accreditation within China. Established by the State Council of China in August 2001, CNCA's main mandate is to unify and streamline management of standards and certifications, which were previously managed by various departments, resulting in inconsistency. The China National Accreditation Service for Conformity Assessment (CNAS), the national accreditation body, does technical conformity assessment. CNAS conducts assessment and accreditation for inspection bodies, laboratories as well as certification bodies.

"National Standard of the People's Republic of China: Organic Products" (GB/T19630-2005) was introduced in January 2005, taking effect in April. In June 2005 CNCA issued "The Rule on Implementation of Organic Products Certification". In 2009, CNCA organized expert meetings for the revision of "China National Standard for Organic Product", with the new version of the national standard due to be issued in late 2010. The Technical Committee of Chinese Organic Certification was founded on 14 December, 2009.

China Organic Product Certification applies to the production, processing, labelling and marketing, and management system of all natural products.

What products are covered by the China Organic Product Certification program

China Organic Product Certification standard covers crops, mushrooms, wild plants, livestock and poultry, aquaculture products, beekeeping products and their unprocessed products among others.

What are the key features of China Organic Product Certification

- The China Organic Product Certification system is certified by certification organizations.
- Inspectors of all certification and certification training bodies must be approved and registered with the China Certification & Accreditation Association (CCAA).

- The China Organic Product Certification system relies on a dual system to check compliance with the relevant criteria consisting of on-site auditing and residue testing.
- There are two certificates delivered by certification bodies, one is Organic certificate, another is Conversion to Organic certificate. Before delivering Organic certificate, there is a period of conversion (usually 3 years), subject to annual surveillance audits.
- National regulations on organic agriculture were first introduced in the early 2000s and the last one was applied in 2005. They require organic certification bodies, inspectors and operators to comply with Chinese national organic standards and certification protocols.
- The organic standards, i.e. National Standard of the People's Republic of China: Organic Products (GB/T 19630.1 19630.4-2005), are based on international norms with added emphasis on contamination by pollutants and prohibited materials and quality management systems, especially record keeping and traceability.

Facts and figures

- China Organic Product Certification is active in China only.
- There is no clear and comprehensive statistical information about the volume and value of organic production in China. The latest estimate was 2.03 million hectares of certified organic farmland in 2009, while total organic production was valued at about US\$ 2.4 billion in 2008, of which US\$ 500 million went for export and the rest was sold locally. Organic imports were estimated at about US\$ 3 million – US\$ 8 million per year, and a maximum of US\$ 20 million in 2009.
- It is estimated by the Organic Food Development Centre that the organic market will reach a value of RMB 24.8-59.4 billion by 2015 in China.

Support

The China Organic Product Certification scheme document, participant application form and other China Organic Product Certification reference material in Chinese are available free of charge from the Organic Food Development Centre website (http://www.ofdc.org.cn/article.asp?m_id=10).

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China Organic Product Certification Program is currently operational in the following country and region.

Detailed maps highlighting countries where certification / verification is possible and countries where certified products / services are sold can be generated on ITC's Standards Map website.



Map coming soon...

1 country

ASIA China

How to become certified

- Step 1:** Identify the certification body(ies) approved by CNCA that operate in the region of interest.
- Step 2:** Download and fill in certification application documents. Perform a self-assessment against the certification requirements and provide the results and background documents to the certification body accredited by CNCA. The certification body will decide if it will accept the certification application or not in 10 working days.
- Step 3:** An on-site inspection is carried out by the certification body as part of the certification process. Tracing the organic product flow, assessment of all inputs and accessories used, verification of the production environment are key elements of the inspection protocol. After inspection, the inspector will produce an inspection report.
- Step 4:** The certification body assesses information collected and decides whether deliver Conversion to Organic certificate or not. If compliance with the standard requirements completely, the certification body will deliver Conversion to Organic certificate to the applicant. After a few years (usually 3 years), an organic certificate will be delivered to holder of Conversion to Organic certificate, subject to annual surveillance audits.
- Step 5:** The certification body signs a contract with holder of Organic certificate or Conversion to Organic certificate. The contract clarifies conditions and requirements of using signs and logos of Organic or Conversion to Organic.
- Step 6:** Entities that receive a Conversion to Organic certificate or Organic certificate are free to advertise their certified status to the market. They also become listed in the OFDC public data base of certified entities which is available on the OFDC website.