

# 2005

## The Organic Certification Directory

The Organic Certification Directory 2005 is a special edition of The Organic Standard

This is the third in a series of annually updated directories on organic certification bodies. The data comes from the Grolink collection and it offers interesting information. Did you for example know that only seventy countries have home based certification organisations, or that China went from having six certification bodies in 2004 to twenty-six in 2005? Now you have the chance to learn more and we hope that you have good use of this directory.

# China goes up and USA goes down

In the 2003 issue of *The Organic Certification Directory*, 364 organisations were listed as offering organic-certification services. Last year, we listed 383. This year, the number has risen to 419 organisations.

The majority of the certification bodies are in the European Union, the United States of America, Japan, China, Canada, and Brazil. Many of the listed certification organisations are also operating outside their home country. Most are based in a developed country and offer their certification services in developing countries. Very few operate in several developed countries; there is not a single EU-based certification body offering its services in the United States, even when they have the required

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accreditation by the National Organic Program (NOP). A handful work on several or all the continents. Seventy countries have a home-based certification organisation. Most of Africa and large parts of Asia still lack local service providers. There are only seven certification bodies in Africa—in South Africa, Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, and Egypt. Asia has 117 certification bodies; 104 of these are based in China, India, and Japan.

<i>Certification bodies per region</i>	2005	2004	2003
Africa	7	9	7
Asia	117	91	83
Europe	157	142	130
Latin America & Caribbean	43	33	33
North America	84	97	101
Oceania	11	11	10
Total	419	383	364



Broccoli in Shandong, China. Photo: Kari Örjavik

The number of organisations has gone down in the United States from seventy-one year 2004 to sixty year 2005. When the NOP was passed, there was a rush for organisations to register as certification bodies, similar to what happened in the EU in the mid-nineties. Some were never accredited, and some may not have been certification bodies. Others realised that there is not much money to be made from organic certification. In Europe, there has been an increase in the number of certification bodies in Spain, Italy, and some new EU member states. In Latin America, five certification bodies in Colombia have been added to the listing, bringing the total to six. The most spectacular increase has been in China, where the number went from six in 2004 to twenty-six in 2005. This growth is likely an effect of the introduction of legislation for organic farming in China.

Largest number of certification bodies per country

Japan	69
United States	60
Germany	31
China (P.R.)	26
Spain	25
Canada	24
Brazil	18
Italy	16
United Kingdom	10

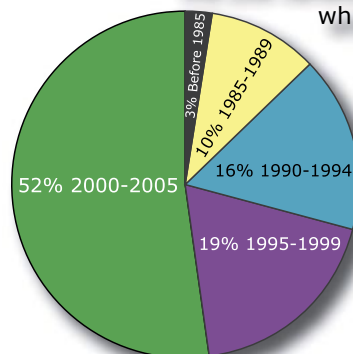
Certification bodies were asked for information about the number of operators they certify. Only 171 responded, giving a total of 147,000 operators. When it comes to the number of farmers, less than one hundred gave an answer. They certified in total 247,000 farms, with IMO's head office alone reporting more than 53,000. BioLatina certified 14,000 farms, Certimex 32,000. Naturland reports 39,000 farms. It should be noted that the same farm can be certified twice; many Naturland-certified farmers are also IMO-certified, as the two organisations cooperate closely. Nevertheless, the total number of certified farms is likely in the range of half a million.

Giving data about turnover seems to be a sensitive issue, as only fifty-nine organisations responded. Many report figures in the range of 100,000 to 500,000 euros. Bio Suisse, KRAV, and Soil Association are the heavyweights when it comes to turnover, all with more than 5 million euros.

Of those 256 that responded to the question concerning the starting date of their operation, only seven had started before 1985, and 52 percent had started after 2000. The Biodynamic Agricultural Association in the United Kingdom started to offer organic-certification services 1970, while the better-known Soil Association started in 1973.

There are some insights to be gained from the statistics on the kinds of approvals individual bodies

Starting year of certification for the 256 certification bodies who responded to the query



have. Approval for the United States has attracted 115 certification bodies, of which sixty are based outside that country. The European Union has 143 approved bodies, with only fourteen non-EU-based bodies recognised within its system. It should be borne in mind that the majority of imports into the European Union come through certification granted under article 11.6 (the importer's derogation). Under that system, import authorisations were granted from 108 countries in 2005.

Number of certification bodies and approvals per region

Region	Total	IFOAM	Japan	ISO 65	EU	USA
Africa	7			3		
Asia	117	4	69	5	1	2
Europe	157	14	16	69	129	34
Latin America & Caribbean	43	4	1	13	5	10
North America	84	5	8	20	0	65
Oceania	11	4	6	3	8	4
<b>Total 2005</b>	<b>419</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>113</b>	<b>143</b>	<b>115</b>
Total 2004	383	30	95	96	132	112
Total 2003	364	26	81	74	112	106

Note that 107 of the listed organisations do not have any of the five highlighted accreditations or approvals. Although the ISO 65 often is seen as a universal norm for certification, only a little more than a quarter of the organisations report that they are accredited to ISO 65. TOS doesn't verify the claims of ISO 65 accreditation; the real number probably is lower. Only five organisations have all five approvals.

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# How the *Directory* works

Readers will note that not all entries are complete. This is because the information was not submitted by the respondents. In most cases, the particulars provided by the bodies have been published as submitted. Independent verification of information was made only regarding approvals. IFOAM, the European Union, the United States, and Japan made the approvals. Some entries were amended as a result of the verification process.

*List of organisations.* In order to be included in the *Directory*, the organisation must be an independent, registered legal entity that conducts and issues certificates in its own right. Many bodies have branch and representative offices that conduct inspections and process applications. These offices are listed separately only when they act as independent, registered legal entities, conducting and issuing certificates in their own right (that is, not through the head office), or are separately accredited or approved in the country or region where they operate. For instance, in Tunisia, four EU-based organisations offer their certification through local representatives, but as they are approved as a representative of the EU organisations, the local representatives are not listed here. Similarly, many branch offices tell us that they are accredited by one entity or another, but as long as they are not accredited in their own capacity, we don't include the note of accreditation, but often there is a note that their accreditation is 'via NN'. TOS apologises for mistakes that may have been made in identifying and making this differentiation.

Whilst an extensive effort was made to cover all certification bodies operating an organic-certification programme, some may have been missed. The *Directory* does include some bodies that have not performed any actual organic certification, but, to the best of our knowledge, offer the service. We did weed out a considerable number of organisations that didn't respond to our inquiries, but we kept those that were included in official listings or whose operational Web site we managed to find. Sometimes we make the choices: for example, one of the organisations listed as an applicant to the U.S. NOP advertises itself as a supplier of organic fertilisers, but there is no sign of any certification service on their Web site. They were, therefore, removed from the *Directory*.

*Country of operation* is listed as submitted. A few organisations do not offer certification in their home country.

*Turnover, Number of employees, Own organic standard,* and *Start of organic Certification* are listed as submitted.

*Number of operators* and *Number of farms.* By operators, we mean anybody holding a certificate for organic pro-

duction. In the case of group certification, one certificate represents many producers. In order to get a view of how many farmers are actually certified-organic, we ask for those data specifically. From the figures, however, it is apparent that some respondents have not understood clearly the question or distinction of categories. The reader should treat these data with some scepticism.

*Approval IFOAM.* The reference used for verification was the list dated 28 June 2005 and published by the IOAS.

*Approval ISO 65.* This also covers accreditation to EN45011 (which is the same). Claims were not independently verified.

*Approval EU.* 'Yes' covers EU (and EEA) control bodies approved by their respective governments to certify according to the EU organic regulations and certification bodies recognised through the third-country acceptance list, namely, Argentina, Australia, Costa Rica, Israel, Switzerland, and New Zealand. The references used for verification were the country listings compiled from several official and unofficial sources. EU-based certification bodies that do not certify for the EU organic regulations are not noted with a yes. In many cases, the operators certified by these bodies are approved by an EU-recognised body as well. The same applies to certification bodies that claim they are approved through unofficial arrangements with approved bodies. Where certification bodies claimed that their operators have import access via article 11.6 (the importer's derogation), it is indicated in the *Directory*.

*Approval US.* 'Yes' covers certification bodies that have been accredited directly by the NOP or recognised through agreements the USDA has with the governments of British Columbia (Canada), Denmark, Quebec (Canada), New Zealand, and the United Kingdom. The reference used for verification was the NOP Web site and associated links.

*Approval Japan.* The reference used for verification was a list compiled by a well-informed source in Japan. TOS has not been able to locate an official list in English of the certification bodies in Japan. However, a list of foreign certification bodies approved for Japanese certification has been used.

*Other approvals.* These cover other certification programmes that the certification bodies operate besides organic certification and those recognised by authorities besides the European Union, the United States, and Japan for organic certification. The claims have not been verified independently.

If you have corrections or additions to the data in the Directory we are happy to receive them.

You can send your comments to The Organic Standard Main Office by e-mail: [office@organicstandard.com](mailto:office@organicstandard.com) or fax: +46-563-720 66.

## Albania

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### **Organic Agriculture Association Shoqata e Bujqësisë Organike**

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Tirane  
Albania

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*Phone:* +355-4-250 575  
*E-mail:* organic@icc-al.org

*Countries of operation:* Albania.

## Argentina

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### **Argencert S.R.L.**

Bernardo de Irigoyen 972, 4º "B"  
1072 Buenos Aires  
Argentina

*General Manager:* Laura Montenegro  
*Contact:* Jorge Casale  
*Phone:* +54-11-436 300 33  
*Fax:* +54-11-436 302 02  
*E-mail:* argencert@argencert.com.ar  
*Web:* www.argencert.com.ar

*Countries of operation:* Argentina; Chile; Paraguay. *Employees:* 17. *Mainly organic:* Yes. *Own standards:* Yes. *Start of organic certification:* 1992. *Number of operators:* 246. *Number of farmers:* 550. *Turnover:* 350,000 USD. *Approval IFOAM:* Yes. *Approval ISO 65:* Yes. *ISO 65 note:* DAP. *Approval EU:* Yes. *EU note:* 3rd country list. *Approval USA:* Yes. *Japan note:* via accredited certification body. *Other approval:* CAAQ-Quebec; Argentina's application authority (SENASA) registered for export certification and local market.

### **Food Safety S.A.**

Varela 183, Flores  
C1406EKC Buenos Aires  
Argentina

*General Manager:* Roberto Rapela  
*Contact:* Maria Susana Vidal  
*Phone:* +54-11-461 212 57  
*Fax:* +54-11-461 212 57  
*E-mail:* foodsafety@foodsafety.com.ar  
*Web:* www.foodsafety.com.ar

*Countries of operation:* Argentina. *Employees:* 8. *Mainly organic:* Yes. *Own standards:* Yes. *Approval ISO 65:* Yes. *Approval EU:* Yes. *EU note:* 3rd country list. *Approval USA:* Yes. *Japan note:* Agreement with approved bodies. *Other approval:* Bio Suisse; SENASA (Argentina).

### **LETIS S.A.**

URQUIZA 1564 Piso 1  
S2000ANR Rosario  
Argentina

*General Manager:* Patricia I. Garcia de Clausen  
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*Web:* www.letis.com.ar

*Countries of operation:* Argentina; Brazil; Canada; Chile; Paraguay; Uruguay. *Employees:* 25. *Mainly organic:* Yes. *Own standards:* Yes. *Start of organic certification:* 1998. *Number of operators:* 510. *IFOAM note:* Applicant. *Approval ISO 65:* Yes. *Approval EU:* Yes. *EU note:* 3rd country list. *Approval USA:* Yes. *Other approval:* CAAQ-Quebec; SENASA Argentina; Switzerland.

### **OIA Organizacion Internacional Agropecuaria (OIA)**

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Buenos Aires  
Argentina

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*Web:* www.oia.com.ar

*Countries of operation:* Argentina; Brazil; Colombia; Nicaragua. *Employees:* Approx. 20. *Mainly organic:* Yes. *Own standards:* Yes. *Start of organic certification:* 1992. *Number of operators:* 550. *Number of farmers:* 1,200. *Approval IFOAM:* Yes. *Approval ISO 65:* Yes. *Approval EU:* Yes. *EU note:* 3rd country list. *Approval USA:* Yes. *Japan note:* Agreement with JONA. *Other approval:* CAAQ-Quebec; EurepGAP; Marine Stewardship Council (MSC); Organic Quality Programs.

## Australia

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### **Australian Certified Organic Pty Ltd (ACO)**

P.O. Box 530, L1 766 Gympie Road  
Chermside QLD 4032  
Australia

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*E-mail:* certification@aco.net.au, info@aco.net.au  
*Web:* www.australianorganic.com.au

*Countries of operation:* Australia; Fiji; New Zealand; Papua New Guinea; Thailand. *Employees:* 8. *Mainly organic:* Yes. *Own standards:* Yes. *Standards note:* Cooperation with BFA. *Number of operators:* 1,400. *Approval IFOAM:* Yes. *ISO 65 note:* In progress. *Approval EU:* Yes. *EU note:* 3rd country list. *Approval USA:* Yes. *Approval Japan:* Yes. *Other approval:* CAAQ-Quebec.

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