

The East African Organic Standard



The Regional Standards Technical Working Group – the facilitators of the East African Organic Standard

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Why?

There are already 4 standards in Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania and more standards underway (almost none of them are used)

- Harmonized standard allow regional trade
- Negotiations with other governments for equivalence/recognition
- Coordinating input into international for a - Codex Alimentarius and IFOAM.
- Better resource use

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International acceptance

Always quickest for market access to use importing country's standard directly

- Pointless to make a national/regional standard that is *identical* with the export market standard
- Different export markets have different standards
- Also producers in Europe and the USA have to accept this

Equivalence is the way forward

- It is a difficult path
- Involves a certain aspect of negotiation - you don't undercut your own bid
- More countries using the same standard give more weight in negotiations
- Delicate balance between being locally adapted and still possible to get accepted internationally
- **Obvious target to get the EAOS recognized**

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Use?

A unified standard is a basis for:

- Export market access
- EA market development
 - Use of ingredients
 - Cross border trade
 - EA organic mark
- Consumer awareness raising
- Extension, education and research
- Policy dialogue
- Increase respectability of organic
- Cooperation within the sector in general

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How?

- The EAOS to replace existing standard
- A standard that works in EA for EA producers
- Easy to understand and use
- Acceptance by the EAC

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In the market place

Is used to define the organic claim

- The vision is that it is used as voluntary standard
- EU style mandatory regulation **is not asked for** by the sector....*today*

"Guarantee" – verification, backing of claim

- Third Party Certification – exists today
- Participatory Guarantee Systems – under development
- Organised Groups – exists today
- Self-claim – exists today

Let the sector and the consumers decide what kinds of guarantee they trust and promote

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What is in the East African Organic Standard?

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Structure

- Introduction
- Scope
- Normative references
- Terms and definitions
- Standards for different areas
- IFOAM Principles of Organic Agriculture

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Standards Topics

- General requirements for all organic production
- Crop production
- Animal husbandry
- Bee-keeping
- Wild collection
- Handling, storage and processing
- Labelling
- Lists for inputs in agriculture and food processing

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General standards

- Environmental care
 - Precautionary measures, avoid using dangerous substances, avoid contamination of organic sites and products
 - Contamination of organic products
- Operator shall fulfil relevant national and regional legislation
- GMO
 - Prohibition of the use GMO
 - Statement that contamination may alter the status

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Social justice

- Workers to be guaranteed human rights and fair working conditions
- Policy on social justice
- No forced or involuntary labour
- No child labour
- Work shall be safe



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Documentation and transparency

- Appropriate to the scale of production and ability of the operator
- Operators shall give information to relevant parties



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Plant production

- Conversion period
 - 1 year for all production
- Parallel production
- Soil and water conservation
- Erosion control
- Contamination



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Seeds and seedlings

- Organic seeds and seedlings
- Untreated
- Allowed to use chemically treated seeds when nothing else is available



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Biodiversity

- not clear primary ecosystems
- keep trees if possible

Farming system diversity

- crop rotations
- perennials - intercropping



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- Fertilisers and soil conditioners
- Pest, disease and weed management
- Criteria for inputs



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Mushroom production

- Substrate
- Inoculum



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Draught animals

- Animal husbandry standards apply
- Not overuse



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Animal management

- Living conditions to fulfil natural behavioural needs
- Space - Movement
- Clean and dry
- Request roughage
- Allows tethering



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- Zero grazing allowed when it is a more sustainable land use
- Animals shall have access to an outdoor run



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- Conversion time
- Animal nutrition
 - down to 40% conventional feed
 - milk to offspring
- Disease management
 - Parasite treatments to be documented
- Transport and slaughter



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Bee - keeping

- Organic or natural areas
- Enough forage and water
- Conversion time
- Health of colonies
- Harvest, reserves of honey, brood and pollen



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Wild collection

- Collected in a sustainable way
- Collection at clearly defined areas



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Handling and processing

- Separation of organic/conventional
- Ingredients – when can conventional ingredients be used
- Processing techniques
- Additives and processing aids
- Packaging materials
- Pest management



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Labelling

- 100% organic
- 95 – 100% organic
- 70 - 95% organic
- Below 70%
- “Produced according to the East African Organic Standard”



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Remember the people who have to fulfil the standards!



Thank you very much!

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