



INTERNATIONAL ORGANIC ACCREDITATION SERVICE

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Ifoam Norms, ISO Guide 65, Canada Organic Regime and Regulation (EC) 834/2007

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Public operator lists

Background:

Ifoam and ISO Guide 65 (and therefore the Canada Organic Regime and (EC) 834/2007) accreditation criteria require certification bodies to make lists of certified operators publicly available as follows:

IC5.2.h: ‘certification body shall make publicly available, through print and or electronic media, current information on h. A current list of certified operators, including name, location and scope of the certification; if an operator is certified as a group it shall be identified as such;’

ISO 65 4.8.1g: ‘certification body shall provide (through publications, electronic media or other means), update at regular intervals, and make available on request g) a directory of certified products and their suppliers.’

Although the details vary slightly, both clearly require public lists of all certified operators. The IOAS has always accepted that this list does not need to be included on the CB website (whenever one exists) but should be at least made available on request.

Most CBs these days, have websites and they include lists of certified products/operators. However, what the IOAS is finding is that in some cases, these lists are **not a comprehensive list of all operators**. CBs defend this approach stating that not all operators want to appear on the web site list.

The IOAS feel, therefore, that these ‘lists’ are misleading and they are not actually the ‘list of operators’ that is implied. The IOAS position on this was discussed recently by the IOAS Accreditation Committee.

Decision

Making available a full list of certified operators (without exception) is a fundamental requirement of transparency in certification. The IOAS accepts that this list need not be available on a web site

(except as required by the European Commission - see below) but must be provided when requested and contain all the details required by relevant norms.

Where CBs provide the service of an operator list or an operator or product search facility on a web site which does not include all certified operators or all required information, the web page must make a clear declaration that states (or similar) 'This is not a full list. A full list of all certified operators including all data required by relevant norms is available on request from (indicate contact details)'

Those CBs working under the EU Recognition Programme are reminded that according to the Commission 'Guidelines on imports of organic products into the European Union' at section 9, the CB must publish a list of all operators 'subject to control, at least with respect to the European Union'. CBs should refer themselves to that section to ensure they are fulfilling these requirements.

End