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**EXTRACT FROM THE REPORT ON AN AUDIT CARRIED OUT BY THE FOOD
AND VETERINARY OFFICE in Tunisia**

FROM 26 NOVEMBER TO 7 DECEMBER 2012

**TO EVALUATE THE ORGANIC PRODUCTION RULES, THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE
CONTROL SYSTEM AND THE SURVEILLANCE CARRIED OUT BY THE COMPETENT
AUTHORITIES**

***NB.: THE FOLLOWING TEXT IS THE TRANSLATION OF PARTS OF THE ORIGINAL
AUDIT REPORT (REF. NO. DG(SANCO)/ 2012-6769). IT HAS BEEN PROVIDED TO ASSIST
VISITORS TO THIS SITE, BUT HAS NO OFFICIAL STATUS. REFERENCE SHOULD ALWAYS BE
MADE TO THE FULL TEXT OF THE ORIGINAL AUDIT REPORT.***

SUMMARY

This report describes the outcome of an audit carried out by the Food and Veterinary Office (FVO) in Tunisia from 26 November to 7 December 2012 under Regulation (EC) No 882/2004 for the purpose of assessing the application of the organic production rules, the effectiveness of the control system and the surveillance carried out by the competent authorities.

The Tunisian legislation necessary to regulate the organic agriculture sector, recognised as equivalent by Regulation (EC) No 1235/2008, provides the legal basis for the control system. The competent authorities (CAs) are clearly defined and effectively coordinated. There is a procedure in place for authorising control and certification bodies (OCCs) and regularly auditing them; the tasks delegated to the OCCs are insufficiently described, however, and hitherto the main aim of the audit procedure has been to check whether the conditions for approval and accreditation were met, rather than to verify the effectiveness of the controls carried out by the OCCs. In any case, no serious instance of non-compliance entailing the revocation or suspension of approval has been identified to date.

The checks by the OCCs were generally carried out as provided for in national law and on the basis of risk analysis.

The OCCs sample organic products on the basis of risk analysis, and positive results are reported to the competent central authority (CCA) for investigation.

The FVO audit team did not detect any anomalies in the export dossiers it examined. The export procedures described by the CAs had been followed, but some shortcomings concerning traceability were noted.

The sanctions applicable to operators provided for by the OCCs' procedures were generally applied.

The effectiveness of the control system at primary production level is satisfactory, with the exception of the procedures for the retroactive recognition of conversion periods, which do not follow the procedure described by the CCA. In processing units (particularly those producing conventional products in parallel) shortcomings were noted concerning the procedures for separating production, cleaning equipment and, in certain cases, traceability.

The report contains a number of recommendations addressed to the Tunisian competent authorities with the aim of rectifying the non-conformities observed and improving the application of control measures.

Recommendations

No	Recommendation
1.	Ensure, when approving or renewing the approval of control and certification bodies, that the tasks delegated to them are clearly set out and detailed so that the CCA can verify the effectiveness of the checks they carry out, as provided by Article 18 of Decree No 2000-409 of 14 February 2000.
2.	Ensure that the control and certification bodies implement effective control measures, as provided by Article 19 of Decree No 2000-409 of 14 February 2000.
3.	Ensure that the control measures implemented by the control and certification bodies are assessed in the audits carried out by the Central Competent Authority on the basis of specific criteria, as provided by Article 18 of Decree No 2000-409 of 14 February 2000.
4.	Ensure that the procedures for separating production, cleaning equipment and traceability in processing units, as laid down by the specifications for the preparation of organic agricultural products (approved by the Decree of the Minister of Agriculture and Water Resources of 3 December 2005) and Article 14 of Law No 99-30 are applied throughout the entire process, can be audited and are effectively audited by the control and certification bodies.

The competent authority's response to the recommendations is available at:
http://ec.europa.eu/food/fvo/rep_details_en.cfm?rep_inspection_ref=2012-6769