

# The Import regime for organic products into the EU



**Paul Axmann**  
**European Commission**  
**Agriculture and Rural Development**  
**Directorate General**  
**Unit H.3 – Organic farming**



# EU Import regime

## Relevant regulations

### Regulation (EC) No 834/2007

- on organic production and labelling of organic products

### Regulation (EC) No 889/2008

- laying down detailed rules for the implementation of No 834/2007

### Regulation (EC) No 1235/2008

- laying down detailed rules for imports of organic products from third countries



European Commission  
Agriculture and  
Rural Development



# Based on equivalence

## Definition 'equivalent'

**Describing different systems or measures, means that they are capable of meeting same objectives and principles by applying rules which ensure the same level of assurance of conformity.**



# EU Import system

## At the EU border

- **No specific tariff rates for organic products**
- **Products enter EU through normal import rights**
- **“Import certificate” needed in all cases**



# EU Import system

## Overview on import regime based on equivalence

- **List of recognised third countries**
- **List of control bodies and control authorities**
- **Member State import authorisations**



European Commission  
Agriculture and  
Rural Development

# List of recognised third countries



European Commission  
Agriculture and  
Rural Development



# List of recognised third countries

## What is needed?

1. **National equivalent organic regulation**
2. **Equivalent control system**
3. **Recognition of the third country by the Commission**

Legal Ref.            Regulation (EC) No 834/2007, Article 33(1)  
                             Regulation (EC) No 1235/2008, Article 7



# List of recognised third countries

## Inclusion procedure

1. **Starting point: request for inclusion from the government of the third country,**
2. **Preconditions: technical dossier,**
3. **Assessment of the technical dossier by the Commission and co-reporting MS,**
4. **Possible additional information request and on-the-spot examination,**
5. **Decision to include the third country in the list requires a favourable opinion of the relevant committee and a decision of the college by written procedure,**
6. **Publication in the official journal of the EU.**



European Commission  
Agriculture and  
Rural Development





# List of recognised third countries

## Status Quo

- **10 countries recognised so far**  
...for different product categories  
(AR, AU, CR, IN, IL, CH, NZ, TN, JP, CA)
- **20 pending applications**  
...last ones: Taiwan and Serbia



European Commission  
Agriculture and  
Rural Development

# List of recognised control bodies



European Commission  
Agriculture and  
Rural Development



# List of recognised control bodies

## What is needed?

1. Control body active in a third country
2. An equivalent standard applied by the CB or CA in the TC
3. Equivalent control measures applied by the CB or CA in the TC
4. Recognition of CB/CA by the Commission

Legal Ref.            Regulation (EC) No 834/2007, Article 33(3)  
                             Regulation (EC) No 1235/2008, Article 10



# **List of recognised control bodies**

## **Inclusion procedure**

- 1. Starting point: request for inclusion from a single control body,**
- 2. Preconditions: technical dossier. Only complete applications will be reviewed,**
- 3. Evaluation by the Commission services and co-reporting MS,**
- 4. Possible additional information request**
- 5. Decision to include a CB in the list requires a favourable opinion of the relevant committee and a decision of the college by written procedure,**
- 6. Publication in the official journal of the EU.**



**European Commission**  
Agriculture and  
Rural Development



# List of recognised control bodies

## Status Quo

**73 EU and non-EU Control bodies applied in 2009**

**Applied for different product categories**

**Applied for about 80 different countries**

**This year the first list will be published**

**30 control bodies will be recognised**

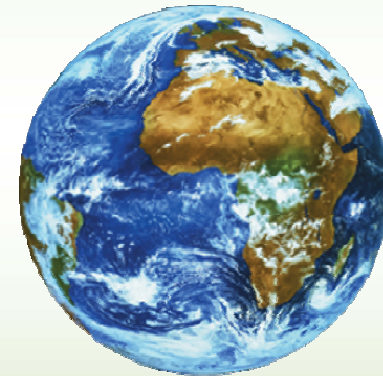
**For more than 60 Third Countries**

**Covering all different product groups**

**(plant, livestock, proc. food, proc. feed, aquaculture, seeds)**

**Update of the list will soon follow**

**Will apply from 1/x/2012**



European Commission  
Agriculture and  
Rural Development

# Import authorisation by Member States



European Commission  
Agriculture and  
Rural Development



# Import authorisation by Member States

**MS can on case-by-case basis issue import authorizations  
(for a single consignment of organic products)**

**They will be replaced by the list of recognised control bodies**

**MS authorisations will be phased out within the next years**

**Legal Ref.            Not in Regulation (EC) No 834/2007 => Transitional rule  
Regulation (EC) No 1235/2008, Article 19**



**Thank you for your attention !**



**[www.organic-farming.europa.eu](http://www.organic-farming.europa.eu)**

