

Apicultural Operations (including beeswax)

The certification procedure for organic production is regulated by the norms for the respective standard.

For EU-certification in Third Countries: Reg. EU 2018/848 + delegated and implementing acts

For the USA: the NOP Final Rule – NOP/COR Equivalence

For the certification of bee-keeping operations, specifically, the following rules will be considered by Kiwa BCS, in line with the above-mentioned norms:

For EU-certification in Third Countries:

Reg.(EU) 2018/848 as applicable to the articles mentioned in chapters II, III, IV, especially Art.9, Annex II part II, 1.9 ; Reg. (EU) 2021/1165 Art. 3 – 6, Annex III, IV, VI. Reg. (EU) 2021/771 Art. 1

NOP does not have specific regulations for organic apiculture but regulates these with the requirements for organic animal husbandry (§205.236 to §205.239).

The operator could be a single producer or a group of operators. In the last case, the inspection program for the Group of operators also applies.

The inspection program is structured as follows:

- a) Organic Systems Plan
- b) Inspection
- c) Certification

1. Organic Systems Plan

The Organic Systems Plan has to be compiled and submitted to Kiwa BCS Öko-Garantie for verification before inspection. The Organic Systems Plan has to be updated continuously to reflect the current state of the operation. Changes always have to be communicated to the certification body, but not later than before an upcoming inspection.

An Organic Systems Plan template is provided by Kiwa BCS. It consists of the following elements:

- Conformity Declaration of the Operation Manager for the respective standard
- Complete description of the operation and its facilities
- Description of all production procedures and –means, so Kiwa BCS can verify their compliance with the respective standard

In case the operator is interested in being certified under Reg. (EU) 2018/848, it is mandatory to provide a preventive measure plan mentioned in Reg. (EU) 2021/1698 Art. 10, 1. a) iii.

On the other side, under NOP a Fraud Prevention Plan is mandatory to be provided in this stage.

2. Inspection of Apicultural Operations

During inspection the compliance of the operation/part of the operation with the requirements of the respective standard is verified. An announced inspection takes place at least once per year. Further announced and/or unannounced inspections can be part of the certification procedure. The inspector is obliged and authorized to request and verify all documents, records and amenities as deemed necessary for the inspection.

2.1. Organic Systems Plan

In general the inspection is based on the verification of statements in the Organic Systems Plan and on comparison with the findings on site. If needed, adjustments have to be made to the Organic Systems Plan.

2.2. On-site Inspection

The on-site inspection encompasses all parts of the operation:

- Collection area covered by the bees
- Storage facilities
- Processing / packaging facilities

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Subject to inspection are all production procedures and – facilities of the operation, as well as all concrete measures regarding a compliance of the standard regarding:

- Materials for the fabrication of the hives
- Separation of organic products from non-permitted materials and non-organic products,
- traceability
- Post harvest treatment
- Identification (labels, resp. shipping papers) and packaging of bee products
- Flow of goods (quantities) and potential production quantities
- Precautionary measures in place to avoid risks of contamination of organic production and products with non-authorized products or substances

2.3. Verification of Documentation

The following documents have to be made available to the inspector, if applicable:

- Maps with indication of collection areas and location of bee hives. Also surrounding cities/residential areas have to be indicated. Description of the collection area within a radius of 3 km from the hives; types of plants visited by the bees, intensive crops sources of potential contamination.
- Maps of premises with identification of processing, extraction and refinery of wax, as well as packaging and storage rooms.
- Bookkeeping documents have to provide information about:
 - Origin of the colonies, transition periods, losses
 - Applied medication, prevention measures for animal health (e.g. Varroa-control) and disease prevention
 - Last application of non-permitted substances (according to standard)
 - List of all (organically and conventionally) produced apicultural products
 - List of all apicultural operations/suppliers, incl. documents for traceability, such as valid organic certificates, delivery papers, invoices, etc.
 - List of apicultural products in storage
 - Feeding, purchases of feed
 - Date and quantities of harvest/production quantities per bee colony
 - Documentation of receipt of goods (purchasing, receipts, delivery documents certificates, receipts, purchasing log: lists or bookkeeping)
 - Documentation of shipping (books, numbers, sales, identification, shipping documents, invoices, transport)
 - Measures for traceability
 - Product reclamations, customer information/customer service procedure in the case of irregularities

2.4. Inspection Report

- The inspection report is the final document describing the results of the inspection. It is compiled by the inspector and has to be signed by the operation manager.
- It documents detected non-compliances with the respective standard and the determination of measures for correction of non-compliances.

The results of the inspection report are basis for the certification.

2.5. Possible other Procedures

- Sampling is generally allowed, but in cases of suspicion, it is mandatory
- Where necessary, sampling of packaging and/or labeling materials
- Inspection of additional parts of the operation or bee keepers
- Additional inspections

3. Certification

- The certification procedure is based on the inspection report and the Organic Systems Plan
- If needed, conditions are imposed and communicated in written form
- If needed, measures are imposed according to the catalogue of measures and communicated.

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- Tracing of implementation of conditions by Kiwa BCS
- Certification decision / issuance of certificate

The Inspection Program is a model and not conclusive. Specific situations in the operations can lead to variances from the described program. It serves for orientation during the execution of the certification procedure according to the respective standard by Kiwa BCS Öko-Garantie GmbH.
The Inspection Program is subject to modifications.