



Organic Certification Procedures Manual

INDEX

1. METHODOLOGY OF THE INSPECTION AND CERTIFICATION PROCESS	3
2. CERTIFICATION SCOPE	3
3. APPLICATION PROCEDURE	4
4. QUOTATION AND ACCEPTANCE OF SERVICE	5
5. APPLICATION ASSESSMENT	5
6. INSPECTION PROCEDURE	6
a. Frequency of Inspection and Time for Inspection	6
b. Inspection Process	7
c. Additional Inspections	9
i. Additional Risk Control Inspections	9
a. Criteria for the Selection of Operators Subject to Additional Controls for risk	10
b. Follow-up of the Analysis carried out by the Inspector	11
ii. Investigation inspections	12
iii. Unannounced Inspections	12
iv. Procedure for cases in which the operator does not attend an additional inspection	13
d. Sampling	13
7. EVALUATION AND CERTIFICATION PROCESS	13
a. Evaluation of the Inspection Report	13
b. Follow-up of non-compliances	14
c. Certification	15
d. Presentation of Evaluation and Certification Results	16
e. Application, Inspection and Certification Flowchart	17
8. PROCEDURE FOR GRANTING RETROACTIVE PERIOD RECOGNITION, AUTHORIZATIONS AND EXCEPTIONS	18
a. Recognition of the retroactive period:	18
b. Parallel Production	19
c. Authorizations for the use of non-organic plant propagating material	20
d. Recognition of catastrophic circumstances	20
e. General conditions for exceptions	21
9. PROCEDURE FOR DENYING, GRANTING, MAINTAINING, EXTENDING, REDUCING, SUSPENDING, WITHDRAWING A CERTIFICATION	21
a. Conditions for Granting a Certification:	21
b. Conditions for Denial of Certification:	22
c. Conditions for Maintaining a Certification:	22
d. Conditions for Extending a Certification:	22
i. Cases in which extension is justified:	22
ii. Cases where extension is not justified:	23
e. Conditions for Expanding a Certification:	23
f. Conditions to Reduce, Suspend or Withdraw Partial or Total Certification:	23
i. Reduce Certification:	24
ii. Suspend Certification:	24
iii. Withdraw/cancel or revoke the Certification:	24

Name of the document: Organic Certification Procedures Manual	Code: MPCO	Version: 16	Effective date: Mar26	Elaborated or updated by: Quality Manager	Reviewed by: General Manager	Approved by: General Manager	Page 1 of 31
--	---------------	----------------	--------------------------	--	---------------------------------	---------------------------------	-----------------



Organic Certification Procedures Manual

10. CERTIFICATION SERVICE SURRENDERING PROCEDURE	25
11. VIOLATION OF PRODUCTION, PROCESSING AND MARKETING STANDARDS OF ORGANIC PRODUCTS AND THEIR PENALTIES	25
a. Minor non-compliances	25
b. Major non-compliances	25
c. Critical non-compliances	26
12. COMPLAINTS AND APPEALS PROCEDURE	26
Violations Committed by Inspectors, Members of the Evaluation Department and Certifiers	27
13. CLAIMS TO THE ORGANIZATIONS	27
14. JAS TRAINING	28
15. SERVICE COSTS	28
16. MAYACERT'S OBLIGATIONS	28
a. Mayacert's obligations to the European Commission and the Member States	28
b. Mayacert's obligations with NOP-USDA	29
c. Mayacert's obligations to MAFF/MOF and FAMIC	30
d. Mayacert's obligations to ICB AG	30
e. Mayacert's obligations with other control authorities or control bodies	30

1. METHODOLOGY OF THE INSPECTION AND CERTIFICATION PROCESS

The process of organic certification of a product is done with the verification, evaluation and decision of the process of agricultural production, livestock, or artisanal or industrial processing. This must comply with the methods, techniques, practices and materials considered in the standards under which organic certification is considered, thus ensuring that the product complies with the established regulations under which the operator or processor wishes to be certified.

The certification service is done by hiring inspectors from each region who speak the local language, and who understand and know the cultural characteristics and native and export crops.

2. CERTIFICATION SCOPE

Mayacert's certification scopes according to Regulation (EU) 2018/848 of the European Parliament, according to NOP-USDA, JAS, Bio Suisse, ROC and other organic standards, shall apply to the products listed below, provided that these products bear or will bear indications referring to the organic production method:

- Unprocessed agricultural products, including seeds and other plant propagating material; from farming or wild collection.
- Production of animals and/or animal products; (Limited to beekeeping and beekeeping products).
- Processing and transformation units of agricultural products destined for human consumption.

Corresponding to products as set out in Article 35(7) of Regulation (EU) 2018/848, classified according to the following categories:

- a) unprocessed plants and plant products, including seeds and other plant propagating material,
- b) animals and unprocessed animal products,
- d) processed agricultural products, including aquaculture products, for use as food
- g) other products listed in Annex I of this Regulation or not included in the previous categories.

In the following approved countries:

Country	Code	Category			
		A	B	D	G
Belize	BZ-BIO-169	X		X	
Bolivia (Plurinational State of)	BO-BIO-169	X		X	
Colombia	CO-BIO-169	X		X	X
Dominican Republic	DO-BIO-169	X		X	X
Ecuador	EC-BIO-169	X		X	
Guatemala	GT-BIO-169	X	X	X	X
Honduras	HN-BIO-169	X	X	X	X
India	IN-BIO-169	-		X	X
Iran	IR-BIO-169	X		X	X
Republic of Korea	KR-BIO-169	X		X	
Sri Lanka	LK-BIO-169	X		X	X



Organic Certification Procedures Manual

Country	Code	Category			
		A	B	D	G
Mexico	MX-BIO-169	X	X	X	X
Morocco	MA-BIO-169	X		X	X
Nicaragua	NI-BIO-169	X	X	X	X
Panama	PA-BIO-169	X		X	
Paraguay	PY-BIO-169	X		X	X
Peru	PE-BIO-169	X		X	X
Philippines	PH-BIO-169	X		X	
El Salvador	SV-BIO-169	X		X	
Turkey	TR-BIO-169	X		X	X
Viet Nam	VN-BIO-169	X		X	X

Mayacert's JAS certification scopes apply to the following agricultural and forestry products:

- Organic agricultural products and organic processed foods (including alcoholic beverages)

As well as the following types of operators:

- Producer-Processor and Processor-Retailer

The scope of certification is outside Japan.

3. APPLICATION PROCEDURE

The applicant for certification communicates with Mayacert, who determines which program and production categories to enter. The information package is given to all applicants who wish to become certified, regardless of their financial capacity or other conditions.

The information package, also available on the website, includes;

- An overview of the certification program,
- The most current required regulations under which the applicant wishes to be certified and in the language of the country where Mayacert certifies: Regulation (EU) 2018/848 of the European Parliament, NOP-USDA and/or JAS, Bio Suisse, ROC among others.
- Certification requirements,
- Policies and Procedures.

All Mayacert system documents are in two languages, Spanish and English. However, for the complaint form, as well as for the rules and control measures established in the regulations that are delivered to the customer, translations are provided in the official language of the third country where Mayacert conducts its activities.

If the applicant, after having familiarized themselves with the information, wishes to take the service, they must fill out the certification application in order to receive the offer of services. Once the offer is accepted, the applicant must fill out the application package, which includes:

- Organic System Plans (OSP)/application forms;
- Service Contract and/or Letter of Intent and Producer/Processor Agreement;
- For groups, the producer listing table and the production history table are included.

Name of the document: Organic Certification Procedures Manual	Code: MPCO	Version: 16	Effective date: Mar26	Elaborated or updated by: Quality Manager	Reviewed by: General Manager	Approved by: General Manager	Page 4 of 31
--	---------------	----------------	--------------------------	--	---------------------------------	---------------------------------	-----------------



Organic Certification Procedures Manual

The information is then registered in the database of new customers.

The applicant must fill out the application in which they testify to tell the truth and state that their production and/or transformation is organic or is in the process of conversion and return it to Mayacert. They must also submit the system plan of their production unit and a sketch or map of it. This information along with the documentation must be complete and in accordance with the regulations to be certified. The production plan will be discussed with the applicant to confirm that they understand the requirements and to resolve any differences in understanding between Mayacert and the applicant.

Mayacert will require that the applicant always comply with the relevant provisions of the program under which they are applying for certification.

When an operator applies for certification for the first time with Mayacert but has previous certification with another certifier and this is stated in the application documents, Mayacert shall request from the previous certifier all information concerning its previous certification, which includes: inspection report, evaluation of the inspection report or decision and certificates.

Mayacert will ensure that operators or groups of operators have resolved the non-compliances identified in the report of the previous inspection authority or inspection body.

When the desired scope of certification relates to a specific system or type of system operated by the certification body, all information required must be supplied by the applicant and if additional information is needed, the applicant must supply it.

Mayacert reserves the right to reject certification applications when it does not have the required capacity, or when the requested activities are not covered by the accredited scope or authorized certification scheme.

4. QUOTATION AND ACCEPTANCE OF SERVICE

Once it has been verified that the certification application received complies with the requirements of the corresponding regulation, an offer of services (quotation) will be sent to the operator. If the operator agrees with the terms of the quotation, they must pay the cost of the certification process, sign the service contract and submit the necessary application documents. Once these documents are received, Mayacert will start the certification process.

5. APPLICATION ASSESSMENT

The application evaluation process is carried out in two parts:

The administrative staff reviews the application for completeness, correctness and compliance with the regulation under which certification is requested. Following the Application Review procedure (Proc_Rev-SC), if the application is complete, an inspector is assigned for the desk audit.

1. The inspector assigned for the desk audit reviews:
 - a. Documentation submitted by the producer.
 - b. If the OSP is complete and correct.

Name of the document: Organic Certification Procedures Manual	Code: MPCO	Version: 16	Effective date: Mar26	Elaborated or updated by: Quality Manager	Reviewed by: General Manager	Approved by: General Manager	Page 5 of 31
--	---------------	----------------	--------------------------	--	---------------------------------	---------------------------------	-----------------



Organic Certification Procedures Manual

- c. If there is a map of the productive unit and if it is correct.
 - d. If it has a production history.
 - e. If there is an organization chart of the production unit.
 - f. If, in the case of groups, the table of the list of producers, the production history table are attached.
 - g. Check that the documentation is signed by the operator.
2. Before proceeding further, the applicant must submit or complete the missing document(s) to bring their application and more importantly their system plan into compliance with the regulation under which they want to be certified. The producer proposes corrective actions in order to comply with the relevant regulation within a reasonable period agreed with Mayacert. After the inspector checks if the corrective actions implemented by the producer are in compliance with the regulation under which they want to be certified, the application is approved.
 3. When the inspector assigned for the desk audit has determined that the documentation submitted by the operator is acceptable, they must sign the OSP in the section or table entitled "Mayacert Assessment Results" and must document the assessment in the specific sections for desk audits within the OSPs and notify management using the ECERT platform and uploading the entire file.

6. INSPECTION PROCEDURE

a. *Frequency of Inspection and Time for Inspection*

Inspections are performed at a frequency of **once per calendar year**. For perennial crops, an annual inspection of the production area **during the calendar year** is established. For short-cycle crops, an inspection frequency is maintained at once per calendar year, under the condition of presenting an annual work plan that clearly specifies the expected rotation cycles. In both cases, inspections may be scheduled and carried out during harvesting and processing.

In both cases, Mayacert will ensure that the area(s) involved can be visited, in terms of logistics, accessibility, security and staffing capacity. Inspections will be scheduled and carried out depending on the times of risk, for example:

- Harvest times
- Fertilization Seasons
- Rotation and rest cycles (verify which rest methods are performed)
- During processing.
- Risk periods according to the region's risk matrix and analysis of previous reports.

The high-risk operations or operations with high-risk production as determined by Mayacert in its risk policy or risk matrix must receive two or more audits per year (see Additional and unannounced audits).

In the case of process plant inspections, scheduling should also be considered during production periods, when possible, in order to adequately evaluate operating practices. In initial inspections, even if organic production is not yet in place, all relevant aspects of the system should be evaluated, including implemented practices, separation procedures, cleaning, traceability and compliance with the expected requirements. The objective is to verify the operator's ability to comply with the regulations from the beginning of the certification process.

Name of the document: Organic Certification Procedures Manual	Code: MPCO	Version: 16	Effective date: Mar26	Elaborated or updated by: Quality Manager	Reviewed by: General Manager	Approved by: General Manager	Page 6 of 31
--	---------------	----------------	--------------------------	--	---------------------------------	---------------------------------	-----------------



Organic Certification Procedures Manual

Subsequently, an additional inspection shall be scheduled once the operation is certified and has organic raw materials available for processing.

All on-site inspections should be conducted when an authorized representative of the operation who is knowledgeable about the operation is present and at a time when land, facilities and activities can be observed that demonstrate that the operation is in compliance or capable of complying with the applicable provisions of the standards or regulations in consideration, except that this requirement does not apply to unannounced on-site inspections.

b. Inspection Process

For the inspection, we take into account the technical standards and procedures contained in the Inspector's Procedures Manual (MPI) and processes of the Independent Organic Inspectors Association (IOIA) as well as the provisions of Regulation (EU) 2018/848 of the European Parliament, by NOP-USDA, JAS, Bio Suisse and other organic standards.

Definition of Inspection: The inspection action is the means by which the field visit or organic production plant is carried out in order to verify the content of the application, production records and evaluation of the entire operation; and to assess that the information provided by the operator or groups of operators conforms to the standards, accurately, truthfully and completely.

The procedure for an initial operator is that Mayacert will make a first inspection if the application proves that the operator appears to meet or will be able to meet the requirements.

The first inspection is **COMPLETE** and more in-depth in terms of coverage, area and operators in order to have sufficient criteria to objectively establish the organic status of the area to be certified. The inspector will examine the **TOTALITY** of the production unit.

For multi-site operations, 100% of the production units registered and described in the OSP will be visited.

In the case of groups of operators that have an internal control system, Mayacert will evaluate the responsible ICS and re-inspect a representative sample of group members annually, based on the risk criteria of each member. The size of the sample will depend on whether the operation has a single or multiple certifications. For single-certified operations, the number of members to be inspected will be determined by their corresponding established calculation criteria:

- For Regulation (EU) 2018/848, it shall be 5% of the total number of members,
- For the USDA NOP Standard, it shall be the square root of the total number of members, multiplied by 1.4, or 2%; following the criteria where the higher of the two options should be selected,
- For the FAMIC JAS Standard, it shall be the square root of the total of members.

In the case of a multiple certification operation, the higher value given by the stricter standard will be taken. Regardless of the standard(s) in question, the minimum number of members to be visited should always be greater than 10 (see the updated Pol-SCI group policy for more details on producer groups and internal control systems).

Name of the document: Organic Certification Procedures Manual	Code: MPCO	Version: 16	Effective date: Mar26	Elaborated or updated by: Quality Manager	Reviewed by: General Manager	Approved by: General Manager	Page 7 of 31
--	---------------	----------------	--------------------------	--	---------------------------------	---------------------------------	-----------------



Organic Certification Procedures Manual

The first evaluation specifies the production and processing and establishes the missing conversion period and corrective actions to be taken before certification as organic.

Mayacert selects inspectors in accordance with the regulations described in its Quality Manual, in order to avoid conflicts of interest. Inspectors are selected on the basis of their specialty, skills and experience. In addition, the selected inspectors are required to speak the official language of the country where the inspection will take place. In the case of producer groups, the inspector must speak, if available, the language of the members or an interpreter will be hired. The same inspector who performed the desk audit may perform the inspection in the field.

Before going to the field, the inspector must prepare an Inspection Plan (PI) and send it to the operator prior to carrying out the inspection on site, which must be uploaded to the ECERT platform.

To initiate the inspection, an initial meeting is held with the operator or legal representatives with full knowledge of the production and control system, to inform them of the scope of the inspection, objectives and internal inspection schedule.

As a second step, a verification of the documentation system and in the case of groups of operators of the internal control system is performed (see the group policy for more details on producer groups and Pol-SCI internal control systems).

This is followed by the field inspection, which focuses on the production, processing and marketing phase, with emphasis on technical, administrative and organizational aspects. It verifies the operation's compliance or ability to comply with specific regulations; that the information, including the application for the organic production system, accurately reflects the practices used or to be used by the applicant; that no prohibited substances have been applied and are not being applied to the operation.

In addition, at Mayacert's discretion, samples of soil, water, vegetative tissue, waste, seeds and fertilizers may be taken for laboratory analysis, if warranted (see specific sampling procedure, TMI).

It is an indispensable condition that the inspector submits to MAYACERT, through the ECERT platform, a complete product conformity assessment report. The report must be clear and comprehensive in terms of indicating the findings and the objective evidence found in order to be able to support it truthfully.

At the end of the inspection, a closing meeting is held with the operator or legal representative and the inspector to confirm the accuracy and completeness of the scope of the inspection observations and information gathered during the field inspection. The inspector should also address the need for additional information as well as any issues of concern. The operator should sign the inspection report for acceptance and take appropriate corrective action and submit a time-bound compliance schedule.

In the case of Farmer Group Inspection, the inspector should rely on the ICS policy for compliance assessment.

The inspector prepares an inspection report, within 10 working days after completion of the inspection, including all possible deficiencies, non-compliances and critical points of the operation and points out the non-compliances found.

Name of the document: Organic Certification Procedures Manual	Code: MPCO	Version: 16	Effective date: Mar26	Elaborated or updated by: Quality Manager	Reviewed by: General Manager	Approved by: General Manager	Page 8 of 31
--	---------------	----------------	--------------------------	--	---------------------------------	---------------------------------	-----------------



Organic Certification Procedures Manual

c. *Additional Inspections*

Mayacert performs additional inspections annually, such inspections may include:

- of extension (Product, Volume, Area), required by the operators.
- of non-compliance follow-up to verify compliance with corrective actions imposed on the operator
- of investigation, as part of the follow-up to a complaint or suspicion or results of residue analysis.
- risk control

i. **Additional Risk Control Inspections**

Mayacert conducts a minimum of **10%** of inspections each year in addition to those provided for annually in all organic seals, giving priority to operations with multiple certifications. Of all physical field inspections performed, at least **10%** will be unannounced. In the event that the percentage of additional and/or unannounced inspections does not reach **10%** according to NOP-USDA regulations, this will not be considered non-compliance, as long as it is not less than **5%**.

Follow-up checks for an alleged or demonstrated noncompliance will not be counted for additional checks.

In the case of high-risk products, defined in Mayacert's risk matrix, or reported by competent authorities, EC, USDA, FAMIC, among others, Mayacert will carry out annually, at least two physical inspections to operators or groups of operators. One of these physical inspections will be unannounced. In addition to this, any additional verification requirements will be complied with. Additional checks on high-risk products requested by the EC, USDA or others must be accounted for separately.

The inspector carries out the audit based on the instructions agreed by the Evaluation Department and communicated through the technical certification manager, using the normal report formats, the module corresponding to the additional inspections, and attaching the necessary annexes to support the report.

The inspector, during an additional inspection, may take a sample, depending on the risk detected during the audit, or following the instruction.

The report is submitted through the channels already established by Mayacert and is reviewed by the assigned reviewer.

An additional monitoring inspection can fulfill the requirements of an annual inspection. The assigned inspector must assess whether the operator continues to comply with all applicable requirements and conducts a full inspection and completes a full report, to which the module for additional inspections is attached.

However, an additional inspection may be reduced in scope, time, extent, and may only be oriented to specific aspects of the operation such as plots, facilities, products, etc. according to the instructions given by the technical certification manager who will direct the assigned inspector, prioritizing the following:

- i. High seasons in the production fields
- ii. Harvest times
- iii. Processing plants in operation
- iv. Working hours

Name of the document: Organic Certification Procedures Manual	Code: MPCO	Version: 16	Effective date: Mar26	Elaborated or updated by: Quality Manager	Reviewed by: General Manager	Approved by: General Manager	Page 9 of 31
--	---------------	----------------	--------------------------	--	---------------------------------	---------------------------------	-----------------



Organic Certification Procedures Manual

The verification of the critical points mentioned above should be prioritized in such a way as to avoid any handling or rearrangement of information or change of activities by the operation.

The inspection report and the result of the evaluation must be sent to the client, as well as the laboratory results, if applicable, regardless of the type of audit and whether residues are detected or not.

a. Criteria for the Selection of Operators Subject to Additional Controls for risk

Definitions:

Risk: A measure of the magnitude of damage in the face of a hazardous situation. Risk is measured by assuming a certain vulnerability to each type of hazard. Although this is not always done, a proper distinction must be made between hazard (probability of occurrence of a hazard), vulnerability (probability of occurrence of damage due to the occurrence of a hazard) and risk (risk itself).

More informally, risk is used to refer to the occurrence of potential harm or damage to units, persons, organizations or entities (in general "protected legal assets"). The greater the vulnerability, the greater the risk, but the more feasible the harm or damage, the greater the danger. Therefore, risk refers only to the theoretical "possibility of harm" under certain circumstances, while danger refers only to the theoretical "probability of harm" under those circumstances.

Danger: It is a situation characterized by the "feasibility of occurrence of a potentially harmful incident", that is, an event capable of creating damage to protected legal assets. The danger is "real" when it exists here and now, and it is "potential" when the danger does not exist now, but we know that it may exist in the short, medium, or long term, depending on the nature of the causes that create danger.

Hazard makes an antecedent incident "probable", while risk makes consequential damage from the incident "possible".

By its nature, a hazard involves elements that can be potentially harmful to human life, health, property or the environment. There are several methods for classifying a hazard, but most systems use variations of the factors Possibility of the hazard becoming an incident and the Seriousness of the incident that may occur.

A common method is to assign values to both possibility and seriousness on a numerical scale (with the highest values for the most possible and the most serious) and multiplying one by the other to establish a comparative scale.

This scale can be used to identify which hazards may need to be mitigated. A low likelihood of occurrence scale may mean that the hazard is Latent, while a high value may indicate that there could be an Active hazard.

Description of criteria:

Operators may be subject to additional control inspections or unannounced inspections based on conditions that represent a risk to the organic system, a likelihood of non-compliance, lack of sufficient information or evidence to guarantee the organic nature or suspicion of unreliable information.

The following risk factors will be used as a basis for selecting operators subject to additional inspections:

Name of the document: Organic Certification Procedures Manual	Code: MPCO	Version: 16	Effective date: Mar26	Elaborated or updated by: Quality Manager	Reviewed by: General Manager	Approved by: General Manager	Page 10 of 31
--	---------------	----------------	--------------------------	--	---------------------------------	---------------------------------	------------------

Organic Certification Procedures Manual

- the type, size, including newly incorporated plots, and structure of operators and operator groups, as well as the number of new members joining the operator group;
- the location and complexity of the activities or operations of the operators and groups of operators;
- the period of time during which operators and groups of operators have been engaged in organic production, preparation and distribution;
- the results of the controls carried out
- in the case of a group of operators, the results of internal inspections carried out in accordance with the documented procedures of the system of internal controls of the group of operators;
- if the farm includes non-organic or in-conversion production units;
- the type, quantity and value of the products;
- the risk of mixing products or contamination with unauthorized products or substances;
- the application of exemptions or exceptions to the rules by operators and groups of operators;
- critical points of non-compliance at all stages of production, preparation and distribution;
- subcontracting activities;
- change of CBs or frequent change of CBs;
- any information that indicates that consumers are likely to be misled;
- any information that may be indicative of non-compliance with the Regulation

These factors will be analyzed by the inspector using the A-R tool in its updated version, and each operator may be rated as high, medium or low risk.

The inspector will calculate the risk factor using the following steps:

1. Place the risk level from 1 to 3 according to the risk factor.
2. The risk factor will be multiplied by the weight or weighting determined annually by Mayacert according to the risk matrix.
3. The calculation of the operator's risk value will be determined by the total points of the factors that apply, multiplied by the total weighting points that apply, divided by the total factors that apply.

The inspector should categorize the operator's risk level as follows:

- Low risk = score less than or equal to 1.00
- Medium risk = score of 1.00 - 2.00
- High risk = score greater than or equal to 2.00

b. Follow-up of the Analysis carried out by the Inspector

The Evaluation Department will base its decision on the following:

1. Of the total number of operators with high risk, 100% will be selected even if more than 10% of operators exceed 10% for additional inspections.
2. The 10% of operators at risk will be distributed between the 2 categories (High and Medium) mentioned above, starting with High-risk operations.
3. In the absence of operators with high or medium risk factors, at least 10% of the organic operator population will be randomly selected for additional inspection.

Name of the document: Organic Certification Procedures Manual	Code: MPCO	Version: 16	Effective date: Mar26	Elaborated or updated by: Quality Manager	Reviewed by: General Manager	Approved by: General Manager	Page 11 of 31
--	---------------	----------------	--------------------------	--	---------------------------------	---------------------------------	------------------



Organic Certification Procedures Manual

ii. Investigation inspections

Mayacert carries out inspections and investigative audits immediately after receiving confirmed information or suspicions of non-compliances or about the presence of prohibited products or substances in organic production from other certification agencies, competent authorities or operators, or when the presence of unauthorized substances has been detected during residue analysis carried out by Mayacert.

An announced or unannounced inspection of the suspect area is performed by an experienced inspector, other than the one who performed the last inspection. This is determined by the technical certification manager.

Mayacert during the investigation period, which must be reasonable and taking into account the durability of the product and the complexity of the case, will provisionally prohibit the marketing of the product in question and its export until it has the results of the investigation.

In the event that the results of the investigation do not reveal any non-compliance affecting the integrity of the organic or in-conversion products, the use and labeling of such products as organic or in-conversion products shall be permitted.

In the event that the operator has been found to have used prohibited products or substances, failed to take the necessary preventive measures and/or failed to take corrective action in response to previous non-compliances, the product shall NOT be marketed as organic or in-conversion or used in organic production.

Mayacert will document the results of the investigations and file them in the ECERT platform with the Operator's file. The results will be shared with the operator and the operator will be given the opportunity to comment, and if necessary, the operator will be required to take the necessary corrective actions and respond to the non-compliance finding.

The inspector will follow the procedure for investigative inspections and submit the report following the normal procedures, which will be evaluated by a reviewer, or if necessary and depending on the complexity of the case, by Mayacert's technical committee.

Mayacert will ensure to respond and follow up with the inspection bodies and/or inspection authorities concerned by the non-compliance. Likewise, the Organic Farming Information System (OFIS) will be used for the exchange of information with the Commission, with other control authorities and other control bodies, as well as with the competent authorities of the Member States and third countries concerned to notify the results of the investigation.

iii. Unannounced Inspections

An Unannounced inspection should not include prior notification of the inspector's arrival. Inspectors should not enter private property without explicit permission from the operation. It is recommended that they have proper identification and an inspection warrant to show that they are acting on behalf of Mayacert.

Mayacert will also ensure the feasibility of conducting unannounced inspections of any operation it certifies and will not accept applications or continue certification with operations located in areas where unannounced inspections cannot be conducted.

Name of the document: Organic Certification Procedures Manual	Code: MPCO	Version: 16	Effective date: Mar26	Elaborated or updated by: Quality Manager	Reviewed by: General Manager	Approved by: General Manager	Page 12 of 31
--	---------------	----------------	--------------------------	--	---------------------------------	---------------------------------	------------------



Organic Certification Procedures Manual

There may be special cases where extenuating circumstances make it impossible to carry out an inspection of the operation without prior notice. In such cases, the certifying agency may give the client short notice due to:

- i. Logistical issues due to the accessibility of some sites
- ii. Absence of appropriate representatives
- iii. Safety issues at inspected sites

However, a maximum time **of 4 hours** shall not be exceeded. If this time is not respected, the reasons for the prior notice must appear in the inspector's final report to be considered in the conclusion of the Evaluation department. In this case, the audit would be filed as an additional control audit and not as unannounced. If the operator has other or multiple certifications other than NOP-USDA, the notice period may be **up to 24 hours prior** to the inspector's visit.

Unannounced inspections are considered annually during the period of validity of a certificate for both operators applying for certification for the first time and operators applying for recertification.

iv. Procedure for cases in which the operator does not attend an additional inspection

When an operator fails to attend an additional inspection, MAYACERT will proceed as follows:

1. If the choice is due to causes that do not compromise the organic integrity of the product, MAYACERT's Evaluation Department may decide to change the date or to change it for another operator. An operator may not be changed more than once by another operator for an additional control inspection.
2. If the choice is due to causes that compromise the organic integrity of the product, MAYACERT's Evaluation Department will not be able to change it for another operator, and if the refusal persists, then a suspension or suspension proposal will be sent.

d. Sampling

Mayacert annually samples at least 5% of its individual operators, and 2% of the members of each group, based on the risks of the operators or group of operators. This percentage may be increased according to the annual country risk assessment performed by the technical department, or according to instructions that may be received on high-risk products from the EC or other competent authorities.

The risk assessment will take into account all phases of production, preparation and distribution.

The Mayacert inspector is responsible for taking samples according to the instructions received and, based on suspicions of non-compliance that may be detected during the on-site inspection or during an investigation. The inspector shall proceed according to the sampling instructions (TMI) in its updated version.

7. EVALUATION AND CERTIFICATION PROCESS

a. Evaluation of the Inspection Report

Receipt of the inspection report:

Name of the document: Organic Certification Procedures Manual	Code: MPCO	Version: 16	Effective date: Mar26	Elaborated or updated by: Quality Manager	Reviewed by: General Manager	Approved by: General Manager	Page 13 of 31
--	---------------	----------------	--------------------------	--	---------------------------------	---------------------------------	------------------



Organic Certification Procedures Manual

Upon receipt of the inspection report prepared by the inspector to the Evaluation Assistant, it is reviewed for completeness before being sent to the Evaluation Department. A complete report must contain all the necessary modules according to the scope for which the operator is applying, the modules are checked for completeness and validity, if they are signed by the Inspector and by the representative of the operation, the annexes that refer in the report are also checked for completeness and that the report is accompanied by the application documents.

When complete, the entire dossier is delivered to the reviewer using the ECERT platform.

Evaluation of the Inspection Report:

It is the process in which the inspection report is reviewed to assess compliance with the standards or regulations for which the operator is applying.

The evaluation process is carried out by the reviewers, taking into account all aspects and requirements of the standards applied; they also check if the report is coherent and if it contains all the necessary information to be able to carry out the evaluation. In case of finding inconsistencies, ambiguous information or lack of information that makes it difficult to evaluate, additional information is requested to the inspector through the Dialogue Box (CD).

The evaluation of the inspection report is based on the terms of reference defined for the reviewer (see the MPD reviewer's procedures manual).

The evaluation of the inspection report shall be specifically limited to the scope covered by the inspection.

If no non-compliances are found in the evaluation of the inspection report, the coordinator of the Evaluation Department or their representative proceeds to issue the notification of compliance with the standards or regulations under which the operator is being evaluated and delivers it to the Certification Department recommending its certification, or in some cases to the owners of the private seal, as in the case of Bio Suisse.

If non-compliances are found in the evaluation of the inspection report, a non-compliance report is issued to be sent to the operator and followed up so that the operator can present the evidence or compliance actions or the corrective action plan.

The maximum delivery period for the final report will be 15 working days from the receipt of the inspection reports at the Evaluation Department.

b. Follow-up of non-compliances

The reviewer sends the non-compliance report for each operation inspected to the operator to present evidence or compliance actions or a corrective action plan.

The operator, based on the notification issued by Mayacert, and within 30 working days following the notification, with the non-compliances found according to the evaluated regulation, presents evidence or compliance actions or presents a corrective action plan to be implemented to correct the non-compliances found, including the date by which the corrective actions must be complied with.

Name of the document: Organic Certification Procedures Manual	Code: MPCO	Version: 16	Effective date: Mar26	Elaborated or updated by: Quality Manager	Reviewed by: General Manager	Approved by: General Manager	Page 14 of 31
--	---------------	----------------	--------------------------	--	---------------------------------	---------------------------------	------------------



Organic Certification Procedures Manual

The reviewer will follow up on the evidence or compliance actions or corrective action plan submitted by the operator. If it is determined that the corrective action plan will correct the non-compliances found and complies with the organic regulations, a notice of non-compliance resolution is issued. If it is determined that the evidence or compliance actions or corrective action plan will not adequately correct the non-compliances found, the operator will be requested to submit adequate evidence or compliance actions or restate the corrective action plan and will be followed up.

When the reviewer determines that the evidence or compliance actions or the corrective action plan corrects the non-compliances found, they shall issue the final non-compliance resolution report and deliver it to the Certification department.

If necessary, the verification is repeated (either documentary or physical), to verify compliance with the corrective action implemented after a specific time determined in the report.

c. Certification

The Certification Coordinator or the certifier, upon receiving the final report from the Evaluation Department, evaluates to corroborate if the data provided by the reviewer is correct and if the evaluation complies with the requirements of the applicable standards and the procedures and/or policies of the Mayacert Quality System.

It is checked if with the final decision, the electronic inspection report is attached and if other documents have been approved during the evaluation should also be attached, such as: The approved label for the final product, the approved list of producers (groups), the corrective action plan, and/or other documents received from the operator.

If the final report of the evaluation of the inspection report contains errors in the data or if the evaluation does not comply with the requirements of the applicable standards and the procedures and/or policies of the Mayacert Quality System, or if the documents that have been approved during the evaluation are not attached, it is followed up with the reviewer until the respective clarifications, corrections and/or documents are obtained.

If the final report has no errors and no missing documents, it makes the certification decision and issues the certificate if applicable.

If the Certification Coordinator participated in the inspection or evaluation of the inspection report, then it must be coordinated in assigning another certifier to make the certification decision, the process must be done by another certifier from the review of the final opinion of the reviewer until the certification decision is made and then deliver back to the Certification Coordinator the certificate, the final decision, the inspection report and the documents that have been approved by the reviewer such as: The approved label for the final product and the approved list of producers (groups), so that the process can continue.

The certifier is not the same person who performs the inspection, evaluation and follow-up of the corrective action plan. Three different people are involved in the process: inspector-reviewer-certifier.

Mayacert will grant a certificate in electronic format to all operations that comply with the applicable organic standards. This does not apply to Bio Suisse and ROC certifications. For the case of certificates under Regulation (EU) 2018/848, these will be issued through the TRACES platform.

Name of the document: Organic Certification Procedures Manual	Code: MPCO	Version: 16	Effective date: Mar26	Elaborated or updated by: Quality Manager	Reviewed by: General Manager	Approved by: General Manager	Page 15 of 31
--	---------------	----------------	--------------------------	--	---------------------------------	---------------------------------	------------------



Organic Certification Procedures Manual

The certificate must contain at least the following information:

- Name of operator or group of operators
- Correlative number of the certificate
- Address of the operator or group of operators
- List of Operator Group Members
- The standard under which the applicant is being certified
- The applicable certification system (production, processing, marketing, etc. according to the applicable standard).
- Product and product category covered by the certificate
- Volume and area if applicable
- Date of inspection
- Date of first inspection if applicable
- Expiration date if applicable
- Date of issue
- Country where the inspection took place
- Signature of certifying officer

For the NOP-USDA, the certificate must be generated from the OID Database and may be provided to certified operations electronically as well. If this is the case, any addendum must include:

- Name, address and contact information of the certified operation;
- The unique identification number/code of the certified operation that corresponds to the identification number/code of the certified operation in the Organic Integrity Database;
- A link to the OID or a link to the certified transaction profile in the OID, along with a statement that reads, "You can verify the certification of this transaction in the OID," or a similar statement;
- Name, address and contact information of the certifying agent; and
- Date of issuance of the addendum.

The certifier's signature cannot be reproduced or altered, and to avoid plagiarism, the necessary technological measures will be taken.

Mayacert cannot delegate the authority to issue, maintain, extend, suspend, cancel or withdraw certification to a person or agency outside Mayacert and assumes full responsibility for each subcontracted work.

d. Presentation of Evaluation and Certification Results

Once the certification process of an operator is completed, the customer service department notifies about the availability of the results (report, laboratory results, evaluation, decision and certificate if applicable) by e-mail. These results will be sent to the operator, if applicable, provided that the operator has not surrendered its certification, or its certification has not been suspended or revoked.

It also notifies of cases of non-compliance or violation of standards by operators, fraud and problems arising in marketing where the organic integrity of the products is violated.

Name of the document: Organic Certification Procedures Manual	Code: MPCO	Version: 16	Effective date: Mar26	Elaborated or updated by: Quality Manager	Reviewed by: General Manager	Approved by: General Manager	Page 16 of 31
--	---------------	----------------	--------------------------	--	---------------------------------	---------------------------------	------------------

The entire information process is documented and filed in the operator’s file in order to trace the decision made by the reviewer and certifier.

All documentation of certification work is kept on the ECERT platform for 10 years and is available to administrative authorities.

e. Application, Inspection and Certification Flowchart

The certification process for agricultural and livestock operations or processing plants whose inspection lasts 7 days, and with no non-compliances, will take a maximum of 45 working days (see flow chart).

Procedure	Responsible	Maximum time (business days)
Application input and review	Customer service	3 days
Customer quotation sent to the customer	Customer service	1 day
Waiting time due to incomplete information in the application.	Operator	
Technical review (Desktop Audit) of the application and inspection scheduling	Technical team (inspectors)	3 days
Waiting time due to unavailability of inspector.	Mayacert	
Field inspection	Inspectors	7 days
Preparation of the report	Inspectors	10 days
Waiting time due to lack of operator’s information	Operator	
Review of the report	Assistant of the evaluation department	1 day
Correction and/or supplementation of report	Inspectors	5 days
Waiting time due to backlog of reports to be reviewed	Mayacert	
Evaluation and Decision	Reviewer	5 days
Correction and/or supplementation of report	Inspectors	3 days
Submission of evidence or compliance actions or corrective action plan by operator	Operator	According to the applicable standard
Evaluation and final decision	Reviewer	3 days
Certification	Certifier	3 days
Waiting time until the operator pays the entire certification service or any pending matter	Operator	
Sending results to the operator	Assistant of the evaluation department	1 day
Effective time of the certification process:		45 days

Note: Any report received more than 3 months (90 days) after the audit will not be evaluated; 90 days is the maximum time to submit a report and not require an additional audit.

Mayacert is not responsible for delays due to incomplete information, late delivery of requested information and/or lack of payment by the customer.



8. PROCEDURE FOR GRANTING RETROACTIVE PERIOD RECOGNITION, AUTHORIZATIONS AND EXCEPTIONS

a. *Recognition of the retroactive period:*

i. Definitions

Conversion:

It is the period of time during which organic management is practiced on a plot, but without recognizing the products harvested there as organic yet. For the purpose of certification, it is generally viewed as the period of time from the last application of prohibited substances until planting/harvesting of crops applicable for certification (lasts 24 or 36 months depending on the crop and the standard).

MAYACERT will recognize as the beginning of the conversion period from the moment the operator registers its activities with MAYACERT and submits to the control system. As the competent authority of the Ministry of Agriculture is not taking the role of authorization, MAYACERT as a control body takes this responsibility.

Conversion categories T1, T2 or T3:

They refer to the first year, second year or third year of conversion to organic production.

ii. Procedure

As an exception and under certain conditions, a prior period may be retroactively recognized as part of the conversion period.

MAYACERT may validate a retroactive period as part of the conversion period, under the following conditions:

- Abandoned land, where crops have little or no management, presence of biodiversity, low yields, inadequate phytosanitary status of the crop.
- Wild crops, where crops grow uncultivated or are minimally managed.
- Land where no unauthorized substances and/or products have been used in organic production for a period of at least three years and where no transgenic (Genetically Modified Organisms), nor their derivatives, nor products containing them or made from them have been used.

MAYACERT may retroactively recognize part of the conversion period depending on the progress of compliance with the requirements of this document and the organic production standards, if applicable.

The operator must request retroactive recognition at the time of processing the application for certification. In the case of group operators, the legal representative on behalf of the group must be the one to request the retroactive recognition of its associates, attaching the supporting documentation for each producer individually.

For this purpose, the operator must submit to MAYACERT:

- Proof from third party entities related to organic production or related to the activity carried out in the production unit (government agencies, NGO's, etc.) that support the history of cultivation and/or management in the last three years.

Name of the document: Organic Certification Procedures Manual	Code: MPCO	Version: 16	Effective date: Mar26	Elaborated or updated by: Quality Manager	Reviewed by: General Manager	Approved by: General Manager	Page 18 of 31
--	---------------	----------------	--------------------------	--	---------------------------------	---------------------------------	------------------



Organic Certification Procedures Manual

- Production history for the last three years
- Land use affidavit signed by the operator and/or individual group producers.
- Maps clearly identifying each parcel included in the application for retroactive recognition and information on the total area of such parcels and, if applicable, on the nature and volume of production in progress and their geolocation coordinates.
- Affidavit of non-use of prohibited products and GMOs.

The Mayacert inspector will use the EPR module to evaluate the documentation and perform a detailed risk analysis. Depending on the results obtained, they may carry out soil and/or plant sampling to confirm compliance. They will also attach photographs of the plots, following a physical inspection by the operator, including the land plots subject to the retroactive recognition request, in order to verify the robustness of the information collected, but before any cultivation measures have been taken by the operator.

Mayacert will send the final written decision which will include a justification of the reasons why the previous period can be recognized retroactively as part of the conversion period. This final written report shall also indicate the initial period considered as organic for each of the plots concerned, as well as for the total area of the plots benefiting from this retroactive recognition of a period.

Mayacert shall immediately notify the DAkkS accreditation body of any retroactive recognition granted, providing the final written report and decision.

Mayacert requires the operator to whom the retroactive recognition granted is applied to keep for three years the documentary evidence relating to such recognition, as well as the documentary evidence relating to the use of the plots covered by such recognition.

b. Parallel Production

For operators certified under Reg. (EU) 848/2018, as well as stipulated in Chapter III, Article 9, they may have organic, in-conversion and non-organic production on the same area, clearly and effectively separated, provided that for non-organic production units there are different varieties that can be easily differentiated.

As an exception, producers of perennial crops that require a cultivation period of at least three years may apply for an authorization to produce the same varieties or different varieties that cannot be easily differentiated.

In these cases, the production in question must be included in a conversion plan and the conversion to organic production of the last part of the area related to such production should begin as soon as possible and be completed within a maximum period of five years.

Mayacert will verify:

- Dates of the beginning of harvest for each of the products considered
- The exact quantities harvested in the units concerned
- Measures taken to separate the products.

Name of the document: Organic Certification Procedures Manual	Code: MPCO	Version: 16	Effective date: Mar26	Elaborated or updated by: Quality Manager	Reviewed by: General Manager	Approved by: General Manager	Page 19 of 31
--	---------------	----------------	--------------------------	--	---------------------------------	---------------------------------	------------------

c. Authorizations for the use of non-organic plant propagating material

Mayacert may authorize operators in third countries where it certifies, the use of in-conversion or non-organic plant propagating material in an organic production unit when organic plant propagating material of sufficient quality or quantity is not available in the territory of the third country where the operator is located. The use of in-conversion or non-organic seed and/or vegetative material may be validated by evaluating the following information:

- common and scientific name (vulgar and Latin name);
- variety;
- total weight of seeds or number of plants affected;
- availability of organic or in-conversion plant propagating material;
- documentation or declaration by the operator demonstrating that no organic plant propagating material of sufficient quality or quantity is available in the territory of the third country in which it is located.

Mayacert will check the reason for the request, if there is availability of seed of that variety in organic production, and that the sowing date indicated is not earlier than the date of response.

Non-organic plant propagating material shall not be treated with plant protection products other than those authorized for seed treatment.

The authorization to use in-conversion or non-organic plant propagating material shall be obtained prior to the sowing of the crop. It shall be granted only to individual users for one growing season at a time, and shall be sent to the operator together with the operator's decision.

For each authorization for the use of non-organic plant propagating material, Mayacert will include the relevant information in the annual report sent to the European Commission.

For bee production, non-organic reproductive material may be used when it is not possible to use organic or in-conversion reproductive material.

When the survival of the colony is endangered for reasons other than climatic conditions, organic honey, organic pollen, organic sugar syrup or organic sugar may be fed to the bee colonies.

d. Recognition of catastrophic circumstances

Mayacert will comply with specific rules including possible exceptions to the applicable organic rules to consider that, in a situation, catastrophic circumstances resulting from a "climatic adversity", "animal diseases", an "environmental incident", a "natural disaster" or a "catastrophe", as well as other comparable situations, are present.

Mayacert may recognize that catastrophic circumstances are present in a situation on the basis of a declaration issued by the relevant authorities of the third country where the situation occurs, if available. If such a declaration is not available, any such recognition by control authorities or control bodies shall be based on data provided by official organizations justifying the occurrence of catastrophic circumstances.

Name of the document: Organic Certification Procedures Manual	Code: MPCO	Version: 16	Effective date: Mar26	Elaborated or updated by: Quality Manager	Reviewed by: General Manager	Approved by: General Manager	Page 20 of 31
--	---------------	----------------	--------------------------	--	---------------------------------	---------------------------------	------------------

e. General conditions for exceptions

Mayacert will grant approvals provided that such exceptions and conditions apply:

- for a limited period and no longer than necessary, and in any case not exceeding twelve months, to continue or resume organic production as it was carried out before the date of application of these exceptions;
- to the types of production or, as the case may be, to the parcels specifically affected; and
- to the specific operator or member of the group of operators in question.

The application of the derogations shall be without prejudice to the validity of the certificates during the period in which the derogations apply, provided that the operator or operators concerned satisfy the conditions under which the derogations were granted.

Mayacert shall immediately notify the DAkKS of the derogations granted, indicating the name of the operator or operators concerned, the period of the derogation, the type of production or, where appropriate, the parcels, the justification for the derogation and shall include a statement from the competent authority of the third country. Where such a statement is not available, justification shall be given for its non-inclusion and the relevant data on which the recognition is based shall be provided.

Mayacert requires that operators to whom derogations granted are applied keep the supporting documents relating to the derogations granted, as well as supporting documents for the use of such derogations during the period in which the derogations are applied and will ensure that the operator(s) comply with the conditions of the derogations granted.

9. PROCEDURE FOR DENYING, GRANTING, MAINTAINING, EXTENDING, REDUCING, SUSPENDING, WITHDRAWING A CERTIFICATION

When a non-compliance with the certification requirements is confirmed, either as a result of surveillance or otherwise, MAYACERT will consider and decide on the appropriate action.

When the appropriate action includes evaluation, review or certification decision, it should be carried out according to the procedures established by MAYACERT: inspection (MPCO 6); evaluation (MPCO 7.a); follow-up to non-compliances (MPCO 7.b); certification (MPCO 7.c).

a. Conditions for Granting a Certification:

1. Demonstrate compliance with the regulations to be certified and that the organic identity is not compromised.
2. To have gone through their respective conversion time. For other requirements, the conditions necessary to improve organic production are established. These corrective actions must be fulfilled within a set time frame, before certification is granted or within a pre-established period of time.

Name of the document: Organic Certification Procedures Manual	Code: MPCO	Version: 16	Effective date: Mar26	Elaborated or updated by: Quality Manager	Reviewed by: General Manager	Approved by: General Manager	Page 21 of 31
--	---------------	----------------	--------------------------	--	---------------------------------	---------------------------------	------------------



Organic Certification Procedures Manual

b. Conditions for Denial of Certification:

When an operator wishes to be certified for the first time with Mayacert and does not demonstrate compliance with the regulations to be certified. It occurs in initial and expansion audits of production units.

Mayacert shall not grant certification to operators or groups of operators that have been subject to a withdrawal by their previous control authority or control body in the last two years, unless the Commission has withdrawn the recognition of the previous control authority or control body in accordance with Article 46(2a) of Regulation (EU) 2018/848 for the specific third country and product category.

c. Conditions for Maintaining a Certification:

When operators demonstrate that they continue to comply with the regulations to be certified and that there are no conditions that demonstrate that they no longer comply with the requirements and that they do not jeopardize the organic identity. In addition, there must be good progress in implementing the corrective actions imposed in the previous external inspection.

Operators must, on an annual basis, pay their certification fees and submit to Mayacert all information related to any changes, modifications or deviations made to their Organic System Plan (OSP) from the previous year.

Mayacert provides its operators with the "OSP Update Statement" (A-OSP-DA) form prior to the anniversary or expiration date of their certificate to ensure continuity of organic certification.

Operators must report any additions or deletions to their OSP from the past year, as well as any changes planned for the following year that relate to the applicable standards or that they deem important to report.

Note: Having at least one on-site audit during the calendar year is **MANDATORY** to maintain certification.

d. Conditions for Extending a Certification:

When operators request an extension on the expiration of the organic certificate, if applicable, it will be granted or denied under the following conditions:

i. Cases in which extension is justified:

- a. When there are no inspectors available and the client had already requested in advance the inspection for the renewal of their certificate.
- b. When there is a catastrophe (earthquake, flood, landslides, etc.) or an internal conflict (internal war) that does not allow the entry of inspectors to perform the external audit.
- c. When the operator has multiple certifications and chooses to receive a single inspection
- d. When there is still a balance of unsold crop and the certificate has expired, as long as the operator has initiated the renewal process.

The operator must submit a formal letter via email to management (administracion.general@mayacert.com), stating the reasons for the requested extension.

Name of the document: Organic Certification Procedures Manual	Code: MPCO	Version: 16	Effective date: Mar26	Elaborated or updated by: Quality Manager	Reviewed by: General Manager	Approved by: General Manager	Page 22 of 31
--	---------------	----------------	--------------------------	--	---------------------------------	---------------------------------	------------------



Organic Certification Procedures Manual

Extension periods will be granted only once, up to a maximum of three months depending on the circumstances and will be evaluated by the Evaluation Department.

ii. Cases where extension is not justified:

When the operator requests the inspection for renewal and the validity of the certificate has expired, or its anniversary date has passed.

e. Conditions for Expanding a Certification:

Mayacert considers the term expansion when operations request the expansion of their production volume, certified products and/or production area/surface.

In order to accept and carry out an expansion procedure, the following must be complied with and followed:

The operator must submit an expansion request in the SC format, where the OSP update is attached with the new products, areas and/or volumes.

Upon receipt of the aforementioned information, Mayacert will conduct a documentary review and the information will be sent to the technical department where a reviewer will be assigned to follow up on the case.

The reviewer will analyze in detail each document submitted by the operator and make a decision on the project. The reviewer decides:

- If the information is complete.
- Whether to continue with the extension process.
- Whether a desk audit or an on-site audit will be performed.
- If an inspector is assigned to audit the operation.

In the event that audit instructions are sent to the inspector, the inspector will conduct a full audit (on-site or documentary) using the reviewer's instructions as a guide.

The inspector will deliver a detailed report in the formats normally used and with the normal procedure. The report will be evaluated under the normal procedure of assessment.

The certifier will issue an updated certificate based on the information sent by the reviewer. The certificate code will be the same, as well as the expiration date. Only a correlative number will be added.

f. Conditions to Reduce, Suspend or Withdraw Partial or Total Certification:

For NOP-USDA certification, the Adverse Action procedure is followed before proceeding to suspend and/or revoke a certification. When it is found that operators no longer comply with the regulations to be certified or when there are external conditions that demonstrate that they no longer comply with the requirements and jeopardize the organic identity (according to violation of the standards of production, processing and marketing of organic products), it can be:

Name of the document: Organic Certification Procedures Manual	Code: MPCO	Version: 16	Effective date: Mar26	Elaborated or updated by: Quality Manager	Reviewed by: General Manager	Approved by: General Manager	Page 23 of 31
--	---------------	----------------	--------------------------	--	---------------------------------	---------------------------------	------------------



Organic Certification Procedures Manual

i. Reduce Certification:

May be a reduction in area, volume, crop and/or number of producers depending on the case and type of non-compliance; only if the contaminated area or product can be clearly identified and separated from the organic product. May occur in additional annual audits and follow-up audits.

This decision implies that the operator cannot make use of the terms of the indication and cannot market the product from the disqualified area/volume/products.

ii. Suspend Certification:

Because an operator has not complied with the requirements of the regulation to be certified and has not taken the correct measures to ensure timely closure of its non-compliances, or has not responded to the notice of non-compliance, a decision is made to suspend certification until the operator implements corrective actions that correct the deficiency found, (if possible), or until it completes a reinstatement process for NOP-USDA certification.

Suspension should not exceed 6 months in the case of an EU and/or JAS certification; in the case of a NOP certification, the Adverse Action Procedure, Proc-AA, in its updated version, shall be followed. It may occur in additional annual and follow-up audits. The Evaluation Department may shorten the term. At the end of this time if the situation has not been resolved, the contract is terminated and the certification is withdrawn. During the suspension, the operator is not certified and cannot make any reference suggesting that they are certified.

Any evaluation, review or decision necessary to resolve the suspension, or required by the certification scheme, must be carried out according to the procedures established by MAYACERT: inspection (MPCO 6); evaluation (MPCO 7); follow-up on non-compliances (MPCO 7.b); certification (MPCO 7.c); follow-up on the abuse of licenses, certificates and logos (MC 6.5), and make the necessary modifications in the documents related to the certification of the case.

Labels, letterheads and any other advertising material indicating a Mayacert certification must be removed immediately. Failure to do so may result in the cancellation of the certification contract. During suspension the operator will be bound by all clauses of the certification contract.

iii. Withdraw/cancel or revoke the Certification:

If there is no solution to remove or eliminate the contamination/deficiency found after a serious or critical non-compliance, or have exceeded the established timeframe to resolve the Suspension of Certification status. May occur in additional annual and follow-up audits. For NOP-USDA regulation, this may result in a Revocation of certification, following the Adverse Action process.

If certification is suspended, revoked or withdrawn, MAYACERT shall take the actions specified by the certification scheme and make all necessary modifications to the formal certification documents, public information, authorizations for the use of conformity marks, etc. to ensure that these do not provide any indication that the product remains certified. If the scope of a certification is reduced, MAYACERT shall take the actions specified by the certification scheme and make all necessary modifications to the formal certification documents, public information, authorizations for the use of conformity marks, etc., in order to ensure that the

Name of the document: Organic Certification Procedures Manual	Code: MPCO	Version: 16	Effective date: Mar26	Elaborated or updated by: Quality Manager	Reviewed by: General Manager	Approved by: General Manager	Page 24 of 31
--	---------------	----------------	--------------------------	--	---------------------------------	---------------------------------	------------------



Organic Certification Procedures Manual

reduced scope of certification is clearly communicated to the client and clearly specified in the certification documentation and public information.

An operation whose certification has been withdrawn or cancelled may not reapply for certification until one year has elapsed from the date of notification of the withdrawal or cancellation.

10. CERTIFICATION SERVICE SURRENDERING PROCEDURE

The operator may submit a signed declaration of surrender to the organic certification and service contract at any time during the certification process by filling out the RCO form in its updated version, available on the Mayacert website.

Mayacert will publish the operator in the list of surrendered operators on its website and in the OID according to the corresponding scope and within 3 working days.

The operator after the surrender shall discontinue the use of any advertising matter containing any reference to it.

11. VIOLATION OF PRODUCTION, PROCESSING AND MARKETING STANDARDS OF ORGANIC PRODUCTS AND THEIR PENALTIES

Mayacert has a catalog of measures or penalties proportionate to the categories of non-compliance.

The type of infractions/violations/non-compliances and the sanctions and measures for their correction are established. Violations are categorized into minor and major as stipulated in the NOP 4002 instruction in the penalty matrix, or into Minor, Major and Critical as explained in Annex I of EU 2021/279.

MAYACERT reserves the right to investigate an operator or trader when there is a suspicion that they are not complying with the requirements of Regulation (EU) 2018/848 of the European Parliament and/or NOP-USDA or JAS.

a. Minor non-compliances

These are those that do not immediately jeopardize the organic integrity of the product and/or process, and that can be resolved with an action plan that demonstrates that the preventive measures taken by the operator are proportionate and adequate. Additionally, the traceability system allows tracing the affected product(s) in the supply chain and the product can be prevented from being imported from a third country to be placed on the Union market with reference to organic production.

b. Major non-compliances

They are those who jeopardize the organic integrity of the product and/or process to be certified or are those who cast doubt on the veracity of the information obtained, or are those operators who are not complying with their contractual obligations with Mayacert.

This may result in partial or total suspension or withdrawal of an operator's certification.

Name of the document: Organic Certification Procedures Manual	Code: MPCO	Version: 16	Effective date: Mar26	Elaborated or updated by: Quality Manager	Reviewed by: General Manager	Approved by: General Manager	Page 25 of 31
--	---------------	----------------	--------------------------	--	---------------------------------	---------------------------------	------------------



Organic Certification Procedures Manual

Major infractions are considered when:

- the preventive measures are not proportionate or adequate and the controls that the operator has put in place are inefficient according to the assessment of the control authority or control body,
- non-compliance affects the integrity of the organic or in-conversion product,
- the operator fails to correct a minor non-compliance in a timely manner,
- the traceability system makes it possible to trace the product(s) concerned in the supply chain and the product can be prevented from being imported from a third country to be placed on the Union market with reference to organic production.

c. Critical non-compliances

Critical infringements are considered when during a major infringement, there is no information in the traceability system to locate the product or products concerned in the supply and the products cannot be prevented from being imported from a third country to be placed on the Union market with reference to organic production. Certification is withdrawn or revoked.

12. COMPLAINTS AND APPEALS PROCEDURE

Mayacert has a formal procedure for handling **complaints** and **appeals** from operators or interested parties.

- A **complaint** is understood to be any expression of dissatisfaction with the actions of Mayacert or any of its representatives that is **not directly related to a certification decision**. Complaints may be submitted **at any time** in writing, using the **Mayacert complaint and appeals form (FQ)**, available on the website.
- An **appeal** is understood to be a request for reconsideration of a **certification decision or official notification** issued by Mayacert. The operator affected by such a decision has the right to appeal within a maximum of **15 working days** from the date of notification, submitting the appeal in writing, accompanied by the arguments and evidence supporting their disagreement, and indicating what they consider to be the correct decision.

Mayacert will always acknowledge receipt of any formal complaint or appeal using the FQ form.

The Evaluation Department will gather the necessary information, analyze the case, and provide an initial response to the client by mail within a maximum of **15 business days**.

Complaints and appeals must relate exclusively to the **scope for which the certification was granted**.

If the appeal warrants it, the Evaluation Department may reanalyze the original inspection report. If deemed necessary, a **reinspection** may be carried out by an inspector other than the one who conducted the first inspection and may be accompanied by the Mayacert Manager. This new information will be discussed by the Evaluation Department to issue a final decision. If the original decision is upheld, the appeal will be rejected; otherwise, appropriate corrective measures will be taken.

If the non-compliance prevails and if the affected party wishes MAYACERT may send another certifying body to co-certify with Mayacert. The costs of this review will be covered by the applicant if the final result is not in its favor, otherwise the costs will be absorbed by Mayacert.

Name of the document: Organic Certification Procedures Manual	Code: MPCO	Version: 16	Effective date: Mar26	Elaborated or updated by: Quality Manager	Reviewed by: General Manager	Approved by: General Manager	Page 26 of 31
--	---------------	----------------	--------------------------	--	---------------------------------	---------------------------------	------------------



Organic Certification Procedures Manual

Cases of notifications of any non-compliance are recorded together with the solution given to the case in the operator's file and in a specific folder for appeals.

Mayacert will inform the affected party on the progress of the treatment of their complaint, appeal or challenge, in parallel to the development of the process. For which the following moments are recognized as propitious for the issuance of such communications:

1. Analysis of the complaint
2. Results of the analysis
3. Re-inspection at reference site (if applicable)
4. Re-inspection results / Corrective actions (if any)
5. Mayacert's conclusions
6. Intervention of another certifying agent (if the non-compliance persists).

In the latter case, the customer will be informed in the same proposed sequence.

If an operator files a complaint showing that an inspector has a conflict of interest, incompetence, dishonesty, bias, etc., Mayacert will investigate the case and if it confirms the grounds for the complaint, the inspector will be changed.

The written notifications submitted by the affected parties and the follow-up given by MAYACERT will be documented in a file which will be in charge of the coordinator of the Evaluation Department.

To ensure that there is no conflict of interest, the personnel (including those acting at management level) who make the decision resolving the complaint or appeal must not have been involved in the certification activities related to the complaint or appeal.

Similarly, personnel (including those acting at a managerial level) who have provided consulting to a client, or have been employed by a client, should not be used by MAYACERT to review or approve the resolution of a complaint or appeal for that client for two years following the termination of the consulting or employment.

Violations Committed by Inspectors, Members of the Evaluation Department and Certifiers

1. Conflict of interest between the inspector, members of the Evaluation Department and the Certifier with the operator.
2. Receiving compensation, gifts or commissions from the inspected operator.
3. Breaches of confidentiality of the information of the inspected operators. The above infractions determine the cancellation of the inspector's or member of the Evaluation Department's contract.
4. Failure to submit complete and timely reports or opinions of the inspections performed. If the report or opinion has flaws or doubts, the inspector or the Evaluation Department shall correct it as soon as possible at no extra cost to the operator or to the certification agency.

13. CLAIMS TO THE ORGANIZATIONS

As a follow-up to the certified organizations, MAYACERT will require the following from them:

Name of the document: Organic Certification Procedures Manual	Code: MPCO	Version: 16	Effective date: Mar26	Elaborated or updated by: Quality Manager	Reviewed by: General Manager	Approved by: General Manager	Page 27 of 31
--	---------------	----------------	--------------------------	--	---------------------------------	---------------------------------	------------------



Organic Certification Procedures Manual

- a. Maintain a record of all complaints submitted by its customers for certified products that are related to compliance with the relevant standards. This record must be available to MAYACERT upon request.
- b. Take corrective action on complaints received regarding deficiencies found in products that may affect compliance with standards.
- c. They should document the actions taken.

14. JAS TRAINING

Mayacert must provide seminars on the JAS regulation to JAS operators on an annual basis. The quality manager and all quality control personnel must participate. See JAS Standard Operating Procedure.

15. SERVICE COSTS

The costs are specified in the COST document.

The costs of sampling and laboratory analysis of soil, tissue and fruit samples or final product of the critical points of contaminant risks found by the inspector at the time of inspection shall be paid by the operator for The European Parliament Regulation (EU) 2018/848, JAS, Bio Suisse and by Mayacert for the NOP-USDA Standard.

16. MAYACERT'S OBLIGATIONS

a. Mayacert's obligations to the European Commission and the Member States

Mayacert has the commitment and obligation to comply with the provisions required by the European Commission following its recognition in accordance with Article 48 of Regulation (EU) 2018/848. Therefore, the following procedure will be followed by the quality manager, using the Organic Farming Information System (OFIS):

- It shall notify the Commission in due time, and at the latest within thirty calendar days, of the occurrence of changes in the contents of its technical file, and any changes concerning information relating to Mayacert; for example: Changes in the postal and e-mail address, website and Mayacert code number.
- It shall make available and communicate, at the request of the Commission or the competent authorities of the Member States, all information relating to its control activities in the third country.
- It shall make available and communicate when necessary the supporting documents relating to the application for recognition under Article 46 of Regulation (EU) 2018/848 which shall be kept for five years following the year in which they are submitted. Such documents shall be archived on the Mayacert Server with the Quality system.
- It shall ensure the identification of signatures of authorized persons within its organization chart and use computer systems that allow the identification of each person and guarantee that the integrity of the content of the documents, including the stages of the procedure, cannot be altered.
- Immediately share information on any suspected non-compliance affecting the integrity of organic or in-conversion products.
- It shall immediately communicate on any provisional authorization granted for the use of non-organic agricultural ingredients for the production of processed organic food. Such notification shall include the justification, presented in the specific form provided by the Commission, that such authorization has been granted in accordance with Article 25(1) of Regulation (EU) 2018/848.

Name of the document: Organic Certification Procedures Manual	Code: MPCO	Version: 16	Effective date: Mar26	Elaborated or updated by: Quality Manager	Reviewed by: General Manager	Approved by: General Manager	Page 28 of 31
--	---------------	----------------	--------------------------	--	---------------------------------	---------------------------------	------------------



Organic Certification Procedures Manual

- Every year by February 28, Mayacert will be sending an annual report to the European Commission, through OFIS, with the following information:
 - a) information on the development of organic production in the third country, including products produced, area cultivated, producing regions, number of producers and food processing activities;
 - b) information on the nature of organic agricultural products and foodstuffs exported to the Union;
 - c) a description of the monitoring and supervision activities carried out by DAKS in the previous year, the results obtained and the corrective actions taken;
 - d) any updates of the production rules applied in the third country considered equivalent to the production rules referred to in Titles III and IV of Regulation (EC) 834/2007;
 - e) any updates of the control measures applied;
 - f) any other update of the technical file;
 - g) any other information deemed relevant and required by the EC.

Mayacert will make available to all interested parties electronically and on a permanent basis an updated list of all its operators and products that have been certified as organic on its website, as well as a contact point from which information on certification status and product categories covered can be easily obtained, which will be updated on a monthly basis.

b. Mayacert's obligations with NOP-USDA

Mayacert will submit an annual report to the NOP no later than the anniversary date (May 27) of the accreditation notification, which must meet the requirements of 7 CFR § 205.510 (a) (1) (2) (3) (4).

Mayacert will maintain current and accurate data in the OID database recording all certified transactions, and within 3 business days of the issuance of a notice of suspension or revocation, or the effective date of surrender of a transaction.

Mayacert shall transfer to the AMS Administrator and make available to any official officer of a state organic program all records or copies of records pertaining to the certification activities of individuals in the event Mayacert dissolves or loses its accreditation. Provided, however, that such transfer shall not apply to a merger, sale or other transfer of ownership of a certifying agency.

Mayacert will also report on the procedures that will be used to review and investigate compliance with the NOP standard by certified operations, and the respective notification to the Administrator of violations thereof, as well as of credible evidence of organic fraud obtained through the audits it conducts.

In accordance with 7 CFR § 205.504(b)(5), Mayacert shall make the following information available to any member of the public, upon request:

- Certification certificates issued during the current and 3 preceding calendar years;
- A list of producers and handlers whose operations it has certified, including for each the name of the operation, type(s) of operation, products produced, and the effective date of the certification, during the current and 3 preceding calendar years;
- The results of laboratory analyses for residues of pesticides and other prohibited substances conducted during the current and 3 preceding calendar years; and
- Other business information as permitted in writing by the producer or handler.

Name of the document: Organic Certification Procedures Manual	Code: MPCO	Version: 16	Effective date: Mar26	Elaborated or updated by: Quality Manager	Reviewed by: General Manager	Approved by: General Manager	Page 29 of 31
--	---------------	----------------	--------------------------	--	---------------------------------	---------------------------------	------------------



Organic Certification Procedures Manual

Requests for such information shall be directed to the appropriate Representative Office through the contact details published on Mayacert's website. Upon receipt of a request, the corresponding office shall review the request to verify that the information sought is within the categories of publicly releasable information listed above and that sensitive or confidential information is excluded from disclosure.

c. Mayacert's obligations to MAFF/ MOF and FAMIC

Mayacert undertakes to notify MAFF/MOF, the Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries of Japan:

- Changes to the attachments to the application form of the registered certification body in accordance with Article 46 of the implementing regulations of the JAS Law.
- Certification, modification, suspension, cancellation, withdrawal, and revocation in accordance with Article 49 of the JAS Law Implementing Regulations.
- Article 49, paragraph 2 of the JAS Law Implementing Regulations.
- Any change in the rules (quality and procedures manual).

d. Mayacert's obligations to ICB AG

Mayacert will provide ICB with all necessary documents for Bio Suisse certification in English or Spanish as soon as possible, at the latest within 6 weeks after certification according to the EC Organic Regulation (or equivalent certification).

Mayacert will immediately inform ICB of all serious violations and sanctions, positive residue tests, complaints and claims by third parties or media reports on Bio Suisse certified farms, indicating the measures taken with regard to certification according to the EC Organic Regulation or equivalent country-specific regulations.

Mayacert ensures the fastest possible communication to ICB of critical inspection results, at the latest within one week and is obliged to take into account in its monitoring activities verification inspections, samples and analyses of Bio Suisse certified farms.

Mayacert undertakes to send the current accreditation document to ICB. The accreditation certificate is valid for all countries in which Bio Suisse inspections are carried out. Upon withdrawal, revocation or modification of the document, ICB will be informed immediately.

Mayacert offers in its accredited scope both inspections and certifications.

Mayacert assures ICB that it and its employees objectively and impartially monitor Bio Suisse requirements and that confidentiality is ensured at all levels.

e. Mayacert's obligations with other control authorities or control bodies

Mayacert undertakes to maintain fluid and transparent communication with the other inspection bodies and inspection authorities through the technical certification managers, and will also provide within a maximum period of thirty days:

Name of the document: Organic Certification Procedures Manual	Code: MPCO	Version: 16	Effective date: Mar26	Elaborated or updated by: Quality Manager	Reviewed by: General Manager	Approved by: General Manager	Page 30 of 31
--	---------------	----------------	--------------------------	--	---------------------------------	---------------------------------	------------------



Organic Certification Procedures Manual

- The control dossier of operators or groups of operators NOP, UE, JAS, Bio Suisse or ROC that decide to change control body, including their certification status, the list of non-compliances and the corresponding measures taken.
- Any relevant information required when operators or groups of operators are subject to traceability control and mass balance control.
- Any pertinent information on follow-ups of investigations and controls of operators where different control authorities or control agencies are involved.
- Any suspected non-compliance affecting the integrity of organic products or in conversion of operators where different control authorities or control bodies are involved.
- Any provisional authorization granted for the use of non-organic agricultural ingredients for the production of processed organic food. Such notification shall include the justification, presented in the specific form provided by the Commission, that such authorization has been granted in accordance with Article 25(1) of Regulation (EU) 2018/848.



Name of the document: Organic Certification Procedures Manual	Code: MPCO	Version: 16	Effective date: Mar26	Elaborated or updated by: Quality Manager	Reviewed by: General Manager	Approved by: General Manager	Page 31 of 31
--	---------------	----------------	--------------------------	--	---------------------------------	---------------------------------	------------------