

Modifications of the Swiss Organic Ordinance (SR 910.18) and the ordinance of EAER (Federal Department of Economic Affairs, Education and Research, SR 910.181) per 01.01.2015:

The modifications concern following topics: responsibility of the companies, sample-taking and spot checks, wine-making (oenological procedures and treatments), allowed plant protection products, yearly report of the certification body to FOAG, surveillance of the certification bodies vis FOAG and the exchange of information among authorities and certification bodies.

Summary of the most important modifications:

Responsibility of the companies: A new article which defines and describes the responsibilities of the companies was added to the Swiss Organic Regulation (SR 910.18). This article (Art. 24 a ff) contains following points:

- The company is hold to accept the measures / sanctions imposed in case of non-compliances;
- The company is hold to inform their clients about partial denials of products in order to make sure that they do not sell the products without reference to the organic regulation;
- The company has to accept that in case of cancelling the certification contract the authorities will be informed immediately. The same procedure applies for subcontractors. In case that your company and the subcontracted unit is not certified by the same certification body, exchange of information between the involved certification bodies takes place.
- In case a company changes its certification body, the certification documentation will be transmitted from the old to the new certification body.
- The company is hold to inform immediately their certification body in case of any irregularities or abuses which jeopardize the organic status of their products.
- The company must confirm in a written way that they respect their responsibilities. IMOSwiss will adapt the letter of confirmation (which you get together with the certification results and have to sign and return to IMO).

Sample-taking and spot checks by the certification body

The number of samples and spot-checks has been formulated more precisely. The certification bodies have to take samples at 5 % of their companies and analyse them. That means that we can no longer accept already existing lot-conforming analyses of your products. However, IMOSwiss will analyse the samples – if a lot-conforming analysis is present – only for single components and not multi-components which is significantly cheaper.

Wine-making (oenological procedures and treatments)

The updated ordinance regulates which oenological procedures and treatments are allowed.

Allowed plant protection products

Specification: repellents of vegetable and animal origin. Amendment: repellents of mineral origin.

List of Countries

The list of authorized certification bodies for India, Japan and Canada has been adopted. Preliminary authorizations of countries (if expired by 31.12.2014) have been prolonged.

Yearly report of the certification body to FOAG

The template of the yearly report which has to be handed in by the certification bodies to FOAG changed. New is the category “exporters” which are under contract with a certification body.

Supervision of certification bodies via FOAG additionally to the annual inspection of the certification bodies through SAS (Swiss accreditation Service), FOAG (independent from SAS) will control the certification bodies.

Exchange of information amongst the authorities and the certification bodies and amongst the different certification bodies

the exchange of information amongst certification bodies and the authorities (FOAG, cantonal food inspectorates...) and amongst the different certification bodies is regulated more precisely. Newly, the companies do not have to agree on data release anymore. They cannot object to the general data release. Also, the cantonal food inspectors are not anymore under the professional discretion towards the certification bodies.

For further details please consider the annex (WBFO2 = Swiss Organic Ordinance SR 910.18 and BRO4 = ordinance of EAER on organic agriculture SR 910.181) in which all amendments are listed.

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