

**Baystate Organic Certifiers**

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Enclosed is the application packet for processors for the Baystate Organic Certifier's Certification Program. Please familiarize yourself with the National Organic Standards, and with Baystate's policies and procedures, prior to filling out the application forms. The Standards may be accessed on the Baystate or National Organic Program websites. Both the Standards and Baystate's Policies and Procedures are combined into our Program Manual which is accessible on our website. If you apply for certification, you will be sent a copy of the Program Manual. Becoming familiar with the National Organic Standards, and Baystate's policies and procedures, will help answer many of the questions you are sure to have. Regarding the application forms, they are meant to get a clear picture of your operation. They are not intended to be a "snapshot" of the operation on the day you fill out the forms, but rather a description of how the operation is operated over the course of the year. Please keep this purpose in mind when writing your responses. All information on the application forms will be kept strictly confidential.

The application has been organized to accommodate the diversity of enterprises. Please use the checklist when filling out the application to guarantee that your application packet is complete. If you have any questions about the application forms, or whether specific questions apply to your operation, call our office and we will do our best to answer your questions.

Once your application has been received, you will be notified of its receipt and whether it is complete. If the application is incomplete, you will be given a list of missing paperwork needed to make it complete. Your application will then be technically reviewed to make sure your operation qualifies for certification. Once this review is complete, an inspector will inspect all aspects of your operation. Once the initial inspection report is filed our staff will review the report and decide if your operation meets the certification standards. If there are any issues or noncompliances you will be given a chance to correct them. This entire process can be completed in four to six weeks for operations that are prepared for inspection and certification. If you require expedited certification, call our office as soon as possible in the application process, so we can arrange to have an inspector ready to inspect your operation. Organic Certification must be renewed annually.

Should you disagree with Baystate Organic Certifier's decision concerning your operation, you may appeal that decision according to the process detailed in the Standards.

The National List of allowed organic inputs that is in the Program Manual does not have a list of brand name products you can use. Once a year we will send you a list of materials compiled by the Organic Materials Review Institute (OMRI) that are approved for organic production. OMRI publishes both a generic list of approved materials and a list of approved brand name materials. You are not limited to the products on the OMRI list, however, if you choose to use a product that is not on the OMRI list you must prove that it is allowed under the regulations of the National Organic Program.

Feel free to contact us with any questions or concerns, and thank you for your interest in organic certification through Baystate Organic Certifiers.

Don Franczyk  
Executive Director