




Basic information	
<b>2014/0100(COD)</b> COD - Ordinary legislative procedure (ex-codecision procedure) Regulation	Procedure completed
Organic production and labelling of organic products  Repealing Regulation (EC) No 834/2007 <a href="#">2005/0278(CNS)</a> Amended by <a href="#">2020/0231(COD)</a>  <b>Subject</b>  3.10.09.04 Organic farming 3.70.17 European ecolabel and ecolabelling, ecodesign	

Key players			
European Parliament	<b>Committee responsible</b>		<b>Rapporteur</b>
	<div>AGRI</div> Agriculture and Rural Development		<a href="#">HÄUSLING Martin (Verts /ALE)</a>
			Shadow rapporteur <a href="#">LINS Norbert (PPE)</a> <a href="#">ANDRIEU Eric (S&amp;D)</a> <a href="#">GIRLING Julie (ECR)</a> <a href="#">JAKOVČIĆ Ivan (ALDE)</a> <a href="#">SENRA RODRÍGUEZ Maria Lidia (GUE/NGL)</a> <a href="#">ZULLO Marco (EFDD)</a>
	<b>Former committee responsible</b>		<b>Former rapporteur</b>
	<div>AGRI</div> Agriculture and Rural Development		
	<b>Committee for opinion</b>		<b>Rapporteur for opinion</b>
	<div>ENVI</div> Environment, Public Health and Food Safety		<a href="#">PIETIKÄINEN Sirpa (PPE)</a>
			05/09/2014
	<b>Former committee for opinion</b>		<b>Former rapporteur for opinion</b>
	<div>ENVI</div> Environment, Public Health and Food Safety		

	Committee for opinion on the legal basis		Rapporteur for opinion	Appointed
	<div>JURI</div> Legal Affairs		VOSS Axel (PPE)	01/02/2018
Council of the European Union	Council configuration		Meetings	Date
	Agriculture and Fisheries		3307	2014-03-24
	Agriculture and Fisheries		3386	2015-05-11
	Agriculture and Fisheries		3479	2016-06-27
	Agriculture and Fisheries		3547	2017-06-12
	Agriculture and Fisheries		3509	2016-12-13
	Education, Youth, Culture and Sport		3617	2018-05-22
	European Commission	Commission DG		Commissioner
Agriculture and Rural Development		HOGAN Phil		
European Economic and Social Committee				
European Committee of the Regions				

Key events			
Date	Event	Reference	Summary
24/03/2014	Debate in Council		
24/03/2014	Legislative proposal published	COM(2014)0180 	<a href="#">Summary</a>
02/04/2014	Committee referral announced in Parliament, 1st reading		
20/10/2014	Committee referral announced in Parliament, 1st reading		
16/03/2015	Debate in Parliament		
11/05/2015	Debate in Council		<a href="#">Summary</a>
13/10/2015	Vote in committee, 1st reading		
13/10/2015	Committee decision to open interinstitutional negotiations with report adopted in committee		
05/11/2015	Committee report tabled for plenary, 1st reading	A8-0311/2015	<a href="#">Summary</a>
27/06/2016	Debate in Council		
13/12/2016	Debate in Council		
12/06/2017	Debate in Council		
22/11/2017	Approval in committee of the text agreed at 1st reading interinstitutional negotiations	PE613.578 GEDA/A/(2017)010672	
18/04/2018	Debate in Parliament		





19/04/2018	Decision by Parliament, 1st reading	<a href="#">T8-0180/2018</a>	<a href="#">Summary</a>
19/04/2018	Results of vote in Parliament		
22/05/2018	Act adopted by Council after Parliament's 1st reading		
30/05/2018	Final act signed		
30/05/2018	End of procedure in Parliament		
14/06/2018	Final act published in Official Journal		

Technical information	
Procedure reference	2014/0100(COD)
Procedure type	COD - Ordinary legislative procedure (ex-codecision procedure)
Procedure subtype	Legislation
Legislative instrument	Regulation
Amendments and repeals	Repealing Regulation (EC) No 834/2007 <a href="#">2005/0278(CNS)</a> Amended by <a href="#">2020/0231(COD)</a>
Legal basis	Treaty on the Functioning of the EU TFEU 043-p2 Treaty on the Functioning of the EU TFEU 42-p1-a1
Other legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 165
Mandatory consultation of other institutions	<a href="#">European Economic and Social Committee</a> <a href="#">European Committee of the Regions</a>
Stage reached in procedure	Procedure completed
Committee dossier	AGRI/8/00399

Documentation gateway				
European Parliament				
Document type	Committee	Reference	Date	Summary
Committee draft report		<a href="#">PE557.122</a>	07/05/2015	
Committee opinion	<div>ENVI</div>	<a href="#">PE549.119</a>	11/05/2015	
Amendments tabled in committee		<a href="#">PE557.347</a>	24/06/2015	
Amendments tabled in committee		<a href="#">PE557.348</a>	25/06/2015	
Amendments tabled in committee		<a href="#">PE557.350</a>	25/06/2015	
Amendments tabled in committee		<a href="#">PE560.821</a>	26/06/2015	
Committee report tabled for plenary, 1st reading/single reading		<a href="#">A8-0311/2015</a>	05/11/2015	<a href="#">Summary</a>
Text agreed during interinstitutional negotiations		<a href="#">PE613.578</a>	21/11/2017	
Specific opinion	<div>JURI</div>	<a href="#">PE618.294</a>	27/02/2018	
Text adopted by Parliament, 1st reading/single reading		<a href="#">T8-0180/2018</a>	19/04/2018	<a href="#">Summary</a>
Council of the EU				

Document type	Reference	Date	Summary
Coreper letter confirming interinstitutional agreement	<a href="#">GEDA/A/(2017)010672</a>	20/11/2017	
Draft final act	<a href="#">00062/2017/LEX</a>	30/05/2018	

#### European Commission

Document type	Reference	Date	Summary
Legislative proposal	COM(2014)0180 	24/03/2014	<a href="#">Summary</a>
Document attached to the procedure	SWD(2014)0065 	24/03/2014	
Document attached to the procedure	SWD(2014)0066 	24/03/2014	
Commission response to text adopted in plenary	<a href="#">SP(2018)350</a>	06/06/2018	
Follow-up document	COM(2022)0728 	20/12/2022	

#### National parliaments

Document type	Parliament/Chamber	Reference	Date	Summary
Contribution	<a href="#">PT_PARLIAMENT</a>	<a href="#">COM(2014)0180</a>	14/05/2014	
Contribution	<a href="#">ES_PARLIAMENT</a>	<a href="#">COM(2014)0180</a>	19/05/2014	
Contribution	<a href="#">IT_SENATE</a>	<a href="#">COM(2014)0180</a>	04/06/2014	
Reasoned opinion	<a href="#">AT_BUNDESRAT</a>	<a href="#">PE536.045</a>	26/06/2014	
Contribution	<a href="#">CZ_CHAMBER</a>	<a href="#">COM(2014)0180</a>	08/07/2014	
Contribution	<a href="#">NL_CHAMBER</a>	<a href="#">COM(2014)0180</a>	09/07/2014	
Contribution	<a href="#">CZ_SENATE</a>	<a href="#">COM(2014)0180</a>	04/08/2014	
Contribution	<a href="#">LT_PARLIAMENT</a>	<a href="#">COM(2014)0180</a>	13/10/2014	
Contribution	<a href="#">IE_HOUSES-OF-OIREACHTAS</a>	<a href="#">COM(2014)0180</a>	17/11/2014	
Contribution	<a href="#">RO_CHAMBER</a>	<a href="#">COM(2014)0180</a>	08/12/2014	
Contribution	<a href="#">AT_NATIONALRAT</a>	<a href="#">COM(2014)0180</a>	10/12/2014	
Contribution	<a href="#">IT_CHAMBER</a>	<a href="#">COM(2014)0180</a>	10/12/2014	
Contribution	<a href="#">FR_ASSEMBLY</a>	<a href="#">COM(2014)0180</a>	20/05/2015	

#### Other institutions and bodies

Institution/body	Document type	Reference	Date	Summary
EESC	Economic and Social Committee: opinion, report	<a href="#">CES2977/2014</a>	15/10/2014	

Additional information		
Source	Document	Date
EP Research Service	<a href="#">Briefing</a>	
EP Research Service	<a href="#">Briefing</a>	
European Commission	<a href="#">EUR-Lex</a>	

Final act	
<p><a href="#">Regulation 2018/0848</a>  <a href="#">OJ L 150 14.06.2018, p. 0001</a></p> <p><a href="#">Corrigendum to final act 32018R0848R(08)</a>  <a href="#">OJ L 007 11.01.2021, p. 0053</a></p> <p><a href="#">Corrigendum to final act 32018R0848R(17)</a>  <a href="#">OJ L 321 15.12.2022, p. 0072</a></p> <p><a href="#">Corrigendum to final act 32018R0848R(04)</a>  <a href="#">OJ L 270 29.10.2018, p. 0037</a></p> <p><a href="#">Corrigendum to final act 32018R0848R(09)</a>  <a href="#">OJ L 204 10.06.2021, p. 0047</a></p> <p><a href="#">Corrigendum to final act 32018R0848R(05)</a>  <a href="#">OJ L 305 26.11.2019, p. 0059</a></p>	<a href="#">Summary</a>

Delegated acts	
Reference	Subject
<a href="#">2020/2516(DEA)</a>	Examination of delegated act
<a href="#">2020/2804(DEA)</a>	Examination of delegated act
<a href="#">2020/2856(DEA)</a>	Examination of delegated act
<a href="#">2020/2902(DEA)</a>	Examination of delegated act
<a href="#">2021/2723(DEA)</a>	Examination of delegated act
<a href="#">2021/2817(DEA)</a>	Examination of delegated act
<a href="#">2021/2938(DEA)</a>	Examination of delegated act
<a href="#">2021/2522(DEA)</a>	Examination of delegated act
<a href="#">2021/2625(DEA)</a>	Examination of delegated act
<a href="#">2021/2818(DEA)</a>	Examination of delegated act
<a href="#">2021/2686(DEA)</a>	Examination of delegated act
<a href="#">2022/2513(DEA)</a>	Examination of delegated act
<a href="#">2020/2800(DEA)</a>	Examination of delegated act
<a href="#">2021/2814(DEA)</a>	Examination of delegated act
<a href="#">2021/2946(DEA)</a>	Examination of delegated act

<a href="#">2022/2637(DEA)</a>	Examination of delegated act
<a href="#">2021/2525(DEA)</a>	Examination of delegated act
<a href="#">2021/2556(DEA)</a>	Examination of delegated act
<a href="#">2022/2597(DEA)</a>	Examination of delegated act
<a href="#">2022/2972(DEA)</a>	Examination of delegated act
<a href="#">2024/3023(DEA)</a>	Examination of delegated act
<a href="#">2022/2737(DEA)</a>	Examination of delegated act
<a href="#">2023/2773(DEA)</a>	Examination of delegated act
<a href="#">2023/2919(DEA)</a>	Examination of delegated act
<a href="#">2024/3001(DEA)</a>	Examination of delegated act
<a href="#">2022/2808(DEA)</a>	Examination of delegated act
<a href="#">2023/2676(DEA)</a>	Examination of delegated act
<a href="#">2023/2944(DEA)</a>	Examination of delegated act

## Organic production and labelling of organic products

2014/0100(COD) - 24/03/2014 - Legislative proposal

**PURPOSE:** to ensure fair competition and a proper functioning of the internal market in organic products, and maintaining and justifying consumer confidence in products labelled as organic.

**PROPOSED ACT:** Regulation of the European Parliament and the Council.

**ROLE OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT:** the European Parliament decides in accordance with the ordinary legislative procedure and on an equal footing with the Council.

**BACKGROUND:** the overall objective of the legislative framework, which is the sustainable development of organic production, is **currently not fully met**. It leads to lost opportunities for farmers and operators in the Union (the organic land area in the Union has only doubled in the last 10 years, while the market has increased fourfold), a risk of limitation to the organic market expansion and a risk of limitation to the environmental benefits associated with organic production.

The main drivers are:

- **regulatory and non-regulatory obstacles** to the development of organic production in the Union;
- a risk of erosion of consumer confidence, notably because of the **many exceptions** that are watering down organic production rules and because of the fraud cases that have developed in connection with shortcomings in the control system and in the import regime;
- complicated **labelling** rules;
- **unfair competition** among operators in the Union and in Third Countries.

When adopting Council Regulation (EC) No 834/2007 on organic production and labelling of organic products, the Council earmarked a series of issues on which the Commission was required to submit a report to the European Parliament and the Council, after having reviewed the experience gained from the application of Regulation (EC) No 834/2007.

The Council adopted conclusions on the Commission's report at its Agriculture and Fisheries meeting of 13-14 May 2013 and called on the Member States and on the Commission to develop the organic production sector at an ambitious level by reviewing the current legal framework, with a view to improving its usability while providing for a period of stability and certainty, aiming at further clarification and simplification.

**IMPACT ASSESSMENT:** the **preferred option** was the principle-driven option which aims at **re-focusing organic production on its principles**, which would be better reflected in the production rules. Exceptional rules would be ended.

**CONTENT:** the Commission proposes to replace Regulation (EC) No 834/2007 with a new Regulation in order to: (i) remove the obstacles to the development of organic production in the Union, (ii) guarantee fair competition for farmers and operators and to improve the functioning of the internal market; (iii) maintain or improve consumer confidence in organic products.

**Respecting principles:** organic production must continue to adhere to a set of principles that reflect closely the expectations of consumers. These principles include:

- respect for nature's systems and cycles and sustainment and enhancement of the state of soil, water, air and biodiversity, of the health of plants and animals and of the balance between them;
- responsible use of energy and natural resources;
- respect of high animal welfare standards and, in particular, fulfilment of animals' species-specific behavioural needs;
- appropriate design and management of biological processes based on ecological systems using natural resources which are internal to the system by methods that: (i) use living organisms and mechanical production methods; (ii) practice land-related crop cultivation and livestock production or practice aquaculture which complies with the principle of sustainable exploitation of fisheries; (iii) exclude the use of GMOs.

**Strengthening and harmonising production rules:** it is proposed to strengthen and harmonise production rules by **removing exceptions**, except where temporary measures are necessary in order to allow organic production to continue or recommence in the case of catastrophic circumstances.

Organic agricultural holdings have to be entirely managed in compliance with the requirements applicable to organic production and retroactive acknowledgement of the conversion period is in principle not possible any more.

The agricultural ingredients used in the composition of organic processed products have to be exclusively organic.

With the exceptions of micro-enterprises, organic operators other than farmers or operators producing seaweed or aquaculture animals are required to develop a system for improving their environmental performance.

**Improving control systems:** the control system is improved by integrating all control-related provisions into a single legislative text under the [Commission proposal for a Regulation on official controls](#) and other official activities in food and feed.

Controllability is enhanced by **clarification, simplification and harmonisation of the production rules** and the removal of a series of possible exceptions to such rules. The proposal seeks to do away with the possibility to exempt certain types of retailers provided for in Regulation (EC) No 834/2007, which has led to different interpretations and practices across Member States and has made management, supervision and control more difficult. The risk-based approach to official controls is reinforced by removing the requirement for mandatory annual verification of compliance of all operators provided for in Regulation (EC) No 834/2007.

**Fees collected for controls:** the proposal introduces specific provisions in order to **increase transparency** with regard to fees that may be collected for the controls, and the provisions related to publication of operators together with information on their certification status are reinforced.

**Reduction of administrative burdens:** a system of **group certification** is introduced for small-scale farmers in the Union with a view to reducing inspection and certification costs and the associated administrative burden, strengthening local networks, contributing to better market outlets, and ensuring a level playing field with operators in third countries.

**Enhanced traceability and fraud prevention:** it is proposed that operators may not be controlled by different control authorities or bodies for the same groups of products across different stages of the organic chain.

**Detection of non-authorised products or substances:** specific provisions are also introduced to harmonise action to be taken when non-authorised products or substances are detected. In this context, there may be instances where farmers are prevented from marketing their products as organic due to the unintentional presence of non-authorised products or substances. Member States may be authorised by the Commission to grant national payments to **compensate for the losses incurred** in such instances.

**Adaptation of the trade regime:** the trade regime is adapted to improve the level playing for the organic operators of the European Union and in **Third Countries** and to better ensure consumer confidence. The possibility of equivalence agreements with Third Countries remains while the system of unilateral equivalency is phased out.

The recognition of control bodies is proposed to be progressively shifted to a compliance regime.

**BUDGETARY IMPLICATIONS:** the proposal allocates a budget for technical assistance measures. Estimated costs for expenditure (including administrative costs) amount to **EUR 2.184 million** for the period 2015-2020.

**DELEGATED ACTS:** this proposal contains provisions empowering the Commission to adopt delegated acts in accordance with Article 290 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union.

## Organic production and labelling of organic products

2014/0100(COD) - 30/05/2018 - Final act

**PURPOSE:** to revise existing EU rules on organic production and labelling of organic products.

**LEGISLATIVE ACT:** Regulation (EU) 2018/848 of the European Parliament and of the Council on organic production and labelling of organic products and repealing Council Regulation (EC) No 834/2007.

**CONTENT:** the new Regulation establishes modernised and uniform rules applicable throughout the EU to **encourage the sustainable development of organic production**. It aims to (i) ensure fair competition for farmers and operators, (ii) prevent fraud and unfair practices and (iii) improve consumer confidence in organic products and the EU organic production logo. It shall repeal Council Regulation (EC) No 834/2007 on 31 December 2020.

**Scope:** the scope of organic rules shall be enlarged to cover a **wider list of products** (e.g. salt, cork, beeswax, maté, vine leaves, palm hearts) and additional production rules for poultry, rabbits and bees.

**General and specific principles:** the amendments adopted specify that organic production shall be based, inter alia, on the following general principles:

- respect for nature's systems and cycles and the sustainment and enhancement of the state of the soil, the water and the air, of the health of plants and animals, and of the balance between them;
- preserve natural landscape elements;
- produce a wide variety of high quality food products that meet consumer demand;
- ensure the integrity of organic production at all stages of production, processing and distribution of food and feed;
- exclude the use of GMOs, products produced from GMOs, and products produced by GMOs, other than veterinary medicinal products;
- restrict the use of external inputs;
- design biological processes using methods that are based on risk assessment and the use of precautionary and preventive measures;
- exclude animal cloning and ensure a high level of animal welfare.

In agricultural activities, organic production shall be based on specific principles such as:

- maintain and enhance soil life and natural soil fertility, soil stability, soil water retention and soil biodiversity;
- the use of seeds and animals with a high degree of genetic diversity, disease resistance and longevity;
- selecting plant varieties, taking into account the particularities of specific organic production systems, with emphasis on agronomic performance and disease resistance;
- choose animal breeds taking into account their genetic diversity, ability to adapt to local conditions, breeding value, longevity, vitality and resistance to disease or health problems;
- the practice of site-adapted and land-related livestock production.

**Production rules:** production rules will be simplified and further harmonised by phasing out a number of exceptions and derogations. Operators shall:

- **take preventive measures at every stage of production, preparation and distribution**, where appropriate, to ensure the preservation of biodiversity and soil quality, to prevent and control pests and diseases and to avoid negative effects on the environment, animal health and plant health;
- **take proportionate precautionary measures** which are under their control to avoid contamination with products or substances that are not authorised for use in organic production.

The Regulation introduces a more uniform approach to reduce the risk of accidental contamination from pesticides.

**Conversion period:** when the entire holding or parts of the holding are intended to produce organic products, they should be subject to a conversion period during which they are managed under organic production rules, but cannot produce organic products. Products should only be allowed to be placed on the market as organic products once the conversion period has elapsed.

After an appropriate conversion period, all agricultural holdings in the Union wishing to switch to organic production shall be fully managed in accordance with the requirements applicable to organic production.

However, the Regulation shall allow mixed farms producing both conventional and organic food would be allowed, on condition that the two farming activities are clearly and effectively separated.

**Certification:** the Regulation provides for the notification of operators' activities to the competent authorities and a certification system to identify operators who comply with the rules governing the production and labelling of organic products. Certification shall be easier for small farmers through a new '**group certification**' system that aims to reduce certification costs and administrative burdens.

**Official controls:** the control system will be strengthened through stricter precautionary measures and robust risk-based controls throughout the supply chain. They shall be carried out on the spot at **least once a year** or once every two years if no fraud has been discovered during the last three years.

Where an operator suspects that a product it has produced, prepared, imported or has received from another operator does not comply with this Regulation, that operator shall identify and separate the product concerned; check whether the suspicion can be substantiated; not place the product concerned on the market as an organic or in-conversion product and not use it in organic production, unless the suspicion can be eliminated.

In the event of **non-compliance** affecting the integrity of organic or in-conversion products throughout any of the stages of production, preparation and distribution, for example as result of the use of non-authorised products, substances or techniques, or commingling with non-organic products, competent authorities, and, where appropriate, control authorities and control bodies, shall ensure that no reference is made to organic production in the labelling and advertising of the entire lot or production run concerned.

**Import of organic products:** a product may only be imported from a third country for placing on the market in the EU as an organic product if certain conditions are met. In particular, the product shall comply with the **equivalent production and control rules of the recognised third country** and be imported accompanied by an inspection certificate confirming the conformity of the product issued by the competent authorities, control authorities or control bodies of that third country.

ENTRY INTO FORCE: 17.6.2018.

TRANSPOSITION: from 1.1.2021.

## Organic production and labelling of organic products



The European Parliament adopted a legislative resolution by 496 votes to 124, with 50 abstentions a legislative resolution on the proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on organic production and labelling of organic products, amending Regulation (EU) No XXX /XXX of the European Parliament and of the Council [Official controls Regulation] and repealing Council Regulation (EC) No 834/2007.

The European Parliament's position adopted at first reading under the ordinary legislative procedure amended the Commission proposal as follows:

**Objective:** the Regulation shall establish the principles of organic production and lay down the rules governing organic production, the related certification and the use of indications referring to organic production in labelling and advertising, as well as the rules applicable to controls.

The amended text specifies that **organic production** shall (i) encourage short distribution channels and local production in the various areas of the Union; (ii) encourage the preservation of rare and native breeds in danger of extinction; (iii) foster the development of organic plant breeding activities in order to contribute to favourable economic perspectives of the organic sector.

**General and specific principles:** the amendments adopted specify that organic production shall be based, *inter alia*, on the following general principles:

- preserve natural landscape elements;
- produce a wide variety of high quality food products that meet consumer demand;
- ensure the integrity of organic production at all stages of production, processing and distribution of food and feed;
- restrict the use of external inputs;
- design biological processes using methods that are based on risk assessment and the use of precautionary and preventive measures;
- exclude animal cloning and ensure a high level of animal welfare.

In **agricultural activities**, organic production shall be based on specific principles such as:

- the use of seeds and animals with a high degree of genetic diversity, disease resistance and longevity;
- selecting plant varieties, taking into account the particularities of specific organic production systems, with emphasis on agronomic performance and disease resistance;
- choose animal breeds taking into account their genetic diversity, ability to adapt to local conditions, breeding value, longevity, vitality and resistance to disease or health problems;
- the practice of site-adapted and land-related livestock production.

**Official controls:** controls shall cover the verification of the application by operators of **preventive and precautionary measures** at each stage of production, preparation and distribution. They shall be carried out on the spot **at least once a year** or once every two years if no fraud has been found in the last three years.

**Actions in case of non-compliance:** if an inspection body suspects that an operator intends to place on the market a product which may not comply with the Regulation, when it has terms referring to organic production, it should conduct an official investigation and provisionally prohibit the placing on the market of the products concerned as organic pending the results of the investigation.

In the event of non-compliance due to the use of unauthorised products, substances or techniques or mixing with non-organic products, **no reference to organic production may appear in the labelling and advertising of the final product** concerned. In the event of serious, repeated or persistent non-compliance, the operator concerned may be **prohibited** from marketing products accompanied by a reference to organic production for a specified period or have his certificate withdrawn.

**Organic production rules:** after an appropriate conversion period, all agricultural holdings in the Union wishing to switch to organic production shall be fully managed in accordance with the requirements applicable to organic production.

However, the Regulation shall allow mixed farms producing both conventional and organic food would be allowed, on condition that the two farming activities are clearly and effectively separated.

When the entire holding or parts of the holding are intended to produce organic products, they should be subject to a conversion period during which they are managed under organic production rules, but cannot produce organic products. Products should only be allowed to be placed on the market as organic products once the **conversion period has elapsed**.

**Small farmers:** the Regulation introduces the concept of 'group of operators' and provides for certification rules that take into account the needs and resource capacities of small farmers and operators.

**Import of organic products:** a product may only be imported from a third country for placing on the market in the EU as an organic product if certain conditions are met. In particular, the product shall comply with the equivalent production and control rules of the recognised third country and be imported accompanied by an inspection certificate confirming the conformity of the product issued by the competent authorities, control authorities or control bodies of that third country.

As regards products imported from third countries or from the outermost regions of the Union where specific local and climatic conditions exist, the Commission shall have the possibility to grant specific authorisations for the use of products and substances in organic production.

**Temporary experiment:** in a declaration annexed to the legislative resolution, the Commission recognises the need to define the conditions under which organic varieties suitable for organic production are developed.

For the purpose of establishing criteria for the description of the characteristics of 'organic varieties suitable for organic production', as well as defining the conditions under which 'organic varieties suitable for organic production' may be produced with a view to marketing, the Commission will organise at the latest 6 months after the date of application of the present Regulation a temporary experiment.

## Organic production and labelling of organic products

2014/0100(COD) - 05/11/2015 - Committee report tabled for plenary, 1st reading/single reading

The Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development adopted the report by Martin HÄUSLING (Greens/EFA, DE) on the proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on organic production and labelling of organic products, amending Regulation (EU) No XXX/XXX of the European Parliament and of the Council [Official controls Regulation] and repealing Council Regulation (EC) No 834/2007.

The committee recommended that the European Parliament's position, adopted at first reading under the ordinary legislative procedure, should amend the Commission proposal as follows:

**Scope, definitions and principles:** Members considered that the **principles and methods for organic production** have to be applied through the whole process of organic farming/organic production. As well as principles concerning organic production, the Regulation shall establish the principles of organic production and the **control and certification** thereof, and lay down the rules concerning organic production, processing, distribution, controls.

It shall **provide the basis for the sustainable development of organic production** and its positive effects on the environment and public health, while ensuring the effective functioning of the internal market and fair competition, thereby helping farmers to achieve a fair income, ensuring consumer confidence and protecting consumer interests.

The amendments concern the **definitions** needed to clarify provisions and positive lists for authorised substances foreseen in the annexes. They list a series of products originating from agriculture, including aquaculture and beekeeping, where such products are, or are intended to be, **produced, prepared, labelled, distributed**, placed on the Union market, or imported into or exported from the Union as organic. Caterer and restaurants should be under the roof of this Regulation.

**Objectives and principles:** The Regulation should not only deal with the principles, but also the **objectives** of organic farming, **processing and distribution**. The general objectives shall be pursued:

- respecting nature's systems and cycles and sustaining and enhancing the health of soil, water, plants and animals and the balance between them;
- establishing appropriate management of biological processes based on ecological systems using natural resources which are internal to the system, by methods that: (i) maintain the long-term fertility of soils; (ii) contribute to a high level of biological diversity; (iii) make a substantial contribution to a non-toxic environment; (iv) make responsible use of, and contribute to the saving of, energy and water, and preserve natural resources such as water, soil, organic matter and air; (v) respect high animal welfare standards.

**Organic production shall in particular be based on the following specific principles:** (i) sustaining the health of plants and animals; (ii) exclusion of food containing or consisting of artificially engineered nanomaterials; (iii) maintenance of biodiversity in natural aquatic ecosystems; (iv) production of organic livestock products derived from animals that have been raised on organic holdings since their birth or hatching and throughout their life.

**General production rules:** operators shall comply with the following general production rules:

- the use of animal **cloning** and the rearing of artificially induced polyploid animals is prohibited;
- **preventive measures** shall be taken as appropriate at all stages of production, preparation and distribution;
- organic operators other than microenterprises, farmers, beekeepers, retailers, and operators producing algae or aquaculture animals, shall **improve their environmental performance** so as to protect biodiversity and to contribute to climate change mitigation by means such as carbon sequestration, establishing performance targets.

**Mixed farms:** by way of derogation from the general rules, a holding may be separated into clearly distinct production units which are either in compliance with this Regulation or dedicated to non-organic production, provided that, *inter alia*, appropriate measures have been taken to ensure the permanent separation of products obtained from each unit concerned. Moreover, Members supported the idea that small farmers should be allowed to participate in **group certification** in order to, in particular, reduce inspection and certification costs and the associated administrative burden.

**Prohibiting the use of GMOs:** the use of GMOs is prohibited in organic production therefore operators should be able to prove that they haven't used non organic products which were produced from or by GMOs.

**Precautionary measures to be taken to prevent non-compliance with this Regulation:** the amended text provides that the operator shall take all necessary precautionary measures in order to avoid the presence of non-authorised processes, products or substances in organic production.

In the event that a control authority or a control body detects the presence of a non-authorised process, product or substance in organic production, the control authority or control body concerned shall **prohibit the placing of the product on the market** with an indication referring to the organic production method until it is satisfied that the suspicion or non-compliance has been eliminated.

Moreover, Member States shall take precautionary measures:

- in order to avoid adventitious contamination with non-authorised products or substances as a result of non-organic farming practices or other non-organic practices;
- where control authorities, control bodies and competent authorities have identified specific risks of non-compliance with this Regulation.

Products potentially contaminated with plant protection products may be considered as marketable **after examination** by competent authorities.

**Database:** Members suggested that the Commission shall establish a database on cases of non-compliance with this Regulation, based on national databases established by Member States. Those databases shall be used to facilitate the formulation of best practices to avoid contamination. The Member States must provide the Commission with the results of their investigations every year.

**Control systems:** Member States shall set up a system of controls and shall designate one or more competent authorities to be responsible for monitoring compliance with the obligations laid down by this Regulation.

The nature and frequency of the controls shall be determined **on the basis of an assessment of the risk** of occurrence and the seriousness of non-compliance with the requirements laid down in this Regulation. All operators and groups of operators shall be subject **at least to an annual physical on-site control** of their compliance with the applicable rules.

A summary report of the control activities carried out during the previous year shall be provided.

Competent authorities shall ensure, **in the event of non-compliance** affecting the status of organic products throughout any of the stages of production, preparation and distribution and export, in particular arising from the use of prohibited or non-authorised substances and techniques or commingling with non-organic products, that no reference is made to organic production in the labelling and advertising of the entire lot or production run concerned. In the event of repetitive, continued or fraudulent non-compliance, the competent authorities may suspend or withdraw the organic certificate as appropriate.

**Trade with third countries:** Members stated that there should be no difference between standards applied in the EU Regulation and standards applied for products which are **exported** to third countries.

For the regime of **imports** from third countries, the product, upon being imported, shall be accompanied by a certificate of inspection confirming that all operators and their products are in compliance with this Regulation.

However, to avoid sudden disruptions of supply on the EU market, the committee says the Commission should be able, for a **maximum of two years, to adjust import requirements** for some products which do not fully comply with EU standards, because of climate conditions, for example.

Members stressed the need for the provisions relating to Commission supervision in third countries to be strengthened. It is also important to strengthen supervision and controls in equivalence agreements with third countries.

**Implementation of this Regulation:** by 1 January 2020, the Commission shall establish the **necessary administrative structures** within competent Union authorities so as to fulfil its responsibilities with regard to improved harmonisation and implementation of this Regulation in Member States, specifically concerning controls within the Union and imports from third countries, and improved communication between Member States and with the Union's Institutions.

## Organic production and labelling of organic products

2014/0100(COD) - 11/05/2015

The Council discussed the proposal for a regulation on organic farming with a view to reaching a general approach. It made significant progress on a number of articles but some Member States requested more time to reflect further on some sensitive issues such as controls and the presence of non-authorised products or substances in organic products.

- **Non-authorised products or substances in organic agricultural products:** delegations expressed diverging views on how to achieve a harmonised EU approach. Some countries would support imposing legally binding threshold limits as initially proposed by the Commission, while others would prefer to rely instead on the existing system of control in the production process.
- **Control systems:** delegations were divided on the mechanism governing the frequency of the controls. Many EU countries would like to keep mandatory annual or regular physical inspections. However, others were in favour of setting a risk-based control system.

The Presidency expects to reach a general approach on this issue at the Council meeting in June before launching negotiations with the European Parliament.