

How to become organic producers?

Organic production is organized and registered production which is subject to mandatory professional inspection of the operator. The nature and frequency of professional inspection is determined on the basis of risk assessment, determined irregularities and compliances. Expert inspection is carried out at least once per year. In addition to the mandatory technical inspection, organic production is subject to the official inspections of compliance with the provisions of the Food Act (Official Gazette 81/13, 14/14, 115/18) and regulations enacted on the basis of Food Act.

Law regulations:

The principles of organic farming are determined by the implementation of Council Regulation (EC) no. 834/2007 on organic production and labeling of organic products, the Commission Regulation (EC) no. 889/2008 on organic production and labeling of organic products with regard to organic production, labeling and control, Agriculture Law (118/2018, 42/2020), the Ordinance on the control system of organic agriculture (11/2020) with associated regulations. Therefore, every operator (entity), before deciding to grow organically, should be well aware of these legal provisions. Conditions for subsidies can be found on Agency for payments in agriculture, fisheries and rural development web site: [Subsidies from Paying agency](#)

Organic production comprises the application of agro-technical, mechanical, physical, biological and biotechnical measures on the use of arable land and barren areas in a way that permanently maintains soil fertility, water quality, plant resistance to pests, biodiversity, productivity, regeneration capacity and vitality of the agricultural and forest ecosystems, and according to local soil and climate conditions. Organic crop production apply procedures of preparation and processing of soil that allow the maintenance or increase soil organic matter, ensure stability and soil biodiversity, and prevent compaction and soil erosion.

To grow perennial crops should be taken into account the choice of the variety (resistance), but also on methods of fertilization. Reproduction material must be certified and must originate from organic production. When selecting varieties it is recommended to pay attention to the preservation of biodiversity, and give preference to native (indigenous) varieties. Grown organically or not, is a personal decision of the producer. In addition to knowledge and experience incultivation, it is necessary to become familiar with the principles of organic agriculture, and to cooperate with the staff of the Directorate for professional support of the development of agriculture and fisheries and the Croatian Ministry of Agriculture.

Monoculture is mitigated by maintaining and increasing soil fertility. We should strive for planting trees and shrubs in open areas that have positive effects on beneficial organisms and the stability of agro ecological system. Mixtures for grassing should be as rich in species typical for a certain area and legumes.

Fertility and biological activity of the soil is maintained cultivation of legumes and green manure and application of manure or organic material (composted) from organic production. It is allowed to use biodynamic preparations. Fertilizers and soil conditioners may only be used if they are approved for use in organic production. It is not allowed to use mineral nitrogen fertilizers.

All methods used for plant production should prevent or reduce environmental pollution to a minimum. In the case of a threat to agricultural crops, plant protection products may only be used if they are approved for use in organic production.

Products for cleaning and disinfection in animal husbandry shall be used only if they are approved for use in organic production.

For pest control in organic farming the following is permitted: agro-technical, mechanical, physical, biological and biotechnological measures. In the selection of the control measures should be preferred: the cultivation of resistant or tolerant varieties to pests, planting healthy and declared organically-grown seedlings, agricultural practices that do not favor the development of pests (encouraging biodiversity, balanced fertilization, irrigation, use of physical and mechanical measures, the use of biological measures, beneficial insects and mites, microorganisms antagonists), the use of funds for environmental protection products of natural origin (sulfur, copper). The funds for environmental protection products are used preventively because when pest populations and the development of plant diseases exceed the economic threshold of identification may be too late.

The first-time inspection

Organic production is established by sowing a new crop / raising new plantations or the transition from conventional or integrated into the organic production in the existing crop / plantation. During this period the farm must undergo a conversion period.

The conversion period is the period of transition from non-organic to organic farming during which the provisions of the organic production of certain law are followed. Depending on the type of production a conversion period is lasting up to three years, starting at the earliest, when the manufacturer of its economy involves in the control system. After the decision on growing organically it is necessary to select a control body and make a contract with one of them (Ordinance on the control system of organic agriculture 11/2020).

The operator must first be registered in the Register of farmers, registered in the system of records of land parcels - ARKOD maintained by the Agency for payments in agriculture, fisheries and rural development.

Following the first inspection on the operator, responsible person has to fill the application (form in Annex 1 of the Ordinance on the control system of organic agriculture NN 11/2020) and should be submitted with the following documents:

1. Inspection contract made with control body;
2. Inspection report of concluded inspection;
3. Craft certificate/Excerpt from commercial court register/Associations register (except for family farming)
4. State mark in the amount of HRK 70.00

Organic production on the farm is subject to expert inspections in all areas of production. Production of processed organic food shall be kept separate in time or space from food that is not organic. Organic products must be prescribed highlighted that they do not interfere or replaced with other (conventional) products (Ordinance on the control system of organic agriculture 11/2020). Packing, handling and storage of organic products shall be temporally and spatially separate from other products.

The producer shall keep records of production and accounting based on receipt of goods and / or certificates on the basis of which the control body is possible to verify origin, type and quantity of all purchased, used materials and their use. The producer must maintain records about the quantities of products that are sold directly to the end user.

After the professional inspection, the control body issues a certificate to the farmer. The organic certificate is a document with which authorized control bodies in organic production confirms that production, processing or service is in conformity to prescribed basic requirements for organic production. Each year the farmer receives a certificate, if the inspection is done, regardless of the status on the certificate. The conformity certification procedure is based on the inspection reports and the corresponding documentation of testing laboratories.

The number of inspections depends on the type of production. In addition to the main expert inspection, at least once a year, the inspection body may carry out a comprehensive review of the production unit. If the inspection body doubts the correctness or authenticity of a product, samples could be sent for analysis. The type of analysis depends on the type and conditions of production.