



Soil Association Organic Standards for Great Britain

Summary of standards changes - documents updated 12th May 2022 – V1.1

This document summarises the changes made to both the Soil Association Standards for Great Britain, and the Organic Standards for Great Britain, for V1.1. The Soil Association Standards for Great Britain contain both the baseline regulations according to 2007/834 and 2008/889 along with the Soil Association higher standards, whereas the Organic Standards for Great Britain only include the baseline regulation (no higher standards).

The changes outlined below have been applied to the relevant standards documents which are: **aquaculture, abattoir & slaughtering, feed processing, farming & growing, food & drink and seaweed.**

The main updates are as follows:

Additional guidance to labelling standards

Where certified licensees use the word organic (including in brand names) and/or the Soil Association Organic symbol in their marketing materials and websites, we have added some additional guidance to two of our labelling standards, "Using the term organic" and "Using the Soil Association symbol off-product" - this change has been made across all standards documents and is shown in the extract below which has been taken from the Food and Drink standards. The additional guidance provides clarity for certified companies, and consumers and buyers, to ensure it is clear whether a product is organic and meets the SA standards.

Soil Association inspectors and certification staff will be applying this additional guidance as from 1st November 2022, if you have any queries about whether your use of organic or the SA symbol meets these standards please contact cert@soilassociation.org.

Updates to the UK Organic Regulation by Defra

- The use of non-organically reared pullets where organically-reared pullets are not available has been extended until 31st December 2022.
- The use of non-organic gellan gum has been extended until 31st December 2022.

In addition, a small number of wording changes have been made to some standards and guidance across all Soil Association Standards documents to provide further clarification for licensees. In this document we have not included small edits that have been made to formatting, grammar and spelling.

Key to text changes: (~~strikethrough~~ = delete; underlined = new wording; normal text = no change)

Updates made across all standards documents

5.8.1 Using the term organic

If you wish to refer to organic in relation to an agricultural, food or feed product anywhere on a label, in advertising materials or commercial documents, you must meet the requirements of these standards.

(EC) 834/2007 Art. 23(1)



Labelling refers to the way in which you identify your products and show their organic status. The labelling standards apply to:

- retail packaging
- bulk packaging
- the labelling of loose produce for sale in retail outlets
- information on delivery notes or invoices for products that are transported in bulk, such as milk
- marketing materials, and
- web content.

This includes reference to organic not just in the product name or sales description, but also in relation to ingredients of a food or feed product. For example, a cereal bar making organic claims about some of the ingredients may only do so if the cereal bar is certified to the organic regulation.

This only applies to food and feed products. However, if you make such claims on non-food and feed products, (such as textiles, health and beauty products, and pet food), your claims must still be true. In the UK all products are governed by the *Trade Descriptions Act*.

Examples of other references to organic include, "organically grown"; "organically produced"; "grown/produced using organic principles"; "grown/produced using organic methods".

If you sell organic products and non-organic products, any use of the word organic, or organic logos (certifier logos such as the SA Symbol, or the EU Organic logo), must be clear and unambiguous as to which products they apply to. Use of references to organic or logos on email footers, invoices, websites should be accompanied by an explanatory wording e.g. "We have a range of organic products, see our product listings for more details", and within the product listing a clear identification of products. For contract manufacturers/packers wording describing the certified service offered should be included e.g. "We offer certified packing of organic products".


	<p><u>If your company name includes the word organic you may not use this on the labels of non organic products. e.g. labels of non organic products sold by 'XXX Organic Farm' could replace their branding with 'XXX Farm'. On websites and marketing materials 'XXX Organic Farm' can be used provide it is clear and unambiguous to buyers which products are organic and which are not.</u></p> <p>Labelling legislation Along with meeting these standards for labelling, you will also need to make sure your labels meet other relevant labelling legislation such as <i>Regulation 1169/2011</i> on the provision of food information to consumers, and the <i>Food Information Regulations</i>.</p>
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<p>5.8.9 Using the Soil Association symbol off-product You may use the symbol on company stationery, promotional literature and websites if we certify a range of your products, providing it is not misleading to <u>buyers</u> the consumer as to which products the symbol applies. <i>Soil Association higher standard</i></p>	<p><u>If you sell SA certified products and also non SA certified products (including non organic products), any use of the SA symbol must be clear and unambiguous as to which products it applies to. Use of the symbol on email footers, invoices, websites should be accompanied by an explanatory wording e.g. "We have a range of products which meet the Soil Association standards, see our product listings for more details", and within the product listing a clear identification of products. For contract manufacturers/packers wording describing the certified service offered should be included e.g. "We offer packing of products certified to Soil Association standards".</u></p> <p>You can download the symbol pack directly from our website. We also have the symbol available for use in Welsh and Gaelic.</p>
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Why?

The Soil Association symbol should only be used in relation to products or enterprises certified to Soil Association standards to avoid misleading consumers.

Updates made to the Food and Drink standards

<p>6.4.2 Permitted additives You may only use the additives in the table below in organic foods and according to the specific conditions against them.</p> <p>Additives marked with an asterisk (*) must be included in the calculation of agricultural ingredients in order to determine the organic percentage of the product overall. <i>(EC) 889/2008 Annex VIII A</i></p>	<p> If you source products manufactured outside of the UK/EU they must meet this Soil Association sourcing requirement.</p> <p>See the glossary for the definition of a food additive.</p> <p>Some additives are a potential GM risk because they are derived from crops that can be GM or are made using processes that sometimes involve GM. For these additives you will need to provide additional proof that they are non-GM by completing a non-GM declaration form, signed by the additive manufacturer, and providing supporting information. The type of supporting information required will depend on the additive.</p> <p>If you need to use a non-organic additive or processing aid in your product, please contact the Certification Team to discuss what will be required.</p> <p>For Soil Association products, you must use organic additives if they are available (see standard 6.4.1).</p>
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E no.		Name	Preparation of foodstuffs of plant origin	Preparation of foodstuffs of animal origin	Specific conditions
E418		Gellan gum	X	X	High-acyl form only. Must be organic from January 1st 2023 2

Updates made to the Farming and Growing standards

2.7.10 Soil-based production

1. Plants must be grown in soil in connection with the subsoil and bedrock.
2. The following are excluded from this requirement:
 - a) plant propagation
 - b) aquatic plant production
 - c) plants in pots or containers (including salad cress) sold direct to consumers still in their pots, which are not intended to be grown on or harvested before they are sold
 - d) sprouted seeds as long as they are produced only with the addition of water.
3. Plants in pots or containers falling under category 2c may be called organic if:
 - a) the substrate is made of at least 51% (by fresh weight of the end product) of materials from organic farming origin
 - b) no more than 49% of the substrate is made up of non-organic manure and compost which meets standard 2.5.2
 - c) the substrate provides more than 50% of their nutrient needs, until the point of sale
 - d) you make sure the substrate is biologically active
 - e) you meet all other relevant standards
 - f) the entire plant and the pot are sold together
 - g) you do not use peat or slaughterhouse wastes, and
 - h) you do not use soil from organic farms.

Soil Association higher standard



Records of:

- substrates used and additional nutrients and other inputs applied
- seeds or vegetative propagating material used
- sales




A sourcing requirement applies for SA processors.

You may use inert natural materials to provide a structural and drained surface for sprouted seed production. You will need to demonstrate that the material does not provide any available nutrients to the plant. Note that new coir and hemp mats will provide some plant-available, soluble nutrients to initial crops.

Point 3 applies to both edibles and ornamentals.

Note that hydroponic production is prohibited (Standard 2.4.2).

<p>3.6.1 Pasture access</p> <p>1. You must allow all your herbivore and poultry species permanent access to pasture, unless the following circumstances temporarily prevent this:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) the health or welfare of the animal b) the weather conditions and the state of the ground, or c) community or national requirements or restrictions relating to specific animal or human health problems. <p>2. Breeding bulls over one year old must have access to pasture or an open air run of at least 30 m². <i>(EC) 834/2007 Art. 14(1)(b)(iii)(d)(iii)</i> <i>(EC) 889/2008 Art. 14(2)(4)</i></p>	<p>You need to take account of both weather conditions and the state of the ground when deciding whether livestock should be out at pasture. Give consideration to the impact on the health and welfare of livestock and the management of the soil and pasture.</p> <p><u>You can temporarily house farrowing sows and finishing pigs (for cleaning off prior to slaughter). All housed pigs must still have access to an outdoor rooting and dunging area in accordance with Standard 3.7.2. with the exception of finishing pigs for up to 72 hours prior to going to slaughter.</u></p> <p>For more information on methods to minimise soil damage refer to the guidance to standard 2.4.1 'Managing your soil'.</p>
<p>3. For Soil Association organic production you must allow your pigs permanent access to pasture or vegetated range, unless the circumstances listed in 3.6.1.1 prevent this. <i>Soil Association higher standard</i></p>	<p> A sourcing requirement applies for SA processors.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Why?</p> <p>We believe that all animals should be given the freedom to roam and graze pasture, whenever conditions allow. Providing animals with access to pasture gives them a more natural life and the opportunity to express natural behaviours such as rooting and wallowing for pigs, dustbathing and ground pecking for chickens, and grazing for cows and sheep. All organic animals have a truly free-range life.</p>	

<p>3.2.6 Exceptional rules for poultry</p> <p>1. When you are establishing for the first time, renewing or reconstituting a flock, non-organic poultry may be brought in only when organic poultry are not available in sufficient numbers. If you have to bring in non-organic poultry you must in order of preference:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) use pullets for egg production, or chicks for meat production, that have been kept to organic standards from three days of age, if they are available. b) use non-organic pullets for egg production before they are 18 weeks old. Any non-organic pullets you bring in 	<p>Organic Poultry suppliers in the UK are listed here.</p> <p><u>The ability to use non-organic poultry with prior permission from Defra has been extended until 31st December 2022.</u></p> <p>If you are bringing in non-organic poultry you must have permission from your competent authority before you bring them onto the holding. In GB, permission is granted by the competent authority and we will submit an application on your behalf. You must show us that organic poultry is not available in sufficient numbers. We will need the following details from you to submit to the competent</p>
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Summary of changes – SA GB Organic standards documents updated 12th May 2022

<p>must have been reared to the veterinary and feed standards detailed in sections 3.4 and 3.10.</p> <p>2. You must have prior authorisation from your competent authority before bringing in any non-organic poultry. <i>(EC) 834/2007 Art. 22(2)(b)</i> <i>(EC) 889/2008 Art. 42</i></p>	<p>authority:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• why you cannot source organic birds• which organic suppliers you have contacted• the number of birds you need• the number of non-organic birds you plan to bring in and when• the name of your suppliers• whether any suppliers will be able to supply you with organic birds in future. <p>A form with all the relevant questions is available on our website or from the Certification Team.</p>
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