

# Soil Association Organic Standards for Northern Ireland Aquaculture

## Version 1.8 – published on 9th November 2026

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## Introduction

The Soil Association standards put the principles of organic production into practice. These organic standards encompass *EU Regulations 2018/848 and subsequent implementing and delegated acts* (referenced throughout as the EU Organic Regulation). These regulations are the legal basis for the control of organic farming, food processing and organic labelling within the EU and Northern Ireland.

Northern Ireland has remained in the EU single market and continues to follow EU rules on customs requirements and the regulation of agri-food products, including the EU organic Regulation. If you are in Northern Ireland, for the purpose of the EU organic regulation requirements, you need to apply these standards as if part of the EU. If you bring in products from EU member states you will not need importing on the scope of your organic license, however, if you bring products from the other parts of the UK or non-EU countries you will need to meet the importing requirements.

The Soil Association has higher organic standards than required by the EU Organic Regulation in key areas: delivering the highest levels of animal welfare, protecting human and animal health, safeguarding the environment and protecting the interests of organic consumers. These reflect our mission and vision as a charitable organisation.

Each standard has a reference which tells you which part of the EU Organic Regulation it refers to, or whether it is a Soil Association higher standard. Each Soil Association higher standard is accompanied by a 'Why?' box which explains the rationale behind the standard and why we expect our licensees to go further than required by the EU Organic Regulation.

Businesses across the world can become certified to the Soil Association standards. A 'competent authority' is authorised by EU Member States to make rulings on organic legislation. In Northern Ireland the competent authority is NICA (Northern Irish Competent Authority). The certification body that is appointed by the Soil Association to inspect and certify to Soil Association organic standards in the UK is Soil Association Certification. Throughout these standards 'your certification body' refers to Soil Association Certification. For further definitions, please refer to the separate Glossary document on our website.

The EU Organic Regulation does not cover processing of non-food crops such as for textiles and cosmetic products and certification of inputs.

The Soil Association offers standards for areas not covered by the EU Organic Regulation. These include:

- textiles
- cosmetics

Please contact us if you would like more information or visit our website.

## Guide to using these standards

The standards are listed in the column on the left, with a white background for EU Organic Regulation standards and a blue background for Soil Association higher standards. Where necessary, guidance is provided in the column on the right, with a grey background to differentiate it from the standard.

- Each standard is referenced with the relevant article/s of the EU Organic Regulation, or shows that it is a Soil Association higher standard.
- Each Soil Association higher standard has a Why? box to explain its purpose and rationale.




This symbol shows where you need to keep a record to demonstrate that you are meeting the standard. The specific requirements for the records will be detailed in the standard or guidance.




This symbol shows where additional relevant information is provided.




This symbol shows where an extra sourcing requirement applies for processors using an organic product that is not certified to Soil Association standards or is sourced outside of the UK/EU. If you would like to know what the sourcing requirements are, you can view our annex on Sourcing Organic Ingredients. Our Working Together for Better Sourcing webpage explains the challenges surrounding the sourcing of organic ingredients and how we are working with others to address them.

### What is guidance?

Guidance provides supplementary information to the standards which explains how compliance will be assessed. It tells you where and how to provide the information required, for example through record keeping or demonstration at your inspection. The guidance may also provide examples of actions and measures to help you demonstrate compliance, and links to best practice guides and information.

| EXAMPLE Standards | EXAMPLE Guidance |
| --- | --- |
| **SA NI 13.5.5 Aeration and oxygen use**<br>1. You may use aeration to ensure animal health, using aerators preferably powered by renewable energy sources where possible.<br>2. You may use oxygen only for animal health requirements and critical periods of production or transport in the following cases:<br>a) Exceptional cases of temperature rise<br>b) Fall in atmospheric pressure<br>c) Accidental pollution<br>d) Occasional stock management procedures such as sampling and sorting<br>e) In order to assure the survival of farmed aquaculture livestock.<br>(EC)2018/848 Annex II Part III (3.1.6.7) (3.1.6.9) | In your aquaculture management plan, detail under what circumstances aeration is, or would be used and the reasons why. If non-renewable energy sources are used explain why renewable sources cannot be used.<br>R You must record the use of aeration and oxygen in your production records. |

The R symbol shows which records you need to keep to demonstrate that you meet this standard.

The relevant part of the EU Organic Regulation is referenced here.

| EXAMPLE Standards | EXAMPLE Guidance |
|---|---|
| **SA NI 12.1.1 Scope of the standards**<br>These standards apply to packaging of products that you introduce into the supply chain.<br><br>We define packaging as all primary (retail), secondary (grouping, display) and tertiary (transport) materials used for:<br>containing<br>protecting<br>preserving<br>handling<br>storage<br>delivery<br>labelling<br>marketing, and<br>presentation of your products.<br><br>Note - we include bulk bins but not transport pallets in this definition. | I Packaging legislation<br><br>Keep in mind that you must make sure [illegible] legislation relating to packaging, packa[illegible]ith food.<br>These include, but are not limited to:<br>the European Parliament and Council Directive on Packaging and Packaging Waste (94/62/EC)<br>the European Standard for Compostable Packaging (EN13432) – if you are using compostable or biodegradable packaging.<br><br>[illegible]rmation claims and symbols on your packaging need to be [illegible]ccurate. In the UK, you will need to make sure your [illegible]s to Defra's Green Claims code. |

*Soil Association higher standard*

Why?

The production, use and disposal of packaging can have a big impact on the environment and human health. We believe that organic products should be packaged in ways that reduce the negative impacts of packaging. This fits with the principles of protecting the environment and biodiversity that underpin organic food and farming, and meets consumer expectations of organic products.

Packaging serves an important role in preventing food waste by protecting and extending the shelf life of products. It also helps to protect consumers by preventing contamination and substitution of organic products with non-organic alternatives. These packaging standards aim to maximise the benefits and avoid the negative impacts of packaging.

The I symbol shows where additional relevant information is provided.

Soil Association higher standards are clearly shown.

Each Soil Association higher standard has a Why? box to explain its purpose and rationale.

## SA NI 12.0 General standards for organic aquaculture

## SA NI 12.1 Scope

**These standards are not available to any new applications for farmed Atlantic salmon production from 9th November 2026. Certification will continue for Atlantic salmon production to the EU organic standards whilst further arrangements are made.**

| Standards | Guidance |
|---|---|
| ### SA NI 12.1.1 Scope of the standards<br>These standards apply to species of fish, crustaceans, echinoderms and molluscs. They can be applied with the necessary modifications to zooplankton, micro crustaceans, rotifers, worms and other aquatic feed animals but you must contact Soil Association Certification if you want to use them for these species.<br><br>*(EC) 2018/848 Art. 1(1)*<br>*(EC) 2018/848 Art. 9(1)*<br>*(EC) 2018/848 Art. 19(1)* | If you are producing aquaculture animals which are not under this scope please contact us. We also have separate standards for organic seaweed and algae production.<br><br>Farmed Atlantic salmon production is no longer permitted under Soil Association higher standards. We will make arrangements directly with existing licensees to transfer to the EU organic regulations. |
| ### SA NI 12.1.2 Products from hunting and fishing of wild animals<br>Products from the hunting and fishing of wild animals cannot be sold as organic.<br><br>*EC) 2018/848 Art. 3(2)* | |

## SA NI 12.2 Objectives and principles of organic aquaculture

### What is this chapter about?

This section details the principles on which these organic standards are based. Organic is a 'whole system' approach to farming and food production. It recognises the close interrelationships between all parts of the production system from the aquatic environment to the consumer. This comprehensive set of organic principles guides our work and our standards.

| Standards | Guidance |
|---|---|
| **SA NI 12.2.1 General principles of organic production**<br>Your production system must meet the following principles and objectives:<br>1. To produce food of high quality and in sufficient quantity by the use of processes that do not harm the environment, human health, plant health or animal health and welfare.<br>2. To work within natural systems and cycles at all levels, from the soil to plants and animals .and contribute to the protection of the environment and the climate.<br>3. To maintain the long-term fertility and biological activity of soils.<br>4. To treat livestock ethically, meeting their species-specific physiological and behavioural needs.<br>5. To respect regional, environmental, climatic and geographic differences and the appropriate practices that have evolved in response to them.<br>6. To maximise the use of renewable resources and recycling.<br>7. To design and manage organic systems which make the best use of natural resources and ecology to prevent the need for external inputs. Where this fails or where external inputs are required, the use of external inputs is limited to organic, natural or naturally-derived substances.<br>8. To limit the use of chemically synthesised inputs to situations where appropriate alternative management practices do not exist, or natural or organic inputs are not available, or where alternative inputs would contribute to unacceptable environmental impacts. | |

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| 9. | To exclude the use of soluble mineral fertilisers. | |
| 10. | To foster biodiversity and protect sensitive habitats and landscape features, such as natural heritage sites. | |
| 11. | To minimise pollution and waste. Substantially contributing to a non-toxic environment. | |
| 12. | To use preventative and precautionary measures and risk assessment when appropriate. | |
| 13. | To exclude the use of GMOs and products produced from or by GMOs with the exception of veterinary medicinal products. | |
| 14. | Encouraging short distribution channels and local production. | |
| 15. | Encouraging the preservation of rare and native breeds in danger of extinction. | |
| 16. | Contributing to the development and use of plant genetic material adapted to the specific needs and objectives of organic agriculture, including the use of organic heterogeneous material and varieties suitable for organic production. | |
| 17. | Fostering the development of organic plant breeding activities in order to contribute to favourable economic perspectives of the organic sector. | |
| 18. | Ensuring the integrity of organic production at all stages of the production, processing and distribution of food and feed. | |
| 19. | The exclusion from the whole organic food chain of animal cloning, rearing artificially induced polyploid animals, and ionising radiation. | |
| | *(EC) 2018/848 Art. 4*<br>*(EC) 2018/848 Art. 5*<br>*(EC) 2018/848 Annex II Part I(1.9.2)*<br>*(EC) 2018/848 Art. 24(5)* | |

## SA NI 12.2.2 Specific principles for organic aquaculture

In addition to the overall organic principles set out in standard 12.2.1, organic aquaculture production must be based on the following specific principles:

1. The production of products of organic livestock from animals that have been raised on organic holdings since birth or hatching and throughout their life.
2. The continuing health of the aquatic environment and the quality of surrounding aquatic and terrestrial ecosystems.
3. Feeding of aquatic organisms with feed from sustainably exploited fisheries in accordance with *Regulation (EU) No 1380/2013* or with organic feed composed of agricultural ingredients resulting from organic production, including organic aquaculture, and of natural non-agricultural substances.
4. The minimisation of the use of non-renewable resources and off-farm inputs.
5. The recycling of wastes and by-products of plant and animal origin as inputs in plant and livestock production.
6. Taking account of the local or regional ecological balance when taking production decisions.
7. The use of seeds and animals with a high degree of genetic diversity, disease resistance and longevity.
8. The maintenance of plant health by preventative measures, such as appropriate crop rotations, mechanical and physical methods and the protection of natural enemies of pests.
9. The production of products of organic livestock from animals that have been raised on organic holdings since birth or hatching and throughout their life.
10. The choice of breeds having regard to a high degree of genetic diversity, the capacity of animals to adapt to local conditions, their breeding value, their longevity, their vitality and their resistance to disease or health problems.

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| 11. The feeding of livestock with organic feed composed of agricultural ingredients from organic farming and of natural non-agricultural substances.<br>12. The application of animal husbandry practices, which enhance the immune system and strengthen the natural defence against diseases, in particular including regular exercise and access to open air areas and pasture where appropriate.<br>13. Avoiding any endangerment of species of conservation interest that might arise from organic production.<br><br>*(EC) 2018/848 Art. 6* | |

## SA NI 12.3 Becoming Soil Association certified

### What is this chapter about?

This chapter explains which activities require certification and how you can certify your business to the Soil Association standards.

| Standards | Guidance |
|---|---|
| **SA NI 12.3.1 Certifying your business**<br><br>To become certified to these organic standards you must have a certification contract with an independent, accredited certification body and comply with all relevant organic standards for your organic activity.<br><br>*(EC) 2018/848 Art. 34(1)* | Businesses across the world can become certified to the Soil Association standards. In NI, NICA is the competent authority, they have delegated some control tasks to accredited organic certification bodies. The certification body that is appointed by the Soil Association to inspect and certify to Soil Association organic standards in the UK is Soil Association Certification.<br><br>In the EU, businesses can only become certified to the Soil Association standards if they are already certified to the EU Organic Regulation by another approved certification body in the relevant country. Additionally, Soil Association Certification is accredited by IOAS (International Organic Accreditation Service) and authorised to offer organic certification in specific countries outside the EU for certain types of products. Please contact Soil Association Certification for more details.<br><br>You must comply with all applicable laws, and Qualifying Standards, including any conditions detailed in any non-compliances. Please refer to your organic client contract for more details. |
| **SA NI 12.3.2 Activities that require certification**<br>1. In the UK and EU all stages of the organic supply chain must hold organic certification.<br>2. Before placing any products on the market as 'organic' or as 'in-conversion' your business must be certified to produce, process, package, store, label, import, export, distribute, wholesale, storage and warehousing, acting as the first consignee for imported products and any other activities that require the physical or financial ownership of organic or in-conversion products or ingredients.<br>3. You do not need certification if you only sell organic products directly to the final consumer or user **provided that** you do not produce, prepare, store organic products other than in relation to the point of sale **or** import such **or** have not contracted out such activities. In other | Without adequate certification at each stage of the supply chain, the products may lose their organic status.<br><br>Examples of businesses not requiring certification in the UK include supermarkets and mass caterers serving food, e.g. restaurants, cafes, catering companies.<br><br>If you are unsure whether the activity you are carrying out requires certification please contact us.<br><br>For more information on the certification requirements for importing and exporting please refer to the Soil Association Food and drink standards, standard 6.8. |

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| countries certification may be required for these activities.<br>*(EC) 2018/848 Art. 34(1)(2)(3)* | 'Placing on the market' is defined as: 'the holding of food or feed for the purpose of sale, including offering for sale or any other form of transfer, whether free of charge or not, and the sale, distribution, and other forms of transfer themselves' Regulation (EC) No 178/2002; Art.8. |
| SA NI 12.3.3 Organic certificate<br>1. You must not make reference to organic, in-conversion, or use the Soil Association symbol without a valid certification document that shows that your activity complies with these organic standards.<br>2. Certification documents are issued once Soil Association Certification has inspected your organic activity and they are satisfied that your activity meets organic standards. The certification document will list all your certified activities and the crops, livestock and/or products you are certified to produce, process, package, store, label, import, export and/or sell as organic.<br>3. The certification document may be in electronic format.<br>4. You are not entitled to obtain a certificate from more than one control body for the same category of products in the same country. This includes at different stages of production, preparation and distribution.<br><br>*(EC) 2018/848 Art. 35(1)(2)(4)*<br>*(EC) 2018/848 Art. 39* | Soil Association Certification will issue licensees with the following documentation:<br>• An annual certificate with valid from and to dates, your name, address and licence number<br>• A Trading Schedule with your certified products, activities and status<br>• For producers, an Information Schedule listing your licensed enterprises, holdings and fields.<br><br>If you are a farmer with land or crops in conversion, these will be shown as 'in-conversion' on your Trading Schedule. Once they have gone through the relevant conversion period they will be shown as 'organic' on your Trading Schedule and you can start trading as organic. If your livestock are shown as 'converted breeding stock' they cannot be traded as organic.<br><br>Annual renewal of your licence is linked to you continuing to meet the relevant standards and payment of the relevant renewal fee. Within a year of your original application date we will send you a renewal invoice.<br><br>Annual renewal of your licence is linked to you continuing to meet the relevant standards and payment of the relevant renewal fee. Within a year of your original application date we will send you a renewal invoice.<br><br>The categories are as follows (2018/848 Article 35.7):<br>(a) unprocessed plants and plant products, including seeds and other plant reproductive material;<br>(b) livestock and unprocessed livestock products;<br>(c) algae and unprocessed aquaculture products;<br>(d) processed agricultural products, including aquaculture products, for use as food;<br>(e) feed;<br>(f) wine; |

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| | (g) other products listed in Annex I to this Regulation or not covered by the previous categories.<br><br>Examples:<br>An egg producer who also packs eggs, or a grower who also packs the produce could not have certification with 2 different certification bodies. This because both the production and the packing would be classed as category A products (unprocessed).<br><br>An egg producer who then processes the eggs into mayonnaise could have certification with different certification bodies as the egg production would fall under category A and the processing under category B.<br><br>Contact us if you need to add a new enterprise to your license – refer to standard 12.4.1 for details. |

## Soil Association Certification

Since 1973 Soil Association Certification Limited (Soil Association Certification) has certified farm enterprises, foods and other products as organic. Soil Association Certification is a wholly owned subsidiary of the Soil Association charity. We are registered with NICA to certify organic food production and processing under the terms of EU Regulation No. 2018/848.

Certification bodies must be able to prove that they have the expertise, equipment, infrastructure and sufficient number of suitable qualified and experienced staff to carry out the task of certification. Soil Association Certification Limited is accredited and subject to an annual inspection by the United Kingdom Accreditation Service (UKAS) for UK licensees and IOAS for non-EU licensees.

To uphold organic integrity and in order to work efficiently, certification bodies are obliged to communicate and exchange relevant certification information about their licensees to control authorities and other certification bodies. This includes when:

a) licensees change certification bodies
b) non-compliances are found
c) organic status of a products is lost, and
d) certification is withdrawn.

## Information

If you are interested in certifying your business, contact Soil Association Certification via:
**Our website:** www.soilassociation.org/certification/get-in-touch/

**Email:** GoOrganic@soilassociation.org
**Phone:** 0117 914 2406
**Post:** Soil Association Certification, Spear House, 51 Victoria Street, Bristol, BS1 6AD

## SA NI 12.4 Your obligations when certified

### What is this chapter about?

This chapter explains your responsibilities and obligations when certified to these organic standards.

| Standards | Guidance |
|---|---|
| **SA NI 12.4.1 Description of your activities**<br>1. Before starting your organic enterprise, you must describe what practical measures you will take to ensure you will comply with these organic standards, and the relevant practical measures to be taken to ensure compliance with this Regulation. If you make any changes to your activity, you must update your certification body accordingly.<br>2. You must include a full description of your premises, units and activities including:<br>a) a full description of the installations on land and at sea<br>b) facilities used for the receipt of goods, processing, packaging, labelling and storage<br>c) procedures used for transporting aquaculture animals and products<br>d) the environmental assessment as outlined in standard 12.7.1<br>e) the sustainable management plan as outlined in standard 12.7.2.<br>*(EC) 2018/848 Art. 39* | To help you meet this requirement we have created an application form that outlines the information we need from you.<br><br>You will need to have documentation that describes what you do. If you have a quality management system already, make sure these points are included within it.<br><br>Practical measures include ensuring staff are adequately trained, having written procedures in place for dealing with organic products, an adequate record keeping system, appropriate cleaning and hygiene, separation and identification of organic products, appropriate pest control, procedures to ensure only permitted ingredients and inputs are used for organic production.<br><br>If you make any significant changes to your activities, you must inform the Certification Team and make sure any relevant documentation is updated. Important changes are, for example, change of location of an activity, change of ownership, or change of contact person. Another important change is alteration of certified production which means that information previously submitted about the production is no longer correct.<br><br>You must let us know if and when you plan to expand into new areas. For example, if you wish to add land, keep new livestock species or enterprises, or start a box scheme or start to pack or process food or feed. Depending on what changes are made, we might need to update your certificates and you may need an additional inspection or licence. |
| **SA NI 12.4.2 Subcontracted operations**<br>If you subcontract out your organic activity, in part or whole, to a third party, they must hold their own organic certification, unless you remain responsible for that organic production and have not transferred that responsibility to the subcontractor, in which case those activities may be covered | This would include contractors used for agricultural work, such as harvesting, spraying, seed cleaning or storage. |

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| under the scope of your organic license. The information in 12.4.1 must include:<br>a) a list of the subcontractors, including their activities and the certification body or authority that they are certified by<br>b) a written agreement by the subcontractors that their operation will comply with the control measures required as part of organic certification, and<br>c) details of all the practical measures taken to ensure and demonstrate full traceability of products.<br>*(EC) 2018/848 Art. 34(3)(5)* | |
| SA NI 12.4.3 Declaration<br>You must sign a declaration stating that you:<br>a) have described your organic enterprise and activities as referred to in 12.4.1 accurately<br>b) will perform your operations according to organic rules<br>c) accept any enforcements in case of non-compliance<br>d) inform the buyers of loss of status of your product<br>e) accept exchange of information about your operation between different certification bodies or control authorities in the event that subcontractors are subject to controls by different control authorities or control bodies<br>f) accept handing over information about your certification history when changing certification body or control authority<br>g) will inform your buyer and certification body or control authority immediately in the event that a suspicion of non-compliance has been substantiated, that a suspicion of non-compliance cannot be eliminated, or that non-compliance that affects the integrity of the products in question has been established<br>h) in the case of withdrawing certification inform the certification body or control authority without delay | This is covered in the contract you sign when you apply for certification with us and the declaration you sign after every inspection.<br><br>You must comply with the terms of the contract at all times. |

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| i) accept that your Certification Body or control authority retains your certification history for a minimum of 5 years<br>j) must inform the certification body of any changes to your activities.<br>*(EC) 2018/848 Art. 39(1)(d)(iii)* | |
| **SA NI 12.4.4 Employment**<br>You must **not** use forced or involuntary labour or child labour that interferes with their education.<br>*Soil Association higher standard* | Note that this standard is also a requirement of several EU Directives including 94/33/EC Protection of Young People at Work, and 2011/36 Preventing and combating trafficking in human beings and protecting its victims. If you are outside the EU, it may be a requirement of the International Labour Organisation Conventions that have been ratified in your country. If it is not you must still meet this requirement.<br><br>Labour management tools, such as Sedex, can be a useful way of helping to ensure that you meet this standard and identify, mitigate and manage risks in your supply chain. |
| **Why?**<br>Organic food which has been produced in a way that compromises the basic rights of people is counter to the principles and expectations of the organic movement and organic consumers. | |
| **SA NI 12.4.5 Certification code**<br>1. Each certification body is issued with a unique certifier code.<br>2. You must use this code if you are packing and labelling products yourself or if another Soil Association certified business in the UK is packing or labelling the product on your behalf.<br><br>*(EC) 2018/848 Art. 32(5)*<br>*(EC) 2021/279 Art. 3* | Please refer to the labelling section 13.18 for more information on labelling requirements.<br><br>In Northern Ireland, products produced or processed in Northern Ireland, the soil Association certifier code is XI-ORG-05. |

## SA NI 12.5 Inspections

### What is this chapter about?

This chapter explains the certification and inspection process and details your obligations as a licensee and the obligations of the certification body during the inspection process.

| Standards | Guidance |
|---|---|
| **SA NI 12.5.1 Inspection visits**<br>1. A physical inspection of your organic certified activities must be carried out once per year. You may be subject to additional announced or unannounced inspections based on an assessment of risk.<br>a. Where no non-compliances affecting organic integrity have been raised in the last three years and no additional areas of risk have been raised by us you may have a reduced frequency of inspection. The period between two physical on-the-spot inspections shall not exceed 24 months.<br>b. Where a physical inspection does not take place an annual verification of compliance is still required where information and documentation will be requested.<br>2. You may also be inspected by your competent authority as part of their surveillance of our inspection procedures.<br>*(EC) 2018/848 Art. 38(2)(3)* | We may carry out additional inspections if:<br>• you wish to add a new enterprise to your licence<br>• you move to new premises<br>• we receive a complaint regarding your business<br>• it is necessary to inspect seasonal activity or at different times of year<br>• we need to inspect again to make sure you have corrected non-compliances<br>• you are selected as part of our additional inspection programme and/or our risk assessment of your operations suggests the need for this.<br><br>We may charge you for these additional inspections if we consider they are needed because of non-compliances.<br><br>At least 10% of a certification body's inspections must be unannounced and 10% must be risk-based extra inspections. These are based on the general evaluation of the risk of non-compliance with the organic production rules, taking into account at least the results of previous controls, the quantity of products concerned and the risk for exchange of products. |
| **SA NI 12.5.2 What happens at the inspection**<br>1. At your inspection Soil Association Certification will:<br>a) verify that the description of your activities provided in your declaration is accurate<br>b) verify whether your activities are compliant with organic standards, and<br>c) compile an inspection report with any possible deficiencies and non-compliances found.<br>2. You or an appointed representative must sign the inspection declaration stating that you agree with the outcomes of the inspection and to undertake necessary corrective actions.<br>*(EC) 2018/848 Art. 39(1)(d)*<br>*(EC) 2018/848 Art. 38(6)* | As part of closing the meeting your Inspector will explain any non-compliances found during your inspection and will ask you to sign a Declaration and explain the need to complete an *Action Summary Form* (usually left with you at the end of inspection) which lists the outcomes of the inspection. This includes any areas that do not comply with the standards and asks how you will correct them. It may also ask for extra information to complete the approval process.<br><br>You must respond with details of the actions you will take to address non-compliances and supply any other information requested, before the deadline given. When we have received your returned form and agreed the information you have given is satisfactory, we will approve your corrective actions and issue/reissue your certificate. |
| **SA NI 12.5.3 Access to facilities** | |

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| You must give Soil Association Certification or your control authority:<br>a) access to all parts of your unit and all premises, including any non-organic production units and any storage premises for input products which it deems necessary in order to certify your organic activities<br>b) access to accounts and relevant supporting documents which it deems necessary in order to certify your organic activities<br>c) any information reasonably necessary for the purposes of certifying your organic activities, and<br>d) when requested, the results of your own quality assurance programmes.<br>*(EC) 2018/848 Art. 38(1)(b)(c)*<br>*(EC) 2017/625 Art. 15(1)(2)* | |
| SA NI 12.5.4 Sampling<br>You must allow Soil Association Certification to take samples which will be analysed for the presence of prohibited substances and checking compliance to organic standards.<br>*(EC) 2018/848 Art. 38(4)(c)*<br>*(EC) 2021/279 Art. 7(c)* | We will take samples if there is a risk that organic standards have not been complied with or to verify that sufficient measures are in place to prevent contamination of organic products. Certification bodies are obliged to take samples from the equivalent of 5% of their licensees per year. |

## SA NI 12.6 Non-compliance with the standards

### What is this chapter about?

This chapter deals with non-compliances. A non-compliance is when an activity does not comply with an organic standard.

| Standards | Guidance |
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| SA NI 12.6.1 Non-compliances<br>1. Where you are found not to comply with organic standards Soil Association Certification will issue you with a non-compliance. The level of sanction will be proportionate to the severity and extent of the non-compliance and the risk it poses to the integrity of the organic product. Soil Association Certification will always apply the precautionary principle when making decisions on compliance to organic standards. | After your inspection we will draw up an *Action Summary Form and Declaration* (either at inspection or we will send it to you afterwards). This lists areas that do not comply with the standards and asks how you will correct them.<br><br>The different grades of sanctions are as follows:<br>• minor non-compliance<br>• major non-compliance<br>• critical non-compliance, or |

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| 2. Depending on the severity of the non-compliance Soil Association Certification may suspend or even withdraw your licence. If your licence is suspended or withdrawn, you must **not** trade as organic.<br><br>*(EC) 2018/848 Art. 37*<br>*(EC) 2018/848 Art. 38(1)*<br>*(EC) 2018/848 Art. 41(3)*<br>*(EC) 2018/848 Art. 42* | • manifest infringement.<br><br>You are required to complete the *Action Summary Form and Declaration* with the actions you will take to comply with the standards and return it to us with any other information we request before the deadline given. When your Certification Officer has received your completed form and agreed that the information you have given is satisfactory, they will approve the *Action Summary Form and Declaration* and renew your licence.<br><br>We may suspend or withdraw your licence in the following cases:<br>• if you are in breach of your contract with us<br>• if you do not pay your fee within the deadlines<br>• failure of licensee to return certified sales declaration (CSD)<br>• we are unable to arrange an inspection<br>• an inspector is refused access to premises<br>• an inspector is refused permission to take a sample<br>• if you do not send the completed *Action Summary Form and Declaration*, or the information we request, within the deadlines<br>• severe or repeated non-compliance resulting in loss of organic integrity of an operation, product or batch<br>• a fraudulent activity is reported by an authority.<br><br>The classification of the non-compliances falls into three categories: minor, major and critical, and takes into account the following criteria:<br><br>• the measure in place to prevent non-compliances<br>• the impact on the integrity of the organic or in-conversion status of product<br>• the ability of the traceability system to locate the affected product(s) in the supply chain<br>• previous non-compliances. |
| SA NI 12.6.2 Reporting non-compliances | Suspicion can originate from a number of sources including (but not exclusively): |

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| 1. If you suspect that a product you have produced, prepared, imported or received from another operator does not meet organic standards you must:<br>(a) identify and separate the product concerned<br>(b) check whether the suspicion can be substantiated<br>(c) not place the product on the market as organic or in-conversion and not use it in organic production, unless the suspicion can be eliminated<br>(d) where the suspicion has been substantiated or where it cannot be eliminated, immediately inform us and provide us with available information, where appropriate<br>(e) fully cooperate with us in verifying and identifying the reasons for the suspected non-compliance.<br><br>If we have a substantiated suspicion that you intend to place a product on the market as organic which does not meet organic standards, we will tell you to withhold the product whilst we investigate. We will complete the investigation in a reasonable time period taking into account the complexity of the case and the durability of the product. Before we make this decision we will give you opportunity to comment. You will need to cooperate fully with any investigation to resolve the suspicion.<br><br>If the suspicion is confirmed, then you must remove any reference to organic from the product. If the suspicion is not confirmed, then you no longer have to withhold the product from sale.<br>*(EC) 2018/848 Art. 27; Art. 41 (1)(2)* | • a positive residue detection showing contamination with a substance not permitted in organic production (please see standard 5.6.3)<br>• a complaint from a reliable source<br>• you have not been able to verify the organic status of goods you have received (see section 5.7 for further information)<br>• not being able to verify valid certification of a product or supplier. For example, if your supplier's certification has been revoked<br>• knowing that an element of the production did not meet organic standards, for example a prohibited substance has accidentally been applied to your crop or a non-organic ingredient has been used by mistake.<br><br>You must stop any further sale/use of the product as organic (or in-conversion if applicable) until any doubt over its organic status can be eliminated.<br><br>You must inform the certification team if you have substantiated suspicion or where you have not been able to eliminate suspicion that the product may not meet organic standards and stop any further sale of the product as organic until any doubt over its organic status can be eliminated.<br><br>An investigation will be carried out to determine if the product has met organic production rules. Once this has been determined you will be informed if the product can be put back on the market as organic or not.<br><br>If you are unsure what action to take, please contact the technical team at sacl.notifications@soilassociation.org. |
| ### SA NI 12.6.3 Actions to be taken in the case of suspicion of the presence of non-permitted products or substances<br>1. If you suspect that a product does not meet these organic standards due to the presence of a substance not authorised for use in organic production, you must: | The non-permitted products and substances referred to in this standard can include any product or substance not permitted in these organic standards. Such products and substances not authorised for use in organic production and processing can include but are not limited to:<br>• active substances used in plant protection products<br>• pest control products for use in agriculture and storage facilities<br>• fertilisers soil conditioners and nutrients |

a) identify and separate the product concerned
b) check whether the suspicion can be substantiated
c) not market the product as organic or in-conversion
d) not use the product in organic production
e) fully cooperate with Soil Association Certification in identifying and verifying the reasons for the positive residue detection.

2. To check whether the suspicion of a positive residue detection can be substantiated you must take account of the following elements:
   a) where the suspicion concerns an incoming organic or in-conversion product check that the information provided on the label of the product matches the information on the accompanying documents and that the information on the organic certificate provided by the supplier relates to the product purchased
   b) where there is suspicion that the cause is under the control of your business you must examine any possible cause for the positive residue detection.

3. Where the suspicion has been substantiated or where it cannot be eliminated you must immediately inform Soil Association Certification and provide:
   a) information and documents relating to the supplier (delivery note, invoice, the supplier's organic certification and the Certificate of Inspection (COI) if relevant)
   b) information relating to the traceability of the product (lot identification or batch number, stock quantity and the quantity of the product already sold)
   c) the laboratory results, from an accredited laboratory when relevant and available
   d) the sampling sheet detailing the time, place and method used to take the sample

- non-organic feed material of plant, algal, animal or yeast origin or as feed material of microbial or mineral origin
- feed additives and processing aids
- food additives and processing aids
- cleaning and disinfection products
- non-organic ingredients not authorised for use in organic products
- processing aids for yeasts and yeast products.

The presence of non-permitted products or substances also includes and may be referred to as residue detections. Suspicion of contamination must be followed by the procedure outlined in this standard.

If you are unsure what action to take, please contact the technical team at sacl.notifications@soilassociation.org.

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| e) any information regarding a previous suspicion or substantiated residue detection for the specific product or substance<br>f) any other relevant documentation that will help clarify the case.<br><br>4. If your product has a positive residue detection for a substance not authorised for use in organic production Soil Association Certification will carry out an investigation to determine:<br>a) if products or substances not authorised in organic production have been used<br>b) if sufficient precautionary measures have been taken<br>c) if sufficient measures following previous requests from certification body have not been taken.<br><br>You will be given the opportunity to comment on the investigation and you may be required to take corrective measure to avoid future contamination.<br><br>*(EC) 2018/848 Art. 28 (2); Art. 29 (1)(2)(3)(4); (EC) 2021/279 Art. 1 (1)(2)* | |
| SA NI 12.6.4 Exceptions<br>Exceptions to certain production rules will only be allowed when explicitly referenced in these standards. Permission must be granted or confirmed by your certification body or competent authority.<br>*(EC) 2018/848 Art. 40(4)(b)* | |
| SA NI 12.6.5 Appeals and complaints<br>We appreciate there may be occasions when you wish to make a formal complaint to us. This could be regarding service, standards, policy, another licensee or an unlicensed company. We have formal complaints and appeals procedures which are available on request. You can make a complaint in writing, by email or by telephone. | If you have a complaint, please send details in writing to cert@soilassociation.org or telephone Client Services on 0117 987 4564.<br><br>If you wish to appeal a certification decision, please send full details to your Certification Officer. |

## SA NI 12.7 Planning and managing your organic system

| Standards | Guidance |
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| **SA NI 12.7.1 Environmental assessment**<br>If your site produces more than 20 tonnes of organic aquaculture product per year including seaweed, you must draw up an environmental assessment appropriate to the production unit. The assessment must be based on *Annex IV to Directive 2011/92/EU* which is the Environmental Impact Assessment Directive. It requires you to consider the conditions of the site, its current and future likely effects on the immediate environment. If the unit has already been subject to an equivalent assessment, then it can be used for this purpose.<br>*(EC) 2018/848 Annex II Part III(1.3)* | Measure whether your site produces more than 20 tonnes of aquaculture product on a fresh weight basis.<br>Council Directive *2011/92/EU* be accessed online here<br>Details of the environmental impact assessment should include descriptions of:<br>• the production unit, including physical characteristics, construction, production processes, inputs and the period when the unit will be in use<br>• the aspects of the environment that the production unit will affect, such as aquatic flora and fauna, air, climatic factors, material assets including architectural and archaeological heritage, landscape and the interrelationship between these factors the pollutants emitted by the unit including the elimination of waste measures adopted to prevent, reduce and where possible offset significant adverse effects on the environment. |
| **SA NI 12.7.2 Sustainable management**<br>You must provide us with a sustainable management plan drawn up in verifiable coordination with neighbouring operators for aquaculture. The plan must be proportionate to the production unit and include:<br>a) The environmental effects of the operation<br>b) Details of environmental monitoring<br>c) Measures to minimise negative impacts on the surrounding aquatic and terrestrial environment<br>d) Where applicable, details of nutrient discharge into the environment per production cycle or per annum<br>e) Details of how technical equipment will be surveyed and repaired where necessary<br>f) A waste reduction schedule to be put in place at the start of organic production<br>g) Defensive and preventative measures taken against predators (in line with national rules and the *Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC*)<br>h) If you produce bivalve molluscs your plan must include a summary of the survey and report required in standard 13.13.9. | At inspection we will check this is appropriate to your system. Ensure you review and update your plan annually and include details of neighbouring operations.<br>Your plan needs to cover:<br>• Energy and water use; impact on wild species, for example seals and Eider ducks, which are a species of conservation interest<br>• Risks identified through environmental monitoring and how these will be managed<br>• How mortalities will be managed; identification and recapture of escapees; measures to minimise waste feed<br>• The impact of any nutrient and effluent build up on the surrounding aquatic environment and how this is managed. Consider important habitats such as calcified seaweed (maerl) beds<br>• Procedures to log and maintain all technical equipment<br>• How site waste is managed to avoid environmental damage, protect animal health and avoid attracting pests. For example, using nets and ropes made of durable material that is suitable for re-use<br>• Identification of potential predators e.g. seals, birds, biofouling organisms, and the steps you take to prevent and deter them in line with national rules and the Habitats Directive. |

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| *(EC) 2018/848 Annex II Part III(1.2)(1.7)(3.2.3)* | |
| SA NI 12.7.3 Renewable energy and recycling<br>Where possible, the use of residual heat should be limited to energy from renewable sources.<br>*(EC) 2018/848 Annex II Part III(1.9)* | |

## SA NI 12.8 Record Keeping

### What is this chapter about?

This chapter details all the records that you will need to keep and have available at your inspection.

| Standards | Guidance |
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| **SA NI 12.8.1 General record keeping**<br>1. You must have a record keeping system in place which allows you to prove the organic status of your products. Your records need to cover all production stages from everything produced or bought in through to all goods sold or dispatched and must allow you to demonstrate the balance between input and output. They must also allow retrospective traceability.<br>2. You must keep stock and financial records at your unit or premises which make it possible to verify the following information for every product:<br>a) the suppliers, sellers or exporters<br>b) the nature and quantities of organic products delivered, including where relevant:<br>i) nature and quantities of all materials bought and the use of such materials<br>ii) the composition of compound feed stuffs<br>c) the nature and quantities of organic products held in storage<br>d) the nature, quantities, and consignees or buyers (other than final consumers) of any products which have left your unit, premises or storage facility.<br><br>3. If you do not store or physically handle organic products, you will still need to keep records of:<br>a) the nature and quantities of organic products bought and sold<br>b) the suppliers, and where different the sellers or the exporters<br>c) the buyers, and where different the consignees. | (I) Standards 12.8.1 – 12.8.3 apply to all licensees. More specific record keeping requirements for aquaculture operations follow below.<br><br>(R) Your records need to be sufficient for us to be able to carry out successful mass balance (input and output) and traceability exercises at your inspection. You will need to be able to demonstrate that you have bought/received/produced sufficient organic material for the quantity you have sold/dispatched.<br><br>(R) You need to have a system to keep track of procedures and records to ensure they are correct, up-to-date and effective.<br><br>(R) Your records need to include:<br><br>• checked organic status of goods delivered as per standard 13.16.2<br>• quantities, batch codes and invoices and delivery notes of goods received<br>• quantities and batch codes of ingredients used in production/packing<br>• quantities produced in each production/packing run<br>• evidence that you processed organic and non-organic products separately<br>• evidence that you cleaned according to these standards before production<br>• batch codes of goods out<br>• what you have sold/dispatched, how much and to whom<br>• the organic products sale value<br>• annual stock takes<br>• any pest control treatments used<br>• Certificates of Inspection (COIs) if applicable. |

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| *(EC) 2018/848 Art. 39 (1)*<br>*(EC) 2018/848 Annex II Part IV(1.5)(d)* | You do not have to record sales value if you do not sell the product, for example, if you store product on behalf of another licensed organic company and do not sell that product to anyone.<br><br>Ⓡ You need to carry out at least annual stock takes and record these (however, if you are handling a large volume of goods it may be beneficial to you to do this more frequently). These are necessary for our Inspector to have a starting point to conduct a mass balance.<br><br>Ⓡ It is up to you to choose a traceability code system that works for you and your products. Some companies will use a batch code system, whereas others may be able to use the best before date on a product.<br><br>Ⓡ You need to keep all records for at least shelf-life plus 12 months. With the exception of Certificates of Inspection which must be kept for 2 years. Please refer to section 6.8 Importing, of the Soil Association food and drink standards for details.<br><br>Also, make sure that your records meet any other legally required time scales that might be specific to your products. |
| SA NI 12.8.2 Verifying certification documents<br>1. You must verify the certification documents of your suppliers and check that they:<br>a) identify your supplier,<br>b) cover the type or range of products you are purchasing, and<br>c) are valid at the time you are making the purchase.<br>2. You must make a record of these checks.<br><br>*(EC) 2018/848 Art. 35(6)* | A certification document will be the organic certificate, or in the case of SA Certification licensees this includes the certificate and trading schedule,<br>The name and address on the certificate must match the name and address of your supplier (the company you are purchasing from).<br><br>The term 'suppliers' also covers businesses supplying a service, e.g. storing organic product.<br><br>When you receive goods, you will also need to make the checks detailed in 13.16.2.<br>Tools such as BioC could be used as a way of doing this.<br><br>Ⓡ Records of verification checks |

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| **SA NI 12.8.3 Complaints register**<br>You must keep a complaint register for your business. This must record:<br>a) all complaints you make or receive<br>b) any response to the complaint<br>c) the action taken.<br>*(EC) 2018/848 Art. 2(4)(5); Art 46(2)(d) ISO65 (4.1.2.2)* | Keeping a record of any complaints you receive encourages transparency. It allows businesses to monitor issues and encourages good practice by ensuring there is a documented system for dealing with complaints. |
| **12.8.4 Specific aquaculture animal production records**<br>You must keep records in the form of a register which is available at all times on the premises of your holding. These records must provide the following information:<br>a) the origin, identifying the animals/batches of animal's date of arrival, the quantities, the organic or non-organic status and conversion period of animals arriving at the holding<br>b) the number of lots, the age, weight and destination of animals leaving the holding<br>c) records of escapes of fish and action shall be taken to reduce the impact on the local ecosystem<br>d) for fish, the type and quantity of feed and in the case of carp and related species, a documentary record of the use of additional feed<br>e) veterinary treatments giving details of the purpose, date of application, method of application, type of product and withdrawal period<br>f) disease prevention measures giving details of fallowing, cleaning and water treatment.<br>g) Operators shall keep records of monitoring and maintenance measures concerning animal welfare and water quality.<br>*(EC) 2018/848 Annex II Part III(3.1.2.4)(3.1.3.5)(3.1.4.3)(3.1.5.3)* | Records of aquaculture animal production |

## SA NI 12.9 Preserving organic integrity

### What is this chapter about?

The standards in this section cover which substances are prohibited and what you need to do to prevent contamination.

| Standards | Guidance |
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| **SA NI 12.9.1 Reducing the risk of contamination**<br>In order to avoid contamination with products or substances that are not authorised for use in organic production, you must take the following precautionary measures:<br>a) put in place and maintain measures that are proportionate and appropriate to identify the risks of contamination of organic production and products with non-authorised products or substances, including systematic identification of critical procedural steps;<br>b) put in place and maintain measures that are proportionate and appropriate to avoid risks of contamination of organic production and products with non-authorised products or substances;<br>c) regularly review and adjust such measures;<br>d) document the risks identified and the measures you put in place, and<br>e) comply with other relevant requirements of these standards that ensure the separation of organic, in-conversion and non-organic products.<br>*(EC) 2018/848 Art. 28 (1)*<br>*(EC) 2018/848 Annex II Part IV(1.2)(1.4)* | You must consider what you do to reduce the risk of contamination at all stages of production, including processing, storage and transport, including how you determine that the measures you have in place are sufficient and how you monitor that they remain effective. You could use details of any sampling and testing that you carry out.<br><br>Examples of risks include:<br>• feed containing non-permitted ingredients<br>• other local non-organic sites<br>• local pollution events, e.g. oil spill, sewerage outlets, flooding<br>• non-permitted cleaning products.<br><br>Containers for storage or transport must be of food grade quality.<br><br>All procedures must be consistently followed, and appropriate records must be maintained to evidence this. Your Inspector will be checking that the procedures you have in place are adequate to reduce the risk of contamination.<br><br>Staff training is an important way to ensure that the risk of contamination is minimised. Ensure that all new staff are adequately trained, particularly when changes are made to these organic standards and your own operational procedures. |
| **SA NI 12.9.2 Genetic modification**<br>1. If a product contains GMOs, consists of GMOs or is produced from GMOs it must not be labelled or advertised with reference to organic production. P<br>2. GMOs, products produced from GMOs, and products produced by GMOs shall not be used in food or feed, or as food, feed, processing aids, plant protection products, fertilisers, soil conditioners, plant reproductive material, | In the EU, if a product contains GMOs or their derivatives then it must be labelled as such, (as described in 12.9.2.3) so the regulation allows labels to be relied upon as evidence to indicate whether food contains GMOs or their derivatives. This would apply to products such as agricultural crops, like maize and soya, or their derivatives like lecithin or starch. However, Directive 2001/18/EC, Regulation (EC) 1829/2003 and Regulation (EC) 1830/2003 do not extend to the use of ingredients produced by genetically modified micro-organisms. For example, enzymes and vitamins. This means that it cannot be |

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| micro-organisms or animals in organic production You must be able to demonstrate the above.<br>3. For food and feed products in the EU, Directive 2001/18/EC, Regulation (EC) 1829/2003 or Regulation (EC) 1830/2003 are applicable, and you may rely on labels or any other accompanying documents to confirm that they are non-GM, unless you have other information that the products do not meet the Directive and Regulations listed above.<br>4. For products that are not food or feed, or products that could be produced by GMOs or for products we are certifying outside the EU, you will need to get confirmation from your suppliers, in the form of a non-GM declaration, that the products supplied have not been produced from or by GMOs.<br>*(EC) 2018/848 Art. 11* | automatically assumed that a product complies with the specific GMO requirements of the organic regulations. For this reason, we require a completed GMO declaration for all products that may be a GM risk.<br><br>Our GMO declaration form explains which additives, processing aids and ingredients are GMO risks. Your Certification Officer can also confirm any other ingredients which are a GMO risk.<br><br>There is a specific form to be used for licensees producing products under a Soil Association Standards license and a separate form to use for licenses producing product under an EU-only licence. This is because the Soil Association has additional requirements in this area, as outlined in 12.9.2.5.<br><br>Please contact us if you need a blank template of the non-GM declaration form for your suppliers to complete. |
| 5. For Soil Association products and ingredients, you will need to provide additional information to demonstrate their non-GM status.<br>*Soil Association higher standard* | **Please note:** The GMO declaration expires 12 months from the date signed. Supporting information must be dated within 12 months of sending to SA Certification. If older than 12 months, you must check with the supplier that the statement is still valid and provide evidence of this to SA Certification. An updated GMO declaration is not required if you have not re-ordered the product since originally submitting evidence.<br><br>12.9.2.3 also says, if you have other information that the products do not meet the GM labelling requirements then you cannot rely on the information stated on the label. For example, test results which show GM DNA in the product. If you or a third party tests any of your organic products and gets a positive result, you must inform us of that result as soon as possible.<br><br>Farmers purchasing animal feeds may rely on the information provided on the labels, or accompanying documents. Feed used must be certified organic so any checks on GM status will have been done by the feed processors.<br><br>As part of due diligence and controlling risks, operators who import/process/trade GM risk organic ingredients may wish to carry out testing for GMOs. For example, soya or maize products. Testing must be to the lowest limit of quantification (0.1%) and not just to 0.9%. |

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| | The European regulations and directives referred to in the standard only apply to product within the EU market. This means that if we are certifying your business outside the UK/EU, supplier declarations will be required for all GM risk ingredients and feed to confirm the products have not been produced from or by GMOs. |
| Why?<br>GM ingredients have no place in organic food. In order to provide additional assurance that Soil Association certified products and ingredients do not contain GM, we require suppliers of risk products and ingredients to provide additional verification to prove their non-GM status. | |
| SA NI 12.9.3 Nanoparticles<br>1. Organic food must not contain or consist of engineered nanoparticles.<br>*(EC) 2018/848 Art.7(e)*<br>*(EC) 201/848 Art. 3(63)* | The definition of engineered nanomaterial, as stated in (EC) 2015/2283 is as follows:<br>engineered nanomaterial' means any intentionally produced material that has one or more dimensions of the order of 100 nm or less or that is composed of discrete functional parts, either internally or at the surface, many of which have one or more dimensions of the order of 100 nm or less, including structures, agglomerates or aggregates, which may have a size above the order of 100 nm but retain properties that are characteristic of the nanoscale.<br><br>Properties that are characteristic of the nanoscale include:<br>(i) those related to the large specific surface area of the materials considered; and/or<br>(ii) specific physico-chemical properties that are different from those of the non-nanoform of the same material.<br><br>Examples of products that we know may contain manufactured nanoparticles and that are commercially available include titanium dioxide and zinc oxide used in health and beauty products. The manufactured nanoparticle versions of these products are transparent. |
| SA NI 12.9.4 Nanoparticles in organic products<br>1. In addition to standard 12.9.3, all other organic products (including feed) within the scope of these standards must not contain engineered nanoparticles.<br>2. This standard does not apply to incidental nanoparticles.<br>*Soil Association higher standard* | The definition of engineered nanomaterial, as stated in (EC) 2015/2283 is as follows:<br>'engineered nanomaterial' means any intentionally produced material that has one or more dimensions of the order of 100 nm or less or that is composed of discrete functional parts, either internally or at the surface, many of which have one or more dimensions of the order of 100 nm or less, including structures, agglomerates or aggregates, which may have a size above the order of 100 nm but retain properties that are characteristic of the nanoscale. |

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| | Properties that are characteristic of the nanoscale include:<br>(i) those related to the large specific surface area of the materials considered; and/or<br>(ii) specific physico-chemical properties that are different from those of the non-nanoform of the same material.<br><br>Examples of products that we know may contain manufactured nanoparticles and that are commercially available include titanium dioxide and zinc oxide used in health and beauty products. The manufactured nanoparticle versions of these products are transparent.<br><br>Incidental nanoparticles not prohibited by this standard include:<br>• Substances that are incidental by-products of other manufacturing processes (such as milling or homogenisation).<br>• Naturally occurring nanoparticles, for example, from volcanic eruptions, in wood smoke or sea spray.<br><br>. |

## Why?

Nanomaterials may introduce new or heightened risks of toxicity, which are currently little understood. The possible effects of these nanomaterials on the environment, human and animal health are currently unknown.
Nanotechnology involves the manipulation of materials and the creation of structures and systems at the scale of atoms and molecules. This can be either through simple physical processes or by specific engineering.
Nanomaterials include:

- nanoparticles and nanoemulsions
- nanostructures including nanocapsules, nanotubes, fullerenes (buckyballs), quantum dots and nanowires.

The properties of nanomaterials can differ significantly from those at larger scales because quantum effects start to occur at the nanoscale. These differences may be in chemical reactivity and biological activity, solubility and mobility, colour and transparency, among others.

These are examples of known and developing uses of nanotechnology:

- food additives, such as for flavouring, enhanced absorption of nutrients or modifying texture
- in health and beauty products, such as in transparent mineral sunscreens and make-up products

- in packaging, including quantum dots for traceability, UV light filters, nanoclays as gas barriers and carbon nanotubes to alter strength-to-weight ratio
- medicinal, such as drug delivery, DNA vaccines and advanced therapies
- environmental, such as soil remediation
- pesticides, such as pesticide delivery in nanoemulsions, and
- textiles, such as stain and water resistant coatings.

## SA NI 13.0 Specific standards for organic aquaculture

### SA NI 13.1 Site selection

| Standards | Guidance |
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| **SA NI 13.1.1 Site suitability**<br>Your production units must be sited in locations that are free from contamination by substances not permitted in organic production and that are free from pollution or pollutants that would affect the organic integrity of the product.<br>*(EC) 2018/848 Annex II Part III(1.1)* | When you start your organic aquaculture operation, or when you add new sites, you must be able to demonstrate you meet this standard and submit details of the assessments you have made in your aquaculture management plan.<br>This should include details of neighbouring operations and an assessment of the contamination risk these pose and how this will be minimised.<br>Ensure that the mean flush rate of each site is appropriate to the species you intend to farm there. |
| **SA NI 13.1.2 Organic and non-organic production**<br>Organic and non-organic production units must be adequately separated based on:<br>a) the natural situation<br>b) separate water distribution systems<br>c) distance<br>d) tidal flow<br>e) Upstream and downstream location of the organic production unit.<br>*(EC) 2018/848 Art. 9(2)(7)(10)*<br>*(EC) 2018/848 Annex II Part III(1.2)* | If you are producing organic and non-organic products, detail the measures you take to ensure adequate separation in your aquaculture management plan. |
| **SA NI 13.1.3 Separation distances**<br>Your competent authority may set minimum separation distances between organic and non-organic production units.<br>*(EC) 2018/848 Annex II Part III(1.2)* | Check with us to find out if your competent authority has set specific separation distances between organic and non-organic production units in your area. |

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| SA NI 13.1.4 Suitable locations<br>Your competent authority may designate locations or areas which they consider to be unsuitable for organic aquaculture.<br>*(EC) 2018/848 Annex II Part III(1.2)* | Check with us to find out if your competent authority has designated any locations unsuitable for organic aquaculture. |
| SA NI 13.1.5 Mangroves<br>The destruction of mangroves is not permitted in organic aquaculture production.<br>*(EC) 2018/848 Annex II Part III(1.4)* | |

## SA NI 13.2 Origin of aquaculture animals

| Standards | Guidance |
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| **SA NI 13.2.1 Origin of organic aquaculture animals**<br>1. You must source organic stock where available<br>2. Locally grown species must be used and breeding must aim to give strains which are more adapted to organic farming conditions, good animal health and welfare, as well as good utilisation of feed resources.<br>3. You must choose species which are robust and can be farmed without causing significant damage to wild stocks.<br>*(EC) 2018/848 Annex II Part III (3.1.2.1) (b) (c)(3.1.2.2) (c)* | Availability of organic stock can be seen on the national database. A URL for the database will be provided once the site is developed.<br><br>Organic stock will be sourced from organic broodstock and from organic production units. |
| **SA NI 13.2.2 Breeding techniques**<br>When breeding organic aquaculture animals you must not use artificial hybridisation, artificial induction of polyploidy, cloning and artificial production of monosex strains, except by hand sorting.<br>*EC) 2018/848 Art. 9 (5) (*<br>*EC) 2018/848 Annex II Part III(3.1.2.2)(b)Annex II Part* | Detail your breeding techniques in your aquaculture management plan. |
| **SA NI 13.2.3 Using non-organic aquaculture animals**<br>1. On approval from the competent authority, wild-caught or non-organic aquaculture animals may be brought onto the holding to improve the genetic suitability of stock. This will only be approved if there are no suitable organic stock available and appropriate justification is provided. You must keep these animals under organic management for at least three months before they are used for breeding.<br>2. For animals that are on the IUCN Red List of endangered species, the authorisation to use wild-caught specimens will only be granted for breeding programmes that are in association with official conservation projects recognised by the relevant public body in charge of the conservation effort.<br><br>*(EC) 2018/848 Art.15 (1); Annex II Part III(3.1.2.1)(a)(d)*<br>*(EC) 2021/1691 Annex (3)(a)* | To support the organic sector and produce your stock in line with organic principles, use organic aquaculture animals when they are available. If you need to use non-organic or wild caught aquaculture animals (see standard 13.2.4), demonstrate the lack of availability of organic animals by providing us with evidence that you have contacted suppliers within a suitable geographic area.<br><br>R At inspection we will check records that demonstrate compliance with any derogation authorised under this standard. |

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| **SA NI 13.2.4 Collection of wild aquaculture juveniles**<br>You may only collect wild aquaculture juveniles for on-growing in the following circumstances:<br>a) As natural influx of fish or crustacean larvae and juveniles when filling ponds, containment systems and enclosures<br>b) The collection of species of wild fry of or crustacean larvae that are not on the IUCN Red List of endangered species in extensive aquaculture farming inside wetlands, such as brackish water ponds, tidal areas and costal lagoons provided that:<br>i. the restocking is in line with management measures approved by the relevant authorities to ensure the sustainable exploitation of the species<br>ii. the fish are fed exclusively with feed naturally available in the environment.<br><br>*(EC) 2018/848 Annex II Part III (3.1.2.1)(e)* | At inspection we will check records that demonstrate compliance with any derogation authorised under this standard. To support the organic sector and produce your stock in line with organic principles, use organic aquaculture animals when they are available. If you need to use non-organic or wild caught aquaculture animals (see standard 13.2.4), demonstrate the lack of availability of organic animals by providing us with evidence that you have contacted suppliers within a suitable geographic area.<br><br>At inspection we will check records that demonstrate compliance with any derogation authorised under this standard. |
| **SA NI 13.2.5 On-growing**<br><br>Only when organic juveniles are not available may you seek a derogation to bring in non-organic juveniles for on-growing. A derogation will be granted to a maximum of 50 % for juveniles of species that were not developed as organic in the European Union or Northern Ireland by 1 January 2022. At least the last two thirds of the production cycle must be under organic management. Such a derogation may be granted for a maximum period of two years and shall not be renewable.<br>*(EC) 2018/848 Annex II Part III (3.1.2.1) SA NI 13.2.4*<br><br>**Collection of wild aquaculture juveniles**<br><br>You may only collect wild aquaculture juveniles for on-growing in the following circumstances:<br>c) As natural influx of fish or crustacean larvae and juveniles when filling ponds, containment systems and enclosures | At inspection we will check records that demonstrate compliance with any derogation authorised under this standard. |

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| d) The collection of species of wild fry of or crustacean larvae that are not on the IUCN Red List of endangered species in extensive aquaculture farming inside wetlands, such as brackish water ponds, tidal areas and costal lagoons provided that:<br>iii. the restocking is in line with management measures approved by the relevant authorities to ensure the sustainable exploitation of the species<br>iv. the fish are fed exclusively with feed naturally available in the environment.<br><br>*(EC) 2018/848 Annex II Part III(3.1.2.1)(e)* | |
| ### SA NI 13.2.6 Producing organic and non-organic aquaculture animals<br>You may rear both organic and non-organic stock of the same species provided there is clear and effective separation between the production sites or units. Such separation measures shall be based on the natural situation, separate water distribution systems, distances, the tidal flow, and the upstream and the downstream location of the organic production unit.<br><br>*(EC) 2018/848 Art. 9 (7)*<br>*(EC) 2018/848 Annex II Part III(1.2)* |  You will need to demonstrate adequate separation in order for your control body to consider requests to permit organic and non-organic production units on the same holding. You will need to make sure there is no risk of contamination from your non-organic production. |
| ### SA NI 13.2.7 Replacing stock in cases of high mortality<br>In the case of high morality caused by catastrophic circumstances, with the approval of the competent authority, you may bring in non-organic stock provided that there are no organic animals available and at least the latter two thirds of the production cycle is under organic management.<br><br>Upon approval by the competent authority you must keep documentary evidence of the use of this exception.<br><br>*(EC) 2018/848 Art. 22*<br>*(EC) 2020/2146 Art. 3(8)* | Your competent authority will recognise a catastrophic event as conditions derived from an 'adverse climatic event', 'animal diseases', an 'environmental incident', a 'natural disaster' or a 'catastrophic event' as well as any comparable situation as defined by EC 1305/2013.<br><br>In the case of a 'natural disaster' this will be quantified as the loss of 30% of relevant agricultural potential or 20% of the relevant forest potential.<br><br>Your certification officer can submit a request to the competent authority on your behalf. This permission needs to be in place before any action takes place. |

| SA NI 13.2.8 Prohibiting the use of species listed as **'threatened' by the International Union for the** Conservation of Nature (IUCN) | |
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| For animals listed as 'threatened' on the IUCN Red List of endangered species, the authorisation to use wild-caught specimens as breeding stock or the collection of wild caught juveniles for on-growing may only be granted in the context of conservation programmes recognised by the relevant public authority in charge of the conservation effort and approved by the Soil Association.<br><br>*(EC) 2018/848 Annex II Part III(3.1.2.1)(d)(e)*<br>*Soil Association higher standard* | Lumpsuckers are listed as Near Threatened at time of writing. |
| Why? | |
| The removal of threatened species from the wild for use in aquaculture cannot be viewed as sustainable and in line with organic principles. Therefore, their use in Soil Association certified sites will not be permitted. | |

| SA NI 13.3 Aquaculture husbandry | |
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| **Standards** | **Guidance** |
| SA NI 13.3.1 Meeting the needs of your aquaculture animals<br>1. The developmental, physiological and behavioural needs of your aquaculture animals must be met through the husbandry environment that provides:<br>a) stocking densities, and sufficient space for their welfare and appropriate stocking densities.<br>b) good water quality with an adequate flow and exchange rate, sufficient oxygen levels and keeping a low level of metabolites.<br>c) temperature and light conditions in accordance with the requirements of the species and having regard to the geographic location. | In your aquaculture management plan demonstrate how you monitor each of the parameters above to ensure the welfare needs of your animals are met. This standard applies to all species under your management including, for example, cleaner fish.<br><br>Adhere to relevant animal welfare legislation in your country of production. |

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| 2. Staff keeping aquatic animals must have the necessary knowledge and skills to manage their health and welfare needs.<br>*(EC) 2018/848 Annex II Part III (3.1.5.3)(3.1.6.1)* | |
| ### SA NI 13.3.2 Installation design<br>The design and construction of the installations for containing farmed species must provide flow rates and physiochemical parameters that protect the animals' health and welfare and provide for their behavioural needs.<br>*(EC) 2018/848 Annex II Part III(3.5.4.1)* | |
| ### SA NI 13.3.3 Holding facility design<br>1. You must design the holding facilities to cater for the species-specific needs of the aquaculture animals so that they:<br>a) have sufficient space for their wellbeing<br>b) are kept in water of good quality with an adequate flow and exchange rate, sufficient oxygen levels, and a low level of metabolites<br>c) are kept in appropriate temperature and light conditions.<br>2. For freshwater fish, the bottom of the holding facilities must be as close as possible to natural conditions.<br>3. For carp, the holding facilities must be natural earth.<br>*(EC) 2018/848 Annex II Part III(3.1.5.3)* | Species-specific stocking densities are shown in section 13.4.<br>You must be able to demonstrate that you have considered the species-specific needs of the animals. |
| ### SA NI 13.3.4 Escapes<br>Installations for containing farmed species must be designed, located and operated to minimise the risk of escapes. If fish or crustaceans escape, you must take appropriate action to reduce the impact on the local ecosystem, including recapture where appropriate.<br>*(EC) 2018/848 Annex II Part III (3.1.5.7)(3.1.5.8)* | Detail what measures are in place to minimise escapes in your aquaculture management plan e.g. net maintenance, design of installation etc. |

## SA NI 13.4 Species-specific production requirements and stocking densities

| Standards | Guidance |
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| **SA NI 13.4.1 Planning stocking densities**<br>The maximum stocking densities are set out in the standards below. You must consider the welfare of the farmed fish when planning stocking densities and monitor all of the following:<br>a) fin damage<br>b) other injuries<br>c) growth rate<br>d) normal behaviour and behaviour indicating stress<br>e) overall health<br>f) water quality.<br>*(EC) 2018/848 Annex II Part III(3.1.5.3)* | In your aquaculture management plan demonstrate how you plan your stocking density and monitor each of the levels above. |
| **SA NI 13.4.2 Stocking densities for different species**<br>Your stocking densities must not exceed the maximum levels set out below.<br>*(EC) 2020/464 Art. 22; Annex II* | Stocking densities are calculated per individual containment unit (e.g., net pen or tank). Show how you plan, measure, and monitor stocking density in your aquaculture management plan.<br><br>For the purpose of calculating stocking density in net pen containment systems the measurements provided in the net manufacture's specifications for the usable volume of the net will be used. |
| **SA NI 13.4.3 Organic production of salmonids in fresh water**<br>Includes: Brown trout, Rainbow trout, American brook trout, salmon, charr, grayling, American lake trout (or grey trout), huchen. | |

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| Production system | On-growing farm systems must be fed from open systems. The flow rate must ensure a minimum of 60% oxygen saturation for stock and must ensure their comfort and the elimination of farming effluent. |
| Maximum stocking density | Salmonid species not listed below: 15 kg/$m^3$<br>Salmon: 20 kg/$m^3$<br>Brown trout and rainbow trout: 25 kg/$m^3$<br>Arctic charr: 25 kg/$m^3$<br>*(EC) 2020/464 Annex II* |

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| Mortality reporting requirement | 1. Where the level of fish mortality exceeds the threshold figures shown below, this must be recorded and reported to Soil Association Certification within 72 hours.<br><br>Atlantic Salmon*<br>Egg to 1st feed - 6% weekly<br>1st feed to 5g - 3% weekly<br>5g to smolting - 1.5% weekly<br><br>2. Mortality levels exceeding these limits must be investigated without delay and a plan approved by Soil Association Certification, detailing how you will address and reduce the number of mortalities.<br>*Soil Association higher standard*<br><br>*Please contact the Soil Association for the reporting requirements for other salmonid species. |
| Why?<br>The Soil Association recognises that mass mortality events can occur for several reasons. Soil Association must be kept informed of any events to ensure that avoidable deaths are not occurring on certified sites, effective controls are in place and the site is suitable for production. | |

| SA NI 13.4.4 Salmonids in sea water<br>Includes: Salmon, brown trout, rainbow trout. | |
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| Maximum stocking density | 10 kg/$m^3$ in net pens<br>*(EC) 2020/464 Annex II* |
| Mortality recording and reporting requirement | 1. Where the level of fish mortality exceeds the threshold figures shown below, this must be recorded and reported to Soil Association Certification within 72 hours.<br><br>Atlantic Salmon*<br><br>Site weight average under 750g:<br>• maximum weekly mortality 1.5%,<br>• Maximum 5-week rolling mortality 6%<br>Site weight average greater than 750g:<br>• maximum weekly mortality 1%,<br>• Maximum 5-week rolling mortality 4% |

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| | 2. Mortality levels exceeding these limits must be investigated without delay and a plan approved by Soil Association Certification, detailing how you will address and reduce the number of mortalities.<br>*Soil Association higher standard*<br><br>* Please contact the Soil Association for the reporting requirements for other salmonid species. |
| Why?<br>The Soil Association recognises that mass mortality events can occur for several reasons. Soil Association must be kept informed of any events to ensure that avoidable deaths are not occurring on certified sites, effective controls are in place and the site is suitable for production. | |
| SA NI 13.4.5 Cod, other Gadidae, sea bass, sea bream, meagre, turbot, red porgy, red drum and other Sparidae, and spinefeet. | |
| Production system | In open water containment systems (net pens/cages) with minimum sea current speed to provide optimum fish welfare, or in open systems on land. |
| Juvenile production | The larval rearing of marine fish shall preferably be in extensive low input systems, such as the mesocsm or large volume rearing. The initial stocking density shall be 20 eggs or larve per litre. During the larval stage the tank shall have_a minimum volume of 20$m^3$. |
| Maximum stocking density | For fish other than turbot: 15 kg/$m^3$<br>For turbot: 25 kg/$m^2$<br>*(EC) 2018/848 Annex II Part III(3.1.2.3)*<br>*(EC) 2020/464 Annex II* |
| SA NI 13.4.6 Sea bass, sea bream, meagre, mullets and eel in earth ponds of tidal areas and coastal lagoons | |
| Containment system | Traditional salt pans transformed into aquaculture production units and similar earth ponds in tidal areas |
| Production system | There shall be adequate renewal of water to ensure the welfare of the species.<br>At least 50 % of the dikes must have plant cover.<br>Wetland based depuration ponds are required. |
| Maximum stocking density | 4 kg/$m^3$<br>*(EC) 2020/464 Annex II* |
| SA NI 13.4.7 Sturgeon in fresh water<br>Species concerned: Acipenser family | |
| Production system | Water flow in each rearing unit shall be sufficient to ensure animal welfare.<br>Effluent water to be of equivalent quality to incoming water. |

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| Maximum stocking density | 30 kg/$m^3$<br>*(EC) 2020/464 Annex II* |

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| SA NI 13.4.8 Fish in inland waters<br>Species concerned: Carp family (Cyprinidae) and other associated species in the context of polyculture, including perch, pike, catfish, coregonids, sturgeon. Perch (Perca fluviatilis) in monoculture.<br>• Fishponds must be fully drained periodically.<br>• Lakes must be devoted exclusively to organic production, including the growing of crops on dry areas.<br>• The fishery capture area must be a suitable size to provide optimal comfort for the fish and equipped with a clean water inlet.<br>• The fish must be stored in clean water after harvest.<br>• You may only use organic and mineral fertilisers in the ponds which are listed in Annex I, with a maximum application of 20 kg nitrogen/ha.<br>• You must not use treatments involving synthetic chemicals for the control of hydrophytes or plant coverage present in production waters.<br>• Areas of natural vegetation shall be maintained around inland water units as a buffer zone for external land areas not in organic aquaculture production.<br>• If you operate a polyculture system for your grow-out production, you must comply with these standards for all other species in the lake.<br>• The total production of species in polyculture is limited to 1500 kg of fish per hectare per year.<br>• The maximum stocking density for perch in monoculture is 20kg/$m^3$.<br>*(EC) 2018/848 Annex II Part III(3.1.5.3)*<br>*(EC) 2020/464 Annex II* | The frequency of drainage will depend on the type of pond, water flow, stocking rates and fish management. You need to demonstrate that the frequency will be sufficient to ensure good water quality, fish health and welfare. You can detail justification for the frequency of drainage in your aquaculture management plan.<br><br>Record – records on the application of fertilisers will be checked at inspection |

| SA NI 13.4.9 Penaeid shrimps and freshwater prawns | |
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| Establishment of production unit/s | Location to be in sterile clay areas to minimise environmental impact of pond construction. Ponds to be built with natural pre-existing clay. Mangrove destruction is not permitted. |
| Conversion time | Six months per pond, corresponding to the normal lifespan of a farmed shrimp. |
| Broodstock origin | A minimum of half the broodstock shall be domesticated after three years of operation. The remainder is to be pathogen-free wild broodstock originating from sustainable fisheries. A compulsory screening to be implemented on the first and second generation prior to introduction to the farm. |
| Eyestalk ablation | Eyestalk ablation, including all similar practices such as ligation, incision and pinching, is prohibited |
| Maximum on farm stocking densities and production limits | Seeding: maximum 22 post larvae/$m^2$<br><br>Maximum instantaneous biomass: 240 g/$m^2$<br>*(EC)2018/848 Annex II Part III (3.1.6.8)*<br>*(EC) 2020/464 Annex II* |

| SA NI 13.4.10 Crayfish<br>Species concerned: *Astacus astacus,* | |
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| Maximum stocking density | For small-sized crayfish (< 20 mm): 100 individuals per $m^2$. For crayfish of intermediate size (20-50 mm): 30 individuals per $m^2$. For adult crayfish (> 50 mm): 10 individuals per $m^2$ provided that adequate hiding places are available.<br>*(EC) 2020/464 Annex II* |

| SA NI 13.4.11 Tropical freshwater fish<br>Species concerned: milkfish (*Chanos chanos*), tilapia (*Oreochromis spp.*), Siamese catfish (*Pangasius spp.)* | |
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| Production systems | Ponds and net cages |
| Maximum stocking density | Pangasius: 10 kg/$m^3$<br>Oreochromis: 20kg/$m^3$<br>*(EC) 2020/464 Annex II* |

## SA NI 13.5 Aquaculture livestock management

| Standards | Guidance |
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| **SA NI 13.5.1 Handling**<br>1. Handling of aquaculture livestock must be kept to a minimum. When handling is necessary, great care, proper equipment and protocols must be used to avoid stress and physical damage. You must handle broodstock in ways that minimise physical damage and you must use anaesthesia where appropriate.<br>2. You must keep grading operations to a minimum and perform them in such a way as to protect the welfare of the fish.<br>*(EC)2018/848 Annex II Part III(3.1.6.1)(3.1.6.2)(3.1.6.9)* | Detail in your aquaculture management plan how you monitor fish for signs of stress during and after handling. Examples of this include scale and fin damage, time out of the water.<br>In seawater systems allowing sufficient time for your stock to swim through grading nets (passive grading) minimises stress and physical damage in the farmed fish.<br><br>At your inspection, demonstrate how you ensure staff who handle fish, including those involved with killing, are appropriately trained, competent and aware of their duty of care. |
| **SA NI 13.5.2 Withdrawing feed**<br>The maximum starve period before harvest for salmon, trout and Arctic charr is 50 degree days.<br>*Soil Association higher standard* | In your aquaculture management plan show how you manage starve periods before harvest to ensure they remain below this limit. Standard 13.3.1. requires you to ensure that the developmental, physiological and behavioural needs of your aquaculture animals are met at all times.<br><br>S A sourcing requirement applies for SA processors. |

### Why?

If feed is not withdrawn before handling or transport this can lead to poor water quality which has health implications for the fish. However, farmed fish become used to being fed regularly so the withdrawal of feed for prolonged periods is a welfare concern.

One of the principles of good animal welfare is freedom from hunger, therefore the Soil Association sets a limit on the permitted withdrawal period for feed for farmed fish before harvest. We use degree days as a measurement because in the wild, fish naturally eat less in colder waters.

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| ### SA NI 13.5.3 Humane harvest and slaughter<br><br>1. Suffering of aquaculture animals, including at slaughter, must be kept to a minimum. You must only use slaughter techniques that render fish immediately unconscious and insensible to pain. Handling prior to slaughter must be performed in a way that avoids injury whilst keeping any suffering or stress to a minimum. You must take into account harvest sizes, species and production sites when considering optimal slaughter methods.<br><br>*(EC)2018/848 Annex II Part III (3.1.6.7)(3.1.6.9)* | Transfer of fish to the killing facility should be by a method and at an appropriate rate to avoid stress and injury but also to prevent delay prior to killing.<br><br>All farmed fish must be stunned before killing, whether or not death accompanies the stun (as in stun/kill methods) or follows a short time after the stun but before the fish has the time to regain consciousness.<br><br>For killing procedures that require it, the time from removal of the fish from water to unconsciousness and killing should be kept to a minimum. Emergency killing, including where automated stunning or other methods fail, should not be by methods considered inhumane at other times. A backup method of manual stunning, such as a priest, must be available in the killing facility.<br><br>We will refer to the FAWC Opinion on the Welfare of Farmed Fish at the Time of Killing for appropriate practice.<br>The following methods of harvest and slaughter do not meet this standard:<br>• ice, except for warm water shrimp<br>• carbon dioxide<br>• suffocation, leaving stock to die in the open air<br>• exsanguination without stunning<br>• operating a rolling harvest where you starve all fish in the holding facility and selectively grade a number for slaughter on a repeated basis<br>• starving stock to modify carcass weight or quality (body composition). |
| 2. You must inform your certification body prior to slaughter. You must include details of animals to be slaughtered, location and slaughter method.<br><br>*Soil Association higher standard* | |
| ### 13.5.4 Closed Circuit Television (CCTV)<br>CCTV must be used at farmed fish slaughter sites, with recordings saved for at least 90 days and made available for reviewing on request.<br>*Soil Association higher standard* | Cameras should be positioned in such a way to clearly show all areas of slaughter where welfare issues could occur. |

| Why? | |
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| Slaughter of livestock most be assessed each year. We will review harvest dates and plan our annual inspections accordingly. Where we cannot witness a harvest on the day we will review footage to assess the slaughter. | |
| **SA NI 13.5.5 Lighting**<br>You may only prolong natural day-length to levels that respect the ethological needs, geographical location and general health of the aquaculture species. You may only prolong natural day-length to beyond 14 hours per day for reproductive purposes. You must avoid abrupt changes in light intensity at changeover time by using dimmable lights or background lighting.<br>*(EC) 2018/848 Annex II Part III (3.1.6.3)* | In your aquaculture management plan, detail for which reproductive purposes you are prolonging natural day length to beyond 16 hours per day for, and the light intensity levels used.<br><br>Artificial lighting of any level is not permitted for non-reproductive purposes beyond 16 hours in outdoor facilities. |

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| **SA NI 13.5.6 Aeration and oxygen use**<br>1. You may use aeration to ensure animal health and welfare, using aerators preferably powered by renewable energy sources where possible.<br>2. You may use oxygen only for animal health and welfare requirements and critical periods of production or transport in the following cases:<br>a) Exceptional cases of temperature rise<br>b) Fall in atmospheric pressure<br>c) Accidental pollution<br>d) Occasional stock management procedures such as sampling and sorting<br>e) In order to assure the survival of farmed aquaculture livestock.<br>*(EC) 2018/848 Annex II Part III(3.1.6.4)(3.1.6.5)* | In your aquaculture management plan, detail under what circumstances aeration is, or would be used and the reasons why. If non-renewable energy sources are used explain why renewable sources cannot be used.<br><br>Ⓡ You must record the use of aeration and oxygen in your production records. |
| **SA NI 13.5.7 Use of hormones is prohibited**<br>You must not use hormones or hormone derivatives.<br>*(EC) 2018/848 Annex II Part III(3.1.2.2)(a)* | |

## SA NI 13.6 Aquatic containment systems

| Standards | Guidance |
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| **SA NI 13.6.1 Closed recirculation**<br>Closed recirculation facilities are only permitted for:<br>a) Hatcheries<br>b) nurseries, and<br>c) the production of organisms used for organic feed.<br>*(EC) 2018/848 Annex II Part III(3.1.5.1)* | A closed recirculation aquaculture system is one in which fish or bivalves are kept in tanks on land and the water is constantly cleaned and recycled back into the system. |

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| **SA NI 13.6.2 Artificial heating or cooling**<br>1. You may only use artificial heating or cooling of water in hatcheries and nurseries.<br>2. You may use natural borehole water to heat or cool water at all stages of production.<br>*(EC) 2018/848 Annex II Part III(3.1.5.2)* | In your aquaculture management plan detail any heating or cooling you use, how it is provided and what stage of production it is used for. |
| **SA NI 13.6.3 Rearing on land**<br>1. For land-based rearing units with flow-through systems it must be possible to monitor and control the flow rate and quality of in-flowing and out-flowing water.<br>2. At least ten percent of the perimeter (land-water interface) of land-based rearing units must have natural vegetation.<br>*(EC) 2018/848 Annex II Part III(3.1.5.5)* | Your records for this will be checked at inspection. |
| **SA NI 13.6.4 Sea based containment systems**<br>Sea-based containment systems must be located where water flow, depth and water body exchange rates are adequate to minimise the impact on the sea bed and the surrounding water body. They must have suitable cage design, construction and maintenance to withstand exposure to the operating environment.<br>*(EC) 2018/848 Annex II Part III(3.1.5.6)(a)(b)* | You will need to consider this in the design of your system – refer to standard 13.1.1 site selection. |
| **SA NI 13.6.5 Production in fishponds, tanks and raceways**<br>1. For aquaculture animal production in fishponds, tanks and raceways, waste nutrients must be collected or the quality of the effluent improved using:<br>a) natural filter beds<br>b) settlement ponds<br>c) biological or mechanical filters, or<br>d) seaweeds and/or animals (e.g. bivalves).<br>2. You must monitor the effluent at regular intervals.<br>*(EC) 2018/848 Annex II Part III (3.1.5.9)* | Your records for this will be checked at inspection. |

## SA NI 13.7 Feeding fish, crustaceans and echinoderms

| Standards | Guidance |
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| **SA NI 13.7.1 Feeding priorities (all species)**<br>1. You must feed your aquaculture animals with feed that meets the animals' nutritional requirements at the various stages of their development.<br>2. You must design your feeding regimes to prioritise:<br>a) animal health and welfare<br>b) the production of high quality aquaculture products including nutritional composition<br>c) low environmental impact.<br>*(EC) 2018/848 Annex II Part III (3.1.3.1)(a)(b)* | At inspection you will need to demonstrate how you:<br>• monitor fish health, and<br>• manage quantities of feed used to prevent waste.<br><br>Please note, if you are purchasing feed that is produced in GB you must make sure they meet the requirement of these standards due to differences between GB and EU organic regulations. |
| **SA NI 13.7.2 Feeding priorities for carnivorous aquaculture species**<br>You must source feed for carnivorous aquaculture animals with the following priorities:<br>a) organic feed products of aquaculture origin<br>b) fish meal and fish oil from organic aquaculture trimmings<br>c) fish meal and fish oil and ingredients of fish origin derived from trimmings of fish already caught for human consumption in fisheries certified as sustainable.<br>d) feed products derived from whole fish caught in fisheries certified as sustainable under a scheme recognised by the competent authority in line with the principles laid down in Regulation (EU) No 1380/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council.<br>e) organic feed materials of plant or animal origin<br>*(EC) 2018/848 Annex II Part III(3.1.3.1)(c)(3.1.3.5)(3.1.3.3)* | You can choose from the above sources of feed in order to meet the animals' nutritional requirements at the various stages of their development, but where possible they must be used in order of preference.<br><br>For operators in NI, NICA (the competent authority) has provided additional guidance on the sustainability criteria for whole fish. We can provide you with a copy on request. |
| **SA NI 13.7.3 Feeding histidine**<br>When the feed sources allowed in these standards do not provide sufficient amounts of histidine to prevent cataracts and to meet the dietary needs of salmonid fish you may feed histidine sources produced through fermentation.<br>*(EC) 2021/1165 Annex III Part B(3)(c)* | Your aquaculture management plan must provide details for which groups of fish, life stages or times of year require additional histidine in their diets and the reasons why. At inspection you must be able to demonstrate that the histidine is from fermented sources. If you are buying an organic certified feed no additional checks are needed. |
| **13.7.4 Feeding astaxanthin** | Detail in your aquaculture management plan if you use astaxanthin and how you determine the quantities fed do not exceed the limit of the |

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| You may feed salmon and trout astaxanthin derived primarily from organic sources such as organic crustacean shells, within the limit of their physiological needs. If organic sources are not available you may use natural sources of astaxanthin such as *Phaffia* yeast.<br>*(EC) 2021/1165 Annex III Part B(2)* | physiological needs of the species you are feeding. If you are buying an organic certified feed no additional checks are needed. |
| SA NI 13.7.5 Feeding freshwater species<br>1. In the grow-out stages, the following species must be fed feed which is naturally available in ponds and lakes:<br>a) carp and associated species in polyculture systems (perch, pike, catfish, coregonids and sturgeon)<br>b) Penaeid shrimp and freshwater prawns (Macrobrachium spp.)<br>c) tropical freshwater fish – milkfish, tilapia and Siamese catfish (Pangasius spp.).<br>2. When natural feed is not available in sufficient quantity, you may feed seaweed or organic feed of plant origin, preferably grown on the holding.<br>3. Where you are supplementary feeding Penaeid shrimp in this way, you may feed a maximum of 25% fishmeal and 10% fish oil derived from fisheries certified as sustainable under a scheme recognised by the competent authority in line with the principles laid down in Regulation (EU) No 1380/2013.<br>4. You may also supplement the diets of Penaeid shrimp and freshwater prawns with organic cholesterol both in the grow-out stage and in earlier life stages in nurseries and hatcheries.<br>5. When you are supplementary feeding Siamese catfish (Pangasium spp.) in this way you may include a maximum of 10% fishmeal or fish oil derived from sustainable fisheries.<br>*(EC) 2018/848 Art.15(2)(d); Annex II Part III(3.1.3.4)* | (R) For species reared in ponds and lakes, keep records of the need to use feed other than that which is naturally occurring in the environment. |
| SA NI 13.7.6 Permitted feed for juveniles<br>The larvae shall feed on the natural plankton developing in the tank, supplemented as appropriate by externally produced phytoplankton and zooplankton.<br>*(EC) 2018/848 Annex II Part III (3.1.2.3)* | |

## SA NI 13.8 Aquaculture feeds

| Standard | Guidance |
|---|---|
| **SA NI 13.8.1 Products and substances permitted for use in aquaculture feed**<br>You may use the following feed materials or products in animal nutrition and processing aids:<br>*(EC) 2018/848 Annex II Part III(3.1.3.1)(d)(e)*<br>*(EC) 2021/1165 Annex III(A)(B)* | |
| **Feed Material** | |
| **Product or substance** | **Conditions of use** |
| Non-organic feed materials of plant or animal origin, or fermentation (by-products) from micro-organisms, the cells of which have been inactivated or killed:<br>a) Saccharomyces cerevisiae<br>b) Saccharomyces carlsbergensis | |
| Meal, oil and other feed materials of fish or other aquatic animals origin | provided that they are obtained from fisheries that have been certified as sustainable under a scheme recognised by the competent authority in line with the principles laid down in Regulation (EU) No 1380/2013<br><br>provided that they are produced or prepared without chemically synthesised solvents<br><br>their use is authorised only to non-herbivores livestock<br><br>the use of fish protein hydrolysate is authorised only for young non-herbivores livestock |
| Meal, oil and other feed materials of fish, mollusc or crustacean origin | for carnivorous aquaculture animals<br><br>from fisheries that have been certified as sustainable under a scheme recognised by the competent authority in line with the principles laid down in Regulation (EU) No 1380/2013.<br>derived from trimmings of fish, crustaceans or molluscs already caught for human consumption in accordance with standard 13.7.2. |

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| Fishmeal and fish oil | | In the grow-out phase, for fish in inland waters, penaeid shrimps and freshwater prawns and tropical freshwater fish<br><br>from fisheries that have been certified as sustainable under a scheme recognised by the competent authority in line with the principles laid down in Regulation (EU) No 1380/2013, in accordance with standard 13.7.5.<br><br>only where natural feed in ponds and lake is not available in sufficient quantities, maximum 25 % of fishmeal and 10 % of fish oil in the feed ration of penaeid shrimps and freshwater prawns (*Macrobrachium spp.*) and maximum 10 % of fishmeal or fish oil in the feed ration of siamese catfish (*Pangasius spp.*). |
| Minerals | | |
| Sodium | Sea salt<br>Coarse rock salt<br>Sodium chloride<br>Sodium bicarbonate<br>Sodium carbonate<br>Sodium sulphate | |
| Potassium | Potassium chloride | |
| Calcium | Calcareous marine shells<br>Calcium gluconate<br>Calcium carbonate | |
| Phosphorus | Defluorinated monocalcium phosphate<br>Defluorinated dicalcium phosphate<br>Monosodium phosphate<br>Calcium magnesium phosphate<br>Calcium sodium phosphate<br>Monodicalcium Phosphate | |
| Magnesium | Magnesium oxide (anhydrous magnesia)<br>Magnesium sulphate Magnesium chloride<br>Magnesium carbonate Magnesium phosphate | |
| **ID number or Functional Group** | **Substance** | **Description/conditions for use** |
| **Preservatives** | | |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| E200 | Sorbic acid | |
| E 236 | Formic acid | |
| E 237 | Sodium formate | |
| E 260 | Acetic acid | |
| E 270 | Lactic acid | |
| E 280 | Propionic acid | |
| E 330 | Citric acid | |
| **Antioxidants** | | |
| 1bE306(i) | Tocopherol extracts from vegetable oils | |
| 1bE306(ii) | Tocopherol-rich extracts from vegetable oils (delta rich) | |
| **Emulsifiers, stabilisers, thickeners and gelling agents** | | |
| 1c322 & 1c322i | Lecithins | Only when derived from organic raw material.<br>from 1 January 2027, only from organic production |
| E412 | Guar Gum | |
| E415 | Xanthan Gum | |
| **Binders, anti-caking agents and coagulants** | | |
| E 535 | Sodium ferrocyanide | Maximum content of 20 mg/kg NaCl calculated as ferrocyanide anion |
| E 551b | Colloidal silica | |
| E 551c | Kieselgur (diatomaceous earth, purified) | |
| 1m558i | Bentonite | |
| E 559 | Kaolinitic clays, free of asbestos | |
| E 560 | Natural mixtures of stearites and chlorite | |
| E 561 | Vermiculite | |

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|---|---|---|
| E 562 | Sepiolite | |
| E 563 | Sepiolitic Clay | |
| E 566 | Natrolite-Phonolite | |
| 1g568 | Clinoptilolite of sedimentary origin, [All species] | |
| 1g599 | Illite-montmorillonite-kaolinite | |
| E 599 | Perlite | |
| **Sensory additives** | | |
| ex2a | Astaxanthin | only when derived from organic sources, such as organic crustacean shells<br>only in the feed ration for salmon and trout within the limit of their physiological needs<br>if no astaxanthin derived from organic sources are available, astaxanthin from natural sources may be used such as Astaxanthin-rich Phaffia rhodozym |
| ex2b | Flavouring compounds *Castanea sativa* Mill.: Chestnut extract | Only extracts from agricultural products |
| **Substances for reduction of the contamination of feed mycotoxins** | | |
| 1m588 | Bentonite | |
| **Nutritional additives** | | |
| 3a | Vitamins and provitamins | Derived from agricultural products<br>If derived synthetically, only those identical to vitamins derived from agricultural products may be used for aquaculture animals. |
| 3a920 | Betaine anhydrous | Only for monogastric animals.<br>From organic production; if not available, from natural origin. |

| Trace elements | | |
|---|---|---|
| **ID number or Functional Group** | **Substance** | **Conditions of use** |
| E1 Iron | | |
| 3b101 | Iron(II) carbonate (siderite) | |
| 3b103 | Iron(II) sulphate monohydrate | |
| 3b104 | Iron(II) sulphate heptahydrate | |
| 3b201 | Potassium iodide | |
| 3b202 | Calcium iodate, anhydrous | |
| 3b203 | Coated granulated calcium iodate anhydrous | |
| 3b301 | Cobalt(II) acetate tetrahydrate | |
| 3b302 | Cobalt(II) carbonate | |
| 3b303 | Cobalt(II) carbonate hydroxide (2:3) monohydrate | |
| 3b304 | Coated granulated cobalt(II) carbonate | |
| 3b305 | Cobalt(II) sulphate heptahydrate | |
| 3b402 | Copper(II) carbonate dihydroxy monohydrate | |
| 3b404 | Copper(II) oxide | |
| 3b405 | Copper(II) sulphate, pentahydrate | |
| 3b409 | Dicopper chloride trihydroxide (TBCC) | |
| 3b502 | Manganese (II) oxide | |
| 3b503 | manganous sulfate, monohydrate | |

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|---|---|---|
| 3b603<br><br>3b604<br><br>3b605<br><br>3b609<br><br>3b612 | zinc oxide<br><br>zinc sulphate heptahydrate<br><br>Zinc sulphate monohydrate<br><br>Zinc chloride hydroxide monohydrate (TBZC)<br><br>Zinc chelate of protein hydrolysates | From organic soy production if available |
| 3b701 | Sodium molybdate dihydrate | |
| 3b801<br>3b802<br>3b803<br><br>3b810<br><br>3b811<br><br>3b812<br><br>3b813<br><br>3b817 | Sodium selenite<br>Coated granulated selenite<br>Sodium selenate<br><br>Selenised yeast, Saccharomyces cerevisiae CNCM I-3060, inactivated<br><br>Selenised yeast, Saccharomyces cerevisiae NCYC R397, inactivated<br><br>Selenised yeast, Saccharomyces cerevisiae CNCM I-3399, inactivated<br><br>Selenised yeast, Saccharomyces cerevisiae NCYC R646, inactivated<br><br>Selenised yeast, Saccharomyces cerevisiae NCYC R645, inactivated | |
| **Zootechnical additives** | | |
| 4a, 4b, 4c and 4d | Enzymes and micro-organisms in the category of "Zootechnical additives" | |
| **Product or substance** | | **Conditions for use** |
| Cholesterol | | product obtained from wool grease (lanolin) by saponification, separations and crystallisation, from shellfish or other sources |

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| | to secure the quantitative dietary needs of penaeid shrimps and freshwater prawns (Macrobrachium spp.) in the grow-out stage and in earlier life stages in nurseries and hatcheries<br><br>when not available from organic production |
| Non-organic spices, herbs and molasses provided that: | • only when organic is not available<br>• must be produced or prepared without chemical solvents, and use is limited to 1% of the feed ration of a given species calculated as a percentage of the dry matter of feed from agricultural origin |
| Phytoplankton and zooplankton | only in the larval rearing of organic juveniles |

| Standards | Guidance |
|---|---|
| SA NI 13.8.2 Synthetic amino-acids and growth promoters are prohibited<br>You must not use synthetic amino-acids or growth promoters.<br>*(EC) 2018/848 Annex II Part III(3.1.3.1)(e)* | |
| SA NI 13.8.3 Calcified seaweed is prohibited<br>You must **not** use calcified seaweed, lithothamne or maerl in feeds for aquaculture livestock.<br>*Soil Association higher standard* | R To demonstrate this, keep records of the feeds you use and the ingredients they contain.<br><br>S A sourcing requirement applies for SA processors. |

Why?

Calcified seaweed, lithothamne and maerl refer to a group of coralline algae, primarily of the species *Phymatolithon calcateum, Lithothamnion glaciale* and *Lithothamnion corallioides*. Calcified seaweed beds are relatively scarce and are important habitats which hold impressive levels of biodiversity, harbouring many rare and commercially valuable species. Owing to their extremely slow growth rate, calcified seaweed beds are very fragile and cannot sustain even limited extraction without deterioration.

Commercial extraction from the sea has already led to the destruction of several beds in Europe and current levels of protection provided are unlikely to prevent further destruction and deterioration.

## SA NI 13.9 Disease prevention and veterinary treatment

| Standards | Guidance |
|---|---|
| **SA NI 13.9.1 Animal health management plan**<br>1. You must keep an animal health management plan. This must comply with Council Directive 2006/88/EC of 24 October 2006 on animal health requirements for aquaculture animals and products and on the prevention and control of certain diseases in aquatic animals.<br>2. It must detail the biosecurity and disease prevention practices you have put in place and include a written agreement for health counselling, proportionate to the production unit, with qualified aquaculture animal health services. They must visit the farm not less than once per year and for bivalve shellfish not less than once every two years.<br>*(EC) 2018/848 Annex II Part III(3.1.4.1)(c)* | (R) A copy of the written agreement of health counselling and your animal health management plan will be checked at inspection. |
| **SA NI 13.9.2 Disease prevention**<br>1. The design and management of your organic aquaculture system must rely primarily on preventive measures of disease control. This includes:<br>a) appropriate siting<br>b) optimal design of the holdings<br>c) the application of good husbandry and management practices<br>d) regular cleaning and disinfection of premises<br>e) high quality feed<br>f) appropriate stocking density, and<br>g) breed and strain selection<br>h) good water quality, flow and exchange rate.<br><br>2. The use of immunological veterinary medicines is allowed.<br>*(EC) 2018/848 Annex II Part III (3.1.4.1)(a)(b)(3.1.4.3)* | (R) In your aquaculture management plan detail information on design and management of your organic aquaculture system in relation to prevention of disease. |

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| **SA NI 13.9.3 Sea lice monitoring and sea lice plan**<br><br>1. You must assess and document your infestation rates of sea lice regularly. *<br>2. To protect wild salmonids, leading up to and during defined sensitive periods you must take regular samples. Samples must be taken at least once every 14 days.<br>3. Your Aquaculture Management Plan must include all necessary measures taken to reduce the risk of sea lice to wild salmonids before and during sensitivity periods. Where possible this must be written in coordination with local organisations and public authorities.<br>4. Where sea lice levels exceed thresholds established in your farming area, you must inform the Soil Association within 14 days of sample date. You must provide evidence of what action is taken to reduce levels.<br><br>*Soil Association higher standard* | *Sampling may be suspended for a short period to protect animal welfare and in line with exemptions detailed in national legislation. The reasons for this must be recorded in writing and be agreed in partnership with local authorities. Soil Association must be informed promptly.<br><br>Sea lice sensitivity period is to run from 1st February to 30th June.<br><br>Sea lice are defined as both Lepeopthierus salmonis and episodic occurrences of Caligus spp. |
| **Why?**<br>The control of sea lice is a universal challenge of the salmon industry and threatens wild salmon stocks. The Soil Association must be able to effectively monitor sea lice controls and have insight on what is happening at a farm level. | |
| **SA NI 13.9.4 Fallowing**<br>Your control body will determine whether fallowing is necessary and the appropriate duration if so. In open water containment systems at sea, fallowing must take place after each production cycle.<br>*(EC) 2018/848 Annex II Part III(3.1.4.1)(g)* | You must be able to demonstrate that the duration of your fallowing period will be sufficient to ensure good water quality and fish health and welfare. This will depend on site characteristics and management of the whole production area including water exchange and health and disease history. |
| **SA NI 13.9.5 Cleaning structures during fallowing**<br><br>1. When you put a cage or other structure used for aquaculture animal production into fallow it must be emptied, disinfected and left empty before being used again.<br>2. You must remove uneaten fish feed, faeces and dead animals promptly to: | Ⓡ Describe in your aquaculture management plan the steps you take to clean structures before fallowing. |

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| a) avoid risk of significant effect on water quality<br>b) minimise disease risks, and<br>c) avoid attracting insects or rodents.<br>3. You may use ultraviolet light and ozone to clean structures only in hatcheries and nurseries.<br>*(EC) 2018/848 Annex II Part III(3.1.4.1)(g)(h)(i)* | |

## SA NI 13.10 Veterinary treatments

| Standards | Guidance |
|---|---|
| **SA NI 13.10.1 Disease treatment**<br>1. If despite the preventative measures you have put in place to protect animal health, a health problem arises, you may use the following veterinary treatments in order of preference:<br>a) homoeopathic remedies<br>b) plants and plant extracts (not those with anaesthetic effects)<br>c) trace elements, metals, natural immunostimulants or authorised probiotics.<br>2. Where these treatments are inappropriate or will not be effective to avoid suffering to the aquaculture animals, allopathic treatment must be used (see standard below).<br>*(EC) 2018/848 Annex II Part III(3.1.4.2)(c)*<br>*(EC) 2018/848 Annex II Part I (1.1)* | (R) Provide details in your aquaculture management plan of:<br>• identification of the relevant disease/infection present on the holding<br>• types of treatment used and method of application<br>• date of application and length of treatment<br>• statutory and organic withdrawal period, and monitoring of effectiveness of treatment.<br><br>The withdrawal periods are set out in standard 13.10.4.<br><br>Ongoing dosing with allopathic veterinary medicines for a disease that is endemic in the water at the site cannot be regarded as one treatment. Where a dose is given to treat an occurrence of the disease that successfully treats the animals, further dosing to treat reoccurrence of the same disease must be regarded as separate treatments. Dosing after episodes that make the fish more susceptible to the disease, such as after vaccination or handling, must be regarded as separate treatments. If dosing is not effective at treating an episode of disease, requiring additional dosing, on an ongoing basis, this would not be regarded as appropriate treatment as it would not be effectively treating the disease. Appropriate and effective treatment must be given to fish where preventative measures have not been successful to prevent health and welfare implications with the fish, even if this may lead to the loss of organic status to the group being treated. |

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| | Organic production must be based on the design and management of your aquaculture operations to prevent disease and promote the health of your livestock. Your aquaculture management plan and veterinary records must make the occurrence of a single treatment course clear and provide evidence for adapting management to prevent the need for further treatments. |
| SA NI 13.10.2 Allopathic treatment<br>1. Allopathic treatment must be used immediately when no other method of treatment can prevent animal suffering or when required by compulsory eradication schemes. Routine prophylactic treatment with synthetic drugs is prohibited.<br>2. Allopathic drug treatments can be used for a maximum of two treatments per year, with the exception of vaccines. However, if the production cycle is less than one year duration, you may treat your stock with only one allopathic treatment.<br>3. If you have to treat your aquaculture animals with any veterinary medicinal product you must inform your certification body or your national control authority before you market the animals as organic.<br>4. You must not sell aquaculture animals as organic if they have received more treatments than is permitted in these organic standards.<br>5. You must treat your animals if required by your national authority for the protection of human and animal health.<br>*(EC) 2018/848 Annex II Part III (3.1.4.2)(a)(b)(d)(g)*<br>*(EC) 2018/848 Annex II Part I (1.1)* | A year period is counted as a rolling 12 months from the date of the first treatment. Health records must clearly identify treatment dates and periods across the lifecycle of the animal. |
| SA NI 13.10.3 Parasite treatments<br>1. With the exclusion of compulsory control schemes operated by national authorities, you may use parasite treatments to a maximum of two courses per year. However, if the production cycle is less than 18 months you may use parasite treatments one course per year.<br>2. You must give preference to the use of cleaner fish for biological control of ectoparasites or freshwater, marine water and sodium chloride solutions. The use of parasite treatments, | You must obtain prior approval from your Certification Officer for all parasite treatments on each occasion.<br><br>Identification, treatment and prevention of parasites can be detailed in your aquaculture management plan.<br><br>Check with local agencies whether you need permission to use cleaner fish and outline how you ensure their welfare in your aquaculture management plan. |

other than through compulsory control schemes operated by Member States, shall be limited as follows:

i. for salmon, to maximum two courses of treatment twice per year, or to one course of treatment once per year where the production cycle is less than 18 months;
ii. for all species, other than salmon, two courses of treatment per year, or to one course of treatment per year where the production cycle is less than 12 months;
iii. for all species, to no more than four courses of treatment in total, regardless of the length of the production cycle of the species;

*(EC) 2018/848 Annex II Part III (3.1.4.1)(3.1.4.2)(e)*

### SA NI 13.10.4 Withdrawal periods

You must employ the following withdrawal periods when treating your aquaculture species.

*(EC) 2018/848 Annex II Part III(3.1.4.2)(f)(g)*

| Treatments | Organic withdrawal period |
|---|---|
| Allopathic veterinary and parasite treatments, including those under compulsory eradication and control schemes | Twice the legal withdrawal period |
| Treatments with no specified withdrawal period | 48 hours |
| You must clearly identify aquaculture animals that have received veterinary medicinal treatments. | |

### SA NI 13.10.5 Storing veterinary medicines

You may store allopathic veterinary medicinal products and antibiotics on holdings provided that they have been prescribed by a veterinarian in connection with a treatment given under standard 13.10.2. They must be stored in a secure location and must be entered in the livestock record as required in standard 12.8.

*(EC) 2018/848 Annex III(7.3)*

Ⓡ Record medicines

### SA NI 13.10.6 The use of organophosphates and avermectin is prohibited

You must not use organophosphate or avermectin-based veterinary medicines. If fish are treated with organophosphates or avermectins they cannot be sold as Soil Association organic.

Soil Association organic status will be lost on animals treated with organophosphate or avermectin-based veterinary medicines. You must inform us when these treatments are used.

Ⓢ A sourcing requirement applies for SA processors.

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| *Soil Association higher standard* | |

**Why?**

Organophosphates (OPs) are the basis for a wide and commonly used range of insecticides and in veterinary medicine are used to treat external parasites. Organophosphates are acutely toxic and have been linked with a range of problems including decreasing male fertility, foetal abnormalities, chronic fatigue syndrome and Parkinson's disease. Organophosphates are especially toxic to the aquatic environment and have a detrimental effect on marine species.
Avermectins are a group of drugs (e.g. ivermectin) used to treat insect infestations in livestock. When used on aquaculture animals, residues are excreted with the faeces and have detrimental effects on the aquatic environment, particularly on sediment-dwelling organisms.

## SA NI 13.11 Transport

| Standards | Guidance |
|---|---|
| **SA NI 13.11.1 Live fish**<br>1. If you transport live fish you must ensure that welfare of the fish is maintained and the duration of the transport is kept to a minimum. This includes:<br>a) Transporting the fish in suitable tanks with clean water which meets their physiological needs in terms of temperature and dissolved oxygen.<br>b) Thoroughly clean, disinfect and rinse tanks before transport of organic fish and fish products.<br>c) Taking precautions to reduce stress. During transport, the density must not reach a level which is detrimental to the species.<br>2. You must keep records to demonstrate compliance with these transport requirements.<br>*(EC) 2018/848 Annex II Part III(3.1.6.6)(4.1,4.2,4.3,4.4)* | (R) In your aquaculture management plan demonstrate how animals are transported and how you monitor to ensure good welfare is maintained. At inspection, we may check your records of oxygen levels, temperature, transport times, stocking densities and cleaning. |

## SA NI 13.12 Conversion periods

| Standards | Guidance |
|---|---|
| **SA NI 13.12.1 Aquaculture sites conversion periods**<br>The following conversion periods for production units must be applied for the following types of aquaculture facilities. | The conversion of aquaculture facilities may take with aquaculture animals present. However, the origin of these animals must meet the requirements set out in standards 13.2. Currently in GB there is no allowance for non-organic |

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| *Soil Association higher standard* | juveniles to be brought onto a holding for on growing or for existing non-organic animals to convert.<br><br>Requests for a reduced conversion period must be submitted to the Certification Team who will seek approval from the competent authority.<br><br>The conversion period cannot begin until your application has been approved.<br><br>Your application will be assessed via an application review stage. The application review will cover a full assessment of your application documentation and management plans. This review will ensure that we have assessed that organic certification is appropriate for your operation, and that you are able to meet the organic standards. We estimate that the application review will take 6 weeks to complete, this is based on submission of all the required information. This timeframe may vary depending on the scope of the application. |

Why?

A core principle of organic production is that the livestock has been kept to full organic standards for the duration of its life. This standard is in place to ensure that Soil Association fish are organic from start to finish.

| Type of facility | Conversion period |
|---|---|
| Facilities that cannot be drained, cleaned and disinfected | 24 months |
| Facilities that have been drained or fallowed | 12 months |
| Facilities that have been drained, cleaned and disinfected | 6 months |
| Open water facilities including those farming bivalve molluscs | 3 months |

*Annex II Part II*

## SA NI 13.13 Bivalves

| Standards | Guidance |
|---|---|
| **SA NI 13.13.1 Scope of the standards**<br>These standards cover the production of mussels (*Mytilus* species), native oysters (*Ostrea edulis*), Pacific, Japanese or cupped oyster (*Crassostrea gigas*). You must also read and comply with section 12.0 General rules of organic aquaculture.<br>*(EC) 2018/848 Annex II Part III(3)* | |
| **SA NI 13.13.2 Growing area**<br>1. You may establish a bivalve production unit in the same area of water as organic finfish and seaweed farming, also including gastropod molluscs such as periwinkles, in a polyculture system.<br>2. Your growing area must be of high ecological status and must be in waters which meet the Criteria for Class A or Class B areas as defined in article 18 (6)(8) of Regulation (EU) 2017/625 and Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2019/627.<br>3. Your bivalve production unit must be delimited by posts, floats or other clear markers and must be restrained by net bags, cages or other man-made means as appropriate.<br>4. Organic shellfish farms must minimise risks to species of conservation interest.<br>*(EC) 2018/848 Annex II Part III(3.1.3.2)(b)* | Please see section 13.1 for guidance on suitable site selection. |
| **SA NI 13.13.3 Nutritional requirements**<br>Your bivalves must receive all their nutritional requirements from nature, except in the case of juveniles reared in hatcheries and nurseries.<br>*(EC) 2018/848 Annex II Part III(3.1.3.2)(a)* | |
| **SA NI 13.13.4 Predators**<br>If you use predator nets, their design must not allow diving birds to be harmed.<br>*(EC) 2018/848 Annex II Part III(3.2.2)(c)* | (R) In your aquaculture management plan, include details of how you prevent and deter predators. If you use predator nets, demonstrate in your plan how you ensure and monitor that these are not causing harm to diving birds or mammals. |

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| **SA NI 13.13.5 Sourcing of seed**<br>1. With permission from the competent authority you may use wild seed from outside the boundaries of the production unit if permitted by local legislation and if it causes no significant damage to the environment, but the seed must come from:<br>a) settlement beds which are unlikely to survive the winter or are surplus to requirements, or<br>b) natural settlement of shellfish seed on collectors.<br>2. You must keep records of how, where and when wild seed was collected to allow traceability back to the collection area.<br>*(EC) 2018/848 Annex II Part III(3.2.1)* | |
| **SA NI 13.13.6 Cupped oyster**<br>For the cupped oyster (*Crassostrea gigas*) you must preferably use stock which is selectively bred to reduce spawning in the wild.<br>*(EC) 2018/848 Annex II Part III(3.2.1)(b)* | |
| **SA NI 13.13.7 Bivalve management**<br>1. Your stocking densities must not be above those used for non-organic shellfish in the locality. You must make adjustments to sorting, thinning and stocking density according to the biomass and to ensure animal welfare and high product quality.<br>2. You must remove biofouling organisms by physical means or by hand and where appropriate return them to the sea away from shellfish farms.<br>3. You may treat shellfish once during the production cycle with a lime solution to control competing fouling organisms.<br>*(EC) 2018/848 Annex II Part III(3.2.4)(a)(b)* | Include details of how you manage biofouling organisms in your aquaculture management plan. |
| **SA NI 13.13.8 Cultivation** | |

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| 1. You may use long-lines, rafts, bottom culture, net bags, cages, trays, lantern nets, bouchot poles and other containment systems.<br>2. You may only cultivate bivalves on the sea bed where it will not cause significant environmental impact at the collection or growing sites.<br>3. You must provide evidence of minimal environmental impact through a survey and report on the site and surrounding area to your certification body or the national control authority. The report must be added as a separate chapter to your sustainability management plan.<br><br>*(EC) 2018/848 Annex II Part III(3.2.4)(a)(b)*<br>*(EC) 2020/464 Art. 22* | |
| ### SA NI 13.13.9 Specific cultivation rules for mussels<br>For mussel cultivation on rafts the number of drop-ropes must not exceed 1/$m^2$ of surface area. The maximum drop-rope length must not exceed 20 metres.<br>You must not thin-out drop-ropes during the production cycle, however you may sub-divide drop-ropes without increasing stocking density at the outset.<br><br>*(EC) 2020/464 Annex II Part IX* | |
| ### SA NI 13.13.10 Specific cultivation rules for oysters<br>You must meet the standard for mussel cultivation above (13.13.10).<br>Additionally:<br>a) If you use cultivation in bags on trestles these must be set out to avoid the formation of a total barrier along the shoreline.<br>b) You must position the oysters carefully on the beds in relation to tidal flow, in order to optimise production.<br>*EC) 2018/848 Annex II Part III(3.2.5)*<br>*EC) 2020/464 Art. 22* | |
| ### SA NI 13.13.11 Conversion and fallowing for bivalve mollusc production | Please refer to standard 13.12 for conversion periods for bivalve molluscs. |

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| You do not have to fallow sites for bivalve mollusc production.<br>*(EC) 2018/848 Annex II Part III(3.1.4.1)(g)* | |

## SA NI 13.14 Cleaning

| Standards | Guidance |
|---|---|
| ### SA NI 13.14.1 General cleaning measures<br>1. You must have suitable cleaning measures in place to avoid contamination and maintain the integrity of your products throughout production, processing and storage.<br>2. You must monitor your cleaning measures to make sure they are effective, adjusting measures where appropriate, and keep records to show that you have done this.<br>3. If you process or store both non-organic and organic at the same site, you must ensure organic processing or storage is only carried out once suitable cleaning of the equipment and/or storage area(s) has been carried out.<br>*EC) 2018/848 Art. 28;*<br>*EC) 2018/848 Annex II Part IV(1.2, 1.4, 1.5);*<br>*EC) 2018/848 Annex III(7.4)(c)* | For permitted cleaning chemicals in aquaculture facilities please refer to section 13.14.5.<br><br>In your aquaculture management plan set out your cleaning procedures, with details of how you clean harvesting/handling equipment, storage areas and equipment used for organic production. Explain how you limit the risk of contamination of organic product from microbial contaminants, from cleaning chemicals, non-permitted substances and from non-organic product.<br>You will need to ensure your staff, or contractors using their own equipment, are trained to carry out effective cleaning to prevent contamination of your organic products.<br><br>Your cleaning procedures need to be clear and to set out what will be cleaned, how, with what frequency (e.g. daily, weekly, monthly or annually), who is responsible, what chemicals and equipment needs to be used and details of the final rinse of food contact surfaces with potable water (where appropriate).<br><br>**Cleaning chemicals**<br>Detergents, disinfectants, sterilisers and sanitisers allowed for use in the food industry may be used for cleaning equipment and storage areas. Residues of these chemicals must be removed from surfaces in contact with organic food so that they do not contaminate organic products, by carrying out a final rinse with potable water.<br><br>Sanitizers containing quaternary ammonium compounds or QACs/QUATs, such as Benzalkonium Chloride (BAC) or Didecyl Dimethyl Ammonium Chloride (DDAC) are difficult to remove from surfaces, and if not adequately rinsed will result in residues in the organic product. Brand names include Deosan, Detsan, Foamsan, Quatsan. |

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| | If you use these to clean harvesting/handling equipment, storage boxes, dairy equipment or work surfaces which are in direct contact with organic products, you need to take measures to ensure they are not contaminating your organic product. For example:<br>• Switch to a cleaning product that does not contain QACs or other substances difficult to rinse and likely to contaminate products that come in contact with them.<br>• Check whether your rinsing procedures are sufficient by testing food contact surfaces to ensure no residues remain.<br><br>A list of products for cleaning and disinfection substances and products will be made available in 2026.<br><br>**Non-dedicated equipment**<br>Where non-dedicated equipment or storage is used you must be able to demonstrate that the cleaning carried out before it is used for organic products is effective. This may require sampling or swabbing for analysis to demonstrate that the procedures you have in place are effective.<br><br>If you process or store non-organic aquaculture products you will need to have a system for checking that cleaning has been undertaken and that it is effective to remove residues of non-organic material and/or previous production. This could involve visual inspection, micro-biological testing, testing to ensure sanitisers have been removed from organic food contact surfaces or ATP testing.<br><br>The European Commission will be releasing detailed rules for cleaning and disinfection of processing and storage facilities in 2026. |
| SA NI 13.14.2 Bio-fouling<br>You must remove bio-fouling organisms only by physical means and, where appropriate, return them to the sea at a distance from the farm.<br>*(EC) 2018/848 Annex II Part III(3.1.4.1)(e)* | In your aquaculture management plan detail how you manage the removal of bio-fouling organisms. |
| SA NI 13.14.3 Cleaning equipment | |

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| You must only clean equipment and facilities by physical or mechanical measures. Where this is not satisfactory, only the substances in standard 13.14.5 may be used.<br>*(EC) 2018/848 Annex III(7.5)*<br>*EC) 2018/848 Annex II Part III(3.1.4.1)(f)* | |
| SA NI 13.14.4 Cleaning and disinfecting<br>You must properly clean and disinfect the holding systems, equipment and utensils on the production unit. You may only use products allowed in these standards.<br>*(EC) 2018/848 Annex II Part III(3.1.4.1)(d)* | At inspection we may ask you to demonstrate how you clean and disinfect the holding systems using the products allowed, and the frequency of cleaning. |
| SA NI 13.14.5 Products for cleaning and disinfection for aquaculture animals and seaweed production<br>1. You may only use products which contain the following active substances, for cleaning and disinfection of equipment and facilities in the absence of aquaculture animals (*):<br>a) Ozone<br>b) sodium hypochlorite<br>c) calcium hypochlorite<br>d) calcium hydroxide<br>e) calcium oxide<br>f) caustic soda ***<br>g) alcohol<br>h) potassium permanganate ***<br>i) tea seed cake made of natural camelia seed only for shrimp production***<br>j) mixtures of potassium peroxomonosulphate and sodium chloride producing hypochlorous acid.<br>2. You may use only products which contain the following active substances, for cleaning and disinfection of equipment and facilities in the presence and absence of aquaculture animals (**):<br>a) limestone (calcium carbonate) for pH control<br>b) dolomite for pH correction (use restricted to shrimp production)<br>c) sodium chloride | (R) Your cleaning procedures must document what techniques and products you use. |

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| d) hydrogen peroxide<br>e) sodium percarbonate ***<br>f) organic acids (acetic acid, lactic acid, citric acid)<br>g) humic acid ***<br>h) peroxyacetic acids***<br>i) peracetic and peroctanoic acid<br>j) iodophores (only in the presence of eggs).<br><br>The use of these substances must comply with relevant EU and national provisions as referred to in Article 16(1) of Regulation (EC) No 834/2007, and in particular with Regulation (EU) No 528/2012 and Directive 2001/82/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council.<br>*(*) Regulation (EU) No 528/2012 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 22 May 2012 concerning the making available on the market and use of biocidal products (OJ L 167, 27.6.2012, p. 1)*<br>*(**) Directive 2001/82/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 6 November 2001 on the Community code relating to veterinary medicinal product (OJ L 311, 28.11.2001, P. 1).*<br>*(***) must not be used as a biocide*<br>*(EC) 2021/1165 Annex IV Part A(1)(2)*<br>*(EC) 2021/1165 Annex IV Part D* | |

## SA NI 13.15 Pest control

| Standards | Guidance |
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| **SA NI 13.15.1 Preventing contamination by pests and pest control products**<br>1. You must design and operate your buildings and controls to reduce the risk of contamination by pests. In areas used for housing livestock you must remove faeces, urine and uneaten or spilt food as often as necessary to keep smells to a minimum and avoid attracting insects and rodents. | In your aquaculture management plan describe the measures you have in place to reduce the risk of contamination by pests. This should include measures to prevent and control wild birds, rodents and insects from getting into your buildings such as:<br>• fly screens<br>• effective covers of waste bins<br>• sealing gaps and entry points. |

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| 2. You must ensure when implementing preventative measures in organic areas that you take proportionate & appropriate measures to avoid the risk of contamination of organic products.<br>*(EC) 2018/848 Art. 28 (1)*<br>*(EC) 2018/848 Annex II Part II(1.5.1.7)* | If you use pest control treatments in areas not used for organic production or storage, you must still assess the risk of contamination and take appropriate preventative measures. |
| SA NI 13.15.2 Treating infestations in organic products or areas used for organic products<br>If you find infestation in organic products, on sacks or containers, in areas used for handling/storing organic products or in areas not used for organic products, you must only use pest control methods which do not contaminate the organic product.<br>*(EC) 2018/848 Art. 28* | Ⓡ If you use pest control methods, you will need to keep records of:<br>• what pests you have found<br>• what chemicals, methods and equipment you used on them<br>• who did the treatment, when and which area or equipment was treated, and<br>• what precautions you took to prevent contamination of organic products<br><br>Rodenticides must be used only in tamper-proof bait stations and in places where there is no risk of contaminating products.<br><br>If you use pest control treatments in areas not used for organic production or storage, you must still assess the risk of contamination and take appropriate preventative measures.<br><br>You should make your pest control contractor aware that your unit is handling organic products and that you must comply with pest control procedures in section 13.15 of Soil Association standards.<br><br>**Control methods on organic products**<br>Control methods which are appropriate for use on organic products include:<br>• carbon dioxide or nitrogen<br>• freezing and heating<br>• vacuum treatment<br><br>**Control methods in organic areas**<br>Control methods which are appropriate for use in organic areas include, but are not limited to: |

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| | • desiccant dusts such as diatomaceous earth and amorphous silica, preferably from naturally occurring sources<br>• electric flying insect control units, with shatterproof tubes that are positioned and cleaned correctly<br>• tamper resistant bait stations that contain legally approved pesticides<br>• sticky boards for insects<br>• humane electronic rodent repellents such as floor mats |
| SA NI 13.15.3 Treating infestations in livestock housing<br>If you find an infestation in areas used for housing organic livestock, you must only use the pest control products and rodenticides listed in Annex II of Regulation (EC) No 889/2008. You must ensure that you take proportionate & appropriate measures to avoid the risk of contamination of organic products or toxicity to livestock.<br>*(EC) 2018/848 Art. 28*<br>*(EC) 2018/848 Annex II Part II(1.5.1.7)* | (R) If you use pest control methods, you will need to keep records of:<br>• what pests you have found<br>• what chemicals, methods and equipment you used on them<br>• who did the treatment, when and which area or equipment was treated, and<br>• what precautions you took to prevent contamination of organic products and toxicity to livestock. |
| SA NI 13.15.4 Using rodent glue boards<br>1. You may only use glue boards for rodents as a last resort and you must:<br>a) provide evidence to show that other methods of trapping have failed or are not appropriate, before you use the glue boards<br>b) use them according to industry best practice<br>c) check rodent glue boards at least once every 12 hours including at weekends and Bank Holidays, as required by the Pest Management Alliance code of practice, and<br>d) keep a record of each check.<br>*Soil Association higher standard* | Glue boards should only be used as a last resort and you will need permission from your certification officer before using them. You'll need to let us know what measures you've already tried, such as bait stations and proofing the unit.<br><br>(R) Records of checks<br><br>Glue boards should not be viewed as a permanent solution to a pest problem. Your certification officer is able to give permission to use glue boards but only for short periods of time to allow you to deal with the pest issue. Your pest controller will be able to make recommendations for how many trappings will be required.<br><br>This standard applies to the whole licensed unit. However, we recognise that in some cases you may not have ownership or control over the whole site – e.g. if you are renting a room in a storage facility. In these cases you must make all efforts possible to create a dialogue with the building manager and/or the pest control company responsible for the site to ensure that you are consulted prior to use of glue boards, or other pest control measures which could affect your organic status, such as fogging. |

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| | Please follow this link to the Code of Practice on the Humane Use of Rodent Glue Boards. |

**Why?**

In order to protect public health within high-risk environments, the use of rodent glue boards remains an important last option when all other control methods have been considered and deemed ineffective. However, their use does raise serious animal welfare concerns. This standard ensures that glue boards are only used as a last resort and only by persons who have been given adequate training and are competent in the effective and humane use of this technique.

## SA NI 13.16 Transport, dispatch and receipt of goods

| Standards | Guidance |
|---|---|
| **SA NI 13.16.1 Collection of products and transport to preparation units**<br>If you are collecting organic and non-organic products at the same time, you must have measures in place to prevent any possible mixing or exchanges between organic, in-conversion and non-organic products and you must be able to clearly identify the organic and in-conversion products. Your collection records need to indicate the collection days, hours, collection circuit and the time and date when products were received.<br>*(EC) 2018/848 Art.23 (1)*<br>*(EC) 2018/848 Annex III(1)* | Ⓡ Collection records. |
| **SA NI 13.16.2 Labelling & transporting products**<br>1. If you send organic or in conversion products to another company, including retailers, wholesalers and other licensees for further processing, packing or re-labelling then you must:<br>a) ensure it is transported in appropriate packaging, containers or vehicles closed in such a way that would prevent alteration, including substitution, of the content without manipulation or damage of the seal. Label it clearly, either on the product or on | For additional requirements for labelling of retail packed products, please refer to section 13.18.<br><br>If your product is not prepacked for retail, or it goes on for further processing, you can put ingredient information either on the label, or on a document with the product provided it can be clearly linked with the product. For example, grain moved from a dryer to a mill would need to be accompanied by a delivery note with full supplier address, product information (including organic status), batch, haulier and vehicle identification and consignee address. |

accompanying documentation undeniably linked to it so that the recipient can easily identify:
   i) the product and its organic status
   ii) the name and address of the operator, and, if different, the seller or owner of the product
   iii) Certification code
   iv) Product traceability code, such as batch or lot number
b) traceability code, such as batch or lot number include your certification code, traceability code and % organic content of the product (if less than 95%).

2. If this information is provided on the accompanying documentation, it must also include information on the supplier and/or transporter.
3. You do not need to use closed packaging, containers or vehicles if:
   a) transportation takes place directly between two organically certified operators
   b) the transport includes only organic or in-conversion products
   c) products are accompanied by a document containing the information required in point 1b above
   d) both the sending and receiving operators keep records of the transportation.

*(EC) 2018/848 Annex III(2.1)(2.2)*

4. For Soil Association certified products which are not pre-packaged, (bulk labelling) the label must include either the Soil Association symbol or the words 'Soil Association Organic'. For unpackaged product, (e.g. grain, milk, dispatching unprocessed fruit and vegetables from farm) this information must go on the accompanying paperwork. Refer to standard 5.8.3 for the requirements for use of Soil Association symbol on pre-packaged product (retail packed).

*Soil Association higher standard*

Labelled packaging helps identify organic products and keeps them sealed which limits the risk of contamination and substitution. However there are products that need to be transported in loose bulk, for example milk on a tanker or fruit and vegetables in open top boxes.

Ⓡ Records of transportation of loose organic products

However you choose to transport your products, you will need to make sure you have minimised the risk of contamination or substitution with non-organic products using clear labelling and separation. For example, if you are transporting loose fruit and vegetables in open top boxes, consider transporting the organic or non-organic products in separate vans. Or, close the tops of the boxes containing organic to prevent accidental contamination.

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### Why?

Soil Association certified products have been produced and processed to organic standards that are higher than the EU organic regulation. Writing 'Soil Association Organic' on the packaging helps to identify products that have met these higher standards.

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### SA NI 13.16.3 Receiving organic products

When you receive an organic or in conversion product you must check upon delivery that the product is labelled according to standard 13.16.2 above and packed appropriately so that it cannot be mistaken or mixed up with other products. You must crosscheck that the label on the product matches the information on the accompanying documents and provide an account of how you check goods upon receipt.

*(EC) 2018/848 Annex III Part 5(5)*

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When receiving goods from other units or operators you need to have a system in place for checking the organic status of the products and have records to show these checks are always made.

Ⓡ Please see the record keeping standards in section 12.8 for details of the information you will need to record.

If you cannot be sure about the organic status of a delivery, for example if information is missing or incorrect, you will need to either:

- get written confirmation from the supplier
- send it back
- sell it as non-organic
- use it in non-organic products

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### SA NI 13.16.4 Additional rules for transporting feed

1. In addition to standard 13.16.2, when transporting feed you must:
   a) ensure that the transport of organic feed, in-conversion feed and non-organic feed is effectively separated physically
   b) ensure that the transport of finished organic feed is effectively separated physically or in time from the transport of other finished products
   c) label it clearly, either on the product or on accompanying documentation undeniably linked to it so that the recipient can easily identify:
   d) the product or a description of the compound feedstuff and its organic status
   e) the name and address of the operator, and, if different, the seller or owner of the product.
2. If you use vehicles or containers that have been used to transport non-organic products, you must:
   a) ensure they are thoroughly clean before transporting organic products. The cleaning measures used must be

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Ⓡ Records of cleaning measures

Ⓡ Records of all transport operations

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| appropriate to the risks, and the effectiveness of the measures must be checked before transporting organic products<br>b) assess and implement measures to ensure that non-organic feed cannot be mistaken or mixed up with organic. Where necessary you may be asked to guarantee this<br>c) keep documentary records of these transport operations.<br>3. You must keep records of transport operations, including the quantity of products at the start and of each individual quantity delivered.<br>*(EC) 2018/848 Annex III (2.1 & 2.2)*<br>*EC) 2018/848 Annex III Part 5 (5)* | |

## SA NI 13.17 Storage of products

| Standards | Guidance |
|---|---|
| **SA NI 13.17.1 General separation**<br>You must manage your organic storage areas and containers to:<br>a) to ensure identification of lots<br>b) avoid any mixing with or contamination from products or substances that we do not allow in these standards. Your organic storage areas, containers and products must be clearly identifiable at all times.<br>*(EC) 2018/848 Annex III Part 7(1)* | Demonstrate that your organic products are clearly identified and separated from areas used for other purposes. Examples include, but are not limited to:<br>• identify the room, area, or racking with the word 'organic' to show that it is for storing organic products<br>• identify all organic materials clearly to avoid accidental contamination<br>• have sufficient space or barriers around the organic storage area to stop accidental contamination<br>• only use stores, bins and containers that are made of materials suitable for contact with the food they are to store<br>• dedicate and identify bins and containers as organic<br>• prevent contamination by birds, insects and vermin<br>• clean the stores regularly so that there are no residues which could contaminate organic products or encourage pests.<br><br>Also refer to section 12.9, for details of contamination, and products and substances we do not allow. |
| **SA NI 13.17.2 Handling and separating organic and non-organic products** | Also refer to section 12.9, for details of contamination and products and substances we do not allow. |

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| When you use the same equipment and premises to store and handle both organic and non-organic products you must:<br>a) minimise the risk of mixing organic products with other products and foodstuffs by clearly identifying and separating them during the production process, and<br>b) effectively clean equipment and storage areas used to handle or store non-organic products before handling or storing organic products.<br>*(EC) 2018/848 Annex II Part IV (1.5); Annex III(7.4)* | |
| SA NI 13.17.3 Storing unauthorised inputs on organic units is prohibited<br>The storage of inputs in organic plant, seaweed, livestock and aquaculture production units, which are not permitted under these standards is prohibited.<br>*(EC) 2018/848 Annex III Part 7(2)* | Storing any non-permitted input product on the organic production unit is prohibited. This includes, but is not exclusive to non-permitted fertilisers, cleaning and disinfection products and anti-fouling substances. |

## SA NI 13.18 General Labelling

| Standards | Guidance |
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| **SA NI 13.18.1 Using the term organic**<br>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.<br><br>Terms listed in annex IV of (EC) 2018/848 (also listed in the guidance to this standard) and their derivatives, this includes terms used in the EU to describe organic products. whether alone or in combination, may be used throughout the European Union and in any language listed.<br><br>*(EC) 2018/848 Art. 2(3)*<br>*(EC) 2018/848 Art. 30(1)(2)* | Labelling refers to the way in which you identify your products and show their organic status. The labelling standards apply to:<br>• retail packaging<br>• bulk packaging<br>• the labelling of loose produce for sale in retail outlets<br>• information on delivery notes or invoices for products that are transported in bulk, such as milk<br>• marketing materials<br>• web content.<br><br>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.<br><br>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, pet food), your claims must still be true. In the UK all products are governed by the *Trade Descriptions Act.*<br><br>Examples of other references to organic include, "organically grown"; "organically produced"; "grown/produced using organic principles"; "grown/produced using organic methods".<br><br>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. 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". |

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| | 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.<br>**Labelling legislation**<br>Along with meeting these standards for labelling, you will also need to make sure your labels meet other relevant labelling legislation such as *Regulation 1169/2011* on the provision of food information to consumers, and the *Food Information Regulations*.<br><br>**List of terms for organic (annex IV of (EC) 2018/848)**<br>BG: биологичен.<br>ES: ecológico, biológico, orgánico.<br>CS: ekologické, biologické.<br>DA: økologisk.<br>DE: ökologisch, biologisch.<br>ET: mahe, ökoloogiline.<br>EL: βιολογικό.<br>EN: organic.<br>FR: biologique.<br>GA: orgánach.<br>HR: ekološki.<br>IT: biologico.<br>LV: bioloģisks, ekoloģisks.<br>LT: ekologiškas.<br>LU: biologesch, ökologesch.<br>HU: ökológiai.<br>MT: organiku.<br>NL: biologisch.<br>PL: ekologiczne.<br>PT: biológico.<br>RO: ecologic.<br>SK: ekologické, biologické.<br>SL: ekološki.<br>FI: luonnonmukainen.<br>SV: ekologisk. |

## SA NI 13.18.2 Using the EU organic logo

1. You must display the EU logo on labels of packaged organic products produced in Northern Ireland or the EU.
2. Use of the EU logo is optional on product labelled in a third country.
3. The EU logo is published for use in green as shown below. The reference for single colour printing is Pantone 376, or if you print using four colour process, 50% cyan, 100% yellow.



4. Where colour is not possible you may use black and white.



5. The EU organic logo must:
    a) appear at least 9mm high and 13.5mm wide, or
    b) appear 6mm high for very small packages, and

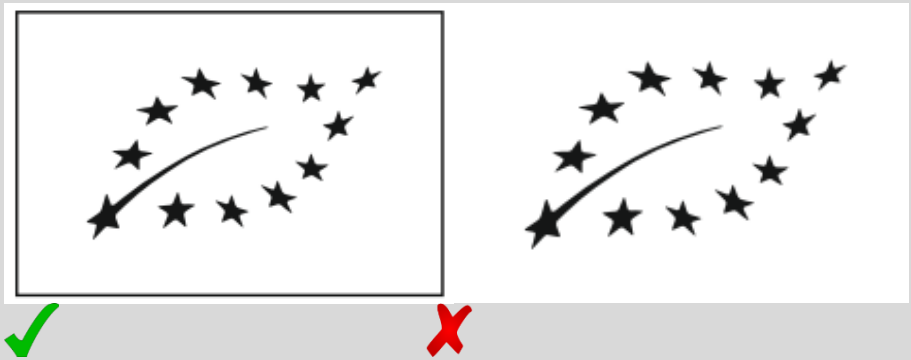
have a proportional height to width ratio of 1:1.5.

6. The EU organic logo may appear:

The use of the logo is mandatory for all organic pre-packaged food produced within Northern Ireland or the European Union. The terms of its use are set by the EU and more information can be found online.

You can download the EU logo in various formats from here.

The white EU logo with the black stars is designed to be used on a dark background only. When the EU logo is used it must appear within a box or a black outline.



If your product is being packed outside the EU, you do not need to apply the EU logo. However, due to the widespread recognition of the EU logo across Europe you may wish to apply it if the products are destined for the EU market.

Products without packaging do not need to display the EU logo (see standard 13.16.2 for details of what you need to include).

Pre-packed products for export only and not for sale on the EU market do not have to use the EU Leaf logo. However, operators must have measures in place to ensure the product cannot be placed on the EU market.

For product pre-packed in the EU, or Northern Ireland, but placed on third country markets the use of the EU logo is optional.

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| a) in negative, if the background of your packaging is dark.<br>b) in the single colour of your packaging if you are only able to print one colour.<br>c) with an outer line around it to improve how it stands out on coloured backgrounds.<br>d) in conjunction with other logos and text referring to organic, providing this does not overlap, obscure or change the logo.<br>7. The organic production logo of the European Union shall not be used in the labelling, the presentation or the advertising of such products originating from mass catering, and shall not be used to advertise the mass caterer.<br>*(EC)2018/848 Art. 2(3)*<br>*(EC) 2018/848 Art. 33(1)(4)(5)*<br>*(EC) 2018/848 32(1)(2)(3)* | |
| SA NI 13.18.3 Declaring ingredient origin<br>1. When the EU logo is used you must also include a declaration in relation to the EU - 'EU agriculture', 'non-EU agriculture', or 'EU/non-EU agriculture'. This must appear:<br>a) in the same visual field as the EU organic log,<br>b) immediately below the certifier code, and<br>c) no more prominent than the sales description.<br>2. The word 'agriculture' may be replaced by 'aquaculture' where appropriate.<br>3. You can replace the words 'UK', or 'Non-UK', 'EU' and 'non-EU' with a particular country if all ingredients were farmed or grown there. In this case only one declaration is required. You do not have to count small amounts of ingredients up to a total of 5% of the agricultural ingredients.<br>*(EC) 2018/848 Art. 32(1)(2)*<br>*(EC) 2021/279 Art. 3(3)* | If the EU logo is used the declaration needs to be in the same visual field as the EU logo. |
| SA NI 13.18.4 Using the Soil Association symbol on products | For more information on how to become certified to the Soil Association standards and the use of our symbol, please refer to section 12.3. |

1. You can only use the Soil Association symbol on organic products that meet the Soil Association standards.
2. You must reproduce the symbol from original artwork and it must appear:
   a) complete and upright
   b) in proportion to the product description
   c) at least 10mm in diameter (example 'A')
   d) in black or white (examples 'B' and 'C')
   e) clearly visible
   f) clear and legible over the whole of a background, for example if used over a photograph (example 'D')
   g) no less prominent than the EU logo













3. If you wish to use the symbol at a smaller size than 10mm in diameter (for example on very small packaging) or in a colour other than black and white, you must seek permission first.
4. The symbol must not appear:
   a) against a background that affects the legibility of the symbol (example 'E')

Retailers who are exempt from being certified (standard 12.3.2) may sell Soil Association certified products which include the SA symbol on their labelling and make use of the Soil Association symbol in the marketing of those products provided it is clear and unambiguous as to which products the symbol applies.

You can download the symbol pack directly from our website. We also have the symbol available for use in Welsh.

If you are using a Soil Association certified sub-contractor to label your product they may apply the Soil Association symbol to your packaging. Organic operators certified by other certification bodies can also apply the Soil Association symbol on your packs, but only if there is a *Contract Symbol User Agreement* in place with them. Please talk to your Certification Officer to find out more.

b) incomplete
c) at an angle
d) within an extra circle either of an outline or solid colour (example 'F')
e) in more than one colour (example 'G')
f) with a different font or typeface (example 'H')

5. Examples of how not to use the symbol are shown below.













*Soil Association higher standard*

## Why?

The Soil Association symbol is the most recognised organic trademark in the UK and has gained the trust, respect and confidence of consumers and producers across the globe. The Soil Association symbol demonstrates that an organic food or non-food product meets our higher standards for animal welfare, health, consumer protection and the protection of the natural environment.

| Standards | Guidance |
|---|---|
| SA NI 13.18.5 Using the Soil Association symbol off-product<br>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 buyers as to which products the symbol applies. | 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. 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 |

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| *Soil Association higher standard* | 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".<br><br>You can download the symbol pack directly from our website. We also have the symbol available for use in Welsh. |
| Why?<br>The Soil Association symbol should only be used in relation to products or enterprises certified to Soil Association standards to avoid misleading consumers. | |

## SA NI 13.19 Making claims on your labels

| Standards | Guidance |
|---|---|
| **SA NI 13.19.1 Using accurate descriptions**<br>1. The term 'organic' can only be used to describe products (in labels, advertising and commercial documents on products) that meet the requirements of these standards, unless the term is not being used in relation to agricultural products in food or feed, or clearly have no connection to organic production.<br><br>2. You must **not** use any terms, including terms used in trademarks, company names and practices, labels or advertising, that could mislead consumers into believing products are organic when they are not.<br>*(EC) 834/2007 Art.23(2)* | Your sales description and product name will need to accurately describe your product. You can't use the word organic, even if it is part of your company trade name, in relation to non-organic products (e.g. on labels). Refer to standard 13.8.1 for further details.<br><br>Substantiating claims<br><br>You will need to be able to substantiate any claims that you make on your labels.<br>For example: You should not use phrases such as 'GMO free' unless you can prove this, if challenged. Instead you could use:<br>• 'organic standards prohibit the use of GM materials', or<br>• 'non-GM'.<br><br>You should not use phrases such as 'pesticide free' unless you can prove this, if challenged. Instead you could use:<br>• 'organic agriculture aims to avoid the use of artificial pesticides and fertilisers'<br>• 'organic standards restrict the use of artificial pesticides and fertilisers', or<br>• 'grown under organic standards which minimise the use of artificial pesticides and fertilisers'. |

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| | We worked closely with the Advertising Standards Authority to draw up a document of approved advertising claims you can make when selling organic. You can find a copy on our website.<br><br>Labelling must not be misleading.<br><br>You need to make sure that the way you label your products is not misleading.<br>For example, if:<br>• you label your product as 'organic mint biscuits', it must contain organic mint<br>• your product does not contain organic mint, you can only label it as 'organic biscuits with mint'<br>• you label your product as 'organic strawberry ice cream' it needs to contain organic strawberries<br>• your product does not contain organic strawberries but uses a natural strawberry flavouring instead, it could only be labelled as 'organic ice cream with strawberry flavour'<br>• your company name includes the word organic, you cannot use it on non-organic products. For example, you could not use the name 'Brown Farm Organics' on non-organic products.<br><br>**Labelling claims**<br>Food labelling legislation is harmonised at an EU level. In England, responsibility for food labelling legislation and policy is split across Defra, the Food Standards Agency (FSA) and the Department of Health (DH). For Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland all domestic standards legislation is the responsibility of the FSA.<br><br>Visit this website for details. |
| SA NI 13.19.2 Aquaculture products labelling<br>1. You must not label wild-caught aquaculture animals as organic.<br>2. Aquaculture products cannot be sold as in conversion. | Organic aquaculture products include:<br>• fish<br>• shellfish<br>• prawns |

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| *(EC) 834/2007 Art.1(2)* | • seaweed<br>• micro-algae. |
| 3. You must describe organic fish as farmed in the sales description and in any advertising literature.<br>4. For multi-ingredient products containing organic fish, you must refer to the fact they are farmed somewhere on the label.<br>*Soil Association higher standard* | |
| Why?<br>These standards are intended to provide transparency and clarity for consumers about the origin of organic fish. Fish can only be called organic if they have been farmed to organic aquaculture standards. Wild-caught fish can never be described as organic. By requiring labels to specify that organic fish are farmed, consumers are less likely to be confused about how organic fish are produced. | |

| Standards | Guidance |
|---|---|
| SA NI 13.19.3 Labelling requirements for licensees **(including retailers, farm shops and farmers' market** stalls) selling direct to consumers<br>You must display your certificate of registration in a way that is clearly visible to your customers. If only some of your products are organic or if your organic supply is sporadic, you also need to provide additional information so that it is clear which products or produce the organic certificate refers to.<br>*Soil Association higher standard* | In order to make it clear which products your organic certificate relates to, you could also display your trading schedule which lists all the products you are certified to sell. If your organic supply is sporadic, or if the certificate only relates to some items that you are selling, you could add an explanatory note making it clear which products the certificate relates to, and how these are indicated.<br><br>Display the certificate in a sensible location in store. For example, if your store is only licensed to cover the loose fruit and vegetables you sell, then put the certificate near the produce.<br><br>Online retailers do not have to include their certificate of registration on their website, but they must indicate which products are covered by their Soil Association organic certification. Refer to use of Soil Association symbol in standard 13.18.4. |
| Why?<br>This standard helps to avoid misleading consumers by making it clear which products on sale are organic. | |

## SA NI 13.20 Packaging

Following feedback from licensees we have paused the implementation of our 2024/25 updated packaging standards. Whenever we review our higher standards, the process is focused on achieving impact through best practice and reasonable implementation. The implementation of the updated packaging standards has highlighted challenges with conveying technical information about packaging through supply chains and so has been paused until further notice whilst we undertake a further review. This is an important topic which we are committed to getting right. Please direct any feedback to standards@soilassociation.org

| Standards | Guidance |
|---|---|
| **SA NI 13.20.1 Scope**<br>1. These standards apply to packaging of products that you introduce into the supply chain.<br>2. We define packaging as all primary (retail), secondary (grouping, display) and tertiary (transport) materials used for:<br>a) Containing<br>b) Protecting<br>c) Preserving<br>d) Handling<br>e) Storage<br>f) Delivery<br>g) Labelling<br>h) marketing, and<br>i) presentation of your products.<br>Note – we include bulk bins but not transport pallets in this definition.<br>*Soil Association higher standard* | **Packaging legislation**<br>This standard applies to products you process, pack or label, (including on farm), or have contract made for you, (including if you're a contracted symbol user). This standard does not apply if you purchase an already certified product (for example, a wholesaler buying an already certified product). In this case you do not have to supply information on the packaging of that purchased product.<br><br>You must make sure your packaging meets all relevant legislation relating to packaging, packaging waste and materials in contact with food.<br>For example, for products sold in the EU such legislation would include, but is not limited to:<br>• the Defra regulations on extended producer responsibility for packaging products.<br>• the *European Parliament and Council Directive on Packaging and Packaging Waste (94/62/EC).*<br>• the *European Standard for Compostable Packaging (EN13432)* – if you are using compostable or biodegradable packaging.<br>• Applicable legality legislation for cellulose based materials, this means the UK Timber Regulations in GB, and the EU Deforestation Regulations in Northern Ireland and the EU.<br><br>Environmental information claims and symbols on your packaging need to be clear, truthful and accurate. In the UK, you will need to make sure your packaging conforms to the Defra Green Claims code. For further information on what constitutes primary, secondary and tertiary packaging please refer to the Defra definitions of packaging class data. |

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| | These standards do not apply to outer packaging used to deliver the product to consumers via postal/courier service, such as postal bags/envelopes, boxes and other packaging materials used to protect contents.<br><br>These standards do not apply to retail bags used by licensed operators, for example, bags for loose fruit and veg used by a retailer or farmers' market.<br><br>To ensure that your packaging products are as widely recycled as possible we recommend using the OPRL guidelines on labelling to communicate whether products are recyclable at kerbside across the UK. |
| Why?<br>The production, use and disposal of packaging can have a big impact on the environment and human health. We believe that organic products should be packaged in ways that reduce the negative impacts of packaging. This fits with the principles of protecting the environment and biodiversity that underpin organic food and farming and meets consumer expectations of organic products.<br><br>Packaging serves an important role in preventing food waste by protecting and extending the shelf life of products. It also helps to protect consumers by preventing contamination and substitution of organic products with non-organic alternatives. These packaging standards aim to maximise the benefits and avoid the negative impacts of packaging. | |
| SA NI 13.20.2 Chlorine bleached paper or cardboard<br>If you use corrugate, bleached paper or cardboard, it must be totally chlorine free (TCF) or elemental chlorine free (ECF). Recycled paper must be process chlorine free (PCF).<br>*Soil Association higher standard* | Demonstrate that you have not used chlorine-based processes in manufacture, for example with a packaging specification for all materials used kept on file. |
| Why?<br>The use of chlorine bleaching has a high environmental impact and its manufacture can result in the release of toxic chemicals such as dioxins and other pollutants. | |
| SA NI 13.20.3 Paper, card and wood-pulp packaging products*<br>Any paper, card and pulp packaging materials from forest ecosystems must be sourced responsibly.<br><br>*Soil Association higher standard*<br><br>*** The implementation of this standard is paused while a review is undertaken.** | Adequate evidence of compliance with this standard is demonstration that packaging products carry certification from Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) or the Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification (PEFC).<br><br>You must ensure that the invoices for paper, card and wood-pulp products you purchase include a valid chain of custody claim from FSC or PEFC.<br><br>Licensees can:<br>• source products which carry source FSC or PEFC certification from |

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| | suppliers,<br>• obtain an independent FSC or PEFC chain of custody certificate,<br>• establish FSC or PEFC group certification with other businesses (suitable for small businesses).<br><br>See the FSC website and/or the PEFC website for more information on the certification process and to obtain approved materials.<br><br>When using recycled paper/card material your packaging must be compliant with the approved certification schemes from PEFC or FSC, for example for FSC these include 'FSC Mix' and 'FSC Recycled' labels, more information on FSC labelling is available here.<br><br>This requirement does not apply when paper/card is derived from outside of forest ecosystems, this can include from agricultural wastes and grasses such as miscanthus. Non-timber forest products (e.g. bamboo or cork) are not within the scope of the standard but we recommend FSC/PEFC certification in sought where applicable for these products. |

Why?

Forests are fundamental in responding to the challenges we face, and to ensure a sustainable future. They regulate ecosystems, protect biodiversity, support livelihoods and help stabilise the climate. Paper packaging makes up more than half of the paper and pulp used in Europe, and this is projected to rise as many look to transition away from plastic packaging. Ensuring that products are deforestation-free is a core goal for the organic movement.

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| SA NI 13.20.4 Plastic materials, coatings, dyes or inks containing phthalates*<br>You must **not** use plastic materials, coatings, dyes or inks that contain phthalates.<br>*Soil Association higher standard*<br><br>***The implementation of the changes to this standard are paused while a review is undertaken.** | Demonstrate that you have not used these materials, for example with a packaging specification for all materials used kept on file.<br><br>The restriction applies to plastic materials, coatings, dyes, or inks in contact with foodstuffs.<br><br>To avoid phthalates in packaging materials we recommend:<br>a. avoid PVC and use plastics that do not require plasticizers for flexibility, such as polyethylene, e.g., PET, HDPE, and LDPE.<br>b. using non-phthalate-based plasticizers which are widely available on the market, see the ChemSec marketplace for more options.<br>c. consider whether packaging is necessary or if there are non-plastic alternatives. |
| Why?<br>Phthalates are a group of chemicals used as a plasticizer in the manufacture of many plastics, giving flexibility to more brittle materials. Phthalates can have a negative impact on human and environmental health, including endocrine disruption in humans and effects on reproduction in all studied animal groups. They are not chemically bound to the material to which they are added meaning they can continuously leach into food products as a food contact material or into the environment. | |

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| **SA NI 13.20.5 PVC and other chlorinated plastics*** <br>Polyvinyl chloride (PVC) or any other chlorinated plastics can only be used when alternative materials that deliver a technically (or legally) required function are **not** available. See guidance for more details. <br>*Soil Association higher standard* | You must demonstrate that you have not used these materials, for example with a packaging specification for all materials used kept on file.<br><br>This **restriction applies to all chlorinated plastics** which includes:<br>• polyvinyl chloride (PVC)<br>• vinyl chloride<br><br>There are some specific circumstances where we are aware that no functional alternatives to PVC or chlorinated plastics currently exist. For example, in cases where packaging must have adequate barrier properties to comply with food safety requirements. These must be demonstrated as part of the packaging submission form.<br><br>Packaging applications where the use of PVC or chlorinated plastics can be used:<br>• metal jar lids or caps (e.g. for jams, sauces and baby food)<br>• tamper evident seals on jar lids or caps, and<br>• linings or seals of coffee capsules or pods<br><br>We will keep these exceptions under review as innovation for functional alternatives develops. |
| **Why?**<br>The production, use and disposal of PVC are associated with a range of environmental and human health issues. PVC often contains additives which are added to improve flexibility and plasticity, including phthalates. PVC can also contain other toxic substances such as chlorinated paraffins, organic tin compounds and alkyl phenols. Chlorinated plastic materials are very difficult to recycle and can act as a contaminant when added to other plastic recycling systems, rendering output materials unfit for use.<br><br>The environmental hazards of PVC go beyond those associated with other plastics. Some of today's most worrying environmental contaminants are released during the production of PVC or its feedstocks and during the disposal of PVC products. | |
| **SA NI 13.20.6 Non-GM packaging** <br>You must **not** use packaging materials or substances that contain, have been derived from, or manufactured using genetically modified organisms or genetically engineered enzymes, unless alternative materials are not available or not possible to verify, as indicated in the guidance section of this standard. | You must seek non-GM sources of packaging materials. This applies to all materials derived from plant-based sources, including:<br>• polylactic acid (PLA)<br>• polyhydroxyalkanoates (PHA)<br>• polybutylene succinate (PBS)<br>• different starch blends. |

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| *Soil Association higher standard* | To mitigate the risk of GM source material in packaging products we recommend you request product specification lists for any compostable or biodegradable packaging products. Biopolymers are often made from natural sugar sources derived from crops such as maize and sugarcane, which are both considered GM risk crops. When sourcing materials it is important to request confirmation from your supplier of the source crop material and whether it is from a country where GM crops are permitted.<br><br>Adequate demonstration of non-GM for packaging materials includes:<br><br>• Raw materials from certified organic production<br>• Non-GMO Project certification (more info here)<br>• IP or PCR testing results for the raw materials<br><br>It is not technically possible to verify the non-GM status of certain components at different stages of the packaging manufacturing process. As a result, such components are exempt from the requirements of these standards. The exempt components are:<br>• glues,<br>• labels,<br>• inks and dyes applied to packaging products,<br>• biodegradable coatings,<br>• lids containing epoxydised soybean oil (ESBO),<br>• starch used in paperboard manufacture, and,<br>• enzymes used in the packaging manufacturing process.<br><br>This standard also applies to cotton teabag strings. Using organic teabag strings means you automatically meet the requirements of this standard. If your tea bag strings are non-organic you will need to provide details of the country of origin of the cotton used in them, and/or an IP certificate to prove they are not made with genetically modified cotton. |
| Why?<br>Genetic modification (GM) is counter to the principles and practice of organic food and farming and does not meet consumer expectation of organic products. Whilst most packaging derived from GM materials no longer contain GM DNA, they are still derived from raw materials which have been genetically modified. Considering the increased global demand for plant-based plastic materials and future projections for growth in the sector, there is a risk that packaging may become a significant driver of GM agriculture. | |

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| **SA NI 13.20.7 BPA and other bisphenols in food-contact materials**<br>You must not intentionally use Bisphenol A (BPA) or other bisphenols in materials that will be in direct contact with foodstuffs.<br>*Soil Association higher standard* | Demonstrate that you have not used BPA or other bisphenols in your food contact materials, for example with a packaging specification for all materials used kept on file.<br><br>Bisphenol A (BPA) is a chemical found in some plastics and used in the manufacture of epoxy resins. It is commonly found in the linings of some food and beverage cans. Alternatives to BPA include epoxy-phenolic, modified polyester and acrylic.<br><br>The wording 'intentionally use' refers to the fact that some materials are classified as BPA-NI, where "NI" stands for 'non-intentional'. This classification means that although there is no BPA added as a constituent of a lacquer, BPA may be present in the pipework, raw material packaging, processing equipment etc. and small amounts may be picked up by the finished product during production. Although you should avoid them where possible, you can still use BPA-NI materials for the time being. We will monitor the situation with BPA-NI materials with a view to totally eradicating BPA from all food contact materials in due course.<br><br>Type 7 plastics may be made from BPA. Type 3 plastics (PVC) could also contain BPA, but only in the case of flexible PVC which is prohibited under 13.20.5 of these standards. |
| **Why?**<br>Studies have shown that BPA has endocrine disrupting properties and toxic effects on our ability to reproduce. Studies have also raised serious concerns over other bisphenols that are sometimes used as an alternative to BPA, such as BPAF, BPB and BPZ. The toxic effects of Bisphenols are evident even at low concentrations. | |
| **SA NI 13.20.8 Oxo-degradable Plastics***<br>You must **not** use oxo-degradable plastics.<br><br>*Soil Association higher standard*<br><br>*** The implementation of this standard is paused while a review is undertaken**. | Demonstrate that you have not used these materials, for example with a packaging specification for all materials used kept on file.<br><br>Oxo-degradable plastics are not bio-based or compostable plastics; they are conventional plastics with 'pro-degradant' additives that accelerate the fragmentation process. To avoid oxo-degradable packaging products we recommend:<br>• use of recyclable plastic formats such as LDPE, or, |

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- use of certified compostable plastics (see '*Packaging Scope*' for more guidance)

For more information and evidence on oxo-degradable plastics see this statement from the New Plastics Economy Initiative.

Any packaging purchased from September 2025 must be compliant. Packaging purchased prior to September 2025 may be used until stocks are exhausted.
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### Why?

Oxo-degradable plastics are considered a 'problematic plastic' owing to their environmental impacts. They contribute to microplastic pollution as they are conventional plastics that fragment by design and are not suited for long-term reuse, recycling at scale or composting. They can undermine recycling systems when captured.
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### SA NI 13.20.9 Polystyrene

You must **not** use polystyrene plastic in primary packaging materials.

*Soil Association higher standard*

*** The implementation of this standard is paused while a review is undertaken**.
</td><td>

Demonstrate that you have not used these materials, for example with a packaging specification for all materials used kept on file.

This restriction includes all types of polystyrene plastics, these include Expanded Polystyrene (EPS) and Extruded polystyrene (XPS). They are defined as Type 6 plastics (PS) and can be in rigid or film forms as well as the more common expanded foam.

This **restriction is limited to primary product packaging**, that is packaging contained in a single sales unit to customers. It does not apply to polystyrene used in a business-to-business supply chain where there is greater opportunity for reuse and recycling. For more information on what constitutes primary packaging see Defra definitions of packaging class data.

We will keep the scope of this restriction under review on an annual basis.

Any packaging purchased from September 2025 must be compliant. Packaging purchased prior to September 2025 may be used until stocks are exhausted.

Further government guidance is available here.
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<tr><td colspan="2">Why?<br>Polystyrene is considered a ‘problematic plastic’ owing to its negative impact on the environment and human health. Polystyrene is made using the chemical styrene, which has been linked to cancers and nervous-system effects. It is not readily recycled and is persistent in the environment once disposed of. It is a consistent component of marine and coastal litter, breaking up into smaller pieces and releasing toxins, presenting hazards to marine species.</td></tr>
<tr><td>SA NI 13.20.10 PFAS (Per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances)*<br>You must not use per- and polyfluoroalkyl (PFAS) chemical substances in your packaging products.<br><br>Soil Association higher standard<br><br>* The implementation of this standard is paused while a review is undertaken.</td><td>Demonstrate that your products have not used PFAS chemicals in their manufacture, for example with a packaging specification for all materials used kept on file, if you use the following materials:<ul><li>greaseproof or water-resistant paper packaging (e.g., bread / pastry bags),</li><li>baking paper or cake cases,</li><li>takeaway pizza boxes and card clamshells,</li><li>butter and cheese papers.</li></ul>There are PFAS-free market ready alternatives to all these applications and/or opportunities to consider reusable or removal options. For alternatives, please review the ChemSec marketplace.<br><br>Any packaging purchased from September 2025 must be compliant. Packaging purchased prior to September 2025 may be used until stocks are exhausted.</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Why?<br>PFAS are a group of chemicals known as ‘forever chemicals’ because they are extremely persistent in the environment. PFAS have been shown to disrupt hormone systems in animals and are classed as endocrine disruptors. Studies have shown links between PFAS exposure and a wide range of human health concerns including cancer, immune system disorders and fertility problems.</td></tr>
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## Annex I – fertilisers and nutrients

The following substances can only be used for fish in inland waters as described in standard 13.4.8

| **Name - Compound products or products containing only materials listed hereunder** | **Description, compositional requirements, conditions for use** | **Soil Association additional conditions** |
|---|---|---|
| Mushroom culture wastes | This must be initially made from products permitted in this table. | |
| Composted or fermented mixture of vegetable matter | Composts obtained from mixtures of vegetable matter which has been submitted to composting or to anaerobic fermentation for biogas production. | |
| Products and by-products of plant origin for fertilisers | Examples: oilseed cake meal, cocoa husks, malt culms | |
| Hydrolysed proteins of plant origin | | |
| Seaweeds and seaweed products | As far as directly obtained by:<br>(i) physical processes including dehydration, freezing and grinding<br>(ii) extraction with water or aqueous acid and/or alkaline solution<br>(iii) fermentation | You must not use calcified seaweed, lithothamne or maerl if extracted from the sea. |
| Sawdust and wood chips, composted bark and wood ash | The wood must not have been chemically treated after felling. | |
| Soft ground rock phosphate | Product as specified in point 7 of Annex 1 A.2 of *Regulation (EC) No 2003/2003*.<br>The cadmium content must be less than or equal to 90 mg/kg of $P_2 0_5$. | |
| Aluminium-calcium phosphate | Product as specified in point 6 of Annex I A.2. of *Regulation (EC) No 2003/2003*.<br>The cadmium content must be less than or equal to 90 mg/kg of $P_2 0_5$.<br>Use only allowed where the soil pH is greater than 7.5. | |
| Basic slag | Products as specified in point 1 of Annex I A.2 of *Regulation (EC) No 2003/2003*. | |

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| Crude potassium salt or kainit | Products as specified in point 1 of Annex I A.3 of *Regulation (EC) No 2003/2003*. | |
| Potassium sulphate, possibly containing magnesium salt | Product obtained from crude potassium salt by a physical extraction process, possibly containing magnesium salts. | |
| Stillage and stillage extract | Ammonium stillage excluded. | |
| Calcium carbonate | Only of natural origin, for example chalk, marl, ground limestone, Breton ameliorant, phosphate chalk. | |
| Mollusc waste | Only from sustainable fisheries, as defined in Article 4 (1) (7) of *Regulation (EU) No 1380/2013* or organic aquaculture<br>Guidance<br>You should also comply with Animal By-Product Regulations, for example in the *UK*. | |
| Egg shells | Must not be of factory farming origin.<br>Guidance<br>You should also comply with Animal By-Product Regulations, for example in the *UK*. | |
| Magnesium and calcium carbonate | Only of natural origin<br>e.g. magnesian chalk, ground magnesium, limestone | |
| Magnesium sulphate (kieserite) | Only of natural origin | |
| Calcium sulphate (gypsum) | Only of natural origin<br>Products as specified in point 1 of Annex I D of *Regulation (EC) No 2003/2003.* | |
| Industrial lime from sugar production | Only as a by-product of sugar production from sugar beet or sugar cane, or vacuum salt production from brine found in mountains. | |
| Elemental sulphur | Products as specified in Annex I D.3 of *Regulation (EC) No 2003/2003*. | |
| Trace elements | Products as specified in Annex ID.3 of *Regulation 2003/2003* | |

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| | Only of natural origin Only the inorganic micronutrients listed in Annex I, part E of *Regulation (EC) No 2003/2003.* | |
| Sodium chloride | | Only sea and rock salt. |
| Stone meal and clays | For example, ground basalt, bentonite, perlite and vermiculite. | |
| Leonardite (Raw organic sediment rich in humic acids) | Only if obtained as a by-product of mining activities | |
| Organic rich sediment from fresh water bodies formed under exclusion of oxygen (e.g. sapropel) | Only organic sediments that are by-products of fresh water body management or extracted from former freshwater areas.<br>When applicable, extraction should be done in a way to cause minimal impact on the aquatic system.<br>Only sediments derived from sources free from contaminations of pesticides, persistent organic pollutants and petrol-like substances.<br>Maximum concentrations in mg/kg of dry matter must not exceed: cadmium: 0,7; copper: 70; nickel: 25; lead: 45; zinc: 200; mercury: 0,4; chromium (total): 70; chromium (VI): not detectable | |
| Xylite | Only if obtained as a by-product of mining activities (e.g. by-product of brown coal mining). | |

## Annex II – Cleaner fish in organic aquaculture production

The use of cleaner fish species is restricted to wild caught and hatchery reared Wrasse (Labridae spp.),and wild caught and hatchery reared Lumpfish (Cyclopteridae spp.).

*Soil Association higher standard*

### Why?

The use of cleaner fish is an approved method for the control of ectoparasites in organic aquaculture in order to reduce the reliance on chemically synthesised allopathic veterinary medicines. The Soil Association believes that for these animals to be used in organic production they must be protected by species-specific standards.

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| **1. Use of cleaner fish in organic production**<br><br>The use of cleaner fish in Soil Association organic aquaculture production must meet the requirements established in these standards and be approved by Soil Association Certification.<br><br>*Soil Association higher standard*<br>*(EC) 2018/848 Annex II Part II(3.1)* | Your aquaculture management plan must demonstrate how you meet the requirements for the management of cleaner fish set out in these standards.<br><br>Efficacy of the cleaner fish must be monitored and demonstrated; this is most important for species of wrasse other than ballan, such as goldsinny and cuckoo. |
| **2. Origin of cleaner fish**<br><br>1. Cleaner fish may only be stocked if they occur naturally in the farmed area.<br><br>2. Cleaner fish must be sourced from organic aquaculture production in preference to non-organic aquaculture systems. If no cleaner fish can be sourced from aquaculture production, then they may be sourced from fisheries with prior permission.<br><br>*Soil Association higher standard* | The use of cleaner fish species will only be approved if they comply with the definition of 'locally grown species'.<br>'locally grown species' means aquaculture species which are neither alien nor locally absent species within the meaning of points (6) and (7), respectively, of Article 3 of Council Regulation (EC) No 708/2007 (7), as well as the species listed in Annex IV to that Regulation'.<br><br>The use of cleaner fish from wild fisheries is a temporary allowance and will be kept under review |
| **3. Cleaner fish husbandry, health and welfare**<br><br>Cleaner fish must be provided with a sufficient number and suitable type of shelters. These shelters must not be situated within the feeding zone of the primary species.<br><br>*Soil Association higher standard* | In your aquaculture management plan demonstrate how you meet the requirements of these standards.<br><br>We will refer to the Animal Welfare Committee's Update to the 2014 FAWC Opinion on the welfare of farmed fish at the time of killing for appropriate practice.<br><br>The design and management of your aquaculture system must minimise stress on cleaner fish species. Particular attention should be paid to feed withdrawal, crowding and separation.<br><br>The cleaning maintenance and suitability of the shelter should be covered in your VHWP. |

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| ### 4. Cleaner fish treatments<br><br>If a health problem arises, cleaner fish must be treated.<br><br>Cleaner fish must be separated from the primary species before they can be treated with chemically synthesised allopathic veterinary treatments.<br><br>*Soil Association higher standard* | Method of separation must be explained in your VHWP. The success of recapture should be recorded. |
| ### 5. Feeding cleaner fish<br><br>1. Cleaner fish must be fed supplementary feed throughout the entire production cycle that is suitable for the nutritional requirement for the species at all stages of their development.<br>2. Attention must be paid to climatic and aquatic conditions and feeding adjusted accordingly to ensure the nutritional requirements of cleaner fish are met.<br>3. Supplementary feed must be introduced in such a way that it is not available to other species.<br>4. Cleaner fish must be fed organic feed when available.<br><br>*Soil Association higher standard* | |

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| ## 6. Humane slaughter<br><br>1. You must only use slaughter techniques that render fish immediately unconscious and insensible to pain. You must take into account harvest sizes, species and production sites when considering optimal slaughter methods.<br>2. Cleaner fish must not be released into the natural environment at the end of the production cycle.<br>3. Cleaner fish mortalities must be properly recycled.<br><br>*Soil Association higher standard* | We will refer to the update to the 2014 FAWC Opinion on the welfare of farmed fish at the time of killing for appropriate practice.<br>Please refer to standard 13.5.3 for more information on human slaughter.<br><br>Pharmaceutical methods of slaughter should take account of dosage, exposure time, size and weight of fish, water temperature and other relevant factors to ensure a rapid and effective kill.<br><br>Any holding tanks for live cleaner fish or bycatch (whether to be returned to site or euthanised) at harvest must have their water quality parameters regularly monitored and recorded. The welfare of the fish must not be compromised when separating from harvest stock.<br><br>No fish must be left to die in air. |
| ## 7. Record Keeping<br><br>You must keep records in the form of a register which is available at all times on the premises of your holding. These records must provide the following information:<br><br>a) The species and number of fish<br>b) The origin and date of arrival<br>c) Mortality<br>d) Feed<br>e) Use of veterinary medicines<br><br>The Soil Association must be informed of any mass mortality events.<br>*Soil Association higher standard* | Please also refer to standard 12.8.4 for specific aquaculture animal production record requirements.<br><br>Mass mortality is 1.5% weekly. |