



Module 14

Distribution Standard

Incorporates:

- Transport
 - Storage
 - Wholesalers
 - Retailers
 - Exporters
 - Importers
-

This document replaces the BIO-GRO New Zealand Organic Standards, 30 April 2001: Module 4.5

The reasons for change are:

- regular review required under IFOAM accreditation;
- incorporation of notified changes since the 30 April 2001 Standards were published;
- incorporation of other changes required for ongoing compliance with the IFOAM Basic Standards, the NZFSA OOAP, and overseas market regulations;
- organic production systems are continuously evolving.

This document may be altered at any time. It was current at the date in the header of each page of the document. It is recommended that anyone intending to use this document contact BioGro or check the BioGro website www.biogro.co.nz to confirm that this is the current version.

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1 Scope and purpose

This BioGro Standard contains the distribution requirements and audit criteria for the certification and licensing by BioGro of distributors of organic products to use the BioGro trademarks/logos. This Standard applies to storage including coolstores, warehouses, transporters, wholesalers, retailers, importers and exporters.

This BioGro Standard specifies the distribution requirements and audit criteria that must be followed by all:

- a. coolstores and warehouses, transporters, wholesalers, retailers, importers and exporters of organic products certified by BioGro, and
- b. coolstores and warehouses, transporters, wholesalers, retailers, importers and exporters of organic products licensed by BioGro to use the BioGro trademarks and logos.

All organic products bearing the BioGro trademarks and logos are distributed in accordance with this Standard.

Information on BioGro, applying for certification and the use of the BioGro trademarks/logos can be obtained from *Module 1 Introduction* and *Module 3 Certification System*.

The audit checklists (available on request from BioGro) may be used for self-audits in preparation for audits by BioGro.

2 References

All relevant regulations and industry requirements must be complied with.

3 Definitions

The BioGro definitions of terms can be found in the BioGro Standards *Module Two: Glossary of Terms*.

4 Procedures

4.1 Introduction

These Standards for distributors, i.e. stores, transporters, wholesalers, retailers, importers and exporters, of certified organic products are designed to guarantee the integrity of organic products through the distribution chain from the producer to the consumer.

Where certified organic products are delivered loose or in bulk from a certified producer or processor, there is potential for contamination, mixing with uncertified items, or incorrect labelling. This section sets the transportation, receipt, storage, packing, labelling, display and record-keeping requirements for a distributor to be certified for the distribution or sale of certified organic products.

The distributor must provide BioGro with full written procedures for their operation, which demonstrate that all specified requirements are met. Certified distributors must have adequate identification and separation systems in place which ensure that certified products can not be commingled with uncertified products or products of different certification status. Certified distributors must have adequate cleaning, rinsing, pest management, storage, and transport systems which ensure that certified products can not be contaminated in any way.

While the ideal situation is one in which distributors handle only certified organic products, it is accepted that uncertified products may also be being distributed for commercial viability until larger volumes of organic products are available. Where parallel distribution is occurring, BioGro reserves the right to increase the frequency of audits.

Packaging materials, storage containers, or bins in contact with certified product must not contain any synthetic fungicides, preservatives, or fumigants.

4.2 Premises

Documentary proof is required that all premises comply with all regulatory and industry requirements.

4.2.1 Pest management

Pest management procedures and all materials used for pest management must be approved in writing by BioGro prior to use. *Appendix B: Permitted and Restricted Materials and Practices* Sections B1.7 and B2.3 provide information on permitted and restricted materials and practices for pest control.

Also refer to *Module 13* Section 4.3.2.

4.3 Staff

Certified distributors must provide adequate staff training and supervision to cover the following:

- a. Staff must be thoroughly familiar with all approved procedures and protocols, and be following them.
- b. Where necessary checklists must be used to ensure staff are complying with the approved procedures for the handling of certified products.
- c. Staff must be aware of the special nature of certified organic products and be able to convey this to customers and other people handling the certified products.
- d. Staff must be conversant with the basic principles of certified organic production.
- e. Staff must be conversant with the requirements of this Module of the BioGro Standards.

4.4 Records required

4.4.1 All distributors

All distributors must hold the following records:

- a. A copy of the current organic certificate or similar objective evidence that each organic product has a certified supplier.
- b. A complete product list showing all products sold, their certification status, and if mixed or blended by the distributor then the ingredients and recipes for such products.
- c. Accounts that demonstrate the origin, nature and quantity of all lots purchased, and details of transport arrangements from the product's supplier.
- d. Accounts that demonstrate the nature, quantities and consignees of each lot sold, and details of how they were transported and if applicable, stored en route. Retail sales shall be accounted for on a set time period that must not exceed one week.

4.4.2 Parallel distributors

Any suppliers who supply conversion, and/or uncertified, and/or conventional products as well as certified organic products must detail on every invoice with every shipment, the status of each and every product line.

4.5 Transportation

Product integrity during transportation from the supplier is the responsibility of both the certified distributor and the supplier. Transportation protocols must guarantee that there is no contamination en route.

Bulk trucks, which are not dedicated to organic use only, must be cleaned according to BioGro approved procedures.

4.5.1 Packaging

- a. Clean new containers, e.g. bins, crates, boxes, bottles, bags, etc., are permitted.
- b. Containers dedicated to certified organic use are permitted providing there has been no contact with prohibited materials. If there has been such contact, cleaning procedures approved in writing by BioGro must be followed.
- c. Containers not dedicated to certified organic use can only be reused provided they are:
 - i. lined with clean paper or food grade plastic liners which are new or dedicated to organic use; or
 - ii. cleaned according to procedures approved in writing by BioGro.

4.5.2 Documentation and labelling

- a. All organic produce must be clearly identified with the name and address and BioGro number of the producer, and the name and certification status of the product.
- b. Where only organic produce is shipped, one set of documentation for all containers is acceptable.
- c. Where mixed organic / conversion / uncertified / conventional products are transported together each container shall be labelled with this information.

4.5.3 Transportation conditions

- a. Open containers and bulk trucks can only be used for transportation when the transport unit is dedicated to certified organic use at the time and has been cleaned according to BioGro approved procedures beforehand.
- b. If conversion and/or uncertified and/or conventional products are being transported together with certified organic products then the certified organic and conversion products must be packaged separately in closed containers and clearly labelled with their status.

4.5.4 Receipt of transported products

On receipt of the transported products the operator shall check that the requirements of 4.5.1, 4.5.2, and 4.5.3 above have been complied with, and shall record this. If there is any doubt as to whether the above requirements have been complied with, then the certified products can only retain certification if that doubt is removed.

4.6 Storage

All certified products must be stored in a way that protects their integrity.

4.6.1 Containers

- a. All bulk goods must be securely stored in clean, closed containers or bags that are clearly labelled.
- b. Fresh produce can be stored in clean open containers, provided all uncertified products are physically separated from it at a specified distance agreed to in writing by BioGro, and both the certified and uncertified products are clearly labelled as such at all times.

4.6.2 Labelling

All containers must be clearly labelled at all times, showing product name, certification status and country of origin (if not New Zealand).

4.6.3 Separation

Where open containers are used then storage areas, including cool storage, for certified and uncertified products must be clearly separate and clearly identified as such.

4.6.4 Inventory

All inventory lists must include certification status for all product lines.

4.7 Preparation, handling, and packaging

Preparation, handling, packing and display of certified organic products must guarantee the integrity of those products at all times.

4.7.1 Cleaning

- a. All packing and display areas and surfaces must be thoroughly cleaned, using only BioGro-approved cleaners and procedures, prior to packing or display of certified products.
 - All equipment, knives, machines etc. not dedicated to certified use must be cleaned prior to preparing and packing certified products.

4.7.2 Preparation and handling

Any trimming, washing, preparation, and other handling of organic produce must follow documented procedures approved in writing by BioGro.

4.7.3 Packaging

Refer *Module 13 Processing* Section 4.4.

4.8 Retailers and Prepack Wholesalers

Shelf display of products must both protect the integrity of all certified products and also accurately convey information on the source and certification status of those products.

4.8.1 Consumer acceptability

All products displayed must be of an acceptable standard and must not bring the BioGro trademark/logo into disrepute.

4.8.2 Labelling

- a. All labelling applied to certified products must clearly state the certification status of those products along with the associated certification trademark, and must comply with the requirements of *Module 3 Certification System* Section 7.8.
- b. If uncertified products of a similar nature are on display, then they must be clearly differentiated from certified products by clear labelling (on packaging or individual) to ensure that there can be no mixing or confusion.
- c. Labelling of BioGro certified products must include:
 - the supplier's name and BioGro number; or
 - the certified retailer or prepack wholesaler's name and BioGro number.

4.8.3 Parallel retailing

Parallel retailing (selling of the same product lines with both certified and uncertified present) is a restricted practice and must be approved in writing by BioGro. Where there is parallel retailing then extra surveillance audits may be required at BioGro's discretion.

4.9 Exporters

Exporters of organic products to markets which are regulated , i.e. where the use of the label "organic" is controlled by specific organic labeling regulations (currently EU, USA, Japan, Canada, and Taiwan), must be certified with BioGro as an exporter in order for those products to be accepted by the importing country as an organic product.

These market regulations each have specific labeling and export shipment verification/certification requirements. As these change from time to time, contact the BioGro office for detailed requirements.

Satisfactory audit trail information must be supplied to BioGro either at the annual audit, or with applications for export verifications/certificates, for all export shipments .

Some exporters may also wish to certify with BioGro as an exporter for non-regulated markets, as a way of providing BioGro's independent guarantee of the integrity of those organic products to their customers in those markets.

- a. As well as all other requirements specified in this module, exporters must have written procedures and be audited to establish the chain of custody from their certified supplier(s) to their consignee(s).
- b. The written procedures must include the handling for the loading, shipping or airfreight, and unloading of the certified products, and include the management of port procedures, such as inspections and fumigation.

4.10 Importers

Importers wishing to import certified organic products for recertification by BioGro, or to be distributed under their original certification, are able to certify with BioGro as importers. This enables importers to provide BioGro's independent guarantee of the integrity of those organic products to their customers.

- a. As well as all other requirements specified in this module, importers must have written procedures and be audited to establish the chain of custody from their certified supplier(s) to their consignee(s).
- b. The written procedures must include the handling for the loading, shipping or airfreight, and unloading of the certified products, and include the management of port procedures, such as inspections and fumigation.



BioGro New Zealand Limited

Level 9, 75 Ghuznee Street, PO Box 9693,

Marion Square, Wellington 6141, New Zealand.

T: +64 4 801 9741 info@biogro.co.nz

F: +64 4 801 9742 www.biogro.co.nz

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