ORGANIC LIVESTOCK PRODUCTION: HERBIVORES

Guidelines no. 21:

Rules for herbivorous animal production

In accordance with Ecocert Organic Standard (EOS)
I. Scope

The following species of herbivorous animal are covered by European Regulation

- Bovine
- Equidae
- Ovine
- Caprine

II. Conversion

A. Definition

The conversion to organic farming corresponds to the transition phase between conventional agriculture and the « organic farming » designation. The conversion period starts once:

- All the breeding requirements stated in the part F of EOS are met (housing, feeding, disease prevention...).
- The operator has submitted his holding to the control system.

The length of the conversion period varies according to the category of animal (small ruminants or bovines or equidae) and the type of production (meat, milk).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SPECIES</th>
<th>SMALL RUMINANT (ovine, caprine)</th>
<th>bovine, equidae</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Production</td>
<td>Meat and/or milk</td>
<td>Meat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conversion period</td>
<td>6 months</td>
<td>12 months and at least ¾ of lifetime under the organic system</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>6 months</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

NB: Please refer to chapter « V. Purchasing animals » for the requirements on introducing non-organic animals in the holding.

B. Examples of conversion

Animal conversion may or may not take place simultaneously with the conversion of the pasture and land used for their feed.
1. Non-simultaneous conversion:

Operators concerned:

- Operators already farming certified organic land and willing to convert a new flock or herd.
- Operators starting the process of organic land conversion but unable to operate animal conversion simultaneously.

Start of conversion:

The animals may be wholly fed on in-conversion feedstuffs if these originate exclusively from the holding. The animals may therefore be considered to be undergoing conversion at the earliest when the land enters its 2\textsuperscript{nd} year of conversion and once all rearing practices are fully compliant.

Conversion period for animals:

This varies according to the species and the production (Refer to table above). For pasture and land used for feedstuff production, rules on conversion of organic plant production applies.

Example:

Animals fed on self-produced in-conversion feedstuffs (from the 2\textsuperscript{nd} year of conversion) with additional organic supplements.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Start of land conversion</th>
<th>Start of conversion for animals</th>
<th>ORGANIC LAND</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>01/05/2010</td>
<td>01/05/2011</td>
<td>01/05/2012</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6-month conversion:
- organic meat and milk, ovine, caprine organic milk
- bovine and equine

12-month conversion:
Organic equine and bovine meat animals which have spent 12 months + ¾ of their lives organically
In practice, it may not always be possible to start non-simultaneous conversion on the exact date the land enters into the 2nd year of conversion. In fact, if the land enters into the 2nd year of conversion at a period when the animals are not pasture-fed but are eating self-produced hay, this hay (brought in before the beginning of the 2nd year of conversion) is still in the 1st year of conversion and may constitute no more than 20% of the annual ration (cf. chapter VI on feeding).

In such cases, the livestock non-simultaneous conversion should be postponed until the following spring, when grazing on plots which are undergoing the 2nd year of conversion.

2. Simultaneous conversion

Operators concerned:
Operators being able to convert land and animals at the same time. Requirements are:
- All animals, pasturage and land used for their feed converted at the same time
- Applies only to those animals which are part of the livestock at the start of conversion and their offspring
- The operations are fully compliant from the very start of the conversion.
- Animals are mainly fed with products from the production unit.

Start of the conversion:
Animals are considered to be undergoing conversion once operators have committed contractually with the control body.

Length of conversion for the animals, pasture and land used for feedstuffs:
Conversion period = 24 months.
In this case, the rule that states equidae and bovines (for meat production) must live ¾ of their lives under an organic system, does not apply.

Example:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Start of conversion of land and animals</th>
<th>24-month conversion</th>
<th>Land and animal products</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>01/05/2010</td>
<td>01/05/2011</td>
<td>01/05/2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>organic (milk, meat)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
III. Mixed operations

A. Definition:

“Mixed operations” means that one or several types of animal are reared simultaneously on the same holding, organically and conventionally. This duplication may be temporarily tolerated under specific conditions or prohibited in some cases.

B. General rules:

One single animal species may not be reared organically and conventionally simultaneously on the same holding (even where organic and conventional units are fully separate).

For example, producing meat bovines organically and milk bovines conventionally within the same holding is not permitted.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Special cases</th>
<th>Conditions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mixed production of different species</td>
<td>Clear separation of buildings, pasture and land</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Example: organic bovines and conventional sheep</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

IV. Identification and transport

A. Identification documents

Operators should be always able to provide permanent identification for all animals: on an individual basis for bovine species and equidae; either on an individual basis or as batch for ovine and caprine species.

**Livestock records** must be kept at all times and must be made available to the control body. They should include the following details:

- animals arriving (origin, number, conversion period, veterinary history, identification marks)
- animals leaving (age, number, destination, identification mark, weight if slaughtered)
- any animal losses and the causes thereof
- feeding
- disease prevention, treatment and veterinary care
B. Transporting animals

Animal transportation times must be reduced to limit stress and maintain their welfare conditions. Identification of the animals and their products must be ensured at all stages of production, preparation (slaughter, cutting up), transport and marketing. Animals must be loaded and unloaded without the use of electrical stimulation, and the use of allopathic tranquilisers is prohibited prior to or during the journey.

V. Purchasing animals

A. General remarks

On an organic holding, purchased animals must be organic. Purchasing non-organic animals may, however, be authorised where organic animals are unavailable.

B. Use of non-organic animals

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Categories</th>
<th>Authorised % of non-organic purchases</th>
<th>Maximum age or weight at purchase</th>
<th>Animal conversion period</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bull</td>
<td>100 % of requirements</td>
<td>No limit</td>
<td>12 months and ¾ of the animal lifetime</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bovines</td>
<td>Up to 10% of the adult livestock for renewal in the form of nulliparous adult females (or 1 animal for holdings &lt; 10UGB) or 40% in one of the following situations: -Major extension to the farm -Change of breed -New livestock specialisation -Endangered breed (in this case non-nulliparous adults can be purchased) ⇒ Agreement of Ecocert SA must be requested or No numerical limitation when constituting a herd for the first time</td>
<td>Nulliparous adult females</td>
<td>12 months and ¾ of the animal lifetime for meat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equidae</td>
<td>Buffalos, calves, foals &lt; 6 months</td>
<td>Buffalos, calves, foals &lt; 6 months</td>
<td>6 months for milk</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

nulliparous adults can be purchased)
⇒ Agreement of Ecocert SA must be requested
or
No numerical limitation when constituting a herd for the first time| | | |

nulliparous adults can be purchased)
⇒ Agreement of Ecocert SA must be requested
or
No numerical limitation when constituting a herd for the first time| | | |
### C. Exceptional conditions

When animal mortality is high due to illness or catastrophic circumstances, Ecocert SA may authorise, with documentary evidence, livestock renewal or re-establishment through non-organic animals on a temporary basis when organically reared animals are not available. (Point F 2.3 of EOS).

### VI. Feeding

#### A. Feedstuff autonomy

Landless livestock production, where the producer does not manage the agricultural land is prohibited.

At least 60% of the feedstuffs originate from the holding or in case this is not feasible, from organic holdings which are situated in the same region.

However, during transhumance periods animals may graze on non-organic land if they are being moved on foot from one pasture area to another. Nonetheless, the quantity of non-organic feedstuffs up taken at this time (grass and other plants which are grazed) must not represent more than 10% of the total annual feed ration (calculated as dry matter contained in feedstuffs of agricultural origin).

#### B. Composition of feedstuffs
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FEEDSTUFFS NON “FROM Organic Farming”</th>
<th>Conditions</th>
<th>Options</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Conventional</td>
<td>Fodder, concentrates .... Spices, herbs and molasses</td>
<td>0% - if non available in organic form - produced or prepared without chemical solvents -1% /year maximum of the feed ration (calculation as a % of dry matter of feed from agricultural origin) produced or prepared without chemical solvents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yeasts <em>Saccharomyces cerevisiae</em> and/or <em>carlsbergiensis</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C1*</td>
<td><strong>Self-produced</strong> permanent pastures (grazing or harvesting), perennial forage and protein crop</td>
<td>Up to 20%**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C1*</td>
<td>Purchased forage/cereals</td>
<td>Considered as conventional so 0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C2*</td>
<td><strong>Self-produced</strong> forage/cereals/...</td>
<td>Up to 100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C2*</td>
<td>Purchased forage/cereals/...</td>
<td>Up to 30%**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fodder (roughage, fresh, dried) or silage</td>
<td>Maximum use of grazing pasturage Must compose the majority of the daily ration (dry matter)</td>
<td>60% - but 50% possible for milk animals in early lactation (maximum 3 months)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organic Milk</td>
<td>Young mammals</td>
<td>Preferably maternal or else natural (liquid or powder) For at least 3 months for, buffalo calves and foals and 45 days for kids and lambs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feed materials of organic plant origin</td>
<td>No restriction</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feed materials of organic animal origin</td>
<td>Any feed material of animal origin (in respect of the standard regulation)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feed materials of mineral origin</td>
<td>Listed in annex V of EOS.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Synthetic amino acids, growth promoters</td>
<td><strong>Prohibited</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Vitamins and provitamins</td>
<td>Derived from</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### OTHER SUBSTANCES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nutritional additives</th>
<th>Agricultural products and/or synthetic vitamins A, D, and E identical to natural ones permitted only when the amount by feedstuffs or natural vitamins is not sufficient.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Trace elements</td>
<td>Listed annex VI of EOS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zoo-technical additives</td>
<td>Enzymes and microorganisms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technological additives</td>
<td>Preservatives, antioxidants, binders, anti-caking agents and coagulants, silage additives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sensory additives</td>
<td>Flavouring compounds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Extracts from agricultural products</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*C1: produced on parcels in the 1st year of conversion  
*C2: produced on parcels during the conversion period from the 2nd year onwards  
**Calculated as a percentage of Dry Matter in feedstuffs of plant origin

All raw materials and substances used must be guaranteed “non-GM” (particular vigilance is required for micro-organisms, enzymes and yeasts).

For further information, please check Guidelines no. 26 (Animal Feed).

### C. Exceptional Conditions

Use of non-organic feedstuffs may be permitted by Ecocert SA for a limited period in a defined area (Point F 3.15 of EOS) where there have been losses of forage production due to exceptional climatic conditions, fires...

### D. Prohibited practices

Keeping animals in conditions leading to anaemia, or subjecting them to a diet leading to anaemia, is prohibited.
VII. Buildings

Housing for livestock are not mandatory in areas where climatic conditions allow the animals to live outdoors.

A. Requirements

- Smooth, non-slippery floors
- A minimum of 50% of the indoor surface area defined in annex III to EOS must be constructed in a solid material (not slatted or grid)
- Dry laying/rest area on solid material (not slatted), covered with natural litter
- Calves more than one week old to be housed in group pens (individual boxes are prohibited).

B. Tethering and isolating animals

These practices are prohibited, however, exceptions may be granted by Ecocert SA for **bovines to be tethered** in the following cases:

- For small-scale holdings, provided that the animals have access to pastures during the grazing period or else if this is impossible access to open-air areas at least twice a week.

- Until 31st December 2013 for old buildings built before 24th August 2000 provided that the animals have regular exercise, that their welfare and comfort are guaranteed and that a compliance plan is put in place.

C. Minimum area

Stocking density must guarantee comfort and welfare of the animals. For that purpose, minimum areas for buildings and exercise areas are specified in Annex III of EOS.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th><strong>Indoors</strong> (net surface area/animal)</th>
<th><strong>Outdoors</strong> (exercise areas, pasturage excluded)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Minimum live weight (kg)</td>
<td>m² / head</td>
<td>m² / head</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bovines and equidae for reproduction and fattening</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Up to 100</td>
<td>1,5</td>
<td>1,1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Up to 200</td>
<td>2,5</td>
<td>1,9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Up to 350</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over 350</td>
<td>5 with a minimum of 1 m² / 100 kg</td>
<td>3,7 with a minimum of 0,75 m² / 100 kg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Dairy cows</strong></td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4,5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bulls for breeding</strong></td>
<td>10</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sheep and goats</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sheep/goat</td>
<td>1,5</td>
<td>2,5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lamb/kid</td>
<td>0,35</td>
<td>0,5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**VIII. Pasture**

**A. General rules**

The animals must have access to pasture in order to graze whenever conditions allow it.

Bulls aged over 1 year must have access to pasturage or at least to an open-air area.

The number of animals is limited so as to reduce overgrazing, poaching of soil, erosion or pollution caused by the animals or by spreading of their manure.

In particular, stocking density must not result in an annual nitrogen load per hectare of organic agricultural land used by the producer in excess of 170 kg, and the total quantity of effluent from the holding (fresh and dried manure, composted solid excrement, composted manure, liquid excrement) is taken into account for the purposes of this calculation. In determining this stock density, the figures in annex IV to EOS have to be taken into account.
Where excessive manure is produced, this may only be spread on organic land, and the producer must conclude a written cooperation agreement to this effect with another producer whose land is organic.

**B. Shared use of pasturage**

Non-organic animals may use the organic pasturage for a limited period provided that they come from extensive farming system and that the organic animals are not present at the same time.

Similarly, organic animals may be grazed on non-organic common land provided that this land has not been treated with products which are prohibited in organic agriculture for at least the last 3 years and that the animals which are usually on this land originate from the same type of husbandry as the type referred to in the preceding paragraph.

**IX. Husbandry practices**

**A. Mutilation**

Ecocert SA may only permit operations which are essential for certain types of production or necessary for reasons of safety (for the animals or the producers), or for the animals' hygiene, welfare or health.

In all cases, the animals must undergo minimal suffering by virtue of an anaesthesia or sufficient analgesia.

**B. Final fattening phase**

In the final fattening phase for adult bovines reared for meat production, access to pasturage is no longer mandatory, and this phase may take place indoors provided that the period concerned does not exceed 3 months and does not represent more than 1/5th of the animal lifetime.

**C. Reproduction**

Preference must be given to natural methods, however artificial insemination is permitted.

The use of hormones or analogous substances to control reproduction (e.g.: induction or synchronisation of oestrus) is prohibited, unless as a form of veterinary therapeutic treatment. Artificial reproduction methods like cloning or embryo transfer are prohibited.
X. Disease prevention and veterinary treatment

A. General principles

In organic production, disease prevention is based on preventing illness: selecting breeds, husbandry management practices, feedstuff quality, adapting stocking density and housing, ease of exercise.

B. Hygiene measures

Buildings and equipment must be cleaned and disinfected using the products whose active ingredients are listed in annex VII to EOS. Rodenticides in traps and the appropriate products from annex II may be used against insects and pests.

C. Prohibited practices

The use of substances to promote growth or production. The preventive use of chemically synthesised allopathic veterinary medicinal products, antibiotics or coccidiostatics.

D. Veterinary treatment

If the preventive measures (referred to above under « general principles ») prove ineffective, the illnesses and/or injuries must receive immediate treatment to prevent the animal suffering in any way. Preference must be given to phytotherapeutic, homoeopathic products and the minerals listed in Annex V and the nutritional additives and trace elements listed in Annex VI to EOS.

If these measures are ineffective, chemically synthesised allopathic veterinary medicinal products or antibiotics can only be used to heal the animal on the instruction of a veterinarian.

The legal withdrawal period between the last administration of the allopathic veterinary medicine and the time when the animal and its products are marketed on the organic market must be doubled. If there is no withdrawal period for a product, a 48-hour time-limit must be applied.
1. Records

When therapeutic procedures and veterinary care are carried out, the date of treatment, diagnosis, type of product (detailing the active ingredients concerned), dosage, means of administration, length of treatment and legal withdrawal period must be clearly noted in the livestock record. Veterinary prescriptions must also be retained. Treated animals must be individually identified.

2. Number of allopathic treatments permitted

| Animals whose life-cycles are under 1 year (young herbivore killed at under 12 months) | 1 single treatment during the animal life-cycle |
| Animals whose life-cycles are greater than 1 year | 3 treatments per year |

Parasites treatments and vaccinations are not taken into account when making this calculation and the same applies to treatment prescribed within the framework of compulsory eradication schemes.

NB: When non-organic animals are purchased (in the required conditions), their producer must give the purchaser the list of treatments carried out (number, nature and dates) so that these can be taken into account when calculating treatment.

XI. Definitions

**Holding:**
Means all the production units operated under a single management for the purpose of producing agricultural products.

**Production Unit:**
Means all assets to be used for a production sector such as production premises, land parcels, pasturages, open air areas, livestock buildings, fish ponds, containment systems for seaweed or aquaculture animals, shore or seabed concessions, the premises for the storage of crops, crop products, seaweed products, animal products, raw materials and any other input relevant for this specific production sector.
**In-conversion feedingstuffs:**
means feedstuffs produced during the conversion period to organic production, with the exclusion of those harvested in the 12 months following the beginning of the conversion.

**Veterinary treatment:**
means all courses of a curative or preventive treatment against one occurrence of a specific disease.

**XII. References in EOS**

F.1 - Information and visit conditions
F.2 - Origin and conversion of the animals
F.3 - Feed
F.4 - Disease prevention and veterinary treatment
F.5 - Husbandry management
F.6 - Livestock housing and free range areas
F.7 - Livestock manure management
F.8 - Precaution and separation measures livestock production
F.9 - Precaution and separation measures transport
F.10 - Precaution and separation measures storage
F.11 - Accounts, traceability and documentation
F.12 - Quality management
F.13 - Labelling and invoicing

*These documents are available upon request to ECOCERT or may be downloaded from our website [www.ecocert.com](http://www.ecocert.com).*