



**Livestock and Seed Program  
Audit, Review, and Compliance Branch  
Quality System Audit Report**

**AUDIT INFORMATION**

<b>Applicant Name:</b>	Maryland Department of Agriculture
<b>Est. Number:</b>	NA
<b>Physical Address:</b>	50 Harry S. Truman Parkway, Annapolis, MD 21401
<b>Mailing Address:</b>	The Wayne A. Crowley, Jr. Building, 50 Harry S. Truman Parkway, Annapolis, MD 21401
<b>Contact &amp; Title:</b>	Valerie Frances
<b>E-mail Address:</b>	<a href="mailto:FranceVL@mda.state.md.us">FranceVL@mda.state.md.us</a>
<b>Phone Number:</b>	410-841-2719
<b>Auditor(s):</b>	David J. Hildreth
<b>Program:</b>	USDA National Organic Program (NOP)
<b>Audit Date(s):</b>	January 23 and June 6, 2006
<b>Audit Identifier:</b>	NP6023ACA
<b>Action Required:</b>	Yes
<b>Audit Type:</b>	Annual Update
<b>Audit Objective:</b>	To determine the compliance of the company's information to the requirements of the audit criteria
<b>Audit Criteria:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 7 CFR Part 205.510; National Organic Program (NOP), Final Rule, dated December 21, 2000; Amended November 3, 2003</li></ul>
<b>Audit Scope:</b>	Maryland Department of Agriculture 2003 NOP Annual Report
<b>Location(s) Audited:</b>	Desk

Information submitted by the Maryland Department of Agriculture (MDOA) for the annual update (2003) report included:

- ARC 1025C Annual Update Checklist and responses to address some areas included on the checklist.
- Signed Conflict of Interest Disclosure Reports were provided for all personnel involved in the NOP certification process.
- Performance evaluations for personnel involved in the NOP certification process.
- List of current certification activities which include 65 crop producers, 6 livestock producers, and 9 handling operations.
- Current fee schedule



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**FINDINGS**

The procedures and records reviewed did not verify that the MDOF Organic Program is currently operating in compliance to the audit criteria. Two (2) major non-compliances and one (1) minor non-compliance were identified during the audit.

**NP6023ACA.NC1 – Major –** NOP §205.504(d) (2) requires the submission of “Copies of at least 3 different inspection reports and certification evaluation documents for production or handling operations Certified by the applicant during the previous year for each area of operation for which accreditation is requested.” *The MDOA stated in the annual update report that files for the clients were provided, but the annual update report and files received from NOP did not contain the files.*

**NP6023ACA.NC2 – Major -** NOP §205.501 (a) (7) states, “A private or governmental entity accredited as a certifying agent under this subpart must: Have an annual program review of its certification activities conducted by the certifying agent’s staff, an outside auditor, or a consultant who has expertise to conduct such reviews and implement measures to correct any non-compliances with the act and the regulations in this part that are identified in the evaluation.” *MDOA annual update report stated that the program audit for 2003 did not occur due to the Maryland Organic Certification Advisory Committee (MOCAC), MOCAC voting to not be responsible for carrying out the internal program review. The internal program review will be carried out with the director of the Organic Certification Program, the Chief of Grading Services, one or more Organic inspectors, and one member of MOCAC. MDOA stated that an updated version of the Quality Manual describing the change was provided, but the auditor did not receive it. The annual program review was not completed as required.*

**NP6023ACA.NC3 – Minor –** NOP §205.501 (a) (11) (vi) requires that the certifying agent to ensure that the decision to certify an operation is made by a person different from those who conducted the review of documents and on-site inspection. *The 2003 annual update report states that Valerie Frances, Organic Certification Director, conducted the document review and made the certification recommendations to Deanna Baldwin, Chief of Grading Services, who then made the final decision. The auditor was unable to determine who conducted the initial document review or if the initial document review was performed, and who made the final decision for certification due to the lack of documentation submitted by MDOA.*