



Labeling of Textiles Under National Organic Program (NOP) Regulations

- USDA regulates the term “organic” as it applies to agricultural products through its National Organic Program (NOP) regulation, 7 CFR Part 205.
- Raw natural fibers, such as cotton, wool, flax, etc., are agricultural products and are covered under the NOP crop/livestock production standards. Off-farm treatment of raw organic fibers are not covered under the NOP crop/livestock production standards.
- Although the NOP has no specific fiber or textile processing and manufacturing standards, it may be possible for fibers grown and certified to NOP crop/livestock standards to be processed and manufactured into textile and other products which meet NOP standards.

Labeling for Certified Handling/Processing/Manufacturing Operations

Only textile products certified to the NOP production AND processing standards are eligible to be labeled “100 percent organic” and “organic.”

100 percent organic

- 100 percent organic fiber content.
- Only organic processing aids.
- USDA Organic seal may be displayed on final product, in marketing materials, and in retail displays—in proximity to certified products only.
- All operations producing, handling, processing and manufacturing the final product must be certified.

Organic

- Minimum of 95 percent organic fiber content.
- 5 percent nonorganic substances, as listed in Section 205.605 of the NOP regulation.
- No non-organic fibers.
- USDA Organic seal may be displayed on final product, in marketing materials, and in retail displays—in proximity to certified products only.
- All operations producing, handling, processing, and manufacturing the final product must be certified.

Other Uses of the Word “Organic” in Textile Product Labeling

The NOP does not restrict the use of the term “made with organic ...” in the labeling of textile products to only those products manufactured in certified organic facilities or containing a minimum of 70 percent organic fibers. However, all fibers identified in these textile products as “organic” must be produced and certified to NOP standards.

Labels on textile products from non-certified handling/processing/manufacturing operations:

- May identify specific fibers as being organic if certified to the NOP crop/livestock standards.
- May state the percentage of organic fibers contained in the final product.
- May not use the USDA Organic seal.
- May not imply or lead the consumer to believe that the final product is certified organic.

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Other Labeling Laws

- NOP label requirements are in addition to those required by the Federal Trade Commission's (FTC) Textile and Wool Acts.
- Information on FTC labeling requirements for textiles can be found at the following websites:

<http://www.ftc.gov/bcp/conline/pubs/buspubs/thread.shtm>

<http://www.ftc.gov/bcp/conline/pubs/buspubs/cotton.shtm>

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National Organic Program
www.ams.usda.gov/nop
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