



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

Applicant: Saskatchewan Organic Certification Association Inc. (SOCA)
Program : National Organic Program/Accreditation for Organic Certification Organizations – 2003 Annual Update
Location(s): Tisdale, Saskatchewan, Canada
Audit Date(s): January 9–23, 2004
Audit File Number: NP4009BA
Action Required: Yes
Auditor(s): Martin Friesenhahn
Contact & Title: Russell Plamondon – President and Administrator
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AUDIT ACTIVITIES

On January 23, 2004, a representative of the USDA, AMS, LS Audit, Review, and Compliance (ARC) Branch completed a review of annual update documents submitted by the Saskatchewan Organic Certification Association (SOCA) Organic Certification Program, Tisdale, SK, Canada, to verify continued compliance to the USDA, AMS 7 CFR Part 205, National Organic Program (NOP). The audit documentation is on record for review (**NP4009BA NC Audit Documentation**).

The following information was provided for the review:

- Completed ARC 1025C Checklist
- SOCA Organic Client List (2002 Growers List)
- Certification documents: 3 crop, 3 livestock, and 3 processor/handler
- Disclosure of Potential Conflicts of Interest (12)
- Training update (8/1/03)
- Revised Farm Inspection Report and Non-GMO Affidavit form.
- SOCA's overall status and performance evaluation (9/1/03)

FINDINGS

The files and information submitted by SOCA for the annual update complied with NOP requirements except as noted in the non-compliances. The evaluation documents and inspection report had questions and references to the NOP Standards but the letter submitted to the clients stated that SOCA would be certifying to the NOP Standards at the next inspection. Three continuous improvement point (CIP) non-compliances were identified during the review.

Non-compliances

NP4009BA.NC1 – CIP - 205.504(d)(1) - Evidence of expertise and ability- Current certification activities- A List of all production and handling operations currently certified by the applicant. *The annual update was submitted September 13, 2003 but the SOCA Growers List of certified clients was dated 2002.*

NP4009BA.NC2 –CIP - 205.504(d)(2) - Evidence of expertise and ability- Current certification

activities- Copies of at least 3 different inspection reports and certification evaluation documents.....
The certification letters submitted with the three crop files stated that the clients would be certified to the NOP Standards at the next inspection. In addition, the 2002 SOCA Growers List showed that the three crop certification clients were only certified to SOCA and not the NOP Standards.

NP4009BA.NC3 -CIP - 205.510(a)(4) - Annual report, recordkeeping, and renewal of accreditation-

The results of the most recent performance evaluations and annual program review and a description of adjustments to the certifying agent's operation and procedures... *Performance evaluations of reviewers, inspectors, etc. were not submitted.*

RECOMMENDATIONS

I recommend that SOCA's accreditation be continued with surveillance by appropriate members of the USDA with the condition that the non-compliances are addressed by the SOCA in a timeframe specified by the NOP. The certification files and evaluation documents of three crop files certified to the NOP should be submitted for review. The initial on-site audit of the SOCA Organic Certification Program should also be conducted for verification of compliance to the NOP Rule.