

U.S. - India Organic Recognition Arrangement

Timeline for Transition: Operation-Level Application and Certification



In January 2021, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) notified India's Agricultural and Processed Food Products Exports Development Authority (APEDA) that we are ending U.S.-India Organic Recognition. The National Organic Program (NOP) took this action because India's organic control system was determined to be insufficient to adequately protect the integrity of the USDA organic seal. We are now in an 18-month transition period that allows **organic operations (farms and businesses)** currently certified by APEDA-accredited certifiers to apply for **direct certification** with USDA-accredited certifiers.

July 12, 2021: APPLICATION

- Any APEDA-certified organic operation in a supply chain exporting to the U.S. must have **applied** to a USDA National Organic Program (NOP) certifier **by July 12, 2021, to maintain access to U.S. market.**
- Operations and certifiers need to follow certifier's **published application procedures.**
- USDA certifiers must report **certification applicants in India** in the USDA Organic Integrity Database.

July 12, 2022: CERTIFICATION

- To export to the U.S., ALL India organic products/ ingredients across a supply chain **must be certified** USDA organic and have a USDA/NOP certificate.
- This is also called a **full compliance date.**

What Does It Mean to Apply?

- Each certifier publishes organic certification application instructions, which generally include submission of an application form, Organic System Plan (OSP), fees, and/or other certifier-required materials (like a contract).

What Happens After I Apply?

- Certifier evaluates application and OSP to initially assess compliance with the USDA organic regulations.
- Certifier may ask for more information or may issue a Notice of Noncompliance or Denial of Certification based on information reviewed during the process.
- Certifier will conduct an inspection if operation appears to be able to comply.
- USDA organic certificate issued if operation fully complies.
- Operation must maintain certification with your APEDA-accredited certifier throughout the USDA certification process!

More Information: <https://www.ams.usda.gov/services/organic-certification/international-trade/India>