



CERTIFICATE OF ACCREDITATION



United States Department of Agriculture

Agricultural Marketing Service

National Organic Program

LETIS S.A.

Urquiza 1285, Planta Alta, 2000, Rosario, Santa Fe, ARGENTINA

meets all the requirements prescribed in the USDA National Organic Program Regulations

7 CFR Part 205

as an Accredited Certifying Agent

for the scope of

Crops, Handling, Livestock, Wild Crops Operations

This certificate is receivable by all officers of all courts of the United States as prima facie evidence of the truth of the statements therein contained. This certificate does not excuse failure to comply with any of the regulatory laws enforced by the U.S. Department of Agriculture .

Status of this accreditation may be verified at <http://www.ams.usda.gov>

Certificate No: **USDA-17-24**
Effective Date: **12/09/2022**
Expiration Date: **12/09/2027**
Issue Date: **05/10/2024**

Jennifer Tucker, Ph.D.
Deputy Administrator
National Organic Program

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NOP-National Organic Program
1400 Independence Avenue, SW.
Room 2642-South, STOP 0268
Washington, DC 20250-0268

NATIONAL ORGANIC PROGRAM: AUDIT & CORRECTIVE ACTION REPORT

GENERAL INFORMATION

- **Certifier Name** LETIS S.A. (LETIS)
- **Physical Address** Urquiza 1285, Planta Alta, 2000, Rosario, Santa Fe, ARGENTINA
- **Audit Type** Material Review Audit
- **Auditor(s) & Audit Dates** Samuel Schaefer-Joel, 08/26/2024 to 08/30/2024
- **Audit Identifier** NOP-38-24

CERTIFIER OVERVIEW

The National Organic Program (NOP) conducted a remote audit of LETIS S.A.'s (LETIS) material review activities. The purpose of the audit was to verify LETIS' compliance with the Organic Foods Production Act of 1990 (OFPA), the USDA organic regulations (7 CFR Part 205), and the NOP Handbook. Audit activities included the assessment of LETIS' material input review policies and procedures, and a review of compliance documentation for inputs used by certified clients as well as inputs on LETIS' approved materials list.

LETIS is a privately owned, for-profit corporation located in Argentina. LETIS was accredited on December 9, 2002, to the USDA National Organic Program (NOP) for the scopes of Crops, Wild Crop, Livestock, and Handling. LETIS has subsidiaries in Uruguay, Peru, and Turkey. LETIS certifies 530 operations in 12 countries. LETIS has a separate material approval program. This program issues material approval certificates to input manufacturers and has 68 input materials listed as compliant to NOP as of July 2, 2024.

NOP DETERMINATION:

NOP reviewed the audit results to determine whether LETIS' corrective actions adequately addressed previous noncompliances. NOP also reviewed any corrective actions submitted as a result of noncompliances issued from Findings identified during the audit.

Any noncompliance labeled as “**Cleared**” indicates that the corrective actions for the noncompliance are determined to be implemented and working effectively. Any noncompliance labeled as “**Accepted**” indicates acceptance of the corrective actions and verification of corrective action implementation will be conducted during the next audit.

Noncompliances from Prior Assessments

AIA-3668-23 - Cleared.

AIA-8514-21 - Cleared.

Noncompliances Identified during the Current Assessment and Corrective Actions

AIA-3349-24 - Accepted. 7 CFR § 205.501(a)(3) states, “A private or governmental entity accredited as a certifying agent under this subpart must: Carry out the provisions of the Act and the regulations in this part, including the provisions of §§ 205.402 through 205.406 and § 205.670;”

Comments: *LETIS does not consistently carry out the provisions of the Act and regulations. LETIS' input material reviews are not always sufficient to verify compliance to § 205.105 and § 205.201(a)(2) and the requirements of **NOP 3012 Interim Instruction Material Review**. The auditor found the following issues with LETIS' material reviews:*

- 1. LETIS incorrectly approved a yeast nutrient input containing diammonium phosphate, which is not on the National List.*
- 2. LETIS incorrectly approved a horticultural oil-based pesticide without verifying 100% of the product composition. The product label shows that the active ingredient comprises 99.5% of the product and that the remaining 0.5% is composed of co-formulants; however, LETIS did not request or review the identity of the co-formulants during the review process.*
- 3. LETIS did not verify whether a material review organization (MRO) it consulted with for material review determinations had the knowledge and expertise necessary to evaluate the compliance of material inputs with the USDA organic regulations.*

Corrective Action: LETIS hired new material review staff with expertise in chemistry and submitted training records showing that material review staff were trained on material review procedures (including the requirement to review the full composition of materials). LETIS confirmed they will no longer accept determinations of material review organizations that have not been confirmed to comply with NOP requirements and submitted an updated input evaluation form F-DT-08 that requires evidence of ISO 17065 accreditation to the relevant organic standard to accept the material review determinations of material review organizations.

In addition, LETIS took the following actions to demonstrate correction of the issues with specific input material identified during the audit:

1. LETIS changed the status of the yeast nutrient to prohibited, identified one certified operation using the noncompliant yeast input and submitted a copy of the notice sent to

the operation communicating that this input was no longer allowed.

2. LETIS submitted technical documents from the manufacturer of the horticultural oil-based pesticide showing that the full composition is compliant.



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NATIONAL ORGANIC PROGRAM: ASSESSMENT REPORT

GENERAL INFORMATION

- **Certifier Name** LETIS S.A. (LETIS) – LETIS Peru SAC
- **Physical Address** Calle Mártir José Olaya N° 129, Oficina 1905, Miraflores, Lima, Perú
- **Audit Type** Certification Office Audit
- **Auditor(s) & Audit Dates** Patricia Bursten, Kelly Skoda, 04/25/2024 to 04/27/2024
- **Audit Identifier** NOP-10-24

CERTIFIER OVERVIEW

The National Organic Program (NOP) conducted an onsite certification office audit of LETIS S.A.'s (LETIS) Peru office certification activities. The purpose of the audit was to verify LETIS's compliance with the USDA organic regulations. Audit activities included a review of certification activities, interviews with LETIS personnel, a records audit, and one witness audit. The witness audit was conducted at a handling operation in Lima, Peru.

LETIS's Peru certification office, LETIS Peru SAC, is located in Lima, Peru and initiated NOP activities on July 17, 2019. LETIS Peru SAC conducts inspections and client support activities in Peru for 17 operations, covering the handling and crops scopes, including producer groups. Certification activities are performed by 12 employees.

NOP DETERMINATION:

The NOP reviewed the findings identified during the audit to determine whether noncompliances should be issued to LETIS.

Noncompliances from Prior Assessments

None

Noncompliances Identified during the Current Assessment

None



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NATIONAL ORGANIC PROGRAM: AUDIT & CORRECTIVE ACTION REPORT

GENERAL INFORMATION

- **Certifier Name** LETIS S.A., (LETIS)
- **Physical Address** Urquiza 1285, Planta alta S2000, Rosario, Santa Fe, ARGENTINA
- **Audit Type** Renewal Audit
- **Auditor(s) & Audit Dates** Patricia Bursten, Sherry Aultman, Sam Schaefer-Joel
12/5/2022 to 12/16/2022
- **Audit Identifier** NOP-22-22

CERTIFIER OVERVIEW

The National Organic Program (NOP) conducted an onsite Renewal Audit of LETIS S.A.'s (LETIS) USDA organic certification program covering the period December 7, 2019, to December 16, 2022. The purpose of the audit was to verify LETIS' compliance with the Organic Foods Production Act of 1990 (OFPA), the USDA organic regulations (7 CFR Part 205), and the NOP Handbook. Audit activities included a review of certification activities, interviews with LETIS personnel, and a records audit. Three onsite witness audits were conducted of inspections of a grower group, a handler, and a livestock operation in Argentina.

LETIS is a privately owned, for-profit corporation located in Argentina. LETIS was accredited on December 9, 2002 to the USDA National Organic Program (NOP) to the scopes of crops, wild crops, livestock, and handling. LETIS has subsidiaries in Perú (LETIS PERÚ), Chile (LETIS CHILE), Turkey (LETIS BIOTEAM), and Uruguay (Netural S.A.). LETIS certifies 583 operations in 18 countries. Certification activities are conducted by 76 employees and 54 contractors.

NOP DETERMINATION:

NOP reviewed the audit results to determine whether LETIS' corrective actions adequately addressed previous noncompliances. NOP also reviewed any corrective actions submitted as a result of noncompliances issued from Findings identified during the audit.

Any noncompliance labeled as "**Cleared**," indicates that the corrective actions for the noncompliance are determined to be implemented and working effectively. Any noncompliance labeled as "**Accepted**" indicates acceptance of the corrective actions and verification of corrective action implementation will be conducted during the next audit.

Noncompliances from Prior Assessments

AIA-5858-21 - Cleared.

AIA-5863-21 - Cleared.

AIA-6521-21 - Cleared.

AIA-6631-21 - Cleared.

AIA-8510-21 - Cleared.

AIA-8511-21 - Cleared.

AIA-8512-21 - Cleared.

AIA-8513-21 - Cleared.

AIA-8621-21 - Cleared.

AIA-8818-21 - Cleared.

AIA-8838-21 - Cleared.

AIA-5861-21 - Accepted. (NOP-36-19.NC7) 7 C.F.R. §205.406(d) states, "If the certifying agent determines that the certified operation is complying with the Act and the regulations in this part"

Comments: *LETIS does not consistently ensure that its reviewers have sufficient information to determine whether an operation is complying with the Act and USDA organic regulations. The auditor's review of certification files and interviews with staff found the following deficiencies:*

1. Wild Crops Certification

- a. In the OSP, there were no details on the type of instructions provided to the collectors.*
- b. In the OSP, there was insufficient information regarding the operation's record keeping system.*
- c. There was no general map of the wild crops areas certified for collection. Individual zone maps were present, but no maps showing the location of all certified zones (sites).*
- d. Wild crops maps reviewed did not provide details such as specific areas of wild crops collection, areas of potential contamination, areas that are restricted for collectors (e.g. towns and cities), and collection locations.*

2. Grower Group Certification

- a. There was no Internal Control System (ICS).*

- b. *The OSP did not sufficiently describe the operation's practices and procedures for preventing commingling between the crops in transition and the certified organic crops.*

Corrective Action: LETIS updated the OSP document Wild Harvest Production Plan F-S-RS-03 to include section 6.1 Training and Instructions to document the instructions provided to the collectors, section 2 Recordkeeping, and 3.5.3 Maps to include boundaries, buffers, sources of contaminants and the harvest areas. LETIS updated the Grower Group OSP document F-S-Gr-03 to include the ICS and section 7.1 was added to describe measures to prevent comingling and contamination.

Verification of Corrective Action: The auditors reviewed wild crop and grower group certification files and verified that LETIS' corrective actions were implemented effectively to address all elements of the noncompliance except one, insufficient operator wild crop maps (bullet 1(d)).

For grower groups, the auditors verified that grower group OSPs included an ICS and included the operations' practices and procedures for preventing commingling between the crops in transition and the certified organic crops.

For wild crops, the auditors verified that operations provided training and instructions for their collectors, that the OSPs for wild crop applicants included a description of harvest records to be maintained and that the OSP for a wild applicant included maps of the general area. However, the auditors' review of an applicant's wild crops OSP found that the OSP did not include maps with details of the specific areas of wild crops collection, areas of potential contamination, areas that are restricted for collectors (towns and cities), and harvested crop collection locations.

2023 Corrective Action: LETIS updated its procedure *MPO-S-01 Application and Review for Organic Programs* on August 30, 2023, prompting its Technical Manager to assign wild crop operations to a client manager (reviewer) qualified for managing operations with that scope. LETIS reviewed the organic system plan (OSP) for all operations certified to the wild crop scope to assess the maps on-file against the requirements. LETIS issued a notice of noncompliance to five operations for insufficient maps. Four operations surrendered certification prior to resolving the noncompliance and one operation resolved the noncompliance. LETIS identified one client manager position qualified for managing all wild crop operations. LETIS issued an email communication on September 1, 2023, to its client manager and inspectors involved in wild crop certification to remind them of the specific map requirements and instructing them to self-study **NOP 5002 Guidance Wild Crop Harvesting**. LETIS submitted an updated map received from one operation as evidence the corrective action was implemented effectively.

AIA-8514-21 - Accepted. 7 C.F.R. §205.501(a)(3) states, "A private or governmental entity accredited as a certifying agent under this subpart must: Carry out the provisions of the Act and the regulations in this part, including the provisions of §§205.402 through 205.406 and §205.670;"

Comments: *LETIS is not consistently demonstrating the ability to fully comply with the requirements for accreditation, including **NOP 3012 Interim Instruction Material Review**. The auditors' review of LETIS' Material Input Procedures and Operation OSP material input lists and interviews with Technical Department staff found that LETIS' records do not demonstrate that LETIS is verifying whether operations use material inputs in compliance with annotations or use restrictions on the National List of Allowed and Prohibited Substances. Additionally, LETIS is not communicating applicable National List annotations or restricted use requirements to its operations.*

Corrective Action: LETIS submitted updated Procedures Manual MPO-S-01 Application and Review for Organic Programs dated January 25, 2022, requiring the production plan (OSP) to include a list of all material inputs, composition and source, location of use, and frequency of use. The manual states the OSP input list must demonstrate that use is in accordance with regulatory restrictions. LETIS developed the new instruction I-DT-44 Inputs Approval dated January 25, 2022, which requires a review analyst to review OSP updates and verify that all material inputs have been previously evaluated by an input review analyst. If new inputs have not yet been evaluated, then the review analyst must provide the technical information to the input review analyst for determination of compliance. I-DT-44 Inputs Approval also requires the review analyst to provide the operation the production plan review sheet communicating the input review analyst's decisions on material input compliance. LETIS submitted updated Procedure Manual MPO-14 Renewal Process, Changes and Maintenance of the Certification dated January 25, 2022, requiring analysts to follow I-DT-44 Inputs Approval. LETIS updated their Trader, Handling, Processing, Wild Harvest, Crops, Livestock and Apiary Production Plan (OSP) templates to include specific questions for material input use restrictions. LETIS also updated corresponding inspection report templates requiring the inspector to verify that NOP-55-21 LETIS S.A. CA 06/28/2022 Page 8 of 9 material inputs are listed in the OSP and used according to restrictions. LETIS communicated the new requirements to all certified operations and provided training on the new procedures to certification staff in February 2022. The new instruction, procedure, updated OSP templates and inspection report templates were submitted.

Verification of Corrective Action: The auditors review of certification files verified that LETIS is using the updated OSP templates which include a section for input use restrictions; however, the files reviewed did not include a sufficient number of inputs with annotations or restricted use in order for auditors to verify consistent implementation of the corrective action. The corrective action will be further verified at LETIS' next audit.

Noncompliances Identified during the Current Assessment and Corrective Actions

AIA-3433-23 - Accepted. 7 C.F.R. §205.404(b)(1) – (4) states, “The certifying agent must issue a certificate of organic operation which specifies the: Name and address of the certified operation; Effective date of certification; Categories of organic operation, including crops, wild crops, livestock, or processed products produced by the certified operation; and Name, address, and telephone number of the certifying agent.”

Comments: *LETIS' organic certificates do not fully comply with the requirements of the USDA organic regulations. The auditors' review of a livestock certification file identified that an organic certificate issued by LETIS did not include all applicable scopes (categories) of organic certification. The certificate listed the livestock scope but did not list the crops scope covering the organic pasture.*

Corrective Action: LETIS updated its procedure *MPO-S-01 Application and Review for Organic Programs* prompting client managers (reviewers) to include the crop organic system plan (OSP) with livestock certification applications. LETIS updated its procedure *MPO-D-03 Decision Process for Organic Programs* prompting staff making certification decisions to verify that livestock operations include the crop scope; and to include both crop and livestock scopes on the organic certificate with their respective products. LETIS notified staff of the change to both procedures on September 1, 2023. LETIS is not currently certifying any livestock operations.

AIA-3434-23 - Accepted. 7 C.F.R. §205.405 states, “When the certifying agent has reason to believe, based on a review of the information specified in § 205.402 or § 205.404, that an applicant for certification is not able to comply or is not in compliance with the requirements of this part, the certifying agent must provide a written notification of noncompliance to the applicant. When correction of a noncompliance is not possible, a notification of noncompliance and a notification of denial of certification may be combined in one notification.”

Comments: *LETIS incorrectly issued a combined notification of noncompliance and denial of certification to an applicant for a single year’s crop harvest. Certifiers cannot issue a notification of denial for products.*

Corrective Action: LETIS updated its instruction *I-D-54 Instructions Client Manager’s Tasks* prompting client managers (reviewers) on how to issue a “*Decision Act*” notice when a product cannot be included in the scope of certification. LETIS notified staff of the change to its procedure on August 31, 2023.

AIA-3435-23 - Accepted. 7 C.F.R. §205.501(a)(2) states, “A private or governmental entity accredited as a certifying agent under this subpart must: Demonstrate the ability to fully comply with the requirements for accreditation set forth in this subpart.”

Comments: *LETIS does not demonstrate the ability to fully comply with the requirements for accreditation. The auditors review of LETIS’ notifications of noncompliance and adverse action templates identified the following issues:*

- 1. LETIS issues notifications of noncompliance to applicants that state that the next step in the adverse action process is a notification of proposed suspension or notification of proposed revocation.*
- 2. LETIS’ combined notifications of noncompliance and proposed suspension/revocation include the impact of revocation but not suspension.*
- 3. LETIS’ notifications of proposed suspension/revocation include the impact of suspension but not revocation.*

Corrective Action: LETIS updated its notice of noncompliance template *F-D-09 Decision of Notification Non-Compliance* to state that the next step in the adverse action process for new applicants is denial of certification. LETIS updated its combined notice of noncompliance and proposed suspension/revocation template *F-D-02 Decision of Non-Compliance, Suspension Proposal/Non-Conformity, Revocation Proposal* to include the impact of suspension on future eligibility for certification. LETIS updated its notice of proposed suspension/revocation template *F-D-04 Decision of Suspension/Revocation Proposal* to include the impact of revocation on future eligibility for certification. LETIS published all template updates on September 1, 2023. LETIS plans to review its document templates during internal audits to verify compliance with the organic regulations.

AIA-3436-23 - Accepted. 7 C.F.R. §205.663 states, “Any dispute with respect to denial of certification or proposed suspension or revocation of certification under this part may be mediated at the request of the applicant for certification or certified operation and with acceptance by the certifying agent. Mediation shall be requested in writing to the applicable certifying agent. If the certifying agent rejects the request for mediation, the certifying agent shall provide written notification to the applicant for certification or certified operation. The written notification shall advise the applicant for certification or certified operation of the right to request an appeal, pursuant to §205.681, within 30 days of the date of the written notification of rejection of the

request for mediation. If mediation is accepted by the certifying agent, such mediation shall be conducted by a qualified mediator mutually agreed upon by the parties to the mediation. If a State organic program is in effect, the mediation procedures established in the State organic program, as approved by the Secretary, will be followed. The parties to the mediation shall have no more than 30 days to reach an agreement following a mediation session. If mediation is unsuccessful, the applicant for certification or certified operation shall have 30 days from termination of mediation to appeal the certifying agent's decision pursuant to §205.681. Any agreement reached during or as a result of the mediation process shall be in compliance with the Act and the regulations in this part. The Secretary may review any mediated agreement for conformity to the Act and the regulations in this part and may reject any agreement or provision not in conformance with the Act or the regulations in this part.”

Comments: *LETIS’ settlement agreements do not comply with the requirements of the USDA organic regulations. The auditors’ review of settlement agreements established by LETIS found the settlement agreements do not include defined actions that the operation must take to correct the noncompliance and do not include defined timelines for the completion of the agreement.*

Corrective Action: LETIS updated its procedure *MPO-LN-11 LETIS-NOP Additional Requirements* prompting staff to develop settlement agreements that include actions the operation must take, including corrective actions or other terms, and to include defined timelines for corrective actions. LETIS updated its settlement agreement template *F-DC-039 Settlement Agreement* to state that the agreement will be terminated after two years if it is respected by both parties. LETIS notified staff of the change to the procedure and template on September 1, 2023, and submitted an example of an executed settlement agreement to NOP that demonstrates staff are following the updated procedure.

AIA-3437-23 - Accepted. 7 C.F.R. §205.662(c) states, “Proposed suspension or revocation. When rebuttal is unsuccessful or correction of the noncompliance is not completed within the prescribed time period, the certifying agent or State organic program's governing State official shall send the certified operation a written notification of proposed suspension or revocation of certification of the entire operation or a portion of the operation, as applicable to the noncompliance. When correction of a noncompliance is not possible, the notification of noncompliance and the proposed suspension or revocation of certification may be combined in one notification.”

Comments: *LETIS’ proposed adverse action notices are not always applicable to the original Notification of Noncompliance. LETIS’ notifications of proposed suspension/revocation contain different citations and evidence than the original notification of noncompliance.*

Corrective Action: LETIS updated its instruction *I-DT-54 Instructions Clients Manager’s Tasks* prompting client managers (reviewers) how to complete each section of the notice of noncompliance template including the noncompliance description. LETIS updated its *F- F-D-04 Decision of Suspension – Revocation Proposal*, *D-11 Decision Notification of Suspension*, and *F-D-05 Decision of Denial – Cancellation/Revocation* templates to include the same description of noncompliance format that appears on the notice of noncompliance. LETIS implemented the revised procedures on August 31 and September 1, 2023, respectively. LETIS submitted an example of an issued notice of noncompliance and notice of proposed suspension that used the same noncompliance citation and description of noncompliance in both notices, as evidence the corrective action has been implemented.

AIA-3667-23 - Accepted. 7 C.F.R. §205.501(a)(3) states, “A private or governmental entity

accredited as a certifying agent under this subpart must: Carry out the provisions of the Act and the regulations in this part, including the provisions of §§205.402 through 205.406 and §205.670;”

Comments: *LETIS does not consistently carry out the provisions of the Act and regulations. The auditors’ review of certification files identified that LETIS does not consistently require livestock operations to provide verification of compliance with the following livestock regulations:*

1. *LETIS does not require operations to provide Dry Matter Demand and Dry Matter Intake calculation methods. §205.237(d)(4)*
2. *LETIS does not require operations to describe the total feed ration for each type and class of animal, including all feed produced on farm and the percentage of each type of feed, including pasture, in the total feed ration. §205.237(d)(1)*
3. *LETIS does not require operations to document the amount of each type of feed actually fed to each type and class of animal. §205.237(d)(2)*

Corrective Action: LETIS updated its organic system plan *F-S-An-03 Livestock Production Plan* to require operations complete a table for Dry Matter Demand and Dry Matter Intake calculations; and feed tables that include the type and quantity of feed, including pasture, by class of animal. LETIS updated its inspection report checklist *F-I-An-08 Livestock Inspection Report* to prompt inspectors to verify additional livestock feed requirements, including that operations are maintaining records of each type of feed actually fed to each type and class of livestock. LETIS designated two staff members as the technical team specializing in operations with the livestock scope. LETIS is not currently certifying any livestock operations.

AIA-3668-23 - Accepted. 7 C.F.R. §205.501(a)(5) states “A private or governmental entity accredited as a certifying agent under this subpart must: Ensure that its responsibly connected persons, employees, and contractors with inspection, analysis, and decision-making responsibilities have sufficient expertise in organic production or handling techniques to successfully perform the duties assigned.”

Comments: *LETIS does not consistently ensure that its material review staff have sufficient expertise in material review prior to performing the duties assigned. The auditor’s review of certification files and interviews with certification staff found that the following examples showing a lack of expertise in material review:*

1. *LETIS approved a synthetic material for post-harvest handling that was not on the National List.*
2. *LETIS approved multiple inputs without documentation of the input’s specific composition and synthetic/nonsynthetic status of their ingredients.*
3. *LETIS approved multiple inputs without identifying that they have a restricted use.*
4. *LETIS approved an enzyme produced with excluded methods for use in organic processing.*
5. *LETIS approved a synthetic horticultural oil that does not meet definition of narrow range oil.*

Corrective Action: LETIS updated its ‘Inputs Evaluation Responsible’ (input review) position qualifications and responsibilities then promoted a person into the new role in February 2023. LETIS submitted the CV and evidence of training for the Inputs Evaluation Responsible staff person. LETIS’ new Inputs Evaluation Responsible worked with an organic consultant as part of their training and to revise the LETIS input review process.

LETIS updated its instruction for input review *I-DT-44 Instructive Inputs Revision* prompting

staff to document the input manufacturing process, to determine the synthetic/nonsynthetic and agricultural/nonagricultural status of an input, and to record all documents used to review an input including data sheet, label, national registrations, composition, residue and 'GMO-Free' analysis, manufacturing method and organic approvals by other bodies. The instruction includes verifying inputs comply with any National List restrictions and are produced without excluded methods. LETIS developed a new form *F-DT-08 Input Evaluation* to document each input review process. LETIS stated the review of the input manufacturing process is documented in the "Evaluation" section and evidenced in documents submitted by the input manufacturer. LETIS updated its list of approved inputs *Insumos Comerciales Revisados* to include additional details regarding date of review, operation scope, and input reviewer name. LETIS implemented its revised input review process on June 2, 2023.

LETIS completed a review of previously approved inputs identified in the noncompliance and issued a notice of noncompliance to operations, as applicable. LETIS submitted two examples of noncompliances issued to operations and the notice of resolution detailing the corrective action. LETIS plans to review all previously approved inputs as part of each operation's annual certification cycle in 2024.

AIA-3669-23 - Accepted. 7 C.F.R. §205.403(d) states, "The inspector must conduct an exit interview with an authorized representative of the operation who is knowledgeable about the inspected operation to confirm the accuracy and completeness of inspection observations and information gathered during the on-site inspection. The inspector must also address the need for any additional information as well as any issues of concern.

Comments: *During a witness audit of a livestock inspection, the auditors observed that the LETIS inspector did not identify potential issues of concern during the inspection. For example:*

- 1. The operation did not have records detailing farm activities such as mowing, plowing, or cultivating of the pasture.*
- 2. The operation did not have hay production harvest and storage records.*
- 3. The operation did not have feed fed records specifically when and how much hay was fed to animals.*
- 4. The operation did not have records of when and how often feed supplements were provided to animals.*
- 5. The inspector did not identify as issues of concern the following during a producer group inspection:*
 - a. The internal control system's (ICS) internal inspections did not identify specific buffer zone issues at two operations.*
 - b. The ICS internal inspectors had minimal understanding the USDA Organic Regulation, and how it applies to their specific operations.*
 - c. The ICS internal inspections did not identify that most the operations did not maintain their own harvest records.*
 - d. The ICS internal inspections did not identify that the operations did not maintain records of transportation of their organic grapes to the handling facility.*

Corrective Action: LETIS developed a new procedure *MOP-AIA-04 Competence and Performance Procedure Inspectors/Auditors* on February 8, 2024, to define its qualifications, training and performance evaluation requirements for inspectors and field evaluation personnel. LETIS updated its procedure *MOP-07 Personnel Entry, Training and Updates for LETIS*

Members on June 30, 2023, to state the requirement for inspectors to have sufficient expertise, including 2000 hours of experience relevant to the scope and complexity of operations they will inspect, and the minimum number of training hours required by the organic regulation. LETIS is not currently certifying any livestock operations. The inspector observed for the witness audit of the livestock operation no longer works with LETIS. LETIS determined the issues identified during the witness audit of the producer group were isolated to the specific inspector having insufficient experience inspecting this type of operation. LETIS is planning to assign a more qualified inspector for future inspections of producer groups in Argentina.

AIA-3670-23 - Accepted. 7 C.F.R. §205.501(a)(2) states, “A private or governmental entity accredited as a certifying agent under this subpart must: Demonstrate the ability to fully comply with the requirements for accreditation set forth in this subpart.”

Comments: *LETIS does not demonstrate the ability to fully comply with the requirements for accreditation. The auditors’ review of LETIS forms and templates identified that LETIS is using “NOP/COR” when referencing the US/Canada Organic Equivalency Arrangement (USCOEA).*

Corrective Action: LETIS sent an email communication on April 3, 2023, reminding staff to use USCOEA as the acronym for the US/Canada Organic Equivalency Arrangement. LETIS submitted several updated documents and a webpage image as evidence that LETIS is using USCOEA when referencing the US/Canada Organic Equivalency Arrangement.

AIA-3671-23 - Accepted. 7 C.F.R. §205.403(c)(1) states, “The onsite inspection of an operation must verify: The operation's compliance or capability to comply with the Act and the regulations in this part;”

Comments: *LETIS does not fully verify an operation’s compliance with the USDA organic regulations. The auditors’ review of inspection reports identified LETIS inspectors are not consistently conducting and documenting mass balance and traceability audit exercises at initial inspections of applicants.*

Corrective Action: LETIS updated its procedure *MPO-I-02 Additional Requirement of Inspections* and its inspection report template *F-I-12 Records Inspection Report* to prompt inspectors to complete a mass balance and traceability exercise for initial inspections on conventional products when there have been no organic sales; or to conduct a simulation records review to verify the operations ability to comply if there have been no sales at all. LETIS notified staff of the change to the procedure and inspection report template on September 4 and September 6, 2023, respectively.

NATIONAL ORGANIC PROGRAM: CORRECTIVE ACTION REPORT

AUDIT AND REVIEW PROCESS

An onsite Mid-term assessment of LETIS S.A. (LETIS)'s organic program was conducted on December 2-6, 2019. The National Organic Program (NOP) reviewed the auditor's report to assess LETIS's compliance to the USDA organic regulations. This report provides the results of NOP's assessment and review of corrective actions.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Applicant Name	LETIS S.A. (LETIS)
Physical Address	Urquiza 1285, Planta alta, S2000, Rosario, Santa Fe, Argentina
Mailing Address	Urquiza 1285, Planta alta, S2000, Rosario, Santa Fe, Argentina
Contact & Title	Patricia Isabel Garcia de Clausen, General Director
E-mail Address	calidad@letis.org
Phone Number	54 341 528-2560
Reviewer & Auditors	Karin French, Alexis Randolph, NOP Reviewers; Alison Howard, Lars Crail, On-site Auditors.
Program	USDA National Organic Program (NOP)
Review & Audit Dates	Corrective Action Review: March 19-September 23, 2021 NOP Assessment review: December 23, 2020 Onsite audit: December 2-6, 2019
Audit Identifier	NOP-36-19
Action Required	None
Audit & Review Type	Mid-term Assessment
Audit Objective	To evaluate the conformance to the audit criteria; and to verify the implementation and effectiveness of LETIS's certification program.
Audit & Determination Criteria	<i>7 CFR Part 205, National Organic Program as amended</i>
Audit & Review Scope	LETIS's certification services in carrying out the audit criteria during the period: December 16, 2017 through December 1, 2019

LETIS is a privately owned, for-profit corporation located in Argentina. LETIS was accredited on December 9, 2002 to the USDA National Organic Program (NOP) to the scopes of Crops, Wild crop, Livestock, and Handling. LETIS certifies 367 operations to the following certification scopes: Crops (245), Wild Crops (4), Livestock (0), and Handlers (119), including 17 grower groups in the crop and wild crop scopes.

LETIS provides certification services in Argentina, Bosnia and Herzegovina, China, Hong Kong, The Republic of Moldova, Pakistan, Russian Federation, Turkey, Ukraine, and Uzbekistan.

Certification decisions are made in the Rosario, Argentina office. Two satellite offices in Turkey and Germany, perform inspection services.

The auditors conducted two witness audits and one review audit in Argentina. Witness audits were conducted on two annual Crops inspections. The Crops operations produced pears. The review audit was conducted at a fruit handling operation.

NOP DETERMINATION

The NOP reviewed the onsite audit results to determine whether LETIS corrective actions adequately addressed previous noncompliances. The NOP also reviewed the findings identified during the onsite audit to determine whether noncompliances should be issued to LETIS.

Any noncompliance labeled as “**Cleared**,” indicates that the corrective actions for the noncompliance are determined to be implemented and working effectively. Any noncompliance labeled as “**Outstanding**” indicates that either the auditor could not verify implementation of the corrective actions or that records reviewed and audit observations did not demonstrate compliance. Any noncompliance labeled as “**Accepted**” indicates that the corrective action remains accepted and that additional verification of the implementation of the corrective action will be conducted during the next audit.

Noncompliances from Prior Assessments

NOP-60-17.NC1 – Cleared.

NOP-60-17.NC2 – Cleared.

NOP-60-17.NC3 – Cleared.

NOP-60-17.NC4 – Cleared.

NOP-60-17.NC5 – Cleared.

NOP-60-17.NC6 – Cleared.

NOP-60-17.NC7 – Cleared.

NOP-60-17.NC9 – Cleared.

NOP-60-17.NC10 – Cleared.

NOP-60-17.NC11 – Cleared.

NOP-60-17.NC12 – Cleared.

NOP-60-17.NC13 – Cleared.

NOP-24-18.NC2 – Cleared.

NOP-24-18.NC3 – Cleared.

AP-339-18.NC1 – Cleared.

AIA-5864-21 (NOP-24-18.NC1) – Accepted. This NC is in addition to a similar NC (NOP-60-17.NC6) issued to LETIS regarding inadequate expertise and knowledge of personnel. 7 C.F.R. § 205.501(a)(4) states, “A certifying agent under this subpart must: Use ... adequately trained personnel, including inspectors ... to comply with and implement the organic certification program established under the Act and the regulations in subpart E of this part.”

Comments: *LETIS-Turkey personnel did not demonstrate an adequate understanding of the USDA organic regulations and NOP Policies. The following are examples of the auditor’s observations from the on-site assessment:*

- 1. During a witness audit of a handler operation, nitrogen was present onsite and was being used as a processing aid. The inspector failed to identify that nitrogen was being used, and that its use was not listed in the operation’s OSP.*
- 2. The OSP asks about an operation’s monitoring procedures (205.201(a)(3)), but the operation did not provide this information. The inspector did not note that this information was missing from the OSP and did not understand what needed to be verified in this case.*
- 3. The inspector did not demonstrate an adequate understanding of how to complete successful traceability and in/out balance exercises. The recorded traceability exercise was incomplete and did not list the documents reviewed. No in/out balance was completed. The operation was not producing and processing organic products, but the inspector did not conduct an in/out balance on non-organic products to test the operation’s record keeping system.*
- 4. The inspector did not record in the inspection report an assessment of whether the record keeping system on-site matched the description in the organic system plan.*

2018 Corrective Action: LETIS determined that staff in Turkey needed additional training on inspections and the requirements for NOP certification. In November 2018, the LETIS General Director and Technical and Quality Director traveled to Turkey to provide training to staff, to conduct performance evaluations, and to complete an internal audit. The training covered completing and verifying the OSP, the NOP requirements for multi-site operations, and various topics on conducting the inspection. In April 2019, one Turkey employee traveled to Argentina for training on the entire certification and inspection process under the NOP. That employee is replicating the trainings for other staff in Turkey. The LETIS Technical and Quality Director and a colleague will travel to Turkey again in September 2019 to provide further training. To monitor this noncompliance, LETIS has created training logs to be maintained, will conduct annual performance evaluations for all staff, and will have the technical department review all inspection reports before issuing certifications decisions.

Verification of Corrective Actions: The implementation of the corrective action could not be verified during the onsite audit of LETIS’s office in Argentina. The corrective action will be verified at the next audit.

AIA-7882-21 (AP-339-18.NC2) – Accepted. 7 CFR §205.404(b) states, “The certifying agent must issue a certificate of organic operation which specifies the name and address of the certified operation.”

Comments: *A NOP review of supply chain documents for a vessel of organic corn from Turkey showed that LETIS issued multiple transaction certificates to a Turkish handler who purchased crops from uncertified subcontractors. LETIS issued two transaction certificates to the handler for a total of 20,000 metric tons of organic corn from Turkey. In a June 15, 2018 email to the NOP, LETIS stated, “This Operator has under his management 193 fields (sites) of crop production and has a leasing contract with the producers (for primary production/ the producers manage the field).” LETIS issued the handler an organic certificate with a 14-page appendix, which listed the names and Turkish organic certificate numbers for 177 producers. LETIS further supplied two letters, dated June 15, 2018 and issued from its Rosario office, stating that the transaction certificates issued to the Turkish handler corresponded to corn produced by a list of 44 and 50 farmers, depending on the letter. The farmers’ names did not appear in the Organic INTEGRITY Database. However, LETIS listed the Turkish handler’s address as “Multiples sitios” [sic] in the same database. While LETIS stated that each field or site was audited by an organic inspector, it did not grant certificates to the individual producers. Instead, LETIS listed the producers as an appendix to the Turkish handler’s organic certificate, providing only their names and their Turkish organic certification numbers as identifying information. The organic certificate did not list the mailing address or physical location for the producers. In response to questions from the NOP, LETIS stated that its general procedures allow for the use of uncertified subcontractors as “multi-site” operations.*

Corrective Actions: LETIS will no longer allow for multisite certification. LETIS identified 11 operations that LETIS will certify as grower groups during the operation’s 2019 certification cycle. LETIS plans to have all the multisite operations certified as grower groups by May 2020.

Verification of Corrective Actions: The corrective action plan has been initiated but will not be fully implemented until May 2020. The auditor reviewed the corrective action plan status with LETIS certification personnel. Eleven of the identified operations are in conversion to grower group certification. The completion of this transition will be verified at the next audit.

AIA-5863-21 (NOP-60-17.NC8) - Accepted. 7 C.F.R. §205.501(a)(21) states, “Comply with, implement, and carry out any other terms and conditions determined by the Administrator to be necessary.” NOP 2601, The Organic Certification Process, Section 3.4, 3 – Inspection, states, “Inspectors often discover new information or documentation during onsite inspections. The inspector may accept additional OSP updates during the inspection, up until the start of the exit interview, and should provide any new information received onsite to the certifier. If the inspector and the operator update the OSP during the inspection, then the inspector should provide a copy of the update to both the operator and the certifier. Once the inspector finishes the inspection report, he or she sends the report to the certifier for review. The certifier will evaluate the inspector’s findings when making a final certification decision.”

Comments: *Inspectors are not verifying the Organic System Plan (OSP) and making necessary updates during inspections. Instead, inspectors are recording updates and details about the operation that should be described in the OSP in their inspection reports. Inspectors are not verifying OSP flow charts and maps during inspections.*

2018 Corrective Action: LETIS revised and submitted the documents listed below. The revisions will be covered in training given to staff in 2018 according to LETIS’ submitted training plan.

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- F-CI-301, the opening interview and inspection plan template – LETIS added verification of the OSP as one of the objectives of onsite inspections.
- Procedures document, OMOP-01, sections six and seven – LETIS added clarifications to the requirements for inspectors in reviewing, verifying, and making updates to the OSP.
- Procedures document, OMOP-06, section 9.11 – LETIS added a requirement for inspectors to verify the accuracy of OSP flow charts and maps during inspections.

Verification of Corrective Actions: Below is evidence that LETIS has not effectively implemented the corrective actions:

- During the Witness Audits LETIS inspectors did not verify the organic system plan (OSP) during the inspection. The inspection checklist is used to document what is currently occurring at the operation. This information is not described in the OSP and is not indicated on an Exit Interview as an update or issue of an inaccurate or incomplete OSP.
- At one of the Witness Audits, the map was not consulted or verified during the field inspection. The map was reviewed at the office after the field visit.
- During the Auditor's record review, inspection reports indicated detailed information on current production practices that were not documented in the current OSP. The Exit Interviews did not identify as an issued of concern differences between the OSP and the current practices of the operation. During the final review, the inspection report and OSP were not reviewed to determine if updates were needed to the OSP.

2021 Corrective Action: LETIS provided training in January 2021 to inspectors. Training records provided to the NOP for review included inspector attendance and the topics of verifying the OSP, map and flow charts during inspection and how to document the verification points. LETIS also updated the general inspection report to include the section Application and Maintenance of Certification; a section for the inspector to document OSP updates. The updated template was provided to the NOP for review. LETIS submitted a Crop inspection report that included inspector comments referencing verification against the OSP.

Noncompliances Identified during the Current Assessment

AIA-5855-21 (NOP-36-19.NC1) – Accepted. 7 C.F.R. §205.404(b)(1) – (4) states, “The certifying agent must issue a certificate of organic operation which specifies the: Name and address of the certified operation; Effective date of certification; Categories of organic operation, including crops, wild crops, livestock, or processed products produced by the certified operation; and Name, address, and telephone number of the certifying agent.”

Comments: *LETIS's organic certificates do not fully comply with the requirements of the USDA organic regulations. The auditor's review of certification files found the following:*

1. *Certificate formats are inconsistent. In one example, the certified operation and the parcel were listed; whereas, other issued certificates these items were not listed. Additionally, some certificates listed two or more operator names.*
2. *For one certificate, the certification scope indicated the operation was a Handler/processor, when in fact, the operation was a Handler/trader.*

Corrective Actions: LETIS updated the organic certificate template and provided examples of compliant certificates showing the correct scope, name, and address of a single operator. The location of the production unit is also shown if different than the operator's address.

AIA-5856-21 (NOP-36-19.NC2) – Accepted. 7 C.F.R. §205.670(g) states, “If test results indicate a specific agricultural product contains pesticide residues or environmental contaminants that exceed the Food and Drug Administration's or the Environmental Protection Agency's regulatory tolerances, the certifying agent must promptly report such data to the Federal health agency whose regulatory tolerance or action level has been exceeded. Test results that exceed federal regulatory tolerances must also be reported to the appropriate State health agency or foreign equivalent.”

Comments: *LETIS did not comply with the requirements of §205.670(g) and appropriately follow the procedures in NOP 2613, Instruction Responding to Results from Pesticide Residue Testing in the following cases:*

- 1. In one residue case with a residue detection over 5% of the EPA tolerance, LETIS did not notify the operation that they could not sell the product. Additionally, LETIS did not adequately investigate to determine an appropriate course of action.*
- 2. In one residue case, LETIS's inspector collected tissue samples of wheat that resulted in a positive pesticide detection. No further action was taken by LETIS. Additionally, LETIS did not contact any U.S. federal or Argentinian authorities concerning the sample exceeding tolerance levels.*

Corrective Actions: LETIS updated policy MPO-RI-07 section 5.9.5, directing staff to follow the guidance of *NOP 2613 Instruction Responding to Results from Pesticide Testing* when responding to pesticide residue analysis results. A new tracking form (R-DT-01) was implemented to record all samples taken by an inspector and the investigation results. LETIS' Technical Assistant for Investigations/Investigative Analyst is a newly created position responsible for analyzing and responding to pesticide residue results reports.

AIA-5857-21 (NOP-36-19.NC3) – Accepted. 7 C.F.R. §205.501(a)(4) states, “A private or governmental entity accredited as a certifying agent under this subpart must: Use a sufficient number of adequately trained personnel, including inspectors and certification review personnel, to comply with and implement the organic certification program established under the Act and the regulations in subpart E of this part;”

Comments: *LETIS does not have a sufficient number of personnel to implement its USDA organic certification program. As a result, LETIS is not consistently reviewing residue analysis reports within a reasonable time. The auditor's review of certification files found the following:*

- 1. At the time of the audit, LETIS had not yet reviewed the laboratory results for samples collected six months prior (i.e., May 2019).*
- 2. The NOP audit engagement letter requested that records for selected residue testing cases be available for the auditors' review at the beginning of the onsite audit; however, those records were not available until the end of the onsite audit.*

Corrective Actions: LETIS added the new position Technical Assistant for Investigations/Investigative Analyst to investigate residue testing cases and maintain records. LETIS updated its MOP-07 Personnel Entry, Trainings and Updates procedure to identify training

requirements. LETIS submitted personnel training records from January 2021 for the new position, including an OILC Sampling and Testing course. LETIS provided an example of a sampling activity and timely management of the case. A new training system to track and record staff qualifications will be finished by December 2021.

AIA-5858-21 (NOP-36-19.NC4) – Accepted. 7 C.F.R. §205.501(a)(3) states, “A private or governmental entity accredited as a certifying agent under this subpart must: Carry out the provisions of the Act and the regulations in this part, including the provisions of §§205.402 through 205.406 and §205.670;”

Comments: *LETIS is not fully carrying out the provisions of §205.403(c)(1) – (2). LETIS’s inspectors do not fully verify an operation’s compliance with the USDA organic regulations and whether the operation’s organic system plan (OSP) accurately reflects the practices used or to be used by the operation. The auditor’s review of certification files found the following:*

- 1. LETIS is not consistently conducting inspections when wild crop activities (e.g., collecting of products) can be verified for compliance. Two out of three Wild Crops inspections reports reviewed by the auditors found that the inspections were conducted when collection activities could not be observed for compliance.*
- 2. OSP updates, including lack thereof, are not verified for accuracy during the onsite inspection. Additionally, LETIS’s inspectors do not identify an inaccurate or incomplete OSP as an issue of concern during the exit interview or in the inspection report.*
- 3. Wild Crops inspection reports reviewed did not include information to demonstrate that collection personnel (other than the license holders) were interviewed.*
- 4. In one reviewed Wild Crops inspection report, there was no information indicating that verification of whether the zones could support the estimated yields was conducted.*
- 5. The records for one grower group inspection did not sufficiently demonstrate that external inspections of the 21 members of the grower group sampled by LETIS’s inspector were conducted.*

Corrective Actions: LETIS updated policy document MPO-I-02 Annual and Additional Inspections section 4.5.4 instructing inspectors to only conduct wild crop inspections when collection activities can be observed. On March 11, 2021, LETIS conducted training. Topics covered included Wild Crop Harvest Guidance, Wild Crop OSP evaluation and verification at inspection, record-keeping for Wild Crop operations, and including mass balance and traceback exercises. LETIS also updated policy MPO-Gr-08 Certification of Smallholder Groups to state all members of a grower group are to be inspected annually. LETIS submitted the updated policies, training agenda and attendance to the NOP. LETIS also provided training to inspectors in January 2021 which included verifying the OSP during inspection and how to document the verification points.

AIA-5859-21 (NOP-36-19.NC5) –Accepted. 7 C.F.R. §205.501(a)(3) states, “A private or governmental entity accredited as a certifying agent under this subpart must: Carry out the provisions of the Act and the regulations in this part, including the provisions of §§205.402 through 205.406 and §205.670;”

Comments: *LETIS is not fully carrying out the provisions of §205.665. LETIS is not implementing the noncompliance and adverse action process in the following manner:*

1. *Even though an operation does not pay its fees, LETIS does not issue the operation a notification of noncompliance. Interviews with certification staff indicated that it is because issuing such notifications create more paperwork and the operation may not have the funds to pay the bill.*
2. *Even though an operation does not submit an updated OSP by the anniversary date, LETIS does not issue the operation a notification of noncompliance for failure to submit an annual update. Instead, LETIS's inspectors obtain the updated OSP at the time of the inspection.*
3. *In one reviewed Wild Crops certification file, the minor issue notification sent to the operation did not include a regulatory citation and a date to respond by.*

Corrective Actions: LETIS created a new instruction document I-DT-DA-00 for the issuance of a Notice of Noncompliance when an operation does not submit fees or an OSP on time. LETIS submitted a Notice of Noncompliance, consistent with the requirements of §205.662, that was issued to an operator who did not submit an annual certification update application.

AIA-5860-21 (NOP-36-19.NC6) – Accepted. 7 C.F.R. §205.501(a)(2) states, “A private or governmental entity accredited as a certifying agent under this subpart must: Demonstrate the ability to fully comply with the requirements for accreditation set forth in this subpart.”

Comments: *LETIS's organic system plan forms do not demonstrate that LETIS fully complies with the requirements of §205.201. The auditor's review of certification files and interviews with staff found the following deficiencies:*

1. *Crop rotation is not identified as a requirement for all types of crop production (annual and perennial).*
2. *The requirement to provide a description of the practices and procedures (§205.201(a)(1)) is combined with monitoring practices and procedures (§205.201(a)(3)), which makes it unclear for the operator to distinguish between the two requirements.*

Corrective Actions: LETIS updated the Crop organic system plan to include the following: crop rotation is a requirement for both annual and perennial cropping systems; and the requirement for producers to describe monitoring practices and procedures. LETIS submitted both a blank template and a completed version of the updated OSP for review.

AIA-5861-21 (NOP-36-19.NC7) – Accepted. 7 C.F.R. §205.406(d) states, “If the certifying agent determines that the certified operation is complying with the Act and the regulations in this part”

Comments: *LETIS does not consistently ensure that its reviewers have sufficient information to determine whether an operation is complying with the Act and USDA organic regulations. The auditor's review of certification files and interviews with staff found the following deficiencies:*

1. *Wild Crops Certification*
 - *In the OSP, there were no details on the type of instructions provided to the collectors.*
 - *In the OSP, there was insufficient information regarding the operation's record keeping system.*
 - *There was no general map of the Wild Crops areas certified for collection. Individual zone maps were present, but no maps showing the location of all certified zones (sites).*

- *Wild Crops maps reviewed did not provide details such as specific areas of wild crops collection, areas of potential contamination, areas that are restricted for collectors (e.g., towns and cities), and collection locations.*

2. Grower Group Certification

- *There was no Internal Control System (ICS).*
- *The OSP did not sufficiently describe the operation's practices and procedures for preventing commingling between the crops in transition and the certified organic crops.*

Corrective Action: LETIS updated the OSP document Wild Harvest Production Plan F-S-RS-03 to include section 6.1 Training and Instructions to document the instructions provided to the collectors, section 2 Recordkeeping, and 3.5.3 Maps to include boundaries, buffers, sources of contaminants and the harvest areas. LETIS updated the Grower Group OSP document F-S-Gr-03 to include the ICS and section 7.1 was added to describe measures to prevent comingling and contamination.

AIA-5862-21 (NOP-36-19.NC8) – Accepted. 7 C.F.R. §205.501(a)(11)(iv) states, “A private or governmental entity accredited as a certifying agent under this subpart must: Prevent conflicts of interest by: Not giving advice or providing consultancy services, to certification applicants or certified operations, for overcoming identified barriers to certification;”

Comments: *During the auditor's review of issued minor issues and notifications of noncompliances, the auditor finds that LETIS provides operations with advice for overcoming barriers to certification. Specifically, there is a “corrective action” section in the notifications where LETIS instructs the operation how to correct the noncompliance. This feature on the minor issue and noncompliance template was removed by LETIS on October 7, 2019.*

Corrective Actions: LETIS updated and submitted the minor issues and notifications of noncompliance template with the “corrective action” section removed.

NATIONAL ORGANIC PROGRAM: CORRECTIVE ACTION REPORT

AUDIT AND REVIEW PROCESS

The National Organic Program (NOP) conducted a mid-term assessment of LETIS S.A. An onsite audit was conducted, and the audit report reviewed to determine LETIS S.A.'s capability to continue operating as a USDA accredited certifier.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Applicant Name	LETIS S.A. (LETIS)
Physical Address	San Lorenzo 2261, First Floor A, (2000), Rosario, Santa Fe, Argentina
Mailing Address	Same
Contact & Title	Patricia Garcia, General Director
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Phone Number	+54 341 426-4244
Reviewer & Auditors	Robert Yang, NOP Reviewer Renée Gebault King and Nikki Adams, On-site Auditors
Program	USDA National Organic Program (NOP)
Review & Audit Dates	NOP assessment review: August 25, 2015; January 11, 2016 through March 18, 2016 Onsite audit: April 6-10, 2015
Audit Identifier	NP5096RKA
Action Required	None
Audit & Review Type	Mid-Term Assessment
Audit Objective	To evaluate the conformance to the audit criteria; and to verify the implementation and effectiveness of LETIS's certification system.
Audit & Determination Criteria	7 CFR Part 205, National Organic Program as amended
Audit & Review Scope	LETIS's certification services in carrying out the audit criteria during the period: November 2012 through April 2015.

LETIS S.A. is a privately owned, for-profit corporation registered in the country of Argentina, offering a third party certification program and verification services to organic producers and processors/handlers. LETIS was accredited as a certifying agent on December 9, 2002, to the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) National Organic Program (NOP) for crop, wild crop, livestock, and handling operations. LETIS currently has 126 operations certified to the USDA organic regulations: 84 crop, 1 wild crop and 41 handling operations. LETIS does not have any operations certified to the USDA organic regulations for livestock. LETIS certifies USDA organic operations mainly in Argentina, with some in Uruguay and the USA (Florida). Other certification activities are conducted in Peru, Paraguay, Chile, Canada, and Mexico under other schemes.

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LETIS' headquarters is located in Rosario, Argentina. All organic certification activities occur in the Rosario office only. LETIS offices in Peru and Pakistan are inspector offices for GOTS certification (textiles), but are not offices where any organic certification activities occur. LETIS is accredited as an ISO Guide 17065 certification body through the Argentine Accreditation Organization (OAA). It is also accredited by SENASA (Argentinian government), Canada Organic Regime (COR), GLOBALGAP, IFOAM, Global Organic Textile Standards (GOTS), EU, JAS, and Bio Suisse.

NOP DETERMINATION:

NOP reviewed the onsite audit results to determine whether LETIS' corrective actions adequately addressed previous noncompliances. NOP also reviewed any corrective actions submitted as a result of noncompliances issued from Findings identified during the onsite audit.

Non-compliances from Prior Assessments

Any noncompliance labeled as "**Cleared**," indicates that the corrective actions for the noncompliance are determined to be implemented and working effectively. Any noncompliance labeled as "**Outstanding**" indicates that either the auditor could not verify implementation of the corrective actions or that records reviewed and audit observations did not demonstrate compliance.

NP0109BBA.NC2 – Cleared
NP0109BBA.NC3 – Cleared
NP2303NNA.NC1 – Cleared
NP2303NNA.NC2 – Cleared
NP2303NNA.NC3 – Cleared
NP2303NNA.NC4 – Cleared
NP2303NNA.NC5 – Cleared
NP2303NNA.NC6 – Cleared
NP2303NNA.NC7 – Cleared

Non-compliances Identified during the Current Assessment

Any noncompliance labeled as "**Accepted**," indicates that the corrective actions for the noncompliance are accepted by the NOP and will be verified for implementation and effectiveness during the next onsite audit.

NP5096RKA.NC1 – Accepted. 7 CFR § 205.404(c) states, "Once certified, a production or handling operation's organic certification continues in effect until surrendered by the organic operation or suspended or revoked by the certifying agent, the State organic program's governing State official, or the Administrator."

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2015 Comments: *Of the 12 certificates reviewed during the audit, three NOP certificates were missing the LETIS phone number; some scopes were not correctly defined (Fruticulture was listed, but not the term Crops). LETIS staff had already identified these issues during their March 2015 internal audit. Certificate templates are pre-printed for the basic LETIS contact information (but not client content); no new certificates have been issued as of the completion of the internal audit. LETIS staff verbally confirmed that any new certificates will be issued with the phone number hand-written on it and that the term "Crops" will be used where appropriate.*

2015 Corrective Actions: LETIS revised its certificate template to include LETIS' phone number. A copy of the revised certificate template was submitted to the NOP. LETIS also updated its *NOP Additional Requirements (MOP-LN-0, rev 02)* document to include a requirement for the elements of the organic certificate to comply with NOP 2603 Instruction Organic Certificates, Section 3.1. LETIS provided its staff with training on the revised certificate template.

NP5096RKA.NC2 – Accepted. 7 CFR § 205.501(a)(6) states, "Conduct an annual performance evaluation of all persons who review applications for certification, perform on-site inspections, review certification documents, evaluate qualifications for certification, make recommendations concerning certification, or make certification decisions and implement measures to correct any deficiencies in certification services;" Annual field evals of inspectors."

2015 Comments: *LETIS performs annual performance evaluations; however they have not been performing annual field evaluations with the inspectors per NOP Instruction NOP 2027, 3.2 Evaluation Criteria, which states "Certifying agents conducting performance reviews should use the following kinds of evaluation criteria: b) field evaluations (Inspectors only) – Inspectors should be evaluated during an on-site inspection by a supervisor or peer (another inspector) at least annually." LETIS has 7 qualified inspectors (all subcontracted) and 2 currently in training. In 2014 they only performed 3 field evaluations. LETIS stated that they intend to perform field evaluations of all inspectors (and did perform this at the witness inspection during the audit).*

2015 Corrective Actions: LETIS conducted field evaluations of all its current inspectors. LETIS also revised its *Profiles of Position (MOP-05, rev 12)* document to include a policy for field evaluations of its inspectors to be conducted by a Supervisor or peer (another inspector) at least annually.

NP5096RKA.NC3 – Accepted. 7 CFR § 205.303 (b)(2) and § 205.304(b)(2) states "Agricultural products in packages described in §205.301(a)(b) or (c) must: On the information panel, below the information identifying the handler or distributor of the product and preceded by the statement, "Certified Organic by ***", or similar phrase, identify the name of the certifying agent...."

2015 Comments: *A review of 9 labels (3 100% Organic, 3 Made with Organic Grapes and 3 other (bulk product) found that 6 of 9 labels contained the statement 'Certified by LETIS S.A' instead of 'Certified Organic by....'. and 1 of 9 labels had the ACA information above the handler/ distributor information instead of below.*

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2015 Corrective Actions: LETIS informed the operations of their noncompliant labels and required the operations to submit corrective actions. LETIS also sent a reminder notification in February 2016 to all its NOP certified operations that as of January 2016, operations should be complying with the requirement to place the "Certified organic by LETIS" statement below the handler/distributor information. LETIS provided it staff with training on label requirements, including training on the placement of the "Certified organic by ***" statement on product labels.

NP5096RKA.NC4 – Accepted. 7 CFR § 205.403(c)(1) states, "The operation's compliance or capability to comply with the Act and the regulations in this part."

2015 Comments *LETIS inspection reports do not direct inspectors to verify the correction of noncompliances identified during previous inspections. The Quality Manager explained to the auditors that this issue was already identified during the March 2015 internal audit and the system is in process of being updated to reflect their quality manual procedures. The Technical Department currently provides the previous inspection report and committee decision to inform the inspector of any prior noncompliances.*

2015 Corrective Actions: LETIS has designated one of the Technical Assistants to be in charge of identifying, and communicating to inspectors, prior noncompliances that need to be verified during an upcoming inspection. LETIS also updated its *Inspections and Audits (MOP-14, rev 08)* procedures to include instructions to provide inspectors with information regarding prior noncompliances that need to be verified during the inspection. LETIS provided the Technical Assistant with training on the revised procedures.

NATIONAL ORGANIC PROGRAM: CORRECTIVE ACTION REPORT

AUDIT AND REVIEW PROCESS

The National Organic Program (NOP) conducted a mid-term assessment of LETIS S.A. An onsite audit was conducted, and the audit report reviewed to determine LETIS S.A.'s capability to continue operating as a USDA accredited certifier.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Applicant Name	LETIS S.A. (LETIS)
Physical Address	San Lorenzo 2261, First Floor A, (2000), Rosario, Santa Fe, Argentina
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Phone Number	+54 341 426-4244
Reviewer & Auditors	Janna Howley, NOP Reviewer Renée Gebault King and Nikki Adams, On-site Auditors
Program	USDA National Organic Program (NOP)
Review & Audit Dates	NOP assessment review: August 25, 2015 Onsite audit: April 6-10, 2015
Audit Identifier	NP5096RKA
Action Required	None
Audit & Review Type	Mid-Term Assessment
Audit Objective	To evaluate the conformance to the audit criteria; and to verify the implementation and effectiveness of [ACA acronym]'s certification system.
Audit & Determination Criteria	<i>7 CFR Part 205, National Organic Program as amended</i>
Audit & Review Scope	LETIS's certification services in carrying out the audit criteria during the period: November 2012 through April 2015.

LETIS S.A. is a privately owned, for-profit corporation registered in the country of Argentina, offering a third party certification program and verification services to organic producers and processors/handlers. LETIS was accredited as a certifying agent on December 9, 2002, to the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) National Organic Program (NOP) for crop, wild crop, livestock, and handling operations. LETIS currently has 126 operations certified to the USDA organic regulations: 84 crop, 1 wild crop and 41 handling operations. LETIS does not have any operations certified to the USDA organic regulations for livestock. LETIS certifies USDA organic operations mainly in Argentina, with some in Uruguay and the USA (Florida). Other certification activities are conducted in Peru, Paraguay, Chile, Canada, and Mexico under other schemes.

LETIS' headquarters are located in Rosario, Argentina. All organic certification activities occur in the Rosario office only. LETIS offices in Peru and Pakistan are inspector offices for GOTS certification (textiles), but are not offices where any organic certification activities occur. LETIS is also accredited as an ISO Guide 17065 certification body through the Argentine Accreditation Organization (OAA). It is also accredited by SENASA (Argentinian government), Canada Organic Regime (COR), GLOBALGAP, IFOAM, Global Organic Textile Standards (GOTS), EU, JAS, and Bio Suisse.

NOP DETERMINATION:

NOP reviewed the onsite audit results to determine whether LETIS' corrective actions adequately addressed previous noncompliances. NOP also reviewed any corrective actions submitted as a result of noncompliances issued from Findings identified during the onsite audit.

Non-compliances from Prior Assessments

Any noncompliance labeled as “**Cleared**,” indicates that the corrective actions for the noncompliance are determined to be implemented and working effectively. Any noncompliance labeled as “**Outstanding**” indicates that either the auditor could not verify implementation of the corrective actions or that records reviewed and audit observations did not demonstrate compliance.

NP0109BBA.NC2 – Cleared
NP0109BBA.NC3 – Cleared
NP2303NNA.NC1 – Cleared
NP2303NNA.NC2 – Cleared
NP2303NNA.NC3 – Cleared
NP2303NNA.NC4 – Cleared
NP2303NNA.NC5 – Cleared
NP2303NNA.NC6 – Cleared
NP2303NNA.NC7 – Cleared

Non-compliances Identified during the Current Assessment

Any noncompliance labeled as “**Accepted**,” indicates that the corrective actions for the noncompliance are accepted by the NOP and will be verified for implementation and effectiveness during the next onsite audit.

NP5096RKA.NC1 – 7 CFR § 205.404(c) states, “Once certified, a production or handling operation's organic certification continues in effect until surrendered by the organic operation or suspended or revoked by the certifying agent, the State organic program's governing State official, or the Administrator.”

2015 Comments: *Of the 12 certificates reviewed during the audit, three NOP certificates were missing the LETIS phone number; some Scopes were not correctly defined (Fruticulture was*

listed, but not the term Crops). LETIS staff had already identified these issues during their March 2015 internal audit. Certificate templates are pre-printed for the basic LETIS contact information (but not client content); no new certificates have been issued as of the completion of the internal audit. LETIS staff verbally confirmed that any new certificates will be issued with the phone number hand-written on it and that the term “Crops” will be used where appropriate.

2015 Corrective Actions: LETIS revised its certificate template to include the phone number and category of certified operation. LETIS’ *Quality Manual-17 10.1.4* contained the requirement that the certificate include the scope of certification; however, the staff member in charge of producing certificates was trained on the certificate requirements and NOP scopes allowed by the regulations to prevent the noncompliance from happening in the future. A copy of the revised certificate template was provided to the NOP.

NP5096RKA.NC2 – 7 CFR § 205.501(a)(6) states, “Conduct an annual performance evaluation of all persons who review applications for certification, perform on-site inspections, review certification documents, evaluate qualifications for certification, make recommendations concerning certification, or make certification decisions and implement measures to correct any deficiencies in certification services;” Annual field evals of inspectors.”

2015 Comments: *LETIS performs annual performance evaluations; however they have not been performing annual field evaluations with the inspectors per NOP Instruction NOP 2027, 3.2 Evaluation Criteria, which states “Certifying agents conducting performance reviews should use the following kinds of evaluation criteria: b) field evaluations (Inspectors only) – Inspectors should be evaluated during an on-site inspection by a supervisor or peer (another inspector) at least annually.” LETIS has 7 qualified inspectors (all subcontracted) and 2 currently in training. In 2014 they only performed 3 field evaluations. LETIS stated that they intend to perform field evaluations of all inspectors (and did perform this at the witness inspection during the audit).*

2015 Corrective Actions: LETIS provided the NOP with a schedule of 2015 field evaluations for all inspectors who inspect NOP certified operations.

NP5096RKA.NC3 – 7 CFR § 205.303 (b)(2) and § 205.304(b)(2) states “ Agricultural products in packages described in §205.301(a)(b) or (c) must: On the information panel, below the information identifying the handler or distributor of the product and preceded by the statement, “Certified Organic by ***”, or similar phrase, identify the name of the certifying agent.....”.

2015 Comments: *A review of 9 labels (3 100% Organic, 3 Made with Organic Grapes and 3 other (bulk product) found that 6 of 9 labels contained the statement ‘Certified by LETIS S.A’ instead of ‘Certified Organic by....’. and 1 of 9 labels had the ACA information above the handler/ distributor information instead of below.*

2015 Corrective Actions: LETIS provided training to the staff member who is in charge of label verification.

NP5096RKA.NC4 – 7 CFR § 205.403(c)(1) states, “The operation's compliance or capability to comply with the Act and the regulations in this part.”

2015 Comments *LETIS inspection reports do not direct inspectors to verify the correction of noncompliances identified during previous inspections. The Quality Manager explained to the auditors that this issue was already identified during the March 2015 internal audit and the system is in process of being updated to reflect their quality manual procedures. The Technical Department currently provides the previous inspection report and committee decision to inform the inspector of any prior noncompliances.*

2015 Corrective Actions: LETIS has designated a staff member to be in charge of identifying, and communicating to inspectors, any noncompliances identified during the previous inspections. This staff member will also oversee the verification of corrective actions by inspectors. The LETIS *Organic Manual of Operating and Procedures OMOP-06 4.1.6* requires inspectors to review previous non-compliances.

AUDIT INFORMATION

Applicant Name:	LETIS S.A.
Est. Number:	N/A
Physical Address:	Entre Rios 549, 1° floor, Rosario (2000), Santa Fe, Argentina
Mailing Address:	Entre Rios 549, 1° floor, Rosario (2000), Santa Fe, Argentina
Contact & Title:	Patricia I. Garcia de Clausen, General Director
E-mail Address:	patricia@letis.org ; administración@letis.org
Phone Number:	54 0341 4264244
Auditor(s):	Betsy Rakola, Accreditation Manager
Program:	USDA National Organic Program (NOP)
Audit Date(s):	February 19 – March 8, 2013
Audit Identifier:	NP2303NNA
Action Required:	No
Audit Type:	Corrective Action Assessment
Audit Objective:	To verify review and approve corrective actions addressing the non-compliances identified during the Renewal Assessment.
Audit Criteria:	7 CFR Part 205, National Organic Program, Final Rule, dated December 21, 2000; revised September 27, 2012.
Audit Scope:	LETIS's February 13, 2013 response letter to the Renewal Assessment non-compliance report.
Location(s) Audited:	Desk

GENERAL INFORMATION

LETIS S.A. is a privately owned, for-profit corporation registered in the country of Argentina, offering a third party certification program and verification services to organic producers and processors/handlers. LETIS was accredited as a certifying agent on December 9, 2002, to the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) National Organic Program (NOP) for crop, wild crop, livestock, and handling operations. LETIS currently has approximately 68 crop, 1 wild crop and 31 handling operations certified to the USDA organic regulations. LETIS does not have any operations certified to the USDA organic regulations for livestock. LETIS certifies USDA organic operations mainly in Argentina, with some in Uruguay and the USA (Florida). Other certification activities are conducted in Peru, Paraguay, Chile, Canada, and Mexico under other schemes.

LETIS maintains one office location in Rosario, Argentina. LETIS is also accredited as an ISO Guide 65 certification body through the Argentine Accreditation Organization (OAA). It is accredited by SENASA, COR, GLOBALGAP, IFOAM, Global Organic Textile Standards (GOTS) and approved for EU, JAS, Bio Suisse and other organic certifications.

AUDIT INFORMATION

During the renewal assessment, the corrective actions for the non-compliances identified during the mid-term assessment were found to be implemented and effective. These non-compliances were cleared, with exception of NP0109BBA.NC2-NC3, which remain outstanding. There were seven additional non-compliances identified during this audit. The NOP notified LETIS of these findings in writing on January 9, 2013. LETIS submitted a response to the NOP on February 13, 2013 and March 7, 2013. The NOP Accreditation Committee considered these corrective actions on March 27, 2013 and recommended that the NOP renew LETIS' accreditation.

FINDINGS

Observations made, interviews conducted, and procedures and records reviewed verified that LETIS is currently operating in compliance with the requirements of the audit criteria except as noted below. The corrective actions for the non-compliances identified during the Mid-Term Audit were verified. The corrective actions for two of the four non-compliances were found to be implemented and effective. Those non-compliances were cleared; two non-compliances remain outstanding. Corrective actions for a non-compliance identified by NOP were found to be implemented and effective, and that non-compliance was also cleared. Nine new non-compliances were identified during the assessment.

NP1020BBA.NC1 – Cleared

NP1020BBA.NC4 – Cleared

NoNC020212 – Cleared

NP0109BBA.NC2 – Accepted. § 205.406(a)(1) states, “To continue certification, a certified operation must annually pay the certification fees and submit the following information, as applicable, to the certifying agent: An updated organic production or handling system plan which includes: (i)...changes to, modifications to, or other amendments made to the previous year’s organic system plan during the previous year; and (ii) any additions or deletions to the previous year’s organic system plan, intended to be undertaken in the coming year....” *The client for a crop operation did not update the OSP for the use of Copper Oxychloride. The inspection or any reviews of the operation did not identify this as a non-compliance for not updating the OSP regarding the use of this input.* **Corrective Action (2010):** The Organic Manual of Operations and Procedures (OMOP-02, 7/28/10) was revised, and Section 11.5 under Continuation of Certification requires the inspector to verify that changes have been updated to the OSP and communicated to LETIS. Otherwise, a non-compliance will be issued through the inspection and evaluation process. The inspection checklist was also updated to list the requirement for the inspector to verify that the changes had been communicated to LETIS. **Verification of corrective action (October 2012):** LETIS’ policy requires annual updates prior to inspections; however, LETIS is having difficulties getting operators to submit updates. If an operation has not submitted an update, and an inspection is scheduled, then the inspector takes a blank form and fills out the update for the operator on site. There have not been any non-compliances issued to operators for failure to submit annual updates. The inspection form has a section where the inspector states whether the update was submitted prior to the inspection. If not, LETIS instructs the inspector to complete the update. LETIS stated that 50% of the updates were not submitted for the most recent certification cycle. **Corrective Action (February 2013):** LETIS has established a client manager position, who will work with the technical department to request annual updates and provide appropriate guidance on completion. This position will be fully implemented by April 2013. LETIS modified its procedures manual to state that, although LETIS will conduct an onsite inspection regardless of whether an update was received, the annual update must be completed by

the operator. Operations who submit late updates will be charged late fees. If the inspection and/or final review determine that the operator made changes and did not duly notify LETIS of those changes, then the operator may be issued a Notice of Noncompliance or certification with minor issues, as appropriate. All operators who are certified to the NOP will be notified of this change. LETIS will verify the implementation of these procedures during its annual internal audit in December 2013.

NP0109BBA.NC3 – Accepted. § 205.501(a)(15)(i) states, “A private or governmental entity accredited as a certifying agent under this subpart must submit to the Administrator a copy of any notice of denial of certification issued pursuant to NOP § 205.405, notification of noncompliance, notification of noncompliance correction, notification of proposed suspension or revocation, and notification of suspension or revocation sent pursuant to NOP § 205.662 simultaneously with its issuance.” *Interviews with the General Director and the Technical Director concluded that the required notices were not being sent to the Administrator as required.* **Corrective Action:** The Organic Manual of Operations and Procedures (OMOP-02, 7/28/10) was revised and Section 16.2 under Publication of the Decision requires LETIS to submit the required notifications to the Administrator simultaneously with its issuance. **Verification of corrective action (October 2012):** *LETIS submitted notifications of major adverse actions to the Administrator in 2011. However, LETIS does not provide notifications of minor non-compliances to the Administrator. LETIS’ understanding was that only major adverse action notifications were to be sent to the Administrator, not notices of minor non-compliances.* **Corrective Action (February 2013):** LETIS sent its quality manager to the NOP annual training in January 2013 in part to learn about the appropriate application of penalties under the USDA organic regulations and NOP 2612, *Recommended Penalties for Violations of Specific Regulatory Requirements*. LETIS introduced the new category of “minor issues” into its certification procedures, stating that the granting or continuation of certification may include requirements for the correction of minor issues within a specific time period as a condition for the continuation of certification. Minor issues are defined as conditions for certification which do not preclude certification, but rather focus on continuous improvement. The procedures manual now lists categories for intentional or willful non-compliances, minor non-compliances, major non-compliances, and minor issues. LETIS modified its certification decision templates to incorporate the “minor issues” category and provided training to its staff in February 2013 to ensure implementation of these actions. The planned October 2013 internal audit will verify the effectiveness of the new procedures.

NP2303NNA.NC1 – Accepted. § 205.402(b)(2) states, “The certification agent shall within a reasonable time: Provide the applicant with a copy of the on-site inspection report, as approved by the certifying agent, for any on-site inspection performed.” *Review of files (10 of 10) and interviews during the witness inspections revealed that LETIS does not provide a copy of the on-site inspection report to any operators. Staff stated that LETIS does not provide a copy of the inspection report as a matter of practice.* **Corrective Action:** LETIS modified its quality manual to state that it shall provide a copy of the on-site inspection report to the operator within a reasonable time. LETIS provided training to its administrative staff regarding this matter in February 2013.

NP2303NNA.NC2 – Accepted. § 205.501(a)(3) states, “A private or governmental entity accredited as a certifying agent under this subpart must carry out the provisions of the Act and the regulations in this part, including the provisions of §§ 205.402 through 205.406 and § 205.670.” *LETIS is accredited for livestock but has not received any applications for certification of livestock to the USDA organic regulations up to this point. Based on interviews, LETIS is knowledgeable of the changes to the livestock standards, including the pasture practice standard in §205.240. However, they have not revised their*

*application forms, livestock OSPs, inspection checklists, livestock certification procedures, etc. to address the changes. They have the current copies of the USDA organic regulations and NOP Program Handbook, including the July 22, 2011 updates for livestock. Since they do not have any clients for livestock, staff stated that they have not yet revised their certification procedures for livestock. **Corrective Action:** LETIS reviewed and updated its forms and policies for livestock OSPs, OSP updates, inspection checklists, and certification procedures. LETIS based this update on the latest version of the NOP Program Handbook, the USDA organic regulations, the NOP's March 2011 sample OSP templates. All of the revised forms contain questions on the length of the grazing season, the days on pasture, and the dry matter intake of ruminants.*

NP2303NNA.NC3 – Accepted. § 205.501(a)(6) states, “A private or governmental entity accredited as a certifying agent under this subpart must conduct an annual performance evaluation of all persons who review applications for certification, perform on-site inspections, review certification documents, evaluate qualifications for certification, make recommendations concerning certification, or make certification decisions and implement measures to correct any deficiencies in certification services.” *Review of personnel files indicated that the only person who had not been evaluated for performance was the General Director of LETIS. The General Director is one of the final decision-makers in the certification process. **Corrective Action:** LETIS modified its operation manual to state that annual performance evaluations shall include all persons who are involved in certification decisions. In March 2013, LETIS will conduct performance reviews for all personnel, including the General Director.*

NP2303NNA.NC4 – Accepted. § 205.504(b)(5)(i-iv) states, “A private or governmental entity seeking accreditation as a certifying agent must submit the following documents and information to demonstrate its expertise in organic production or handling techniques: A copy of the procedures to be used, including any fees to be assessed, for making the following available to any member of the public upon request: certification certificates issued during the current and 3 preceding calendar years; a list of producers and handlers whose operations it has certified, including for each the name of the operation, type(s) of operation, products produced, and the effective date of the certification, during the current and 3 preceding calendar years; the results of laboratory analyses for residues of pesticides and other prohibited substances conducted during the current and 3 preceding calendar years; and other business information as permitted in writing by the producer or handler.” *LETIS indicated that there have been no requests for information from the public. However, LETIS does not have a procedure describing the process of releasing information and types of information that can be released to the public. **Corrective Action:** LETIS modified its procedures manual to state that all certificates issued and the results of laboratory analyses from the current and preceding 3 calendar years will be publicly available, along with any other business information which is permitted in writing by the operator. LETIS also plans to provide training to its staff on the provision of information to the public under the USDA organic regulations. The planned October 2013 internal audit will verify the implementation of these new procedures.*

NP2303NNA.NC5 – Accepted. § 205.406(c) states, “If the certifying agent has reason to believe, based on the on-site inspection and a review of the information specified in § 205.404, that a certified operation is not complying with the requirements of the Act and the regulations in this part, the certifying agent shall provide a written notice of noncompliance to the operation in accordance with § 205.662.” *The witness audit of a rice processing facility found that approved labeling materials and transaction certificates from LETIS stated that the rice was 100% organic. However, the OSP and inspection report stated that, for certain buyers, the bulk rice is treated with carbon dioxide in order to eliminate insects. Therefore, that product is only eligible for “organic” status, not 100% organic per § 205.301(a). There*

was no evidence that LETIS inquired about CO₂ treatment before issuing transaction certificates stating that the product was 100% organic. LETIS should have categorized the rice treated with CO₂ as organic, not 100%, on all certificates. **Corrective Action:** LETIS conducted training with the technical staff in February 2013 to clarify the differences between the “100% organic” and “organic” labeling categories. LETIS will now ask inspectors to examine the use of inputs on the National List and to note in their reports which labeling category the products qualify for. Before issuing a certificate, LETIS will verify the status of the product to ensure the correct labeling category. LETIS submitted newly-created label review checklists, which are based on the NOP 2005 auditing checklists. In addition, LETIS submitted evidence of internal training conducted in February 2013 using the NOP’s online training modules.

NP2303NNA.NC6 – Accepted. § 205.662 (a)(1-3) states, “When an inspection, review, or investigation of a certified operation by a certifying agent or a State organic program’s governing State official reveals any noncompliance with the Act or regulations in this part, a written notification of noncompliance shall be sent to the certified operation. Such notification shall provide a description of each noncompliance, the facts upon which the notification of noncompliance is based, and the date by which the certified operation must rebut or correct each noncompliance and submit supporting documentation of each such correction when correction is possible.” *Review of client files (1 of 10) revealed that LETIS is issuing notices of minor non-compliances on the letter of certification. The letter did not include a description of the noncompliance. There was no specific date for a rebuttal or corrective actions. Instead, the letter stated that the non-compliances must be addressed ‘by the next inspection.’ Interviews during the witness inspection also revealed that operators often received certification decisions with minor noncompliance with a deadline of “the next inspection.”* **Corrective Action:** LETIS conducted training on the NOP penalty matrix with its technical staff in February 2013, outlining the difference between minor issues and noncompliances. The trainer informed staff that noncompliances must include a specific date for correction, that the noncompliances must be adequately described according to the inspector’s observations, and that the NOP penalty matrix should be used as a guide. LETIS will evaluate the implementation of these corrective actions during its December 2013 internal audit.

NP2303NNA.NC7 – Accepted. § 205.670(e) states, “If test results indicate a specific agricultural product contains pesticide residues or environmental contaminants that exceed the Food and Drug Administration’s or the Environmental Protection Agency’s regulatory tolerances, the certifying agent must promptly report such data to the Federal health agency whose regulatory tolerance or action level has been exceeded.” *LETIS’ draft procedure does not address procedures for responding to positive residue testing results, including comparing the test results to appropriate lists and notifying agencies that dictate regulations and tolerances.* **Corrective Action:** LETIS introduced new procedures on sampling for residue testing and requesting sample analyses. The new procedures incorporate the updated NOP residue testing regulations from November 9, 2012; the NOP’s memo to certifying agents from November 8, 2012; guidance NOP 2611, *Laboratory Selection Criteria for Pesticide Residue Testing*, and guidance NOP 2613, *Responding to Results from Residue Testing*. The procedure stipulates that LETIS shall conduct annual sampling on 5% of its clients who are certified to the USDA organic regulations. LETIS also provided training to its inspectors and technical staff in December 2012.



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

AUDIT INFORMATION

Applicant Name:	LETIS SA
Est. Number:	N/A
Physical Address:	Entre Rios 549, Piso 1, (S2000ANR); Rosario, Argentina
Mailing Address:	Entre Rios 549, Rosario, 2000, Santa Fe, Argentina
Contact & Title:	Patricia I. Garcia de Clausen, General Director
E-mail Address:	patricia@letis.org ; administración@letis.org
Phone Number:	54 0341 4264244
Auditor(s):	Martin Friesenhahn
Program:	USDA National Organic Program (NOP)
Audit Date(s):	July 16, 21, and August 5, 2010
Audit Identifier:	NP0109BBA
Action Required:	No
Audit Type:	Corrective Action Audit
Audit Objective:	To verify that corrective actions adequately address the non-compliances identified during the Mid-Term Audit.
Audit Criteria:	7 CFR Part 205, National Organic Program, Final Rule, dated December 21, 2000; revised February 17, 2010.
Audit Scope:	The company's submitted corrective actions.
Location(s) Audited:	Desk

Corrective actions completed by LETIS dated June 22, 2010 were received by the auditor of record from the NOP on June 24, and July 15, 2010 for the non-compliances identified during the Mid-Term Audit conducted April 19-22, 2010. Additional corrective actions were requested by the auditor of record on July 21, 2010 and received on July 28, 2010.

FINDINGS

The corrective actions submitted by LETIS adequately addressed the non-compliances from the Mid-Term Audit.

NP0109BBA.NC1 - Adequately Addressed - NOP § 205.404(b)(3) states, "The certifying agent must issue a certificate of organic operation which specifies the: categories of organic operation..." *The LETIS organic certificates for Trader operations listed "Trader" for the Operator's Activity. Trader is not one of the four scopes of NOP Accreditation which include crop, livestock, wild crop, or handling.*

Corrective Action: The Organic Manual of Operations and Procedures (OMOP-02, 7/28/10) was revised



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

and Section 9.3.4(b) under certificates lists only the four scopes applicable to NOP. Traders is now listed in the scope of certification for other standards.

NP0109BBA.NC2 – Adequately Addressed - NOP § 205.406(a)(1) states, “To continue certification, a certified operation must annually pay the certification fees and submit the following information, as applicable, to the certifying agent: An updated organic production or handling system plan which includes: (i)...changes to, modifications to, or other amendments made to the previous year’s organic system plan during the previous year; and (ii) any additions or deletions to the previous year’s organic system plan, intended to be undertaken in the coming year....” *The client for a crop operation did not update the OSP for the use of Copper Oxchloride. The inspection or any reviews of the operation did not identify this as a non-compliance for not updating the OSP as to the use of this input.* **Corrective Action:** The Organic Manual of Operations and Procedures (OMOP-02, 7/28/10) was revised and Section 11.5 under Continuation of Certification requires the inspector to verify that changes have been updated to the OSP and communicated to LETIS or a non-compliance will be issued through the inspection and evaluation process. The inspection checklist was also updated to list the requirement for the inspector to verify that the changes had been communicated to LETIS.

NP0109BBA.NC3 - Adequately Addressed - NOP § 205.501(a)(15)(i) states, “A private or governmental entity accredited as a certifying agent under this subpart must:(15) Submit to the Administrator a copy of: (i) – Any notice of denial of certification issued pursuant to NOP §205.405, notification of noncompliance, notification of noncompliance correction, notification of proposed suspension or revocation, and notification of suspension or revocation sent pursuant to NOP §205.662 simultaneously with its issuance.” *Interviews with the General Director and the Technical Director concluded that the required notices were not being sent to the Administrator as required.* **Corrective Action:** The Organic Manual of Operations and Procedures (OMOP-02, 7/28/10) was revised and Section 16.2 under Publication of the Decision requires LETIS to submit the required notifications to the Administrator simultaneously with its issuance.

NP0109BBA.NC4 - Adequately Addressed - NOP § 205.501(a)(21) states, “A private or governmental entity accredited as a certifying agent under this subpart must: Comply with, implement, and carry out any other terms and conditions determined by the Administrator to be necessary.” NOP §205.510(a)(1-4) requires that the accredited certifying agent must submit annually to the Administrator on or before the anniversary date of the issuance of the notification of accreditation an Annual Update that is in compliance to (1-4). *LETIS submitted annual updates through 2008 but did not send the annual update in 2009, which was required on or before their anniversary date of the issuance of the notification of accreditation.* **Corrective Action:** LETIS stated that they did not submit the annual update in 2009 since the information was submitted for the reaccreditation process and on-site audit conducted in March 2009. LETIS has also stated that the annual update for 2010 will be submitted in December and that they could send the 2009 update separately or with the 2010 annual update if needed.