

NOTICE OF SUSPENSION OF ACCREDITATION – CUC TURKEY OFFICE

May 9, 2019

Alvaro Martinez
Control Union Certifications
P.O. Box 161
Ad Zwolle 8000
Netherlands

Dear Mr. Martinez:

The USDA Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) National Organic Program (NOP) conducted an onsite renewal audit of Control Union Certification's (CUC) organic program on October 26 – November 2, 2018. As part of this audit, the auditors evaluated the implementation and effectiveness of the corrective actions from the noncompliance identified during the audit of CUC's satellite office in Izmir, Turkey (CUC-Turkey) conducted in July 2017. The renewal audit revealed a continued lack of knowledge of the USDA organic regulations and NOP policies. The results of a separate compliance review of operations certified by CUC-Turkey further demonstrated that the staff do not have sufficient knowledge and understanding of the USDA organic regulations and NOP policies. As a result, the NOP issued CUC a combined notice of noncompliance and proposed suspension of CUC-Turkey on April 3, 2019.

The NOP is hereby suspending the accreditation of CUC-Turkey as a NOP certifying agent for one year, from May 9, 2019 through June 9, 2020. CUC-Turkey is directed to cease all certification activities in the countries where the satellite office conducts these activities: Turkey, Kyrgyzstan, Republic of Moldova, United Arab Emirates, Russia, Tajikistan, Kazakhstan, Ukraine, Ethiopia, Afghanistan, Uzbekistan, and Greece. In addition, CUC-Turkey office must make all client files available to the NOP pursuant to §205.665(f) of the USDA organic regulations.

CUC must immediately notify its certified operations and applicants for certification of the following:

- a. CUC-Turkey will no longer provide USDA organic certification services as of May 9, 2019.
- b. All operations certified by CUC-Turkey must inform the NOP (AIAInbox@ams.usda.gov) **within 60 days of the notification date** whether they have applied with a new certifier or are surrendering their certification. Operations applying for certification with another certifier, including if they are applying to another CUC office, must provide the name of the certifier and the date of application.
- c. If an operation does not inform the NOP that it has applied for certification with another certifier or surrendering certification **within 60 days of the notification date**, the

NOP will issue the operation a noncompliance, which may lead to the suspension of the operation's certification.

- d. Operations applying for certification with another certifier must inform the NOP (AIAInbox@ams.usda.gov) once they have received their new organic certificate.
- e. Operations that have applied for certification with another certifier may use their existing inventory of labels approved by CUC-Turkey identifying CUC as the certifying agent if the use-up is approved by the new certifier according to the NOP's instructions for label use-up approval.

Additionally, CUC must submit to the NOP the following by **May 10, 2019**:

1. A copy of the notification sent to applicants and certified operations as outlined above.
2. A current list of new applicants that applied to CUC-Turkey for certification, if applicable, and operations certified by CUC-Turkey, including operation name, physical and mailing addresses, email address, phone number, and name of primary contact.

Please be advised that CUC-Turkey may seek reinstatement of its accreditation after the suspension period by submitting a request to the Secretary for reinstatement of its accreditation. The request must be accompanied by evidence demonstrating correction of each noncompliance and corrective actions taken to comply with and remain in compliance with the Organic Food Productions Act and the USDA organic regulations (7 C.F.R. 205).

If you have any questions regarding this notice, please contact Graham Davis, Accreditation Manager, at Graham.Davis@ams.usda.gov or (202) 692-0047.

Sincerely,



Cheri Courtney
Director, Accreditation and International Activities Division
USDA-AMS National Organic Program