



What to Expect at Your Annual Inspection

PURPOSE OF THE ANNUAL INSPECTION

- The annual inspection verifies that your operation meets the National Organic Program standards.
- The inspector assigned to your business confirms that your Organic System Plan (your annual application) aligns with what is happening on-site, reviews / audits your records, and notes changes since you submitted your plan.

BEFORE THE INSPECTION

- Review the [VOF Guidelines](#) and call the VOF office for any questions you have regarding the organic standards.
- Review your Organic System Plan (OSP) – a thorough and detailed OSP will require less information to be collected and resolved during or after the inspection.
- Confirm that any previous conditions for continued certification have been resolved and have related materials available for your inspector, when applicable.
- Schedule a time to meet with the inspector (thank you for flexibility). Confirm meeting time, meeting address, location and travel time for non-adjacent fields/facilities, any on-site protocols for biosecurity or food safety, and what records to have ready for review.
- Ensure your vehicle has gas if needed to reach remote parts of operation and have keys to any gates or buildings.
- Alert and schedule other personnel/employees as necessary.
- Gather your records - see checklists appropriate to your operation (below).
 - Have applicable records available and accessible from the previous calendar year (Jan-Dec) to the current date, but note that records must be kept for five years and those over a year old could be reviewed, too.

THE DAY OF INSPECTION

- The inspection will consist of a tour, records review, and two audits:
 - Mass Balance Audit: checks organic sales against quantity of crops grown / production capacity or the quantity of feed purchased/grown to qty of feed needed (for livestock).
 - Traceability Audit: checks the origin of livestock, traces a product from seed to sale, or from purchase through production to sale.
- Devote the time and attention needed to complete the inspection (2-6 hrs, depending on your operation).
- Provide a space where you and the inspector can comfortably review records – ex. a conference room, office, tailgate, picnic bench, or kitchen table.
- Provide the inspector access to all facilities included in certification – fields, buildings, production area, storage areas, livestock housing facilities, etc.
- Your inspector will end with an exit interview / summary and may request missing documents.

AFTER THE INSPECTION

- The inspector will submit a final report to the VOF office for review. Any issues in this final report will be the same issues covered in the exit interview.
- An updated certificate will be issued after the inspection report has been reviewed by VOF certification staff.
- Please submit any corrective actions resulting from issues found during the inspection to VOF by the due date given to avoid elevating the issues and potential future suspension of your certification. In general, call the office with any questions about how to respond.

PROCESSING RECORDS CHECKLIST

These records apply to crop producers who make multi-ingredient products on farm, as well as processing operations.

Records are an integral part of organic certification and the inspection. The inspector will review your records and complete two audits — one that checks that organic sales match the production capacity (mass balance) and one that traces purchase through production to sale (traceability).

Items	Description
<input type="checkbox"/> Product list	A complete list of all products, including brand name, being requested for certification
<input type="checkbox"/> Ingredient list	A list of all organic and non-organic ingredients and processing aids, including the suppliers
<input type="checkbox"/> Organic certificates and receipts for ingredients	Include the system summary pages and ensure certificate is not out of date
<input type="checkbox"/> Product profiles	Product formulations for each product being requested for certification
<input type="checkbox"/> Product labels	Copies of current labels and marketing materials; certification documentation for any organic products purchased for resale, Private Label Agreement(s) for co-packed products
<input type="checkbox"/> Non-organic ingredient declarations and natural flavor documentation	Verify the allowance of all non-organic ingredients and processing aids when applicable
<input type="checkbox"/> Facility map(s) & process flow diagram(s)	Identify all equipment used in processing; can be hand drawn
<input type="checkbox"/> Cleaners & sanitizers, SOPs	Cleaning and sanitizing materials and cleaning/sanitizing Standard Operating Procedures available to view
<input type="checkbox"/> Records for lot numbering	Including but not limited to: incoming ingredients, ingredients in storage, final products, purchase invoices, batch recordkeeping systems, and sales invoices
<input type="checkbox"/> Organic integrity records	Records for clean transport units, pest control logs, cleaning logs, other agency facility audits as applicable
<input type="checkbox"/> Quality control records	Quality control plan, OCPP or HACCP plan and how it's followed, if applicable, or VT Health Dept inspections
<input type="checkbox"/> Supply chain documents	Supply Chain map (optional to be submitted as a separate document, based on the complexity of your supply chains), Uncertified handler affidavit(s)