



Circular No. 3/2023

02 November 2023

To: Organic Operators, Organic Control Bodies and Farm Advisors

Further to Circular 4/2022 DAFM wishes to advise of the following Organic Production Rules Updates

1. New Organic Standards

The updated Organic Food and Farming Standards in Ireland Edition 2.03 is available to download from the following link: <https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/fc7c8-organic-farming/>

The main amendments in this latest edition relate to points 2, 3, 4 and 5 below.

2. Non Organic Animals Grazing on an Organic Holding

Non-organic livestock may use organic pasturage for a limited period of a maximum of 180 days each year, provided that they have been raised in an environmentally friendly way on land supported under Articles 70, 71, 72 and 73 of Regulation 2021/2115 and that they are not present at the same time as organic animals of the same species on that holding, in accordance with the conditions outlined in paragraph 3.03.14 of the organic standards. All animal farm-to farm movement must comply with movement requirements, For more information visit [gov.ie](http://www.gov.ie) - [Animal Identification & Movement \(AIM\) \(www.gov.ie\)](http://www.gov.ie)

Organic Standard Reference: 3.03.14(d)

3. Dehorning and Castration

The surgical castration of livestock over 6 months of age and dehorning of livestock over 6 months of age will result in the loss of organic status for the individual livestock where these mutilations are carried out. The change from 8 to 6 months will apply from 1st January 2024.

Organic Standard Reference 3.04.18.

4. Non-Simultaneous Conversion

In the case of non-simultaneous conversion, all the livestock on the holding must start their conversion period in sufficient time to ensure the holding attains full symbol status two years after commencement of conversion. Where livestock are not undergoing simultaneous conversion with the land, livestock buildings must be compliant with organic requirements in the first winter of conversion of the stock.

Organic Standard Reference: 3.07.10

Stock may be converted either simultaneously or non-simultaneously with the land. Once conversion of the land has begun these Standards must be complied with in regard to replacements or expansion of the herd or flock. Non-simultaneous conversion standards are set out in 3.07.08 to 3.07.11.

Note: The OCBs will assume that all livestock operators wish to undergo simultaneous conversion unless it is specifically stated in the management/conversion plan that the applicant wishes the land to convert firstly, followed by the livestock

Organic Standard Reference: 3.07.03

5. Veterinary Treatments

With the exception of vaccinations, treatments for parasites and compulsory eradication schemes established in the Republic of Ireland or Northern Ireland (as applicable) , the following will apply:

Animals for meat consumption: 1 course of treatment of chemically synthesised allopathic veterinary medicinal products or antibiotics is allowed within a twelve month period.

Animals for breeding: 2 courses of treatment within a twelve-month period.

For dairy mastitis control: 2 courses of treatment for dairy mastitis control are allowed within a twelve month period.

Where the above is exceeded, the animal should then be sold conventionally.

Organic Standard Reference: 3.12.13

6. Mineral licks

Organic producers can use non-organic lick buckets under the following conditions:

- It is stated on the animal health plan that the stock/land are deficient in certain minerals etc
- There are no GM ingredients in the mineral lick.

Eastát Chaisleán Sheonach, Contae Loch Garman, Y35 PN52

Johnstown Castle Estate, Co. Wexford, Y35 PN52

T +353 53 9166425 | organicimports@agriculture.gov.ie

www.agriculture.gov.ie

7. Non organic livestock

Non organic livestock are not allowed to be bought in to an in-conversion or organic farm; however an exemption is possible for non organic breeding stock subject to specific limitations set out in legislation. Organic operators must seek a derogation from their OCB prior to purchase of non-organic breeding stock.

A derogation must be sought prior to purchase of a non-organic breeding bull. This is effective from 1st January 2024.

Organic Standard Reference 3.05.05-11

8. Organic Trading Hub

The Organic Trading Hub, launched in September 2023, is a new central platform connecting organic farmers and suppliers, facilitating the buying and selling of certified organic livestock and feedstuff across the country.

<https://organictradinghub.ie/>

Kevin McGeever

Seamus Barron

Kevin McGeever
Assistant Principal
Organic Unit
Department of Agriculture,
Food and the Marine

Seamus Barron
Agricultural Inspector
AES Division
Department of Agriculture,
Food and the Marine