



Welcome

Transition to Organic
Crop Production

Certification Process

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Organic Farmer since 2000

Organic Inspector since 2003



Considerations

- You must document everything you do on an organic farm.
- If paperwork and organization are not your strong suits, then you need to find someone else in your operation who has those strengths, or you may want to reconsider transitioning to organic.

First Steps

- You need to become familiar with the rules and what products are approved for organic production and which are not. You don't want to make a mistake in the transition years and set yourself back another 1 – 3 years.
- Read the organic regulations - <https://www.ams.usda.gov/about-ams/programs-offices/national-organic-program>
- Choose a certification agency

Choosing a certification agency

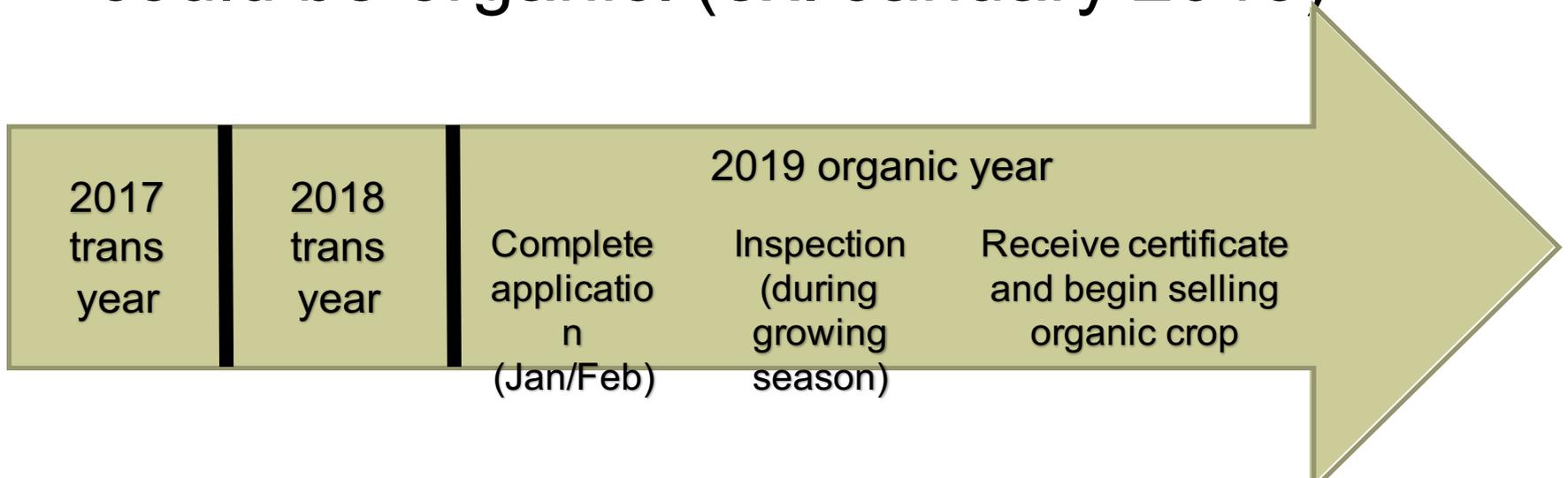
- Find an accredited agency - <https://www.ams.usda.gov/services/organic-certification/certifying-agents>
- Consider their location and compare fee schedules
- Good idea – talk to organic farmers about their certification agencies.

Transition Years

- Develop a crop plan and a list of inputs you plan to use on the organic farm, and send them to your certifier for review.
- Ask your certifier for a copy of the application to review
- Document the last application of a prohibited substance
- Start farming organically
 - Equipment cleanout
 - Segregation
 - Document your activities and inputs

The Application

- Request an application from your certifying agency early in the year in which your crop could be organic. (ex. January 2019)



The Inspection

- An inspector schedules a visit to your farm. They will tour the fields, bins, equipment, and reviews your records.
- Opportunities for improvement and any non-compliances will be discussed in the inspection
- An annual occurrence
- Random, unannounced inspections and sampling inspections are also conducted.

Certification

- After a final review by your certifying agency and full payment of all fees a certificate will be sent to you
- Once you have the certificate you can begin selling certified organic products!

Costs

- Application fee
- Inspection fee
- Certification fee
- Cost share program

What ifs?

- What happens if pollen GMO drifts into your field?
- What happens if herbicide drifts onto an organic field?
- What happens if I applied a prohibited substance?
- What happens if I plant GMO seed?

Questions & Answers/ Discussion

**Thank you for
attending**

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