

# ORGANIC MATTERS...

*Recent surveys have found that consumers associate organic food with healthy produce, free of chemicals and artificial ingredients, grown using sustainable and ecologically sound practices!*

The consequence has been a steady increase in consumer demand for organic products, including organic coffee.

## What is Organic?

The Oxford Dictionary defines organic as “not involving or produced with chemical fertilisers or other artificial chemicals” and “characterised by natural development”.

The Merriam-Webster Dictionary states that organic food is produced “without employment of chemically formulated fertilisers, growth stimulants, antibiotics, or pesticides”.

**Biological Farmers of Australia (BFA)** says “organic products are grown and processed without the use of synthetic chemicals or fertilisers or genetically modified organisms (GMO)”.

The **Canadian General Standards Board** says “organic foods are produced, processed, manufactured and handled in accord with organic principles and without genetically engineered or modified organisms or irradiation.”.

Biological Farmers of Australia, **Agric Quality New Zealand**, **United States Department of Agriculture (USDA)** and the **Canadian General Standards Board** all agree that an ‘organic’ product is one produced under a system that satisfies their respective production and processing standards.

## Organic Certification

The **Australian Quarantine Inspection Service (AQIS)** has a minimum standard for organic product systems, the National Standard for Organic and Bio-dynamic Produce that must be complied with for certification.

AQIS does not certify compliance but approves independent organic certification organisations in Australia that carry out the audit and certification duties. There are currently seven approved certification bodies<sup>2</sup>. The most recognised is Australian Certified Organic, the certification arm of Biological Farmers of Australia.

Australian Certified Organic (ACO) extends its certification requirements beyond AQIS’s National Standard with its own Organic Standard. For products to carry ACO’s certified organic logo it must be proven to have been grown, harvested, processed and packaged to the requirements of these standards.

The USDA’s National Organic Program (NOP) provides a standard for production and handling of organic products. Compliance with the NOP may be assessed and certified by one of the ninety seven USDA accredited certification organisations<sup>3</sup>.

Each step of the production process is subject to a documented Organic Management of System Plan that is audited by an accreditation organisation. Included in these plans will be the procedures of cleaning.

Since the Organic Standard appreciates the needs for cleanliness it explicitly requires the maintenance of a HACCP food safety program with documented and recorded cleaning procedures. One requirement is that only approved cleaners be used on food contact surfaces.

## What are Approved Cleaners?

BFA categorises products as:

- Prohibited (P) – These are disallowed for use.
- Restricted (R) – These may be used provided they do not come into contact with food surfaces or where rinsing occurs subsequent to cleaning.
- Allows (A) – These are products that have been assessed as suitable for use in organic systems.

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Biological Farmers of Australia specifically registers products that have been proven to conform to their Organic Standard and are given an Allowed Input certification and carry the BFA Allowed Input logo.

The **Organic Materials Review Institute (OMRI)** in the US publishes a Brand Name Products List of products that have been reviewed and comply with the USDA National Organic Program. Only those products that have passed the OMRI review may display the OMRI Listed seal on labels and in advertising.

## Organic Coffee

Organic coffee must comply with the same requirements for certification as any other food. To be certified organic, coffee must have been grown, dried, processed, stored, transported, roasted and packed in compliance with an accredited organic system. It must also be percolated or extracted according to the requirements of the Standard.

### What are the Issues?

Are the organic beans ground in a grinder that is used to grind non-organic beans? If so, is the grinder cleaned in compliance with the organic standards?

Are the organic ground beans percolated from a group head and filter that is used for non-organic beans?

Is the group head regularly cleaned using an espresso machine cleaner that is a BFA Allowed Input or OMRI Listed?

The final steps to produce an organic espresso are no less important than the rest of the process from cropping to roasting.

That final step, the extraction of the espresso from the ground organic beans, should be performed with an espresso machine that has been cleaned with a BFA registered or OMRI Listed espresso machine cleaner.

### References:

- 1 Lockie, Stewart, Lyons, Kristen, Lawrence, Geoffrey & Mummary, Kerry (2002) Eating 'Green': Motivations behind organic food consumption in Australia. *Sociologia Ruralis* 42 (1), 23-40
- 2 Australian Government, Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, AQIS Approved Certifying Organisations 2005
- 3 Agricultural Marketing Service, USDA, Accredited Certifying Agents



**Cafetto® Evo®** is an espresso machine cleaner with outstanding organic and environmental benefits complemented by exceptional cleaning performance and safety. Each ingredient in Cafetto® Evo® has been assessed by Biological Farmers of Australia and certified as an Approved Input for the cleaning of espresso machines.

Cafetto® Evo® has also been evaluated by the Organic Materials Review Institute in the USA and listed as an espresso machine cleaner complying with the requirements of the USDA National Organic Program.