

Maryland Department of Agriculture

The Department of Agriculture (USDA) has reviewed your application for accreditation as a certifying agent to perform certification activities on behalf of USDA under the National Organic Program (NOP). Your application has been approved, subject to the conditions listed on the enclosed Decision on Accreditation document.

Please sign, date, and return by facsimile the enclosed [Decision on Accreditation document](#) signifying your acceptance of the terms of your accreditation. Also note that you must satisfy the noted conditions within the time periods given. Failure to do so will result in initiation of suspension or revocation of your accreditation and may result in the initiation of suspension or revocation of your clients' certification.

Upon completion of all conditions identified in the Decision on Accreditation document, USDA will issue the Agency a formal accreditation document and certificate of accreditation. In the interim, this letter and the enclosed Decision on Accreditation document will serve as your notice of accreditation.

This accreditation to certify crop, livestock, wild-crop, and handling operations to the National Organic Standards is granted pursuant to the provisions of the Organic Foods Production Act of 1990, as amended, (7 U.S.C. 6501 *et seq.*) (OFPA) and the National Organic Standards thereunder (7 CFR 205.1 *et seq.*) (NOS). This accreditation is effective April 29, 2002, and will terminate on April 28, 2007.

The Agent shall perform all functions in accordance with and comply with all requirements of OFPA, the NOS, and any policies and procedures issued by the NOP. The Agency shall not require, as a condition of certification, that any client comply with any production or handling practices other than those in the NOS. The NOS may not be modified, rewritten, or otherwise altered. Please note that guidance documents may be used to assist clients in complying with the NOS where those standards allow site-specific flexibility in application. However, it is important to note that such guidance documents are recommendations only and are not binding on the client.

The Agent shall make application for and receive approval of any change to the scope of its accreditation prior to implementing any such change as required in section 205.510(f) of the NOS.

The Agent shall submit the annual reports and fees required under section 205.510(a) of the NOS.

The Agent shall submit its application for accreditation renewal no later than October 28, 2006, as required in section 205.510(c).

Becoming an accredited certifying agent on behalf of USDA represents a milestone in the National Organic Program. Your efforts will help producers and handlers promote

organic products in the marketplace, and offer consumers a new choice in today's fast-paced food markets, based on a consistent national standard for organic products. We take your responsibility seriously, and if you have any questions about the program or the standards you will be certifying to, please do not hesitate to contact the NOP staff.

Sincerely,

A. J. Yates
Administrator



DECISION ON ACCREDITATION

Audit, Review, and Compliance Branch Audit Information	
Applicant	Maryland Department of Agriculture
Date	April 29, 2002
Audit Identifier	NP 2095 DA

Congratulations. The Department of Agriculture (USDA) has accredited you under the National Organic Program. This accreditation allows you to certify **crop, livestock wild crop and handling** operations to the USDA's National Organic Standards. Your accreditation is conditional, subject to satisfactory resolution of the following conditions:

☒ You must resolve, by a date certain and to the satisfaction of USDA, any deficiencies identified during an initial site evaluation.

☐ You must submit, within 120 days, evidence that you have replaced the certification standards submitted in your application with the National Organic Standards. You may not rewrite, modify, or otherwise alter the National Organic Standards.

☐ You must submit, within 120 days, evidence that you have revised all certification guidance documents, policies, and procedures employed under the National Organic Program to reflect implementation of the National Organic Standards.

Note: Guidance documents may be used to assist clients in complying with the National Organic Standards where those standards allow site-specific flexibility in application. Guidance documents are recommendations and are not binding on the client.

☐ You must submit, within 120 days, evidence that you are in compliance with the National Organic Program's conflict of interest provisions by submitting documentation demonstrating that all responsibly connected individuals are either not subject to the National Organic Standards or have been or will be certified by another USDA-accredited certifying agent.

Note: Certifying agent members not involved with management of the organization (budget, personnel, contracting, program evaluation, and administrative policies and procedures) will not be considered to be responsibly connected parties or subject to section 205.501(a)(11)(i). Such members will, however, be subject to the conflict of interest provisions of section 205.501(a)(11)(ii).

☒ Other noncompliance as stated in the audit report to follow by mail.

FAILURE TO SUBMIT DOCUMENTATION WITHIN 120 DAYS WILL RESULT IN INITIATION OF PROCEDURES TO SUSPEND OR REVOKE YOUR ACCREDITATION. If you have any questions, do not wait until the 120 days are up; contact our offices as soon as possible and someone will assist you. (The NOP office number is 202-720-3252.)

Please sign and date below, acknowledging your receipt of this letter, and return by fax to: Richard Mathews, Program Manager, NOP/USDA-AMS, 202-205-7808 (fax). Because of delays with the U.S. Postal Service following the events of September 11, 2001, we urge you to use facsimile or overnight mail service.

Name/Title

Date

Approved By	QSVP Manager	File Name	Maryland Department of Agriculture.doc
Revision – 1	DA Rev1	Date 04-22-02	April 22, 2002