



Information note for producers outside of Switzerland

Summary of the Bio Suisse Standards - Version 1.1.2009

This summary of the Bio Suisse Standards gives farmers from countries outside of Switzerland an overview of the requirements for Bio Suisse approval. A prerequisite for Bio Suisse approval of an agricultural holding is the existing certification in accordance with the rules of EU Regulation 834/2007.

If the agricultural holding has already been approved by Bio Suisse, particular attention must be given to the conditions specific to the holding, as furnished with the respective approval letter.

1. Whole-farm approach

The entire agricultural holding must be managed to organic standards. Holdings which include conventional livestock enterprises or plots which are not under organic management can not be approved. In this regard the Bio Suisse definition of an agricultural holding is binding:

- The whole of the lands, buildings, equipment, and workforce with one farm operation centre.
- Independent, segregated produce flow, and an individual, unmistakable outward identity.
- The farm manager must not be in charge of conventional holdings or parts of holdings.

2. Fertilizer use

The following fertilizer limits per hectare and year must be adhered to:

	kg N _{tot} /ha	kg P ₂ O ₅ /ha
Field fodder production and field vegetables	225	80
Tillage crops (root crops, cereals)	180	60
Viticulture, top fruit, soft fruit, etc.	100	30

Other limits apply to specialty crops.

Prohibited: Peat for soil improvement / chemically-synthesized chelates (e.g. EDTA) / highly concentrated potassium salts.

You must establish need in order to obtain permission to use trace elements or mineral potassium products.

3. Areas dedicated to the enhancement of biodiversity

At least 7% of your agricultural area must be dedicated to the promotion of biodiversity. Examples for eligible areas are: unfertilized, species-rich permanent pastures and meadows / strips sown in wildflowers and herbs (for at least 18 months) / standard traditional orchard trees and site-appropriate specimen trees (1 are, i.e. 100 m², per tree) / hedges, copses, and riparian woodlands / ditches, ponds, peatlands / ruderal vegetation, stone mounds, dry-stone walls / unpaved tracks (with at least one third grass cover).

4. Reproductive material (seeds, vegetative propagating material) and transplants

- You may only use undressed conventional reproductive material if the inspection body has established that organic material is unavailable.
- The use of chemically dressed reproductive material is prohibited. Its use will lead to the crop losing its approval.
- From 1 January 2009 only organic seed is permitted for cereal production.
- The use of hybrid seed in cereal production (with the exception of maize) is not permitted.
- For crops which in the country in question are also grown as GMO, organic reproductive material must be used.
- Transplants grown as annual crops (incl. strawberry transplants) must be certified organic. The growing medium must contain no more than 70% peat.

5. Plant protection products

- Prohibited: metaldehyde (for slug/snail control), pyrethroids (also in traps) / bioherbicides / growth regulators.
- The use of copper preparations is subject to restrictions (in terms of pure copper per hectare and year): Vegetables, potatoes, wine, hops, and stone fruit 4kg / soft-fruit 2 kg / pome fruit 1.5 kg.
- The use of copper- and sulphur-based products in the production of cereals, legumes, or oilseeds is not permitted.
- The use of ethylene to induce flowering in pineapples is prohibited.

6. Crop rotation

- The crop rotation must include a minimum of 20% soil building crops (e.g. grain legumes, green manure, leys etc.).
- Outside of the growing season a cover crop must be established on at least 50% of the open tillage area to ensure a green cover.

For annual crops you must have at least a one year break between two main crops of the same species (exception: rice).

7. Green cover in viticulture and tree crops

In vineyards and tree crops a green cover must be maintained throughout the year. In arid climates the green cover may be limited to four months. If the naturally occurring vegetation is too sparse you must sow a green manure crop.

8. Clearing and burning

Clear-felling of virgin forests (primary and secondary) or the burning of sites (pre- or post-harvest) are prohibited.

9. Livestock

In the EU you must comply with the regulations for the keeping of livestock laid down in EU Regulation 834/2007. In all other countries you must comply with at least the IFOAM Standards.

10. Conversion period

The minimum conversion period is two full calendar years. The conversion period may not be shortened based on previous management.

11. Parallel production

In cases of parallel production on both full-symbol and in-conversion lands, evidence of separation and traceability from field to sale must be furnished and confirmed by the inspection body.

12. Trade and processing

- Do you grow a product which you also buy in and process? You can not obtain Bio Suisse approval for such a product. Exceptions apply if the bought-in products are approved by Bio Suisse or if the inspection body monitors produce flow segregation and traceability.
- The products must be shipped to Switzerland by surface or sea transport (air transport is prohibited).
- Storage and processing must be compliant with the Bio Suisse Standards.

13. Labelling

Bio Suisse approval does not entitle you to label products with the Bud (Knospe) trademark. Only the Swiss importer who holds a valid licensing contract with Bio Suisse is authorized to do so. Products must be labelled on containers, packages, delivery notes, invoices etc. with the phrase or logo "approved by BIO SUISSE".

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In case of doubt, please note that this summary is not authoritative. Refer to the full version of the Bio Suisse standards, instructions, and regulations (see www.bio-suisse.ch/en/library).