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ICO becomes ECOCERT ICO

In 1995 - ICO began providing organic certification and other certification services across the USA and was one of the first to be accredited by the USDA National Organic Program. ICO offers certification for all types of activities: crops, wild crops, livestock, handler & processor, retailer, production partnerships/grower groups.

In 2011, ICO became a 100% owned subsidiary of ECOCERT Group while maintaining its own USDA NOP accreditation.

In 2012, ICO added QR Codes to assist in certification status verification and was approved by USDA to issue JAS export certificates (TM-11).

NEW! December 31, 2012, ICO, LLC changed its name to Ecocert ICO LLC in order to extend additional services of ECOCERT Group to clients. This will further allow for the streamlining of certification from one company/office.

Benefits

- **Centralize all your organic certifications** with the same staff/company.

-Our goal will be to **bundle your NOP and ECOCERT audits** and **ease the application**

process to save time and money. Additionally, lessening carbon emissions from travel.

Logo – We are combining the ECOCERT Group and ICO logos, meaning **the combination of the two** are acceptable for use in marketing materials. You will see, from now on, both logos on all of our documentation. (See also “Regulatory Changes”, “Labels”, Page 3).

If you choose to add additional certification types, you may have separate forms to fill out dependent upon the type of certification you wish to add. Please [let us know](#) your interest in any additional certification type.

New arrival in ECOCERT ICO

Ecocert ICO is pleased to announce new additions to our team! [George C. Kalogridis](#), he brings with him 23 years of experience in the organic industry as a farmer, sourcing agent, and in production development both domestically and internationally. George will be working with ECOCERT ICO in Certification Management.

[Amber Smith](#), she will be working in the office as administrative support to our team.

Last but not least, we would like to welcome [Chris Koestline](#), who will be working in the Cosmetic field.

Additions to Ecocert ICO 2013

Coming in 2013

- Gluten-free verification through collaboration with [GFCO](#)
- Grass fed verification through collaboration with American [Grassfed Association](#)
- Defined inspection costs
- Promote veterans turning to organic farming via discounts for certification
- **Apply online!** – [website](#) coming as early as February 2013

✦ ECOCERT Group programs offered through one-stop inspection

- [Input eligibility](#) for use in organic farming (EU and NOP)
- [Europe](#): Regulation (EC) No 834/2007
- [Japan](#): JAS regulation
- Other national regulations: South Korea, Brazil, China...
- [Organic and natural cosmetics](#), according to Ecocert standard
- [COSMOS](#) – COSMETic Organic Standard
- Organic and Natural SPA: BEING
- [Ecoproducts](#) : (Natural cleaning products, Natural and organic home perfumes, Ecological paintings and coatings)
- Textiles ; [GOTS](#) (Global Organic Textile Exchange) and [OE](#) (Organic Exchange).

- [Ecocert Fair Trade](#)
- [Ecological Green Spaces - Eve®](#)
- [Eco-sustainable golf course](#)
- [Carbon services](#)

-Ecocert ICO **does not charge any user fee** based on your volume of sales and has defined inspection costs to provide transparent costs.

-Ecocert ICO will provide a **5% discount** to certification costs for combining or the addition of other ECOCERT Group certification schemes

Ecocert ICO Team

General Manager – [Vincent Morel](#)

Administrative Manager – [Jessica Ervin](#)

Certification Managers – [David DeCou](#) and [George Kalogridis](#)

Cosmetic Certification Officer - [Chris Koestline](#)

Staff Inspector – [Allen Moody](#)

Certification Officer/Staff Inspector – [Luella Mozingo](#)

Certification and Accounting Assistant – [Heather Fort](#)

Administrative Assistant – [Amber Smith](#)

Contracted Inspectors across the U.S.

Certified Organic by Ecocert ICO LLC

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New Website:
www.ecocertico.com

Follow us on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#)!



Discounts & Deadlines for 2013

Ecocert ICO has made some changes to our discount and deadlines.

All Discounts **can** be combined with more than one discount.

Early bird special: \$75 off the fee if **the COMPLETE OSP and application fee** are submitted before February 15th for **renewals** (completeness is determined during the OSP review process by the reviewer).

Referral Discount: \$75 off certification fee for referring new clients to ECOCERT ICO. (Upon receipt of referrals complete/accepted OPS and application fee). No limit to number of discounts received for multiple referrals.

New Client Discount: New NOP clients receive \$100 discount (first year only).

Veterans Discount: \$50 off certification fee for those actively serving in the military or military veterans, providing proof of service.

Research & Education Farms Discount: Farms/institutions that can demonstrate exclusive use for public research and education and are **not selling** organic product are exempt from paying certification base fees. Only inspection costs will apply.

Transfer of Certification: \$150 off certification fee for a transfer of certification from another accredited agency (first year only).

ECOCERT Group certification : If you are certified with another company of ECOCERT Group (cosmetics, fair trade...) or add another certification type with another company of ECOCERT Group, a 5% discount will apply to your total invoice the first year.

Renewal OSP deadline: April 15th.

Late fees of \$100 will apply for renewal OSPs submitted after May 1st.

Upcoming Events

January 22, 2013 : [Sustainable Food Summit](#), San Francisco, CA

January 22-24, 2013: [Indiana Horticulture Congress](#), Indianapolis, IN -Certification training

February 7-9, 2013: [Missouri Organic Expo](#), Springfield, MO - Livestock Symposium

February 21-23, 2013: [Midwest Organic & Sustainable Education Service \(MOSES\)](#), Lacrosse, WI

March 1-2, 2013: [Indiana Small Farm Conference](#), Danville, IN -Certification Training and [Wholesale Success](#) Food Safety Course

March 8-10, 2013 : [Expo West](#), Anaheim, California

September 26-28, 2013 : [Expo East](#), Baltimore, MD

Funding & Grants

Each year, there are many grants available that can be of interest to those interested in sustainability or in the organic industry.

FUNDING/GRANTS

The following links are recommended sites to look for those that may be applicable to your operation.

USDA Rural Dev www.rurdev.usda.gov

SARE www.sare.org

Government Grants www.grants.gov

USDA NRCS www.nrcs.usda.gov

Other News...

Regulatory Changes

Although most of us would like the organic regulations to stay the same there are always some adjustments which occur as aspects of the regulations change. There have been two very significant changes in the organic regulations and NOP policies recently. Additionally one anticipated change in the regulations has been delayed.

LABELING: There are 2 issues which need to be noted by all of you with any kind of organic labeling.

First, with ICO changing its name to ECOCERT ICO all labels which identify your certifier will need to be changed to read ECOCERT ICO or ECOCERT ICO, LLC wherever you identify your certifier. The use of one of our new seals may also be appropriate. The deadline for this is by January 2014. See ECOCERT ICO's Technical Sheet on labeling TSo8 on our website.

Second, the NOP has issued a policy concerning the use of the required language "Certified Organic by...(the name of your certifier)" (COB) on a label. The new policy requires that the COB be placed directly below the information identifying the final handler or the distributor of the product. This means that nothing should be between the two sets of information. The new ECOCERT ICO logo with the "certified organic by" language can be used for this or you may use the simple text language without the logo. The NOP has allowed certified handlers and other producers until January 1, 2014 for all labels to come into compliance with this policy. See PM 12-2 in the NOP Program Handbook and our new Technical Sheet on handling and labeling TSo8.

RESIDUE TESTING OF ORGANIC CROPS AND PRODUCTS: Under the original legislation which was approved to get the National Organic Program put in place in the USDA, there has always been a requirement for certifiers to periodic residue testing "to assist in the enforcement of this title".

To implement this aspect of the regulation and legislation as of January 1, 2013 all certifiers will be required to perform residue testing on at least 5% of all of their certified operations. We will be determining where and when to perform the sampling required to meet this requirement. Certainly some of the sampling will be at operations where there is reason to suspect that some issues exist but some of the sampling will occur on a totally random basis. Do not assume that just because you know someone who had the sampling done that they had a problem. Ecocert ICO will be paying for any sampling and analyses from our own resources.

SODIUM NITRATE: Until the end of October of this year sodium nitrate was a prohibited natural product with an allowance for use in organic crop production to meet up to 20% of a crop's nitrogen requirements. The National Organic Standards Board decided in April of 2011 to prohibit the use of sodium nitrate with no allowance. Because the USDA was not able to complete the rulemaking to add sodium nitrate to the list of prohibited naturals without an annotation it is currently not prohibited at all. NOP expects to have a proposed rule out soon on sodium nitrate. When

there is a final rule we should expect that no sodium nitrate will be allowed to be used on organic crop lands at all. In the meantime NOP has made it very clear that any use of sodium nitrate until should continue to meet the "not greater than 20% of a crops nitrogen requirements" standard. Their thinking is based on 7 CFR 205.200 which states that production practices must maintain or improve the natural resources of the operation, including soil and water quality. Those of you still with some remaining sodium nitrate please keep the above in mind and expect a total prohibition soon.

Social Responsibility, Staff & More

Ecocert ICO staff is participating in the Farm to School initiative and development of the first [small farm conference](#) in Indiana and to bring in Wholesale Success food safety training at the conference through www.familyfarmed.org. Staff members have also been providing certification & transitioning to organics seminars across the U.S. and have sessions booked at upcoming conferences for 2013 in Indiana, Kentucky and Missouri. We will also be submitting our 2nd data collection to evaluate our carbon emissions in January 2013. This information will be utilized to compensate at 100% by planting trees, etc.

Ecocert ICO Certification Manager, David DeCou, was elected to service on the Accredited Certifiers Association board in 2012. He is currently up for nomination for the 2013 year as well!

Farmers' Legal Action Group (FLAG) published the Farmers' Guide to Organic Contracts. This new source for the organic community can help organic farmer s evaluate, negotiate, and manage contract agreements with buyers of organic farm products. Here is the link to view the Farmers' Guide to Organic Contract. www.flaginc.org/topics/pubs/organic.php

ATTRA has gone mobile! Check them out on your [phone or device!](#) Need help with flame weeding? Are you ready to start selling your produce at the farmers market? Need some help with any sustainable-ag issue? Simply call their English-language ATTRA toll-free hotline at 800-346-9140 or the Spanish-language ATTRA hotline at 800-411-3222 for expert advice. ...or use the [Ask An Ag Expert](#) tool to send them a note.

NEW GUIDES FOR TRANSITIONING TO ORGANICS PUBLISHED [NCAT](#) specialists, in partnership with the National Organic Program, have published four new guides on organic certification to describe the relevant organic requirements, provide best practices, and further explain the certification process: [Guide for Organic Crop Producers](#), [Guide for Organic Livestock Producers](#), [Guide for Organic Processors](#), [Organic Certification of Farms and Businesses Producing Agricultural Products](#) These guides provide helpful information for both beginning farmers and current organic operations looking to adopt new management approaches.