

# NOFA-NY Certified Organic, LLC

**N**OFA-NY Certified Organic, LLC is New York State's largest organic certification agency, accredited since 2002 by the USDA National Organic Program (NOP). Since the NOP Standards do not allow certifiers to provide education and advocacy, NOFA-NY Certified Organic, LLC was formed as a subsidiary of NOFA-NY, Inc. to comply with conflict of interest requirements. The agency is part of the NOFA-NY, Inc. and is completely funded by certification fees.

## Defining "Certified Organic"

"Certified Organic" means that a USDA-accredited certification agency has verified that the production practices used meet the requirements outlined in the National Organic Program (NOP) Standards. The NOP Standards are based on the principles of the Organic Foods Production Act of 1990 that puts forth the basic concept that healthy soil is the foundation for healthy plants and animals.

Certified organic operations must apply for certification each year. This involves undergoing an annual on-farm inspection, submitting their organic system plan, maintaining detailed records, and paying an annual certification fee. Once certified, operations must notify the certifier of any changes to their operation to ensure continued compliance.



## Organic Vegetables, Fruits and Grains

- ♦ Crops must be harvested from land that has not had prohibited synthetic fertilizers, herbicides, or pesticides applied within the last three years.
- ♦ Farmers must manage soil fertility through crop rotation, cover cropping, manure and compost additions, and approved mineral applications.
- ♦ Tillage and cultivation must be done in a way to minimize soil erosion and preserve water quality.
- ♦ Certified organic seeds must be used if commercially available. At least three attempts to source organic seed from viable sources must be made and documented before using any untreated, non-GMO seed. Transplants must be certified organic.

## Organic Livestock

- ♦ Pre-existing dairy herds must complete a one-year transition period before becoming certified.
- ♦ To qualify for organic slaughter, livestock must be managed organically from the last third of gestation. Poultry must be managed organically from the second day of life.
- ♦ Antibiotics and hormones are prohibited. Synthetic parasiticides are prohibited in slaughter stock.
- ♦ Livestock must be fed a ration consisting of 100% organic feed. Ruminants over six months of age must have access to managed pasture with edible forage during the entire grazing season (minimum of 120 days) and must receive at least 30% of their dry matter intake (DMI) from pasture. Daily outdoor access is required during the non-grazing season for all animals over six months of age.
- ♦ Pigs and poultry must have access to the outdoors year round and be able to exhibit their natural behaviors such as rooting and scratching.

- ♦ Farmers must rely on preventative healthcare practices and use only approved treatments when necessary. If antibiotics must be administered for the welfare of the animal, animals must be removed from the herd.

## Organic Maple Syrup

- ♦ The sugar bush is considered a field crop and all applicable regulations apply to the management of the sugar bush.
- ♦ We encourage maple producers to observe good forest management practices and refrain from over tapping of trees or the tapping of diseased trees or trees in decline. Tapping should be based on the health and vigor of the tree determined by examination in both the winter and summer to view the leaf canopy.
- ♦ Excess or diseased trees should be thinned on a regular basis to promote canopy development and general health of the sugar bush.
- ♦ Synthetic defoamers may not be used when boiling.

## Organic Processed Foods

- ♦ All handling operations must develop an Organic Handling Plan for their facility. This written document must detail the complete process from receipt of raw material through production and packaging of the finished product.
- ♦ In operations producing both certified and non-certified product, complete and total separation of raw materials, processing and storage are required.
- ♦ Processed foods must be produced with organic ingredients. If non-organic ingredients are used, the label must distinguish between certified organic and non-certified organic ingredients.
- ♦ Products may not contain ingredients that have been genetically modified, irradiated, or produced with sewage sludge.
- ♦ Artificial colors and flavors and other synthetic additives are prohibited.