



Australian Government
Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service

12 April 2010

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NASAA Certified Organic
P O Box 768
STIRLING SA 5152

BY:

Dear AQIS Approved Certifying Organisations and Operators

Cessation of the Use of the Regulatory Mark used for Certifying Organic Products for Export

It has been determined by AQIS that use of the voluntary regulatory mark for certifying organic products for export is to cease. This mark is reproduced below:



This decision means that the permission provided to approved certifying organisations in the *2007 Rules for Design and Procedure governing the AQIS regulatory mark for certified produce (Rules)* to use the above mark is revoked, as are the Rules.

The above decision was made on the basis that:

- (a) the regulatory mark is no longer being used by a majority of operators, and the Approved Certifying Organisations' own marks are becoming increasingly recognised by importing countries;
- (b) the term 'Australian Government Certified' may be misleading, as it incorrectly implies that products with the mark are being directly certified by the Australian Government;
- (c) the regulatory mark does not specify the product being certified (e.g. organic or biodynamic produce); and
- (d) under export control legislation, the mark is not expressly required to be applied to organic produce.

Approved Certifying Organisations are to advise those operators using the regulatory mark that no further printing of packaging and/or labels containing the mark is to be undertaken.

Further, as an authorised officer under the *Export Control Act 1982 (Cth)*, this letter constitutes written approval under order 3.11(1) of the *Export Control (Organic Produce Certification) Orders* to modify your QM system to remove any requirements in relation to the Rules or the application of the above mark.

AQIS is aware that operators may have already printed packaging and/or labels displaying the regulatory mark for use on stock. As such, in order to minimise loss to those operators, a phase-out period of existing packaging and labels will be implemented by AQIS. Accordingly, the use of existing packaging and labels displaying the regulatory mark must cease **on or before 30 October 2010**. No organic products are to be packaged and/or labelled with the regulatory mark after this date.

Yours sincerely

Colin Hunter
General Manager - Food Exports
Biosecurity Services Group