

# NASAA Newsletter

Issue 14 - Christmas 2015

**Christmas Wishes from the NASAA Board, its Managers and all the team.**

**Leading and growing, we continue to support our industry**



*This edition will focus on keeping you up to date with where and what NASAA is up to. It will discuss the climate change, touch on markets, the Chinese-Australian Free Trade Agreement and discuss a number of activities that NASAA has either undertaken or is undertaking...*

## 1. Major Industry events- What are we up to and where

NASAA has continued to focus on organic industry development, encouraging conversion and educating conventional farmers about the issues, benefits and opportunities of Certification.

Since the last Newsletter, NASAA's involvement has included major conferences and events including:

- On 21st August, we were part of the OBE – Grazing Best Management Practice (BMP) in Roma where we discussed the alignment of organics and BMP.

What we discovered was that the BMP tools that were discussed are an interesting program which can be an important management tool to businesses in Agriculture.

It was interesting to observe and discuss how it could be better utilised in an Organic farming system for reporting and management purposes, and how relevant BMP was to those already certified and those interested in heading down the path for reporting purposes.

We were honoured to have been there to support the great team at OBE and to be able to give many western Queensland producers the information



they needed to take the steps in becoming NASAA certified OBE suppliers, it's all about the networks.

While the BMP program is only just being rolled out in Queensland, currently there are plans to have it extended into the southern states shortly. Watch this space.

- As part of our ongoing commitment to service at NASAA, we also attended the Riverland Field Days at Barmera as a guest of Primary Industries and Regions SA (PIRSA). It was great to spend the day catching up with familiar faces and meeting new ones. The conversations throughout the day ranged from the usual suspects, the weather, to crop protection and market access, to clarifying parts of the standards for operators. Keep an eye out, the program in 2016 will also include what and where we will be.

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• On 23rd September, along with NASAA certified operator, Mark Forrester, and NASAA WA, spoke to 55 pastoralists, predominately all cattlemen who were very interested in organics, at Goldfields Nullarbor Rangelands Innovation and Pastoral Profit Expo in Kalgoorlie.

• Mark then further represented NASAA at the same expo in Casgoyne, WA. It is often difficult for us to be everywhere all the time, and from time to time, our valuable operators are in a better position to represent NASAA and present on their experiences moving into Organics. As a result of Mark's contribution we continue to receive an increased level of enquiries from the Western side of the country. Thank you Mark, we very much appreciate your support.



• As a result of growing demand for more information from growers throughout south Western Australia, we responded to a call out from one of our most energetic and connected operators to deliver more information and build a greater presence throughout the Vasse region and then further up into Dowerin.

A number of grape growers, a wine processor, small croppers and some broad acre grain growers attended the workshops at Vasse and Dowerin in WA. Thank you very much to Brent Burns and his staff from Landsave Organics at Vasse and to Kim Hack from Wombyn Olive Farms for all the work they put into organising these events, and Peter Togno and his family from Margaret River Creamery for their generous support of these western workshops. We really appreciate it.

• During the same period, NASAA's Operations Manager, Peter Hastie ran workshops throughout the Eastern States, from northern NSW, southern NSW

and three different regions in Victoria. The focus of these workshops was as part of our wider industry development program in 2015, where education forms a critical part of overcoming the common barriers to entry for Organics.

We are encouraged to see some of the biggest interest in Organic Certification coming from the Western States. And therefore, we continue to recognise the importance of being present to provide those that are interested with the knowledge and networks to make it happen.

• If anyone wants to run a workshop during 2016, please contact Pete on 0402 069 354 or at [peter.hastie@nasaa.com.au](mailto:peter.hastie@nasaa.com.au).

## **2. Organic Market News - Demand outstrips organic supply by forty percent**

According to the Australian Organic Market report, there is a 40% shortfall in supply of organic products in relation to the demand.

The key drivers are certified organic meats, predominately beef; dairy products and processed foods.

The balance of the product not consumed in Australia is exported to the US, the EU or SE Asia. These are our top three export destinations.

Looking to the future growth and expansion of the Organic sector, the emerging demand for Certified products from markets such as China continues to grow rapidly. NASAA is receiving many inquiries for certified product across the Asian region and further abroad. Many of these markets are yet to register as a key export destinations however, current interest suggests that strong global export demand for certified organic Australian product may continue for the foreseeable future.

Domestically, the organic industry has grown by 15.4% compound since 2012 and during 2013, NCO certified a further 5.5 million hectares of agricultural land bringing the total land area certified by NCO to approximately 12 million hectares.

This does highlight the importance of maintaining a strong and stable domestic service. A strong local Organic sector, has a direct bearing on our ability to supply globally. So thank you to all our producers at home.

Dairy processing and manufacturing in Australia has seen some significant developments with the

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entry of some new players into the industry and the continued growth and expansion of more traditional and experienced operators. Bellamy's Organic share price movements continue to demonstrate and support correlating markets evidence that Certified Organic Dairy products are in significant demand globally.

Let's not forget the importance of supporting our Small to Medium Enterprises (SME's) who have a Domestic market focus at present. While some are expanding to reach markets not on these shores, many choose to supply locally and nationally which is seeing its fair share of change as well, as one moves up another moves in.

A number of large international certifiers have also expressed interest in NCO's inspection and certification services. These include interest from a large Chinese processor who is chasing certification to the US NOP on behalf of a US based Organisation.

### **3. NASAA 2015 Industry Seminar & AGM- Healthy soils, Healthy Systems, Healthy Homes**



What do chickens, fig trees, baby foods, fruit orchards and healthy soils have in common?

They were all part of the NASAA industry Seminar held at the AGM in Canberra on November. The theme "Healthy Soils, Healthy Systems, Healthy Homes" recognised 2015 International Year of Soil. A special thank you to all our speakers.

Laura McBain, CEO of Bellamy's Organics who provided a detailed account of Bellamy's journey from a local Tasmanian family business to its rapid

rise and incredible success on the ASX. She discussed the trials and tribulations of moving into the Chinese market and offered some valuable advice to those looking at exporting to this markets.

Glenn Morris, MD, Fig Trees Organic Farms explained how he has trebled cattle stocking rates through improving the humus content in his soils and rotational grazing strategies;

Katie Finlay, Mt Alexander Fruit Gardens and current RIRDC Victorian Rural Woman of the Year discussed how with her husband Hugh, they utilised Organic Management tools, to not only turn their farm around after a decade of setbacks, but also turn their lives around. An inspiring story!

Madelaine Scott told her own inspirational story about how Madelaine's Eggs became a reality, her approach to organic egg production; animal welfare and the importance of Organic farming ethos was to her business. She discussed utilising modern facilities such as crowdfunding to build her small business and her vision for the future

Following the seminar, the 29th Annual NASAA AGM was held with 21 people in attendance plus three Proxies and one via e-conferencing.

We thank our sponsors – Bellamy's and Camperdown Dairies.

A very big thank you also to Bellamy's Organic and Camperdown Dairies for their very generous sponsorship of both the seminar and the AGM. Having the support two successful organic businesses is invaluable. Thank you Laura, Rod and team, and Peter and the Camperdown Team.



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#### **4. From dark and dingy to professional work place**

At last, after many long months of negotiations, the office that has been our home for 23 years is being modernised. Open plan will replace the internal walls, old carpets and multiple filing cabinets. Instead we will have a professional and efficient workplace. A Board Room / Training Room will also bring many meetings and training days in-house and contribute to the ongoing program of improving our efficiency and services.

#### **5. Next year NASAA's 30th Birthday - Watch the calendar**

NASAA was incorporated in March 1987 but was operating for a number of years before this so we will be celebrating our 30th Birthday in 2016.

The 30th birthday is not only about celebrating the contribution and people that have made NASAA a leader in the organics sector, but also highlighting the strategic direction and opportunities for the next five to ten years.

#### **6. Helping indigenous communities to Grow through organics**



#### **POETCom Indigenous Inspector Training, Nadi, Fiji.**

One of the greatest hurdles in achieving organic certification for indigenous communities is the cost of certification and inspections.

NASAA's program which included Indigenous Inspector Training initiated by NASAA during 2014, was picked up and continued by the Pacific Organic & Ethical Trade Community (POETCom) in Nadi, Fiji.



The November 2015 event attracted 21 participants from Fiji, Samoa, Palau, PNG, Vanuatu, the Solomon Islands and NZ.

Training people, indigenous to the various islands, to be able to inspect organic operations within the Asia Pacific region is a vital step in helping those communities grow and develop, and in increasing access to certified organic produce.

As this is now growing, we have handed this over to the International Organic Inspectors Association (IOIA). The training was led by Luis Brenes and very ably supported by our own Kathe Purvis, who conducted the very first Indigenous Organic Inspector Training in Hahndorf, SA., last year.

The IOIA now have the opportunity to grow this program by training indigenous people to inspect to national and international standards.

Importantly this will reduce the need for Australian or European based inspectors to conduct inspections and significantly reduce the cost of certification to many certified operators living in remote and developing nations.

Kind regards,

**Ben Copeman**  
*NASAA General Manager*

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# World Tour of Australia

**NASAA hit the road in 2015 with workshops all over the country, culminating in the Organic Industry Seminar in Canberra in November. What does 2016 have in store?**

Where has the year gone? With unprecedented demand coming from nearly all the sectors in Organics, this year has really flown. Our focus has been getting the word out there about the opportunities that are building both at home and around the world for Organic produce of all kinds.

We have experienced such overwhelming support for the national education and networking program in 2015, and we sincerely thank everyone who was able to assist us to bring it together. We have organised, partnered or spoken at over 25 events this year on both sides of the country. We held workshops with the aim to deliver on more tangible and useful topics for our operators and interested businesses.



These ranged from a number of topics around production and processing knowledge through to marketing and industry education. We discussed the industry as a whole, the opportunities and threats to entry, emerging markets and shifting domestic demand. We discussed steps to certification, soil health and Organic composting techniques. We got industry experts in to discuss organic pest and weed management in Organic farming systems, horticultural management, Organic dairying and beef production amongst others.

We listened and we learned, the ultimate aim is to deliver on our promise to be the leading service provider to the industry and to our operators.

The key aim in all this is that we develop transparent and integrated supply chain networks that bolster and strengthen the organic supply chain. We have seen a growth in the number of larger processors actively developing their own suppliers.

Taking into consideration the current level of deficit in supply, the current increase in interest from these processors is encouraging from an industry wide perspective.

## **Organic AgFacts for NASAA members**

Importantly, NASAA's programs are designed to build greater depth in both the supply and demand side, and hence help to achieve longer term market growth and stability.

As the bigger operators shift their focus to meeting international market expectations and export demand, new and existing smaller processors have the opportunity to investigate the evolving domestic markets.

Production, price and sustainability for farmers is key to understanding the risks and opportunities of Organics and steps to Certification. NASAA is working with a number of Industry experts to develop Organic AgFacts around a number of relevant subsector topics.

These will be made available to NASAA members, and purchasable for non-members along with a number of other special NASAA member resources and services which are under development or planned for.

Stay in touch, if you have any feedback, suggestions or wish to submit a topic to be considered in a workshop let me know.

In the meantime I'm looking forward to working with you all throughout 2016 and have a really fantastic Christmas. What a fantastic time to be part of Organics!

**Pete Hastie**

*NASAA Operations Manager*

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# Hangin' up her hat...

**NASAA / NCO Director Gaye Lamb retires**

## **Gaye Lamb**

**NASAA Director 2008 – 2015**

**NCO Director 2012 – 2015**

At the NASAA Organic Industry Seminar and AGM in Canberra last month, NASAA farewelled Director Gaye Lamb, after serving on the NASAA Board for 7 years and the NCO Board for 3 years.

Gaye and her partner Michael Krake are long term NASAA/NCO certified operators.

Gaye was especially skilled in seeking out funding grants for not-for-profit organisations and had gained many grants to assist NASAA in achieving its objectives.

Gaye and Michael were always willing to offer their help at NASAA promotions and activities – mostly in the past when these activities were mainly staffed by



NASAA volunteers.

Gaye and her bright array of hats, for which she is well known, will be missed.

**NASAA and NCO thank Gaye for her contributions over the many years.**

## **Want to Advertise with NASAA?**

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# OFA Internship Program

**As part of the National Organic Internship Program, the OFA Interns were encouraged to apply for the Rising Star Award, as part of National Organic Week put together by CORE.**

Victoria Meyer, who has just completed an Internship at Mt Alexander Fruit Gardens was a keen candidate. Victoria has been a great intern for our pilot program this year, has worked hard, learnt a lot, and left her internship much clearer about what she wants to do in organic farming in the future.

Many of our Interns comment on how important the right farm is. Thanks to Mt Alexander Fruit Gardens for their support of the Internship Program from its infancy - their guidance and feedback is critical to the long term success of the program.

Unfortunately for Victoria, the other 'Rising Star' candidate had a very strong social media presence, and despite Victoria's great number of votes (the second highest of the whole voting segment) was not able to keep track with Sasha Welker, who ultimately won the 'Rising Star Award'.

The 'Rising Star Award' was created by the OFA, with the intention to encourage young upcoming organic farmers to be recognised for their business acumen, their profile, and ultimately the success in the growth of their young businesses. Thanks especially to Tanya Lacy, from Intercept Experience, who generously donated the outstanding prize for the Rising Star Award, a 3-month mentorship program valued at \$5500. The program is all about developing their business plans, their future endeavours - we wish Sasha well with this. Look out next year for an update on what she is up to!

Thanks to Cecile Plantade from CORE, for her work and effort in the Awards for National Organic Week (NOW). Great to see so many organic producers across Australia recognised for their work and effort in the organic industry. And always fabulous to see Costa featured! Thanks to Peter Longhurst, from Primal Foods for his representation of the OFA at the NOW Awards night.



The Internship Program has progressed well this year, with well over 40 applications from farms and interns, and quite a few fantastic placements like Victoria where Interns are able to work and learn on strong and viable organic farms. We currently have placements available across Australia, so if you are interested in being a professional organic farmer - then contact us today!

**Chairman**  
*Organic Federation of Australia*



# Certified Organic Wine of the Year 2016

 [www.facebook.com/organicwineoftheyear](http://www.facebook.com/organicwineoftheyear)

## Proudly Sponsored by NASAA and Organic Times

*The Organic Wine of the Year Award is about to move into its third year, which is also the 30th anniversary of NASAA...*

Coming into its third year, the Organic Wine of the Year Awards, is really taking off, and we are expecting even more wines to be submitted in 2016. With the 2014 Winner, Pig in the House certified by ACO, and the 2015 Winner Macaw Creek certified by NASAA - we are hoping to continue to encourage some great competition across the organic wine sector.

We want to make sure that the 2016 competition is the biggest one to date, and gives a huge boost to the organic wine sector in Australia. Through our partnership with Winestate Magazine, there are a number of benefits to entering your wines:

- Winestate Magazine Advertising
- Winestate Magazine Review of your wine
- Tasting Event Exposure throughout the year
- Social Media Coverage

### Dates for your Diary

#### March 2016

Submissions Open for 2016

#### Friday April 8th 2016

Winestate Cabernet & Bordeaux Challenge  
National Wine Centre, Adelaide - 6pm

#### Friday May 27th 2016

Winestate Shiraz Challenge  
National Wine Centre, Adelaide - 6pm

#### Friday June 30th 2016

NASAA/Winestate Organic Wine of the Year Awards  
National Wine Centre, Adelaide - 6pm

### JOIN US

NASAA welcomes the sponsorship of **Organic Times** for the Organic Wine of the Year 2016. The Organic Wine of the Year Award also presents significant opportunities for promoting other organic products throughout the year. We would love for more of our operators to take part in sponsoring the event, so that we can present organic wines alongside organic cheeses, olives, chocolates, nuts, crackers and more.



Please contact us if you would like to co-sponsor the event, or if you would like to purchase tickets to any of the events.

### Submit your Wines

Entry is open to all certified organic wines made in Australia and certified with a government approved certifier. To enter your wines, please send 2 bottles of each, packages marked ORGANIC WINE OF THE YEAR to Peter Jackson Winestate Magazine 81 King William Road, Unley, South Australia, 5061.

### We encourage all NASAA Certified Organic wineries to submit their wines in 2016



ORGANIC TIMES

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# Earth To Paris:

## Organic Movement Calls for an End to High-emitting Industrial Farming Practices



Industrialized farming costs \$3.33 trillion per year in environmental damage. We can remedy this by switching to agro-ecological farming practices such as Organic Agriculture. With the world awaiting an agreement from the upcoming COP21 climate conference in Paris, the organic food and farming movement calls for commitment to land-based mitigation measures that contribute to food security and tackle the root causes of climate change.

Producing the food we eat from farm to fork accounts for about half of all human-induced greenhouse gas emissions. When it comes to greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, the agricultural sector is second only to the energy sector. To date climate negotiators and policy-makers have paid little attention to this fact. IFOAM – Organics International calls for a climate agreement recognizing the importance of the land sector and the start of a process developing clear and transparent principles to ensure actions taken on climate change are in accordance with social and ecological considerations. “Industrial farming is one of the major drivers of climate change, and business as usual is not an option,” states André Leu, President of IFOAM – Organics International. “Only a transition to agroecology and organic farming can lead to deep cuts in emissions from food production”.

We are producing enough to feed the world yet one third of all food never makes it to the table. Half of the smallholder farmers who grow the majority of global agricultural produce are amongst the world’s hungry. As Andre Leu, points out “Unless farmers are given the agro-ecological technologies they need to meet the challenges posed by climate change, impacts on food production will be devastating, pushing millions into poverty.” Agriculture and forest-related mitigation actions should thus contribute to food security and tackle activities with the highest emissions such as fertilizer use particularly in ‘high-emitting’ countries.

Land-based mitigation measures should not be considered a quick fix for climate change, using carbon offsetting instead of phasing out fossil fuels. Gábor Figeczky, Advocacy Manager at IFOAM - Organics International warns “If, in the name of fighting climate change, land used by local farmers to produce food is acquired for use in carbon offsetting projects, then we could put a further 600 million people at risk of hunger by 2080.”

We cannot lose sight of the fact that climate change is doing damage to those who grow our food. Farmers must be empowered to lift themselves out of poverty and hunger, nourish growing local and global populations and mitigate global warming through low emission and high sequestration farming practices and systems.

Unlike chemical farming exacerbating climate change, organic farming practices use inputs that lead to less GHG emissions and are beneficial to soils. Organic farmers work with techniques such as crop rotations that allocate more carbon below ground. This is where land-based mitigation measures should be rooted – cutting emissions and capturing carbon in soil without jeopardizing food security.

# Mind your own **BEESWAX**

***As we all know, primary production is never a simple business, and many operators diversify in order to get the most out of their certified organic practices. As the bad news seems to keep on coming for them, could BEES be your next side project?***

Worldwide declines in bee numbers are causing global concern, and losses in Australia threaten the long-term production of key food crops. It is estimated that up to 30% of south-eastern Australia's bee population were wiped out due to an intensified drought in summer 2014, and winter weather affects bees in the Northern Hemisphere.

Bees are integral to Australian agriculture; their pollination is required for nearly 2/3 of Australian food production. Common fruit and seed crops, such as apples, avocados and canola, are particularly reliant on wild honeybee pollination.

Many organic farmers have sought to help restore balance and support pollination by keeping their own bees.

## **DID YOU KNOW?**

- Honey bees, scientifically also known as *Apis mellifera*, which means "honey-carrying bee".
- Honey is the only food that includes all the substances necessary to sustain life, including enzymes, vitamins, minerals, and water.
- The honey bee's wings are incredibly fast, about 200 beats per second, thus making their famous, distinctive buzz.
- The average worker bee produces about 1/12th teaspoon of honey in her lifetime.
- A honey bee visits 50 to 100 flowers during a collection trip.
- The bee's brain is oval in shape and only about the size of a sesame seed.
- A colony of bees consists of 20,000-60,000 honeybees and one queen.
- The queen bee can live up to 5 years and lays up to 2500 eggs per day.
- It is estimated that 1100 honey bee stings are required to be fatal.

## **How do bees make Beeswax?**

Worker bees, which live only around 35 days in the summer, develop special wax-producing glands on their abdomens and are most efficient at wax production during the 10-16th days of their lives. From about day 18 until the end of its life, a bee's wax



glands steadily decline. Bees consume honey (6-8 pounds of honey are consumed to produce a pound of wax) causing the special wax-producing glands to convert the sugar into wax which is extruded through small pores.

The wax appears as small flakes on the bees' abdomen. At this point the flakes are essentially transparent and only become white after being chewed. It is in the mastication process that salivary secretions are added to the wax to help soften it. This also accounts for its change in colour.

The exact process of how a bee transfers the wax scales from its abdomen to its mandibles was a mystery for years. It's now understood to be processed in either of two ways. Most of the activities in the hive are cooperative so it should be no surprise that other worker bees are willing to remove the wax scales from their neighbours and then chew them. The other method is for the same bee extruding the wax to process her own wax scales. This is done using one hind leg to move a wax scale to the first pair of legs (forelegs). A foreleg then makes the final transfer to the mandibles where it is masticated, and then applied to the comb being constructed or repaired.

Beeswax becomes soft and very pliable if the temperature is too high (beeswax melts around 65 degrees celsius). Likewise, it becomes brittle and difficult to manage if the temperature is too low. However, honeybees maintain their hive at a temperature of around 35 degrees celsius which is perfect for the manipulation of beeswax.

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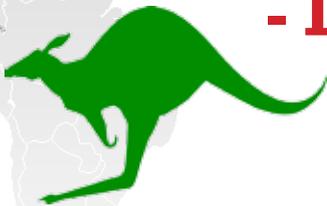
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# What's it all about?

## The China-Australia FTA



### - Dragon meets Kangaroo

*Dragon meets kangaroo is a strange metaphor for the FTA but it highlights the real question – Do we as Australians have the speed and dexterity of the kangaroo to not only avoid the dangers of closer involvement with such a massive economic power but also take advantage of it?*

For your business, understanding the contentious China-Australia FTA agreement will help you to better assess the risks and potential opportunities that may be hiding in the document.

The substantial benefits that are promised by the signing of this historic China Australia Free Trade Agreement (ChAFTA) are set to start flowing from the end of 2015, as announced by the Minister for Trade and Investment Andrew Robb on December 9th.

The Minister said that this follows a critical 'exchange of notes' in Sydney between Australia's Ambassador-designate to China Jan Adams and Chinese Ambassador Ma Zhaoxu which formally confirms that both Australia and China have now fulfilled their respective domestic requirements to enable ChAFTA to enter into force.

The Minister outlined the benefits that he believes will follow:

Two rounds of annual tariff cuts in quick succession. The first round of tariff cuts will occur on 20 December followed by a second round on 1 January 2016, saving Australian agricultural exporters an estimated \$300 million

Growth in agribusiness jobs - dairy industry for example expects ChAFTA to result in 600-700 extra dairy jobs in the first year alone.

More than 86 per cent of Australia's goods exports to China (worth more than \$86 billion in 2014) will enter duty free, rising to 96 per cent when ChAFTA is fully implemented.

Businesses can search for product-specific ChAFTA tariff information and guidance on rules of origin through an innovative new FTA Portal. A guide for exporting and importing goods, providing step-by-step advice ahead of entry into force, is also available.



# CHINA-AUSTRALIA

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**Submissions Open - March 2016**

**Award Presentation - 30th June 2016**



ORGANIC TIMES



# What is

# CERTIFIED ORGANIC

*Many products claim to be natural, organic, or additive and pesticide free. What does it all really mean?*

The only way to be 100% sure that products are organic, is to look for **Certified Organic** by an approved certifier like **NASAA**.

**Certified Organic** products are independently audited and verified by a third party certifier, and comply with relevant organic standards

**Certified Organic** producers undergo a conversion process to ensure that non-organic, industrialised farming methods and inputs are phased out

**Certified Organic** operations are managed in compliance with the standards on an ongoing basis

**Certified Organic** products *do not* contain GMOs, hormonal growth promotants, synthetic additives, chemical herbicides, fungicides or insecticides or synthetic fertilisers

**Certified Organic** production considers social justice, animal welfare, biodiversity and the revegetation of land for long-term sustainability

**Certified Organic** products carry a certification logo and number to demonstrate organic integrity



**1234P**

Products carrying a label implying that they are an Australian certified organic product may only be *packaged* in Australia - the ingredients may not necessarily be certified to an Australian Standard

Products carrying the NASAA label are confusion free

Know where your food comes from - **ALWAYS READ THE LABEL CAREFULLY**

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