

Recognition of International Organic Accreditation Service (IOAS)

Revised November 2008

Background: Establishing Organic Production and Processing Sub-Program

On December 6, 2002 IOAS expressed to NIST, in a letter, their intent to apply for NIST recognition under the National Voluntary Conformity Assessment System Evaluation (NVCASE) program for Organic Production and Processing. The purpose of their request was to provide confidence in their quality of work and provide assurance that IOAS is subject to government oversight.

After reviewing IOAS application, NIST decided to proceed with establishing a NVCASE sub-program for Organic Production and Processing. In accordance with NVCASE regulations, NIST published a notice in the Federal Register to invite all interested parties to a workshop held on May 9, 2003. The purpose of this workshop was to consult the public and develop criteria for the sub program. The workshop was attended by USDA, ANSI, IOAS, Organic Trade Association, and other Organic Agriculture experts. Most of the questions asked during this workshop were clarifications about the IOAS program. No body objected to establishing the sub program. On November 4, 2003 NIST published another notice in the Federal Register to announce the establishment of the sub program for Organic Production and Process and invited applications from all interested accreditors.

NIST Evaluation and Recognition of IOAS

IOAS was initially recognized on August 26, 2004 for a period of two years under the NVCASE program as an accreditor of certification bodies for Organic Production and Processing. As a part of re-evaluation NIST conducted one witness audit in each of the years 2005 and 2006, and an on-site assessment against ISO/IEC 17011 that replaced ISO/IEC Guide 61.

Renewal assessments of IOAS occur every two year. On June 19-20, 2006, and again on July 9-10, 2008, NIST conducted the on-site assessment at IOAS's office in Jamestown, North Dakota. During each 2-day renewal assessment, NIST reviewed IOAS's policies, procedures, forms, documents, and records against the requirements of ISO/IEC 17011. IOAS addressed the non-compliances and NIST convened an Evaluation Panel meeting to render a decision on IOAS recognition. After reviewing the results of the on-site assessment and the witness audits, the Evaluation Panel approved NIST continued recognition of IOAS for two more years. The current terms of IOAS recognition are as follows:

Name of the Recognized Accreditor: International Organic Accreditation Service

Address of the Accreditor: 102-1/2, 1st Avenue South, Suite 4, Jamestown, ND 58401

Authorized Representative: Ken Commins, Executive Director

Initial Date of Recognition: August 26, 2004

Valid through: August 25, 2010

Type of Action: Recognition Renewal

General Criteria for Recognition: ISO/IEC 17011 and NVCASE Program Handbook, NISTIR 6440:2004 ED

Specific Scope of Recognition: 1. International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements (IFOAM) Norms 2005
2. ISO/IEC Guide 65:1996

List of IOAS-accredited Certification Bodies (CBs)

The list of CBs accredited by IOAS can be accessed through its web site at www.ioas.org.