



# Washington State Dept. of Agriculture Organic Food Program

Certification Fact Sheet

## Seed and Planting Stock Guidelines

### National Organic Standards Section 205.204

#### Certification Criteria and Record Keeping Strategies:

- Organic seed and annual seedlings are required to be used unless they are documented to be commercially unavailable. This requirement includes cover crops and forages. Sprouts are specifically required to be produced with organic seed only.
- Verification of all seed sources and their compliance with the National Organic Standards is required to be maintained in a grower's files. This includes invoices, organic certification verification and commercial unavailability documentation.
- Conventional seed treatments are not allowed.
- Seed Treatments are permitted if all ingredients are documented to comply with the National Organic Standards.
- Inoculants must be documented to meet National Organic Standards, including verification that the treatment isn't produced from genetically modified organisms.

#### Verifying Commercial Unavailability:

Producers must use organic seed. If organic seed is not available, non-organic seed (untreated) may be used. Organic producers must search for organic seeds and document the unavailability of organic seeds if non-organic seeds are used.

Documenting the unavailability of organic seeds should include the following steps:

- Contact three or more organic seed suppliers and document whether organic seeds are available. Organic producers should ensure that you are contacting seed suppliers that offer organic seed varieties.
- Document on the Organic Seed Availability Form (AGR 2261) all seeds used. If non-organic seeds are used document the reasons why organic seeds were not available.

#### Reasons why organic seeds are may not be commercially available:

- Retail packets may not be the appropriate form/quantity for your operation.
- Unsuitable variety for your production system or specific market (i.e., disease resistance, fruit size).
- Documented quality concerns from on-farm variety trials.
- Letters from seed suppliers verifying no equivalent organic seed available.

**Note: The cost of organic seed is not valid justification for the use of non-organic seeds.**

#### Genetically Modified Organisms:

Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs) are not allowed in organic production per Section 205.105 of the National Organic Standards.



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## Common GMO Crops and Seed Materials:

Alfalfa, Barley, Canola, Cantaloupe, Corn, Cotton, Dry Beans, Flax, Mustard, Oats, Papaya, Peanuts, Potato, Radicchio, Rapeseed, Rice, Rye, Safflower, Sorghum, Soybean, Squash, Sugarcane, Sugar Beet, Sunflower, Sweet Potato, Tobacco, Tomato, Watermelon, Wheat, Zucchini. Forage and Legume Inoculants.

## Resources for Organic Seeds:

The following organizations provide helpful information and resources for locating organic seed.

- Organic Seed Alliance - [www.seedalliance.org](http://www.seedalliance.org) or phone 360-385-7192
- ATTRA, Seed Supplier Search - [http://attra.ncat.org/attra-pub/altseed\\_search.php](http://attra.ncat.org/attra-pub/altseed_search.php) or phone: 800-346-9140 (English) or 800-411-3222 (Español)
- USDA Database of GMO crops for food/feed: [http://usbiotechreg.nbio.gov/database\\_pub.asp](http://usbiotechreg.nbio.gov/database_pub.asp)
- Organic Materials Review Institute (OMRI), seed sources database - <http://seeds.omri.org/> or phone: 541-343-7600 ext: 100.
- OMRI Materials Lists by Category or Product - [http://www.omri.org/OMRI\\_products\\_list.php](http://www.omri.org/OMRI_products_list.php) or phone: 541-343-7600 ext: 100.
- Certified Organic Seed Sourcing Service - <http://www.organicseedsourcing.com/> or phone: 540-894-8865

## Organic Seed Decision Tree:

