

Description of the Danish organic certification system (2009):

Regulation

In Denmark the whole farm must be converted or have entered into conversion within the first 4 years after the start of the conversion of the farm. In 2007 there were 2607 certified organic farmers, 123 certified farm suppliers and 734 processors, packing departments and wholesalers. Retailers are not certified under the governmental organic scheme.

The production and processing of organic products is regulated by means of national regulations and guidelines, and the certification and inspection system is also governmental. Besides the governmental rules the Demeter International rules are applied by the members of Biodynamisk Forening, which consists of 22 certified Demeter farms and 10 biodynamic farms which are not certified by Demeterforbundet (Demeter Association). Further, there are 22 Demeter authorised shops and bakeries and 5 wholesalers. Besides the inspection by the Plantdirektoratet, these biodynamic farms, shops and wholesalers are inspected once per year by the Demeterforbundet according to the extra Demeter standards requirements

The Danish organic regulations are in some areas stricter than those of the EU Regulation, but because the Danish certification system is governmental it would be a technical trade barrier if products from other EU countries fulfilling the requirements of the Reg. EC 2092/91 could not get the Danish Ø-logo when packed or labelled in Denmark.

Some of the stricter Danish requirements may have to be cancelled when the new EU Regulation 834/2007 has entered into force by January 2009, because the Danish organic standards and certification system is governmental.

Certification and inspection

The competent authorities responsible for the Danish organic certification and inspection system are the Plant Directorate and the Danish Veterinary and Food Agency.

The Plant Directorate (<http://pdir.fvm.dk/Økologi.aspx?ID=2128>) is responsible for the registration and inspection of the organic farms and farm supplying companies producing organic feed, seeds, fertilizers, soil improvers and other non-food products. The inspection is carried out by its 6 regional district offices in the cities, Aalborg, Odense, Roskilde, Vejle, Viborg and Aarhus, which all apply the control code DK-Ø-50. The results of the control of the organic farm supplier companies and the GMO control are published in quarterly reports at <http://pdir.fvm.dk/GMO-kontrollen.aspx?ID=9594>.

The Danish Veterinary and Food Agency is responsible for the registration and inspection of the companies processing, packaging, labelling or importing food products from third countries

<http://www.foedevarestyrelsen.dk/Maerkning/Okologi/Kontrol/forside.htm> . The inspection is carried out by its 10 regional control and enforcement offices situated in the 3 regions of Denmark, (North, South and East Denmark). These regional offices have the control codes DK-Ø-1 to DK-Ø-10. Besides, the Danish Veterinary and Food Agency also has a unit for cross checking control. New rules for three grades of organic catering logos (Bronze: 30-60%, Silver: 60-90% and gold: 90-100% organic) to be used by organic retailers, restaurants or catering companies/institutions (e.g. hospital kitchens) are to be adopted in the spring of 2009. In contrast to these catering quality logos the governmental logo (the red Ø label) is a control logo used for organic products, which are produced, processed, packed or labelled in Denmark according to the Danish organic Regulations and Guidelines <http://pdir.fvm.dk/Default.aspx?ID=2389> , or organic products imported from other countries, which are certified according to the EC Regulation 2092/91. The biodynamic farmers are controlled by the Plant Directorate and the Demeter Union in Denmark.

LOGOS applied

The Danish red “Ø”-label was launched in 1990, and it is well known by more or less all Danish consumers. In 2004 a campaign was launched to make the EU organic logo known to the Danish consumers too.



The biodynamic producers and processors apply two logos, the Demeter flower and the trade logo, and opposite to the Ø-logo, which is a control logo, that covers products, which are controlled according to the Danish regulation (in Denmark) or the EU-regulation (in other EU countries and EU approved countries), the Demeter logos are quality logos which may only be used on products produced according to the Demeter International standards.

Certification subsidies

The certification and control of organic farmers, farm suppliers, processors, packaging and labelling enterprises is paid by the government as part of the annual Finance Act.. However, certification and control of Danish producers/wholesalers exporting to other countries, e.g. according to the US-NOP (US National Organic Programme) or the JAS (Japanese Organic Standards) has to be paid by the exporter.

The subsidizing system for support of the organic farmers is administrated by the Danish Food Industry Agency, which administers all the agricultural subsidy programmes in Denmark.