The principles of organic production and processing

1.2 The principles of organic production

Organic is a ‘whole system’ approach to farming and food production. It recognises the close interrelationships between all parts of the production system from the soil to the consumer.

We have established a comprehensive set of organic principles that guide our work and our standards.

Agricultural principles

- To produce food of high quality in sufficient quantity.
- To work within natural systems and cycles throughout all levels from the soil to plants and animals.
- To maintain the long term fertility and biological activity of soils.
- To treat livestock ethically, meeting their physiological and behavioural needs.
- To respect regional, environmental, climatic and geographic differences and (appropriate) practices that have evolved in response to them.

Environmental principles

- To foster biodiversity and protect sensitive habitats and landscape features.
- To maximise use of renewable resources and recycling.
- To minimise pollution and waste.

Food processing principles

- To minimise processing, consistent with the food in question.
- To maximise information for the consumer on processing methods and ingredients.

For more detailed food processing principles see chapter 40.

Social principles

- To provide a fair and adequate quality of life, work satisfaction and working environment.
- To develop ecologically responsible production, processing and distribution chains, emphasising local systems.

From these principles the practices that form the foundations of organic farming have been established:

- encouraging biological cycles involving micro-organisms, soil fauna, plants and animals
- sustainable crop rotations
- recycling of nutrients using composted manure and vegetable waste
- cultivation techniques that enhance and protect the soil and its life
- avoiding soluble mineral fertilisers
- avoiding agrochemical pesticides, and
- animal husbandry which meets their physiological, behavioural and health needs.
40.2 Principles of organic food processing

40.2.1 In addition to the principles in chapter 1, we have defined more detailed principles of organic food processing. These principles reflect our underlying philosophy and set out the ideal to strive for. They guide our standards and should also guide your manufacturing practice.

40.2.2 Organic foods are wholesome, authentic, unadulterated and of high quality.

Note:
- ‘wholesome’ means preferably whole, minimally processed, contributing to positive health
- ‘authentic’ means honest/genuine food from a known source, not giving a false impression regarding its nature
- ‘unadulterated’ means food made using recipes and methods that minimise the use of additives and processing aids
- ‘high quality’ means as good and as nutritious as possible (of its kind).

40.2.3 Organic foods are not fortified with added artificial nutrients, unless required by law.

40.2.4 The transformation of organic agricultural raw materials into food is easily traceable and kept separate from contamination.

40.2.5 New or novel technologies, ingredients and processes will not be applied automatically to organic food manufacturing.

40.2.6 There is no place for genetically modified organisms or their derivatives in organic food.

40.2.7 Emissions and pollutants are minimised at sites processing organic food and the processing site environment is conserved and respected.

40.2.8 Organic food packaging and transportation is minimised and environmentally responsible.

40.2.9 Labelling ensures transparency of information concerning the nature and ingredients of the food.

40.2.10 Social justice and rights and high standards of animal welfare are an integral part of the whole organic food production chain.