

CERES Policy

Policy on Certification equivalent to (EC) 834/07 in Third Countries

1	Aim	Define clear rules and procedures for those issues in Regulations (EC) 834/07 and (EC) 889/08, which must be handled in a different way in third countries, as compared to EU countries.
2	Background	Regulations (EC) 834/07 and (EC) 889/08 are made basically for EU countries. Technical issues are based mainly on European experiences, and many procedures are meant for EU conditions. Since CERES performs certification under the EU-Regulation not only inside, but also outside the EU, different interpretation needs to be defined.
3	Normative framework	<p>Regulation (EC) 834/07:</p> <p>Art. 33: "Import of products providing equivalent guarantees</p> <p><i>1. A product imported from a third country may also be placed on the Community market as organic provided that:</i></p> <p><i>(a) the product has been produced in accordance with production rules equivalent to those referred to in Titles III and IV;</i></p> <p><i>(b) the operators have been subject to control measures of equivalent effectiveness to those referred to in Title V and such control measures have been permanently and effectively applied;</i></p> <p><i>(c) the operators at all stages of production, preparation and distribution in the third country have submitted their activities to a control system recognised in accordance with paragraph 2 or to a control authority or control body recognised in accordance with paragraph 3;</i></p> <p><i>(d) the product is covered by a certificate of inspection issued by the competent authorities, control authorities or control bodies of the third country recognised in accordance with paragraph 2, or by a control authority or control body recognised in accordance with paragraph 3, which confirms that the product satisfies the conditions set out in this paragraph.</i></p> <p><i>The original of the certificate referred to in this paragraph shall accompany the goods to the premises of the first consignee; thereafter the importer must keep the certificate at the disposal of the control authority or the control body for not less than two years.</i></p> <p><i>2. The Commission may, in accordance with the procedure referred to in Article 37(2), recognise the third countries whose system of production complies with principles and production rules equivalent to those laid down in Titles II, III and IV and whose control measures are of equivalent effectiveness to those laid down in Title V, and establish a list of these countries. The assessment of equivalency shall take into account Codex Alimentarius guidelines CAC/GL 32.</i></p> <p><i>(...)</i></p> <p><i>3. For products not imported under Article 32 and not imported from a third country which is recognised under paragraph 2 of this Article, the Commission may, in accordance with the procedure referred to in Article 37(2), recognise the control authorities and control bodies, including control authorities and control bodies as referred to in Article 27, competent to carry out controls and issue certificates in third countries for the purpose of paragraph 1, and establish a list of these control authorities and control bodies. The assessment of equivalency shall take into account Codex Alimentarius guidelines CAC/GL 32."</i></p>
4	Terms, clarifications, abbreviations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EU-Regulation: Regulations (EC) 834/07 and (EC) 889/08, including their annexes • Third country: countries, which are not members of the European Union, and, in the present context, are <u>not</u> included in the "List of Third Countries" annexed to Regulation (EEC) 94/92.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Equivalent third country standard: The CERES equivalent standard for third countries is composed of the present policy, combined with other relevant policies quoted below. Whenever no specific provisions are defined in the present document, Regulation (EC) 834/2007 respectively (EC) 889/2008 apply. Codex: Codex Alimentarius Guidelines CAC/GL 32 from 2001, amended in 2008. Ann. = Annex; Art. = Article; Sect. = Section; § = Paragraph
5	Interpretation	<p>In its Articles 32 and 33, (EC) 834 offers three possibilities for imports from third countries:</p> <p>a. "Compliant products": Production, processing and control procedures must comply entirely with the Regulation and with the implementation rules established in (EC) 889/08. For the time being, this remains a theoretical option for third countries because the EU Commission has not yet established a procedure for import of compliant products</p> <p>b. "Equivalent products" proceeding from third countries whose control systems are considered to be "of equivalent effectiveness" (the so called "third country list"). The present policy does not address these cases.</p> <p>c. "Equivalent products" proceeding from third countries not recognised by the Commission. For these products, the certifiers working in each of these countries are expected to present their respective "equivalent standards". The present document is CERES "equivalent standard".</p>
6	Policy	
6.1	General definitions and provisions	Wherever the EU-Regulation says "control authority", "competent authority" or "control authority or body", we understand "control body", when referring to third countries not listed as "equivalent" in Reg. 1235/08. We avoid having an entire "equivalent standard" as CERES. Below, we basically refer to those points in which we handle things differently in third countries as compared to EU member countries. To have a complete picture of the "CERES equivalent standard for third countries", the present document must be seen in combination with Regulations (EC) 834/2007 and (EC) 889/2008, as well as the different organic certification policies published on the CERES website.
6.2	Including additional substances in our equivalent standard	Refer to WI 8.0.2
6.3	Details of compliant vs. equivalent	In the following, we define the borderline between "compliant" and "equivalent".

834/07	889/08	Codex	Issue	Compliant	Equivalent
Art. 5 and 6		Foreword	Overall principles of organic farming and processing	CERES requires these principles to be respected for both compliant and equivalent products	
Art. 9		Sect. 1 (§ 1.5)	Prohibition of GMOs	Prohibited for crops, livestock, fertilisers, pesticides, food ingredients, processing aids	No difference
Art. 10			Prohibition of ionising radiation	At least in some member countries, ionizing radiation for detection of foreign particles in food is allowed (e.g. Germany)	CERES accepts equipment for detection of foreign particles in organic food, as long as the radiation limits defined in

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					Directive 1999/2/EC, Art. 2(a) are not exceeded.
	Art. 7		Livestock species covered (scope)	Only the species mentioned here	Upon request, and after internal discussion, CERES offers certification also for other mammal species not listed here, e.g. camelids. Normally such species are raised under extensive systems, and therefore can be considered "equivalent" to herbivores such as sheep. Conditions for housing, maximum stocking density, etc. will be determined based on the size / weight of the respective animals. In case of specific technical questions coming up in relation to animal species not listed here, CERES will ask specialists for advice.
	Art. 3 (2)		Limits for livestock manure	Max. of 170 kg N/ha/year from livestock manure	No difference
	Art. 4	Foreword	Prohibition of hydroponic production	Prohibited	No difference
Art. 11	Art. 40	Ann. 3.A (§ 3 and 11)	Mixed / parallel production	Parallel production not allowed, clear separation required for mixed production	No difference
	Art. 36 (2)(a)		Retroactive recognition of conversion period		See Policy 4.1.2
Art. 12(1) (d)	Art. 45, Art. 48	Ann. 1.A (§ 8)	Use of conventional (untreated) seeds and potatoes in case of non-availability of organic material	Databases about organic seeds do not exist in third countries. CERES requires extensive investigation about availability of organic seeds or propagation material at a national and possibly even international level, before recognising the use of non-organic material as "compliant". For further details, see CERES Policy 4.1.17.	Please refer to Policy 4.1.17, Section 5.2
	Art. 45(2)	Ann. 1.A (§ 8)	Use of chemically treated seeds	Possible in EU Member states, in case there is a national law proscribing chemical seed disinfection due to phytosanitary reasons (see Council Directive 2000/29/EC). Not applicable to third countries.	Please refer to Policy 4.1.17, Section 5.1(h)
Art. 13	Art. 6a - 63	Not covered	Seaweed and micro-algae	(We do not offer this certification under a	Please refer to Policy 4.1.14

834/07	889/08	Codex	Issue	Compliant	Equivalent
				"compliant" scheme currently)	
Art. 14 (1)(d)	Art. 21	Ann. 1.B (§ 13)	In conversion feed for livestock	Limited percentages	No difference
	Art. 43	Ann. 1.B (§ 15)	Conventional feed for livestock	Exemptions can be granted for up to 5% protein concentrates for non-herbivores	No difference
Art. 14 (1)(b) (iv)	Art. 10-14, Ann. III	Ann. 1.B (§ 28 and 34)	Housing conditions for livestock	Clearly defined and detailed minimum surfaces per animal	No difference
	Art. 15, Ann. IV	Ann. 1.B (§ 37 and 52)	Stocking density	Limited to max. 170 kg N / ha, max. number of animals clearly restricted	No difference
	Art. 9 (4)		Non-organic adult male and nulliparous female mammals, for the renewal of a herd or flock,	Only under very specific conditions	CERES verifies the availability in the respective country. Case-to-case approval necessary.
	Art. 17 (3) b		Non-organic animals grazing on organic common land	Only under very specific conditions	Case by Case decision based on the principle that only animals from non-industrial management systems are eligible to graze on common organic land.
Art. 14 (1)(b) (vi)	Art. 39	Ann. 1.B (§ 42)	Tethering of animals	Reg. (EC) 889/08 allows tethering only for smallholders, and only with a special authorisation granted by the control body.	No difference
	Art. 12 (4)	Ann. 1.B (§ 48)	Artificial light for poultry	Minimum 8 hours continuous nocturnal rest	No difference
	Art. 19 (3)	Ann. 1.B (§ 66)	Artificial feeding of bees	Only organic honey, sugar or sugar syrup, no exemptions	No difference
	Art. 13 (4), Art. 38 (5)	Ann. 1.B (§ 67)	Origin of beeswax	Only certified organic or new wax only from the caps.	<p>No difference. However, in countries where organic beekeeping is just starting, it may be impossible for beekeepers to replace their wax by organic wax, while it would last several years to build up a new wax stock using only the caps. In such cases:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small beekeepers can apply in writing for a derogation for using conventional wax which is free of pesticide residues and paraffin. Evidence must be provided through laboratory testing • While larger companies are requested to search for sources of organic wax even outside the country.

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	889 Art. 34		Procedures for import of organic products	Certificates of inspection for each import	<p>No such obligation for imports from other countries to third countries, but normally CERES requests transaction certificates also in such circumstances, to ensure the integrity of the product. The same applies for purchases from other operations inside the country, when these suppliers are not certified by CERES.</p> <p>Products from recognised third countries (Reg. EC 1235/2008, Annex III), can be imported to other third countries, and then re-exported, or used as ingredients in organic products – provided the product is within the scope of Annex III.</p>
	Art. 69		GMO free declarations	Vendor declaration from Annex XIII may be used	No difference
	Ann. I	Ann. 2, Table 1	Compost from household waste	Defines heavy metal residue limits	No difference
	Ann. I	Ann. 2, Table 1	Trace elements	Complexing agents limited to those listed in part E of Ann. I to Reg. (EC) 2003/03	No difference
	Ann. I	Ann. 2, Table 1	Calcium chloride	Limited to be used in case of proven Ca deficiency only for apples	<p>Also for other fruit crops in case of proven Ca deficiency (in leaf tests, not soil tests!) For crops, other than apples, only CaCl₂ from mined sources may be used.</p>
	Ann. I	Ann. 2, Table 1	Human excrements	Not allowed	No difference
	Ann. I		Alkaline extracts of humic acids	Not listed	See Policy 4.1.22
	Ann. I		Hydrolysed proteins from plant or animal origin	Listed in Reg. 354/2014	CERES allows hydrolysed proteins up to a maximum of 20% of the crop's total N demand – provided the producer makes sufficient efforts to maintain and increase soil organic matter and plant leguminous crops.
	Ann. I		Silicates, silicic acid	Not listed	Silicates and silicic acids may be used in small quantities as plant growth stimulants
	Ann. II	Ann. 2, Table 2	Piperonyl butoxide (PBO) as synergist for pyrethrum	Not listed	Explicitly allowed under Codex. Also, some EU authorities tolerate PBO in organic farming. Producers must be made aware of potential risks. See Brief Info 3.2.17

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	Ann. II	Ann. 2, Table 2	Plant extracts other than those listed in Ann. II to Reg. 889	Except for those explicitly listed (Pyrethrum, Neem), also "basic substances" are allowed	No difference
	Ann. II	Ann. 2, Table 2	CuSO ₄ is limited to the use of TRIBASIC copper sulphate	Only tribasic CuSO ₄	No difference
	Ann. II	Ann. 2, Table 2	Potassium permanganate as fungicide and bactericide	Only allowed for fruit trees, olive trees and vines	No restrictions for applications as fungicide or bactericide on different crops
	Ann. II	Not listed	Use of substances for crop protection: from agricultural origin, commonly used as food (e.g. vinegar, sugar); or allowed as food additives or processing aids per Annex VIII.	Now allowed per the new Annex II (Reg. EU 2016/673)	Allowed
	Ann. II	Table 2 (III)	Microorganisms for pest control	Products as specified in the Annex to Implementing Regulation (EU) No 540/2011. This annex is limited to particular strains of certain microorganisms.	<p>Also other strains of the same species may be used, as long as they are approved by national authorities in the respective country, or multiplied at farm level. Regarding other species of viruses or microorganisms, not listed in the Annex to Regulation 540/2011, these can be approved on a case to case basis, except for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pathogens that (intentionally or not) affect vertebrate animals • Entomopathogenic microorganism having a very broad spectrum of hosts and posing a high risk to beneficial insects.
	Ann. II	Table 2 (V)	Pheromones	Products as specified in the Annex to Implementing Regulation (EU) No 540/2011. This annex is limited to particular pheromones against Lepidoptera pests	Also other types of pheromones, against Lepidoptera and other insect taxa, can be used. Use is limited to traps and dispensers.
	Ann. VIII A	Ann. 2, Table 3	Positive list of allowed food additives	Only those listed may be used only for the described purpose	No difference
	Ann. VIII B	Ann. 2, Table 4	Positive list of allowed processing aids	Use of K ₂ CO ₃ is restricted to "drying of grapes".	Since the EU recognises NOP as "equivalent" and NOP allows use of K ₂ CO ₃ without further restrictions, CERES also considers use of K ₂ CO ₃ for other processing steps to be equivalent.
	Ann. VIII B	Ann. 2, Table 4	Positive list of allowed processing aids	Use of NaOH is restricted to " Sugar(s) production;	Since the EU recognises NOP as "equivalent" and NOP

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				Oil production from rape seed ".	establishes only the restriction "prohibited for use in lye peeling of fruits and vegetables", CERES follows the NOP rule in this regard.
Art. 28	Art. 65 (1)		At least once a year a physical inspection of all operators	Producer group certification based on internal control systems cannot be considered compliant.	See Policy 4.1.3 on group certification
	Art. 91 (1)		Description of procedure for operators who "suspect" their product not be compliant		When we find that for certain crops or for certain types of operations in certain countries, there is a generalised lack of will or lack of capacity to co-operate with the certification body for assuring compliance with the Regulation, we will not accept applications for organic (equivalent) certification of that crop or type of operation.