



MEDIA RELEASE

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Updated organic standard available

Following months of industry and public consultation, the *Australian Certified Organic Standard 2013* - the updated rulebook for organic production, manufacturing, processing and retailing - is now available.

The most noticeable updates in the Standard are in poultry, wine, horticulture, cottage industries and aquaculture.

The Standard is reviewed every three years to ensure it meets industry expectations and changes with new practices and research.

It prescribes the practice requirements of all businesses certified with Australian Certified Organic, the most recognised organic label in Australia, identified by the Bud symbol that appears on the majority of certified organic produce in Australia.

By having its own standard Australian Certified Organic has been able to achieve recognition with the European Union, something that other standards haven't been able to do.

Standards Convenor Owen Gwilliam says, "The Standard brings together the requirements of national and international relevant standards so consumers have a simple choice when buying organic. More importantly the *Australian Certified Organic Standard* allows the broadest possible international market access.

"The high quality of our Standard has earned direct equivalence with the European Union for livestock and wine export, whereas Australia's national organic standard hasn't been able to achieve this. This means that unless you're certified with Australian Certified Organic you may have difficulty accessing EU markets.

Stocking densities for layers and meat chooks have been prescribed for poultry on fixed pastures and rotational stocking. Recent developments in the free range egg market mean organic industry standards for poultry must uphold strict standards that are objective, enforceable, in line with consumer expectations and practical for producers.

To secure equivalence with the European Union winemaking standards, additional requirements for the winemaking process, including those relating to additives, have been added.

Horticulture and viticulture producers who use copper to manage disease must restrict their copper usage to 6kg per hectare per year.

Organic aquaculture is expected to grow in coming years and the aquaculture section of the *Australian Certified Organic Standard* has been rewritten. Changes to management practices required by aquaculture operators are not extensive but have been made to reduce ambiguity.

See austorganic.com for more information or call Australian Certified Organic 07 3350 5716.

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