

Land Conversion to Organic

Summary from:

SRS Organic Standard

Version 01.01

from 29.05.2018

Based on

COUNCIL REGULATION (EC) No 834/2007 of 28 June 2007, as amended
COMMISSION REGULATION (EC) No 889/2008 of 5 September 2008, as amended

Conversion rules

The following rules shall apply to a farm on which organic production is started:

The conversion period shall start at the earliest when the operator has notified his activity to SRS and subjected his holding to the control by SRS.

During the conversion period all rules of organic production must apply.

If the operation is partly under organic production and partly in conversion to organic production, the operator must keep the organically produced and in-conversion products separate and keep adequate records to show the separation.

Conversion periods specific to the plant production are defined as follows:

Regular conversion

For plants and plant products to be considered organic, the organic production rules must have been applied on the parcels during a conversion period of:

Annual crops	at least two years before sowing
Perennial crops	at least two years before its use as feed from organic farming
Grassland or perennial forage	at least three years before the first harvest of organic products

Retroactive recognition

Conversion period cannot be shortened but a **period before the date of the start of the conversion period may be taken into account if certain conditions occur.**

SRS may recognize retroactively the previous time period as being part of the conversion period if:

- the land was included in a programme implemented for the protection of environment or in another official equivalent programme, provided that no products prohibited in organic production were used on that land;
- the fields were natural or agricultural areas which were not treated with products prohibited in organic production.

The retroactive recognition of the previous land management or the natural/virgin land status can be taken into consideration **only when satisfactory evidence has been submitted** to SRS proving that the conditions were met for a certain period of time.

The length of the period retroactively recognized by SRS may vary according to the submitted proofs.

SRS may request minimum one year of organic management on previously virgin natural areas before reaching organic status of the fields in order to have the chance to control the implemented crop production practices.

Extension of the conversion period

Where the land had been contaminated with products not authorized for organic production, **SRS may decide to extend the conversion period beyond the regular conversion period length.**

The extended length of the conversion period is fixed taking into account of the following factors:

- the process of degradation of the prohibited product shall guarantee an insignificant level of residues in the soil (for annual crops) and in the plant (for perennial crop) at the end of the conversion period
- the harvest following the treatment or contamination must not be sold with reference to organic production methods.