



Washington State Dept. of Agriculture Organic Food Program

Certification Fact Sheet

Organic Greenhouse Guidelines

WSDA Organic Food Program has developed guidelines to help producers better understand organic standards as they relate to greenhouse production. The following points address common concerns regarding the production of organic crops in a greenhouse setting.

SITES

Greenhouses must be located on a certified organic site or certified as a separate organic site.

- **Production of crops in soil** within a greenhouse requires that the land in the greenhouse has not had any prohibited materials applied for 36 months prior to harvest.
- **Production on benches and in containers** does not require the 36-month transition. For bench and container systems there needs to be documentation that the greenhouse sidewalls and ceiling/overhead has been cleaned with approved cleaners and is free of residual pesticides that would contaminate the organic crops.

TRANSPLANTS

Transplants must be grown with organic practices as described in the Organic System Plan.

- **Annual Transplants** – Annual transplants must be grown from organic seeds unless organic seeds are commercially unavailable. Organic greenhouse operations must have documentation from at least 3 organic seed supply companies that organic seeds are not commercially available. In addition, purchased transplants intended to produce an organic crop must be from a certified organic source.
- **Perennial Transplants** – Perennial transplants must be produced from organic planting stock or organic seed. If organic planting stock or organic seed is not commercially available then nonorganic seeds/planting stock may be used. Perennial planting stock must be under organic management for not less than one year prior to selling the planting stock as organic perennial transplants.



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MATERIALS

Materials for use in organic production must be from non-synthetic sources or be listed on the National List (205.601)

- **Potting Medium** – Just because the bag says it is organic does not necessarily mean it is. Make sure the potting soil is approved through the current WSDA Brand Name Materials List or the OMRI Product List. Potting soil mix may contain non-disclosed ingredients including synthetic fertilizers and wetting agents.
- **Rooting Hormones** – Synthetic rooting hormones are prohibited in organic production. A strike, scion wood or cutting treated with a synthetic rooting hormone must be under organic management for one year prior to being sold as organic.

USE OF MANURE

Non-composted manure must not be applied within 90 days of harvest for crops where the edible portion *does not* contact the ground or 120 days for crops where the edible portion *does* contact the ground. [NOS 205.203 (c)(1)].

TREATED WOOD

Greenhouses may be constructed with treated wood provided that the treated wood does not have contact with any portion of an organic crop, roots or contact the soil in the area of production.

CROP ROTATION

Does not apply to container-only production greenhouses. The producer of crops grown in the soil with a greenhouse cover must implement a crop rotation as noted in [NOS 205.205].

