Why should I become certified organic?
Organic certification communicates your practices to your customers in one word, promotes a nationwide standard by which you can reliably market your product, and may provide a premium price at market.

Do I need to be certified?
All crops or products that are labeled as organic must be certified unless the operation is exempt or excluded.

What doesn’t need to be certified?
- Operations that gross less than $5,000 annually from organic products.
- Retail food establishments.
- Processors that produce products with less than 70 percent organic ingredients.
- Processors that produce products with organic claims limited to the information panel, or ingredient list.

A complete list of exemptions and exclusions from certification are outlined in Section 205.101 of the USDA organic regulations. Labelling restrictions may apply.

How long does it take to get certified?
The certification process takes an average of 3 1/2 months. However, it depends upon the complexity of your operation, the completeness of your application, and the time of year that you apply. Products must be certified prior to selling, labelling, or representing them as organic.
What is the cost of organic certification?
Certification fees must be submitted annually. Requests outside the initial application and renewal review may incur additional fees.

What are the recordkeeping requirements?
To comply with USDA organic regulations, certified operations must keep records sufficient to document organic integrity and have procedures in place to prevent commingling with nonorganic products or contamination by prohibited materials. Records should be adapted to your operation and must be available at your inspection.

What happens if my practices are out of compliance with USDA organic regulations?
Certification is built on continual improvement and annual evaluations of compliance. For correctable violations, WSDA will communicate any corrective action necessary. If corrected, these violations will not impact your organic certification.

How do I find out more?
Information and application forms are available online: agr.wa.gov/FoodAnimal/Organic
Contact us! We are here to assist!
(360) 902-1805 organic@agr.wa.gov