Different kind of standards

Regulations
- voluntary or mandatory

Private sector standards
- Soil Association, KRAV, Naturland, BioSuisse

Markets
- buyers’ standards and consumer preferences

Scope

- EU and US: crop, wild crop, livestock, livestock feed
- EU: mushrooms and beekeeping; US not
- EU regulates the terms ‘organic’, ‘biologic’, and ‘ecologic’
- US only regulates the term ‘organic’.

Conversion periods

Issues to consider

- Length
- Start
- Verification of start
- Verification of period

Length of the conversion period (1)

- US: 36 months before harvest
- Japan, EU: 2 years before sowing annual crop or 3 years before harvesting perennial crop (some exceptions)
- IFOAM: 12 month before sowing annual crop or 18 months before harvesting perennial crops
Start of the period

- US: last prohibited material used
- EU: organic management + application (new)
- IFOAM: organic management + application to Certification body

Verification of start

- US: not specified (retrospective)
- EU: application that enables inspection (exceptions)
- IFOAM: application that enables inspection (exception)

Verification of period

- US: Initial inspection, affidavit
- EU, IFOAM: monitored
- Private certifiers, inspection,

- Special cases: new land or “traditional” agriculture

Conversion of whole farm

- Some private standards require full farm conversion
Approved inputs

- US: natural OK unless specifically prohibited, synthetic not OK unless positive listing
- Japan, EU: all input needs positive listing
- Private certifiers: may be more restrictive

Manure

- Organic manure not required!
  - EU: from extensive animal husbandry, no “factory farming”, limitation of quantity
  - Japan: composted manure
  - US: composted manure as a rule
  - IFOAM: composting not required, restricted quality & quantity
  - Private standards: may have more strict requirements

Seeds and planting materials

- Organic seeds shall be used (all)
- If not available use, non treated, non GMO, conventional seeds (all)
- If non treated conventional seeds are not available, may use treated conventional seeds (IFOAM, EU (very limited))

Parallel production

- EU: restrictive OK if different varieties + inspection shall cover non organic
- US: no direct restriction
- IFOAM: visually distinguishable or harvest + can be verified
- Some private certifiers: banned
Contamination from outside

- EU: no direct regulation
- US: pesticide level regulation, boundaries, buffer zones
- Private standards: production site
- IFOAM: buffer zones, hedges
- GMO contamination standards today - none (IFOAM precautionary measures)

Contamination within the farm

- EU: heavy metals regulated
- US: no regulation
- IFOAM and private: may be more restrictive

Environmental & social aspects

- US: natural resources be maintained or improved, fertilisers should not contaminate
- EU: environment in preamble, manure storage
- EU, US, Japan social aspects not regulated
- IFOAM: improvement of landscape and biodiversity + social standards

Storage and handling

- Measures to take when fumigating storages (US)
- “Separate” storage for organic (EU, IFOAM)
- Organic produce labelled as such (EU, IFOAM)
Management and administrative requirements

Often create more problems than standards
- Japan: Grading Manager
- US: Organic Farm Plan
- Group certification
- Etc.

Private Labels

- Access to market + consumer recognition
- IFOAM seal

Governmental labels

- EU logo
- National logos in EU
- USDA Seal, JAS mark

Equivalency or total compliance?

- TBT (WTO): equivalence or international standards
- EU: equivalence in theory
- US: equivalence mentioned for bilateral agreement - practical implementation still to show
Private certification bodies’ solution

• Being approved by everybody
• Offering a menu of certifications

IFOAM’s solutions

• International standards (for standards)
• Recognition of local variations in OA
• Acceptance of IFOAM Basic Standards and IFOAM Accreditation for import equivalency

International Task Force…….

• UNCTAD
• FAO
• IFOAM
• Government representatives
• Private sector