

Soil Association Organic Standards for Great Britain

Summary of standards changes – document updated 6 June 2025

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1. Updates to all GB and SA GB standards

Standard	Description of changes	Reason for update
1.3.1* – Certifying your business (Baseline)	The guidance is updated with the following: <u>You must comply with all Applicable laws, and Qualifying Standards, including any conditions detailed in any non-compliances. Please refer to your organic client contract for more details.</u>	This update is a consequence of the change to standard 1.4.4 (below). The obligation to comply with applicable legislation is a feature of organic client contracts, and the guidance for 1.3.1 has therefore been updated accordingly.
1.3.3* – Organic certificate (Baseline)	The standard is amended as follows: 1. You are not allowed to sell products with the Soil Association symbol or with <u>must not make reference to organic or in-conversion [or use the Soil Association symbol]</u> without a valid <u>certification documents</u> that shows that your activity complies with these organic standards. 2. <u>Certification documents</u> are issued once Soil Association Certification has inspected your organic activity and they are satisfied that your activity meets organic standards. The <u>certification documents</u> will list all your certified activities and the crops, livestock and/or products you are certified to produce, process, <u>package, store, label, import, export</u> and/or sell as organic. 3. The certificate <u>certification document</u> may be in electronic format. The guidance is updated with the following:	These technical revisions are intended to clarify the scope of this standard in practice.

Key to text changes: (~~strikethrough~~ = delete; underlined = new wording; normal text = no change)

	<p><u>If you wish to add a new product to your license you will need to complete a product specification form – refer to standard [6.3.1] ‡ for details.</u></p> <p><u>Contact us if you need to add a new enterprise to your license – refer to standard [5.4.1] ‡ for details.</u></p> <p>†Applicable to SA GB and SA NI higher standards only</p> <p>‡Replace with applicable equivalent standard within each document</p>	
1.4.3* – Your obligations when certified: Declaration (Baseline)	<p>The guidance is updated with the following:</p> <p><u>You must comply with the terms of the contract at all times.</u></p>	This is a technical revision to clarify and strengthen the requirement to comply with the terms of contract at all times.
1.4.4* - Other statutory requirements (Baseline)	This standard is no longer needed.	The requirements set out in this standard no longer exist in regulation.
1.7.2* - Verifying certification documents (Baseline)	<p>The guidance is updated with the following:</p> <p><u>The term ‘suppliers’ also covers businesses supplying a service, e.g. storing organic product.</u></p>	This is a technical revision to clarify the scope of the standard.
1.13.2* - Treating infestations in organic products or	The example scenario outlined in the guidance has been amended as follows:	This is a technical revision to clarify appropriate precautions to take when using pyrethrum as an insecticide treatment.

Key to text changes: (~~strikethrough~~ = delete; underlined = new wording; normal text = no change)

<p>areas used for organic products</p> <p>(Baseline)</p>	<p>[...]</p> <p>For example, if you need to use pyrethrum as a spray or fog to control insects you must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>if product is unpackaged</u>, remove all organic products from the area to be treated <u>and</u> • not put organic products back into the treated area for at least 24 hours after the treatment • <u>if product is in sealed packaging it can remain but additionally wrap the product with impermeable layer and not remove the wrapping for at least 24 hours after the treatment.</u> 	
<p>SA GB 1.13.4* – Using rodent glue boards</p> <p>(SA higher standard)</p>	<p>The guidance is updated with the following:</p> <p><u>The use of rodent glue boards is now prohibited in Wales by The Agriculture (Wales) Act 2023. In England, the Glue Trap (Offences) Act 2022 also prohibits the use, unless the glue trap is set by a pest controller granted a license by the Secretary of State as outlined in the legislation.</u></p> <p><u>At the time of publication, the Scottish Parliament had voted to ban the sale of glue traps, but the implementation date had not been announced.</u></p>	<p>This is a technical revision to reflect changes in legislation on the use of glue boards in England, Wales and Scotland.</p> <p>This update is not applicable in Northern Ireland.</p>

(*occurs across all standards documents, so precise reference number will vary across each document)

2. Updates to GB and SA GB Farming and Growing standards

Standard	Description of changes	Reason for update
1.2.1 – General principles of organic production (Baseline)	The standard is amended as follows: [...] 2.To work within nature's systems and cycles, <u>ensuring that plant, water, animal and soil health are sustained and improved.</u> from the soil to plants and animals.	This revision is to ensure the standard wording prominently features the impacts they aim to achieve, and more closely aligns with regulatory text.
1.7.5 – Cropping plan (Baseline)	The guidance is amended as follows: We will send you our Annual Questionnaire form before your annual inspection, where you can for you to record this information.	This update is to enable the collection of data required for reporting to Defra.
1.7.6 – General livestock records (Baseline)	The guidance is updated as follows: <u>We will send you our Annual Questionnaire form before your annual inspection, for you to record your livestock numbers.</u>	This update is to enable the collection of data required for reporting to Defra.
1.8.2 - Products with 95-100% organic ingredients (Baseline)	The guidance is updated as follows: <u>The above mandatory information on prepacked product labels must be easily visible and clearly legible. This applies to the certification code and agriculture statement, and the EU logo when used.</u> <u>The organic regulation requires them to be in a conspicuous place - easily visible, clearly legible</u>	This is a technical revision to clarify the labelling requirements for prepacked products.

	<p><u>and indelible. This information cannot be inside a products packaging, for example, the inside lid of an egg box. You can view guidance from the Food Standards Agency on how to display mandatory information on packaging and labels.</u></p>	
<p>1.14.2.3 – Labelling and transporting products (SA higher standard)</p>	<p>The standard is amended as follows:</p> <p>You must include the words 'Soil Association Organic' or the Soil Association symbol on the packaging of products certified according to Soil Association standards.</p> <p><u>For Soil Association certified products which are not pre-packaged, (bulk labelling) the label must include either the Soil Association symbol or the words 'Soil Association Organic'. For unpackaged product, (e.g. grain, milk, dispatching unprocessed fruit and vegetables from farm) this information must go on the accompanying paperwork. Refer to standard 5.8.3 for the requirements for use of Soil Association symbol on pre-packaged product (retail packed).</u></p>	<p>This is a technical revision to clarify the labelling requirements for prepacked products.</p>
<p>2.3.2 – Preventing environmental contamination (Baseline)</p>	<p>The standard is amended as follows:</p> <p>You must carefully manage your plant production techniques to avoid or minimise contaminating the environment.</p>	<p>This revision is to ensure the standard wording prominently features the impacts they aim to achieve, and more closely aligns with regulatory text.</p>

	<p><u>You must use preventive measures at every stage of organic production, to prevent environmental pollution and contamination.</u></p> <p>The guidance is updated as follows:</p> <p><u>Preventive measures' include measures to ensure the preservation of biodiversity and soil quality, measures for the prevention and control of pests and diseases and measures that are to be taken to avoid negative effects on the environment, animal health and plant health.</u></p> <p><u>This would include pollution of waters, soils, and surrounding environment.</u></p> <p><u>Preventive measures should be taken by operators at every stage - production, preparation, and distribution_</u></p>	
<p>2.4.1 – Managing your soil (Baseline)</p>	<p>The standard is updated as follows:</p> <p><u>1 You must manage your soils for soil health by maintaining and enhancing soil life, appropriate fertility, structure, stability and biodiversity.</u></p> <p>[...]</p> <p><u>(d) the responsible application of livestock manure or organic material preferably composted and from organic production</u></p> <p>The guidance is updated as follows:</p>	<p>This revision is to ensure the standard wording prominently features the impacts they aim to achieve, and more closely aligns with regulatory text. It also provides further information on how this can be demonstrated.</p>

	<p><u>By following the organic standards your system will ensure that plant, water, animal and soil health are sustained and improved.</u></p> <p><u>We recommend monitoring and regularly reviewing your organic matter and nutrient levels of your soils alongside other soil health parameters.</u> We may require evidence that soil fertility is being maintained. This may be through soil testing results and/or yield records.</p> <p><u>This should take into consideration areas of your farm which are prone to compaction, erosion, run-off, flooding, waterlogging and different soil types, and manage them appropriately. You may have this detailed in a crop or livestock management plan.</u> [...]</p>	
<p>2.5.1 – The use of fertilisers and soil conditioners is restricted (Baseline)</p>	<p>The guidance is updated with the following: [...]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>the method used for comparing nutrients that enter and leave the farm.</u> <p><u>It may be beneficial to integrate a nutrient management plan with your crop management plan, to help with nutrient budgeting.</u></p> <p><u>Further details on NVZ requirements can be found here, and in standard 2.5.3 and 3.6.4.</u></p>	<p>This is a technical revision to encourage licensees to use nutrient budgeting within their crop management plans, and to signpost to government guidance on nitrate vulnerable zones (NVZs).</p>

<p>2.5.3 – Applying manure (Baseline)</p>	<p>The guidance is amended as follows:</p> <p>You must detail the maximum rate of nitrogen from manure that is applied per hectare of your holding per year. In nitrogen vulnerable zones (NVZs)†The field limit is 250kg of nitrogen per hectare per year. <u>In nitrate vulnerable zones (NVZs) the limit may be lower.</u></p>	<p>This is a technical revision to reflect updates in government guidance on the application of organic manures.</p>
<p>2.5.4 – The use of peat is restricted (SA higher standard)</p>	<p>The guidance is amended as follows:</p> <p>We are aiming to phase out the use of peat by 2025. To prepare for this, we encourage you to use sustainable alternatives to peat where possible.</p> <p>We are conducting trials to test peat-free alternatives. If you would like to take part in the trials please contact a member of the Standards Team: standards@soilassociation.org</p> <p><u>We are working to end the use of peat in horticulture, and we are supportive of initiatives that will help to deliver a sector-wide ban.</u></p> <p><u>We are actively involved in trials to test peat-free alternatives, including an Innovative Farmers field lab which successfully tested the use of locally-sourced peat-free blocking materials.</u></p> <p><u>There are now peat free propagating substrates available, which are effective for many</u></p>	<p>Peat-free alternatives are being developed, but none are currently available at sufficient scale, affordability or reliability. As such, we have revised the guidance to this standard.</p>

	<p><u>propagation operations including innovations in blocking materials.</u></p> <p><u>You should use sustainable alternatives to peat where possible</u></p>	
2.7.1* – Producing organic seed and propagating material (Baseline)	<p>The guidance is updated as follows:</p> <p><u>Propagating material includes cuttings and strawberry runners. Transplants are not regarded as propagating material and requirements for transplants are described in standard 2.7.8.</u></p>	This is a technical revision to clarify what is meant by 'propagating material' and 'transplants'.
2.7.4 Using non-organic seed and vegetative propagating material (Baseline)	<p>The guidance is updated as follows:</p> <p><u>You do not require prior approval when sowing grass/forage/arable silage/whole crop silage/cover crop green manure mixes that contain at least 70% (by weight) organic seeds as long as you provide details of these on the Annual Questionnaire we will send you before your inspection.</u></p>	This update is to enable the collection of data required for reporting to Defra.
2.8.1 – Substrates for mushroom production (SA higher standard)	<p>As above, the guidance is amended as follows:</p> <p>We are aiming to phase out the use of peat by 2025. To prepare for this, we encourage you to use sustainable alternatives to peat where possible.</p> <p>We are conducting trials to test peat-free alternatives. If you would like to take part in the trials please contact a member of the Standards Team: standards@soilassociation.org</p>	Peat-free alternatives are being developed, but none are currently available at sufficient scale, affordability or reliability. As such, we have revised the guidance to this standard.

	<p><u>We are working to end the use of peat in horticulture, and we are supportive of initiatives that will help to deliver a sector-wide ban.</u></p> <p><u>We are actively involved in trials to test peat-free alternatives, including an Innovative Farmers field lab which successfully tested the use of locally-sourced peat-free blocking materials.</u></p> <p><u>You should use sustainable alternatives to peat where possible</u></p>	
3.2.4 Replacement breeding stock (Baseline)	<p>The guidance is updated as follows:</p> <p><u>There is no limit to the number of non-organic males you may bring in for breeding. If you bring in male breeding stock this does not reduce the number of female breeding stock you can bring in.</u></p>	This update is to make it clear that male breeding animals do not need to be included in the maximum percentage allowances that apply to female breeding animals.
3.5.2 – Animal mutilations are restricted (Baseline)	<p>The guidance is updated as follows:</p> <p>If you wish to tail dock, disbud or dehorn your animals you must provide reasons for why it is necessary and how and when it will be carried out and what pain relief will be given in your health plan. In GB we can authorise these practices on the competent authority's behalf if the relevant criteria are met <u>and if the practice is documented in your health plan and recorded on the Annual Questionnaire we send you prior to inspection.</u></p>	This update is to enable the collection of data required for reporting to Defra.

*Occurs across multiple standards documents, so precise numbering may vary

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3. Updates to GB and SA GB Food and Drink standards

Standard	Description of changes	Reason for update
5.4.1 – Description of your activities (Baseline)	<p>The standard is amended as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Before starting your organic enterprise, you must describe how you will <u>what practical measures you will take</u> to ensure you will comply with these organic standards. If you make any changes to your activity you must update your certification body accordingly. [...] <p>The guidance is updated as follows:</p> <p><u>Practical measures include ensuring staff are adequately trained, having written procedures in place for dealing with organic products, an adequate record keeping system, appropriate cleaning and hygiene, separation and identification of organic products, appropriate pest control, procedures to ensure only permitted ingredients and inputs are used for organic production.</u></p>	<p>This update is to ensure a general obligation on licensees to ensure staff are adequately trained, along with setting out other practical measures that should be taken to ensure organic standards are complied with.</p> <p>This update to the standards is in line with (EC) 889/2008 Art. 63(1)(b).</p>
5.8.2 - Products with 95-100% organic ingredients (Baseline)	<p>The guidance is updated as follows:</p> <p><u>The above mandatory information on prepacked product labels must be easily visible and clearly</u></p>	<p>This is a technical revision to clarify the labelling requirements for prepacked products.</p>

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	<p><u>legible. This applies to the certification code and agriculture statement, and the EU logo when used. The organic regulation requires them to be in a conspicuous place - easily visible, clearly legible and indelible. This information cannot be inside a products packaging, for example, the inside lid of an egg box. You can view guidance from the Food Standards Agency on how to display mandatory information on packaging and labels.</u></p>	
<p>5..8.8 – Using the Soil Association symbol on products (SA higher standard)</p>	<p>The guidance is updated as follows: <u>The symbol must be clearly visible. When used on prepacked product labelling it must be on the outer packaging and not inside a products packaging, for example, the inside lid of an egg box, on a leaflet inside the product packaging.</u></p>	<p>This is a technical revision to clarify the labelling requirements for prepacked products.</p>
<p>5.16.3 – Paper, card and wood-pulp packaging products (SA higher standard)</p>	<p>The guidance is amended as follows: To allow licensees to source compliant products, this standard will be enforced from September 2025, but licensees should look to source compliant products at the earliest opportunity. <u>Any packaging purchased from September 2025 must be compliant. Packaging purchased prior to September 2025 may be used until stocks are exhausted.</u></p>	<p>This is an update to clarify the implementation date for this standard.</p>

<p>5.16.4 – Plastic materials, coatings, dyes or inks containing phthalates</p> <p>(SA higher standard)</p>	<p>The guidance is amended as follows:</p> <p>This restriction applies to all packaging products in scope</p> <p>Until September 2025 the restriction applies to plastic materials, coatings, dyes, or inks in contact with foodstuffs.</p> <p>From September 2025, the restriction will apply to all packaging, whether in contact with foodstuffs or not. For those specific products, any packaging purchased from September 2025 must be compliant and packaging purchased prior to September 2025 may be used until stocks are exhausted</p>	<p>This is an update to further reiterate the date of this standard’s implementation, and provide clarification around purchasing compliant packaging.</p>
<p>5.16.5 – PVC and other chlorinated plastics</p> <p>(SA higher standard)</p>	<p>The guidance is updated as follows:</p> <p><u>The restriction on PVdC applies from September 2025. For products containing PVdC, any packaging purchased from September 2025 must be compliant and packaging purchased prior to September 2025 may be used until stocks are exhausted.</u></p>	<p>This is an update to clarify the implementation date for this standard.</p>
<p>5.16.9 – Polystyrene</p> <p>(SA higher standard)</p>	<p>The guidance is amended as follows:</p> <p>To allow licensees to source compliant products, this standard will be enforced from September 2025, but licensees should look to source compliant products at the earliest opportunity.</p>	<p>This is an update to clarify the implementation date for this standard, and to signpost to UK government guidance on single use plastics</p>

	<p>Any packaging purchased from September 2025 must be compliant. Packaging purchased prior to September 2025 may be used until stocks are exhausted.</p> <p>Further government guidance about single-use plastics bans and restrictions is available here.</p>	
<p>6.4.1 – Permitted additives (Baseline)</p>	<p>The standard is amended as follows:</p> <p>Alongside potassium metabisulphite, under 'Specific conditions', the following is added:</p> <p>In fruit wines³ and mead with and without added sugar: 100 mg/l⁴ In cider and perry produced with addition of sugars or juice concentrate after fermentation: 100mg/l⁴. (Maximum levels available from all sources, expressed as SO₂ in mg/l)</p>	<p>This a technical revision to ensure alignment with the GB regulation (EC) 889/2008)</p>
<p>6.6.1 – Non-organic agricultural ingredients (Baseline)</p>	<p>The standard is amended as follows:</p> <p>GB considers that the ingredients below are not available in organic form, so you can use them in non-organic form in your organic products:</p> <p><u>Unprocessed</u> edible fruits, nuts and seeds <u>and</u> <u>processed products derived from them</u>:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. acorns (Quercus species) 2. cola nuts (Cola acuminata) 3. gooseberries (Ribes uva-crispa) 4. passion fruit also known as maracujas (Passiflora edulis) 	<p>This update is to ensure accurate alignment with (EC) 889/2008 Art. 28; Annex IX.</p>

	<p>5. dried raspberries (<i>Rubus idaeus</i>) 6. dried redcurrants (<i>Ribes rubrum</i>).</p> <p><u>Unprocessed</u> edible spices and herbs <u>and processed products derived from them:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Peruvian pepper (<i>Schinus molle</i> L.) 2. horseradish seeds (<i>Armoracia rusticana</i>) 3. lesser galanga (<i>Alpina officinarum</i>) 4. safflower flowers (<i>Carthamus tinctorius</i>) 5. watercress (<i>Nasturtium officinale</i>). <p><u>Unprocessed</u> algae, including seaweeds, which are allowed as food <u>ingredients and processed products derived from them.</u></p>	
<p>6.9.4 – Sulphur dioxide levels for Soil Association certified wines (SA higher standard)</p>	<p>The guidance is updated as follows: Permitted levels of sulphur dioxide in organic ‘other wines’ are given as a range in the table because they depend on the type of wine. <u>For mulled wine, you must also meet the requirements specified below.</u></p> <p>For the specific levels, refer to the relevant parts of <u>part B of Annex I of Delegated Regulation (EU) 2019/934, namely parts A(2 c,d,e) A(3) A(4), A(5) and B as retained in GB.</u></p>	<p>This is a technical revision to ensure consistency with updated regulations. We have also clarified that mulled wine is within the scope of this standard. This standard remains under further review.</p>
<p>6.9.5 – Use of sulphur dioxide in exceptional conditions</p>	<p>The standard is updated as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. You can apply to your certification body to use higher levels of sulphur dioxide up to the 	<p>This is a technical revision to ensure consistency with updated regulations. This standard remains under further review.</p>

(Baseline)	<p>maximum levels outlined in Annex I B of EC Regulation 606/2009 <u>part B of Annex I of Delegated Regulation (EC) 2019/934</u>. However, you can only do so if exceptional climatic conditions of a given harvest year lead to severe bacterial or fungal attacks which deteriorate the sanitary status of organic grapes in a specific geographical area which means that more sulphur dioxide than previous years is needed in order to obtain a comparable product.</p>	
6.9.6 – Permitted oenological practices (Baseline)	<p>The guidance is amended as follows: For further conditions and limits of application on the use of centrifuging and filtration, heat treatments, and ion exchange resins, refer to <u>part B of Annex I of (EC) 2019/934 as retained in GB</u>. EC Regulation 606/2009 Annex IA.</p>	<p>This is a technical revision to ensure consistency with updated regulations. This standard remains under further review.</p>
6.6.13 – Oil palm products (SA higher standard)	<p>The guidance is amended as follows: **Only RSPO product certified to the ‘Identity Preserved’ (IP) or ‘Segregated’ (SG) supply chain models are recognised. If your supplier’s certificate lists IP or SG, but also lists <u>another supply chain models (for example e.g., Mass Balance), you will need to must obtain additional written confirmation from your supplier that for each consignment of product you are buying that it is certified IP or SG (e.g., on delivery documents, or additional documents supplied with each consignment).</u></p>	<p>This is a technical revision to clarify the requirements around sourcing RSPO certified products.</p>

	<p><u>If you are buying from a trader or distributor, be aware that they need a license from RSPO to sell RSPO certified product, but they don't themselves need certification. Under the RSPO license, traders and distributors must provide the buyer with details of the product manufacturer's license number and the application supply chain model.</u></p>	
<p>6.6.15 – Critically endangered species (SA higher standard)</p>	<p>A new standard has been added, as follows:</p> <p><u>Products and ingredients derived from critically endangered species may only be used if:</u></p> <p><u>a. they were cultivated and organically grown (not harvested from the wild).</u></p> <p><u>Or</u></p> <p><u>b. they were organically harvested from the wild and are certified to a standard that the Soil Association recognises for its protection of threatened species.</u></p> <p><u>This requirement applies to all species classified as globally 'critically endangered' on the IUCN's red list of threatened species including but not limited to:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <u>• Commiphora wightii (Indian bdellium-tree)</u> <u>• Nardostachys jatamansi (Spikenard)</u> <u>• Chlorophytum borivilianum (Safed musli)</u> <p>Guidance:</p>	<p>This is a new standard to ensure that the conservation of critically endangered species is actively supported with sustainable harvesting approaches that protect and enhance biodiversity, support rural livelihoods, and respect traditional cultures.</p>

	<p><u>You will need to provide confirmation from the farms' certifier that it is not wild harvested, or, if it is an organic wild harvested source, you will need to provide your immediate supplier's FairWild certificate.</u></p> <p><u>Critically Endangered species harvested from the wild are not eligible for re-certification to Soil Association standards unless they hold FairWild certification</u></p> <p><u>All legal requirements, including CITES legislation must also be met.</u></p> <p><u>(S) If you source products certified to other organic standards they must meet this Soil Association requirement.</u></p>	
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4. Updates to GB and SA GB Abattoir and Slaughter standards

No updates to Abattoir and Slaughter standards

5. Updates to GB and SA GB Aquaculture standards

No updates to Aquaculture standards

6. Updates to GB and SA GB Feed Processing standards

Standard	Description of changes	Reason for update
8.9.2 – Labelling requirements for feed (Baseline)	The standard is amended as follows: 1. The term organic on feed labels must be The terms 'organic' and 'may be used in organic production' in accordance with Regulations (EC) 834/2008 and (EC) 889/2008 as defined in standards 8.9.1 on feed labels must be: [...]	This is a technical revision to clarify the scope of the standard.
9.1.7 – Use of non-organic protein for pigs and poultry (Baseline)	The standard is amended as follows: [...] 4. This exemption will be in place until 31 st December-2022 <u>2025</u>	This update follows an extension to the exemption issued by Defra regarding the use of non-organic protein for pigs and poultry.

7. Updates to GB and SA GB Seaweed standards

No updates to Seaweed standards
