

Organic Mushroom Production

1. General

Mushroom production is although similar to crop production but with a difference that it is an indoor activity under controlled environment and without the involvement of soil as growing medium. Mushroom production standards cover all edible mushrooms intended for human consumption, whether grown on compost, raw biomass or wood.

2. Organic Management Plan

During the registration of the farm or organic mushroom production unit with the Accredited Certification Body (ACB), the operator has to submit an organic management plan, which will be verified by the ACB during inspection. The organic management plan shall be updated annually.

3. Management of production site

The operator shall maintain the entire production site including housing facilities in a way that prevents contact with prohibited substances with production site, tools and boxes/ trays, organically produced mushrooms and each and every step throughout the entire growing cycle including harvesting and post-harvesting process. Any wood or plant material used for construction of mushroom house, racks, substrate holding containers, boxes, trays etc shall be free from prohibited substance treatment.

Organic and nonorganic production units must be in separate facilities separated by space and time and have separate ventilation systems, boxes, trays, tools, substrate holding racks etc including facilities for compost production.

4. Substrate and Growing media

All substrate and growing media shall be prepared on the farm in compliance of these standards or sourced from certified organic sources certified in accordance with the standards prescribed in Appendix 1 of these rules.

In case of unavailability of certified organic raw material needed for making the substrate accredited certification bodies may allow the use of chemically untreated conventionally grown raw material up to a maximum limit of 25% for making the compost.

The composting process shall ensure that the substrate has reached a temperature of at least 65°C for about 6-7 days prior to use. All composts and growing media

used (from the commencement of the composting process) shall be audited and verified for compliance with this Standard by the accredited certification body.

Steam is allowed for final sterilisation of compost.

In cases where raw crop residue/ biomass is used without composting as substrate, such as straw, hay or grains, they shall be sourced from organic operations certified as per crop production standards prescribed under Appendix 1 of these rules.

Logs, sawdust or other wood based material when used as substrate shall come from wood, trees or logs that have not been treated with prohibited substances

5. Fungus spawn

Organic spawn (seed) shall be used. Accredited certification bodies shall evaluate the conformance of spawn production as per the evaluation process given in Annex 3 of Appendix 1 under these rules. In case of non-availability of organic spawn accredited certification bodies may allow the use of conventionally grown spawn for limited period of time.

Use of GMO products or its derivatives or genetically modified organisms (spawn) at any stage of the production process is prohibited.

6. Conversion

Existing Mushroom production systems on being converted to organic management shall have to undergo a minimum period of 12 months as conversion period from the date of registration with the certification body. During the conversion period all management practices must be in compliance of these standards.

In case of new installations where the entire production system is being implemented in compliance of these standards, two or more production cycles must have been produced under organic conditions compliant with this standard prior to products being sold as organic.

7. Pest control and sanitation

Preventive pest and disease management shall be the preferred approach. Methodologies and measures listed at Clause 8 of Appendix 1 and at Clause 2 of Appendix 5 can be used in cases where preventive measures are not sufficient to tackle the problem.

For sanitation and disinfection of installation, equipments and facilities products listed in Annex 9 of Appendix 2 of these rules can be used.