



# Certified Naturally Grown Produce Inspection Forms

Farmer(s): \_\_\_\_\_ Farm name: \_\_\_\_\_

Inspector: \_\_\_\_\_ Affiliation (farm name, extension...) \_\_\_\_\_

Inspector is a:  CNG Farmer  Farmer using natural practices  Cert Organic Farmer  
 Extension Agent  Sust Ag Educator  Master Gardener  Customer (1 of 3)

Date of the inspection: \_\_\_\_\_ How long did the inspection last?: \_\_\_\_\_

## INSTRUCTIONS

The goal of the inspection is two-fold. In part, the inspection aims to verify that the CNG standards are being upheld. Equally important, the inspection offers an opportunity for producers to systematically review their practices with the inspector and reflect on how to improve sustainability in their operation.

The Inspector should:

- Ask questions to determine compliance with CNG standards
- Offer feedback and recommendations
- Share insights and suggestions to help the farmer set sustainability goals
- Use the Worksheets to note highlights of what's reported and discussed
- Complete these sections: Inspection Overview, Summary Inspection Report, and Inspector Contact Information
- Review List of Inputs (if completed)
- Return Summary Inspection Report and Inspector Contact Information (the final two pages) to CNG

The Farmer should:

- Before inspection: complete the List of Inputs on page 6 for the inspector to review on site (this worksheet is recommended but not required)
- During: walk through operation with inspector answering questions and sharing openly
- Complete the Sustainability Goals section
- Indicate one of your goals on the bottom of the Summary Inspection Report
- Keep the Worksheets, Overview, Goals, and List of Inputs on file at the farm for at least 3 years to share with future inspectors
- After: [optional] keep a copy of the Inspection Summary Report as a backup

PLEASE REMEMBER: It is easy to get side-tracked into specific conversations and discussions. Do that *after* the inspection is complete. Stay on track and perform a thorough inspection of the farmer's operation.

## INSPECTION WORKSHEETS

### AS YOU WALK THROUGH THE FIELDS

#### I. Land Management

A. How many acres are in production?

B. Ask the farmer about their markets. Does it look like they grow all they sell? (E.g. does it seem that the land base is sufficient to support these?)

YES

NO

C. How long has the farmer managed the property?

D. Has synthetic fertilizer, pesticide or herbicide been used in the last 36 months? If yes, then the operation is considered transitional. What was applied and when?

Transitional

Not Transitional

E. List any crops / livestock that are excluded from certification – please explain why they are excluded.

F. Ask the farmer about their tillage practices. What approaches does the farmer use to minimize erosion? And to minimize soil compaction?

G. Ask the farmer to describe his/her crop rotation practices. Does the farmer use a written plan or basic principles? Does the farmer feel s/he is meeting her/his rotation goals?

H. Does the farmer plant cover crops? What kinds and when? How else does s/he let the land recover between plantings?

## II. Soil Fertility

A. Dig into the soil in different fields. (i) Does it look and smell healthy? (ii) Is it very compacted? Does it have aggregates and channels for air and water movement? (iii) Are there worm castings, or other signs of invertebrates?

B. Does the farmer use fresh animal manure? If yes, when do they apply it? *[Raw manure must be applied 120 days before harvesting a crop that might come into contact with the manure.]*

C. Does the farmer use compost?

YES                       NO

(i) If yes, does it contain manure or is it plant-based only?

Plants only               Contains manure  
[See (ii)]

If it contains manure, (ii) how does the grower make sure that the compost is finished? *(If they are not confident it's finished, the farmer must observe the 120-day rule for fresh manure)*

(iii) Does the compost about to be used look and smell finished, like digested compost?

YES                       NO  
Comments:

D. Does the farmer use other inputs for fertility? Make sure these are recorded in the List of Inputs on p.6.

## III. Water Use

A. Does the farmer irrigate?

YES                       NO

(i) If yes, what is/are the irrigation source(s)?

(i)

(ii) Has it been tested? When? (Answer for each source)  
*[Regular water testing is not a CNG requirement, but is considered best practice and encouraged]*

(ii)

B. When was the most recent test of water used for washing produce? *[Annual testing is not a CNG requirement, but is considered best practice and encouraged]*

Date:

|  |  |
|--|--|
|  |  |
| C. Ask the farmer about methods he/she uses to conserve water.   |  |
| <b>IV. Weeds</b>   |  |
| A. What are the farmer's biggest weed challenges?  |  |
| B. What practices does the grower use to manage weed pressure?   |  |
| C. Does the farmer use inputs for weed control? Make sure these are allowed (see the List of Inputs section on p.7 for resources).   |  |
| <b>V. Insect Pests</b>   |  |
| A. Do you see insects or insect damage? What are the grower's biggest insect pest challenges?  |  |
| B. What practices does the grower use to manage insect pressure?   |  |
| C. Does the farmer use inputs for insect control? Make sure these are allowed (see the List of Inputs on p.7).   |  |
| <b>VI. Disease</b>   |  |
| A. What are the biggest plant disease challenges the grower faces?   |  |
| B. What practices does the farmer use to prevent or manage these?  |  |
| C. Does the farmer use inputs for disease control? Make sure these are allowed (see the List of Inputs on p.7).  |  |
| <b>VII. Buffers</b>  |  |
| <i>Buffers are important when a potential source of contamination is nearby. <u>The standard buffer is generally 50ft, though adequate buffer size is context specific, determined largely by the method of application as well as prevailing wind patterns and slope of the land. For example, if synthetic chemicals on an adjacent property are applied by broadcaster or boom sprayer that stays close to the ground then a 20ft buffer may be adequate. If chemicals are applied with high-pressure sprayers or aurally, then a distance greater than 50ft may be required.</u></i> |  |
| A. What is the land use on the properties adjacent to the growing area? Is there risk of spray contamination? If so, ask specifically,   |  |
| (i) What is sprayed?   |  |

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <p>(ii) When? (Time of year, time of day)</p> <p>(iii) How frequently?</p> <p>(iv) How is it applied?<br/> <i>[If there is risk of contamination, the farmer should have these details]</i></p>   |   |
| <p>B. Does the farmer have an adequate buffer based on the spray concerns? Are there shrubs or trees or other factors that help to prevent or block drift? <i>[If there is risk of contamination, the farmer must have an adequate buffer.]</i></p>   |   |
| <p><b>VIII. Biodiversity Conservation</b></p>   |   |
| <p>A. Are there woodlands on the property? How are these managed?</p>   |   |
| <p>B. Are there wetlands or waterways on or near the property? What steps does the producer take to minimize potential run-off of soil, excess nutrients, and if used, natural pesticides?</p>  |   |
| <p>C. Is there critical habitat for birds or other wildlife on the property? How does the grower enhance and protect this habitat?</p>  |   |
| <p>D. How does the farmer provide habitat for beneficial insects and pollinators?</p>   |   |
| <p><b>IX. Food Safety</b><br/> <i>CNG standards cover production practices and do not specifically address food safety. However, we recognize that proper food safety practices are crucial to providing high-quality and healthy food, maintaining relationships with customers, and running a successful farm business. Please take this opportunity to discuss:</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;"> <input type="checkbox"/>sanitation      <input type="checkbox"/>washing procedures      <input type="checkbox"/>food handling      <input type="checkbox"/>educational and training resources </p>   |   |
| <p><b>X. Seeds &amp; Transplants</b><br/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Seeds must be CNG, Certified Organic, or grown according to CNG methods whenever available. This includes cover crop seed. If the varieties the farmer wants are not available in quantity in this form, the farmer may use conventional seeds, though <b>chemically treated and genetically engineered seeds are prohibited.</b></li> <li>• Transplants must be grown according to CNG standards. Farmers should verify that there are no synthetic wetting agents or fertilizers in the potting mix. Perennials that weren't raised according to CNG standards may be marketed as CNG after 12 months under CNG management. <b>Produce from transplants not grown according to CNG standards may not be marketed as CNG.</b></li> </ul> </p> |   |
| <p>A. Ask the grower about their source(s) of seeds.<br/> (i) Where does the farmer purchase seeds? <i>[The farmer should be able to show seed supplier evidence]</i><br/> (ii) Is it a company that also sells treated and/or genetically modified seeds?<br/> (iii) If yes, how does the grower make sure that they don't get treated or GM seeds?</p>  | <p>(i)</p> <p>(ii)</p> <p>(iii)</p>   |
| <p>B. Does the farmer grow their own transplants?<br/> (i) If they grow all or some transplants, what is the growing medium? What ingredients does it contain?</p>  | <p>B. <input type="checkbox"/>YES    <input type="checkbox"/>NO</p> <p>(ii)</p> |

|  |   |
|--|---|
| (ii) Are they able to verify that it does not contain synthetic fertilizers or wetting agents?   | (iii) <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO  |
| C. Does the farmer purchase some or all of their transplants?<br>(i) If yes, how does the grower ensure that the transplants are grown according to CNG/Organic practices? | <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO<br>(i) |

**INSIDE THE OFFICE/BARN/SHED/GREENHOUSE**

|   |
|---|
| <p>A. Has the farmer had the soil tested recently? If so, discuss the results and how the farmer will (or has) addressed them.<br/><i>[CNG does not require annual soil testing]</i></p>  |
| <p>B. Equipment<br/>(i) Is the equipment properly stored to prevent leaking or contamination of soil and produce?<br/><br/>(ii) Does the farmer ever borrow equipment? If yes, do they clean it properly before using it on the farm?<br/><br/><i>[Equipment used on a conventional farm must be cleaned thoroughly before use on a CNG farm]</i></p> |
| <p>C. Are fuel and inputs properly stored to prevent leakage?<br/><br/><input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO<br/>Suggestions for improvement:</p>  |
| <p>D. Energy<br/>(i) How does the farmer minimize energy use?<br/><br/>(ii) Does the farmer use renewable energy sources?</p>   |

**INSPECTION CHECKLIST**

Did you address these items?

- |   |   |  |
|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Tillage                | <input type="checkbox"/> Irrigation & water use | <input type="checkbox"/> Biodiversity                        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Rotation & cover crops | <input type="checkbox"/> Weeds                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Equipment                           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fertility              | <input type="checkbox"/> Pests                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Processing area/other out buildings |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Compost                | <input type="checkbox"/> Disease                | <input type="checkbox"/> Greenhouse                          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Soil test results      | <input type="checkbox"/> Buffers                | <input type="checkbox"/> Seeding & transplanting             |

## INSPECTION OVERVIEW

|   |            |
|---|------------|
| A. Describe notable or outstanding aspects of the farm operation. Consider making this a farm tour site for a gathering of your local farmer's network. 😊   |            |
| B. The inspector may find minor violations that aren't grounds for removal from the CNG program but that should be addressed in order for the farm's certification to be continued. Do you recommend any Corrective Actions be taken to bring the farm into stronger alignment with CNG standards and/or principles? (These should also be noted in the Inspector Contact Information page.) In what timeframe should they be addressed (eg. immediately, within two months, by next year's inspection, etc)? |            |
| Corrective Action   | Time Frame |
|   |            |
| C. List any Corrective Actions from the last inspection and indicate if they have been acted upon.  |            |
|   |            |

### SUSTAINABILITY GOALS: going beyond the core standards

This is to be completed by the farmer with the assistance of the inspector. It should remain on farm for future reference.

Sustainability is an ongoing process and is context specific. We are united by our commitment to improving the soil and caring for the earth and our families with the long-term view in mind. Certified Naturally Grown is largely focused on ecological sustainability; however, to ensure the continued success of any farm it's important to include the economic and social aspects of sustainability as well.

The farmer should take this opportunity to reflect on and set some goals for improving sustainability on his or her farm using the inspector as a sounding board. These may be short-term or long-term goals and could be in any of the following areas or others:

- **Soil:** preventing erosion and runoff, building organic matter, cover cropping, reducing compaction
- **Water:** Use efficiency, rain water capture, run-off prevention, protecting wetlands and waterways
- **Inputs:** Use efficiency, reducing use, replacing with local products and/or preventative practices
- **Biodiversity:** Protecting/providing habitat for wildlife, buffering wild areas
- **Supporting biological cycles:** Habitat for pollinators, beneficial insects
- **Energy:** Energy efficiency, renewable energy
- **Waste:** Reduction, reuse, recycling
- **Economic viability** Maintain/improve the bottom line; pay yourself and staff fair wages.
- **Engaging the community:** Educate the public, increase food access

For the farmer being inspected: What are 3 goals for improving sustainability of your operation in the short term and long term? Discuss strategies to achieve these goals.

| Goal | Time frame | Steps necessary to make it happen |
|------|------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1.   |            |                                   |
| 2.   |            |                                   |
| 3.   |            |                                   |







## INSPECTOR CONTACT INFORMATION

This information will be kept completely confidential but is required for this form to be valid. It is only so we have the option to contact you with any follow-up questions and/or to confirm that you conducted the inspection and filled in this form.

|                                      |                    |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------|
| Farm or Ranch you inspected: _____   |                    |
| Your Name: _____                     | Affiliation: _____ |
| Your Phone: _____                    | Your Email: _____  |
| Your Mailing Address: _____<br>_____ |                    |

- I recommend this farm                       I recommend the farm with minor corrective actions                       I don't recommend this farm for CNG certification

### **INSPECTION NOTES**

|   |
|---|
| Do you recommend any Corrective Actions be taken to bring the farm into stronger alignment with CNG standards and/or principles? (These must also be noted in the Inspection Overview on p.5.)                |
| What about the farm stood out as interesting or impressive? (Optional) Feel free to jot a note below your signature on the Summary Inspection Report that will be scanned and uploaded to the farm's profile. |

If you'd like to recommend this farm for certification, you're almost done! But FIRST:

- Did you sign the Summary Inspection Report at the bottom? Did the farmer sign too?
- Did you initial the agree/disagree statements?
- Did you indicate your farm/affiliation on the summary report?

**Please return this page and the Summary Inspection Report to CNG using one of these three methods:**

|   |           |                                |           |  |
|---|-----------|--------------------------------|-----------|--|
| <b>Mail to:</b><br>Certified Naturally Grown<br>540 President Street, Third Floor<br>Brooklyn, NY 11215 | <b>OR</b> | <b>Fax to:</b><br>718-596-4697 | <b>OR</b> | <b>Email to:</b><br>forms@naturallygrown.org |
|---|-----------|--------------------------------|-----------|--|

The rest of the inspection worksheets should be left with the farmer for future reference and next year's inspection.

Inspection forms can be downloaded at [www.naturallygrown.org/documents](http://www.naturallygrown.org/documents)

Don't hesitate to contact us if you have any questions: [info@naturallygrown.org](mailto:info@naturallygrown.org) or 845-687-2058