

# Certified Naturally Grown Produce Standards

## **Allowed and prohibited substances, methods, and ingredients in CNG production and handling. ( 205.105)**

To be sold or labeled as "Certified Naturally Grown," the produce must be produced and handled without the use of:

- (a) Synthetic substances and ingredients, except as provided in 205.601;
- (b) Nonsynthetic substances prohibited in 205.602;
- (f) Ionizing radiation, as described in Food and Drug Administration regulation, 21 CFR 179.26; and
- (g) Sewage sludge.

## **Land requirements. ( 205.202)**

Any field or farm parcel from which harvested crops are intended to be sold, labeled, or represented as "Certified Naturally Grown" must:

- (a) Have been managed in accordance with the provisions of 205.203 through 205.206;
- (b) Have had no prohibited substances, as listed in 205.105, applied to it for a period of 3 years immediately preceding harvest of the crop; and
- (c) Have distinct, defined boundaries and buffer zones such as runoff diversions to prevent the unintended application of a prohibited substance to the crop or contact with a prohibited substance applied to adjoining land that is not under CNG management.

## **Soil fertility and crop nutrient management practice standard. ( 205.203)**

- (a) The producer must select and implement tillage and cultivation practices that maintain or improve the physical, chemical, and biological condition of soil and minimize soil erosion.
- (b) The producer must manage crop nutrients and soil fertility through rotations, cover crops, and the application of plant and animal materials.
- (c) The producer must manage plant and animal materials to maintain or improve soil organic matter content in a manner that does not contribute to contamination of crops, soil, or water by plant nutrients, pathogenic organisms, heavy metals, or residues of prohibited substances. Animal and plant materials include:
  - (1) Raw animal manure, which must be composted unless it is:
    - (i) Applied to land used for a crop not intended for human consumption;
    - (ii) Incorporated into the soil not less than 120 days prior to the harvest of a product whose edible portion has direct contact with the soil surface or soil particles; or
    - (iii) Incorporated into the soil not less than 90 days prior to the harvest of a product whose edible portion does not have direct contact with the soil surface or soil particles;

(2) Composted plant and animal materials produced through a process that  
(i) established an initial C:N ratio of between 25:1 and 40:1; and  
(ii) maintained a temperature of between 131 F and 170 F for 3 days using an in-vessel or static aerated pile system; or  
(iii) maintained a temperature of between 131F and 170F for 15 days using a windrow composting system, during which period, the materials must be turned a minimum of five times.

(3) Uncomposted plant materials.

(d) A producer may manage crop nutrients and soil fertility to maintain or improve soil organic matter content in a manner that does not contribute to contamination of crops, soil, or water by plant nutrients, pathogenic organisms, heavy metals, or residues of prohibited substances by applying:

(1) A crop nutrient or soil amendment included on the National List of synthetic substances allowed for use in organic crop production;

(2) A mined substance of low solubility;

(3) A mined substance of high solubility, Provided, That, the substance is used in compliance with the conditions established on the National List of nonsynthetic materials prohibited for crop production;

(4) Ash obtained from the burning of a plant or animal material, except as prohibited in paragraph (e) of this section: Provided, That, the material burned has not been treated or combined with a prohibited substance or the ash is not included on the National List of nonsynthetic substances prohibited for use in organic crop production; and

(5) A plant or animal material that has been chemically altered by a manufacturing process: Provided, That, the material is included on the National List of synthetic substances allowed for use in organic crop production established in 205.601.

(e) The producer must not use:

(1) Any fertilizer or composted plant and animal material that contains a synthetic substance not included on the National List of synthetic substances allowed for use in organic crop production;

(2) Sewage sludge (biosolids) as defined in 40 CRT Part 503; and

(3) Burning as a means of disposal for crop residues produced on the operation: Except, That, burning may be used to suppress the spread of disease or to stimulate seed germination.

**Seeds and planting stock practice standard. ( 205.204)**

(a) The producer must use Certified Naturally Grown or organically grown seeds, annual seedlings, and planting stock: Except, That,

(1) Non-CNG or nonorganically produced, untreated seeds and planting stock may be used to produce an organic crop when an equivalent organically produced variety is not

commercially available, Except, That, organically produced or Certified Naturally Grown seed must be used for the production of edible sprouts;

(2) Non-CNG or nonorganically produced seeds and planting stock that have been treated with a substance included on the National List of synthetic substances allowed for use in organic crop production may be used to produce a CNG crop when an equivalent organically produced, Certified Naturally Grown, or untreated variety is not commercially available;

(3) Non-CNG annual seedlings may be used to produce a crop when a temporary variance has been granted in accordance with 205.290(a)(2); (these variances given primarily because of an extreme natural disaster)

(4) Non-CNG or nonorganically produced planting stock to be used to produce a perennial crop may be sold, labeled, or represented as Certified Naturally Grown only after the planting stock has been maintained under a system of CNG management for a period of no less than 1 year; and

(5) Seeds, annual seedlings, and planting stock treated with prohibited substances may be used to produce a Certified Naturally Grown crop when the application of the materials is a requirement of Federal or State phytosanitary regulations.

**Crop rotation practice standard. ( 205.205)**

The producer must implement a crop rotation including but not limited to sod, cover crops, green manure crops, and catch crops that provide the following functions that are applicable to the operation:

- (a) Maintain or improve soil organic matter content;
- (b) Provide for pest management in annual and perennial crops;
- (c) Manage deficient or excess plant nutrients; and
- (d) Provide erosion control.

**Crop pest, weed, and disease management practice standard. ( 205.206)**

(a) The producer must use management practices to prevent crop pests, weeds, and diseases including but not limited to:

(1) Crop rotation and soil and crop nutrient management practices, as provided for in 205.203 and 205.205;

(2) Sanitation measures to remove disease vectors, weed seeds, and habitat for pest organisms; and

(3) Cultural practices that enhance crop health, including selection of plant species and varieties with regard to suitability to site-specific conditions and resistance to prevalent pests, weeds, and diseases.

(b) Pest problems may be controlled through mechanical or physical methods including but not limited to:

(1) Augmentation or introduction of predators or parasites of the pest species;

(2) Development of habitat for natural enemies of pests;

(3) Nonsynthetic controls such as lures, traps, and repellents.

(c) Weed problems may be controlled through:

(1) Mulching with fully biodegradable materials;

(2) Mowing;

(3) Livestock grazing;

(4) Hand weeding and mechanical cultivation;

(5) Flame, heat, or electrical means; or

(6) Plastic or other synthetic mulches: Provided, That, they are removed from the field at the end of the growing or harvest season.

(d) Disease problems may be controlled through:

(1) Management practices which suppress the spread of disease organisms; or

(2) Application of nonsynthetic biological, botanical, or mineral inputs.

(e) When the practices provided for in paragraphs (a) through (d) of this section are insufficient to prevent or control crop pests, weeds, and diseases, a biological or botanical substance or a substance included on the National List of synthetic substances allowed for use in organic crop production may be applied to prevent, suppress, or control pests, weeds, or diseases: Provided, That, the conditions for using the substance are documented by the farmer.

(f) The producer must not use lumber treated with arsenate or other prohibited materials for new installations or replacement purposes in contact with soil or livestock.

#### **Wild-crop harvesting practice standard.**

(a) A wild crop that is intended to be sold, labeled, or represented as organic must be harvested from a designated area that has had no prohibited substance, as set forth in 205.105, applied to it for a period of 3 years immediately preceding the harvest of the wild crop.

(b) A wild crop must be harvested in a manner that ensures that such harvesting or gathering will not be destructive to the environment and will sustain the growth and production of the wild crop.

#### **Additional Produce Standards**

In addition to the standards from the USDA National Organic Program Final Rule listed above, Naturally Grown includes the following requirements.

##### **I. Old Apple Orchards**

Land that was planted to an established Apple Orchards prior to 1965 is not eligible for Certified Naturally Grown status without a soil test for heavy metal contamination.

##### **II. For farms that have a mix of Conventional and Certified Naturally Grown™ field areas**

Farmers must ensure acceptable pre-use cleaning of equipment, and properly sized buffer strips to eliminate any chance of chemical contamination between Certified Naturally Grown and Conventionally grown crops. Farmers must show inspectors that facilities and methods exist to keep conventional and Certified Naturally Grown labeled crops separate.

Most importantly and most limiting, we will NOT Certify farmers who grow a mix of the SAME crop conventionally and Certified Naturally Grown in the same year. For example, while a farmer that grows conventional apples, but Certified Naturally Grown vegetables would be okay, a farmer that is growing 50 acres of conventional carrots, and 20 acres of Certified Naturally Grown carrots and the two fields are contiguous would NOT be acceptable and should not apply to be a part of this program.

## Disqualification from the Program

Farmers may have their Certified Naturally Grown status revoked and their names removed from the website if complaints are made and evidence is found that the grower is not adhering to the standards listed here-in.

Farmers may also lose their Certified Naturally Grown status if they do not fulfill Naturally Grown's other [program requirements](#).