

OP 8: MAINTAINING CERTIFICATION

i. Continuation of certification:

A certified operation must pay annual certification fees and submit the following information, as applicable:

- a. An updated organic production or handling system plan which includes:
 - A summary statement, supported by documentation, detailing any deviations from, changes to, modifications to, or other amendments made to the previous year's organic system plan during the previous year; and
 - Any additions to or deletions from the previous year's organic system plan, intended to be undertaken in the coming year.
- b. Any additions to or deletions from the information regarding the name, address, and phone numbers provided in the original application.
- c. An update on the correction of minor non-compliances previously identified by the certifying agent as requiring correction for continued certification.
- d. Other information as deemed necessary by GCS to determine compliance with the regulations.

GCS will conduct an annual on-site inspection before the expiry of certificate, which is operator's first full on-site inspection date.

Note: GCS will issue a written notification of non-compliance if GCS has the reason to believe, based on the on-site inspection and a review of the annual updated information that a certified operation is not complying with the regulations. See the section titled "Non-compliance procedure for certified operations" for details.

Note: GCS will issue an updated certificate of organic operation when it determines that the certified operation is complying with the regulations and that any of the information specified on the certificate of organic operation has changed.

ii. Re-evaluation of Certification:

a. Due to change in standards

In the event of significant changes to standards for certification, certified operators and applicants will be notified of the changes, the date those changes will be effective, and the deadline for demonstrating compliance to the new standards. The deadline for demonstrating compliance may be the regular annual inspection date or an earlier date if accelerated compliance is necessary to maintain organic



integrity. Continued compliance will be evaluated when the requested information is provided by the applicant or certified operation.

b. Due to change in Certified Operation:

Certified operators, through the GCS Certification Contract / Agreement, are required to provide notice of significant changes to their organic management plan, ownership, or management structure that may affect compliance with the standards. When such notice is received, the certification will be re-evaluated to determine continued compliance with the regulations. GCS determines whether the announced changes require further investigations. If such is the case, the supplier is not allowed to release certified products resulting from such changes until GCS notified the supplier accordingly.

GCS may do an additional inspection and take a decision and will issue an updated certificate of organic operation if the operation continues to comply and any of the information specified on the certificate of organic operation has changed.

iii. Surveillance Activities:

GCS staff will monitor products that indicate “Certified by GCS” to confirm that they conform to the standards. Staff will conduct such surveillance at trade shows and other locations where products may be displayed or sold. A record of the surveillance activities will include the date, event, location, name of staff person, and description of products. These records will be filed at the GCS office.