

FAQ's

Q. 1 Which legislation regulates the Organic Food in India?

Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) has the mandate to regulate manufacture, distribute, sell or import “organic foods” as per the provisions laid under Section 22 of the Food Safety Standards Act, 2006. The Food Safety and Standards (Organic Foods) Regulations, 2017 will regulate the Organic Foods in the country. It has been notified in the Gazette of India on 29.12.2017.

Q.2 What is the purpose of the Regulations?

The Food Safety and Standards (Organic Foods) Regulations, 2017 recognizes already established two systems of certification i.e. Participatory Guarantee System (PGS) implemented by Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare and National Programme for Organic Production (NPOP) implemented by Ministry of Commerce and Industry. These Regulations will regulate the manufacture, distribute, sale or import “organic foods”.

Q.3 What are the key features of these Regulations?

Organic Food Certification: *The Food Business Operator (FBO) has to comply the requirements of NPOP Certification or PGS-India Certification system.*

Organic Food Labelling: *Organic Food to comply with the FSSR (Packaging and Labelling) Regulations, 2011 in addition to the labelling requirements under NPOP or PGS-India.*

Other Food Safety and Standards Regulations: *All organic food shall comply with the relevant provisions, as applicable, under the Food Safety and Standards (Food Product Standards and Food Additives) Regulations, 2011 and relevant provisions, as applicable under the Food Safety and Standards (Contaminants, Toxins and Residues) Regulations, 2011 except for residues of insecticides for which the maximum limits shall be 5% of the maximum limits prescribed or Level of Quantification (LoQ) whichever is higher.*

Traceability- *To be established through one of the systems of certification (i.e. NPOP or PGS-India).*

Equivalent agreements- *Provision for bilateral or multilateral equivalence agreements based on NPOP with exporting countries for imports in India.*

Q.4 Who is exempted from the need of verification of compliance?

Direct sales by the original producer or producer organisation to the end consumer is exempt from the need of verification of compliance to any of the systems of certification (i.e. NPOP or PGS-India).

Q.5 Which food products can be labelled as 'Organic' ?

Under NPOP system:

- *In case of single ingredient product where all requirements have been met it can be labelled as 'Organic'.*
- *In case of multi ingredient product where min. 95% of ingredients are of certified origin it can be labelled as 'Certified Organic'.*

Under PGS-India system:

- *In case of single ingredient product where all requirements have been met it can be labelled as 'PGS- Organic'.*
- *In case of single ingredient product where min. 95% of ingredients are organic it can be labelled as 'PGS- Organic'.*

Q.6 What a consumer needs to look on the Organic Food Label?

The consumer should look for Food Safety and Standard Authority of India's organic logo and License number. In addition to the same it may carry India Organic Logo, in case of NPOP certified food or PGS-India Logo, in case of PGS certified food.



India Organic Logo



PGS-India Logo

Q.7 What a Consumer should be aware while purchasing Organic Foods?

A consumer should always check that the Organic Foods are not labelled as:

- *Genetically modified organisms/Genetic engineered.*
- *Irradiated foods.*
- *Natural" or "Green" foods.*

Q.8 What are the residual limits of Insecticides in Organic Foods?

The organic food shall also comply Food Safety and Standards (Contaminants, Toxins and Residues) Regulations, 2011 except for residues of insecticides for which the maximum limits shall be 5% of the maximum limits prescribed or Level of Quantification (LoQ) whichever is higher.

Q.9 Who is responsible for certifying Organic Foods?

The Accredited Certification Bodies in case of NPOP and Regional Councils in case of PGS-India are responsible for certifying the Organic Food Products.

Q.10 What about imported organic products?

Organic Food is not required to be re-certified on import to India under bilateral or multilateral agreements based on the equivalence of standards as per National Programme for Organic Production it. All organic food consignments to be accompanied by a Transaction Certificate issued by an Accredited Certification Body.

Q.11 Can the logo 'Jaivik Bharat' be used on the Organic Foods as on date?

The logo 'Jaivik Bharat' may be used on the certified Organic Foods. It can be downloaded from the portal (www.jaivikbharat.fssai.gov.in).

Q.12 What a FBO is required to do if he is already Registered/Licensed under FSSAI?

The FBO who is already Registered/Licensed under FSSAI, is not required to re-register /take a separate licence under FSSAI. He is required to get his existing Registration/License modified.

Q.13 What a FBO is required to do if he wants to start with new organic food business?

The FBO should be certified with either NPOP or PGS-India before applying under FSSAI Registration/License.

Q.14 Are in-conversion organic Foods covered under the FSS (Organic Foods) Regulations, 2017?

No, in-conversion organic products are not covered under the FSS Regulations. There is no provision for licensing of in-conversion organic products under FSSR.

Q. 15 The organic foods should comply with which Food safety parameters?

The Organic Foods should comply with the requirements for the Metallic contaminants, aflatoxins, naturally occurring toxic substances (NOTS), as specified under the Food Safety and Standards (Contaminants, Toxins and Residues) Regulation, 2011. In case of Residues of

insecticides, the limit of residue shall be 5% of the max limits prescribed under the above mentioned Regulations or Level of quantification (LoQ) whichever is higher.

Q. 16 The organic foods should comply with which other standards besides food safety parameters?

Besides Food Safety parameters, the organic foods should comply with the requirements of various parameters covered under the Food Safety and Standards (Food Product Standards and Food Additives) Regulations, 2011.

Q.17 Is there any provision for the small retailers for keeping their organic food products distinguishable from the conventional food products in their shops?

There is a provision in the Regulations that all the organic products needs to be displayed distinguishable from conventional foods at the shelves. The small retailers may distinguish them by placing stickers on the shelves.

Q.18 Is re-certification required for the exporting countries for organic products to be imported into India?

The imports of Organic Food from countries, with which bilateral equivalence agreements are there, are not required to be re-certified.

Q. 19 What is the date of compliance to Organic Food Regulations?

The Food Safety and Standards (Organic Foods) Regulations, 2017 will come into force from 1st July 2018.