

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ's) on Organic Foods

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

A. 1 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. Organic foods are regulated by Food Safety and Standards (Organic Foods) Regulations, 2017 notified under the provisions of the Act.

Q.2 Which systems of certification are recognized in the Food Safety and Standards (Organic Foods) Regulations, 2017?

A.2 The Food Safety and Standards (Organic Foods) Regulations, 2017 recognize 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.

Q.3 Who is exempted from the need of verification of compliance?

A. 3 Organic food which is marketed through direct sales to the end consumer by the small original producer or producer organisation is exempted from the provisions of the certification. Small original producer or producer organisation is the one whose annual turnover is not exceeding Rs 12 Lakhs per annum.

Q.4 Which food products can be labelled as ‘Organic ‘?

A. 4 Under NPOP system:

- In case of single ingredient product where all requirements been met as per the specified standards can be labelled as ‘Organic’.
- In case of multi ingredient product where min. 95% of ingredients are of certified origin, can be labelled as ‘Certified Organic’.

Under PGS-India system:

- In case of single ingredient product where all requirements have been met, may be labelled as ‘PGS- Organic’.
- In case of multi ingredient product where min. 95% of ingredients are organic, it may be labelled as ‘PGS- Organic’.

Q.5 Which logo FSS (Organic Foods) Regulations, 2017 refers to as FSSAI’s Organic Logo?

A. 5 The FSSAI’s Organic Logo is ‘Jaivik Bharat’ Logo.

Q.6 Which logo shall a consumer look on the label of Organic Food?

A. 6 The consumer shall look for Food Safety and Standard Authority of India's organic logo (Jaivik Bharat) and FSSAI Logo License number.



In addition, the label may carry India Organic Logo (NPOP certified) or PGS-India Organic Logo (PGS-India certified) under whichever system it is certified.



Q.7 What are the residual limits of Insecticides in Organic Foods?

A. 7 For residues of insecticides in organic food, limits shall be 5% of the maximum limits prescribed or Level of Quantification (LoQ) whichever is higher as for foods specified under Food Safety and Standards (Contaminants, Toxins and Residues) Regulations, 2011.

Q.8 What are the limits for Contaminants in Organic Foods?

A. 8 The organic food shall comply to the maximum limits of contaminants (Metal contaminants, Naturally Occurring Toxic substances, Aflatoxins etc.) as specified for foods under Food Safety and Standards (Contaminants, Toxins and Residues) Regulations, 2011.

Q.9 The organic foods should comply with which Microbiological parameters and their limits?

A. 9 For Microbiological parameters, the Organic Foods should comply with parameters and limits specified in Appendix B of FSS (Food Product Standards and Food Additives) Regulations, 2011.

Q.10 The organic foods should comply with which other standards besides food safety parameters?

A. 10 Besides Food Safety parameters, the organic foods should comply with the requirements of various quality parameters prescribed under the [Food Safety and Standards \(Food Product Standards and Food Additives\) Regulations, 2011](#).

Q.11 Who is responsible for certifying Organic Food?

A. 11 The Accredited Certification Bodies in case of NPOP and Local Group in case of PGS-India are responsible for certifying the Organic Food.

Q.12 What about imported organic products?

A. 12 Organic Food is not required to be re-certified on import to India if there is bilateral or multilateral agreement based on the equivalence of standards as per National Programme for Organic Production. All organic food consignments to be accompanied by a Transaction Certificate issued by an Accredited Certification Body.

Q.13 What an existing FBO dealing with organic food is required to do if he is already registered or licensed under FSSAI?

A. 13 The FBO who is already Registered/Licensed under FSSAI, is not required to take a separate licence under FSSAI. The FBO shall get his existing Registration/License endorsed for organic foods. The endorsement can be done online through Food Licensing and Registration System (FLRS). It can be accessed via link which is <https://foodlicensing.fssai.gov.in/index.aspx>

Q.14 What a FBO is required to do if he wants to start with new organic food business?

A. 14 Certification under NPOP/PGS-India is a pre requisite for handling organic food and is a requirement for taking Registration or License under FSSR.

Q.15 Are foods which are 'In-Conversion' to organic covered under the FSS (Organic Foods) Regulations, 2017?

A. 15 No, foods which are 'In-conversion' to organic are not covered under FSS (Organic Foods) Regulations, 2017.

Q.16 Can 'In-Conversion' to organic food use Jaivik Bharat Logo?

A. 16 No, organic foods which are 'In-conversion' cannot use Jaivik Bharat Logo.

Q.17 Do 'In-Conversion' to organic food needs to take Registration/License under FSSR for Organic Food?

A. 17 No, such foods are treated as non organic foods.

Q.18 Is there any provision for seller of organic food for keeping their organic foods distinguishable from the conventional food products in their shops?

A. 18 There is a provision in the Regulations that all the organic products needs to be displayed distinguishable from conventional foods at the shelves. The seller of organic food either exclusively or as part of his retail merchandise shall display such food in a manner distinguishable from the display of non-organic food.

Q.19 Is re-certification required for the exporting countries for organic products to be imported into India?

A. 19 The imports of Organic Food from countries, with which bilateral equivalence agreements are there, are not required to be re-certified.

Q. 20 What are the punitive actions for FBO for not complying with the Regulations?

A. 20 The Offences and Penalties for the Food Business Operators who are not complying with the FSS Act, Rules and Regulations are liable for offences and penalties provided under Section 48 and 49 of the FSS Act.

Q. 21 What are the powers of the Food Safety Officer (FSO)?

A. 21 The powers of the Food Safety Officer (FSO) are mentioned under Section 38 of the FSS Act, 2006.

Q. 22-What are the responsibilities of Food Business Operator (FBO)?

A. 22 The responsibilities of a FBO are covered under Section 26 of FSS Act, 2006

Q. 23 Who will pay for the samples analysis, if a consumer wants to get it analyzed??

A. 23 Purchaser will pay the cost of the same and analysis. If the report of the Food Analyst shows that the article of food is not in compliance with the Act or the rules or regulations made there under, the purchaser shall be entitled to get refund of the fees paid by him.

Q. 24-What are the sampling protocols for Organic Food?

A. 24 The Sampling protocols for organic foods shall be same as for non organic foods under FSSR. It shall be as per Section 47 of the FSS Act, 2006 that covers Sampling and Analysis Procedure.

Q. 25 If someone is selling organic cotton, does it come under this regulation?

A. 25 No, non-food items are not covered under the mandate of FSS Act, 2006.

Q. 26 How is traceability maintained in Organic Food Systems?

A. 26 Traceability is to be maintained as required in NPOP or PGS-India through whichever system it is certified.
