

Introduction

Imports of organic products to the EU, Great Britain or Switzerland need to be accompanied by a Certificate of Inspection (COI), confirming that the product has been produced in accordance with organic production rules equivalent to the EU organic regulations. It is issued by the certification body of the operator performing the last operation of preparation on a lot (preservation, processing, packaging, labelling, sealing the goods in packaging or containers). Brokers, who do not physically handle the product, are not considered as “exporters”. COIs are issued in the EU online tool Traces, and endorsed by electronic signature. The COI must be available before the consignment leaves the country of export. Consignments for which ones no COI is endorsed before the product leaves the country of export, may not be customs’ cleared as organic in the EU (Reg. (EU) 2021/2306, Article 3.2.) or Switzerland. In the EU, one COI is requested for each consignment (according to Reg. (EU) 2021/2306, Article 2(1) ‘consignment’ means a quantity of products under one or more Combined Nomenclature codes, covered by a single certificate of inspection, conveyed by the same means of transport and imported from the same third country).

The same is valid for exports to Great Britain (England, Scotland and Wales), but COIs are not issued in Traces, but as signed pdf file.

USDA National Organic Program (NOP) published the final rule on Strengthening Organic Enforcement (SOE) on 19.01.2023 and come in to force on 19.03.2024. For organic imports to the US, NOP has expanded the functionality of its Organic INTEGRITY Database (INTEGRITY) by launching a new import certificate module. The Import Certificate provides traceability to the port of entry and ensures an auditable record trail. Starting 19.03.2024, this document will be required for all organic exports to US, including those certified to the NOP organic standard. Any request for TC or NOP import certificate must be submitted and issued before shipment of consignment.

Further, for certain products from certain countries there are additional requirements described in chapter 1).

Chapter 1, Documents needed to request a COI

For all requests:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Request form 24_054, please find it on our webpage, Request for Issuance of a Certificate of Inspection (COI) Sales invoice Delivery note (outgoing goods) Seal list (if applicable)
Additionally, for sales of purchased products, bought from a producer certified by bio.inspecta:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Invoice (incoming goods) Delivery note (incoming goods)
Additionally, for sales of purchased products, bought from a producer certified by another certification body:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Valid certificate – supplier listed in the data sheet/OSP Invoice (incoming goods) Delivery note (incoming goods) Domestic Transaction Certificate (issued by the certification body of the supplier)
Additionally, for exports to the EU, GB and Switzerland: depending on the country and product a minimum of 10% or 30% of all consignments for the following products (also valid for products originating from these countries, exported through an operator in another country to the EU): Current increased control	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information on sampling/ analysis is assessed. Refer to chapter 3. Time needed between ordering sampling and receipt of analysis results is at least 2 weeks. bio.inspecta informs you once analysis results are received.

<p>measures of the EU for import for certain products and countries (32_2402)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submit the request for COI 25_054 in time once information is available. • COIs shall accompany the goods, and shall be issued before the shipment leaves the country of origin or export (refer to administrative information below, about time needed to issue a COI).
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>For exports to the United States of America: For grain, oil seeds, and products of these (like sunflower meal) from one of the following countries: Armenia, Bulgaria, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Moldova, Romania, Russia, Turkey, or Ukraine, sampling by bio.inspecta has been ordered with document No. 25_053.</i> • <i>For exports to the United States of America: USDA organic soybean or soybean meal imported into the U.S. from Benin, Burkina Faso, Ghana, Nigeria, or Togo, certifiers must not issue time-based NOP import certificates (NOP-ICs) that cover multiple shipments. A separate NOP-IC must be issued for each shipment of soybean or soybean meal. Additionally at least one supply chain traceability SCT audit per quarter must cover an exported shipment.</i> <p><i>Please mind that APHIS requires fumigation at the border for certain commodities. This will lead to a declassification of the products. For certain commodities APHIS prohibits the import at all. This list changes very often. Therefore bio.inspecta recommends to clarify the current situation with the buyer in the USA.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information on sampling/analysis is assessed. Refer to chapter 3. Time needed between ordering sampling and receipt of analysis results is at least 2 weeks • Submit the request for COI 25_054 in time once the documents are available. •

Chapter 2, COI issuing procedure

<p>For all requests:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submit the request form 24_054 together with relevant documents. In order to ensure that the COI is issued before the consignment leaves the country, it may be issued based on draft transport papers (valid for COIs issued in Traces). • Submit original transport papers as soon as they are available, but within 10 days from the issuance of the COI and, in any case, before customs clearing in the EU or Switzerland (valid for COIs issued in Traces).
--------------------------	--

Chapter 3, Additional requirements for countries/ products where analysis results are required

The number of export consignments to be sampled is calculated for each concerned product of each concerned operator for the period between 01.01.25-31.12.25. For concerned export consignments, bio.inspecta must take a representative sample. Sampling explicitly is required to be done by the certification body (or by an independent third party surveyor subcontracted by the certification body respectively), not by the operator. The samples must be analysed and assessed prior to issuing the

requested COI (depending on the products on different unallowed substances). The sampling needs to be done at the place in the country where the last handling (e.g. packing of big bags, loading of bulk) takes place. It needs to be done during or immediately before loading, in order to eliminate the risk of contamination after sampling. The sample must be unmistakably linkable to the product loaded on the vehicle.

Please note that sampling is done according to Reg. (EU) 691/2013.

The analysis result will be sent to bio.inspecta with a copy to the customer. The invoice of the sampling/ analysing institute is received by the client.

How to request sampling and analysis:

Request sampling at bio.inspecta	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Order sampling at bio.inspecta with request form 25_053, please find it on our webpage, Request for Export Consignment Sampling (25_053EN) (please contact bio.inspecta to chose among our partner surveyors and laboratories).
If there are justified reasons, why sampling at the place of final handling is not possible, the following is required:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Justification why this is not feasible • Confirmation that the operator engages an independent third party surveyor (GAFTA member), to do additional sampling during final loading at port (aim is to have a sample available for analysis in case there would be any finding of residues during import) • The reports of the surveyor (sampling, inspection, photo) are submitted to bio.inspecta as soon as they are received (may be after issuing the COI)

Administrative information

All applications for COIs should arrive at international@bio-inspecta.ch.

On weekdays, COIs are issued

- the same day if complete application arrives prior 12.00am (CET)
- the next day if complete application arrives later than 12.00am (CET)
- no COIs are issued on Saturday and Sunday
- incomplete requests will be returned to sender with the request to complete

Sampling, transport of samples and analysis usually takes 10 to 14 days (depending on possible detection of substances, the laboratory’s procedure may take longer). Laboratories offer express services at extra charge.

Please provide your COI requests as timely as possible, in order to ensure that COIs are issued before the product leaves the country of origin or export, and to have sufficient time, if any clarifications are needed before issuing the COI.