Agricultural Marketing Service, USDA

§ 1207.514 Exemption for organic potatoes.

(a) A producer who operates under an approved National Organic Program (NOP) (7 CFR part 205) system plan; produces only products that are eligible to be labeled as 100 percent organic under the NOP, except as provided for in paragraph (b) of this section; and is not a split operation shall be exempt from the payment of assessments.

(b) To apply for an exemption under this section, the producer shall submit a request for exemption to the Board—on a form provided by the Board—at any time initially and annually thereafter on or before July 1 as long as the producer continues to be eligible for the exemption.

(c) The request shall include the following: The producer’s name and address, a copy of the organic farm or organic handling operation certificate provided by a USDA-accredited certifying agent as defined in section 2103 of the Organic Foods Production Act of 1990 (7 U.S.C. 6502), a signed certification that the applicant meets all of the requirements specified in paragraph (a) of this section for an assessment exemption, and such other information as may be required by the Board and with the approval of the Secretary.

(d) If the producer complies with the requirements of this section, the Board will grant the exemption and issue a Certificate of Exemption to the producer. For exemption requests received on or before August 15, 2005, the Board will have 60 days to approve the exemption request; after August 15, 2005, the Board will have 30 days to approve the exemption request. If the application is disapproved, the Board will notify the applicant of the reason(s) for disapproval within the same timeframe.
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(e) The producer shall provide a copy of the Certificate of Exemption to each handler to whom the producer sells potatoes. The handler shall maintain records showing the exempt producer’s name and address and the exemption number assigned by the Board.

(f) An importer who imports only products that are eligible to be labeled as 100 percent organic under the NOP (7 CFR part 205) and who is not a split operation shall be exempt from the payment of assessments. That importer may submit documentation to the Board and request an exemption from assessment on 100 percent organic potatoes, potato products, and seed potatoes—on a form provided by the Board—at any time initially and annually thereafter on or before July 1 as long as the importer continues to be eligible for the exemption. This documentation shall include the same information required of producers in paragraph (c) of this section. If the importer complies with the requirements of this section, the Board will grant the exemption and issue a Certificate of Exemption to the importer. The Board will also issue the importer a 9-digit alphanumeric Harmonized Tariff Schedule (HTS) classification valid for 1 year from the date of issue. This HTS classification should be entered by the importer on the Customs entry documentation. Any line item entry of 100 percent organic potatoes, potato products, and seed potatoes bearing this HTS classification assigned by the Board will not be subject to assessments.

(g) The exemption will apply immediately following the issuance of the Certificate of Exemption.

(h) Agricultural commodities produced and marketed under an organic system plan, as described in 7 CFR 205.201, but not sold, labeled, or represented as organic, shall not disqualify a producer from exemption under this section, except that producers who produce both organic and non-organic agricultural commodities as a result of split operations shall not qualify for exemption. Reasons for conventional sales include lack of demand for organic products, isolated use of antibiotics for humane purposes, chemical or pesticide use as the result of State or emergency spray programs, and crops from a buffer area as described in 7 CFR part 205, provided all other criteria are met.


§ 1207.515 Safeguards.

The Board may require reports by designated handlers and importers on the handling, importation, and disposition of exempted potatoes. Also, authorized employees of the Board or the Secretary, may inspect such books and records as are appropriate and necessary to verify the reports on such disposition.


RECORDS

§ 1207.532 Retention period for records.

Each handler and importer required to make reports pursuant to this subpart shall maintain and retain such records for at least 2 years beyond the end of the marketing year of their applicability:

(a) One copy of each report made to the Board; and

(b) Such records as are necessary to verify such reports.


§ 1207.533 Availability of records.

(a) Each handler and importer required to make reports pursuant to this subpart shall make available for inspection by authorized employees of the Board or the Secretary during regular business hours, such records as are appropriate and necessary to verify reports required under this subpart.

(b) Importers shall also maintain for 2 years records on the total quantities of potatoes imported and on the total quantities of potato products imported, and a record of each importation of potatoes, potato products, and seed potatoes including quantity, date, and port of entry, and shall make such records available for inspection by authorized employees of the Board or the Secretary during regular business hours.

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