

Materials for Organic Crop & Livestock Production

USDA's national organic regulations list inputs - fertilizer, pest control, etc. - that are allowed in organic production. With some exceptions, all natural (non-synthetic) inputs are allowed and synthetic products are prohibited. For organic production, always check that you are using a material for its reviewed purpose and following all restrictions.

How do I know if I can use a material on my organic farm?

1

Look up the material in a recognized input material list and follow all restrictions for using the material. There are a few different material lists to verify if a product is allowed for organic production.

2

Check with your organic certifier to ensure a material is allowed in the way you intend to use it. Double checking any new material you are planning to use with your certifier will ensure that you will remain in compliance with the organic regulations.

Material Lists

OMRI: Organic Materials Review Institute:
omri.org

WSDA: Washington State Department of Agriculture:
agr.wa.gov/departments/organic/input-material-registration

National List of Allowed and Prohibited Substances:
ams.usda.gov/rules-regulations/organic/national-list

Definitions

Non-synthetic (natural): A substance derived from a mineral, plant, or animal matter and does not undergo a synthetic process.

Synthetic: A substance formulated or manufactured by a chemical process or by a process that chemically changes a substance extracted from naturally occurring plant, animal, or mineral sources.

What materials can I use while I transition to organic?

For the transition leading up to organic certification, you can only use materials that are allowed in organic production. This includes fertilizers, pest and disease controls, seeds, seed treatments, livestock treatments, cleaning agents, and any other materials used on the farm.

Helpful Tips for Finding and Using Organic Materials

Input labels may use “organic” to refer to the product chemistry rather than its approval for use in organic agriculture. Look for the WSDA Approved for use in Organic Production seal or the OMRI logo on product labels.

Check names carefully. A one letter difference in a brand name may distinguish a compliant product from a noncompliant version.

Consider how the input is being used. Products may be approved for a specific use and prohibited under other circumstances.

Input materials may not disclose all the inactive ingredients on a label. 100% of the ingredients must be evaluated for compliance. If you cannot determine all the ingredients, don't use the input on your organic or transitional site.

Looking for a material to use for a specific control purpose on your operation?

NCAT ATTRA maintains a **Sustainable Pest and Weed Control Database** that lists control materials by specific pests, weeds, and diseases in organic management. This list may not be up to date per organic regulations - make sure to check all materials with a recognized input list and an organic certifier.

attra.ncat.org/biorationals