	10.06.10	Brief Information: Crop Production	Page 1 of 3 Information
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Introduction:

This document is intended to give interested persons or companies an overview of the OCCP standards on Organic Crop Production. The OCCP standards was adopted by the Philippine National Standards on Organic Agriculture and Processing in 2005 after undergoing a series of public consultations

Minimum Requirements:

1. Conversion Period

- Plant products can be certified organic when the full requirements of the standards have been met
- Length of conversion period is based on past use of land and ecological situation
 - Annual crops: 12 months before start of production cycle
 - Perennial crops: 18 months
 - Lands heavily treated with chemicals: 3 years
 - Virgin land: no conversion required

2. Choice of crops and varieties


- Seeds and plant materials shall be from certified organic production when available
- When certified organic seeds and planting materials are not available, chemically untreated conventional materials may be used
- When untreated conventional seeds and planting materials are not available, chemically treated seeds and planting materials maybe used for an established time limits and conditions
- The use of genetically engineered seeds, transgenic plants or planting materials are not allowed
- Planting materials or stocks derived from tissue culture can be used if its equivalent variety is not commercially available

3. Crop rotations and soil management practices

- For lowland rice cultivation, green manuring or rotation with legumes or other nitrogen fixing plants has to be applied at least once a year
- In intensive vegetable cultivation, there shall be at least one legume crop in rotation within three years
- In perennial crops, intercropping, cover crops or mulching must ensure that the soil is sufficiently covered throughout the year.

4. Fertilization Policy

- All synthetic fertilizers are prohibited
- All organic inputs should come from the farm

	10.06.10	Brief Information: Crop Production	Page 2 of 3 Information
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- If on farm materials are not available in sufficient amounts, materials from conventional farms may be used, but should not exceed 50% of the applied materials
- a maximum application of material containing 170 kg Nitrogen per hectare per year shall not be exceeded on a specific plot.
- Composting of manure is recommended to stabilize nutrients, prevent environmental degradation and prevent spread of pathogens
- Raw manure is a regulated material and must be composted unless it is applied in the following case
 - no less than 90 days prior to harvest of a crop for human consumption whose edible portion does not come in contact with the soil surface or soil particles
 - 120 days between application of raw materials and harvest for products likely to be eaten raw, (nitrate accumulators) leafy greens, or crops exposed to contact with soil such as root crops
- Only organic inputs listed Appendix 2.4 as allowed or restricted may used on the farm

5. Pest, disease and weed management

- The use of synthetic pesticides (herbicides, fungicides, insecticides, molluscicides, nematicides etc.) is prohibited.
- Products prepared at the farm from local plants, animals and microorganisms are allowed
- The use of genetically engineered organisms or products thereof is not permitted
- Only products for pest, disease and weed management listed in Appendix 2.5 as allowed or restricted may be used

6. Growth regulators

- All synthetic products like growth regulators and dyes (e.g. for cosmetic alterations of organic products) are prohibited

7. Pollution control

- Chemical contamination from outside and within the farm by wind drift, run-off and other means shall be minimized
- If there is a risk of contamination, buffer zone between conventionally and organically farmed fields must be kept


8. Soil and water conservation

- Burning organic matter shall be restricted to the absolute minimum (i.e. disease control)
- Soil erosion shall be prevented
- Excessive and improper use of water and the pollution of ground and surface water shall be prevented

9. Diversity in crop production

- The farm should have sufficient crop diversity in time and/or space

10. Labeling

	10.06.10	Brief Information: Crop Production	Page 3 of 3 Information
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- Only products that are produced according to these Standards may be labeled as “produce of organic agriculture” or similar

Records and Traceability:

A complete audit trail is needed to prevent unintentional or fraudulent mixing of products and to verify that the grower has a system to track organic product until it is sold

Farmer-producer must maintain updated documents of the following, containing key information to allow evaluation of compliance with standards

1. Farm History
 - information on date of last application of prohibited inputs and crops planted over the past 3 years
2. Farm Maps
 - clearly give the location, dimensions, boundaries, crops planted and the size of the land in terms of hectares
3. Farm Diary or Record of Farm activities
 - production practices such as dates and rates of application and operations such as field preparation, planting, irrigation, fertilization, manual labor, cultivation, harvesting, green manuring, cover cropping etc.
4. Farm Inputs Record
 - shows all off- or on-farm inputs used, source, brand, storage including official receipts for inputs purchased
5. Harvest Record
 - crops harvested, field identification, date of harvest and amount harvested
6. Sales record
 - date of sale, the crops sold (both organic and non-organic), amount sold, and the field identification
7. Other supporting documents- hauling receipts, bills of lading, etc.

These documents must be maintained for at least three years after the crops has been sold, and be available for inspection at all times.

Knowledge:

The farmer has to study and keep a copy (hard copy or electronic file) of the respective standards

The farmer needs to have adequate knowledge on organic farming rules and technologies

Note:

Please be aware that this is only a selection of the essential requirements of the standards and everyone is advised to get a copy of the standards and study all the requirements of the standards. A copy of the OCCP standards may be obtained from the OCCP website www.occp.phils.org while the Philippine National Standards may be obtained from the DA-BAFPS website