



OREGON TILTH RETAIL & RESTAURANT FAQs

Does a retailer who prepares and sells deli items have to be certified to label those items as organic?

Retail food establishments (retailers) do not need to be certified in order to sell organic agricultural products. However, they are responsible for verifying and maintaining the organic integrity of those products and cannot label the product as certified organic or use the USDA seal. The retailer also needs to comply with product composition requirements and labeling requirements under the regulations. Please see the Oregon Tilth labeling and Composition Guide.

If I buy certified organic coffee beans from a local certified coffee roaster, how can I label the bulk bins which I use to sell the coffee?

When displaying bulk, certified "100 percent organic" or "organic" food in self-service bins or creating other product displays you may post signs that provide the same information as provided on the original container or shipping documents. For example, your display, labeling, and display containers may use the USDA Organic seal and the certifying agent's mark, logo, or seal.

We understand that as a retailer we are exempt from the requirement of being certified, but that we still have to keep records, what sort of records should we maintain to demonstrate compliance with the regulations?

Records should include date of purchase, source, quantities, and certifying agent for organic products (Certificates). Records should also include documentation of methods used for prevention of commingling and contact with prohibited substances, and pest control methods. Records are very important if the organic status of a product sold by you is ever questioned. Maintenance of records may serve to lessen your liability by proving you have used due diligence to preserve organic integrity.



We purchase organic cheese from a small local producer who is exempt (less than \$5,000 sales) from certification. How can we label the cheese on our shelf tags?

If you buy product from a small-scale organic producer who is exempt from certification, you may identify this product as "organic." But, you may not identify this product as being "certified organic," and you may not display the seal, logo, or other identifying mark of a certifying agent; nor may you display the USDA Organic seal in conjunction with this product.

I have a restaurant and I buy a lot of certified organic ingredients. Can my menu identify these items as organic without being certified?

Yes, restaurants are considered retail food establishments and are excluded from certification but can identify products on their menus as organic without certification. They need to comply with prevention of contamination as well as labeling requirements.