



Organic Food Federation

Explanatory Note 304

These notes are intended to help applicants comply with Organic EC Regulation 2092/91. They are not exhaustive and are for explanation only. In cases of doubt the Regulation or the OFF should be consulted.

Sanitation In Premises used for Storage, Processing or Packing of Organic Products

All food production is governed by the Food Safety Act 1992 and its subsequent amendments, and the Food Hygiene (General) Regulations that MUST be observed in conjunction with the Organic Regulation EC 2092/91.

1. Cleaning and Sanitation Chemicals

- 1.1 The Organic Regulation allows the use of all cleaning agents providing they are approved for food use. Many agents may leave traces of chemical residue that must be removed by copious rinsing after use. It is important to use all cleaning agents in strict accordance with the maker's instructions. With organic production it is important to minimise the use of any chemicals (without compromising Food Safety). Over usage does not result in better cleaning, and only results in higher costs and greater risk of detectable residues in finished products.
- 1.2 All chemical cleaning agents used must be supplied with a COSHH (Control of Substances Hazardous to Health) Safety Document which should show the chemical make-up and give advice on the treatment necessary if the substance is accidentally swallowed, splashed into eyes or affects the skin.
- 1.3 All chemical-cleaning agents must be stored in a locked cupboard or cage and responsibility for the use of chemicals must be designated to a specific person (e.g. Supervisor, Hygiene Manager, etc.)

2. Cleaning Procedures

- 2.1 Even the simplest of production operations should have a written cleaning procedure so that the frequency and method of cleaning and the chemical usage is specified. It is also recommended that a simple checklist be drawn up in order to ensure that everything that has to be done is done. It is the supervisor or line manager's responsibility to ensure that cleaning operations are performed correctly.
- 2.2 In the case of a one person or very small business, the cleaning procedure can be a one-page summary posted in a position of visibility in the production area, which can be referred to by the personnel concerned or any visiting inspector.
- 2.3 If the supplier of cleaning chemicals is contracted to write the sanitation procedure (as is often the case for larger companies), they MUST be informed that organic production is taking place and that the requirements of Organic Regulation EC 2092/91 MUST be observed.

3. Cleaning Frequency

- 3.1 Cleaning frequency depends on the ease at which micro-organisms can grow, the nature of the product (i.e. amounts of crumb, stickiness, oiliness, and amounts of debris thrown off during processing), and the time which lapses during which the line is static.
- 3.2 As a rule, cleaning should always take place before serious accumulations of product material form on machinery, work surfaces and floors, or if there are significant breaks in production, (e.g. long breakdowns, meal breaks, shift changes etc).

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- 3.3 With high risk products such as meats, fish, salad products, eggs and dairy products the lines must be thoroughly cleaned at least twice per day or when there is a change of product (whichever is the more frequent).
- 3.4 With low risk products all machinery, utensils and work surfaces must be thoroughly cleaned at least once per day and when it is necessary to change from non-organic to organic production.
- 3.5 Where appropriate, dry cleaning should be carried out using brushes, scrapers and vacuum cleaning equipment. Compressed air **MUST NOT** be used for safety reasons.

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