This information sheet gives up to date information on the operating changes due to Brexit.

**Deal or No Deal**

We are all waiting for news of a trade deal with the European Union. Even if there is a deal, we do not have any details of what will be covered or if approvals will be for a limited period of time.

No deal at the end of the transition period is still a possibility. In this case the only way UK organic operators could gain access to the EU market is by individual approval of the Federation by the European Commission

As it stands from 1st January 2021 we will no longer be able to sell organic goods into the EU unless the following happens:

* Trade Deal - Acceptance of UK organic standards as part of a Free Trade Agreement (the UK and the EU agree equivalence);
* The Federation is approved under EC Reg 1235 which lists approved third countries. (The Federation gets approval by the EU to certify GB (English, Scottish, Welsh) goods for export to the EU.)

The Federation has applied to the EU for recognition as an approved certification body and to be added to EC Reg 1235. This will allow organic goods we certify to be exported into Europe even in the event of a no trade deal.

**Exporting to the EU**

Goods leaving the UK for EU will require a Certificate of Inspection (COI) which will need to be raised on the TRACES NT system and approved by ourselves

Operators who wish to export to the EU will need to have “exporter” added to their scope of certification.

**Importing into the UK**

Operators who wish to import from the EU from 1st Jan 2021 will need to be registered with us as importers.

TRACES NT will no longer be used for imports into the UK.

On 1 January 2021, we will use a paper based system to control all imports, which is a temporary solution until an electronic system can be developed in a few years’ time.

This paper based system is still being finalised but may be similar to the importation system used up to 2017 prior to TRACES NT.

All imports must be accompanied by a COI.

Control Bodies in the third country will have to endorse the certificates before the consignment leaves.

Defra organics team is revising the documentation for the import system and will have the COI, step by step guidance, and FAQs which will be available in the next month **but it should not be used until 1 January 2021**.

Organics did not form part of the Border Operating Model (BOM) because of the sensitivity around the negotiations. We hope to include more details on importing/exporting in the next couple of months.

**Northern Ireland**

For the purposes of organic trade of goods, Northern Ireland will be considered as part of Europe.

**Goods from Northern Ireland to the UK and EU**

No COIs will be required for exportation of goods

**Goods from UK to Northern Ireland**

A COI will be required when exporting to NI

**New EU Organics Regulation 2018/848**

The new EU Organics Regulation 2018/848 was due to come into force in January 2021. It has now been delayed by a year until January 2022 and makes it easier in terms of Northern Ireland enforcement and what regulations they apply.

Great Britain will retain current organic regulations 834/2007, 889/2008 and 1235/2008. Northern Ireland will operate, in essence, as part of the EU and will use EU organic regulations.

This means GB and Northern Ireland will continue operating in a similar manner under the current regulations and will not be diverging immediately.

**Sector letter to UK Chief Negotiator, Lord Frost**

A letter from more than 30 organisations (including the Federation) representing the organic food and drink sector expressing strong concern about the future of trade and certification of organic products between the UK and the EU, has been written to Chief UK Negotiator, Lord Frost and copied to the Rt Hon Michael Gove MP.

Extracts include:

… We believe that securing mutual recognition of the UK and EU organic regulations in the form of an equivalence agreement will be in the best interests of the closely integrated UK and European agri-food and drink industry. The UK’s organic regulation already meets all the requirements of the current EU organic regulation which should make negotiations in this area straightforward.

… Unless equivalence is secured as part of the negotiations, it would bring significant practical and financial problems for a dynamic, fast-growing and highly prized part of the British food scene. Manufacturers in Northern Ireland are likely to lose access to some essential sources of organic ingredients or products produced in Great Britain in favour of products from EU member states which will be able to be imported without additional administration, or certification requirements.

**Labelling**

Changes will need to be made to labels both for the home and foreign markets. It is a possibility that our code GB-ORG-04 might have to be removed along with the use of the EU leaf logo. At this point we do not know what these changes will be as they depend on the trade deal and equivalency agreements.

We have asked Defra if the same code might be used for both markets and are awaiting an answer.

Organic goods produced in Northern Ireland may use the EU organic logo. The EU has already authorised all control bodies as equivalent when operating in Northern Ireland.

You can continue to use the Federation’s logo in the UK.

If the UK does not reach an equivalency deal with the EU, you cannot ship organic food from GB to Northern Ireland or the EU and label it as organic. You can still export organic products using non-organic labelling if it meets all other marketing standards and you obscure any organic labelling.

In GB, you must change the statement of agriculture to ‘UK agriculture’ or ‘UK and non-UK agriculture’.

**UK Organic Logo**

We have asked if a UK organic logo is planned and have been informed that there are no plans for this to date.

**What’s happening**

We are working closely with Defra, UK Organic Certifiers Group (UKOCG), The European Organic Certifiers Council (EOCC)

Defra are making agreements with other countries for approval and we are awaiting a list of the countries that we have agreements with.