



INTERNATIONAL ORGANIC ACCREDITATION SERVICE

A non-profit organisation
40, 1st Ave West, Suite 104, Dickinson,
N.D. 58601, USA
Tel: +1 701 483 5504 Fax: +1 701 483 5508
E Mail: info@ioas.org
Web: www.ioas.org

IFOAM Accreditation Programme

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Overall judgments by inspectors

Criterion 6.5.5 of the IFOAM Criteria 2005 states that:

'Inspectors shall be able to make recommendations regarding non-conformities but shall not be required to make an overall judgment of whether the operator should be certified'

An explanatory note adds that:

'The criterion prohibits requiring an inspector to make an overall judgment of whether the unit should be certified or not. The overall judgment is a function of certification and not of inspection and would contravene criterion 1.3.10 if it was required of the inspector. The criterion does not prohibit the inspectors from providing an overall recommendation but does prohibit the certification body from requiring this of them.'

The IOAS have come upon cases where inspection forms conclude with tick box options to 'recommend' or 'not recommend' certification of the operator.

The IOAS have concluded that such a system may only be acceptable under this criterion if a third option is also included such that the inspector can opt to click a 'not willing to recommend or not recommend' box.

The same requirement would apply to any similar systems that appear to demand a 'yes' or 'no' recommendation.

Inspection forms or inspector manuals must make clear the three options. Where they do not, IOAS will assume that a 'yes' or 'no' recommendation is required and this will be considered non-compliant with IFOAM Norms.

Jan Deane
Programme Manager