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NUTRILITE AND ORGANIC FARMING



1. What is organic farming?

Organic or “ecological” farming utilizes holistic agricultural management practices to restore, maintain, and enhance ecological harmony, based on the belief that there is symbiotic relationship between the farm, the environment and the community. Organic farms promote biodiversity, biological cycles and soil biological activity and do not utilize synthetic herbicides, fertilizers or pesticides.

2. What are some characteristics of organic farming practices?

There are several compelling principles that characterize organic farming, including biodiversity, sustainability, integration, natural plant nutrition, natural pest management, and integrity. Organic farming is engaged in balanced, biologically intensive farming, emphasizing management, environmental interrelationships (such as those between natural enemies and pests) and processes to build soil health and plant nutrition.

3. What is biodiversity?

Biodiversity is the variety of life forms, their genetic diversity and the ecological roles they perform. Biodiversity is a principle of sustainable agriculture and an important indicator of a healthy organic farm. It plays a very important role in pest management. Biodiversity is enhanced by diverse agricultural systems and native vegetation that support strong populations of predators and parasitoids to suppress pest populations at or below economic thresholds.

4. What specific organic farming practices help maintain biodiversity?

Organic producers support biodiversity in their operations in several ways. These techniques include: crop rotation; use of cover crops and mulching; intercropping and companion planting; minimizing soil disturbance to encourage earthworm and soil organism diversity; limiting the use of botanicals and other natural, but broad-spectrum pesticides; introducing and maintaining beneficial organisms in the form of soil or compost inoculants, such as beneficial insects and mites, or as pollinators; establishing habitats for beneficial insects and wildlife; sequencing of crops to suppress insect pests, diseases and weeds.

5. Why does Nutrilite utilize organic farming practices?

Nutrilite is known for its longstanding commitment to promote the healthy use of soil, water and air as to minimize all forms of pollution that may result from agricultural practices. Our goal is to enhance and sustain rather than reduce and simplify biological relationships and interactions. At Nutrilite our commitment is to the long term – we believe agricultural practices have an impact not only on soil health, but also on the community and the environment.

6. Are Nutrilite products 100% certified organic?

No. Although crops grown on Nutrilite farms are certified organic, it often takes a long time to obtain full certification of a product or process. Additionally, there are manufacturing processes used that are not certified organic, therefore the products do not meet the regulatory requirements for certified organic. Consequently, the end product cannot be certified organic.

7. Can products made with non-organic materials or ingredients be labeled as “organic”?

According to the Organic Foods Production Act and the National Organic Program of the USDA “products labeled ‘organic’ must consist of at least 95 percent organically produced ingredients (excluding water and salt). Any remaining product ingredients must consist of nonagricultural substances approved on the National List or non-organically produced agricultural products that are not commercially available in organic form. Products labeled as ‘100 percent organic’ must contain (excluding water and salt) only organically produced ingredients.”¹

8. What techniques are used in Nutrilite’s farms to protect the crop from pests and diseases?

Nutrilite’s organic farming techniques meet or exceed the organic certification standards and guarantee that every Nutrilite product is as close to nature as possible. Nutrilite utilizes environmentally and economically sustainable agricultural production systems. A sound plant nutrition management on its own eliminates 80 % of pests and diseases. Rather than using allowed bio-pesticides on a routine basis, we optimize the use of crop manipulation and diversity, organic manuring, natural predators and parasitoids to suppress or control potential insect and mite infestations, weeds and disease.

9. How do Nutrilite’s organic farming practices contribute to good “soil health”?

A healthy soil is the heart and soul of organic farming! Nutrilite certified organic farms maintain soil health by proper management of the biological, chemical and physical properties of the soil. Our scientists continually strive to develop and maintain optimal balances and ratios of nutrients and microorganisms, to increase soil biological activity and maintain long term soil fertility. This is accomplished by use of green manure crops, cover crops, crop rotation, intercropping, composting, earthworm and water management.

10. What are some differences between “organic” and ‘conventional” farming practices?

Conventional agriculture utilizes synthetic herbicides and/or pesticides, contributing significantly to many environmental problems. Problems include soil erosion, groundwater contamination, pesticide residues and loss of biotic diversity, among others. Use of conventional fertilizers, in soluble mineral form (salts), is incompatible in the long run with the soil’s life maintenance. Conventional agriculture focuses on the plant – organic agriculture focus on the soil...The plant is the result! Organic agricultural techniques uses nutrients in the protein (organic) form. It aims to reduce the amount of toxic chemicals in the food supply, creating long term solutions to problems such as polluted water, soil erosion and unhealthy soils.

11. Why does Nutrilite utilize organic farming techniques?

Nutrilite’s position on organic certification, consistent with corporate values, is that there is significant benefit from using the holistic practices to restore, maintain, and enhance ecological harmony, based on the belief that there is symbiotic relationship between the farm, the environment and the community.

12. What are some benefits of organic farming?

Organic farming is an Earth-friendly approach which:

- Prohibits:** the use of synthetic fertilizers, toxic chemicals and pesticides, avoiding runoff of polluting chemicals for good ground water and soil health;
- Prevents:** topsoil erosion and improves soil fertility and water quality by utilizing holistic agricultural techniques;
- Protects:** the environment, its habitats and promotes species diversity and a sustainable future for our planet.

The concept of organic farming looks at the human element – It’s good for the planet, for the economy and for society.
Organic farming is: Economical – Ecological – Social
(Feasible – Sustainable – Just)

13. Is it more expensive to utilize organic farming practices than "conventional" farming practices?

Organic produce may seem to cost more at the checkout stand, but in reality, conventional foods are more expensive because of the environmental costs to society that are associated with the use of pesticides and chemical fertilizers. These include increased costs to regulate pesticide use, and costs for disposal and clean up of hazardous waste generated by pesticide manufacturing. After the first years of investment and management, when the self-supporting capacity has been created in soil and environment, the costs are actually lower than conventional.

14. What are the requirements to obtain organic certification?

Certified organic is documented status granted by accredited regulatory bodies indicated that specific appropriate practices with respect to 1) crops, 2) processes, or 3) products defined by regulation have been audited and are in compliance. Farms that are certified organic have been inspected by an independent third party agency to verify organic authenticity to the consumer. Once certified, organic growers must have annual farm inspections, including periodic soil and water analysis. They must maintain detailed records of their farming practices in order to verify organic authenticity, including all soil inputs and use of ecologically friendly methods to improve the soil and control pests. The social aspects of the life on the farms are also verified.

15. Are all of the farms where Nutrilite products are grown certified organic?

Nutrilite operates farms in North and South America, all of which have been certified organic. Additionally, Nutrilite brand is proud to own and operate the largest organic herb farm in the United States, Trout Lake farm, located outside Cascade Mountains.

16. How many certified organic farms does Nutrilite currently operate?

Nutrilite operates four certified organic farms:
Lakeview, San Jacinto Valley, California: Purchased in 1954, Nutrilite's original farm (648 acres) and processing plant produces some of the world's finest alfalfa, broccoli, carrot, parsley and spinach crops.
El Petacal, Jalisco, Mexico: Purchased in 1993 covers 1,353 acres and includes test plots for 25 different crops, including herb test plots. Primary crops include watercress, spinach and citrus.
Trout Lake, Washington State: Purchased on 1998, this 1,600-acre farm is the largest organic herb farm in North America. Located in the foothills of the Cascade mountain range, Trout Lake offers an ideal location for growing Echinacea, St. John's Wort, Chamomile and a host of other herbs for Nutrilite formulations.
Ubajara, Ceará, Brazil - In 1998, Nutrilite purchased 4,100 acres of prime Brazilian farmland to grow pineapple, coconut, passion fruit and acerola cherries. The actual acreage and types of crops depend on the demands from product and vary year to year.

17. Which organizations certify Nutrilite farms?

Nutrilite farms are certified on a yearly basis by state organizations or by independent and/or non-profit organizations accredited by the USDA as an organic certifier under the National Organic Program. Trout Lake Farm is the largest organic herb farm in the United States and is certified organic by the Washington State Department of Agriculture. Lakeview farm is certified by the California Certified Organic Farmers (CCOF), El Petacal in Mexico is certified by Oregon Tilth, Inc. Nutrilite's farm in Brazil is certified by the Brazilian Biodynamics Institute IBD (Instituto Biodinâmico).

18. Is there an international standard for organic certification?

The International Federation of Organic Agricultural Movements (IFOAM), an impartial non-governmental organization, is the world representative of all organic movements. It's objective is establish a standard set of rules valid for the international community. IFOAM-accredited certifiers must adhere to the standards set by IFOAM. More recently the economic blocks, USA, European Community and Japan have set their own rules and standards for organic certification, making it necessary for the certifiers in each country to go through specific accreditation programs, such as the USDA, JAS (Japan) and DAP (Europe).

19. Are American organizations that certify organic farms in the US required to be IFOAM members?

No. Organic certifying organizations in the United States are not required to be IFOAM members.

20. Are all the organizations that certify Nutrilite's farms as organic IFOAM members?

No. The Washington State Department of Agriculture, the California Certified Organic Farmers (CCOF) and IBD (Brazil) are accredited by IFOAM. Oregon Tilth, Inc. is not an IFOAM member.

21. What are Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs) and genetically modified microorganisms (GMMs)?

Genetically modified organisms (GMOs) and genetically modified microorganisms (GMMs) are organisms in which the DNA, that is the genetic material, has been altered in a way that does not occur naturally by natural recombination or mating.

22. Do Nutrilite farms utilize GMOs or GMMs?

Nutrilite has a long tradition of using organic farm practices on its farms. This policy includes using only traditional farming methods and natural methods to control insects and prevent crop disease, and has been extended to preclude the growing of GMO and GMM plants on any Nutrilite farming operation. It reflects Nutrilite's commitment to providing customers with products that address all of their concerns.

23. Does Nutrilite grow all the plant materials found in Nutrilite products?

No. Besides Nutrilite-grown materials, our products may also contain certain other ingredients which, by necessity, are purchased from suppliers outside of the direct control of the company.

24. How does Nutrilite assure the quality of materials provided by outside growers?

Before an independent grower is ever considered, they must first meet the stringent standards of Nutrilite's Supplier Certification Program. The Supplier Certification Program criteria require that the supplier work with Nutrilite to move toward organic certification or at least sustainable agricultural if organic certification is technically infeasible due to crop or environmental requirements.

25. Does Nutrilite test botanicals received from outside suppliers?

Yes. Nutrilite routinely tests for pesticides during development on those botanicals not sourced from our farms.

26. Does Nutrilite test botanicals grown on Nutrilite farms?

No. Nutrilite does not routinely test the certified organically grown botanicals from our farms since all Nutrilite farms meet the criteria for organic certification.

27. Do Nutrilite ingredients purchased from outside suppliers contain GMOs?

Nutrilite has instituted a program of identifying suppliers that have an "identity-preservation" system in place, which carefully isolates traditional, non-GMO strains from seed to finished raw material. This is especially true for ingredients derived from commodity crops, such as soybeans and corn. We demand detailed documentation regarding sourcing and processing of ingredients. Our suppliers must indicate their level of certainty about the GMO status of their ingredients and botanicals, which must be categorized as Identity-Preserved (IP), or better. This effort has allowed our Nutrition and Wellness products to be promoted as being non-GMO, a feat that we are proud of.

28. Is there a minimum tolerance of GMO contamination accepted for non-GMO crops?

There is no minimum tolerance established in the present National Organic Standards for GMO contamination.

29. Are Nutrilite products 100% GMO-free?

Even though we use non-GMO sources of ingredients, it is impossible to guarantee a 100% traditional genetic source of these crops. We cannot preclude the possibility of some small fraction of GMO varieties due to pollen drift, cross-contamination by wildlife or residue from equipment or in transportation vehicles; consequently, trace levels of GMOs (below 1%) may still be present

30. What is pollen drift?

Pollen can be carried from one crop to another by a variety of means: by birds, wind or animals that can transport it appreciable distances. Additionally, pollen drift can also occur from GMO weeds that pollinate a non-GMO varieties.

31. What are some sources of genetic contamination?

Nutrilité farming practices, such as keeping all our production and farming equipment strictly for non-GMO grains, minimize contamination sources. Sources of contamination are more commonly found in farms utilizing both non-GMO and GMOs seeds. Contamination may occur: during the breeding of new varieties (pollen drift and/or seed mixture), seed production, commercial production, and grain marketing.

32. How does Nutrilite minimize or prevent genetic contamination of their fields?

Nutrilité is proud of the fact our farms are all certified organic. We take a proactive stand in assuring the quality of our botanicals, minimizing the potential for genetic drift. The crop lines we currently grow on our farms for processing have no GMO history. We take full advantage of natural barriers and use crop manipulation techniques, such as staggering plantings that are off cycle with neighboring farms or planting up wind from neighbors, whenever possible, so as to limit possibilities of cross contamination. Additionally we cultivate good working relationships with neighboring farms and closely monitor whether or not they are growing GMO crops.

33. Do products containing trace-levels of GMOs considered to be non-GMO?

The European Union (EU) has recognized this eventuality and permits an ingredient with up to 1% “adventitious” GMO contamination to still be considered non-GMO (1% complies with current regulations as of Feb 14, 2003). This is not the same as GMO-free, which allows no residual GMO, but it does not mandate that the ingredient be labeled as being derived from GMOs.

34. What is a “Naturally Derived” product?

A substance that originates from a natural source. A naturally derived ingredient can be artificial or synthetic.

35. Are Nutrilite products 100% natural?

No. Synthetic nutrients are used for several reasons, including better assimilation in the body or formulation advantages. This is consistent with the Nutrilite stance of “The Best of Science, The Best of Nature.” Nutrilite will, however, use or find natural alternatives to synthetic sources of organic materials whenever feasible. Nutrilite supplements have no artificial colors, flavors or preservatives added.

36. Does Nutrilite test incoming raw materials for residues of herbicides and pesticides?

Nutrilité conducts thorough microbiological and quality analysis on every lot number of raw material received.

ⁱ <http://www.ams.usda.gov/nop/FactSheets/FactSheetsHome.html>