



SEACASE Workshop Tavira January 2010 – S.7: Certification “New EU organic aquaculture rules”

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http://ec.europa.eu/fisheries/index_en.htm

Plan of presentation

1. Background - How the rules came about
2. New basic Regulation of 2007
3. Detailed rules agreed in August 2009
 - Commission Regulation 710/2009

1. Background - from Soil to Water

- Products of fishing not in scope of organic but aquaculture and seaweed collection are. Meanwhile big focus on sustainability labelling (eco-labelling!) for fishing and aquaculture
- Agriculture's primary organic principle is focused on 'soil' (ecosystem - life, fertility, stability, biodiversity, combat compaction & erosion, provide nourishment) – soil = solid/semi solid medium
- Aquatic medium not easily comparable with soil. Fish & shellfish grow in the water and not in bed of sea/freshwater environment. Seaweed generally attach to rocks or other solid substrate via holdfasts.
- Points to need for flexibility for organic aquaculture & seaweed while at the same time search for harmonisation

Background...

- Former EU rules did not cover aquaculture (Council Regulation 2092/91)
- Draft new rules adopted by Commission in December 2005 and sent to Council for decision
- Details of overarching organic rules including aquaculture developed in 2006 (enthusiastic Austrian and Finnish Presidencies of Council)
- Council Regulation 834/2007 agreed in June 2007
- For aquaculture national rules or private standards apply until 1.7.2010

Background...

- Organic is a process rather than an end-product certification and is the label most widely recognised by consumers
- An action item from the original Sustainable Aquaculture Strategy Communication 2002 (COM(2002) 511f) => establish common definition of organic aquaculture criteria with specific norms and criteria
- Also covered by European Action Plan – organic food 2004
- Close co-operation between DG Agriculture & Rural Dev. + DG Maritime Affairs and Fisheries -> results

2. New basic Regulation of 2007 - Objectives and principles

- Objectives – sustainable management system for aquaculture respecting nature producing products (fish and shellfish) of high quality responding to consumers' demands
- Involving appropriate design and management, restricting use of external inputs, strict limit on chemical inputs
- Producing food from organic ingredients and restricting additives

New basic Regulation - General Production rules

- The entire holding to be managed in compliance with the requirements applicable to organic production.
- However, in accordance with specific conditions a holding may be split up into clearly separated aquaculture production sites - not all managed under organic production. (R710/09 - Separation left to Member States)
- The same species may be involved, provided that there is adequate separation between the production sites

Aquaculture production rules (R.834/07)

- Organic aquaculture to be based on the rearing of young stock originating from organic broodstock and organic holdings
- When not available, non-organically produced animals may be brought onto a holding under specific conditions

Husbandry practices (R.834/07)

- Farmers to have knowledge and skills as regards the health and the welfare needs of the animals;
- Husbandry practices to ensure that developmental, physiological and behavioural needs of animals are met and minimise negative environmental impact from the holding, including the escape of farmed stock;
- Organic animals to be kept separate from other aquaculture animals;
- Transport to ensure that the welfare of animals is maintained;
- Suffering of the animals including at slaughter to be kept to a minimum;

Breeding (R.834/07)

- Artificial induction of polyploidy, artificial hybridisation, cloning and production of monosex strains, except by hand sorting, not to be used (R 710/09 – no hormones)
- The appropriate strains compatible with the objectives and principles of organic production to be chosen
- species-specific conditions to be established

Feeds for fish and crustaceans

- feeds to meet the animal's nutritional requirements at the various stages of its development;
- plant fraction of feed to originate from organic production and ingredients from fisheries to originate from sustainable fisheries;
- non-organic feed materials from plants origin, feed materials from animal and mineral origin, feed additives and certain other products to be used only if they have been authorised for use in organic production under the Regulation;
- growth promoters and synthetic amino-acids shall not be used;

Bivalve molluscs

- To receive all their nutritional requirements from nature except in the case of juveniles reared in hatcheries and nurseries
- To be grown in waters which meet the criteria for Class A or Class B areas as defined in in Community hygiene rules
- The growing areas to be of high ecological quality as defined by EU Water Legislation (Water Framework Directive)

Disease Prevention

- To be based on keeping the animals in optimal conditions by appropriate siting, optimal design of the holdings, the application of good husbandry and management practices
- Disease to be treated immediately to avoid suffering to the animal;
- Chemically synthesised allopathic veterinary medicinal products, including antibiotics, may be used where necessary but within limits specified in detailed rules (Section 7 of Commission Regulation 710/2009 – max x2/year; parasite treatments max x2/year)

3. Detailed rules - Commission Regulation 710/2009

- Provisions for site location and sustainable management including environmental assessment and **sustainable management plan** (new Articles 6b + 25b)
- Provisions for production of organic and non-organic in the same holding
- Use of locally grown species

Detailed rules.....

- The new Regulation 710/2009 sets out a common standard for various types of fish and shellfish aquaculture following one year of discussion with Member States and following extensive discussions with a representative group of experts in previous year.
- This is a balance between existing national rules and private standards
- Free movement in the 27 Member States assured – market of 500 million people – from 1 July 2010