

Statutory Organic Food Crop Regulations

	European Union (EU) regulations	US regulations	Best organic practice
Organic Crop Production			
1. Are organic chemicals like pesticides and fertilisers allowed?	Yes. Organic-approved pesticides and substances are allowed ¹³ .	Yes. Approved biological, botanical or mineral inputs are allowed ¹⁴ .	Yes. But a defined list shall contain only fully and effectively safety-tested organic substances.
2. Are organic crops grown without synthetic chemicals?	No. Synthetic substances are allowed under exceptional conditions, such as when organic inputs are not available, do not exist or may cause additional harm to the environment. ¹⁵	No. Twenty-five synthetic chemical substances are approved for crop pest control while ensuring that they do not contribute to the contamination of crops, soil or water. ¹⁶	Yes. Synthetic substances should not be permitted in organic crop production.
3. Are there effective land management measures in place to stop contamination of organic farms?	Partially. A minimum period of three years of organic production is required, with buffer zones that are confirmed by annual inspection and testing regime. ¹⁷	Yes. Soil must be free of prohibited substances for three years prior to harvesting the crop, with detailed buffer zones and land management requirements in place. ¹⁸	Yes. A three-to-five-year organic management period is necessary, depending on groundwater run-offs, with boundaries, buffer zones and run-off directions defined.
4. Are organic-approved substances effectively safety tested?	No. The EU is reviewing plant protection active substances, although EU legislation does not assess the integrated or cumulative effects of different chemicals, nor does it take into account different routes of exposure.	Yes. The USA has a robust pesticide risk assessment and monitoring programme, which evaluates scientific data on pesticides to ensure they will not harm humans or the environment, providing guidance on the risk assessment of co-occurrence to multiple pesticides with similar mechanisms of action. ¹⁹	Yes. It is essential that a complete and thorough safety assessment is performed on all natural substances applied to organic crop. Safety testing must test the effects of exposure, including cumulative, to multiple and different exposure routes in real-life scenarios.
5. Is pre- or post-harvest processing of organic crops allowed?	Yes. Pest and disease control inputs, as well as 'occasionally amending fertility' inputs, are allowed when alternative methods fail, although all inputs are strictly controlled and verifiable at the annual inspection. ²⁰	Yes. Whilst the list is limited, a clearly defined list of pest, weed and disease management practices allows their use only when an organic method has proved insufficient to prevent or control the pest. ¹⁴	Yes. Organic and fully safety-tested substances may be used for pest, weed and disease management, but only when physical and natural methods have failed.
6. Are GMO (genetically modified organism) crops allowed?	No. Regulations ban the use of GMOs and products produced from or by GMOs. ²¹	No. Regulations ban the use of GMOs and products produced from or by GMOs. ²²	No. No GMO inputs are allowed at any stage of organic crop production.

13. Official Journal of the European Union (2007), Council Regulation (EC) No 834/2007, Article

16. <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2007:189:0001:0023:EN:PDF>

14. US Government Publishing Office, Electronic Code of Federal Regulations, National List of Allowed and Prohibited Substances, Title 7: Agriculture, Part 205: National Organic Program,

§205.206. <https://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/retrieveECFR?gp=&SID=a5b155ba6da8c49616dcd44de509f65d&mc=true&n=pt7.3.205&r=PART&ty=HTML>

15. Official Journal of the European Union (2007), Council Regulation (EC) No 834/2007, Article

4. <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2007:189:0001:0023:EN:PDF>

16. US Government Publishing Office, *Electronic Code of Federal Regulations, National List of Allowed and Prohibited Substances, Title 7: Agriculture, Part 205: National Organic Program*, §205.601. <https://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/retrieveECFR?gp=&SID=a5b155ba6da8c49616dcd44de509f65d&mc=true&n=pt7.3.205&r=PART&ty=HTML>
17. *Official Journal of the European Union* (2007), Council Regulation (EC) No 834/2007, Article 12. <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2007:189:0001:0023:EN:PDF>
18. US Government Publishing Office, *Electronic Code of Federal Regulations, National List of Allowed and Prohibited Substances, Title 7: Agriculture, Part 205: National Organic Program*, §205.202. <https://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/retrieveECFR?gp=&SID=a5b155ba6da8c49616dcd44de509f65d&mc=true&n=pt7.3.205&r=PART&ty=HTML>
19. United States Environmental Protection Agency, Office of Pesticide Programs (2002), *Guidance on Cumulative Risk Assessment of Pesticide Chemicals That Have a Common Mechanism of Toxicity*. https://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2015-07/documents/guidance_on_common_mechanism.pdf
20. US Government Publishing Office, *Electronic Code of Federal Regulations, National List of Allowed and Prohibited Substances, Title 7: Agriculture, Part 205: National Organic Program*, §1.1. <https://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/retrieveECFR?gp=&SID=a5b155ba6da8c49616dcd44de509f65d&mc=true&n=pt7.3.205&r=PART&ty=HTML>
21. *Official Journal of the European Union* (2007), Council Regulation (EC) No 834/2007, Article 9. <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2007:189:0001:0023:EN:PDF>
22. US Government Publishing Office, *Electronic Code of Federal Regulations, National List of Allowed and Prohibited Substances, Title 7: Agriculture, Part 205: National Organic Program*, §205.604. <https://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/retrieveECFR?gp=&SID=a5b155ba6da8c49616dcd44de509f65d&mc=true&n=pt7.3.205&r=PART&ty=HTML>