

# **ROK-EU Organic Equivalence Arrangement**

## **Questions and Answers**

### **1. Korea has signed an “equivalence arrangement” with the EU. What does this mean?**

- This means that as long as the terms of arrangement are met, Korean and EU organic processed products certified by either country’s law may be sold as organic in both countries.

In other words, organic processed products certified by certifying agencies in accordance with 「The Act on Promotion of Environment-Friendly Agriculture and Fisheries, and Management and Support of Organic Foods」 or 「EU Organic Regulations」 can be exported(sold) as organic without further certification by destination country.

### **2. When does this equivalence arrangement take effect?**

- The equivalency arrangement becomes effective on February 1, 2015.

### **3. Which products can be traded under the arrangement?**

- The scope of the arrangement covers products which are certified to either country’s organic regulations and contain at least 95%

organic ingredients.

- The scope of processed foods is defined by importing country.

☆ Korean Food Code definition of “Processed food” refers to a food manufactured, processed, and packaged by adding food or food additives to food raw materials (agricultural, forestry, livestock, or marine products), transforming food raw materials (such as grinding or cutting) till their original forms cannot be recognized, or mixing such transformed ones or adding food or food additives to such mixture. However, where, without the use of food additives or other materials, the agricultural, forestry, livestock, or marine products are simply cut, peeled, salted, ripened, or heated (except the cases where heating is performed for sterilization or heating causes significant changes to those products) till their original forms can be recognized or where sanitary risks from treatment processes are not expected and food raw materials are simply treated so as to allow organoleptic identification of food quality, such food products are excluded from the definition of the processed food.

○ Also, the products should have their final processing within Korea or EU but raw materials produced in third countries can be allowed.

○ This time of arrangement only covers organic processed agricultural and livestock products and does not include seafood-based organic processed products.

**4. What are the requirements for exporting certified Korean products to EU in accordance with the arrangement?**

- The organic products are only limited to the products that are completed final processing within Korea.
- Regarding exported products to the EU, residue test and subsequent regulatory actions on prohibited materials such as prohibited pesticides and GMO are subject to EU regulations.

**5. What are the requirements for exporting certified EU products to ROK in accordance with the arrangement?**

- The organic products are only limited to the products that are completed final processing within EU.
- Regarding exported products to ROK, residue test and subsequent regulatory actions on prohibited materials such as prohibited pesticides and GMO are subject to Korean regulations.

**6. Can I export organic products with a counterpart's organic seal under the arrangement?**

- Exporting products under the arrangement can be exported with the use of either or both country's logo.

Korean Organic Food Logo	EU Organic Logo
	

- Exported products with the organic labeling should be subject to organic labeling regulations of the importing country.

☆ Organic labeling regulations : ROK || EU

**7. What happens if an organic operation or certifying agent violates terms of the arrangement?**

- Significant non-compliances will be reported to counterpart's supervisory office and appropriate enforcement actions may be pursued to concerned products or certifiers under related regulations.

**8. Regarding GMO, what kind of regulations can be applied to equivalence arrangement?**

- The use of GMO in the process of production and handling is completely prohibited in both countries based upon current certification standards.
- GMO residue test and subsequent regulatory actions will be subject to the regulations of importing country.

- ☆ In case of Korea, detection of GMO will be subject to the revocation of organic labeling after random sampling residue test and then the relevant products should follow GMO labeling standards under Food Sanitation Act as general products.

## **9. What documentation is required for products traded under the arrangement?**

- All shipments of organic products under this arrangement must be accompanied by the import certificate. The certificate will be used for confirming the fact that concerned products are satisfying requirements of the arrangement.

☆ certificate of inspection for import : to Korea || to EU

## **10. Who is responsible for issuing an import certificate?**

- The certificate for exporting products to the EU will be issued by Korean certifying agency and vice versa. When an organic operator requests the import certificate, certifying agency will issue it provided by required documents.

## **11. How can I see the list of Korean certifying agencies which can issue an import certificate?**

- The list of Korean certifying agencies is available at [www.enviagro.go.kr](http://www.enviagro.go.kr).

**12. How can I see the list of EU certifying agencies which can issue an import certificate?**

- The list of EU certifying agencies is available at the [EU official website](#).