

Certification Program according to GOTS (Global Organic Textile Standard)



Textile processors and manufactures
(spinning, weaving, finishing, printing/dyeing, sewing)

Trader, exporter, importer, distributor

The certification program for organic textile production is defined according to the requirements of the GOTS - Global Organic Textile Standard. GOTS is a privately owned standard by the four industry-associations IVN (Germany), Soil Association (England), Organic Trade Association (US) and the Japan Organic Cotton Association (Joca) who adopted the first version in September 2006. GOTS is presently the most accepted certification program for organic textile products world wide. Manufacturers are able to market their organic yarns, fabrics, textiles and garments with “one” certificate that is well received in all major world markets. GOTS and the related Labelling Guide lay down rules for the implementation of this organic textile certification program.

GOTS - Global Organic Textile Standard defines unified criteria for environmentally and socially responsible production of organic textiles. The GOTS provides criteria for the composition of fiber products that are labeled as “organic” and “made with organic” and also addresses “organic in conversion”. The GOTS processing requirements include criteria for substances that may be used at each stage of manufacturing. GOTS also addresses practices such as packaging, environmental management, product quality (i.e. permissible residue levels in the product) and minimum social criteria.

The certification program is structured as follows:

1. Application, formalities throughout the certification process
2. Organic Systems Plan
3. Inspection and Evaluation
4. Certification
5. GOTS-logo-use

1. Application, formalities throughout the certification process

Process and requirements for application and throughout the certification are defined in the GOTS Service Protocol.

2. Organic System Plan

An Organic System Plan (OSP) template is provided by Kiwa BCS. It consists of the following elements:

- Conformity declaration of the Operation Manager for GOTS
- Complete description of the operation and its facilities
- List of articles to be certified
- List of suppliers, premises, sub-contractors
- List of used chemicals
- Description of all production procedures and means, so Kiwa BCS can verify their compliance with GOTS

The OSP constitutes the basis for inspection and certification. Therefore, the OSP should be filled out with utmost care - so as to provide to Kiwa BCS sufficient information for

determining compliance with the respective standard. The OSP has to be submitted to Kiwa BCS Öko-Garantie for verification prior to the initial inspection visit. It has to be updated continuously to reflect the current state of the operation. Changes always have to be communicated to Kiwa BCS, but no later than before the next inspection.

3. Inspection and Review

3.1 On-site Inspection

During inspection the compliance of the operation with the requirements of the GOTS Standard is verified. In general the inspection is based on the verification of the statements indicated in the Organic System Plan and on a comparison with the findings in the facility.

One announced inspection visit at each facility that is involved in the chain of custody will take place at least once per calendar year. Furthermore, Kiwa BCS conducts unannounced spot checks or additional inspections if necessary to safeguard the compliance with the standard. The inspector is obliged and authorized to request and verify all documents, records and amenities as deemed necessary for the purposes of the inspection.

The on-site inspection encompasses all parts of the operation. The procedure is as follows:

3.1.1 Introductory meeting

The person in charge and/or managers is informed about the planned inspection procedure. Open initial questions as well as to the company profile are clarified. This includes interviews with responsible persons of production.

3.1.2 Inspection / tour of the operational plant (premises, processing equipment, storage, etc.)

During inspection (at processing plants) the main focus and attention is put on:

- The separation and identification system in production, storage of raw materials and ready products as well as related documents. Conservation, conditioning of ready products and indication of organic and conventional will be checked.
- The chemical use in conformity with GOTS, herewith dyestuffs and auxiliaries available in production and in the store rooms are checked as well as safety precaution/ regulations.
- The cleaning procedures (methods, cycles used agents) in processing plants.
- The system for waste water (pre)treatment.
- Packing materials and labeling of organic products

The inspector verifies whether the company has the knowledge, technology and space to store and process organic raw materials separately and identified at any stage during processing, storage and handling.

3.1.3 Verification of documents (operating documentation, bookkeeping, label, weighing tags)

An inspection of the book keeping and quantitative verification of accounts and results (comparison of purchase and sales) takes place. All shipping documents are checked. Purchase records, sales documentation, invoices as well as processing documentation have to be available in order to follow up the relevant product flow. The quantitative product flow of organic raw materials must be traceable and is calculated through the entire production chain. Therefore, a data overview must be implemented that enables the calculation of the quantitative products flow.

Additionally, documents like proof of organic origin of raw materials (transaction certificates), lists of suppliers, recipes, safety data sheets for process chemicals/ auxiliaries, weighing tags, labels and others is checked. The layout of hangtags/labeling/ packaging should be approved by the inspector or evaluator before use.

Access to the bookkeeping and production documents provides information about:

- Location, production units, size, ownership
- Listing of all suppliers, including documents for tracing (e.g. shipping papers, invoices, etc.) and valid company certificates/operational certificate/scope certificate
- Listing of all organically produced products with proof of organic origin for the incoming raw materials (transaction certificates)
- Listing of all products in storage
- Production reports: date and quantities of production, description of processing procedures and methods, separation organic/conventional processing
- Listing of used chemicals (dye stuffs, auxiliaries) in compliance with GOTS approved chemicals (according to the GOTS positive list).
- Documentation of recipes
- Documentation of shipping (books, numbers, cash, identification, shipping documents, invoices, transport).
- Documentation of receipt
- Measures for traceability
- Product reclamations, customer information/ customer service procedure in the case of irregularities

3.1.4 Sample-taking for residue analyses

In case the inspector finds indications that prohibited raw materials, chemicals or additives might have been used there are samples taken for residue analyses. Hence, sampling is always possible, but presently not mandatory related to GOTS. It is required that the company itself provides residue and fastness test reports to ensure that all limits of GOTS are met. Samples of packaging and/or labeling materials are taken as well.

3.1.5 Verification of social aspects

As part of the social audit the list of workers, workers contracts, payrolls, etc. is inspected.

Worker-related documents such as list of workers, staff files, worker contracts, payrolls, social security records, working time records, etc. have to be available and are checked. Furthermore, during the workshop tour the workers wellbeing, health and safety precautions, and other social requirements are verified. Interviews with workers are conducted.

In case no separate social certification is available (e.g. according to BSCI, SA 8000 or ICTI) a social statement is required that describes how the company meets the social criteria as defined in the GOTS Standard.

3.1.6 Closing meeting

The inspection results, including the basic findings of the inspection, the further procedure, preliminary measures for correction of detected non-compliances, etc. will be discussed with the responsible representative of the company.

3.1.7 Inspection report

The inspection report is the final document that describes the results of the inspection. It is compiled by the inspector and has to be signed by the company manager or a representative. It documents detected non-compliances with the GOTS Standard and corrective measures which have been agreed on (with deadlines).

The results of the inspection report are basis for the certification.

3.2 Review

Review of the inspection result is done by the reviewer.

4. Certification

The process of certification is outlined in the GOTS Service Protocol.

Please note: For each shipment of certified goods the company has to request the related transaction certificate from Kiwa BCS.

The Certification Program is a model and not conclusive. Specific situations in the operations can lead to variances from the described program. It serves for orientation during the execution of the certification procedure according to the respective standard by Kiwa BCS Öko-Garantie GmbH. The Certification Program is subject to modifications.

5. Surveillance-audits (re-certification)

As to temporary cessation of the client's activities, please refer to the GOTS-certification-agreement between Kiwa BCS and the client at section § "Period of Validity and Termination".

6. GOTS-Logo-use

With the completion of GOTS certification by an Approved Certifier the Certified Entity acquires a sub-licence which entitles him to participate in the GOTS programme, including use of the standard and the GOTS logo on its respective GOTS Goods in accordance with the provisions of this Labelling guide and as long as the certification remains valid.

The GOTS-Licensing and Labelling Guide is available at <http://global-standard.org/licensing-and-labelling/licensing-and-labelling-guide.html>.

It sets the requirements for the use of the registered trademark 'Global Organic Textile Standard' (GOTS logo) in order to ensure correct and consistent application on products as well as in advertisements, catalogues or other publications.

Only products announced by the Operator and thus listed at and reviewed/approved by Kiwa BCS may be labeled by the Operator with the GOTS-logo according to the certified product-category in the GOTS-certificate of compliance otherwise the Operator has to be asked to correct the GOTS-product-Label accordingly.