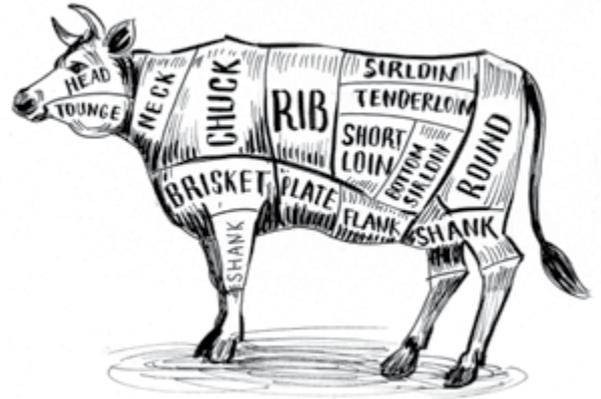


# FACTSHEET NO 3: ORGANIC SLAUGHTER AND PROCESSING



## Slaughtering and processing of organic beef carcasses

The slaughter and processing of organic animals is an essential step to supplying consumers with nutritious organic meat of the highest quality, while ensuring the integrity of the entire organic value chain. In order for the meat of an organic animal to be sold on the market under the 'organic' label, each step of the process (on farm production, slaughter and processing), needs to be certified by a third-party assessor.

## Requirements for organic slaughter and processing

There are certain requirements regarding slaughtering and processing of organic meat to maintain its organic status. These are the below points.

- **Certification of slaughter and processing facilities**

Meat products can only be labelled 'organic' if the slaughter and processing facility has undergone organic certification by an accredited third-party certifying body to assure compliance with all applicable regulations and organic standards. The label must list the responsible entity that processed the organic product as well as the certifying entity.

- **Separation/segregation of carcasses and meat products**

The slaughtering facility must ensure that organic animals, the resulting carcasses and organic products are clearly separated from non-organic products. Products must be identified as organic throughout all processing stages to ensure that co-mingling or substitution with non-organic products is prevented. Slaughtering of organic livestock carcasses should be done on specific days and at specified times before which all slaughtering equipment is cleaned to ensure no contamination/mixing occurs with non-organic products and carcasses.

- **Traceability**

The slaughter facility must establish and maintain a traceability system for all manufacturing steps. Traceability must be possible in both directions of the value chain, from farm to the consumer and backwards from the retail package to the original organic animal.

- **Recordkeeping**

Records/documentation must also be kept on the cleaning of equipment prior to the slaughter and processing of organic carcasses.

- **Allowed substances/additives during processing of organic meat**

In a broad sense organic processing is defined as changing a raw product by biological, physical or mechanical means. If the raw product is changed through a chemical reaction, only additives and processing aids that are listed in the annex of the relevant set of standards may be used for products labelled 'organic'. If meat is processed into value-added products, all ingredients and raw products must be organic. Any additives and processing aids used during the processing of meat must be listed in the annex of the respective organic standards for allowed substances. At no time may organic products use genetically engineered or nanomaterials. For organic certification of any processed products, the processor must share the used recipes and quantities of ingredients with the certifying entity. In principle, salt (sodium chloride) and water do not count as non-organic ingredients. Irradiation is not permitted for an ingredient or a final product. Isolated ingredients such as vitamins, trace elements and minerals, or others, are not allowed, unless required by law or to prevent a nutritional deficiency. In such cases it is best to inform the certifying entity to get the required clearance. Some processing may require the use of enzymes or micro-organisms. Such cultures must comply with organic standards and may not involve genetic engineering during any stage of multiplication or preparation.

- **Packaging and storage of organic meat products**

The handler and processor aim to maintain a high nutrient value through proper packaging and storage. For that purpose, processing may use permitted measures to regulate humidity, control temperature and atmosphere. Organic products may not be packaged in genetically engineered or nanomaterials.

- **Prevention of contamination by prohibited substances**

During processing, handlers and processors prevent contamination by harmful chemicals, such as pollutants and prohibited cleaning chemicals. Only allowable substances as listed in the respective organic standard annexes<sup>1</sup> may be used. Proper sanitation measures must be in place, without the use of prohibited substances, to ensure that organic products are free from pests, diseases and pathogens.

**Animal welfare considerations**

Generally, animals should be subjected to the least amount of stress during transport to and while in a holding pen at the slaughter facility. The slaughter facility carries a responsibility for animal welfare from the time animals are offloaded until they are slaughtered. Preventing stress and pain to the animal will result in meat of superior quality with improved shelf-life and it will address the ethical concerns of consumers. Namibia adheres to the standards set in this regard by the International Federation of Organic Agricultural Movements (IFOAM)-Organics International, which includes that:

- Animals are to be handled gently and calmly during transport and slaughter.
- They must be kept separate from non-organic/conventional animals during transport, offloading and in the holding pen at the slaughter facility.
- Animals should be given water and feed during transport depending on weather and other conditions.
- Journeys to a slaughterhouse may not exceed eight hours.
- Injurious devices such as electric prods, tranquilizers and stimulants are prohibited.

**NamLits – Traceability in the Namibian context**

Namibia has a well-established traceability system for all livestock suitable for export under FanMeat regulations, the NamLits system. This system is suited to trace organic meat from farm to fork (producer to end-consumer) as organic cuts in retail packaging can be traced back to the producer provided the processors and logistics providers maintain traceability throughout the product’s journey.

**Organic certification**

The term ‘organic’ carries an inherent claim to value and quality. Hence, certification is a critical mechanism to ensure that the integrity of an organic product is protected and never compromised. Organic produce in Europe and the United States must be certified by an accredited third-party entity before they may be sold with an organic claim on a label. This certification is required for every step of the value chain. Organic allowable inputs, the organic producer, processor and the logistic handlers must comply with the regulations for the respective markets. This procedure applies also to Namibia.

**STEPS TO CERTIFICATION OF A SLAUGHTERING AND/OR PROCESSING FACILITY IN NAMIBIA**

1. Become a member of NOA
2. Get familiar with Namibian organic certification procedures
3. Submit an application form to NOA
4. Assessment and inspection by NOA as the certifying body
5. Annual assessments undertaken to ensure ongoing certification

<sup>1</sup>United States National Organic Program: eCFR (electronic Code of Federal Regulations) §205.600 to §205.607; European Union Organic Regulations: Regulation (EU) 2018/848 of 30 May 2018 and pending changes dated 1 Jan 2022, Annex – Ares (2021) 2131426.

**About the Namibian Organic Association (NOA)**

NOA is a membership-based association established in 2009 by a group of dynamic farmers and consumers with the common interest of developing the organic sector in Namibia.

**About the Knowledge Hub for Organic Agriculture in Southern Africa (KHSAs)**

KHSA is part of the project Knowledge Centre for Organic Agriculture in Africa (KCOA), a collaborative country-led partnership funded by the German Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) and implemented by the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) and non-governmental organisations. The project aims to scale up adoption of organic farming practices through five knowledge hubs in Africa over a four-year period. In the Southern African Knowledge Hub (KHSA), project activities are focused in Zambia, in Namibia (led by the Namibia Nature Foundation and NOA), and in South Africa and Malawi. For more information contact the KHSA Project Manager for Namibia: [noa@nnf.org.na](mailto:noa@nnf.org.na).

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