



## Maple Street Co-operative Society Limited

Via Online Submission Portal

11<sup>th</sup> December 2024

Dear Sir/Madam,

Re: National Organic Standard Bill 2024

Maple Street Co-operative Society Ltd welcomes the opportunity to make a submission in response to draft legislation to introduce a legislative framework to support a National Organic Standard that outlines the requirements that organic goods must meet when they are sold in Australia or imported into Australia.

We support the introduction of such a standard in Australia.

We are a 45-year-old health food co-operative, owned by over 1,700 community members. We have a turnover of over \$4M and are a mainstay of our rural area employing 28 people and purchasing from many suppliers and producers. Our area is a magnet for foodies and produces high-quality food.

As the Bill outlines, there is currently 'no legislated definition of 'organic' for non-export use, no mandatory standard for domestic use and no requirement for certification of organic products produced and sold domestically in Australia'. Our shop focuses on certified organic food local produce and ethically produced products. These products command the prices they deserve, the farmers having to navigate the organics administration and land/husbandry practices that ensure their certification is awarded and maintained. The low chemical aspect of organics is highly valued by our customers, as are the environmental commitment and practices the certifiers must adhere to.

The definition and use of the term 'organic' needs to be crystal clear/ transparent for our community members and to be understandable at point of sale for what they will be consuming. The current situation is not acceptable and undermines consumer trust. Food is such a key foundation for peoples' lives, and our customers have a high level of trust in us. This is one of the most important aspects of our business.

We therefore urge the decision-makers to bring Australia into line with our international peers in terms of creating this national standard.

Your faithfully,

Peter Pamment,  
Secretary