



Kehoe's Kitchen

17/12/2024

National Organic Standard Bill 2024 Submission

Dear Committee,

Kehoe's Kitchen is Australia's largest and 1st certified organic producer of raw probiotic fermented vegetables. We have one of the largest ranges in our category internationally and have many trade secret recipes which are not being made in any other country, like our Organic Fermented Garlic paste. We have had Korea's largest kimchi company visit us at our factory and we regularly receive export enquiries for our certified organic products. Our garlic paste has massive export potential, but we cannot send it to USA, Korea or many other countries, because we do not have domestic regulation in Australia.

We can afford to get our own USA Organic or Korea Organic certification, but that is not the difficult part. The **impossible** part is the current lack of domestic regulation requires all farmers supplying us to do the same. Looking at kimchi as an example, it has 7 ingredients. If we want to export to USA, we need to be able to source from many many more organic farmers (due to market size), from multiple states/seasons to ensure continuity of supply 12 months per year. We cannot ask 50+ farmers to outlay this cost, so that we may try to enter a market, with no guarantee to purchase from them. It would be a massive waste of their money and resources, and considering the 6 month cabbage growing period, it's impossible. What we **need is domestic regulation**, so that these countries instead respect the Australian Organic standard that these farmers are already paying for

and working to. We can then buy from organic farmers as required, without any risk, and get them to gradually increase plantings as we test the USA market without being held back by additional certification requirements.

The lack of domestic regulation has been a chokehold on our export potential for over a decade now. We have world best/leading products, and we are not able to export them. This lack of domestic regulation is extremely disappointing, and totally unnecessary.

We have massive potential exporting to USA. We have invested \$25,000 from our Cash flow, plus \$25,000 from Trade Investment Queensland in this market in 2024. We have obtained FDA registration, trademark registration, label approvals and USA attorney retainer. We are hoping to start physically exporting in 2025, but we cannot sell our organic products for above reasons. Certified Organic is the key unique selling point/point of difference they want from us, that would help us win shelf space. There are plenty of cheap conventional krauts/kimchi locally made in America. We don't want to compete with them, we want to export our certified organic range, at a higher price, which warrants the sea freight and gives us and our farmers a better return.

We need the Australian government to support the organic industry with domestic regulation now. This will have an immediate positive effect on inflation (due to increase in exports) and via economy of scale it will make organic food in Australia more affordable for our population too. Supporting the organic industry is the only **real way** to help protect the environment while at the same time decreasing the burden on healthcare in Australia.

Sincerely,

Katrina Kehoe