



## The Organic Food Chain Pty Ltd.

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A.Q.I.S. Approved Certification Organisation



JAS-ANZ



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Committee Secretary Meat Marketing  
Senate Standing Committee on Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport  
PO Box 6100  
Parliament House  
Canberra ACT 2600

### Submission

The Organic Food Chain Pty Ltd is one of the seven certifying bodies administered by AQIS for Organic Accreditation in Australia.

Currently, the term organic is governed under the 2007 National Standard for Organic & Biodynamic Produce V3.3. This standard is referenced under the Export Control Act. Thus any product claiming to be organic, must meet the standard before being exported. The National Standard is based on the Codex Alimentarius Commission Organic Standards.

The problems identified by other submissions arise from the fact that the Export Control Act does not govern domestic produce. The ACCC and the state Fair Trading departments have demonstrated a reluctance to prosecute based on the existing National Standards, despite the process being overseen by a Government Department, with full and transparent Industry Consultation.

These products sold domestically can use the term “organic” without any verification, nor justification, and with no fear of prosecution.

As a result, the Organic Industry has, in the past, promoted to consumers the importance of choosing “Certified Organic” and to identify such products by recognition of a certification logo.

However, with the implementation of individual certification bodies own “domestic only” standards, we now see the situation of products in the marketplace with logos, but not adhering to the requirements of the National Standards. This has created a second major labelling issue.

This has caused great confusion among consumers, manufacturers and exporters alike. Product that does not meet the National Standards has been exported, and consumers have fallen victim to fraudulent “quasi organic” products. AQIS have claimed to be powerless to regulate – despite each certification body signing off on the Administrative Arrangements, a legal agreement with AQIS.

Perhaps the reason for the lack of government intervention is the outdated perception that Australia is already the “Clean & Green” country and organics is a “fad”. Consumers actively seek out organic produce for very real health reasons – people with allergies and those on doctor’s instructions. Fraudulent organic labelling places these people at risk of medical complications.

Every consumer should have the basic right to know, and choose what they are eating.

Its time Australia’s food labelling laws protected consumers.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ivy Inwood". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'I' and a long, sweeping underline.

Ivy Inwood  
Director