

### **Application Objective**

After completing this module, you will be able to help producers complete the farm map and field history sheets that are required for organic certification.

### **Learning Objectives**

After completing this module, you will:

Know the requirements for certification and the paperwork needed relating to the organic farm plan, field histories, and farm maps.

Understand the sections of the rule relating to physical features of the farm and the difference between conventional, transitional, and organic production.

### **Topics**

Information required to complete a field history sheet and farm map for organic certification

How to make a farm map that includes all of the important considerations for organic certification

How to complete the field section of the farm plan

### **Relevant Sections of the NOP Standards**

205.103 Record keeping by certified operations

205.201 Organic production and handling system plan

205.202 Land requirements

### **Additional Reference Materials**

*An Overview of Organic Crop Production* (<http://www.attra.ncat.org/organic.html>)

Organic Field Crops Documentation Forms (<http://www.attra.ncat.org/organic.html>)

### **Keywords**

Buffer zone. An area located between a certified production operation or portion of a production operation and an adjacent land area that is not maintained under organic management. A buffer zone must be sufficient in size or other features (e.g., windbreaks or a diversion ditch) to prevent the possibility of unintended contact by prohibited substances applied to adjacent land areas with an area that is part of a certified operation.

Commingling. Physical contact between unpackaged organically produced and nonorganically produced agricultural products during production, processing, transportation, storage or handling, other than during the manufacture of a multiingredient product containing both types of ingredients.

Field. An area of land identified as a discrete unit within a production operation.

Natural resources of the operation. The physical, hydrological, and biological features of a production operation, including soil, water, wetlands, woodlands, and wildlife.

Organic system plan. A plan of management of an organic production or handling operation that has been agreed to by the producer or handler and the certifying agent and that includes written plans concerning all aspects of agricultural production or handling described in the Act and the regulations in subpart C of this part.

Split operation. An operation that produces or handles both organic and nonorganic agricultural products.

### **Introductory Comments by Trainer**

Your facilitator will provide a brief overview of the Organic System Plan, the Farm Map and the Field History Sheets.

### **Exercise 1: Sweet Briar Farm**

The scenarios used in this training are fictitious, but are based on actual farms.

Working in groups of three, you will use the Sweet Briar Farm Scenario and Sweet Briar Farm Map to complete the Field History Sheets and “Section 2: Farm Plan Information” of the certification application. After you complete these documents, you may be called upon to present your ideas to the plenary. ***Refer to the relevant sections of the NOP Standards and pages 8-11 of NCAT’s Organic Crops Workbook to complete this exercise.***

### **Closure Discussion**

- Q1. What did you put on the organic farm map that may not be required on maps used by other farm service agencies (such as Natural Resource Conservation Service)?
- Q2. Think of yourself as an inspector. Point out areas that you would pay close attention to when you make a farm inspection.
- Q3. What types of records must the farmer provide for fields in transition?
- Q4. How will that be different from fields already in organic production?



## Sweet Briar Farm Scenario

Sweet Briar Farm is a 450-acre split production operation on which Rosemary Green produces cabbage and potatoes, both conventionally and organically. The land in production is divided into 50-acre fields with 350 acres under conventional production. Fifty acres in the southeast corner of the farm have been certified organic for the past four years.

Sweet Briar Farm is bordered to the north by a wooded area and to the east by a horse farm. The land on the west and south sides of the farm are under conventional cultivation by other farmers. A road runs along the western and southern sides of the farm. It enters Sweet Briar Farm near the Storage and Processing area, located in the middle of the western boundary edge. There is a large shed for storage and processing and a pole-barn to store mechanical equipment.

The farm is located in a hilly region with a temperate climate. Yearly rainfall is moderate and Rosemary has dug drainage ditches around Conventional Fields 1-5. Elevation is higher on the north end of the farm so drainage moves south towards a wetland, located just above the organically certified fields. Also located on the farm are two wells used for irrigation when rainfall is not adequate. One well is located between Fields 2, 3, 4, and 5 and the other well is located between the Storage and Processing area and Field 6. Rosemary has also planted windbreaks around the perimeter of the cultivated fields.

The average yield per acre for the conventionally produced potatoes and cabbage are 21,700 pounds and 27,000 pounds respectively. The farmer largely relies on crop rotation to take care of nematode and insect pests in the potato fields. When she does have an outbreak she uses Aldicarb to control it. To control fungal disease, a major concern with potatoes, and also to help build resistance to insect pests, she relies on maintaining adequate fertilization and soil moisture to support plant vigor, and using varieties that have high levels of tolerance to diseases. Rosemary has problems with diamondback moths on her cabbage and applies *Bacillus thuringiensis* (Bt) to control it. She also applies copper hydroxide to the cabbage to control black rot and other fungal diseases. She applies Scott's 10-3-7 as fertilizer. Rosemary keeps a detailed log of the rates and dates of application of all inputs in her files.

Rosemary has divided the 50 acres devoted to organic production into two 25-acre fields. One is planted with cabbage and one with potatoes. Cabbage yields about 21,500 pounds per acre and potatoes about 20,000 pounds per acre. Each season Rosemary rotates planting potatoes and cabbage in the organic fields. She plants a rye cover crop in the winter and Sunn hemp in the summer. She composts chicken manure and sawdust in an area located between the wetland and the Storage and Processing area. This compost is added to the organic fields to improve soil fertility.

Because of the success of her organic acreage, Rosemary has decided that next year she will begin transitioning Conventional Fields 6 and 7 (at the southern edge of the farm) into organic production.



### Completed Sweet Briar Farm Map





