



## Chapter 3– European Recognition Program

### Introduction

This chapter of the CAEQ Accreditation Guide covers requirements that a certification body (hereinafter called control body) must comply to be recognized under the European recognition program according to Regulation (EU) 2018/848. It means to be recognized by the European Commission (hereinafter called competent authority) and to be under the oversight of the CAEQ (hereinafter called control authority) for assessment and surveillance for the activities in third countries.

CAEQ offers this accreditation service to support the recognition of control bodies as specified in Article 46 of Regulation (EU) 2018/848. This is based on CAEQ's status as an accreditation body outside the Union, which is a signatory of a Multilateral Recognition Arrangement (MLA) under the oversight of the International Accreditation Forum, in accordance with Article 46.3(b) of Regulation (EU) 2018/848.

This chapter must always be read in conjunction with Chapter 1 of the CAEQ Accreditation Guide which outlines the requirements specified in the *ISO/CEI 17065* standard (Requirements for bodies certifying products, processes and services).

### Scope



#### *Legal bases*

Considering the Regulation (EU) 2018/848, Article 45 defines requirements for imports of organic products into the EU from third countries:

*(a) the product is a product as referred to in Article 2(1);*

*(b) one of the following applies:*

*(i) the product complies with Chapters II, III and IV of this Regulation, and all operators and groups of operators referred to in Article 36, including exporters in the third country concerned, have been subject to controls by control authorities or control bodies recognised in accordance with Article 46, and those*

	Committee on Accreditation for Evaluation of Quality			Page 1 de 5
Accreditation Guide – Chapter 3 – European recognition program				
File name ACA8LD3031b	Date 1 <sup>ère</sup> publication April 19, 2022	Date of revision February 10, 2025	Distribution Internal and web	Circulation authorization 

authorities or bodies have provided all such operators, groups of operators and exporters with a certificate confirming that they comply with this Regulation;

(ii) in cases where the product comes from a third country which is recognised in accordance with Article 47, that product complies with the conditions laid down in the relevant trade agreement; or

(iii) in cases where the product comes from a third country which is recognised in accordance with Article 48, that product complies with the equivalent production and control rules of that third country and is imported with a certificate of inspection confirming this compliance that was issued by the competent authorities, control authorities or control bodies of that third country.

## Stakeholders

There are 3 main players:

- I. Control body (certification body)
- II. Control authority (CAEQ)
- III. Competent authority (European Commission)



## Who can apply?

All control bodies that are legally established in third countries can apply at any time to be recognized under the Regulation (EU) 2018/848 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 30 May 2018 on organic production and labelling of organic products and repealing Council Regulation (EC) 834/2007.

The categories of production are the following:

- (a) unprocessed plants and plant products, including seeds and other plant reproductive material,
- (b) livestock and unprocessed livestock products (including beekeeping),
- (c) algae and unprocessed aquaculture products,
- (d) processed agricultural products, including aquaculture products, for use as food,
- (e) feed (including unprocessed and processed animal feed),
- (f) wine,
- (g) other products listed in Annex I to Regulation EU 848/2018 or not covered by the previous categories.

Nota: control body need to specify if they intend to certify groups of operators regarding A, B, C and G categories.

	Committee on Accreditation for Evaluation of Quality			Page 2 de 5
Accreditation Guide – Chapter 3 – European recognition program				
File name ACA8LD3031b	Date 1 <sup>ère</sup> publication April 19, 2022	Date of revision February 10, 2025	Distribution Internal and web	Circulation authorization 

### Accreditation requirements

All Control Bodies which apply to be recognized by the European Commission must comply with the following requirements:

- ✓ ISO/IEC 17065  
<https://www.iso.org/standard/46568.html>
- ✓ Regulation (EU) 2018/848 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 30 May 2018 on organic production and labelling of organic products and repealing Council Regulation (EC) 834/2007
- ✓ Secondary legal acts of Regulation (EU) 2018/848 for three main areas: production and labelling, controls and trade.
- ✓ Official communications related to the implementation of Regulation (EU) 2018/848 from the General Directorate for Agriculture and Rural Development of the European Commission.

[https://ec.europa.eu/info/food-farming-fisheries/farming/organic-farming/legislation\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/info/food-farming-fisheries/farming/organic-farming/legislation_en)

Any additional requirements or questions coming from the representatives of the European Commission



### Regulation

Starting on January 1, 2022, all control bodies with activities in third countries operating certification systems for products destined for EU markets must demonstrate that they implement a control system compliant to Regulation EU 2018/848 and its secondary acts.

Concerning third countries, the regulation (EC) No 1235/2008 is replaced by the regulations (EU) 2021/1697 and 1698 for purpose of compliance and by the regulation (EU) 2021/1342 for purpose of equivalency.

### Responsibilities

As part of the accreditation process, CAEQ provides the control bodies with reports relating to the documentary review, on-site assessment (office audit and witness audits), monitoring and other on-going evaluation of its activities

	Committee on Accreditation for Evaluation of Quality			Page 3 de 5
Accreditation Guide – Chapter 3 – European recognition program				
File name ACA8LD3031b	Date 1 <sup>ère</sup> publication April 19, 2022	Date of revision February 10, 2025	Distribution Internal and web	Circulation authorization 

(annual report), which are necessary to maintain accreditation and recognition by the European Commission.

A Policy for the Accreditation of Organic Production Certification - EA-3/12 M: 2022 has been developed by the European Cooperation on Accreditation. This document outlines the EA Policy for application of ISO/IEC 17011 when processing accreditation to control bodies in the field of organic production, in accordance with Regulation (EU) 2018/848. This guidance has been adopted by the CAEQ as an internal procedure for assessment. CAEQ strictly adheres to the requirements of this Policy throughout the entire assessment process (initial, renewal, surveillance) for control bodies.

This Policy is available on:

<https://european-accreditation.org/publications/ea-3-12-m/>

It is the responsibility of control body to apply via the OFIS portal for the recognition to the European Commission. Information on the procedure of the application to be submitted is detailed in Delegated Regulation (EU) 2021/1698. To use the portal, the new applicant control body must contact the Commission at AGRI-B4@ec.europa.eu to obtain access for registration and the submission of an application.



Once the application for recognition is reviewed, the Commission may request additional information from the control body. If necessary, the control body will seek information that falls under the responsibility of CAEQ or requires further action from us as a control authority. CAEQ will take all necessary steps to respond to such requests. However, it is the control body's responsibility to ensure that submission deadlines are met, providing sufficient time for additional reviews or on-site visits, if required.

When the control body is recognized by the Commission, the latter publishes the name of the CB in Regulation (EU) 2021/1378 which lists all recognised control bodies and their scope of activity including product categories and countries of operation.

### *Extension of scope of recognition of control bodies*

Recognized control bodies can apply for extension of new category or country at any time.

The addition of a new category or a new country to an existing scope is considered as an extension. Similarly, the inclusion of certification for groups of operators within the current scope is also treated as an extension.


	Committee on Accreditation for Evaluation of Quality			Page 4 de 5
Accreditation Guide – Chapter 3 – European recognition program				
File name ACA8LD3031b	Date 1 <sup>ère</sup> publication April 19, 2022	Date of revision February 10, 2025	Distribution Internal and web	Circulation authorization 

When adding a new category, the control body must apply for scope extension to CAEQ, accompanied by the necessary documentation. The assessment for the new category will involve a document review and a witness audit. Once the CAEQ grants accreditation for the scope extension, the control body can apply for the scope extension through the Commission via the OFIS portal.

In the case of adding a new country, the control body must apply for an extension of the geographical scope to CAEQ, along with the required documents. The assessment for the new country will involve a document review; however, a witness audit is not mandatory for the decision-making process. Once the CAEQ extends the geographical scope of accreditation, the control body can apply for the scope extension via the OFIS portal.

For more information, you can contact to General Directorate for Agriculture and Rural Development of European Commission: [AGRI-B4@ec.europa.eu](mailto:AGRI-B4@ec.europa.eu)

OFIS: [https://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/ofis\\_public/index.html?lang=en](https://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/ofis_public/index.html?lang=en)

	Committee on Accreditation for Evaluation of Quality			Page 5 de 5
Accreditation Guide – Chapter 3 – European recognition program				
File name ACA8LD3031b	Date 1 <sup>ère</sup> publication April 19, 2022	Date of revision February 10, 2025	Distribution Internal and web	Circulation authorization 