

Friend of the Earth Standard

FOE-Farming

Criteria and indicators for sustainable farming products certification



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REV	DATE	MOTIVATION	REDACTED BY	APPROVED BY
0	13/03/2014	First issue	Paolo Bray	Paolo Bray
1	18/01/2018	First revision	Paolo Bray	Paolo Bray
2	26/01/2018	Second revision	Paolo Bray	Paolo Bray
3	02/07/2019	Third revision	Pietro Serratore	Paolo Bray
4	10/04/2026	Thourth revision	FOE scientific departmen	Paolo Bray

REQUIREMENTS CATEGORIES

1. SYSTEM OF SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT
2. LEGAL CONFORMITY
3. ECOSYSTEM PRESERVATION
4. WILDLIFE AND FLORA PROTECTION
5. USE OF HAZARDOUS SUBSTANCES
6. AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION SYSTEM
7. FARMING
8. SOIL RESOURCES
9. WATER RESOURCES
10. EMISSIONS CONTROL
11. WASTE MANAGEMENT
12. POWER MANAGEMENT
13. SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Name of the Organization	
This document may be auto-filled by a company representative or by a qualified assistant. The form must be compiled in the mother language or in English, if perfectly known.	
In case the organization is a Farmers Cooperative, checks will be carried out every year using a verified, homogeneous sample of not less than the total square root of the companies belonging to the Cooperative.	

a) ADDRESS OF THE ORGANIZATION:	
b) IS THE ORGANIZATION TO CERTIFY PART OF A GROUP OR ASSOCIATION?	
c) AGRICULTURAL COMPANY AND FIELDS:	
Name of the agricultural company	Coordinates
d) CERTIFIED FIELDS AND AGRICULTURAL COMPANIES ON THE SPOT: (The Auditor has to list fields and agricultural companies currently certified as the total sample)	
Name of the agricultural company	Coordinates
e) AREA/ADDRESS OF THE AGRICULTURAL COMPANY:	

FARM COMPOSITION		
BREED	NUMBER OF ANIMALS	

TOTAL NUMBER OF ANIMALS	
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Purchased feed:	Supplier	Indicative average quantity per animal (Kg)	

Farm production feed:	Indicative average quantity per animal (Kg)	

Friend of the Earth project has been presented (Otherwise, the Auditor must provide a short description)

The audited Company has been informed that, in case of approval confirmation, it may use Friend of the Earth logo on its certified products.

The Company has a copy of the organigram that identifies roles of the staff involved in the audit Audit duration has been agreed

Data of the preliminary information form have been confirmed (in case of different information, specify)

CERTIFICATION BODY:	AUDIT TEAM:	START AND END DATE OF THE AUDIT:
AUDITOR'S SIGNATURE:	NAME OF THE ORGANIZATION RESPONSIBLE THAT ASSISTS THE AUDITOR:	AUDIT CODE:

NOTES FOR THE AUDITOR

The auditor must fill in any checklist field.

The auditor must read the notes in green squares before filling in the fields.

The auditor must provide motivation when qualification requirements are not applicable.

The auditor must answer Yes (Y) when the organization conforms to the requirement and No (N) when it doesn't.

The auditor must provide comments and motivations for positive or negative answers. Yes, No, or Not applicable aren't sufficient. Any relevant document must be inserted in the final audit report in a separate and numbered attachment.

As the first phase of the audit, the organization has to describe any aspect of the production system, such as:

**A map showing every crop production area, uncultivated ones, and faunistic habitat; superficial waters, streets and buildings, in addition to the extension of fields and uncultivated areas.*

**Any crop to be produced during the following year*

**Rotation plan and/or perennial crops production plan*

**Practices and suggestions used to maintain the ground healthy and to guarantee the cultivation's productivity*

**Practices and suggestions used to prevent and control parasites, weeds, and crop diseases*

**Seeds, seedlings, and other vegetal materials are used to propagate crops*

**Any other activity on the farm that uses the crops produced as inputs (i.e., added value) or that provides inputs to the cultivation system (e.g., livestock, aquaculture, or fertilizer).*

REQUIREMENTS LEVEL

Essential requirements: Regarding essential requirements, a 100% conformity is needed so that the Auditor can certify the organization. Any lack of these requirements is considered a Major Non-Conformity, and it will be necessary to use corrective measures that have to be taken within a maximum period of three months from the discovery of Non-Conformity. The organization must provide sufficient evidence of the corrective measures taken for every Major Non-Conformity to the Certification Body. Only regarding requirement 2.1, considering the complexity of the information treated in it, the given period for the Non-Conformity evaluation is extended to 6 months.

Important requirements: Regarding important requirements, a 100% conformity is needed, so that the Certification Body can recommend the organization for the certification. Any lack of these requirements is considered a Minor Non-Conformity, and it will be necessary to propose corrective measures (declaration of intent and action plan), which will be submitted to the Investigation Body within a maximum of 4 months from the discovery of the Non-Conformity. In the proposal produced, the organization must include a timetable for the making of each corrective action. The maximum time for the complete implementation of each corrective measure is equal to one year.

Recommendations: Conformity to recommendations is not a rigorous requirement in order to obtain the certification. But, in the assessment, every aspect related to these requirements will be checked, and any lack will be indicated in the Audit report in the form of a recommendation. The organization has to evaluate any possible corrective measures, and, within the following inspection, it will have to inform the Certification Body about decisions and corrective measures taken.

If a requirement does not apply to the organization under verification, the requirement has to be marked with N.A.

1 – SYSTEM OF SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT

Nº	Requirement	Level	Y/N	Comments
1.1	The Organization has a social and environmental management system that involves necessary policies, programs, procedures, and registers showing the conformity to these normative requirements	E		
1.2	The Organization has identified a person responsible for verifying the conformity to the social and environmental management system.	E		
1.3	Any documentation related to the system of social and environmental management has been compiled for at least three years.	I		
1.4	The Organization has made a Life Cycle Assessment (LCA) study on its own productive system.	R		
The Auditor has to examine documentary proof supporting the above requirements.				
1.5	Staff management			
1.5.1	The Organization has defined practices that prevent access to working facilities to unauthorized people	I		
1.5.2	It has conducted the formation of internal and external staff (when necessary). The register performed formation activities. Indicate if there have been planned themes related to environmental aspects protection or to prevent practices that are dangerous in this regard.	I		
1.6	Emergency procedures			
1.6.1	There are emergency procedures in the company. Report the following elements at least: agricultural company address or map, contact person/s, list of emergency telephone numbers, position of the nearest phone, fire extinguishers position, spots with centralized electric switches and valves that close water and gas.	I		
1.6.2	There are procedures to implement relevant corrective measures in case of environmental accidents (ex. Leakage of fertilizers)	I		
1.7	They are maintained to prevent breakages and anomalies that can pollute the surrounding environment.	I		

2 – LEGAL CONFORMITY

Nº	Requirement	Level	Y/N	Comments
2.1	The Organization provides evidence related to the conformity of production and agricultural operations to every environmental law and normative at local, federal, state, and international levels.	E		

2.2	Medical authorization: the Organization disposes of its own identification number. (Register Veterinary Public Service identification number)	E		
The Auditor has to examine the documentary proof provided by the authorities supporting requirement 2.1				

3 – ECOSYSTEM PRESERVATION

N°	Requirement	Level	Y/N	Comments
3.1	From the date of the certification request forward, the Organization must not destroy any natural ecosystem. Also, from January 1 st , 1950 forward, no natural ecosystem shall have been destroyed by agricultural company management activities.	E		
3.2	Mitigation measures			
3.2.1	If a natural ecosystem has been destroyed by relevant management activities done by the agricultural company since January 1 st , 1950, the Organization must have documented the extent of the destruction and ecological impact.	E		
3.2.2	If a natural ecosystem has been destroyed by relevant management activities done by the agricultural company since January 1 st , 1950, the Organization must have developed, helped by an expert, a mitigation plan in compliance with the current legislation that compensates for the negative impact. The plan must include CO2 compensation.	E		
3.2.3	If a natural ecosystem has been destroyed by relevant management activities done by the agricultural company since January 1 st , 1950, the Organization must have implemented the mitigation plan activities.	E		
The Auditor has to collect and attach documentary proof that, from January 1 st , 1950 forward, no natural ecosystem has been destroyed.				
3.3	Any natural ecosystem, both aquatic and terrestrial, that is in the Organization site must be identified, protected, and restored using a protection program that also includes the reforestation of areas not intended for agriculture in the agricultural company.	E		
3.4	Production areas must not be in places that can negatively affect national parks, faunistic shelters, biotope networks, forest reserves, buffer zones, or other public or private areas for biological resources protection.	E		

3.5	The organization must develop a plan to keep or to restore the interconnection of natural ecosystems within its borders, considering habitat interconnection in landscape terms: for example, using elements such as native vegetation on roadsides and along water courses or riverbanks, trees, living hedges and barriers.	I		
3.6	Aquatic ecosystems protection			
3.6.1	In accordance with the used crop, the Organization protects aquatic ecosystems from erosion and displacement and agrochemicals runoff (for example, by creating protected areas on river banks, perennial or temporary water courses, bays, sources, lakes, swamps, and other natural water courses).	E		
3.6.2	The Organization must not modify natural water courses to create new irrigation or drainage channels.	E		
3.6.3	Water channels that were previously transformed must keep their natural vegetal cover, or, in case of its absence, it will be necessary to restore this cover.	E		
3.7	Development and recovery of company sites that aren't intended for agricultural production (buildings, sheds, barns, etc.) include evaluation of the landscaping impact, as well as impacts at points 3.1 and 3.2	I		

4 – WILDLIFE AND FLORA PRESERVATION

Nº	Requirement	Level	Y/N	Comments
4.1	It is necessary to create and to keep an inventory of fauna and flora found in the agricultural company every year	R		
4.2	The organization takes special measures to protect species considered vulnerable or at a higher risk in the IUCN Red List for the agricultural company	E		
4.3	The organization protects and restores ecosystems that provide habitat for fauna and flora in the organization's site, including those that provide habitats for fauna that cross the agricultural company during migration.	E		
To verify requirement 4.3, it is necessary to attach a short description of protection and preservation systems.				
4.4	Regulation of hunting, capture, extraction, or wild animal trade activities in the organization:			
4.4.1	Hunting, capture, extraction, or wild animal trade activities must be prohibited in the agricultural company, unless there are special and documentable authorizations.	E		

4.4.2	When there is authorization for hunting, capture, extraction, or wild animal trade activities in the organization, activities must not involve endangered species.	E		
4.4.3	When there is authorization for hunting, capture, extraction, or wildlife trade in the organization, activities must not have a negative impact on ecological functions or processes that are important to local and agricultural ecosystem sustainability.	E		
The Auditor must examine documentary proof supporting above requirements.				

5 – USE OF HAZARDOUS SUBSTANCES

Nº	Requirement	Level	Y/N	Comments
5.1	Chemical products, fuels, oils, and other possibly hazardous materials for people and environmental substances are treated in order to avoid food or environmental pollution, or to endanger human health.	E		
5.2	Acquisition, deposit, transportation, use, and disposal of these products must follow the instructions dictated by the current legislation, so as not to create problems for workers and environmental pollution.	E		
The auditor must be able to examine documentary evidence to support the above requirements.				

6 – AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION SYSTEM

Nº	Requirement	Level	Y/N	Comments
6.1	Crop rotation is applied for all annual crops. The annual rotation includes at least 2 different crops. A single crop, within the rotation, must cover at least 10% of the usable agricultural area and not be greater than 50% of the same. For horticultural crops: at least 3 different plant species over 5 years. If it is not possible to resort to an alternative crop, other equivalent agronomic techniques, as applicable, must be adopted (e.g., the use of annual green manure on at least 30% of the UAA).	E		
6.2	The Organization calculates agricultural productivity per input unit (fertility, water, or energy, where applicable), and it implements strategies to keep or improve efficiency list.	I		
6.3	The OR (Orchard Register or Company Register) is correctly compiled (indication of show varieties and of the successive cultivation practices).	E		
6.4	Use of agrochemicals			
6.4.1	The Organization uses biological, chemical, biotechnical, and agronomical defense resources rationally.	E		

6.4.2	The Organization has a plan to find monitoring strategies for pest, weeds, and disease prevalence, including biological control practices and reducing the use of chemicals.	I		
6.4.3	The organization tracks the number and population of species useful for biological control, and it implements strategies to improve their habitat and to introduce new useful species.	I		
6.4.4	When it is necessary to use pesticides, the organization must: Use slightly persistent products with low environmental impact and limited residual action, according to current legislation.	E		
6.4.5	The Organization does not use inputs that are considered "highly toxic" by current legislation about weeds, parasites, and disease control.	E		

7 – FARMING

N°	Requirement	Level	Y/N	Comments
7.1	General information			
7.1.1	OGM (also called GMO) Reared animals can't be OGM/ GMO	E		
7.1.2	Animal Welfare The organization hosts and eventually transports reared animals in spaces and conditions compliant with the World Organization for Animal Health's "Five Freedoms", including avoiding ongoing confinement in cages, crates, or via tethering. Animals must be slaughtered in a humane method that produces instant insensibility followed by death while insensate.	I		
7.1.3	Identification system in farming:			
7.1.3.1	There is a list of bovine animals on the farm.	E		
7.1.3.2	All animals have earmarks.	E		
7.1.3.3	The system includes a historical archive of identification and traceability data up to birth.	E		
7.2	Alimentation			
7.2.1	Alimentation register: Food rations of each animal group are registered and updated.	I		
7.2.2	Feed's origin compliant to Friend of the Earth requirements: All feed used for production is subject to audit, and during the reared animals' life, comes from agricultural activities compliant with Friend of the Earth requirements. Some of the origins may be the object of the current	R		

	audit.			
7.2.3	Optimization of Conversion Index: the Organization considers, according to its nutrition plan, an optimization plan for the ratio of food/feed and produced milk and/or meat.	I		
7.2.4	At every animal food/feed delivery, a sample is taken to keep until the delivered batch is exhausted.	R		
7.3	Sanitary aspects			
7.3.1	The organization avails itself of a veterinarian for regular collaboration to treat animals.	E		
7.3.2	Meds, conservation, and use:			
7.3.2.1	There are only meds that are officially approved by the National Medical Authority	E		
7.3.2.2	There is a space for meds conservation (including refrigeration, if necessary)	E		
7.3.2.3	The space is properly managed according to the loading and unloading register.	E		
7.3.2.4	The sanitary treatment register is properly compiled.	E		

8 – SOIL RESOURCES

N°	Requirement	Level	Y/N	Comments
8.1	The Organization has registered the current condition of:			
8.1.1	Soil type	E		
8.1.2	Soil erosion	R		
8.1.3	Soil cover	E		
8.1.4	Soil organic substance	E		
8.1.5	Soil biological activity	E		
8.1.6	Soil degradation (different from erosion)	E		
8.1.7	Soil nutrients	E		
8.2	The Organization has defined objectives, management, and soil conservation strategies, including evaluation methods to achieve these objectives.	E		
8.3	Every year, the Organization evaluates results in terms of objectives, and it adapts strategies accordingly.	E		
The registration update has to be triennial at least.				

9 – WATER RESOURCES

N°	Requirement	Level	Y/N	Comments
9.1	Water			
9.1.1	Water different from the net one is analyzed at least once a year.	I		
9.1.2	Wells are closed in order to avoid contamination.	I		
The auditor has to verify where the water used by the organization (well, aqueduct, etc) comes from.				
9.2	Any superficial or underground water used by the company for agricultural or production purposes must have concessions and permissions from the corresponding legal or environmental authorities.	E		
9.3	The organization must not drain or deposit industrial or domestic wastewaters in natural water courses without demonstrating that the drained water complies with relevant legal requirements and that its physical and biochemical characteristics will not deteriorate the receiving water course.	E		
9.4	In case there are no legal requirements, drained wastewater has to respect the following minimum criteria:			
9.4.1	Biochemical Oxygen Demand (BOD5, 20) or Total Suspended Solids: < 50 mg/L	E		
9.4.2	pH: 6.0 ÷ 9.0	E		
9.4.3	Fat and oils: < 30 mg/L	E		
9.4.4	Fecal coliform: absent	E		
9.5	Rainwater			
9.5.1	Rainwater is collected to be used for cleaning operations or other practices.	R		
9.5.2	Tanks are closed to avoid contamination.	R		
Registrations update must be triennial at least.				

10 – ATMOSPHERICAL RESOURCES

N°	Requirement	Level	Y/N	Comments
10.1	The organization has identified GHG emissions sources in the agricultural phase, and it has defined reduction objectives and strategies for their achievement.	E		
10.2	The Organization has identified GHG emissions sources in the rearing phase (including the ones that come from metabolism and vegetal and animal waste), and it has defined reduction objectives and strategies to achieve them. Emissions related to animal food production have also been considered.	E		
10.3	The organization has identified dust and micro particulate emissions sources in the agricultural company. The organization has defined reduction objectives and strategies for their achievement.	E		

10.4	Regarding used pesticides, the organization implements at least two of the following phases to reduce displacement risk: 1. enlarge droplet size. 2. Choose formulations that aren't subject to displacement. 3. Define vegetal buffers for alluvial or swampy areas.	I		
10.5	The organization does not use ozone- disruptive products/substances	E		
Registrations update must be at least triennial.				

11 – WASTE MANAGEMENT

N°	Requirement	Level	Y/N	Comments
11.1	Organic and inorganic waste deposits do not affect the building or the surrounding environment negatively (for ex., causing dispersion or runoff).	E		
11.2	Crops' residues and organic waste that do not come from crops and that are contaminated by biological or agrochemical sources are not composted, mulched, or used in other ways.	E		
11.3	There are procedures to separate organic waste from inorganic waste to simplify their collection for re-use/recycling/composting (for example: pallets, wood, trunks, paper, cartons, fertilizer, and waste that comes from alimentary transformation).	E		
11.4	Residues and organic waste that are not coming from cultures are burned or interred, whenever possible, unless weed controls are necessary.	E		
11.5	The Organization reuses or recycles any waste coming from inorganic materials that can be reused or recycled in accordance with local legislation on separate collection.	E		
11.6	Manure management			
11.6.1	The farm has proper structures to avoid the pollution of the soil beneath it (percolation) and of the surrounding areas.	E		
11.6.2	The material is eliminated at an appropriate frequency.	E		
11.6.3	The material is subject to appropriate composting.	E		
11.6.4	The Organization respects an appropriate timing between manure production and its distribution in fields.	E		
11.6.5	Manure is used in soil fertilization practices (or in companies in the area with which agreements have been made)	E		
11.7	The Organization, whether it receives mud or other materials from external installations, and it uses them in fertilization practices, disposes of relevant documentation to demonstrate their non-polluting properties.	E		

11.8	Containers and other disposable packaging			
11.8.1	There is a conservation method of materials used in agricultural activities. If yes, describe it.	I		
11.8.2	There is a disposal method for materials used in agricultural activities. If yes, describe it.	I		
11.8.3	Specialized companies are involved in these activities.	I		
11.8.4	There is evidence of proper disposal (delivery notes, other documents). Remember that the combustion of these materials is prohibited.	I		
11.9	The Organization has a management plan for animals that died in the farm, which includes utilization of authorized companies or other systems authorized by national legislation.	E		
11.10	There are disposal modalities of milk not compliant with alimentary use. If yes, describe it.	E		
It is an auditor's duty to collect any necessary documentation to verify waste disposal modalities of the organization and to attach a short description.				

12 – POWER MANAGEMENT

N°	Requirement	Level	Y/N	Comments
12.1	The effective total of the net energy consumption coming from operations is annually calculated, including: 1. the direct consumption of energy externally acquired (both renewable and non-renewable); 2. internal renewable energy production and consumption; 3. fuels used for transport and agricultural machinery functioning; 4. grey energy use and production (for ex. input, packaging, equipment).	I		
12.2	Objectives for energy resources reduction have been outlined, along with evaluation strategies and methods to achieve these objectives.	I		
12.3	The Organization undertakes to obtain the energy it needs by using renewable energy systems. If not all the energy it needs comes from renewable sources, the organization does engage in the acquisition of "Green credits" on the market.	I		

13 – SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

N°	Requirement	Level	Y/N	Comments
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13.1	The organization must respect human rights according to the following requirements:			
13.1.1	Respect international guidelines and the ILO regarding child labor.	E		
13.1.2	Pay workers with salaries that conform to the legal minimum at least.	E		
13.1.3	Assure that employees have access to healthcare.	E		
13.1.4	Apply security measures in accordance with legal requirements.	E		
13.1.5	Possibly have SA8000 certification.	R		
The Auditor must verify conformity to requirements using documentary proof (for example, employment contracts) and observations on the spot.				

Extra comments:

CONCLUSIONS:

*It's important that the Auditor also fills the following fields

☐ Agricultural production **COMPLIES with Friend of the Earth requirements**

☐ Agricultural production **DOESN'T COMPLY with Friend of the Earth requirements**

The Auditor has found the following non-conformities:

MAJOR NON-CONFORMITIES (to which conform within 3 months)

N°	Requirement	Level	YES/NO	Comment

MINOR NON-CONFORMITIES (proposal to send within 4 months and conformity to achieve within 1 year)

N°	Requirement	Level	YES/NO	Comment

RECOMMENDATIONS (to communicate before the following inspection)

N°	Requirement	Level	YES/N O	Comment