



# Organic Content Standard 3.0

## User Manual

OCS-201-V3.1-2020.07.13





©2013 Textile Exchange. All rights reserved. OCS, ORGANIC CONTENT STANDARD, and the OCS Logo are trademarks of Textile Exchange.

The OCS 3.1 replaces OCS 3.0 and is effective as of July 13, 2020. All audits conducted after February 28, 2021 shall be conducted using OCS 3.1.

English is the official language of the Organic Content Standard. In any case of inconsistency between versions, reference shall be made to the English version.

#### **Disclaimer**

Although reasonable care was taken in the preparation of this document, Textile Exchange and any other party involved in the creation of the document HEREBY STATE that the document is provided without warranty, either expressed or implied, of accuracy or fitness for purpose, AND HEREBY DISCLAIM any liability, direct or indirect, for damages or loss relating to the use of this document.

This is a voluntary standard and is not intended to replace the legal or regulatory requirements of any country.

#### **Copyright**

This publication is protected by copyright. Information or material from this publication may be reproduced in unaltered form for personal, non-commercial use. All other rights are reserved. Information or material from this publication may be used for the purposes of private study, research, criticism or review permitted under the Copyright Act 1976.

Any reproduction permitted in accordance with the Copyright Act 1976 shall acknowledge the *Organic Content Standard* as the source of any selected passage, extract, diagram or other information.

The OCS will undergo a revision process at least every five years. The next revision is tentatively scheduled to begin in 2023. You may submit feedback to the standard at any time; send to [Integrity@TextileExchange.org](mailto:Integrity@TextileExchange.org). Points of clarification may be incorporated into OCS guidance documents prior to 2023. More substantive feedback or suggested changes will be collected and reviewed as part of the next revision of the standard.

#### **Document Revision History**

OE 100 (2004) and the OE Blended (2007)  
Organic Content Standard, released March 2013  
Organic Content Standard 2.0, released January 2016  
Organic Content Standard 3.0, released March 2020  
Organic Content Standard 3.1, released July 2020



# Contents

- Introduction ..... 4
  - About the OCS User Manual ..... 4
  - About the Organic Content Standard..... 4
  - About Textile Exchange ..... 4
  - Acknowledgements ..... 5
  - How to Use This Document ..... 5
- Section A – General Information ..... 6
  - A1. References..... 6
- Section B – Principles of OCS Certification ..... 7
  - B1. Scope..... 7
  - B2. Claims ..... 8
  - B3. First Processor Certification ..... 9
  - B4. Supply Chain Certification ..... 9
- Section C – Verification of Organic Material Inputs ..... 10
  - C1. Verification of Input Material..... 10
  - C2. Material-specific requirements ..... 12
- Section D – Chain of Custody ..... 13
  - D1. Chain of Custody Criteria ..... 13
  - D2. Technical Specification of Input Material ..... 16
- Appendix A – Definitions..... 19



## Introduction

### About the OCS User Manual

The OCS User Manual is intended to support suppliers in the implementation of the Organic Content Standard. This is a separate document from the Organic Content Standard document.

### About the Organic Content Standard

The Organic Content Standard (OCS) is an international, voluntary standard that provides chain of custody verification for materials originating on a farm certified to recognized national organic standards. The standard is used to verify organically grown raw materials from the farm to the final product.

Individual sites are certified by independent, third-party certification bodies using annual audits. Material is tracked from the farm to the final product following the requirements of Textile Exchange's Content Claim Standard (CCS). For more information or to apply for certification, please visit: [TextileExchange.org/Integrity](https://TextileExchange.org/Integrity).

The goal of the Organic Content Standard (OCS) is to increase organic agriculture production.

The OCS aims to deliver this goal through three key objectives:

- Provide the industry with a tool to verify the organically grown content of the products they purchase.
- Provide companies with a trusted tool to communicate organically grown content claims to the industry.
- Provide organic farmers with broad access to the global organic market for their products.

### About Textile Exchange



The Organic Content Standard is owned and managed by **Textile Exchange**. Textile Exchange is a global non-profit that works closely with our members to drive industry transformation in preferred fibers, integrity and standards and responsible supply networks. We identify and share best practices regarding farming, materials, processing, traceability and product end-of-life in order to reduce the textile industry's impact on the world's water, soil and air, and the human population.



## Acknowledgements

The Organic Content Standard would not be possible without the help of the International Working Group (IWG) that worked to review, research, discuss, and approve the revision of the Organic Content Standard.

We would also like to extend special acknowledgment to the Global Organic Textile Standard (GOTS) for their contribution and participating as an International Working Group (IWG) member in the development and alignment with the Organic Content Standard (OCS).

## How to Use This Document

This document sets forth the overall requirements for conformity with the OCS. Guidance and supporting documents are available at [TextileExchange.org/Integrity](https://TextileExchange.org/Integrity).

In the OCS, the following terms are used to indicate requirements, recommendations, permissions, or capabilities:

- “shall” indicates a requirement
- “should” indicates a recommendation
- “may” indicates a permission
- “can” indicates a possibility or capability

“Desired Outcomes” have been included to detail the intent of requirements, but they are not requirements themselves. They are designated by a blue text box; see the following example:



**Desired outcome:** Example text. Why does this requirement exist?



### Guidance Sections

In the guidance section, requirements have been listed with additional comments on what conformity with these requirements will look like. Explanation of documents required and information to be collected in your records are all listed here.



### Additional Guidance

Additional good practice guidance and links to further information is also provided for some requirements. This information is often not audited but may be helpful in learning how to meet the requirements.



## Section A – General Information

### A1. References

**A1.1** All certified *organizations* are subject to the requirements of the following documents. All can be found at [TextileExchange.org/Integrity](http://TextileExchange.org/Integrity).

**A1.1.1** *CCS-101 Content Claim Standard (CCS)* - The **Content Claim Standard (CCS)** is a chain of custody standard that provides companies with a tool to verify a specific input material in a final product. It requires that each organization along the supply chain take sufficient steps to ensure that the integrity and identity of the input material are preserved.

**A1.1.2** *OCS - Logo Use and Claims Guide* - This document describes the language and design requirements for communication related to the OCS.

**A1.1.3** *OCS-201 OCS User Manual* – This document accompanies the standard and should be used for interpretation and guidance for users of the standard, including *first processors*, supply chain companies, brands, and retailers.



## Section B – Principles of OCS Certification

### B1. Scope

**B1.1** OCS certification applies to all supply chain *sites* of organically grown content: first processor, manufacturing, packaging and labeling, storage, handling, and shipping through the seller in the last business-to-business transaction.



Depending on the kind of *organic material* processed, the following examples are considered the first post-harvest processing stages that shall be OCS certified, and applicable sites are referred to as the *first processor*.

- Ginning for cotton\*
- Retting for bast fibres
- Boiling and washing cocoons for silk
- Scouring for wools and other animal fibres (respective grading if this step is undertaken before scouring and not already covered by the organic farming certification)

All organizations who are both OCS and GOTS certified shall have both certifications with the same certification body in order to reconcile organic volume among both standards accurately.

**B1.2** The OCS may be applied globally.

**B1.3** The OCS applies to supply chain sites of products not intended for consumption as food for humans or animals.



The Organic Content Standard (OCS) may not be used to support claims on food products as they are governed by national laws.

Food products in this context refer to those that are “intended for consumption” as agricultural food crops may have other purposes than consumption (e.g. cucumbers in shampoo).



**B1.4** The OCS applies to products that contain at least 5% *organically grown material*, calculated as a percentage of the entire product excluding *accessories* and *trims*.



An OCS Blended product may have a minimum of 5% and a maximum of 94% certified content (e.g. T-shirt with 5% Organic Cotton / 95% cotton) and the remaining content may be any material.

An OCS 100 product may have a minimum of 95% and a maximum of 100% certified content (e.g. T-shirt with 95% Organic Cotton / 5% recycled polyester) and the remaining content may be any material – as long as it is of a different type.

Individual components of a product may be identified as certified to the OCS but only in a manner that makes it completely clear that only the identified component contains organic content, and not the whole product. For example, only the upper of a shoe is made with organic cotton, while the bottom is rubber.

## B2. Claims



**Desired outcome:** Consumer-facing claims that mention the OCS are controlled in order to protect the integrity of the standard.

**B2.1** Claims related to the OCS may be either product-specific or general (non-product specific).

**B2.1.1** OCS products that meet all of the following criteria qualify for product-specific labelling:

- a. The product is certified up through the seller in the last business-to-business transaction;
- b. For use of the OCS 100 logo, the product shall not contain certified and non-certified content of the same material type;



Products containing certified and non-certified content of the same material type may NOT carry OCS 100 claims - the materials must be of different types. For example, a t-shirt containing 95% organic cotton and 5% recycled polyester may use the OCS 100 logo, while a t-shirt containing 95% organic cotton and 5% conventional cotton may not.

Products containing certified and non-certified content of the same material type may carry OCS Blended claims. For example, a t-shirt may contain 5% organic cotton and 95% conventional cotton and use the OCS Blended logo.





- c. All artwork and language meet the requirements of *OCS Logo Use and Claims Guide*;
- d. Approval of final artwork has been obtained from an authorized certification body through a label release form; and
- e. Only certified organizations may physically attach product-specific claims with reference to the OCS (e.g. hangtags, sewn-in labels).

**B2.1.2** Organizations that meet one or more of the following criteria may make general marketing claims (non-product specific) related to the OCS:

- a. Organizations with current certification to the OCS.
- b. Organizations that purchase certified products or products that contain certified material (verified by transaction certificates).
- c. Organizations that have made public commitments to the OCS.

**B2.1.3** All claims related to the OCS are subject to the requirements of *OCS Logo Use and Claims Guide*.

## B3. First Processor Certification

**B3.1** The following sections apply to all first processors:

**Section C:** Verification of Organically Grown Material

**Section D:** Chain of Custody

## B4. Supply Chain Certification

**B4.1** The following modules apply to all supply chain sites subject to OCS certification:

**Section D:** Chain of Custody



## Section C – Verification of Organic Material Inputs



**Desired outcome:** Allowable organically grown material input is defined and verified.

### C1. Verification of Input Material

**C1.1** The first processor shall have a system in place to verify that all organically grown material inputs come from a farm certified by an accredited certification body to comply with one or more of the following:

- a. USDA National Organic Program (NOP),
- b. Regulation (EC) 834/2007 & EU 2018/848, or
- c. Any other organic standard that is approved in the IFOAM Family of Standards.



Testing on materials other than cotton follows a widely used testing protocol.

**For organic cotton:**

Genetically modified organism (GMO) testing on cotton shall be carried out at an early stage of the processing chain (ginning or spinning) to ensure that sufficient DNA from the plant is available in the seed or fiber material.

Testing for the presence of GMOs in the organic material shall be carried out by the CB based on *OCS -103 Policy on the GMO Screening of Organic Cotton*.

[ISO IWA 32:2019 Screening of genetically modified organisms \(GMOs\) in cotton and textiles](#) shall be used as the GMO testing method.

Textile Exchange no longer recommends testing on chemically processed cotton materials.

Certification bodies will retain and collate data of GMO testing at the gin, and confidentially submit it to Textile Exchange.



[ISO 20921:2019 Textile – Determination of stable nitrogen isotope ratio in cotton fibers](#) can be used to determine whether the cotton was organically grown.

**Fertilizer & Pesticide:** Follow organic farming standards' testing protocols to detect synthetic fertilizer and pesticide residue.



**C1.2** All organically grown material entering the supply chain shall have a valid scope certificate of the farm, issued by an accredited certification body.



“Entering the supply chain” refers to the inputs of the first processor. CCS “B2.1a Input Inspection” requires input document inspection and for the OCS includes the farm’s scope certificate.

The certification body will require the following input documents to be submitted in order to issue a transaction certificate for the first processor’s outputs:

- Scope certificate of an organic farm;
- GMO & fiber/material quality test reports; and
- Input transaction certificates per C1.3 guidance.

Audit reports may be substituted for the first year of implementation in cases where scope certificates are not available.

All records of data & documents shall be shared with Textile Exchange on the “trackit” system.

**C1.3** All organically grown material entering the supply chain shall have a valid transaction certificate issued by an accredited certification body and shall consider scope certificates of the farm in case of non-availability of transaction certificate.



“Entering the supply chain” refers to the inputs of the first processor. CCS “B2.1a Input Inspection” requires input document inspection and for the OCS includes the farm’s transaction certificate as well as any traders involved prior to the first processor.

To ensure a chain of custody for organic materials from the farm to the first processor is maintained, the certification body will require the following input documents to be submitted in order to issue a transaction certificate for the first processor’s outputs:

- Transaction certificate(s) naming the farm as the seller and any subsequent trader(s) transaction certificate(s). Records of data shall be kept with the certification body, and also shared with Textile Exchange trackit system;
- GMO & fiber/material quality test reports collected from the organization; and
- Scope certificate of an organic farm per C1.2 guidance.

All records of data & documents shall be shared with Textile Exchange on the “trackit” system.



“Non-availability of transaction certificates” refers to situations where the organic standard’s regulation or authority does not issue transaction certificates and are therefore impossible to obtain.

**C1.4** “*In-conversion*” organically grown material may be accepted as *OCS material* if the applicable farming standard permits such certification.



The scope certificate of an in-conversion farm shall be accepted for an in-conversion claim under the OCS if the applicable farming standard permits such certifications and claim.

- In-conversion Scope certificate of an organic farm.
- GMO & fiber/material quality test reports will be collected from organization.

All records of data & documents shall be shared with Textile Exchange on the “trackit” system.

## C2. Material-specific requirements

**C2.1** If the organization's organically grown material inputs include organic cotton, the organization shall cooperate with and conduct GMO testing for the organic cotton in accordance with *OCS-103 GMO Screening of Organic Cotton*.



The organization and the certification body shall conduct GMO testing for organic cotton in accordance with *OCS-103 GMO Screening of Organic Cotton* and shall report all findings of GMO cotton to Textile Exchange immediately, as specified in the policy. See user manual guidance under C1.1 above for more input verification information.

**C2.2** The first processor or OCS certified sites shall only accept organic wool as an input if it is non-*mulesed* or from a farm with *ceased mulesing* status.



Ceased mulesing status may be verified through one of the following options:

- The wool is sourced from a country where mulesing is illegal or not practiced;
- The organic standard used to certify the farm does not permit mulesing; or
- The farm is certified to the Responsible Wool Standard.



## Section D – Chain of Custody



**Desired outcome:** The integrity of organically grown material is maintained through to the final consumer.

### D1. Chain of Custody Criteria

**D1.1** The organization shall conform with the requirements of the *CCS-101 Content Claim Standard (CCS)* whereby:

**D1.1.1** Each reference of “CCS” in the Content Claim Standard shall be understood as “OCS.” In the case of contradiction with the CCS, the OCS requirements supersedes that of the CCS.

**D1.1.2** “Claimed material,” as defined in the CCS, refers to OCS material for the OCS, which is defined in Section C1.

**D1.1.3** Additional inputs may be accepted as OCS material as defined in *ASR-106 Accepted Equivalent Standards*.



### Principles of Chain of Custody



#### Identification

All organic raw materials shall be clearly identified at all stages of the supply chain.

- Certified products are accurately identified.
- Content percentages of claimed materials are accurate.

Refer to CCS “B3.2 Identification”

All organic raw materials shall be clearly identified.

In some case it may be necessary for the OCS materials to be labelled directly, while in others, it may be sufficient for machines, carrying vessels, storage containers, or areas to use clear signage. It may also be possible that no identification is needed, such as at a spinning mill that only processes 100% OCS cotton, or when control system is in place to link a product description with each container.



Labels and signage shall be visible and understandable by all workers operating in the area.

Example of good identification practice: A gin has OCS certified cotton bales marked with OCS label on printed cloth bags with the gin's name, address, and certification licensing number.



### Segregation

All stages through the supply chain shall be operated to ensure that organically grown and non-certified material are not commingled. This ensures that organically grown fibers and OCS products are not contaminated by contact with non-organically grown material.

- Certified materials are not mixed with non-certified materials (except as specifically permitted).
- Certified materials are stored separately from non-certified materials.

Refer to CCS "B3.3 Segregation"

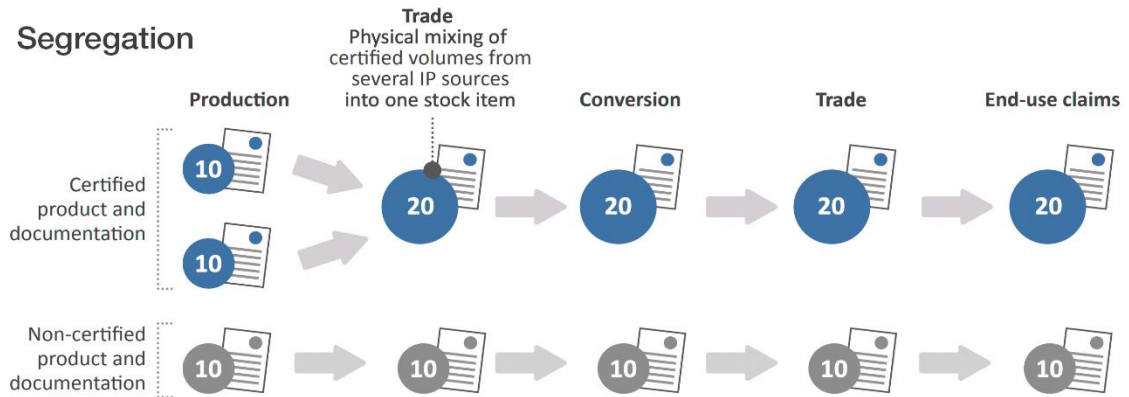
- Organizations that process OCS and non-OCS products at the same site shall take precautions to prevent commingling, including cleaning out the machinery before processing OCS inputs.
- Certified material shall have a dedicated area for storage before, during, and after production.
- Training shall be provided to all workers regarding handling and storage of OCS product.
- Extra precautions shall be taken at production sites such as ginning and spinning of cotton due to higher risk of contamination.
- Workers shall be trained about segregation of certified and non-certified material.

Examples of good segregation practices: In the diagram below (courtesy of ISEAL's *Chain of Custody and Models Definitions* guidance document<sup>1</sup>), blue icons are certified material processing only, maintaining segregation of certified and the grey icons that are non-certified materials at all stages of production and storage.

<sup>1</sup> [https://www.isealalliance.org/sites/default/files/resource/2017-11/ISEAL\\_Chain\\_of\\_Custody\\_Models\\_Guidance\\_September\\_2016.pdf](https://www.isealalliance.org/sites/default/files/resource/2017-11/ISEAL_Chain_of_Custody_Models_Guidance_September_2016.pdf)



## Segregation



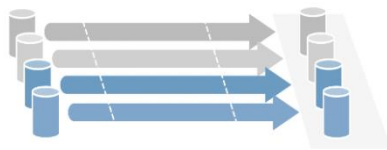
## Volume Reconciliation

The objective of volume reconciliation is to ensure that certified output volume does not exceed available certified input (from transaction certificates) after factoring in production losses. Detailed records or systems must be maintained that identify which inputs were used in the production of a given output product.

- Comparison of certified output volume to the certified input volume.
- $(\text{Input}) - (\text{production loss}) = (\text{output})$

There several types of chain of custody models, some of which are illustrated in the figures below (courtesy of the Ellen MacArthur Foundation's *Mass Balance White Paper*<sup>2</sup>). Textile Exchange's chain of custody model is based on "segregation".

### IDENTITY PRESERVATION



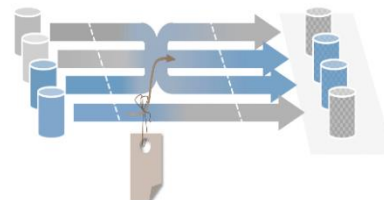
### MASS BALANCE



### SEGREGATION



### BOOK & CLAIM



<sup>2</sup> <https://www.ellenmacarthurfoundation.org/assets/downloads/Mass-Balance-White-Paper.pdf>



This model ensures that certified product is kept separate from non-certified sources through each stage of the supply chain, ensuring that the ingredients within a particular product originate from certified sources, though it may not be possible to identify which molecule came from which certified source. However, the OCS does allow blending within a product, which lowers the overall percentage of certified material but the certified portion of OCS Product's chain of custody is maintained at each supply chain site.

- Certified product is kept physically separate from non-certified product through each stage of the supply chain, with the exception of being blended with non-certified product.
- Certified product may be mixed: Different batches of certified physical products may be mixed only with other batches of physical product certified to the same standard, or two standards which recognized equivalence.
- The documentation associated with certified physical product clearly distinguishes between certified and non-certified materials and may be used to track each individual batch of certified physical product separately in the associated documentation.

## D2. Technical Specification of Input Material

**D2.1** The organization shall maintain records of technical specifications for all OCS materials – including organic raw material inputs on file.



### Cotton

Fiber quality test reports will be collected for each output transaction certificate from a first processor. Reports will be mentioned on transaction certificate box 10/17. Testing by the certification body may also occur on-site to reduce the risk of fiber substitution.

The tables below from *Organic Cotton: A Fiber Classification Guide* show how cotton fiber quality relates to yarn count. This guidance document can be downloaded from [TextileExchange.org](http://TextileExchange.org).





## Cotton Species

There are four species of cultivated cotton, each with its own characteristics and product suitability.

**Table 2: Cotton Profile and Product Suitability**

Cotton	Fiber Length	Yarn Count (Ne)	Yarn Type	Cultivation Country (Organic)	Product Suitability
Gossypium Arboreum	Short	3-20	OE, K	Benin, Bukian Faso, India, Mali, Pakistan, Peru, Senegal, Tanzania, Uganda, USA	Denim/Jeans, Home, Canvas, Non-Wovens, Medical, Industrial textiles
Gossypium Herbaceum	Short	3-20	OE, K	Benin, Bukian Faso, India, Mali, Pakistan, Peru, Senegal, Tanzania, Uganda	Denim/Jeans, Home, Canvas, Non-Wovens, Medical, Industrial textiles
Gossypium Hirsutum (Upland)	Medium, Long	18-45	K, C, CK	Benin, Brazil, Bukina Faso, China, Colombia, India, Madagascar, Mali, Pakistan, Peru, Senegal, Tajikistan, Tanzania, Turkey, Uganda, USA	Denim/Jeans, Home, T shirts, Yoga wear, Leisure wear, Causal wear, Under wear, Industrial, Smart, Geo textiles
Gossypium Barbardense	Long, Extra Long	40-130	K, C, CK	China, Egypt, India, Israel, Kyrgyzstan, Madagascar, Peru, Turkey, USA	High-end (fine apparel, underwear/intimates), High-end Home

OE - Open end/Rotor yarn | K - Ring spun carded yarn | C - Ring spun combed yarn | CK - Ring spun combed compact yarn

**Table 3: Fiber Length Conversion Chart**

Fiber Length	mm	inches
Short	<25	<26/32
Medium	25-30	26/32-35/32
Long	30-35	36/32-42/32
Extra Long	>35	>44/32

**Table 6: Fiber Staple Length and Yarn Count Range**

Staple Length	Type	Yarn Count Range		
		Ne	Nm	Tex
Short	Coarse	3-16	5-27	197-37
Medium	Medium	17-44	28-76	34.7-13.1
Long	Fine	45-80	77-135	12.8-7.4
Extra Long	Very fine	>80	>135	>7.4

### Example: Cotton/Wool

The certification body will require documents that detail the technical specification to be submitted by seller/buyer in order to issue a transaction certificate by certification body.

In this example, the purchase order or invoice has fiber quality parameters mentioned and can be compared to at quality test report.

- Ginning & Spinning process – technical specifications are the fiber length & micron value.
- Spinning & Weaving/Knitting /Pre-treatment – technical specifications are yarn count, fabric construction.

We Confirm having sold to you **Indian Cotton** of following Parameters at following terms and Conditions:

Description	Indian Cotton, Crop 2018-2019 (H.S. Code 5201) Origin Country: India		
Variety	Indian Organic Raw Cotton S-6 MIDDLING. CONTAMINATION CONTROLLED.		
Parameters	Staple Length 29 MM	Mic : 3.5 - 4.9 NCL,	Strength: 29 GPT MIN,
	Moisture: 8.5% Max,	Trash: 3.50% Max.	



### How to do testing at ginning (quick test):

A fiber length quick test can be done with the help of simple ruler to scale, or with a more specific tool available in the market.

Example:



**Ginning:** Fiber length etc.

**Spinning:** Carded/Combed/Open End/Filament – with yarn count etc.

**Fabric:** Woven/Knitted/Nonwoven – Fabric construction, Yarn count (Ne 100\*120, Ne 60\*80) Construciton (92\*80 – epi\*ppi)

**Garment:** T shirt, Shirt etc.

All technical specifications will be mentioned on the transaction certificate.



## Appendix A – Definitions

Refer to *TE-101 Terms and Definitions for Textile Exchange Standards and Related Documents* for definitions of terms used in these procedures. Key definitions are included below. Defined terms are shown in italics in the first usage in this document, and in some other uses for clarity.

**Ceased Mulesing:** Wool from sheep where *mulesing* has ceased on the property. No lambs born on this property in the last 12 months have been mulesed. No purchased sheep are mulesed.

**First processor:** The certified *organization* that performs the first point of product transformation following the harvest or collection of the raw material. For OCS, this refers to the earliest processing stage following the farm (the gin, for cotton).

**In-Conversion:** The establishment of an organic management system and building of soil fertility requires an interim period, known as the conversion period. While the conversion period may not always be of sufficient duration to improve soil fertility and for re-establishing the balance of the ecosystem, it is the period in which all the actions required to reach these goals are started.

**Mulesing:** Removal of wool-bearing strips of skin from between the hind legs of sheep (the “breec’h” area) in an effort to avoid problems of fly strike.

**OCS Material:** The specific organically grown material that is being verified by the OCS as a content claim in a product which is sold.

**Organically Grown Material:** Any output of an organic *farm* that has been certified by an accredited certification body to comply with USDA National Organic Program (NOP), Regulation (EC) 834/2007 & EU 2018/848, or any other organic standard that is approved in the IFOAM Family of Standards.

**Organization:** A legal entity which is *certified* to or in the process of becoming certified to the OCS. A scope certificate is held by an organization, and an organization has one or more sites.

**Site:** Any geographically distinct unit within a certificate scope. Locations which are geographically distinct or have different civic addresses are considered to be separate sites.

**Transitional:** See *in-conversion*.