

Contents of this application packet:

□ **An Organic Handler fee schedule.**

Instructions: Read, review and retain.

Explanation: Lists fees charged for handler certification.

□ **An Organic Handler Application form.**

Instructions: Complete and return this form. Follow instructions on the form.

Explanation: The NOP defines handle as: “To sell, process, or package agricultural products, except such term shall not include the sale, transportation, or delivery of crops or livestock by the producer thereof to a handler.” If your operation fits this definition, please complete a handler application.

□ **An Organic Handling System Plan Update form; OR**

□ **An Organic Handling System Plan (OHSP) form.**

Instructions: A new OHSP (long form) is required at least every fourth year. So, if you are applying for your fourth year of certification, you must complete a full OHSP form. Otherwise, you may use the (shorter) Update form.

Complete and return this form if you are submitting a Handler application. **Complete all sections of the form, mark the section as “Not Applicable” if it does not apply to your operation. Do NOT leave any sections blank.** Follow instructions on the form.

Explanation: An Organic System Plan is: “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.” This plan is the description of your operation, which will be used to determine your eligibility for certification and compliance with organic standards. Failure to complete [any part of] the form will delay processing your application.

□ **A Product Profile form.**

Instructions: Complete and return a Product Profile form for any new or changed products not included with your previous application if you are applying for continuation of certification as an organic handler. Follow instructions on the form.

Explanation: The Product Profile provides detailed information on your organic products. This information is required to determine eligibility for certification and compliance with organic standards.

□ **Record of Complaints to an Organic Operation**

Instructions: You must record all complaints received (both written and verbal complaints) pertaining to the organic integrity of your products. Retain this record for a minimum of 5 years from the date of the records' creation. DO NOT return this form with your application—the information you record on this form will be reviewed during your annual inspection.

Explanation: In order for a handler to ship organic products to European and other export markets, the certifier of that operation must be accredited under the internationally accepted regulation of ISO Guide 65. This regulation requires operators to record complaints made to them regarding their compliance with organic standards. The Montana Department of Agriculture supplies this form to assist operators in establishing a system for recording complaints that is compliant with ISO Guide 65. The inspector will verify your record of complaints during your annual inspection.