

ACO Industry Notice and Statement

20 July 2012

Re: Fertiliser contamination allegations

There has been understandable farmer and consumer concern following allegations by the ABC's 7.30 Report of potential contamination in two product lines of Nutri-Tech Solutions (NTS) BFA registered farm inputs.

The two products in question, NTS Fulvic 1400 and Nutri-Care, were alleged to have contained substances not permitted in organic production, namely nitrates and benzene respectively.

Australian Certified Organic (ACO) is conducting product tests to determine whether repeat sample tests will confirm these results or as to whether this is an isolated incidence. As a precaution, testing has been extended to cover a broad spectrum from the approximately 80 products which NTS has registered for use in organic production.

NTS is independently conducting its own product tests to determine the source of contamination.

In the meantime a number of products have recently been withdrawn from BFA registration, pending product test results. These products include:

Backyard Boost
Backyard Blooms
K-Carb-35
Cal-Mag Life
Dia-Life
Gyp-Life
Lime Life
Mag Life
Phos Life
Nutri-Key Shuttle Seven
Life-Force Vita-Guard
Vita-Guard
Life-Force Stimulate
NTS Fulvic 1400
NTS Soluble Fulvic Acid Powder
Nutri-Care

Farmers are advised to check whether they are or have been using in the past 12 months any of these products listed in this notice and if so to urgently notify the ACO office prior to produce being sold. As a further precautionary measure certified organic farmers are advised to temporarily discontinue using all Nutri-Tech products until the full investigation has been completed.

In addition to product testing, ACO is conducting a thorough audit of Nutri-Tech operations and will notify clients of the results expected in the coming one to two weeks.

All organic farmers can trace fertiliser applications because of meticulous records they are required to keep. This enables speedy isolation of any issues, should there prove to be any concern in relation to these matters.

Certified organic products remain consumers' best means of reducing their exposure to a range of synthetically manufactured products, including these ones in question. Nitrates in particular are used by non organic farmers but are expressly prohibited in organic standards.

ACO's regular spot retail market residue testing is being expanded as a further precaution. Recent market produce spot testing by ACO has confirmed no presence of pesticide residues in the marketplace. The third party auditing and certification in addition to the residue testing programs aim to ensure transparency and verified safety to deliver confidence for farmers and consumers.

An updated list of BFA registered NTS products along with all BFA registered products for organic farming is available on the ACO website: australianorganic.com.au. Farmers at all times are urged to ensure that they are using only currently approved organic farm inputs.

Concerned growers who may believe they have used any products from the above list of products are urged to contact the ACO office on 07 3350 5716 or info@aco.net.au.