

The Coalition's Response to the Organic Development Group

2025 Federal Election Questionnaire

Pass domestic regulation of the Australian organic industry within 12 months of election.

The Coalition recognises the contribution of the organics industry to the agricultural sector and that the current regulatory framework is not 'fit for purpose'. The Coalition remains committed to a domestic organic regulatory framework in Australia.

On 19 November 2024 the Coalition introduced the *National Organic Standard Bill 2024* to create a framework for regulating the sale or importation of organic goods in Australia, with appropriate penalties for non-compliance.

The Coalition remains committed to a domestic regulatory framework in Australia. The coalition is committing \$1.6 million (and \$0.4 million ongoing) for the implementation of a national organic standard.

As per the Coalition Senators' dissenting report in the Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee Inquiry (2025) it is recommended that Labor commit to working closely with the organics industry to develop a domestic regulation framework that will include a legislated definition of 'organic' and a mandatory standard for organic products produced and sold domestically in Australia.

The recent Standing Committee on Agriculture's Inquiry into Australian agriculture in Southeast Asian Markets report 'Trading North' in November 2024 also supports the recommendation to define and regulate organic products within Australia's domestic market.

Accelerate market access for organic exports.

The ODG calls upon the next government to:

- **Improve resource allocation within the DAFF organic program to accelerate equivalency negotiations with key trading partners to reduce certification burdens and improve market access.**
- **Implement all recommendations from the 'Trading North' Report.**

The Coalition recognises that trade diversification and expansion is important for the organics industry to continue to grow. One of the key drivers for domestic regulations is to enable equivalency negotiations to commence.

The level of resource allocation can be investigated in government, and once Labor agrees to a National Domestic Organic Standard.

The Albanese Government has not responded to the Trading North report. The Coalition will consider the inquiry recommendations if in government.

Invest in data collection to measure the organic industry's positive environmental and health impacts and its potential to accelerate Australia's progress towards its \$100bn agriculture industry goal by 2030.

The ODG calls for targeted commitments in the following areas:

- 1. Ongoing production of an annual Australian Organic Market Report to provide up-to-date insights on industry trends, economic value, and sustainability impacts.**
- 2. Development and implementation of an API-based data transfer system for certification bodies, ensuring streamlined and consistent organic industry data collection.**
- 3. Industry benchmarking and regulatory reporting tailored to the organic sector, improving trade competitiveness and understand and track sustainability and health impacts of organic farming systems.**

Industry is best placed to collect data and report on the positive health and environmental impacts of organics.

The Coalition has supported the Australian Agriculture Sustainability Framework (AASF) being delivered by the NFF. The AASF was developed in response to increasing pressures on the agricultural sector to demonstrate sustainability performance, both domestically and internationally.

Maintaining traceability and establishing appropriate biosecurity safeguard organic integrity.

To protect the integrity of Australia's organic sector, the ODG calls on all parties and politicians to commit to the following if the proposed changes from FSANZ Proposal 1055 and the amendments to the Gene Technology Act 2000 are adopted, to ensure that any changes to GM regulation do not diminish traceability for the organic industry:

- Implement a national GM supply chain testing program – Establish proactive testing measures to detect potential GM contamination and verify compliance with organic standards.**
- Fund dedicated staff to monitor and communicate GM developments – Strengthen regulatory oversight by ensuring both industry and policymakers have access to up-to-date information on emerging genetic technologies and contamination risks.**
- Support organic seed production programs - Invest in domestic seed production to reduce reliance on imports, ensuring the availability of non-GM seed stock for Australian organic farms.**

- **Develop a centralised digital certification system – Improve traceability, efficiency, and security of organic certification through digital solutions, reducing administrative burdens while enhancing compliance oversight.**
- **Inclusion of organic in Biosecurity strategies – Future biosecurity strategies under the next federal government must include the organic industry to ensure integrity of the organic industry from potential biosecurity threats.**

The ODG urges the government to implement these commitments before the 2028 election. The ODG seeks a commitment of \$19.5M over four years to support traceability for the organic industry.

The Coalition will consider this if elected.