

Guide to risk assessing your textiles products

This guide is designed to help you evaluate your operation and products to identify where there may be risk of non-permitted residue contamination and accidental mixing of organic and non-organic products. It is only applicable to processors who transform, pack or label products, and those trading or purchasing raw, unprocessed fibres.

It is important that you carry out a risk assessment for each of your organic products. Where a risk is identified, you must undertake residue testing for the parameters identified to ensure there are no prohibited/restricted residues.

When undertaking residue testing, this guide will help establish what testing policy you should put in place, the frequency of these tests and the number of samples to take. If your products are tested under any other residue testing scheme (such as Oeko-tex) please inform us, as this could help you assess some contamination risks. If undertaking testing, you must use a lab which is accredited to EN/ISO 17025 or equivalent. Your risk assessment will be checked alongside any relevant test results at your inspection. Your products may be subject to random testing by our inspectors.

Please see GOTS standards and manual 2.4.15 for the limit values for residues in GOTS goods and GOTS standards and manual 2.4.16 for residues in additional materials and accessories.

Risk factor 1 - Organic fibres used

- Are all your organic fibres certified according to the GOTS standards?
- Do you have reason to believe there could be pesticide or GM contamination of your fibre?
- Could your organic fibres have been substituted with conventional fibres?
- If processing wool, have sheep been managed as organic for 12 months before shearing? Has a period of three months (or three times the legal withdrawal period, whichever is greater) between the last treatment with an external veterinary treatment and shearing been observed? Have synthetic pyrethroid treatments been used in the last 12 months?

→ Please record any potential risk(s) and your proposed action

Risk factor 2 - Accessories and additional materials

- Are all accessories and additional materials used permitted in GOTS certified products?
- Could any natural materials used be synthetic imitation fibres?
- Have you evidence to demonstrate that accessories and additional materials meet the GOTS residue requirements, and has SA Certification approved these?
- See accessories risk assessment sheet P919Fm for guidance on residue limits and applicable tests, or standard 60.16.3

→ Please record any potential risk(s) and your proposed action

Risk factor 3 - Chemical inputs used

- Have all chemical inputs used on or coming into contact with the product been approved for use by a GOTS-approved certifier?
- If you are processing non-organic products on your site using inputs not approved to GOTS, is there a risk these could have mistakenly been used to process your organic products?
- Do any of your inputs contain chemicals only permitted in restricted quantities and if so, can you guarantee you do not exceed these allowed quantities?
- See input information sheet P920Fm for guidance on requirements or standards 60.7 – 60.11

→ Please record any potential risk(s) and your proposed action

Risk factor 4 - Separation (If you operation is not dedicated organic)

- Are organic fibres and products kept entirely separate from non-organic fibres and products from goods in, through processing and storage and transport?
- Is machinery thoroughly cleaned/purged before any organic runs?

→ Please record any potential risk(s) and your proposed action

Risk factor 5 - Transport and Storage conditions

- Have any pesticide/biocide treatments been used which may not comply with organic production standards?

→ Please record any potential risk(s) and your proposed action