

1. AIM AND SCOPE

The purpose of this procedure is to determine the solution method for appeals and complaints that may come from operators or about different 3rd parties in control and certification services carried out in accordance with TR (Regulation on the principles and implementation of organic farming) and EU Organic farming legislation and Başak Organic Standard¹.

2. RESPONSIBILITY

General Manager is responsible for the implementation of this procedure, the appropriate handling and decision-making of appeals and complaints within certain periods, and the Quality Unit personnel and Units subject to activities are responsible for the preliminary investigation and recording of appeals / complaints and the follow-up and coordination of corrective / preventive activities.

The Appeal and Complaint Evaluation Committee is responsible for the resolution of appeals/complaints, upon assignment by General Manager, in relevant cases.

3. DEFINITIONS

Başak Ekolojik Ürünler Kontrol ve Sertifikasyon Hizmetleri Tic. Ltd. Şti. hereafter referred to as “Başak Ekolojik”.

Inspector: A real person authorized by the Ministry to inspect the implementation of every stage of organic farming activities in accordance with the relevant legislation, on behalf of control body.

Operator: Natural or legal person engaged in organic farming activities.

Certifier: A natural person authorized by the Ministry to confirm that the inspected product is organic on behalf of the control body.

General Manager: It is the person responsible for the coordination of the certification studies, signing the agreement with the client, relations with the subcontractors and making the agreements.

Appeal: If the operator disagrees with the certification decision or the certification decision process, sanctions or rejection of applications, the operator may appeal the decision.

Complaint: Complaints about Başak Ekolojik services, eg. failure to respond to certification-related correspondence or unprofessional behavior.

Appeal and Complaint Evaluation Committee: In the event that the operator has an appeal to the decisions made as a result of the appeals/complaints, it is the committee that is convened by General Manager to examine the issue and is responsible for the evaluation of the relevant appeals and complaints.

Ministry: T.C. Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry

Organic Agriculture Committee: It consists of a total of seven members, including the relevant Deputy General Director from the General Directorate of Plant Production of the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, the relevant Head of Department and three members from the relevant Department, a member from the Legal Counseling Department and a

¹ Başak Organic Standard will be valid until 31 December 2024, it will not be valid as of this date.

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member from the Guidance and Inspection Department (For the purpose of establishment, duties, working procedures and principles, see Turkish Regulation on the principles and implementation of organic agriculture).

TÜRKAK: Turkish Accreditation Agency.

Customer Relations: *Sending the F-P06.03 Customer Satisfaction Survey Form to customers, transcribing customer demands obtained from the surveys according to the type of feedback, forwarding summary and detailed reports to the relevant departments, conducting customer satisfaction surveys responsible for evaluating customer demands and, when necessary, notifying the customer of the evaluation results. The e-mail address through which customers can reach customer relations is available on the Başak Ekolojik website.*

4. IMPLEMENTATION

4.1. Appeal and Complaint

Complaints about the service quality of our company; in writing or with the [F-P06.03 Client satisfaction survey form](#).

General Manager conducts a preliminary investigation of the received appeal and complaint and confirms whether it is related to the certification activities under Başak Ekolojik responsibility. When an appeal or complaint arises for any reason, the personnel of our company, which is the subject of disagreement with the operator, notifies General Manager of the situation. The personnel who receive the appeal or complaint must also convey the situation to General Manager without delay.

General manager; with the [F-P06.01 Appeal And Complaint Notification Form](#) ensures that all stages until the conclusion of the appeal/complaint are recorded in a way that can be traced back. General Manager is responsible for starting to deal with the appeal/complaint within five working days and concluding it within 15 days at the latest. General manager; discusses the appeal/complaint with relevant parties (including inspectors and certifiers) and other persons it deems appropriate. It ensures that the appeal/complaint owner is informed in writing about the result and, if necessary, the activities to be carried out regarding the appeal/complaint. In addition, it retrospectively reviews the control and certification stages of the operator concerned with the appeal/complaint and ensures that it is used as data for corrective action if there are any misapplications or issues that need improvement. If General Manager is a party to the appeal/complaint, the responsibility for handling and resolving the appeal/complaint rests with the Quality Unit.

In order to apply when necessary, competent courts in case of appeals are determined in the [S-P01.01 Organic Agriculture Inspection and Certification Service Agreement](#). If the operator has an appeal to the Başak Ekolojik certification decision which is according to TR Organic Agriculture Regulation, it has the right to submit the relevant information and documents to the Organic Agriculture Committee within twenty-one (21) days at the latest.

Table-1. Appeals/complaints regarding certification activities under Başak Ekolojik responsibility

N	Appeal/Complaint	Execution
1	Complaints about office services, including but not limited to the following; Inability to reach relevant persons, Arrangement of the document and late sending time, etc.	About the evaluation result of the appeal/complaint the client is informed, to prevent recurrence and root corrective action to eliminate the cause initiated and its effectiveness measured.

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2	Complaints that may affect inspection impartiality, independence and efficiency, including but not limited to the following; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The attitude and behavior of the inspector, • Any differences in the interpretation of the standards • Failure to use appropriate methods in inspection, • Non-compliance with the inspection plan 	
3	By the operator; Appeal to certification decision	An appeal to Başak Ekolojik must be made within 14 days at the latest. Başak Ekolojik does not accept the appeal if the prohibited substance is applied in the production process.
4	Appeal to the decisions taken by Başak Ekolojik for pesticide residues in organic products	It must be done by the operator within 30 days at the latest. Re-evaluation can be done as an additional inspection or an inspection of the document (evaluation papers, photographs, etc.) If the prohibited substance is applied in the production process, the appeal is not accepted.
5	Appeal to the non-compliances written by the inspectors as a result of the control.	In this case, the inspector, to the operator; explains that it has right to appeal and prepares a report. The inspected person is asked to sign the report, if it does not, the report is signed unilaterally. It is stated in the report that the subject and the inspected party refrain from signing. General Manager examines the appeal and conveys the result to the relevant parties in writing, stating the detailed justifications. The operator has right to appeal to the decision of the General Manager. In this case, see item 7.
6	Appeal to the Inspectors who will carry out the inspectors	The operator has right to appeal to the inspector. Submits the appeal, along with its justification, in writing to General Manager with Başak Ekolojik appeal/complaint form. General Manager evaluates in a way that does not hinder or delay control process, and does not jeopardize its impartiality, independence and consistency. If the appeal is found to be justified, the inspectors are changed and the information of the newly assigned inspector is sent to the firm for confirmation. If the appeal is not justified, this situation is communicated to the operator in writing and a reconfirmation of the inspection plan is requested.
7	Appeal of the operator to the decisions made as a result of appeals/complaints	First of all, General Manager ensures that the Appeal and Complaint Form is refilled. With this form, it ensures that all stages are recorded in a way that can be traced backwards. If available, the client's letter on this subject is also added to the form. General Manager ensures that the Appeal and Complaint Evaluation Committee convenes within 5 working days to examine the issue. The decision of the Appeals and Complaints Evaluation Committee is notified in writing to the relevant parties together with its justifications (referring to the relevant standard or procedure and forwarding a copy if necessary).

Complaints about operators from different parties; It may be related to non-compliance with the usage rules of certificates and logos. Compliance with the principle of confidentiality is essential in the evaluation of such complaints. In special cases where the subject needs to be announced to the public, the form and details of the announcement are under the responsibility of our company, and we act in accordance with the legal requirements. Namely:

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Table-2 Complaints and Ways of Execution

N	Complaint	Execution
1	Use of the logo and the right to use the document outside the specified scope	Corrective action is requested immediately, if the result is negative, Başak Ekolojik will follow P-07 Procedure for the Termination, Reduction, Suspension and Withdrawal of Certification
2	Use of the logo in a way that may cause misunderstanding, such as the product certificate (e.g. using the logo on the product)	
3	Misuse of the accreditation agency's logo	
4	Complaints / feedback from the relevant chambers or professional groups to which the operator is affiliated or a member	
5	Complaints/feedbacks from interested parties benefiting from the operator's product	If it is proven to be a justified complaint/publication, Corrective action is requested immediately and or an additional inspection will be conducted. if the result is negative, Başak Ekolojik will follow P-07 Procedure for the Termination, Reduction, Suspension and Withdrawal of Certification
6	The emergence of inappropriate news about operators in the written and visual media	

In case of complaints about the products within the scope of the certification, the operator; must submit the content and reason of the complaint. Operator; should inform Başak Ekolojik about the corrective actions to be carried out, ensure compliance and prevent its recurrence as per the relevant legislation.

4.2. Establishment and Structure of the Appeal and Complaint Evaluation Committee

If there is a disagreement between Başak Ekolojik and the operator regarding the outcome of the appeal/complaint, Başak Ekolojik will ensure impartiality in its activities and improve the service quality; It forms the Appeal and Complaint Evaluation Committee, which is completely independent of control and certification processes such as the acceptance of applications, the assignment of inspectors, the execution of inspection, reporting and certification decision, within a maximum of 5 working days.

The appeal and complaint evaluation committee consists of 3 members assigned by General Manager. The unanimity of at least 2 members is required for a decision. Both members must be sufficient in the subject decided. Başak Ekolojik employee, who is involved in the inspection and certification activities of the client who appeals and complains, cannot take part in the Appeal and Complaint Evaluation Committee for the evaluation of this client's appeal and complaint. In order to ensure that there is no conflict of interest, Başak Ekolojik; does not use personnel (including those in a managerial position) who have provided consultancy to a client or been employed by a client, in reviewing or approving the resolution of a complaint or appeal by that client for a period of two years from the termination of the consultancy or employment. Committee members sign **S-P02.01 Committee Membership Agreement** and **BY-P02.05 Committee Membership Statement of Obligation** and **BY-P02.02 Impartiality and Confidentiality Statement**.

4.2.1. Activities to be carried out by the Appeal and Complaint Evaluation Committee

The duty of the Appeals and Complaints Evaluation Committee is to evaluate the appeals/complaints received at any stage of control and certification processes, in accordance with the principles of impartiality and confidentiality.

Appeal and Complaint Evaluation Committee takes the following as a basis when evaluating;

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- ✓ Compliance with accreditation standards,
- ✓ Adhering to the principle of impartiality and confidentiality,
- ✓ The inspection will measure whether the operator's system is capable of meeting and maintaining client requirements and continuously improving the system,
- ✓ Compliance of Başak Ekolojik employees with relevant control and certification procedures,
- ✓ Operator's membership of any group or association, easy access to services regardless of the number of certified operators,
- ✓ Implementation in accordance with policies and procedures,
- ✓ The use of the document and logo.

4.3. Records of Appeal and Complaints

Appeal and complaint records (if any, correspondence with the Organic Agriculture Committee / Ministry on the subject) are kept by General Manager. If the operator is a certified client; A copy of the appeal and complaint form (if any, correspondence with the Organic Agriculture Committee / Ministry on the subject) is also kept in the file of the operator. Appeal and complaint records are confidential and are not open to parties other than the operator, the Appeal and Complaint Evaluation Committee and the Organic Agriculture Committee / Ministry / TÜRKAK.

4.4. Corrective Actions After Appeal and Complaint Processes

General manager is responsible for initiating corrective/preventive action as far as practicable regarding each complaint or appeal. Corrective / preventive actions are followed and coordinated by the Management Representative in accordance with the **P-12 Corrective Preventive Actions Procedure**. Appeal and complaint procedures during the meeting period are reported to the management with a performance report by the Quality Management Representative for the purpose of evaluation in the management review meetings. Management can also take corrective / preventive action decision based on this report (see **P-10 Management Review Procedure**).

5. RELATED DOCUMENTS

Management Review Procedure (P-10)

Corrective Preventive Actions Procedure (P-12)

Organic Agriculture Inspection and Certification Service Agreement (S-P01.01)

Appeal And Complaint Notification Form (F-P06.01)

Client satisfaction survey form (F-P06.03)

Committee Membership Agreement (S-P02.01)

Committee Membership Statement of Obligation (BY-P02.05)

Impartiality and Confidentiality Statement (BY-P02.02)

6. DISTRIBUTION

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An electronic copy of this document is available to all personnel in the Başak Ekolojik Institutional Portal System (SharePoint).

7. REVISION HISTORY

Revision No	Relevant Article	Revision	Revision Date
06	General	TR-AB code has been removed from the name of the document and the names of the QMS in the document. Main headings are all capital letters.	03.01.2022
07	General	Adjustments have been made according to the new EU organic production Regulation with number (EU)2018/848.	19.10.2022
08	03	Customer relations definition has been added.	08.12.2023

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