

## Social responsibility in operations that are certified according to Bio Suisse standards

Information note for BIOSUISSE ORGANIC (BSO) operations outside of Switzerland (last updated 01/2026)  
 Basis: [The Bio Suisse Standards, part V, section 3.3: Social responsibility](#)

### General

Fulfilment of social responsibility towards employees is a core element of Bio Suisse principles. The dignity as well as the physical, psychological and social well-being of employees are a priority focus and must be protected. The standards are based on the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the core labour standards of the International Labour Organization (ILO), a specialised agency of the United Nations.

### Requirements

On a transitional basis, compliance with **social responsibility** requirements ([part V, Articles 3.3.1 to 3.3.7](#)) will be reviewed in two different systems. Since 2023, social audits have gradually been incorporated directly into BIOSUISSE ORGANIC control inspections, and it is anticipated that these social audits will be rolled out across the world by 2029. The requirements applicable to BSO operations in countries that are already covered are described hereafter in the section *New system*, whilst those applicable in countries not yet covered are described in the section *Previous system*.

### New system

Applies in 2026 to BSO operations in the following countries:

- France
- Greece
- Italy
- Spain
- Turkey

A Bio Suisse social audit is mandatory for BSO operations in the countries mentioned above. Depending upon the risk classification according to Amfori BSCI Country Risk Classification, the social audit is carried out annually or every two years. For the time being, there is no social audit requirement for farming operations with a maximum of three employees and for processing and trading operations with a maximum of five employees.

Frequency of social audit			
<b>Number of staff, permanent and temporary cultivation*</b>	0-3 total	4-15 total	>15 total
<b>Number of staff, permanent and temporary processing and trade</b>	0-5 total	6-50 total	>50 total
<b>Low-risk countries</b> as per amfori BSCI* <b>&gt;80</b>	No social audit	No social audit	<b>Every two years</b>
<b>Medium-risk countries</b> as per amfori BSCI* <b>60-80</b>	No social audit	<b>Every two years</b>	<b>Annual</b>
<b>High-risk countries</b> as per amfori BSCI* <b>&lt;60</b>	No social audit	<b>Annual</b>	<b>Annual</b>

\* The category 'cultivation' also includes beekeeping, aquaculture, fishing, wild harvesting and animal husbandry.

If a BSO operation has a valid certificate under a standard recognised by Bio Suisse, no Bio Suisse social audit will be required.

Standards recognised under the new system:

- Fair for Life
- Fairtrade Standard for Hired Labour  
(weitere Fairtrade Standards sind nicht anerkannt)
- FairWild
- For Life
- Naturland
- SA8000

In order to be eligible for recognition, the corresponding certificate must be valid at the time of the BSO inspection. Within the ambit of the BSO inspection the certificate must be issued to the inspection body as either hard copies or digital copies.

### **Previous system**

For BSO companies in countries not mentioned above under New System, the previous system applies, depending on the risk classification, either an obligation for external social certification or auditing or an obligation for self-declaration.

Mandatory external social certification or auditing:

BSO operations with at least five employees from the countries listed below with the relevant products are subject to a requirement of external social certification or auditing. Within the BSO inspection the valid certificate or audit certificate (not older than 18 months) must be issued to the inspection body as either hard copies or digital copies.

<b>List of products and countries</b>	
<b>Products</b>	<b>Country</b>
Primary production (incl. packaging or processing on an affiliated production operation*) of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Fresh vegetables</b> (except seedlings and products that will undergo further processing in the country of origin)</li> <li>▪ <b>Fresh fruit</b> (incl. berries, citrus fruit and table grapes; except seedlings and products that will undergo further processing in the country of origin)</li> <li>▪ <b>Fresh herbs</b> (except products that will undergo further processing in the country of origin)</li> </ul>	Morocco, Peru, Portugal
Primary production (incl. packaging or processing on an affiliated production operation*) of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Fresh bananas</b> (except products that will undergo further processing in the country of origin)</li> </ul>	All countries of origin

List of accepted social certifications and audits:

- Amfori BSCI
- Fairtrade
- GlobalG.A.P. GRASP
- Naturland
- SA8000
- Sedex SMETA

### **Confirmation by self-declaration form**

BSO operations not subject to a requirement of mandatory external certification or auditing that employ more than 20 employees are obliged to complete and sign the [social responsibility self-declaration](#) form every three years and to submit it to the inspection body in physical or digital form as part of the BSO inspection.

BSO operations that are able to present a valid certificate or a valid audit report (not older than 18 months) under any of the following standards do not need to make the Bio Suisse self-declaration:

- Amfori BSCI
- Control Union Fair Choice
- Fair for Life
- Fair Trade USA
- Fairtrade
- For Life
- GlobalG.A.P. GRASP
- IBD Fair Trade
- Naturland
- Rainforest Alliance
- Rapunzel Hand in Hand
- RSPO P&C 2018 / RSPO ISH 2019  
or corresponding follow-up standard
- SA8000
- Sedex SMETA
- Soil Association Ethical Trade

**Contact:** Bio Suisse, International Division: [international@bio-suisse.ch](mailto:international@bio-suisse.ch); +41 61 204 66 44