



Certified Organic

Teas Etc., is organic certified by Quality Certification Services (QCS), a USDA approved agency, as a supplier of organic teas, herbs and Rooibos. We have made a conscious decision to only list products as "organic" if they are 100% certified organic whether blended, flavored or scented. We are committed to quality organic products, contributing to the well being of individuals and the planet, one leaf at a time.

Why Buy Organic

What does "Organic" mean?

The USDA defines organically produced food as being grown without the use of conventional pesticides; fertilizers made with synthetic ingredients or sewage sludge; bioengineering; or ionizing radiation and grown by farmers that emphasize the use of renewable resources and the conservation of soil and water to enhance environmental quality for future generations.

Farms utilizing organic growing methods must obtain organic certification by a USDA approved certifying agent who is responsible for inspecting all aspects of organic integrity; growing, harvesting and packing, prior to certification being issued.

Companies that package organic products, such as Teas Etc, must also obtain [organic handler and processor certification](#) from a USDA approved certifying agency if they are going to sell products as organic. Obtaining this certification requires an organic system plan which details every aspect of organic integrity including; production and packaging, sanitation, pest control, record keeping, lot number system and storage. Along with the facility certification individual products are reviewed and certified. To see a list of all of our [certified organic products](#).

Organic Labeling and the USDA seal?

The USDA categorizes certified organic products into 4 groups, based on the percentage of organic ingredients as follows;

- 100% Organic products contain only organic ingredients, excluding water and salt. 100% organic product labels must include the name of the agency that has certified the handler and processor, may utilize the USDA organic seal and the phrase "100% Organic" on the label and in the ingredient list.
- 95%-100% organic products must contain at least 95% organic ingredients, and the remainder of the ingredients must be nonagricultural substances on the USDA's National approved list, non-organically produced agricultural products that are not commercially available in organic form. 95% - 100% organic product labels must contain the name of the agency that has certified the handler and processor and may not use the USDA seal.
- At least 70% organic products must contain at least 70% organic ingredients and may state on the label "Made with Organic Ingredients". These products may not use the USDA seal.
- Products containing 70% or less organic ingredients may make no claim other than stating that a specific ingredient is organic on their ingredient list.

Our Organic Labeling Policy

Teas Etc will only list and label products that contain 100% organic ingredients as "organic". It is our hope that by doing this that we will eliminate any possible confusion about how much of a product is organic and what ingredients may or may not be organic. We feel that it should be easy to shop for organic tea without having to interpret the organic labeling requirements.

We may make reference to organic status such, EU (Europe) certified or JAP (Japan) certified, to identify a product with certification other than USDA only as a means to provide that information to our customers.

What are the benefits of buying organic?

There are many benefits to buying organic here are some of the best:

- Certified organically grown tea guarantees that the product contains fewer toxins and in some cases tastes better.
- Certified organic products, including teas, meet stringent USDA organic standards and certified handlers and processors as well as growers undergo meticulous yearly inspections insuring the organic integrity of the products they produce and/or package.
 - Organic farming builds healthy soil and increases the productivity of the land.
 - Growing organically supports a biologically diverse, healthy environment.
- Organic farms are less reliant on non-renewable fossil fuels helping to reduce environmental pollution.

Buying organic products supports organic farming in turn organic farming contributes overall to a clean, healthy environment which benefits us all, now and for future generations.

How do I know I am buying organic?

It's no longer enough to look for the USDA organic seal. Unauthorized use of the seal is not uncommon. A USDA certified handler or processor, or company selling products that are packaged by a certified supplier, will have a [certificate available](#). Along with the certificate, the supplier should maintain a [certified product list](#) of the individual products that have been certified, even if all products are organic.

Things to look for;

- An [organic certificate](#) stating the organic status of the supplier that has been issued by a [USDA approved certifying agency](#).
 - A [certified product list](#)
 - Visit online or call the certifying agency for the status of a supplier.

Things to look out for;

- Web sites that claim organic but can not produce an organic certificate.
- Web sites or vendors that do not know what a certified product list is or won't supply one upon request.
 - Mislabeled products; no ingredient list, no lot number, no certifying agency listed.
 - Overuse of the USDA seal, most certified suppliers will not find it necessary.

Be a smart organic consumer, ask the right questions, look for the right list and certificates and be sure to get what you pay for and want.