Certification Officer
Oregon Tilth Certified Organic

Job Description

Primary Purpose: The job of the Certification Officer is to assess certification applicants and to evaluate operations for certification as well as compliance with the standard(s) to which certification is being requested.

The duties of the Certification Officer cover the following areas:

A. Review

1. Review and evaluate Organic Systems Plans (new and updates), Inspection Reports and client requests for compliance to federal or private standards (USDA NOP, GOTS, NSF 305 etc) in an effort to determine compliance to the regulation
2. Review and evaluate all post-inspection documentation and/or changes submitted by operator
3. Use judgment and knowledge to make certification decisions of operations based on technical expertise and file information provided in applications and/or inspection reports.
4. Use judgment and knowledge to make certification decisions for product specific reviews and evaluation as necessary (i.e. new materials for use, product additions, land additions etc.)

B. Inspection

1. Assess clients' ability to comply with standards and evidence of compliance to the applicable standards they have applied for.
2. Inspect all relevant parts of the premises, records and potential contamination sources in order to determine the operations ability to comply with the applicable standards.
3. Evaluate audit trail records and sample audit to determine compliance with organic standards and provide evidence of operations ongoing ability to comply
4. Evaluate the OSP for completeness, accuracy and clear representation of practices at the operation as compared to what is viewed on-site through the site visit.

C. Communication

1. Provide answers to specific client questions and needs regarding compliance to the standards and/or OTCO procedures and policies
2. Contact clients to encourage the resolution of open action items
3. Communicate with Inspectors as needed to improve quality inspection services.
4. Communicate with OTCO clients to ensure a positive customer service experience

D. Other Duties

1. Answer specific questions about certification process
2. Represent OTCO at various trade shows and/or presentations
3. Other duties as assigned

Job Specification
Telecommute option, with Management approval
Exempt
Full-time

Specific Skills and Abilities

- Requires high-level exercise of discretion and judgment
- Customarily and regularly exercises authority to make decision of significance
- Ability to work as member of a team, and interface with other branches of the organization.
- Ability to solve problems and make decisions under pressure and time constraints
- Ability to assess and evaluate current and future work loads
- Ability to communicate well with clients, to explain standards clearly and to explain clients needs and concerns to OTCO

Certification Officers will be classified by Program Managers, in consultation with the Certification Director, according to the general guidelines and approximate qualifications below. Certification Officers will focus in one or more organic program department or groups of clients; processing, livestock, farm or other. Certification Officers Levels 1 or 2 are formally titled "Certification Officer". A formal title change may occur upon designation as a "Senior Certification Officer".

Certification Officer Level 1:

- B.A. degree or higher in agriculture, food technology or related field or equivalent work experience.
- Proficient computer skills including Microsoft Outlook, Word and Excel.
- One or more years experience in a professional office environment and/or quality assurance.
- Hands-on experience in agriculture or food processing preferred.
- Education, training, or work experience in sustainable agriculture/organic processing preferred.
- IOIA Organic Inspector training, auditor training for food quality production systems or similar field preferred.
  Experience with quality auditing or regulatory compliance auditing preferred.

Certification Officer Level 2:
Certification Officer Level 1 qualifications, plus:

- Demonstrated competence at certification tasks
- Successful training to inspection report review responsibilities or other major decision making authority
- Minimum two years professional work experience directly relevant to third-party certification

Senior Certification Officer:
Certification Officer Level 2 qualification, plus:

- 5 or more years professional work experience directly relevant to third-party certification
- Demonstrated leadership/expertise in one or more areas
- Excellent analysis and writing abilities