**QCS Grower and Livestock Fee Structure**

The following options are intended to provide a cost-effective certification for operations of various sizes and types.

Please select the option for which you qualify, and which represents the best value.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  |  | | **Annual Certification Fees**  **NOP or EU 834**  *Due with Application* | | **Annual Inspection Fees** | |
| **Option** | **Description** | | **Annual Gross Sales\*** | **Annual Certification Fee** | ●Cost varies: see below  ● $95 QCS service fee per inspection  ● Unannounced inspection may occur (see below) | |
| **OPTION 1**  Standard Grower or Livestock  *For both scopes (Grower and Livestock) add $250.* | Certification of an Individual  Grower and/or Livestock Operation | | < $25,000 | $750 |
| $25,001-$50,000 | $875 |
| $50,001-$100,000 | $1,075 |
| $100,001-&175,000 | $1,275 |
| $175,001-$250,000 | $1,475 |
| $250,001-$350,000 | $1,700 |
| $350,001- $450,000 | $1,950 |
| $450,001-$550,000 | $2,200 |
| $550,001-$650,000 | $2,475 |
| $650,001-$800,000 | $2,825 |
| $800,001-$1,000,000 | $3,225 |
| $1,000,001-$1,500,000 | $3,975 |
| $1,500,001-$2,000,000 | $4,775 |
| $2,000,001-$2,500,000 | $5,625 |
| $2,500,001-$3,000,000 | $6,525 |
| $3,000,001-3,500,000 | $7,475 |
| $3,500,001-$4,000,000 | $8,500 |
| $4,000,001-$4,500,000 | $9,600 |
| $4,500,001-$5,500,000 | $10,775 |
| > $5,500,001 | $12,025 |
| \*How to determine ***Annual Gross Sales:***  Certified operations – use the annual gross sales of organic products for the previous calendar year.  Applicants for certification – estimate the expected annual gross sales for the first calendar year following certification. | | | | | | |
| **OPTION 2**  Multi-Unit  Umbrella  (Primary operation pays all certification fees) | Certification of a Primary Operation and  Additional Associated Units  (Each unit require a separate Organic System Plan and inspection)  (Maximum 30 production units) | | **Annual Gross Sales** | **Annual Certification Fees** | ●Cost varies: see below  ● $95 QCS service fee per inspection  ● Unannounced inspection may occur (see below) | |
| < $50,000,000 | $25,000 + $1,850/unit |
| $50,000,000 - $250,000,000 | Flat rate: $80,000 |
| >$250,000,000 or  >30 production units | Contact QCS for a quote |
| **OPTION 3**  Dairy Producer  Flat Rate | Certification of a Single Dairy Producer (includes certification of feed/grazing pasture, not crop production to be sold off-farm)  ***Maximum 80 cows milking at any one time.*** | | **Annual**  **Flat Rate** | $1,650 | Included | |
| **OPTION 4**  University or Research Institution | Certification of an organic research program that does not sell organic products | | **Annual**  **Flat Rate** | $1,250 | Included | |
| Additional Lands / Production Expansion | Adding land or new type of production outside of the renewal period. | | $250  Requires submission of the Additional Lands Application or appropriate Organic System Plan. | | ●Cost varies: see below  (Net 15 Terms)  ● $95 QCS service fee per inspection | |
| **Additional Certification Options (ADD-ONS): Fees due with application.** | | | | | | |
| **Add-On** | | **Description** | | | | **Fee** |
| Grass-Fed Add on for Ruminant Livestock | | Certification to the Organic Plus Trust (OPT) Grass-Fed Organic Livestock Program | | | | $295 |
| International Add-ons for EU 834 | | UK Organic Certification | | | | $300 |
| Bio-Suisse Certification | | | | $350 |
| International Verifications for NOP | | US-Japan, US-EU, US-UK or US-Switzerland Organic Equivalence | | | | $70 each |
| US-Canada Organic Equivalence, US-Korea Organic Equivalence | | | | $150 each |
| US-Taiwan Organic Equivalence (requires laboratory testing at cost) | | | | $150 (+ testing) |
| COR: Organic Equivalency Arrangements | | | | $150 each |
| On-Farm Processing | | $180. This fee is required for operations that conduct on-farm processing of organic crops. To qualify as “On-Farm Processing” all ingredients must be produced on-farm under the same ownership and management as the farm operation. All activities must be described in the Organic System Plan in sufficient detail to evaluate compliance and are limited the following simple processing activities: sanitizing, curing, drying, dehydrating, cutting, grinding, shelling, de-hulling, de-pulping, ripening, mixing raw agricultural ingredients, crushing to extract oil, use of handling equipment such as a sorting machine, shaker table, or gravity separator; packaging raw agricultural products into retail containers using a packing line or packing equipment. Operations that conduct complex processing are not eligible for On-Farm Processing and must submit the Organic Handling Plan (OHP) and the applicable Handler/Processor Certification fee. | | | | |
| Expedited Certification  Add $100 for both scopes (Grower and Livestock) | | **Contact the QCS office if you seek expedited review.** | | | | |
| 30-40 working days | | | | $1875 |
| 15-20 working days | | | | $3750 |
| Additional Lands/ Production Expansion 30-40 working days | | | | $725 |
| Additional Lands/ Production Expansion 15-20 working days | | | | $1450 |
| International Verification | | | | $550 each |
| Expedited Inspections | | Fee for Canceled Expedited Inspections – please see our Expedited Service Agreement for terms and conditions. | | | | $600 + all expenses incurred |
| ***Other Fees*** | | | | | | |
| Renewal Late Fee | | $100 | | | | |
| Finance Fee | | $25 first 30 days past due, 1% of balance for every 30 days thereafter. | | | | |
| Input Review | | For the review of multi-ingredient inputs that are not listed as approved by QCS, OMRI, WSDA, CDFA, or PCO. No charge for up to 2 input reviews in a calendar year. Additional reviews $70 per input. | | | | |
| Update Fee | | Applies to Additional Products, Label Reviews, and other OSP updates outside of annual renewal that do not require inspection. $70/hour for 15-20 working days. Expedited: $200/hour for 3-5 working days; $450/hour for 1-2 working days. The application and supporting documentation must be complete and compliant to ensure these timelines. Please contact the QCS office to determine availability of expedited review. | | | | |
| Transaction Certificate | | $150 each for 5-7 working days. $250 each for 3-5 working days. $460 each for 1-2 working days. The fee for domestic mailing (shipping and labor) will be at least $50, and international mailing (shipping and labor) will be at least $75. The application and supporting documentation must be complete and compliant to ensure these timelines. | | | | |
| Reinstatement Fee | | $500, due with application. | | | | |
| Mediation Fee | | $300 for mediation resulting from an administrative noncompliance (e.g. failure to renew), $500 for  mediation resulting from technical noncompliance; due upon QCS acceptance of request for mediation. | | | | |
| State Registration Fees | | For states that require certifier registration, the additional fees apply: CA $25; NJ $25; and UT $100. | | | | |
| Azzule Platform | | $80 per client audit upload; $15 per client audit share/sent | | | | |
| Use of FOG logo | | $100 contributing fee. | | | | |
| **Fee credits** | | | | | | |
| Early renewal discount | | A $50 non-transferrable discount will be awarded to operations whose annual update renewal application and fee payment are received 1 month or more prior to the operation’s anniversary date. | | | | |
| Referrals | | A $50 non-transferrable credit will be awarded for each referral which results in an application to QCS for certification. | | | | |
| QCS Logo | | A $25 non-transferrable credit will be awarded to operations using the QCS logo on new retail labels. | | | | |
| Switching to QCS | | 10% discount for operations who are switching to QCS because their current certifier is reducing administrative capacity or ending accreditation, provided that there are no open noncompliance’s or settlement agreement. | | | | |

\*QCS reserves the right to charge additional fees, as applicable, for all other administrative and certification related services not specifically listed. Time is billed at $70/hour.

**DESCRIPTION OF FEES AND REFUND POLICY**

**Certification Fees** Certification Fees are the base annual fees due each year for certification. The amount of fees to be paid depend on the fee option chosen from the above table and are in addition to the inspection fees charged. Certification fees are due at the time of initial application (1st year) and on anniversary (renewal) date in subsequent years. A flat rate fee may be negotiated at QCS’s discretion. Certification fees take into account the requirement for QCS to conduct additional inspections (primarily unannounced) and sampling at a percentage of QCS certified operations, as described in the organic standards. Certification fees may be higher when needed to ensure compliance (including additional document review and pesticide residue testing) for what has been determined to be a high risk region or a high risk commodity; if this applies, QCS will notify the applicant/client and provide a quote of the additional compliance fees. QCS reserves the right to not review an application until all fees are received. Use of Net 15 terms above refers to the terms for payment within 15 calendar days of invoice.

***Vertically Integrated Operations Certified with QCS.*** If an operation is certified as both a Grower and a Processor/Handler with QCS, and is providing product to itself, it may select *OPTION 1**Standard Grower or Livestock* with gross sales of *0-$25,000* and pay the *Annual Certification Fees* of *$750* plus the cost of inspection for the Grower, and the appropriate fee category plus inspection for the Processor/Handler.

**Inspection Fees** The final cost for inspection varies based upon the complexity of the operation inspected, the ability to group with other nearby inspections, the individual inspector assigned, and how long the inspection takes. In addition to fees for the inspector’s time, all travel expenses are paid by the party to be inspected. This may include travel time, gas, mileage, car rental and/or airfare, meals, lodging, tolls, etc. We strongly encourage clients to submit their application in a timely manner so that inspections can be coordinated as to save on travel expenses.

Operation complexity is determined in the initial review phase using a standardized formula taking into account things like operation size, length of time certified, number of certified products, whether any international equivalencies are requested, whether there’s parallel uncertified production, whether there’s any on-farm post harvest handling, past noncompliances, past inspection length, etc.

The chart below indicates the minimum cost and the expected total price range of an inspection based on the operation’s assigned complexity. For example, a simple crop inspection is going to cost a minimum of $485 and is expected to fall within the range of $485 to $735 when travel expenses are taken into account. Note that actual inspection time and travel expenses may increase the inspection cost above the anticipated range. However, QCS greatly strives to keep inspection costs within these ranges.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Operation Type** | **Operation Complexity** | | | |
| Simple | Moderate | Complex | Very Complex |
| Grower Only | 485-735 | 735-970 | 970-1100 | Varies based on site specific requirements (please contact the QCS office). |
| Grower and Handler | 540-855 | 855-1140 | 1140-1450 |
| Grower and Livestock | 655-825 | 825-1025 | 1025-1195 |
| Grower, Handler and Livestock | 680-855 | 855-1140 | 1140-1450 |
| Livestock Only | 540-825 | 825-1025 | 1025-1195 |

Clients will be invoiced after the inspection for the inspection fees: total inspection cost, inspector accommodations, and the inspection service fee**.** The inspection service fee is retained by QCS to cover administrative costs associated with our inspection program.

**Unannounced Inspections and Sampling:** Unannounced inspections and sampling occur in accordance with organic standards. Unannounced inspections are not billed unless they are combined with your full renewal cycle inspection, and the costs of random sampling is similarly not billed to the client. However, when an operation incurs a technical noncompliance, or has a positive pesticide residue/GMO contamination test, the operator must cover the cost of any follow-up unannounced inspections and/or associated sampling required to complete our investigation into the issue. This cost is capped at $600 per investigation of each technical noncompliance and/or positive sampling result. Investigations may be carried over from your previous certification cycle, but the billable window for any investigation activity shall not exceed 365 days since the technical noncompliance was issued or since QCS was made aware of the positive sampling result.

**Expedited Certification** Expedited certification is intended for clients that are seeking priority review of their Organic System Plan (OSP) of 15-20 working days or 30-40 working days for certification. QCS defines working days as weekdays (Monday-Friday) provided the weekday(s) does not fall on a holiday. QCS’ ability to complete the certification process in this time frame depends on submittal of a completed application/organic system plan, supporting documentation and fees, a willingness to respond quickly with any additional information requested by QCS, inspector availability, and availability of client to be present at inspection. Expedited certification fees are in addition to certification fees. Additionally, to ensure that inspectors and QCS are compensated for potential disruptions to inspection schedules when accommodating expedited requests, inspector-hours will be billed 100% higher for 15-20 working day and 50% higher for 30-40 working day expedited requests. The inspection service fee will increase from the standard $95 per inspection to $190 for 15-20 days and $145 for 30-40 day.

**Canceled Expedited Inspections** When working on an expedited timeline, QCS needs to secure the time of one of our qualified inspectors on very short notice. This may require inspectors to reschedule previously-planned inspections, block off adequate windows of time for your inspection that may otherwise be filled with other assignments, and incur expenses making necessary travel arrangements. Much of this work may, by necessity, occur concurrently with your initial review, which must be completed before an inspection can take place.

Because of this, inspectors can incur significant costs only to have the inspection date change due to delays attributable to the client, including but not limited to: an initial review that’s been extended by prolonged requests for information required to correct the submission of an incomplete application, delayed client responses to requests for information, and/or cancellation due to personnel availability and unforeseen plant/farm closures.

To ensure inspectors are compensated for all expenses, lost revenue, and lost opportunity costs when delays of this nature occur, there will be an additional $600 + expenses fee charged for all cancelled/delayed inspections of expedited applications, provided the situation meets these conditions: 1) Application and expedited fees have been submitted to QCS, 2) QCS assigns an inspector, 3) The inspector and client have settled on an inspection date, and 4) The inspection is then delayed for one of the reasons cited above.

**Refund Policy** If the application is withdrawn before inspection, one half of certification fee(s) may be refunded. If withdrawn after inspector has been assigned, the certification fee(s) are nonrefundable. Expedited certification fees are nonrefundable. If you are denied certification, suspended or revoked, certification fees are nonrefundable and all invoices must be paid according to terms; inspection charges must be paid if the inspection was conducted.

**Referral Policy** If an existing client refers a new client to QCS, provided the new client provides an application, fees and a statement they were referred by that existing QCS client, a $50 non-transferrable credit will be awarded to the existing QCS client.

**US-Taiwan Organic Equivalence** QCS is required to test 1/3 of the clients verified to the US-Taiwan Organic Export Arrangement annually. As this is a requirement of Taiwan, the cost of laboratory testing is the client’s responsibility. If QCS collects and submits a sample for testing the actual costs will be billed.

**Transaction Certificates** QCS expects the transaction certificate request to be submitted before shipping the product. For COIs through the TRACES system for the European Union (EU) the COI must be issued before shipping product, as required by EU regulation (EC 834/2007 Article 33, EC 889/2008 Article 84, EC 1235/2008 Article 13, and EC 2020/25). For TM-11 or NAQS requests, QCS expects the transaction certificate request to be submitted before shipping the product in order to verify compliance. If a TM-11 or NAQS request is submitted after the product has shipped, the TM-11 or NAQS document will not be issued if the product composition or labeling is found not to be in compliance with the regulation, or the equivalency or export arrangement. The transaction certificate request and supporting documentation must be complete and compliant to ensure the timelines above.