

Appendix E



GEORGIA CROP IMPROVEMENT ASSOCIATION ORGANIC CERTIFICATION PROGRAM

POLICY DEFINING CROP ROTATION

This policy is designed to aid the GCIAOCP staff in determining the adequacy of organic clients crop rotation practices either listed on the OSP or implemented.

The National Organic Program defines a crop rotation as:

The practice of alternating the annual crops grown on a specific field in a planned pattern or sequence in successive crop years so that crops of the same species or family are not grown repeatedly without interruption on the same field. Perennial cropping systems employ means such as alley cropping, intercropping, and hedgerows to introduce biological diversity in lieu of crop rotation.

The most operative phrase is "planned pattern or sequence in successive crop years".

"Planned pattern or sequence"- there should be a multiyear plan for crop rotation that takes in to account the use of different crop kinds that increase soil organic matter, break or disrupt weed, insect and disease cycles, etc. Cover crops can be a component of such a plan or other cash crops.

The term "successive" is straight forward (following in an uninterrupted sequence)

The term "crop years" can be confusing. It seems logical to many that a crop year is the time required to plant and harvest a specific crop, other define crop year depending on spring planted or fall planted.

The disruption of weed, insects, disease cycles and the need to increase soil organic matter should be the defining steps that determine if a particular crop rotation is adequate.

There may be situations whereby that the above suggested cycle maybe altered. The client must submit a written request explaining the reasons for an exception or variance. The Program Manager will be the final authority on such submitted requests.