



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

Directorate B. Quality, Research & Innovation, Outreach
The Director

Brussels,
GVC/nb(2019)6936773

Dear [REDACTED]

Subject: The new model of the South Korean import certificate for organics

Thank you for the productive discussions that our services had during the EU-South Korea annual organic dialogue that took place in Brussels last 24 September 2019.

During the above-mentioned meeting, the new model of the South Korean import certificate for organics was discussed. South Korea explained that the new certificate needs to include the certification number assigned by the control body for traceability purposes to the final manufacturer of the product. The transitional period before the new certificate is mandatory ends 31 December 2019.

In the European Union, there is, for the time being, no unified system to number the operators and their certificates. Traceability is however guaranteed on the basis of the code number assigned to control bodies. In the framework of the new EU organic Regulation published in 2018 (Regulation (EU) 2018/848), the EU is developing a new model of operator certificate. The control body will issue this new certificate to each operator through an EU database. Thus, each certificate will include a unique reference number that will allow the identification of the operator. We consider that the system that we aim to put in place will fully satisfy your request to have a certification number per operator.

The new Regulation will only apply from 1 January 2021 onwards. For that reason, for 2020, the European Commission could discuss with Member States the establishment of a “temporary certification number” assigned by each CB to its certified operators exporting commodities to South Korea. Nevertheless, this certification number that would be used during 2020 would differ from the certification number that will be attributed by the EU certificates database from 1 January 2021 onwards and we consider this may create some confusion.

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In light of the above, we consider it is preferable to wait for the EU certificate database system to be in place and to refer for 2020 to the Control Body code number. However, if this option is not acceptable for you we would ask the relevant Control Bodies to assign a “temporary certification number” for the 2020 exports.

Yours faithfully,

