

This PDF is a version of an online module that is part of the Principles for Transitioning to Organic Farming project. For all of our educational materials, please visit:

<http://organictransition.umn.edu/>

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# Record Keeping

This material is based upon work that is supported by the National Institute of Food and Agriculture, U.S. Department of Agriculture, under grant number 2013-51106-21005.

# Why Good Record Keeping Is Important

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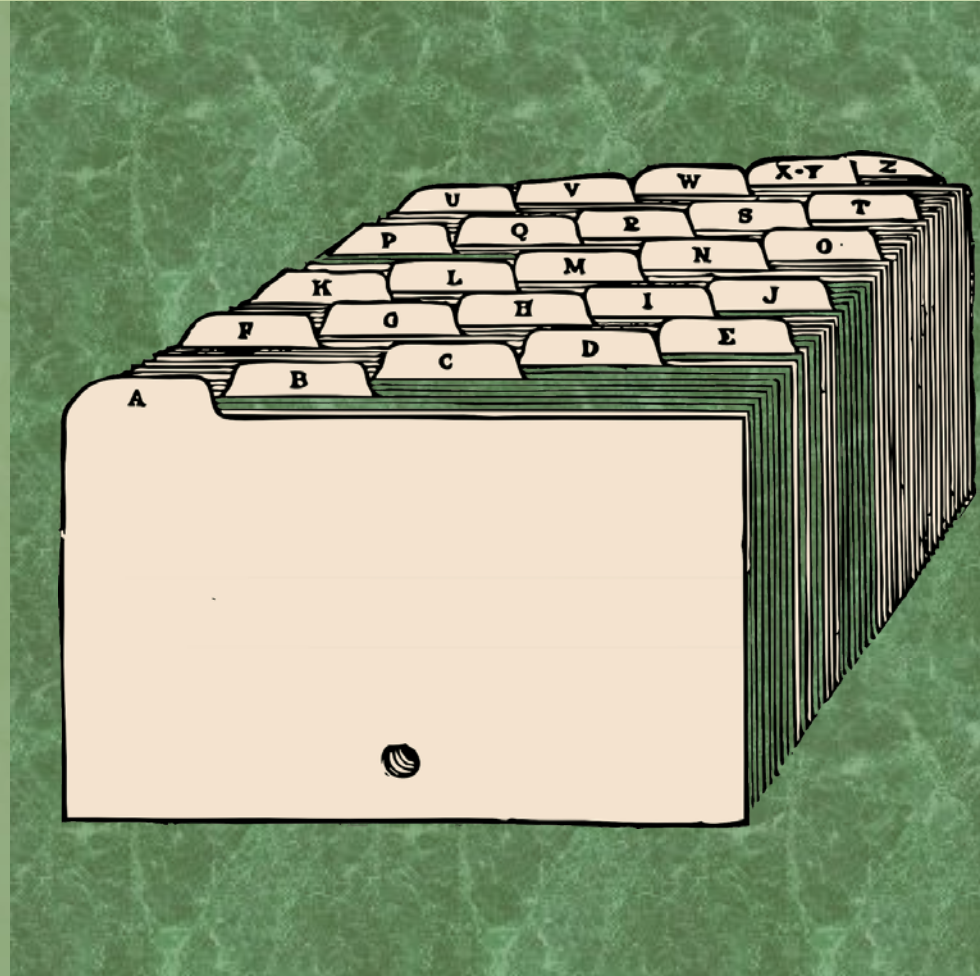


on



# Record Keeping

- I. Documentation in organic
- II. What to record
- III. Forms and field maps
- IV. Tracking and lot numbers
- V. Other tips



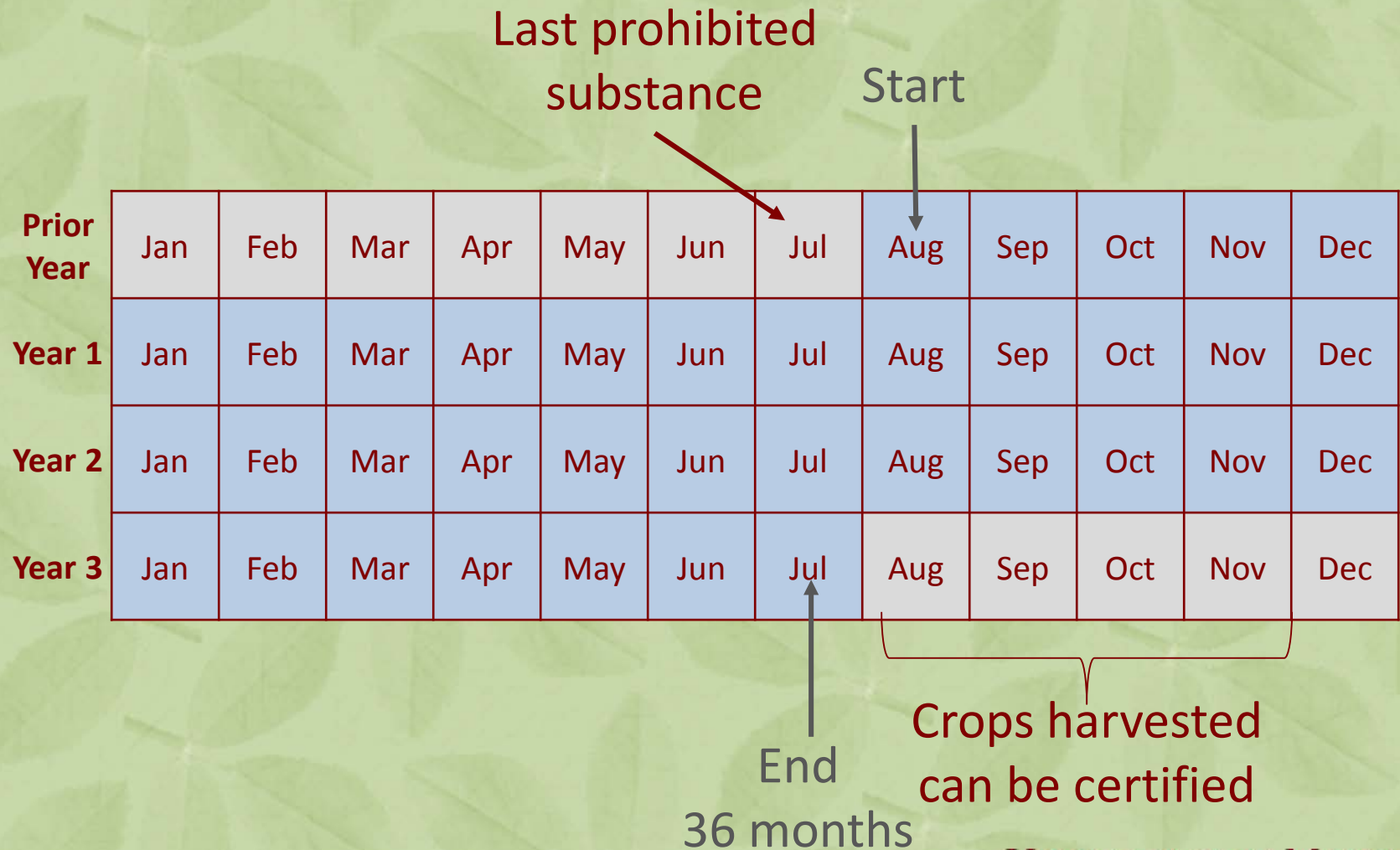




# Records – NOP definition

“Any information in written, visual, or electronic form that documents the activities undertaken by a producer, handler, or certifying agent to comply with the Act and regulations”

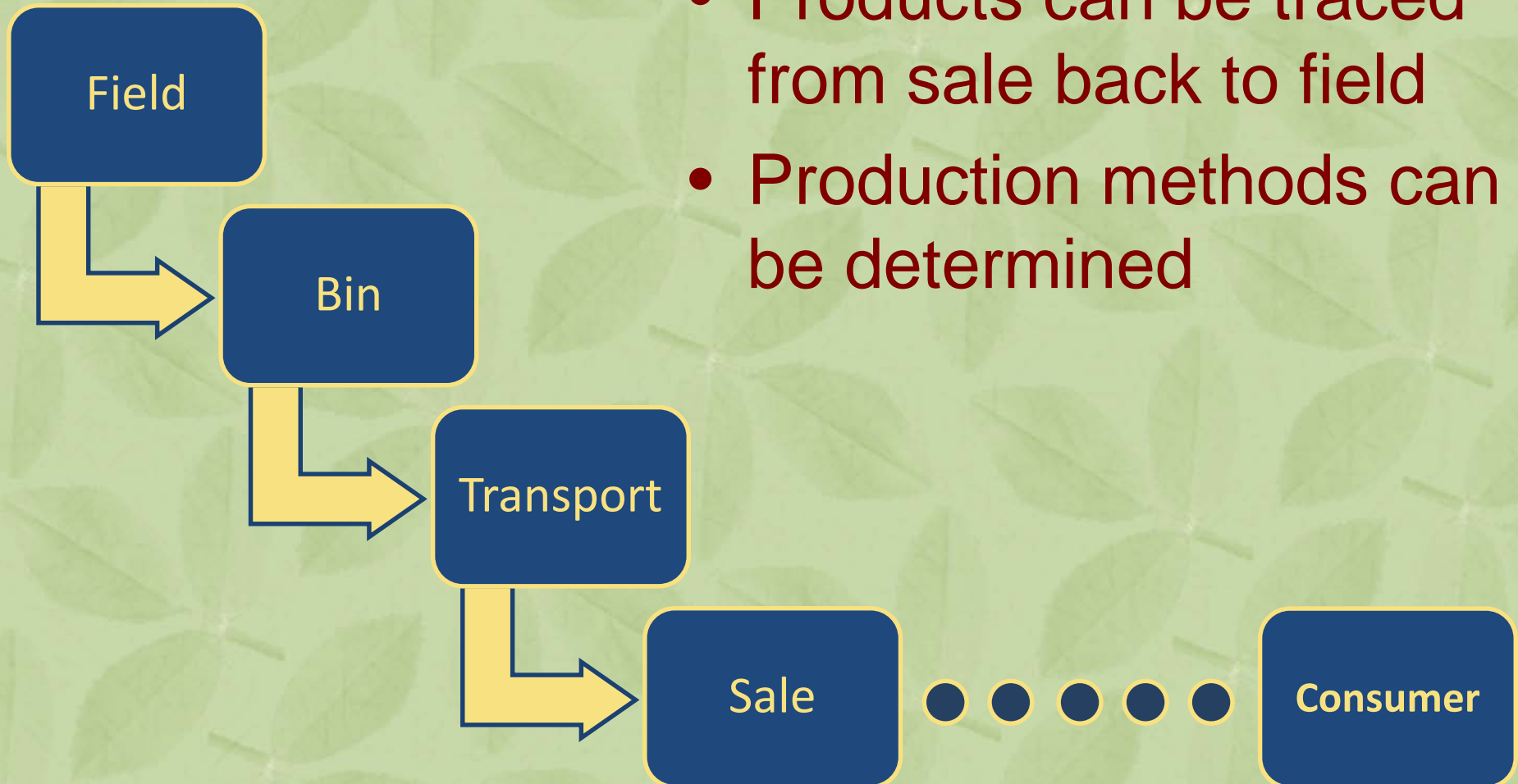
# Start record keeping as soon as you transition – 36 months prior to when you want to be certified





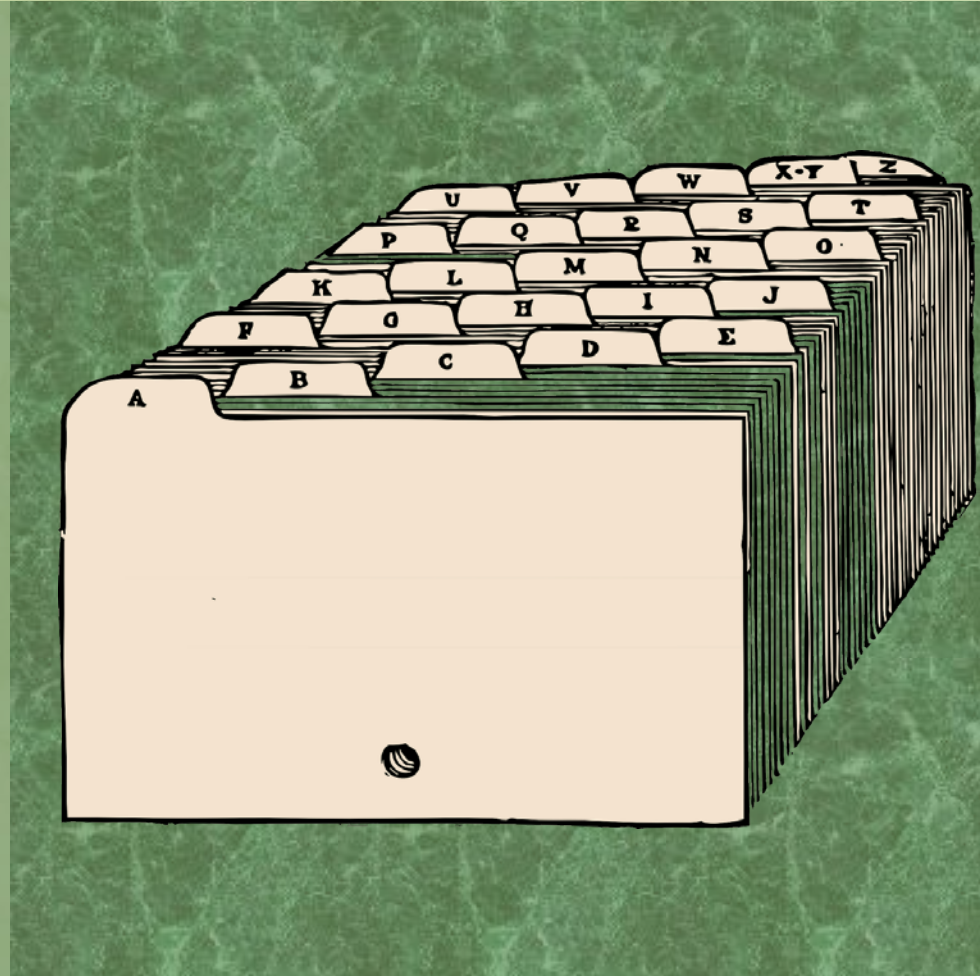
# Audit Trail

- Products can be traced from sale back to field
- Production methods can be determined



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# Keep Track of Activities that Occur Over Time

- Includes field operations and inputs
- Dates must be included
- Each field must have a number and its acreage denoted



# Field Operations



- Tillage
- Planting
- Fertilizing
- Any operation when amendments are applied
- Cultivation and other weed control operations
- Irrigation
- Approved pesticide application
- Harvesting (and yields obtained)
- Any other operations



# Inputs

- Seed variety and source
- Seed coatings, treatments, or inoculants
- Foliar-applied products
- Soil-applied products
- Adjuvants or surfactants
- Manure, compost, other approved fertilizers, or micronutrients
- Approved pesticides
- Any other approved inputs



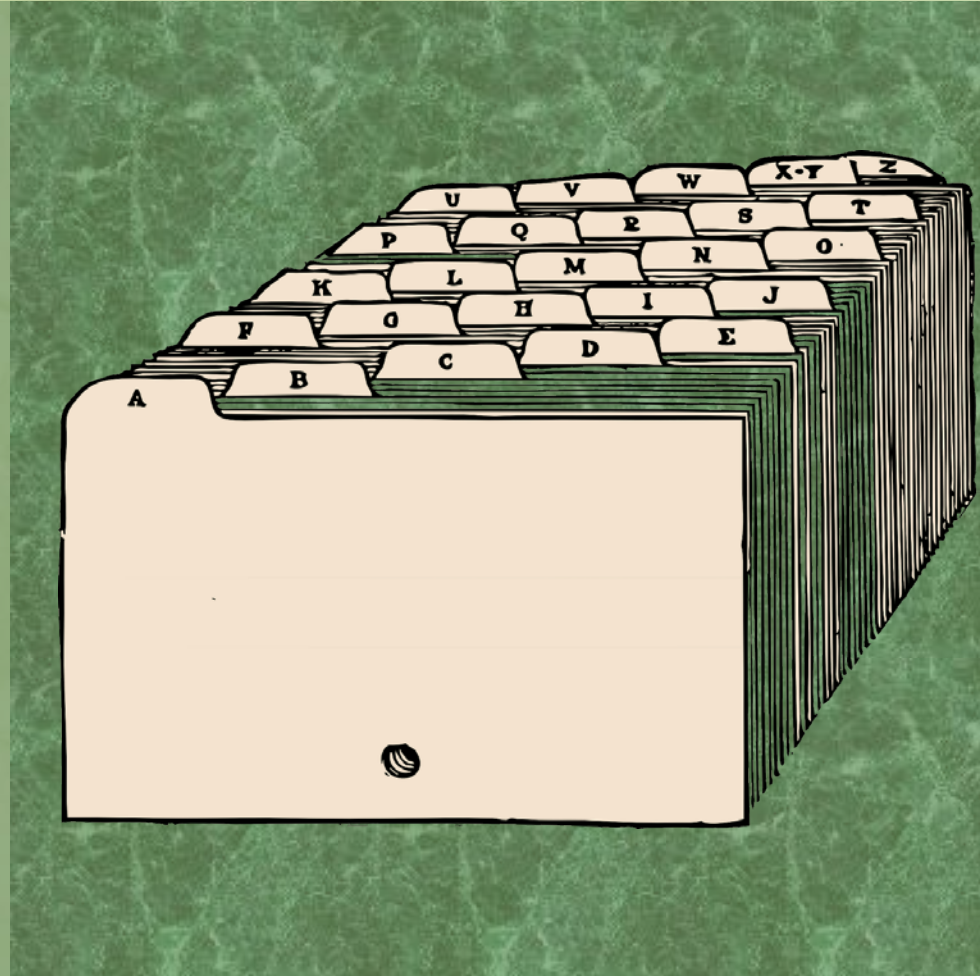


# Example – Manure Application

- What – what was applied
- Who – you or custom work
- When – date operation performed
- Where – which field
- Why – use of some inputs need justification
- How – what equipment and rate was used

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# Examples of Forms

- Field history and production sheets
- Activity log
- Inputs record
- Harvest and storage records
- Equipment cleaning log





# Field History Sheets

Field History – 200\_\_

Field #	Crop	OG / T / C	Acres	Rent / Own	Yield Per Acre	Harvest Date	Storage Location
1	oats	OG	40	own	45 bu	July 18	n/a
2	corn	OG	80	own	80 bu	Oct 10	Bin 3
3	soybeans	OG	80	own	30 bu	Sept 30	Bin 2
4	alfalfa	OG	40	own	4 tons	June/July/Aug	hayloft

Riddle and Gulbranson, 2011

## FIELD HISTORY SHEET

Code: O = organic; T = in transition/conversion to organic; C = conventional

Code	Field No.	ACRES/ ha.	Year 2006		Year 2005		Year 2004	
			Crop	Inputs	Crop	Inputs	Crop	Inputs
C	C-1	100 a.	Corn	Atrazine, 2,4-D Captan, Poncho, Urea, DAP, KCl	Soybeans	Round-up, Cruiser, Apron -Maxx, Ag-lime, Soybean inoculant 10-20-10	Corn	Atrazine, 2,4-D, Captan, Poncho, Urea, DAP, KCl
C	C-2	90 a.	Soybeans	Round-up, Cruiser-Maxx, Soybean inoculant 10-20-10	Corn	Atrazine, 2,4-D, Captan, Poncho, Ag-lime, Urea, DAP, KCl	Soybeans	Round-up, Treflan, Cruiser, Apron- Maxx, Soybean inoculant, 10-20-10
O	O-1	7 a.	Oats/ pasture	Ag-lime Legume inoculants	Pumpkins	Compost, Dipel 2X, Pyganic	Pasture	None
O	O-2	6 a.	Pasture	Ag-lime	Oats/ pasture	Legume inoculants	Pumpkins	Compost Pyganic Bordeaux mix
O	O-3	7 a.	Pasture	Ag-lime	Pasture	None	Oats/ pasture	Legume inoculants
O	O-4	6 a.	Pumpkins	Compost, Ag-lime, Pyganic, Dipel 2X, Bordeaux mix	Pasture	None	Pasture	None
O	O-5	35 a.	Canning peas/rye	Pea inoculant, Feed-N-Gro 2-4-2	Corn	Fishplus	Clover	Ag-lime Hog manure

# Activity and Input Log

Activity and Input Log – 200\_\_ Crop Year

Date	Field #	Activity	Type of Input	Source of Input	Product Label and Receipt (check)	Rate of Application	Other comments and observations
April 10	1	fertilizer appl.	manure	own	none	2T/ac.	composted
April 10	2	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓
April 10	3	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓
April 10	4	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓
June 6	2	cultivate					
June 6	3	cultivate					

Riddle and Gulbranson, 2011



# Storage, Transportation and Sales Records

- Become important after transition
- Help track your products as they enter the organic marketplace



# Logs, sheets and forms vary, but the overall information to record is the same



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## 3 YEAR FIELD HISTORY

Use a separate line for each field and list fields in order. Do not group fields on the same line unless the fields are always farmed as one field.

								Name		Year: 2015	
Office Use Only	Field #	Acres	Rent or Own	Organic	Transitional	Conventional	Crop	Seed variety and company ( List any inoculants or seed treatments)	Input (such as fertilizer, lime, weed or pest control products and manure)	Amount / Rates of input used	Input application dates
				<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>					
				<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>					
				<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>					

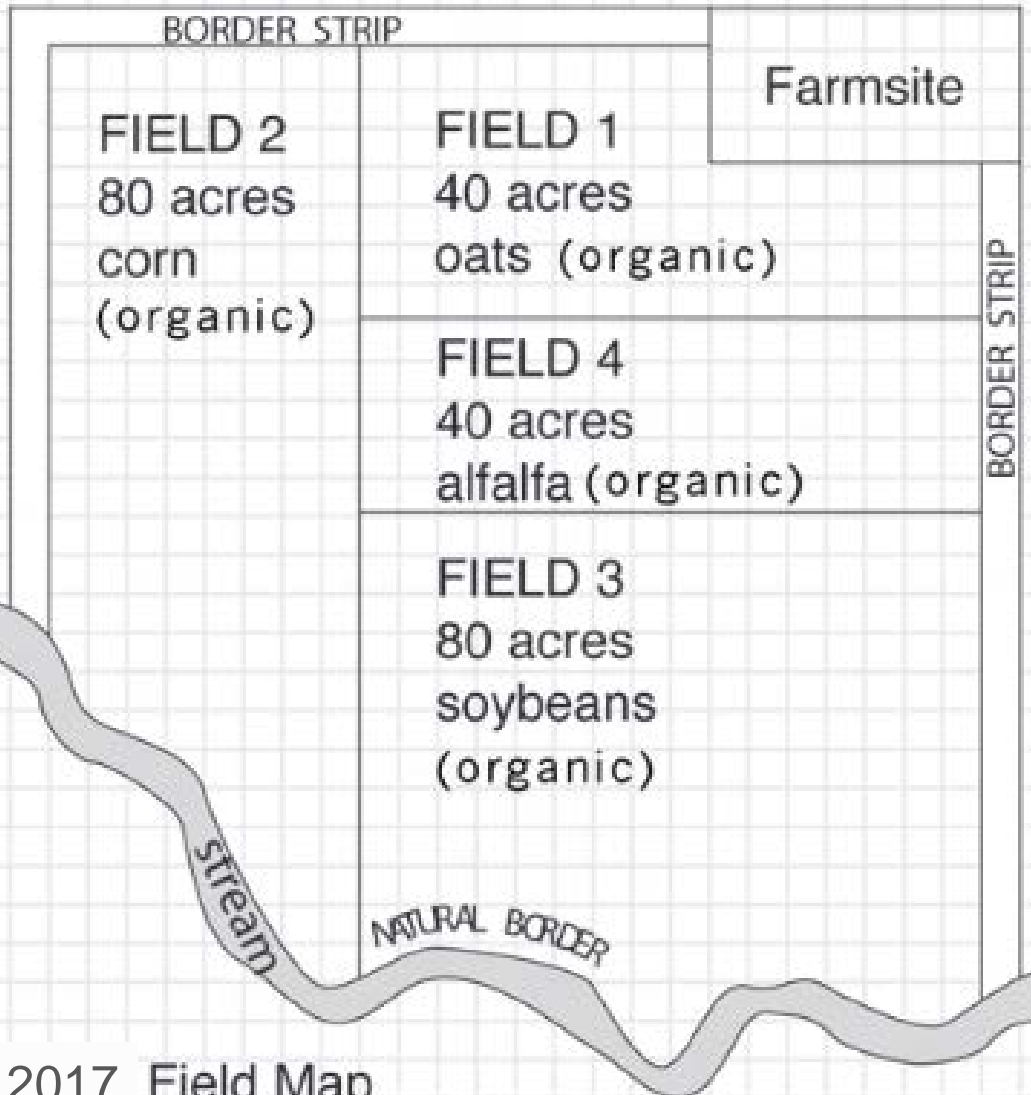




# Record Keeping Templates

- [Documentation Forms for Organic Crop and Livestock Producers from ATTRA](#)
- [Your Bridge Between Crop Insurance & Organic System Reporting from MOSES](#)
- [Minnesota Guide to Organic Certification](#)
- Certifier websites (such as [MOSA Organic](#))

Conventional Neighbor's Field



Riddle and Gulbranson, 2011

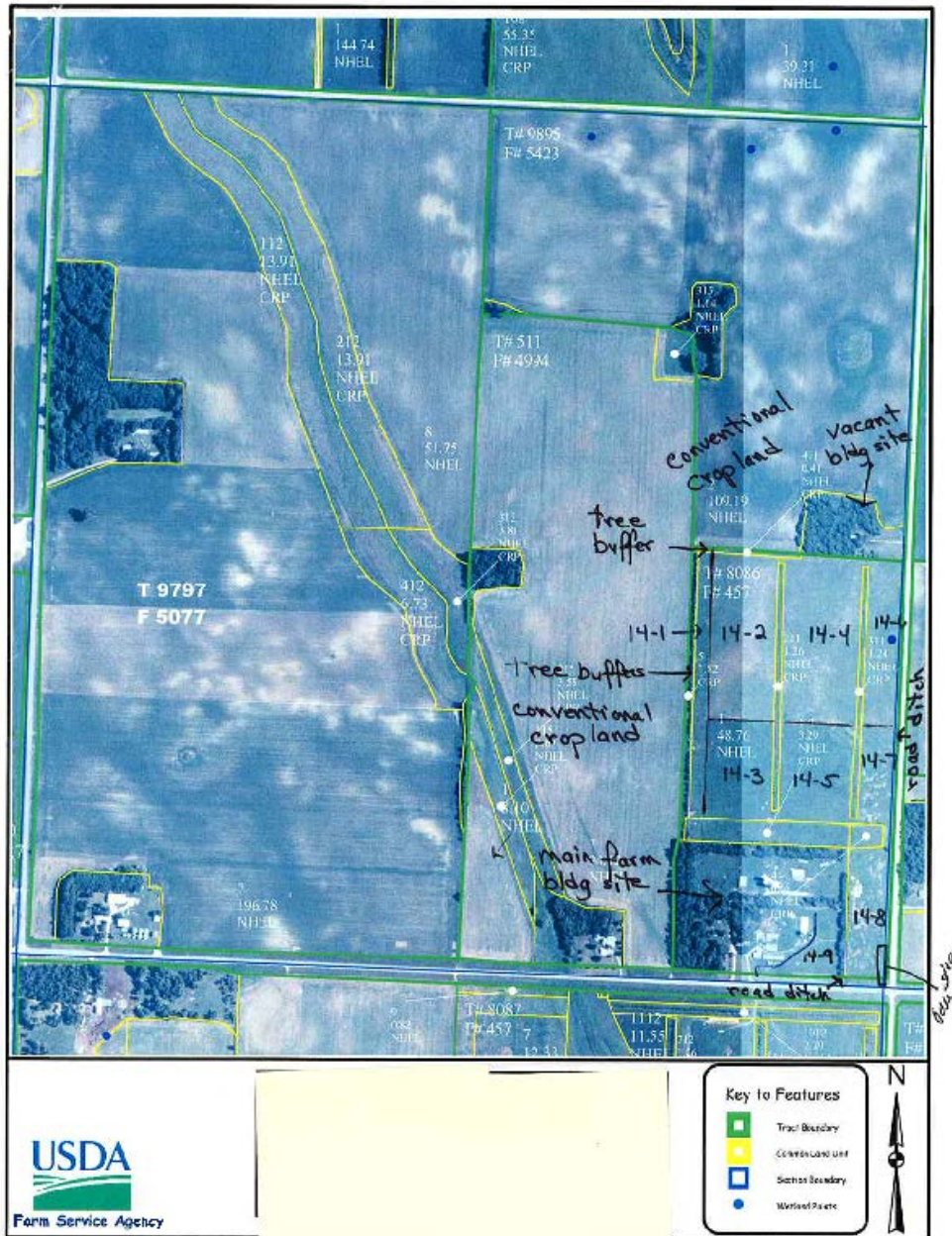
# Field Map

- Accurate map of your entire farm
- Must include:
  - Fields (location and acreage)
  - Orientation
  - All geographical features



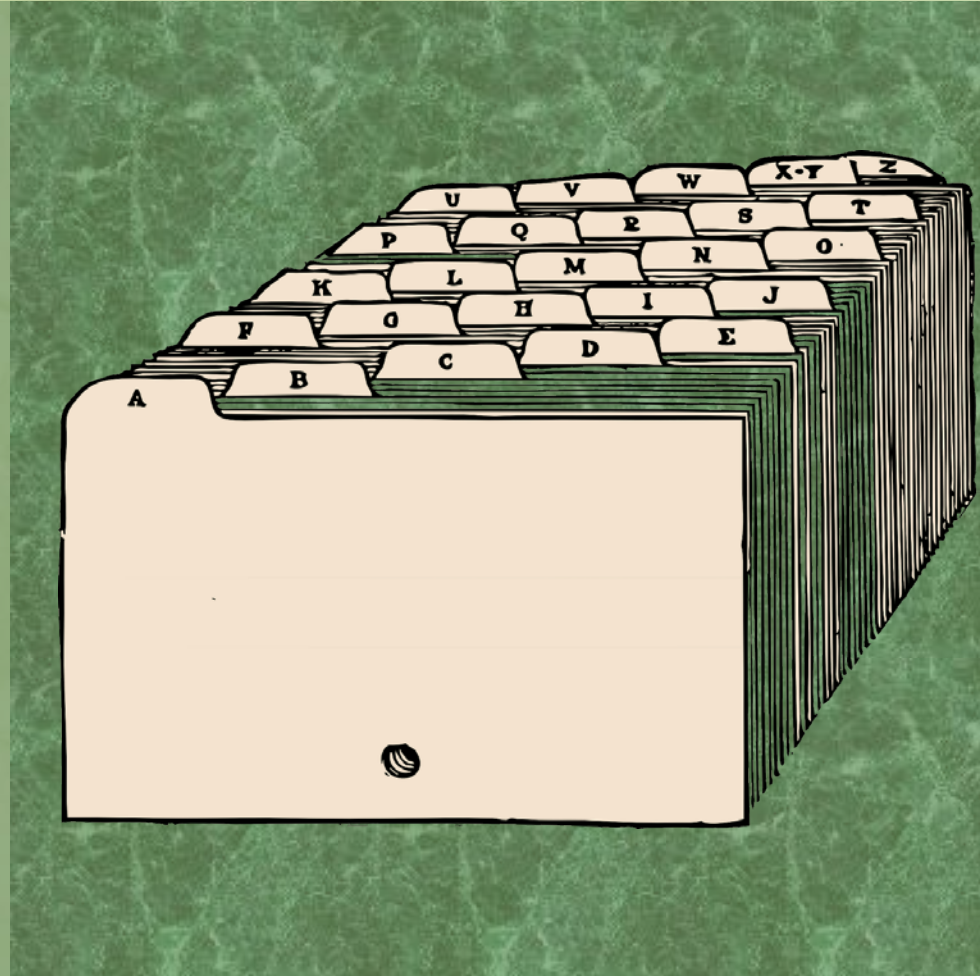
# Satellite Maps

- Obtain from NRCS
- Outline landscape features for your operation
- Watch our module on Certification for more information



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# Lot Numbers

- First created on-farm as part of audit trail
- Assigned to every new product
- Used in your logs and other forms



# What Is a Lot Number?

- Code used to trace crop
  - To the field where grown and when grown (place and time)
  - Indicates all production practices associated with that field (seed, amendments, planting, fertilizing, harvesting, etc.)





# Assigning Lot Numbers

- Assigned before the grain leaves the field
- Should be specific, consistent, and easy to decipher; can include:
  - Crop
  - Field
  - Bin
  - Year
  - Farm name or initials





# Example

Farm	Year	Crop	Field	Bin
Farm Name	2018	Soybean	7	1

Lot number = FM18S71

Tip: Be consistent when creating lot numbers

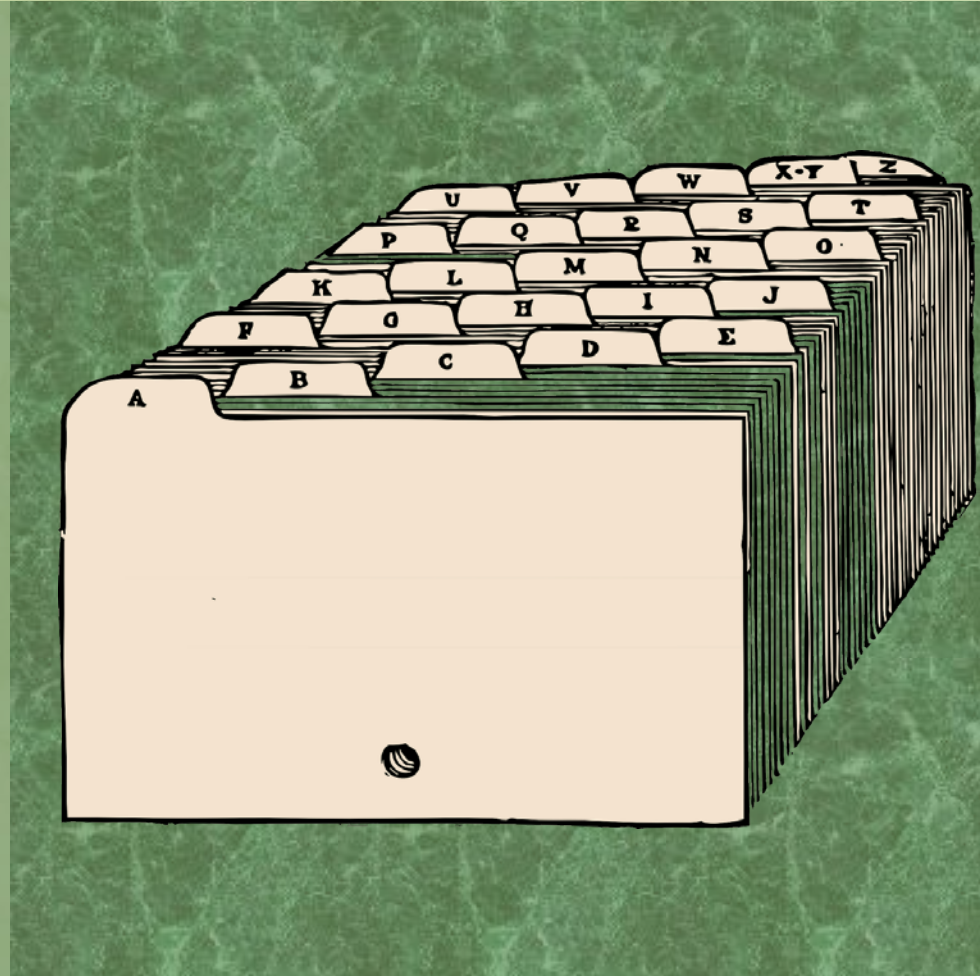


# Other Things to Know

- When crops are combined, a new lot number is assigned, but records will show associations with old lot numbers
- Lot number will travel with the product along the production chain

# Record Keeping

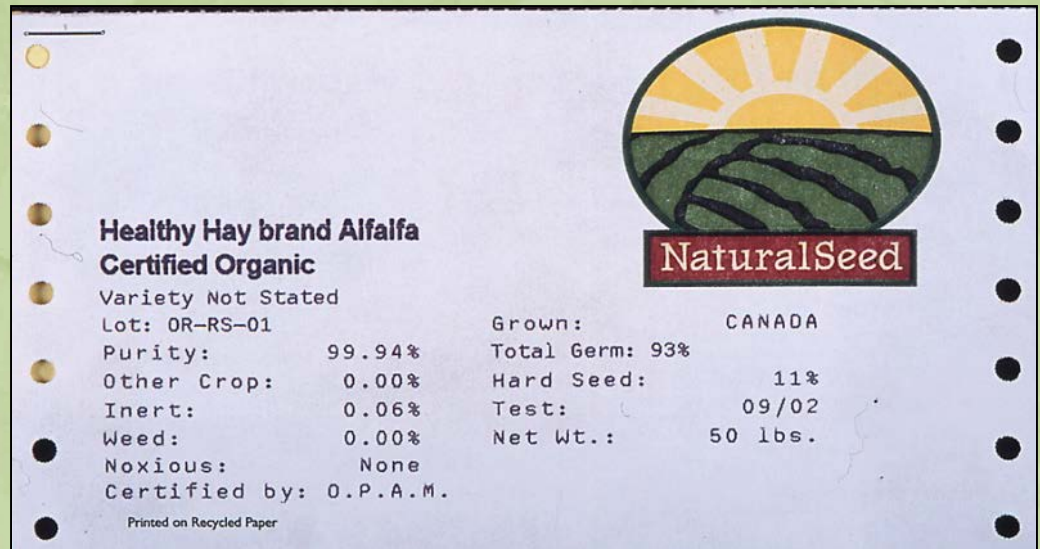
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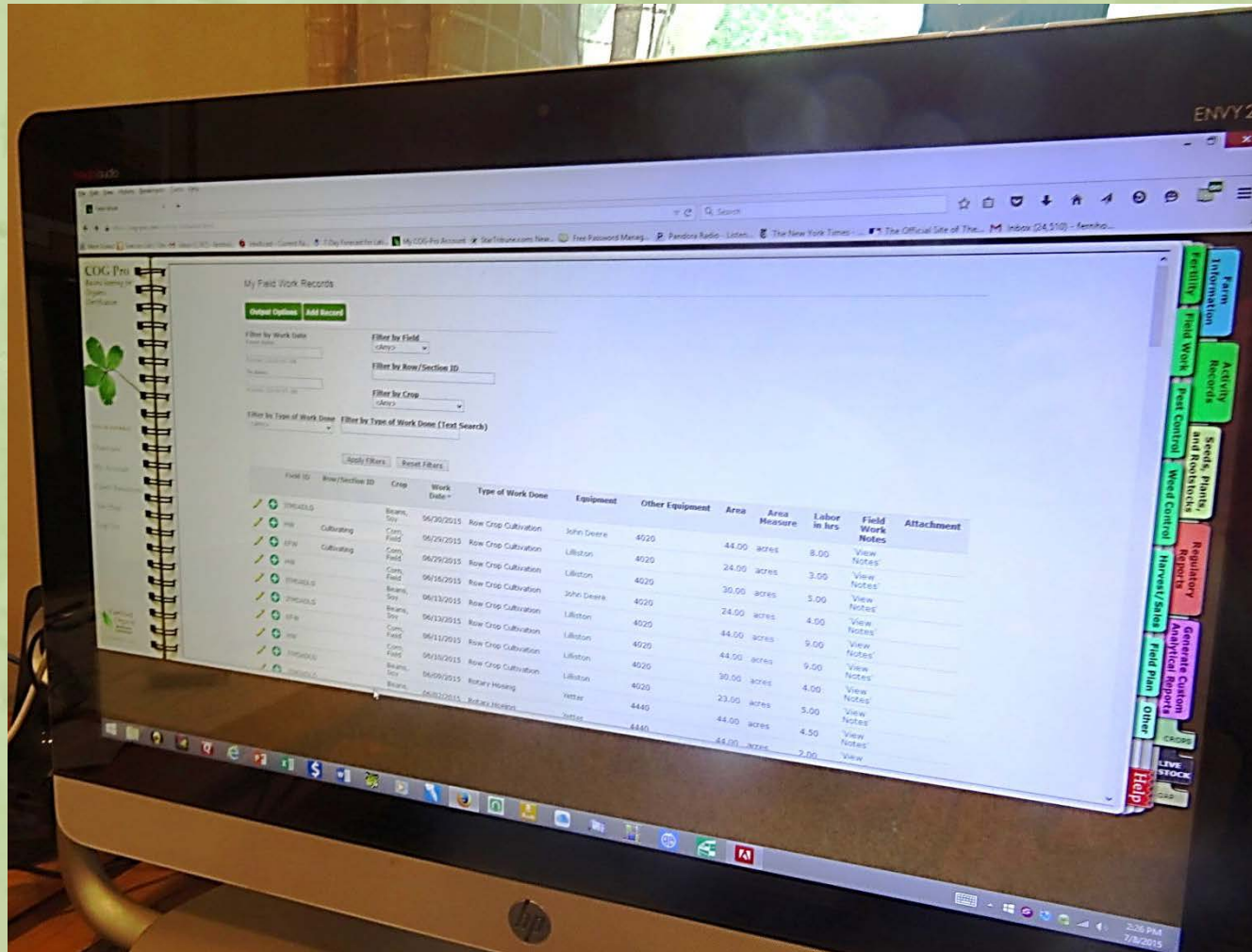


# Items to Save

- Labels – seed, inputs
- Soil and tissue test results
- Invoices
- Receipts
- Communications with your certifier
- Keep for 5 years



# Record Keeping Programs

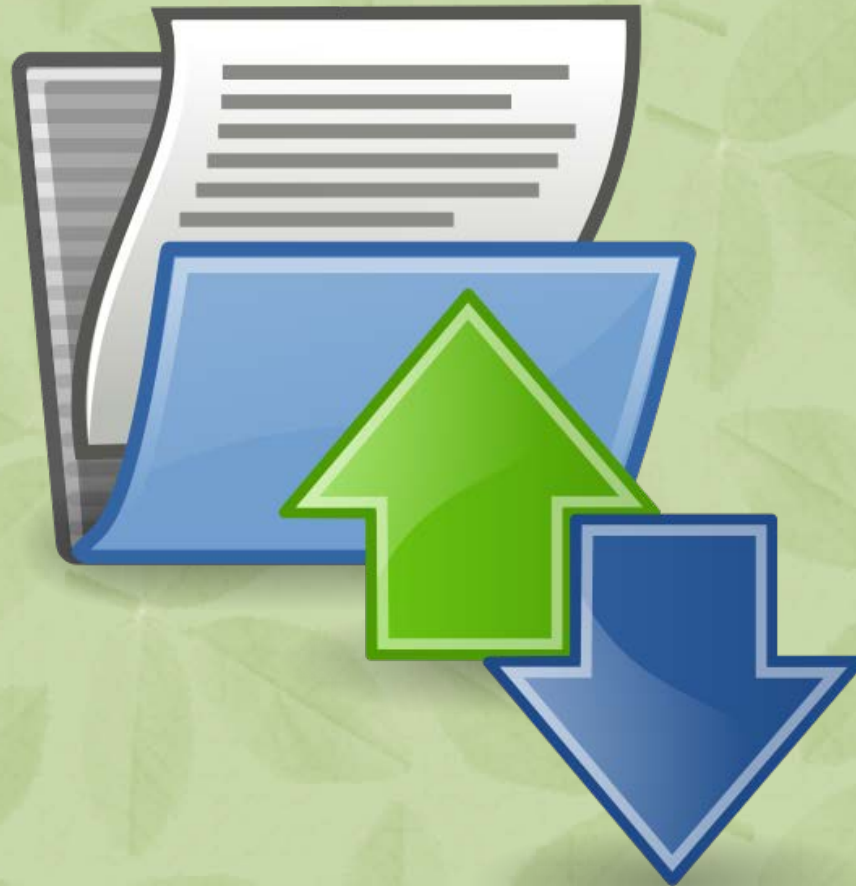


Example:  
COG Pro

Many  
other  
options  
available



# Protect Your Data!



# Conclusion

- Choose the record keeping method that you will be comfortable with
- Keep track as you go along
- Keep everything organized and accessible
- Consult with your certifier with questions

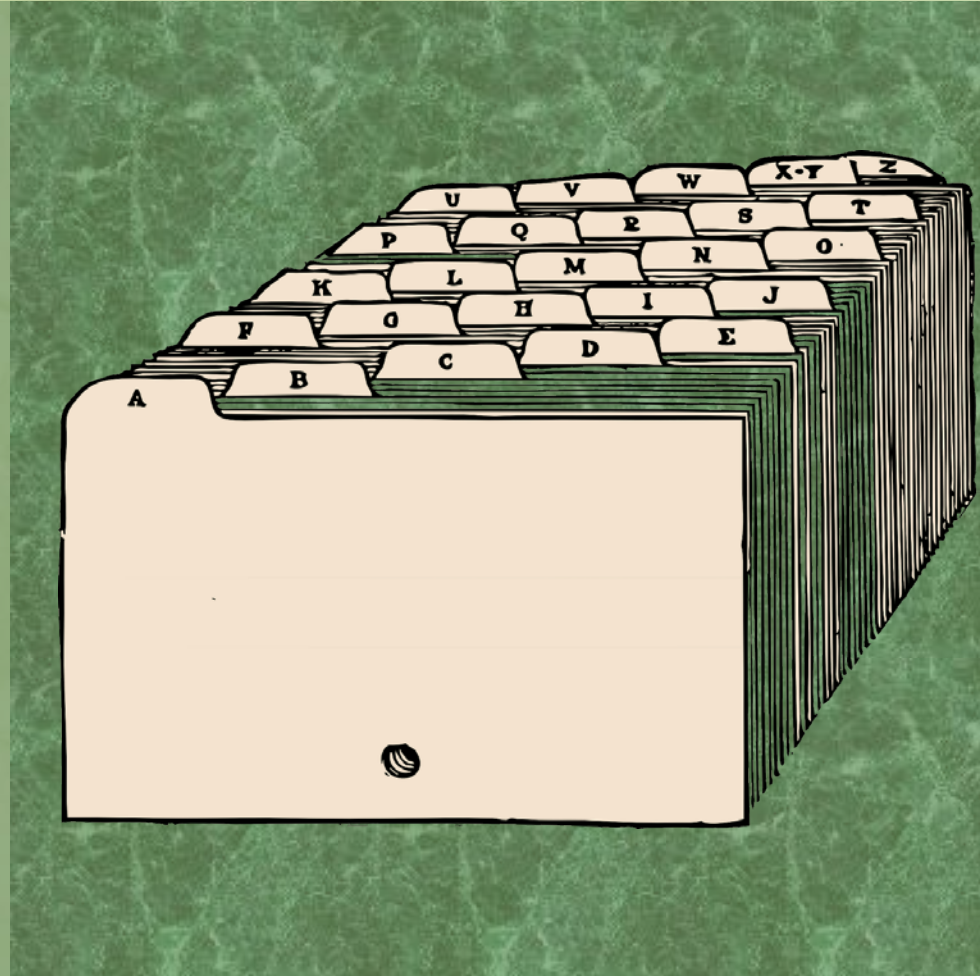


# Resources

- [Record Keeping Checklist for Organic Growers – CCOF Certification Services](#)
- [Organic Recordkeeping for a Crop Audit – Oregon Tilth](#)
- [Example Forms – MOSA Organic](#)
- [Guidebook for Organic Certification - MOSES](#)
- [Minnesota Guide to Organic Certification – Minnesota Institute for Sustainable Agriculture](#)

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National Institute of Food and Agriculture

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