

Trace Test Worksheet

Pick one sale and walk it backward. An inspector does this at every organic inspection. Do it yourself first.

Step 1. The sale

Product	
Date sold and invoice number	
Buyer	
Amount sold	
Lot number on the invoice	

Step 2. Storage and packing

Where the lot was stored	
Date packed or processed	
Lot number on the storage or pack record	

Step 3. Harvest or purchase

Harvest date, or date bought	
Field, or supplier name	
Amount harvested or bought	
Lot number on the harvest log or receipt	

Step 4. The field or the supplier

Seed or planting stock record found?	
Inputs used on that field found?	
Supplier organic certificate current on that date?	

Result

- ☐ Every step has a record with a date.
- ☐ The same lot number shows on the harvest log, the storage label, and the invoice.
- ☐ I can find every record in under ten minutes.

This is a general template in plain words. The USDA organic regulations at 7 CFR Part 205 and your certifier's own forms are the final word. This is not legal advice.

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Mass Balance Worksheet

Pick one product and one time period, such as last season. The goal: show you did not sell more organic product than you grew or bought.

Product	
Time period (from, to)	
Unit (pounds, cases, gallons)	

What came in

A. On hand at the start	
B. Harvested in the period	
C. Bought in the period	
D. Total in (A + B + C)	

What went out

E. Sold as organic	
F. Sold as not organic	
G. Used, given away, or fed	
H. Loss you wrote down (drying, sorting, spoilage)	
I. On hand at the end	
J. Total out (E + F + G + H + I)	

The check

D minus J (should be zero, or close)	
If it is not close, why?	

What the answer means

- Close to zero: your records hold together.
- Total out is more than total in: you sold more than you can show came in. Find the missing harvest or purchase record before your inspection.
- Total in is much more than total out: product is not accounted for. Look for sales, loss, or stock you did not write down.

Records to pull: harvest logs, purchase receipts, supplier certificates, sales invoices, stock counts at the start and the end, and loss or waste notes.

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