

# CURRENT CONDITIONS FOR SEED USE IN THE CZECH ORGANIC FARMING

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## Abstract

Council Regulation (EC) No. 834/2007, and Commission Regulation (EC) No. 889/2008, are the most important European legislative instructions on organic farming (OF). They lay down a permit to use just organic seeds (OS) for establishment of organic crop stands. Such seeds have to originate from the plants being grown in compliance with OF rules for at least one generation. Organic farmers are obliged, in compliance with the above-mentioned legislation, to use seeds originating from organic production when establishing crop stands. Otherwise, they are allowed to use their own seeds or they may apply for an exception to a relevant public authority in order to use conventional untreated seeds. There are 3,517 organic farmers in the Czech Republic (CZ) and they manage their farms on the total surface of 448,202 ha, which represent 10.55% of the agriculture land surface in CZ. Arable land represents 12.26% (54,937 ha) of the total organic land surface. Cereals were considered as the main market crops and grown on the surface of 22,762 ha in 2009. Deficiency of certified good-quality OS in CZ is one of the factors limiting the organic cereals growing there. Crop stands are currently established from certified OS (6%), conventional untreated seeds (37%) and farm seeds (57%) in CZ. They are usually established from "uncontrolled" farm seeds originating from repeated reseeded. As restrictions on conventional untreated seeds are being imposed, seed growers have to be motivated to provide a sufficient supply of certified OS. Current deficiency of approved seeds is also caused by a complexity of the reproduction processes and small amount of approved seeds originating from the approved reproduction processes. Identical requirements for conventional and OS have been imposed but organic farming is not so highly intensive as conventional farming. It is one of the reasons of the current OS deficiency.

**Key words:** organic farming, seeds, availability