



Iowa Organic Certification Program

Developing a Producer Lot Number

1. Lot numbers, which begin at the farm level, play a critical role in the identification of product as it moves through the organic system.
2. A lot number is a code assigned by producers to link products to fields of production.
3. Lot numbers are unique to each operation, but need to be used consistently once established.
4. For most producers, lot numbers indicate the producer's identity, the type of crop, storage unit or field number, and the production year. For example, the lot number PNOS507 would represent the following information:

PN	OS	5	07
Producer Name	Organic Soybeans	Field Number	Production Year

This grower may be growing both organic and conventional soybeans. Records must be maintained to show when the crop in Field 5 was harvested, and where it was stored or to whom it was sold.

5. For producers who sell product directly from the field, field numbers and date of harvest may be used in the lot number to track that product to the field of production. For example, the lot number APN551307 would represent the following information:

A	PN	5	513	07
Asparagus	Producer Name	Field Number	Harvest Date May 13	Production Year

6. Each part of the lot number should contain as many digits as the maximum number needed. For instance, if there are 12 fields on the farm, two digits should be contained in the field code section of the lot number. Field #1 would be designated as 01.
7. Any time organic products are combined, a new lot number must be assigned. The lot numbers of the incoming organic products and the new lot number must be recorded on the same document, such as a bin register or production report, in order for the audit trail to remain intact. For example, two lots of organic soybeans (#OSB0207 and #OSB1107) are sourced from bins 02 and 11, and are blended together when they are loaded into the same semi-trailer for shipment. The new lot is designated by a new lot number (#OSL407 with the L498 indicating the 4th load sold in 2007). The old lot numbers and the new lot number should be recorded on the bin register. The new lot number should be recorded on the outgoing Bill of Lading (BOL) and product sales record.