

## General ROA Terms and Definitions

**Purpose:** To define the terms and definitions used in the ROC program and program administration and the ROA organization.

1. **Agreement:** The ROC licensing agreement between the ROA and the Organization
2. **Approval:** ROA CBAC decision that a certification body is competent to carry out ROC certification activities. Achieving approval status gives a certification body the authority to grant certification to ROC.
3. **Assurance personnel:** The Certification Body personnel approved for conducting any activities related to ROC audits and personnel performing technical reviews and on-site audits.
4. **Authorized licensee:** Includes, but is not limited to, any brand, broker, finished goods manufacturer, or wholesaler who is making a ROC claim and has a valid License Agreement with the ROA.
5. **Brand:** A name, term, design, symbol, or any other distinctive feature that identifies a product as distinct from other products.
6. **Brand Owner:** a person or company who sells a commodity or product under a registered brand label. Brand owners will be referred to as “brands” throughout this document.
7. **Auditor:** A certification body representative who conducts audits.
8. **Calibration:** A targeted review or training of a technical reviewer or auditor to ensure performance metrics and ROC program goals are consistently applied. Any findings in the individual’s performance or training should appropriately address any deficiencies or knowledge gaps that are observed.
9. **Certification level:** The ROC™ level to which a product is certified, i.e., Bronze, Silver, or Gold.
10. **Certified producer:** A farm or ranch that has applied for or achieved ROC certification status and is making a ROC claim. A Certified Producer must have a valid License Agreement with the ROA. A producer grows or raises a commodity to be used for a food, feed, cosmetics, or textile product. The first stage in the raw material supply chain. Certified producers are also referred to as “operator”.
11. **Certified operation:** See certified producer.
12. **Chain of custody:** The set of practices and documentation required to ensure that certified product (i.e., ROC plant or animal products) is segregated, identifiable, and traceable throughout the supply chain. Post-farm processors and handlers must maintain the proper chain of custody standards for a final consumer product to carry ROC™ claims.
13. **Claimed material:** The portion of a product that is intended to be used and eligible for ROC claims; see certified product.
14. **Client:** A ROC certified operator or applicant.

15. **Consumer facing content claims for textiles:** These include but are not limited to hang/swing tags, claims displayed permanently on product, and alternative packaging.
16. **Critical activities:** file review, auditing, decision making, or issuance of certificate.
17. **Critical tolerance (CT):** a type of finding that is a major non-compliance with resolution due within 30 days.
18. **Desk audit:** off-site records assessment conducted by the ROA to assess conformance to the ROC Certification Body Requirements document or approved equivalent.
19. **Evaluation:** Process undertaken by ROA to assess the quality and competence of a certification body based on a defined scope of approval.
20. **Exempt organization:** An organization that meets the exemption criteria of the NOP Organic certification program and is also exempt from certification requirements and auditing. Exempt organizations include those that store, or transport only packaged, segregated raw or finished goods; and retailers that sell packaged, labeled product(s) to consumers.
21. **Framework for ROC:** Standards for Regenerative Organic Certified<sup>®</sup> (ROC<sup>™</sup>). ROC consists of three pillars: Soil Health and Land Management, Animal Welfare, and Farmer & Worker Fairness. ROC has three levels: Bronze, Silver, and Gold. Each requires a different number and scope of regenerative organic practices used.
22. **Global North:** Refers to countries with the highest level of industrialization and mature democracies. These nations located primarily in the Northern hemisphere include countries such as Australia, Canada, the entirety of Europe and Russia, Israel, Japan, New Zealand, Singapore, South Korea, Taiwan, and the United States.
23. **Governing documents:** any document stating ROC program requirements. The Governing Documents consist of: the License Agreement, the ROC Framework, the Program Manual, the Operation Information & Certification Contract, the Supply Chain Guidelines, the Cost & Fee Structure, and the Labeling Guidelines & Terms of Use. Governing Documents will be available at [RegenOrganic.org/Resources](https://RegenOrganic.org/Resources).
24. **Grower group:** Grower group certification refers to the certification of a group of producers whose farms are uniform in most ways, and who are organized under one central management or internal control system (ICS) and marketing system. Grower group certifications have historically been used for the certification of cooperatives or groups of producers located in a geographical or social region whose crops are marketed collectively.
25. **Handler:** Any person engaged in the business of selling, processing, or packaging agricultural products except for final retailers that do not process agricultural products.
26. **Information panel:** The labeled panel immediately to the right of the principal display panel, as displayed to the consumer. If the panel is not usable, due to package design and construction, then the information panel is the next label panel immediately to the right.
27. **Internal control system (ICS):**
28. **Licensee:** Legally authorized representative of an organization that has signed the ROA License Agreement and has agreed to be bound to the terms of the ROC program.

29. **Licensors:** ROA is the licensed owner of the Regenerative Organic Certified name and all other trademarks, certification seals, logos, and standards.
30. **Low Risk Social Fairness Audit:** A low-risk farmer and worker fairness audit is defined as an audit of a family-owned and operated farm or ranch located in the global north with less than 5 direct hire employees in a calendar year with no third-party contract laborers; no H2A workers; and no hired adolescent labor under age 16.
31. **Medium-scale farm:** 6-25 permanent workers and no more than 100 total workers on-site at the management unit at any time.
32. **Medium-scale farm organization:** More than 2/3 of member farms meet the criteria for medium-scale
33. **Non-compliance (NC):** type of finding issued to an operator found not in compliance with the ROC standards due for resolution within 45 calendar days.
34. **On-site Audit:** synchronous evaluation visit of conformance to the ROC Certification Body Requirements either in person or virtually.
35. **Operation:** A legal entity that is certified to or in the process of becoming certified to ROC. The farm or ranch that grows or raises crops, botanicals, and/or animals to be used for food, cosmetics, or textile product. Typically, the first stage in the raw material supply chain.
36. **Operator:** the owner or responsible person of the applicant or certified operation.
37. **Opportunity for Improvement (OFI):** a type of finding set on the CB related to program improvement during the evaluation visit that has no due date but is suggested for resolution before the next full evaluation.
38. **Organization:** the Farm, Producer, Operation, Brand, Finished Goods Manufacturer, Supply Chain Actor, or other entity that executed a License Agreement.
39. **Parcel:** readily distinguishable pieces of land from each other with no adjacent or touching borders.
40. **Principal display panel:** The portion of a product packaging or label that is most likely to be displayed, presented, shown, or examined under customary conditions of display for sale.
41. **Processing:** Any stage in the supply chain where ROC materials (i.e., plant or animal products) are modified. Processing may include activities such as slaughter, milling, cooking, mixing, and packaging a final product. Processing may occur at a separate facility or on-farm. If the latter, then the farm or ranch is both producer and processor.
42. **Producer:** The farm or ranch that grows or raises crops and/or animals to be used for a food or textile product. The first stage in the raw material supply chain.
43. **Recommendation:** a type of finding that has no due date and suggested to be resolved before the next audit cycle.
44. **Reevaluation:** A complete audit of the CB quality system and certification operational activities that occurs every four years. It is a process undertaken by ROA to assess the quality and competence of a certification body based on a defined scope of approval.
45. **Remote audit:** A site audit that is conducted via a remote web conferencing method or other audio/video means.

46. **ROC mark(s):** Refers to the Regenerative Organic Certified seal and name and all other trademarks, certification seals, logos, or any other proprietary designations owned by the Regenerative Organic Alliance.
47. **ROC Pillars:** Soil Health, Animal Welfare, and Social Fairness.
48. **ROSP** - Regenerative Organic System Plan completed by the Client
49. **Surveillance Audit (ASR):** Annual audit of the Certifying Body as a condition of approval.
50. **Site:** Any geographically distinct unit within a certification pillar scope. Locations which are geographically distinct or have different civic addresses are separate sites (see exception for *farms*). *Subcontractors* are not considered to be sites. Includes: farms, *facilities*, offices.
51. **Smallholder:** Small farming operations where land and labor productivity are comparatively low due to limited resources. Smallholder farmers often rely on farming as a primary means of livelihood and are at greater risk of vulnerability in the supply chain. Smallholders rely primarily on family labor for farm operations. Smallholder size may vary by farm type and commodity; however, some certifications set thresholds so confirm with your certification program, if applicable. Most smallholders are organized by Internal Control System (ICS) for certification purposes. Contact the ROA for additional guidance on determining if your operation is considered a smallholder under the ROC.
52. **Small-scale farm:** ≤5 permanent workers and no more than 25 total workers on-site at the management unit at any time (FT-USA, FFL).
53. **Small-scale farm organization:** More than 2/3 of member farms meet the criteria for small-scale. A maximum of 1/3 of member farms may have up to 2 times the parameters defined.
54. **Spot audit** - A type of short notice onsite or synchronous virtual visit to an ROA-approved Certifying Body or certified operator usually as the result of a complaint or major non-conformity to the ROC program.
55. **Standards:** ROC Framework, Dairy Animal Welfare Criteria, Processor Criteria, and Supply Chain Guidelines.
56. **Subcontractor:** A legal entity hired by an operation to perform services (e.g., storage, processing). Subcontractors take physical possession, but not legal ownership of certified product and are independent of the organization which outsources the material; OR an independent legal entity hired by a certification body to provide services related to certification activities.
57. **Supply Chain:** Any steps taken to deliver food, fiber, or botanical products from the farm to the end consumer. Raw agricultural materials are transformed into saleable goods by processing, packaging, transporting, storing, or distributing to final sales outlets.
58. **Supply Chain Actor:** Any organizations that process or handle certified product that are not fully packaged or contained and/or take legal ownership of ROC product; including but not limited to any stage in the supply chain where ROC materials (i.e., plant or animal products) from the producer are modified, which may include the final stage of production. For ROC, the scope for Supply Chain Actors (SCAs) begins with the first legal change in ownership after harvest of crop.

59. **Suspension:** The limitation of a *scope certificate* or *accreditation* due to a specific *non-conformity* or issue. A suspension may be lifted when the non-conformity or issue is resolved and the scope certificate or accreditation becomes active again immediately.
60. **USA Wage and Hours Division:** The entity is responsible for administering several statutes that extend various protections to different types of agricultural workers.
61. **Withdrawal:** The revocation of a *scope certificate* or *accreditation* due to a specific non-conformity or issue, or at the request of the *accredited/certified* party. Following a withdrawal of accreditation/certification, a new *assessment/audit* is required for accreditation/certification to return to active status.
62. **Witness Audit of Auditor(s) (WA):** on-site audit during which a qualified auditor is observed by the ROA to confirm competence. The witness audit will be scheduled at an agreed-upon time by the Certification Body, ROA, and auditor. In the event the Certification Body has no active ROC applicants, a mock audit is acceptable.