

BIO HOTELS standards:

A) Food Standards

The aim of the BIO HOTELS is to exclusively use organic products which are sourced, whenever possible, locally. In terms of quality, the BIO HOTELS prefer to use products that meet the requirements stipulated by Demeter, Bioland or similar high standards.

Detailed Provisions:

Food

Individual BIO HOTELS Members may make exceptions in accordance with the following provisions. To the extent that the following provisions require approval, the Board grants the relevant approval of exceptions as described under 'Exceptions'.

Furthermore, exceptions are generally made for collecting plants and food in the wild, catching or hunting wild animals and fishing in the wild as well as seafood, pursuant to the following provisions, which may be replaced in part or in whole by any new provisions:

Fish, seafood and game

In the event that fish, seafood and game are not sourced organically:

1. this is to be communicated to the guest with a note stating 'Not from organic source' or similar text.
2. it should be proven that the products come from the following source:
 - Game: regional source (direct from hunter with proof of origin, accompanying game certificate)
 - Fish: regional source (only wild-caught, no farming)
 - Ocean fish: certified origin (ASC, MSC; Fishing Act of Iceland, Alaska or similar standard).
 - Seafood: certified origin (ASC, MSC or similar standard)

Wild herbs, mushrooms and berries (wild collection)

- a) From certified organic wild collection (detailed specifications from the relevant inspection body).
- b) Herbs and fruit grown by a Member must be certified as agriculture (small-scale). Agricultural products – also those from own farming grounds – must meet the requirement of being in exclusive organic quality (or 'conventional' if the producer is in the process of converting to an organic farm and has applied for recognition) to ensure that organic ingredients are used. .

Additional note: microwave ovens are not used.

Beverages:

Wine

There are no provisions for wine lists which consist solely (100%) of organic wines. However, the following rules apply to wine lists that also contain conventional wines:

- a) There must be at least 20 organic wines on offer; these must include organic sparkling, white and red wines.
- b) 75% of the wines must come from organic sources.
- c) Organic wines must always be favoured on the wine list; for example, by being grouped together at the top of the list.

As of 2016, wine lists with conventional wines will be charged an annual penalty of €100 per product (label/type) by the Association. An application for an exception does not need to be submitted to the Association. The wine list is checked as part of the annual inspection and the result automatically forwarded to the Association.

Spirits

There are no provisions for lists which consist solely (100%) of organic spirits. However, the following rules apply to lists that also contain conventional spirits:

- a) There must be at least one organic spirit in each group of conventional spirits.
- d) 75% of the spirits must come from organic sources
- b) Organic spirits must always be favoured on the list; for example, by being grouped together at the top of the list.

As of 2016, lists with conventional spirits will be charged an annual penalty of €100 per product (label/type) by the Association. An application for an exception does not need to be submitted to the Association. The list of spirits is checked as part of the annual inspection and the result automatically forwarded to the Association.

Exceptions

- a) Up to 3 exceptions are possible for non-alcoholic beverages, beers and food. This must be reported by the Member Company by 1 January to the Compliance Officer by means of a Request for an Exception and contain a detailed product description and producer information. Each Request for an Exception will be extended for another year if a retraction is not submitted in writing by the respective Member Company by 31 December.
- b) The selection of exceptions is incumbent on the Member Company and is noted by the Association. A Request for an Exception is forwarded to the inspection body. Explicit approval by the Association is no longer necessary (except animal products).
- c) All exceptions regarding animal products are subject to approval and must be applied for. Approval is incumbent on the Board and is provided in writing.
- d) Member Companies will be charged an annual penalty of €100 by the Association for each exception.

Last updated: Monday, November 23rd 2020.

These new provisions replace all previously valid provisions in the area of F&B of the Association.

B) Non-Food Standards

Members of the association BIO HOTELS commit themselves, to develop their establishments as ecologically and sustainably as possible. Ecological materials and solutions are to be used for every renovation, extension or new construction and for all purchases.

Detailed Provisions:

Toiletries and Cosmetics:

Members are required to exclusively use certified organic toiletries and cosmetics throughout the entire establishment. Approved certifications are: BDIH, Natrue, Ecocert, AbCert, ABG, ICEA or equivalent. This minimum standard applies to cleansing products as well as to all products in treatment rooms and shops (cosmetics; makeup; body, face and haircare products).

Comprehensive Resource Management:

CO2 certification is carried out for each Member Company and is a Group Certification of the BIO HOTELS Association. The goal is to certify the Association as a single group and thus make a clear statement in the area of non-food for external communication. All members are required to capture and store their CO2 values electronically every 2 years, in a timely manner (in the period provided) and with the help of the tool of common choice. As part of ecological inspections, these values will be verified. The benchmark value and the respective CO2 values then make their way into the Group Certification of the Association.

Minimum Standards:

- A. Members of the association exclusively use recycled paper or primary-fibre paper from sustainable forestry. Sustainable forest management is characterised by the protected and certified FSC and PEFC labels. This provision concerns both direct procurement by members (for example paper for the office, toilet, kitchen, etc.) as well as indirect procurement by placing orders with printers, etc.
- B. Members exclusively use 100 % electricity from renewable energy sources (this means energy sources that are inexhaustible or that renew relatively quickly such as hydropower, biomass, solar, wind, tidal, geothermal, and CHP units).
- C. The CO2 value for each establishment may not exceed 40kg per guest per night. Should an establishment exceed this value, the establishment has one year to reduce its CO2 emissions.

Sanctions for violating the Standards of the BIO HOTELS Association (Food & Beverage as well as Non-Food Standards)

Author: Gernot Loitzl, ABG: In the event of deviations, the following sanctions can be imposed by the organic inspection body in accordance with the penalties stipulated in EU Regulation (EEC) No 2092/91 on organic products:

Sanction 1 (S1): minor deviation that does not yet constitute a violation of the BIO HOTELS Standards; clarification or settlement possible by submission within a period of time granted at the inspector's discretion (up to 21 days). If, as a result of the submission, it transpires that there has been a breach of the Standards or of the EU Regulation, the sanction level can be subsequently increased according to the severity of the deviation.

Typical deviations that trigger S1:

Certificates are missing during an inspection. Minor faults in the preparation of inspection documentation as required in the form 'Documentation to be prepared for inspection' (faxed to each company prior to a scheduled inspection); errors when inspecting incoming goods (for example, not reacting to missing organic labelling on products or their accompanying documents, etc.) if the organic status of the product can be determined during the inspection or its origin from organic farming seems plausible to the inspector; in the event of indeterminate status or clear references to conventional origin, a higher sanction level will be applied). Minor inaccuracies with regard to labelling of menus, table cards, etc.; proof of this being corrected can be demonstrated by submitting documents to the inspection body.

Sanction 2 (S2):

A deviation that constitutes a violation of the BIO HOTELS Standards, requiring a submission stating that the issue has been resolved within a specified deadline or whose implementation must be checked by means of an additional inspection;

Typical deviations that trigger S2:

Failure to correctly inspect incoming goods resulting in the acceptance of conventional goods or conversion goods (in the process of being converted to organic); minor labelling errors; missing or inaccurate labelling of conventional foods that have been confirmed by the supplier to be currently unavailable in organic quality (for example, on buffets), as well as for conventional non-alcoholic beverages or labelling errors for wines/beers; in the event of repeated transgressions → S3. Confirmation from a supplier that a particular product is not available in organic quality for a certain period of time is not reported or reported late (in the event of short-term logistical problems, a note from the supplier on the delivery paperwork/ invoice that a certain product is currently not available in organic quality suffices); repeated transgressions → S3

Sanction 3 (S3)

Deviations that constitutes a violation of the BIO HOTELS Standards, requiring an additional control and, following a resolution of the Board by simple majority, results in a contractual penalty in the amount of one to three times the annual Membership Fee. This is to be paid by the Member immediately. All rights and obligations remain unaffected. This sanction can be imposed per violation and multiple times.

Recommendation: The inspection body sends an inspection report to the Board explaining why an S3 has been imposed; confirmation of an S3 with relevant information shall be sent to the Member by the Board.

Typical deviations that trigger S3:

Repeated use of conventional foodstuffs for which there is no confirmation of a supplier exemption; it should be noted that this confirmation must be sent in writing by post, fax or e-mail upon first use of the exception (within 72 hours) to the inspection body and the Board. A late registration either during or shortly before the inspection is not accepted as a valid confirmation and repeated infringements will be penalised with S3. It should also be noted that the confirmation only applies to the products it lists. If other conventional foods are also used, S2 will be imposed and, by repeated infringements, S3. Gross labelling errors or repeated gross inaccuracies. Repeated deviations with S2 or S1, which were not redressed despite a request from the inspection body.

Sanction 4 (S4)

Expulsion of Member: to be imposed at the discretion of the Board; for example, in the event of inherent non-compliance with the Standards or failure to fulfil conditions despite repeated requests and/or repeated S3 without a 'willingness to improve'; costs for marketing activities remain unaffected. If any marketing activities need to be changed or discontinued, or there are additional costs due to the expulsion of a Member, these costs are to be paid by the Member Company regardless of membership status.

General Note on Sanctions:

The examples of how to classify deviations are understood to act as a guide which the inspector must follow. However, it must be emphasised that not all possible deviations can be listed here and that the inspector's own judgement is required in specific cases.