

**21—47.11(190C) Regional organic associations (ROAs).** The department may register and authorize a regional organic association to assist the department by providing application assistance to the association's members requesting application assistance.

**47.11(1) Registration.** If authorized by the department, regional organic associations shall be registered by the department in order to assist the department.

*a. Registration.* Regional organic associations shall register annually. To register with the department, the regional organic association shall submit the following:

- (1) Names and addresses of a minimum of 25 members;
- (2) A signed regional organic association declaration as provided by the department;
- (3) The bylaws and ongoing changes to the bylaws; and
- (4) Verification of regional organic association liability insurance.

*b. Authorization.* For authorization to be granted, the following requirements shall be met:

- (1) The regional association shall sign a memorandum of understanding with the department specifying functions to be performed by the association related to application assistance; and
- (2) The regional association shall receive from the department a letter of authorization to provide application assistance.

**47.11(2) Functions.**

*a.* Authorized ROAs, reviewing member application materials for submission to the department, shall:

- (1) Provide to the department and the board a summary of the member's application;
- (2) Identify any unresolved shortcomings in the application; and
- (3) Indicate if the application appears to meet the Iowa organic standards promulgated in Iowa Code chapter 190C and this chapter.

*b. Requirements.*

- (1) Application assistance provided by ROAs shall be conducted by association staff or association board members; and
- (2) Application materials received by the ROA for submission to the department shall be forwarded along with the summary to the department. The application fee for state organic certification shall be paid with a check made payable to the department by the individual member applying for state certification. The check shall be submitted with the application.

**47.11(3) Prohibited.**

*a.* ROA staff or ROA board members providing application assistance for their members shall have no personal or commercial interest in the outcome of a member's application for state certification.

*b.* ROAs shall not amend member documents prior to submitting them to the department.