

## ORGANIC CERTIFICATION AND INSPECTION

**Dr. C. Malleshwaran**

*Assistant Professor of Commerce (International Business), Chikkanna Govt. Arts College, Tirupur*

**Mrs.R.Aruljothi**

*Research Scholar Chikkanna Govt. Arts College, Tirupur*

### **Abstract**

*This paper attempts to bring together different issues in the light of recent developments in organic farming. The after effects of green revolution have encouraged the farmers to take up organic farming. This paper has reviewed the global and Indian Scenario with reference to organic farming. In India the cultivated Land Under Certification is 2.8mha only. The key issues emerging in organic farming include yield reduction in conversion to organic farming. Soil fertility enhancement, integration of live stock certification constrains, ecology, marketing and policy support. The potential for organic farming, especially in the dry land regions has been discussed. It has been argued that organic farming is productive and sustainable but there is a need for strong support to it in the form of subsidies, extension services and research.*

### **Introduction**

Organic farming is known by different names in different countries and the estimated 16 different terms in use include biological farming regenerative farming and sustainable farming. Organic farming methods are widely used in under developed and developing countries, largely because of economics and lack of chemicals.

### **Organic Farming in India**

India has traditionally practiced organic agriculture, but the process of modernization particularly the green revolution technologies has led to the increased use of chemicals. In recent years, however, limitation of agriculture based on chemical use and intensive irrigation has become apparent and there has been a resurgence of interest in organic agriculture. Government of India has also launched the national programme for organic production (NPOP) in the year 2001. European commission and Switzerland as equivalent to their country standards. Similarly the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) has recognized NPOP conformity assessment procedure of accreditation as equivalent to those in the US. Currently India ranks 33<sup>rd</sup> in terms of total land under organic cultivation and 88<sup>th</sup> in agricultural land under organic crops of total farming area.

Table 1: The status of organic production in India 2013-2014

Total area under certified organic cultivation	2.8 mha
Total production	5,85970mt
Total quantity exported	19456mt
Value of total export	Rs.30124lakhs
Number of farmers	1,41,904

Source: So EL survey(2013-14).

#### Purpose of Certification

Organic certification addressed a growing worldwide demand for organic food. It is intended to assure quality and prevent fraud. For organic producers, certification identified suppliers of products approved for use in certified operations for consumers “Certified Organic” serve as a product assurance similar to “low fat” 100% whole wheat “or” no artificial preservatives.

Certification is essentially aimed at regulating and facilitating the sale of organic products to consumers. Individual certification bodies have their own service marks, which can act as branding to consumers.

#### Why Organic certification

- Provides identity for organic produce
  - Protects the interest of organic producers and consumers
  - Promotes global/national trade
- Organic Certification standards:-
- Defines the minimum production practices and handling requirements  
This must be followed for the products to be certified as “Organic?”
  - Different types of standards
  - India has developed standards during the year 2000, as regulation and not as legislation-NPOP.

#### Types of Standards

##### Mandatory Standards

- Abide by law and regulations
- Passed by government or regulatory  
Body eg CODEX-set by WHO, FAO
- Reference standard for disputes

##### Voluntary Standards

- Influences the mandatory standards
- Includes new techniques and innovations

- Recognizes traditional standards(eg) IFOAM

#### **Regional Standards**

Developed in line with mandatory standard-EU regulations.

#### **National Standards:**

- National program on organic production (NPOP)
- LOAM srilanka.

#### **Certification Standard**

- Developed by certification bodies
- Developed and clearly indicates do's and don'ts
- Provide time limit to practice standards.

#### **Certification System in India**

In India are two accreditation systems for authorizing certification and International agencies for organic certification. National programme an organic production(NPOP) promoted by ministry of commerce in the cone program me which governs and defines the standards and implement procedures. National accreditation Body (NAB) is the apex decision making body. Certification and inspection agencies accredited by NAB are authorized to undertake certification process. The NPOP notified under FTDR Act and controlled by agriculture processed foods expert Development Authority (APEDA) looks after the requirement of export which NPOP notified under APGMA act and controlled by agriculture marketing Advisor, Directorate of Marketing and Inspection looks after domestic certification. Currently 20 certification agencies have been authorized to undertake certification process details of the system are available at [www.apeda.com/npop](http://www.apeda.com/npop). In 2010, India's organic certification process under NPOP has been granted equivalence with European Union and Switzerland. It has also been recognized for conforming assessment by USDA'S NOP.

#### **The Certification Process**

In order to certify a farm, the farmer is typically required to engage in a number of new activities in addition to normal farming operations.

##### **1. Study**

Every aspect of farming including storage, transport and sale.

##### **2. Compliance**

Farm facilitation and producers methods must comply with the standards.

##### **3. Documentation**

Detailed farm history and current set up it includes soil and water test results.

##### **4. Planning**

A written annual production plan must be submitted from seed to it sale.

**5. Inspection**

Annual on farm inspections are required

**6. Fee**

A fee is to be paid by the grower to the certification body for annual surveillance.

**7. Record-Keeping**

Day to Day farming and marketing records covering all activities.

**National Standard for Organic Production (NSOP)**

It grouped under six categories.

- 1) Conversion
- 2) Crop production
- 3) Animal husbandry
- 4) Food processing and handling
- 5) Labelling
- 6) Storage and transport

**Conversion**

The time between the starts of organic management and cultivation of crops or animal husbandry is known as the conversion.

**Crop Production**

- Choice of crops and varieties: All seeds and planting materials should be certified organic.
- Duration of Conversion: The minimum Conversion period of plant products, produced annually is 12 months prior to start of the production cycle.
- Fertilization policy: It should minimize nutrient losses, avoid accumulation of heavy metals and maintain the soil pH over.
- Pest disease and weed management: Use of synthetic chemicals such as fungicides, insecticides, herbicides, synthetic growth regulators and dyes are prohibited.

**Collection of non-Cultivated materials of Plant origin and honey**

The collection area should not be exposed to prohibited substances and should be at an appropriate distance from conventional farming, human habitation and places of pollution and contamination.

**Food Processing and Handling**

Organic products shall be protected from co-mingling with non-organic products and shall be adequately identified through the whole process. Certification program shall regular the means and measures to be allowed or recommended for decontamination

clearing or disinfection of all facilities where organic products are kept handled processed or shored.

#### **Packaging**

Materials should be eco friendly unnecessary material should be avoided recycling and reusable systems should be used packaging material should be bio-degradable material used for packaging shall not contaminable the food.

#### **Labelling**

When the full standard requirement are met the product can be sold as “organic” an proper certification by certification agency “India Organic” logo can also be used on the product.

#### **Storage and Transport**

The products integrity should be maintained during storage and transportation of organic products. Organic products must be protected from co-mingling with non-organic products and must be protected all times from contact with the materials and substances not permitted for use in organic farming.

#### **Certification in India**

Two certificated

NPOP Certificate	-	EU, regulations
Domestic Market	-	Used for other country market

#### **Indian Certification Agencies**

- IS COP - Indian society for certification of organic production accredited by APEDA New Delhi.
- INDOCERT - Indian organic certification agency Cochin.
- It is supported by two international organizations VIZ, MIS FIBL (Research Institute of Organic Agriculture) and MIS bio. Inspect a an internationally accredited Swiss organic certification agency.
- M/s FIBL support INDOCERT in planning management ,consultancy,
- Assistance in developing structures, procedures, documents technical training of the stag end also support in obtaining accreditation requirements.
- M/s bio Inspect a assists to start inspections for the export market right from the beginning through co-certification.
- Tamil Nadu Agricultural University organic Certification (TNAUOC).

### International Certification Agencies

IMO - institute for market ecology, Switzerland - agency at Bangalore most renowned international agency for inspection, certification and quality assurance of eco-friendly products.

- SKAL - Netherlands certification and inspection organization, which certifies organic products, processes and inputs.
- SGS - Switzerland
- ECOCERT - Ecological Certification, France, Germany.

### Cost of Certification

#### For International Agencies

Agencies	Cost for field visit (Rs)	Cost for Certification (Rs)
IMO-worldwide	18000	70000
BIOCERT-worldwide	18000	70000
BIOSYS- worldwide	18000	70000
SKAL-worldwide	18000	70000
DEMETER-worldwide	18000	70000
INDOCERT-National level	4500	18000

### TANU Organic Certification

#### Fee Structure

- Cost of Application form and brochure - Rs.200
- Registration charges - Rs.500
- Certification charges - valid for 2 years and has to be renewed every after 2 years.

#### Fee Structure

Farm Area	No. of produces/ crop to be certified	Registration fee for 2yrs	Renewed charges for every year after 2 year
5 acres	Upto 3 crops for each additional crop to a maximum of 5 crops	Rs.5000 Rs.1000 Each crop	Rs.2500 Rs.500
5-10 acres	Upto 3 crops For each additional crop To a maximum of 5 crop	Rs.7500 Rs.2000 For each crop	Rs.3750 Rs.1000
10-20 acres	Upto 4 crops For each additional crop To a maximum of 5 crops	Rs.10000 Rs.2000	Rs.5000 Rs.1000
20-50 acres	Upto 5 crops For each additional crop	Rs.15000 Rs.3000	Rs.7500 Rs.1500
Above 50 acres	Upto 5 crops For each additional crop	Rs.30000 Rs.4000	Rs.15000 Rs.2000
Poly house production	Maximum of 5 crops	Rs.10000	Rs.5000

Farm visit Actual Travel fare 20% extra

### **Certification Procedure in Brief**

- Application is made to the certification agency in the prescribed format with necessary farm and process details.
- Screening of Application by Certification agency and of necessary further details.
- Cost, estimate comprising of certification charges, inspection charge, travel cost, reporting cost, laboratory charges etc is sent for acceptance.
- Acceptance of cost by the grower/producer.
- Signing of agreement between grower/producer and certification agency.
- Certification agency seeks cropping/production/cultivation/processing plan and supply a copy of the standards to the grower/producer to follow.
- Certification agency raises an invoice and asks the producer to release 50% of the certification cost in advance.
- Grower/producer pays the fee.
- Inspection schedule is worked out.
- Inspection is carried out at one or more than one occasion.
- If required unannounced inspection can also be done.
- Inspection report/s submitted to the certification committee.
- Certification agency asks for final payment.
- Final payment is made.
- Certification is granted.
- Grower/producer released the stock for sale with certification mark (India Organic Logo).

### **Organic Certification Agencies in Tamil Nadu**

- 1) IS COP (Indian Society for Certification of Organic Products) Rasi Building, 162/163, Ponnaiyarajapuram, Coimbatore-01, TamilNadu. 9443243119.
- 2) Tamil Nadu Organic Certification Department (TNOCD) Coimbatore. Thadagam road, Coimbatore-641 013.TamilNadu. 91-422-2457554.

### **Conclusion**

The lack of national rules, regulations and standards relating to organic food production, inadequate certifying agencies and unrecognized “green” marketing and retailing channels have prevented farmers from exploiting the export market advantages of organic production and it is a major missed opportunity as most small and marginal farmers of our country have actually been practicing organic farming as part of traditional cultivation practice. Although very late but Government of India has finally worked up to this problem and is trying to establish at least the basic rules and accreditation process. In

March 2000 the ministry of commerce launched NPOP (National Programme for Organic Production) for Organic Products which could then be sold under the logo India Organic.

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