



ORGANIC CERTIFICATION



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Organic Certification in India: An Introduction

In recent years, Government of India has started actively promoting organic food production all over the country, through various ministries such as Ministry of Commerce and Ministry of Agriculture. APEDA (Agricultural and Processed Foods Export Development Authority), an autonomous organization under Ministry of Commerce has brought out NSOP (National Standards for Organic Production) and NPOP (National Program for Organic Production) as a part of its strategy to encourage quality organic food production in India by facilitating establishments of organic certification bodies . Indian agencies who wish to start an organic certification program can now apply for national accreditation via a **National Accreditation Board** (NAB) of APEDA. These developments offer an opportunity for the organic farming promoters to set up a national certification body duly recognized by the Government of India and also by reputed international accreditation bodies for organic production programs.

Project Objectives

The main objective of this project is to facilitate an organic producer's access to organic markets by offering appropriate inspection and certification services at an affordable rate.

Project objectives are given in detail as shown in the Table below:

Major Area of Focus	Objectives	Assumptions
Project Goal	Development of organic food production system in India	
Project Output	An independent; self-reliant and recognized certification program is established by the concerned organization	There are sufficient numbers of farmers; processor and traders ready to use and pay for certification services
Activities during project initiation phase	Initial workshop with the stake holder of the organization for the knowledge transfer; project appraisal; and decision making	The draft project proposal should be ready to be discussed and should be further developed by the stakeholders incorporating the inputs of the participating members
Activities during project implementation phase	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Defining organizational set up and responsible staff Developing operating manual and necessary documents On-the-time raining of inspection and certification staff Regular review of processes and documents Implementing national and international accreditation 	

Project Deliverables

The project is supposed to result in an independent certification body which is offering its services to individual large scale organic farmers; farmer's co-operative societies; private entrepreneurs; food processors; food trade units and all other interested parties. National accreditation shall be gained as early as possible from APEDA (please refer Annexure 1) while international accreditations such as IFOAM or ISO accreditation and EU or USDA accreditation and other international accreditations (please refer Annexure 2) are aimed soon after gaining national accreditation.

Project Area

A national organic certification program can make its organic certification services available all over India.

Project Initiation Phase

In an initial workshop organized by the concerned organization, the management team responsible for the establishment of a national organic certification program brings together all stakeholders and other interested parties on a single platform. During the workshop, all participants will receive detailed information on scope of organic production and organic certification in India; procedures involved in organic farm inspections and certifications; selection and training of inspection and certification staff; marketing of organic products; organic food market requirements and all other relevant know-how. Based on this background, the project concept will further be developed. After a general appraisal of the situation by the stakeholders; decision shall be taken to appoint an organic consultant who shall guide the organization to set up a successful 'National Organic Certification Program' under NPOP (National Program for Organic Production) of NAB. Later, a core team responsible for organic certification program may be selected under the expert guidance of the organic consultant. This core group may consist of a project head; a quality manager, a head of certification, a head of inspection and three to four members of inspection staff (field staff).

Following the workshop the planning documents are reviewed and refined by the core group with the support of the organic consultant

Methodology for Phase 1	
Appointing a project team by the top management of the organization	<p>Appoint an organic consultant</p> <p>Appoint a core team of staff responsible for organic</p> <p>Certification program with the help of the organic consultants</p>
Project appraisal-1	Gaining and evaluating the information on organic production base in India, framework set by the government
Workshop	<p>Plan for a week long initial workshop</p> <p>Preparation for the workshop</p>
Topics for discussion during workshop	<p>Organic production and markets; discussing options and potentials in India</p> <p>Introducing to organic standards; inspection and certification programs</p>
Project appraisal 2	Analyzing the result of the workshop; evaluating the feasibility
Project planning 1	Project planning with the core team and the consultant
Project planning 2	Adapting and refining the planning documents, elaborating the final project proposal

Project Implementation Phase (Phase 2)

Based on the decisions taken during the initial workshop the following activities may be implemented.

Major Activities during Phase 2
Define organizational set up of the certification program
Define the operational processes that are essential for a successful organic Certification program
Preparation of an operations manual for the smooth functioning of the entire organic certification program
Preparation of an inspection and certification manual for inspection and certification staff
Development of all necessary documents and formats which may include a format for preparing field level inspection reports for inspection staff
Legal registration of the organic certification body
Selection of inspection and certification staff under the guidance of organic consultant
Training of inspectors and certification staff; on the job training
Starting small scale operation of the certification program
Applying for national accreditation (for example with APEDA)
Applying for international accreditations such as IFOAM or ISO accreditation and EU or USDA accreditation and other relevant international accreditations
Reviewing manuals and documentation according to the accreditation criteria

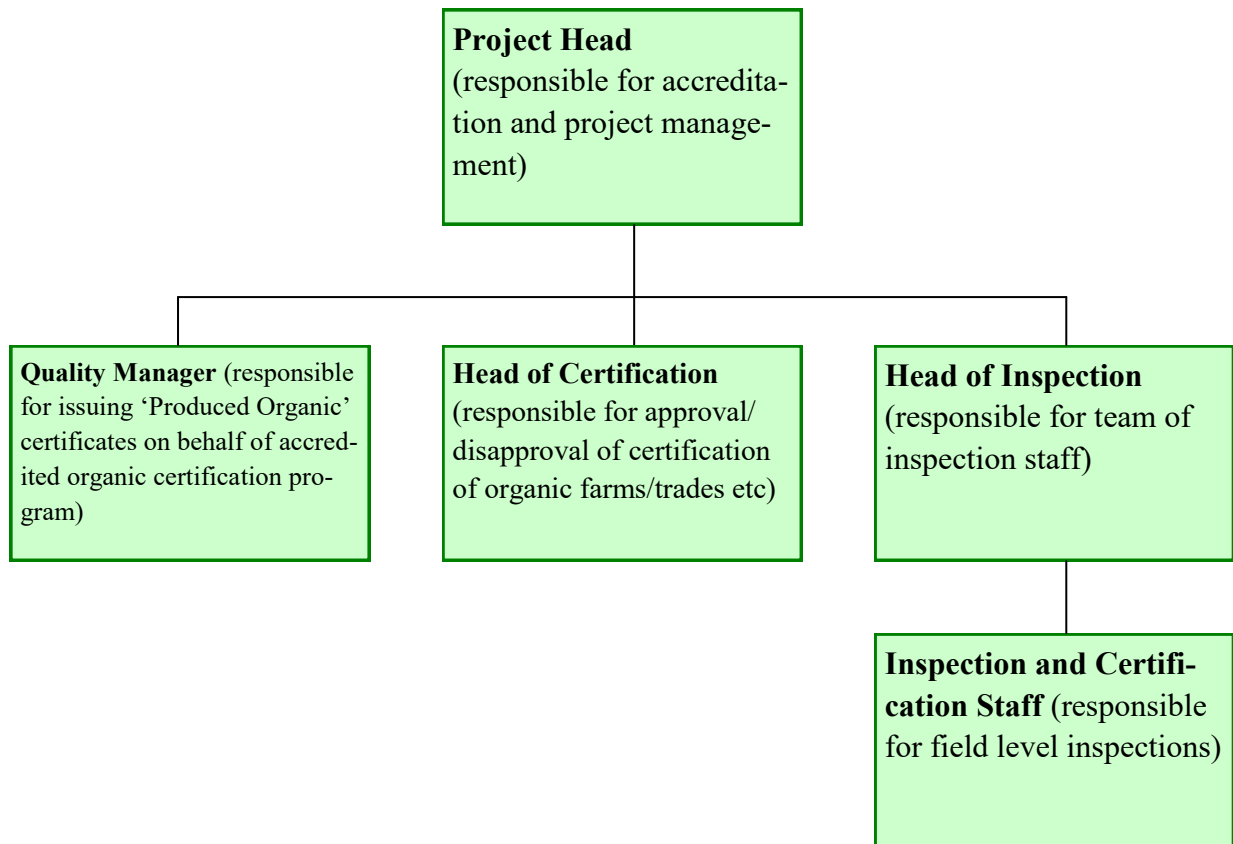
Project Methodology in Detail

2019	2020	2021	2022
<p>Jan till June</p> <p>Step 1: Appointing organic consultant</p> <p>Step 2: Selecting project core team</p> <p>Step 3: Organizing the initial workshop</p> <p>Step 4: Clarification on the status of the national standards and accreditation</p> <p>Step 5: Allocating funds for the initial phase</p>	<p>Reviewing operational procedures of the certification program and documentation with regard to compliance with national and international accreditation criteria</p>	<p>Follow up international accreditation procedures</p>	<p>Status as an accredited national organic certification program</p>
<p>June</p> <p>Step 6: Appraisal of the feasibility of the project</p> <p>Step 7: Conduct Initial workshop and training</p> <p>Step 8: Final decision on project implementation/Go ahead signal</p> <p>Step 9: Consolidated project planning</p> <p>Step 10: Defining partners & stakeholders</p> <p>Step 11: Finishing budget and financial plan</p> <p>Step 12: Allocation of funds</p> <p>Step 13: Defining project management and responsibilities of key personnel</p>	<p>Applying for national accreditation</p>	<p>Inspections for both the domestic market and the export market pick up slowly</p>	<p>First year certification of organic farms and production systems as per conversion period criteria (Certified as 'Under Conversion')</p>

Project Methodology in Detail continued...

<p>July to September</p> <p>Step 14: Developing a first version of the program structure</p> <p>Step 15: Developing first version of manuals and forms</p> <p>Step 16: Registration of the pro-</p>	<p>Inspections for the domestic market begin</p>	<p>Inspections for both the domestic market and the export market gain momentum</p>	<p>Gaining mutual recognition by other certification bodies</p>
<p>September</p> <p>Step 17: Training of inspectors and certification staff by the hired training agency</p> <p>Step 18: First lot of inspections begin</p> <p>Step 19: On-the-job training of inspectors and certification staff (capacity building is an on-going process)</p>	<p>Applying for international accreditation and market – specific accreditation such as US-NOP (National Organic Program); EU accreditation; Accreditation as per Japan agricultural standards etc</p>	<p>Improving manuals and documentation</p>	<p>Operations in full swing</p>
<p>October to December</p> <p>Step 20: Start small scale operation of the certification program throughout India</p> <p>Step 21: Promotion of the certification services through well-planned advertising strategies</p>	<p>Inspections for the export market begin</p>	<p>Reviewing manuals and documentation</p>	<p>By now the program is accredited by relevant international accreditation bodies also</p>

Organization Structure



Costs and Financial Plans

An estimate of preliminary budget for set up of an organic certification program in the first year is as below:

Budget for Phase 1

Activities	INR
Preparation of the workshop	50000
Appraisal for the project feasibility	10000
Implementation of the workshop	100000
Project planning	20000
Travel expenses	20000
Total Expenses	200000

Budget for Phase 2

Office cost (first year) in INR	
Rental	300000
Maintenance, telecommunication	100000
Project promotion, printing and advertising	100000
Office equipment-cupboards, shelves; computers; printers, etc	400000
EXPENSES	
Travelling expenses for inspectors	100000
Training expenses	100000
SALARIES	
Project manager	420000
Certification manager	300000
Inspection staff-3	540000
ACCREDITATION CHARGES	
National	20000
International	100000
TOTAL EXPENSES (INR)	2480000

Assumptions

The project is based on the following assumptions: -

1. The number of clients interested in organic certification program will be large enough to main-tain this certification program
2. The certification program is generally able to gain national and international accreditation within **FOUR** years
3. The organization in question may be interested to get accreditation under NPOP (National Program for Organic Production) – ‘*India Organic*’ Program of NAB - APEDA
4. The following trends are expected to facilitate the implementation of the project
 - The demand for organic products in the western world is continuously increasing
 - The increasing awareness of the health benefits of organic foods within the Indian urban upper-class may allow developing a small domestic organic market step by step
 - The attempts in harmonization of standards and certification processes especially of IFOAM and Codex Alimentarius commission will facilitate the development of independent certification programs in developing nations like India



ANNEXURE 1

Your suggested first contact point is APEDA, a NAB (National Accreditation Board) for accreditation of organic certification Body under NPOP (National Program on Organic Production)

Your first reference webpage may be	http://www.apeda.gov.in/apedawebsite/organic/index.htm
NPOP Standards are Available at	http://www.apeda.gov.in/apedawebsite/organic/ORGANIC_CONTENTS/English_Organic_Sept05.pdf
Application form for accreditation is available at	http://www.apeda.gov.in/apedawebsite/organic/Applyform/application_for_accreditation.pdf
List of Steering Committee Members is available at	http://www.apeda.gov.in/apedawebsite/organic/list_of_NSC_members.pdf
List of Committees under NPOP is available at	http://www.apeda.gov.in/apedawebsite/organic/List_of_committees_under_NPOP.htm
All application forms are available at	http://www.apeda.gov.in/apedawebsite/organic/ApplyForm.htm
List of lapses which are considered as non conformities in an organic certification programme under NPOP is available at	http://www.apeda.gov.in/apedawebsite/organic/List_of_lapses.htm
Important notifications regarding organic certification is available at	http://www.apeda.gov.in/apedawebsite/organic/Important_announcement.htm
Details of "annual charges for inspection & certification of organic products in India" is available at	http://www.apeda.gov.in/apedawebsite/organic/price.htm
All Formats are available at	http://www.apeda.gov.in/apedawebsite/organic/Formats_of_scope_and_transaction.html

ANNEXURE 2

For training of your staff, you may contact	International Competence Centre for Organic Agriculture (ICCOA) 951 C, 15th Cross, 8th Main Ideal Homes Township Rajarajeshwari Nagar Bangalore - 560 098, India Phone : +91- 80-28601183/28607200 Telfax : +91-80-28600935 E-mail: info@iccoa.org
For getting accreditation from US-NOP, you may refer	http://www.ams.usda.gov/AMSV1.0/nop
For getting accreditation from IFOAM, you may refer	http://www.ifoam.org/about_ifoam/standards/accreditation.html
For ISO International Organic Accreditation Service	http://www.ioas.org/iso65.htm

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