



PACIFIC ORGANIC AND ETHICAL TRADE COMMUNITY (POETCOM) PARTICIPATORY GUARANTEE SYSTEM EVALUATION

INTRODUCTION

There are now many Participatory Guarantee Programs (PGS) serving thousands of small farmers around the world. While there is enormous diversity in how these programs have implemented the various functions of a PGS, the key characteristics (including inclusivity and participation of stakeholders at all levels of operation, transparency and peer appraisals of farms) just to name a few, have proven to be consistent around the world. In many cases PGS develop their own logos and marks, however it is possible for PGS growing to the Pacific Organic Standard to apply to use the PGS Organic Pasifika Mark which will be common across endorsed and authorized PGS in the Pacific.

APPLICATION TO USE THE POETCom PGS ORGANIC PASIFIKA LOGO - HOW IT WORKS

In order for a PGS to be eligible to use POETCom PGS Organic Pasifika Mark the PGS must be endorsed by the Standards and Certification Committee (SCC) of POETCom and receive formal authorization to do so from the POETCom Advisory Board. The Mark can then be used under a defined set of rules.

A) PGS REVIEW COMMITTEE

The SCC is appointed by the POETCom Advisory Board and is mandated to review applications from PGS to use the PGS Organic Pasifika Mark. The SCC will review all applications including documentation submitted and the completed self evaluation by the PGS. The SCC will then independently assess the PGS against the evaluation questionnaire.

B) PGS EVALUATION

A completed evaluation form and all PGS documentation must be submitted for review signed by an authorized member of the PGS. Though only one final submission should be submitted to the POETCom for each PGS program, your group may find it educational to have as many stakeholders as possible answer the questions including farmers, consumers, facilitating NGOs as well as national or regional level coordinating staff.

The questions are phrased so that “YES” answers align with the characteristics of PGS. That being said, not all questions require YES answers for your PGS to be considered for endorsement and to be able to use the POETCom PGS Logo. Those questions marked as ‘IMPORTANT CHARACTERISTIC’ do require a “YES” answer for your PGS to be considered for endorsement and to use the POETCom PGS Logo.

All applications are to be submitted by email to the POETCom Standards and Certification Committee Karen Mapusua, POETCom Coordinating Officer: karenm@spc.int

C) ENDORSEMENT

If the SCC is satisfied that the PGS application:

1. Meets all requirements of POETCom;
2. Has all the important characteristics of a PGS;
3. Has sufficiently robust systems that the integrity of the Pacific Organic Standard will be maintained;

they will issue a formal endorsement to the POETCom Advisory Board to authorize the PGS use of the PGS Organic Pasifika Mark under the specified 'rules of use' which will be provided.

The SCC may request further information or clarification from the PGS prior to making any decision.

If an application is denied the SCC will inform the PGS in writing with an explanation as to why the application was denied. A PGS may reapply at any time once the identified issues have been addressed.

If a PGS wishes to submit a complaint or appeal in writing providing evidence to support their complaint to the POETCom Advisory Board for consideration. The PGS will be required to sign an agreement of use which agrees to authorized use of the Mark only; regular review of the PGS by the SCC at a frequency to be agreed; to inform the SCC of any substantive changes in PGS rules or procedures; and of any non compliant farms identified in the PGS and a description of the action taken.

D) TIME FRAME

Review: Once complete documentation is received by SCC the review process will be completed within one month and passed to the POETCom Advisory Board. If a meeting is not scheduled within the two weeks following the Advisory Board can endorse the recommendation through email consultation and the PGS will be notified of the outcome in writing. The entire process will take place within six weeks.

Appeals: Appeals will be considered in the first meeting of the POETCom Advisory Board following receipt of the appeal. Appeals will not be reviewed by email.

PGS EVALUATION APPLICATION

I. PGS NAME and CONTACT INFORMATION

Name of the PGS:

Contact Person:

Year program launched:

Country Being Served:

Region(s) Being Served:

Number of producers involved in The PGS:

Address:

Phone:

Website:

Email:

2. SHARED VISION AND AGREED UPON NORMS

2.1 Is our program based on generally recognized organic principles?

Yes

No

(Important characteristic)

2.2 Is it based on the Pacific Organic Standard?

Yes

No

Please elaborate especially if any other standards or requirements are in place:

2.3 Did all our stakeholders have an influence in the choice and adoption of our Organic Norms?

Yes

No

Please list key stakeholders:

2.4 Are our norms easily available and accessible to all stakeholders or other interested parties?

Yes

No

(Important Characteristic)

Please elaborate on how people can access them:

2.5 Do we have mechanisms in place to ensure farmers fully understand what they are agreeing to (Examples may include short summary of the standards, regular trainings, regular meetings or place they can contact for more information about practices or allowable materials)?

Yes No (Important Characteristic)

Please elaborate:

2.6 Are Social Justice Principles embraced by our PGS?

Yes No

Please elaborate:

3. PROCEDURES TO VERIFY PRODUCERS' COMPLIANCE AND UNDERSTANDING

3.1 Is information created and maintained for each farm?

Yes No (Important Characteristic)

Please elaborate the type of records:

3.2 Does this information include specific questions about farm operations to ensure procedures on the farm are in accordance with the Pacific Organic Standards?

Yes No (Important Characteristic)

3.3 Do producers take a pledge, declaration, oath, or promise that they will follow the standards (written, verbally stated or documented in some culturally appropriate way)?

Yes No (Important Characteristic)

Please Elaborate:

3.4 Are annual on-site reviews/inspections carried out for every farm in the PGS?

Yes No (Important Characteristic)

3.5 Do producers take part in the annual on-site review/inspection process?

Yes

No

(Important Characteristic)

3.6 As a policy, can consumers or other stakeholders visit the producers (Open Gate Policy)?

Yes

No

4. DOCUMENTED MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS

4.1 Is the following information maintained by the PGS:

(a) General Information about each farm/operation

Yes

No

(Important Characteristic)

(b) Producer's Pledge (or record if Verbal Pledge)

Yes

No

(Important Characteristic)

(c) Record of onsite review/inspection

Yes

No

(Important Characteristic)

(d) Record of attendance at local meetings

Yes

No

(e) Record of certification for each farm / operation

Yes

No

(Important Characteristic)

(f) Is this information accessible to members of the public?

Yes

No

(Important Characteristic)

Please elaborate:

4.2 Have efforts been made to minimize paperwork necessary to certification

Yes No

4.3 Are the steps to certification process publicly available to all stakeholders?

Yes No (Important Characteristic)

4.4 Can stakeholders easily find out who is certified?

Yes No (Important Characteristic)

5. HORIZONTALITY

5.1 Is decision and policy making about PGS procedures made by either producers or regularly elected producer representatives?

Yes No (Important Characteristic)

5.2 Are there mechanisms in place to regularly review and improve PGS procedures and policies?

Yes No (Important Characteristic)

5.3 Are the PGS Procedures appropriate to the cultural context in which they are used (for example verbal pledges and video documentation in areas of low literacy)?

Yes No (Important Characteristic)

5.4 Are producers the primary decision makers about which producers are to be certified? (as opposed to a third party or separate organizational group)?

Yes No (Important Characteristic)

Please elaborate:

5.5 If it's a national program, is there room for local and regional variations to the rules and operational procedures of the PGS as long as main functional points are maintained? (For example, maybe the on-site inspection can be changed or added to as long as they stick to agreed basic standards)

Yes

No

Not applicable

Please elaborate, give examples:

6. CONSUMER INVOLVEMENT IN THE PGS

6.1 Do consumers have the option of being active members of the PGS Group?

Yes

No

6.2 Are consumers able to be included in the Regional and National decision making bodies

Yes

No

6.3 Are consumers able to be included in the Certification Process?

Yes

No

6.4 Is the PGS program endorsed by any consumer group? This could include environmental organizations, health advocacy organizations, etc.

Yes

No

7. SYSTEMS FOR MANAGING NON-COMPLIANCE

7.1 Are there prescribed consequences for non-compliance?

Yes

No

(Important Characteristic)

7.2 Is there a system for managing non-compliance?

Yes

No

(Important Characteristic)

7.3 Are producers in the PGS involved in the system for managing non-compliance?

Yes No (Important Characteristic)

8. MECHANISMS FOR SUPPORTING PRODUCERS

8.1 Is there a system for producers to participate in trainings or sharing meetings with other local member-producers of the PGS?

Yes No (Important Characteristic)

8.2 Does the organization offer agricultural technical advisory (or economic or social) services to producers?

Yes No

8.3 Does the PGS program have mechanisms in place to avoid conflict of interest?

Yes No (Important Characteristic)

Please explain:

9. SEALS AND LABELS

9.1 Is there a PGS seal or logo available for our farmers to use apart from the POETCom label?

Yes No

9.2 Does the PGS own or control the seal?

Yes No

9.3 Does each producer receive an individual certificate or some proof of their certification status?

Yes No (Important Characteristic)



10. SUSTAINABILITY OF THE PROGRAMME

- 10.1** How is the PGS program funded now? Can the program be entirely self-funded in the future?
- 10.2** If producers pay a fee to be certified, do they feel it is a fair fee? What fee is charged?
- 10.3** Do producers and other stakeholders participate in the operation of the PGS to keep costs and overhead down? In what ways do they participate?
- 11.** Please provide any other information about your PGS you feel it is important for the PGS Review Committee to know.
- 12.** Please attach copies of all PGS documentation, forms etc.

Submitted by:

Position:

Signature:

Date: