

49 **SECTION 3** **DEFINITIONS**

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51 ***Committee Review***

52 This refers to the process whereby a committee evaluates the submitted peer review
53 reports and issues a decision on the issuance of the PGS certificate.

54

55 ***Domestic markets***

56 These refer to market reach of PGS guaranteed products that producer may directly
57 link with consumers or indirectly through an intermediary, which denotes **national**
58 **or regional borders or locality (e.g. provincial, municipal or barangay level)**

59

60 ***Internal Rules***

61 These describe the established requirements for application and membership, the on-
62 farm production scheme guarantee process, the documentation requirements and the
63 sanctions relating to non-compliance. These internal rules should be set and agreed
64 upon by the key stakeholders involved in PGS.

65

66 ***Organic Guarantee System***

67 This refers to an organized process to guarantee organic production systems and the
68 credibility of the interaction of people or organizations, based on participation,
69 compromise, transparency and trust.

70

71 ***Organic Operator***

72 This refers to an individual or a business enterprise that is responsible for ensuring
73 that production, processing, manufacturing, distribution, wholesale, retail, trade,
74 importation and/or exportation of organic agriculture products meets, and continues
75 to meet, applicable PNS relevant to organic agriculture and other regulatory
76 requirements.

77

78 ***Participatory Guarantee System (PGS)***

79 PGS is a quality assurance initiative that is locally relevant, emphasizes on the
80 participation of stakeholders, including producers and consumers. Since the system
81 is based on direct personal relationships between the consumers and producers, it
82 normally favors direct or short-distance market relationships (May, 2008).

83

84 ***Peer Review***

85 This refers to the process whereby farmer members assess the farming practices of
86 their peers in order to verify compliance with a set of internal rules and standards set
87 by the PGS group.

88

89 ***Primary stakeholders***

90 These refer to farmers, processors, traders and consumers.

91

92 ***Self Review***

93 This refers to the process by which a farmer member assesses his own farming
94 practices with a set of internal rules and standards set by the PGS group.

95

96

97 ***Standards***

98 Documents, approved in consensus by an organized body, which can be repeatedly
99 used to provide rules, guidelines or characteristics of a product, process or
100 production method fit for their purpose (ISO, 2004).

101

102 ***Small farmer***

103 This refers to natural persons dependent on small-scale subsistence farming and
104 fishing activities as their primary source of income and/or whose sale, barter or
105 exchange of agricultural products do not exceed a gross value of One Hundred Eighty
106 Thousand pesos (PhP 180,000.00) per annum based on 1992 constant prices;
107 Provided, that the small farmer holds and cultivates not more than 3 hectares of
108 agricultural land.

109

110 ***Smallholder***

111 This refers to producers with small land parcels or part-time producers. It is also
112 describes producers who run family farms as opposed to large scale farms
113 (plantations etc).

114

115 ***Smallholder Groups***

116 These refer to groups of smallholder producers with homogeneity in terms of
117 geographical location, production system, size of holdings and common marketing
118 system.

119

120 ***Supplier Groups***

121 These refer to groups that supply inputs, machineries, equipment, and packaging
122 materials.

123

124 ***Support Sectors***

125 These refer to the academic and research institutions, government agencies
126 (LGAs/LGUs/NGAs), financial institutions, civil society organizations (CSOs) and
127 quality assurance/guarantee groups.

128

129

130 **SECTION 4 KEY PRINCIPLES OF PARTICIPATORY GUARANTEE SYSTEM**

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132 ***4.1 Participation***

133 5. PGS requires the active involvement of primary stakeholders who should be
134 able to contribute to the development and continuous application of standards, rules
135 and principles in the PGS, including information dissemination regarding the group.
136 The involvement and participation of other stakeholders (i.e. supplier groups,
137 support sectors) may be dependent on their interest and/or mandate.

138

139 ***4.2 Shared Vision***

140 6. All key stakeholders involved in PGS (i.e. primary stakeholders, support
141 sectors, supplier groups) should have the conscious shared vision in ensuring the
142 integrity of the organic products compliant with applicable standards.

143

144

145

146 **4.3 Transparency**

147 7. The mechanism by which the whole PGS works must be well informed to all
148 key stakeholders involved. An in-depth understanding of how the system works
149 should be required of everyone. Thus, PGS and relevant documents should be made
150 available. The principle of transparency includes the openness of the system during
151 development of procedures wherein all stakeholders are involved in the process.
152 While during generation of operators' information and records, review, basic inquiry,
153 **a certain level of confidentiality is observed.**

154

155 **4.4 Trust**

156 8. A means of ensuring the integrity of PGS system including standards
157 compliance, consideration to various social and/or cultural control mechanisms,
158 should be in place. This is to ensure that the PGS group has the capacity to
159 demonstrate trust and build confidence of all its key stakeholders. Building of trust
160 between consumers and PGS group is enhanced through: (1) evidences showing **self**
161 **review** of farmer, understanding standards and recording practices and (2) peer
162 review process within the PGS group.

163

164 **4.5 Horizontality**

165 9. All key stakeholders involved in PGS have equal responsibility and
166 accountability in establishing and maintaining the integrity, quality and safety of
167 organic product. The level of accountability of a stakeholder depends on the level of
168 review process they are involved **in**, thereby spreading accountability and
169 responsibility.

170

171 **4.6 Development**

172 10. Participating in PGS enhances primary stakeholders' (especially smallholder)
173 knowledge and capacity to apply applicable standards. Full understanding of
174 applicable standards develops the PGS group's capacity to plan and manage specific
175 activities thereby enhancing the groups' livelihood and **socioeconomic** status. An
176 regular capacity building and support among the PGS members is also emphasized to
177 enhance the credibility of the system.

178

179

180 **SECTION 5 GUIDELINES FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF PARTICIPATORY**
181 **GUARANTEE SYSTEM**

182

183 PGS should have the following characteristics:

184

185 **5.1 With legal foundation**

186 11. With PGS considered as form of organic guarantee system, local community
187 organizations can establish and perform as a group within a community (i.e. local
188 groups) and registered to give the organization its legal **personality** (i.e. SEC, DSWD,
189 DOLE, CDA or any relevant **agencies**).

190

191 12. Producers, community level organizations, producer associations, and others
192 can organize themselves into local groups in accordance to relevant rules and
193 regulations set by the appropriate registering agencies. The membership of the

194 organization maybe expanded to include non-government organizations (NGOs),
195 Local Government Agencies/Units (LGAs/LGUs), consumers and market
196 representatives and other multi-sectoral groups.

197

198 **5.2 Clearly defined and transparent rules and procedures**

199 13. The PGS **groups** develop, **implement**, review **and approve** their own rules,
200 norms and procedures in a transparent manner. It has a democratic structure to
201 ensure that the producers **groups** and **other stakeholders** have ownership of the
202 organic guarantee system. Adherence to established norms and procedures, however,
203 is enforced to maintain the integrity of the guarantee system.

204

205 14. For the PGS to effectively deliver **on** a consistent and equitable basis, the PGS
206 internal rules and procedures are documented. The level and complexity of the
207 documentation, however, may vary depending on the level of review process (i.e. self-
208 review, peer review, committee review) a stakeholder is involved with. The following
209 may serve as guide in determining the minimum documents needed by each level.
210 The PGS group can determine additional documentary requirements, depending on
211 needs.

212

i) Farmer level: pledge, farming/production and sales records

213

ii) Peer level: application, peer review reports

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iii) Committee level: committee report, list of approved and sanctioned
215 farmers

216

217 Similarly, the PGS standards, rules and procedures are dynamic and are always open
218 to review and change allowing continual improvement of the entire process.

219

220 15. The PGS group develops simplified forms to ensure uniform application of
221 procedures and encourages other approaches to achieve the intended purpose (e.g.
222 video-interview for peer review).

223

224 16. Guarantee decisions are conducted in a transparent manner and follow a
225 prescribed procedure, which involves thorough discussions. In cases of rejections,
226 there should be available guidance for members to improve practice towards
227 compliance with standard.

228

229 17. A certain level of documentation is commensurate on the need and is kept by
230 the group that may include standards, database, operations manual or technical notes
231 of consultants.

232

233 **5.3 Clearly defined internal standards that **are** consistent with the** 234 **requirements of relevant Philippine National Standards (PNS)**

235 18. On the minimum, PGS must adopt the latest issuance of PNS OA. A PGS group
236 is encouraged to develop its internal standards and may identify additional
237 requirements, which may be higher than PNS OA, depending on the consensus of the
238 membership. These internal standards may be further translated into local languages
239 to ensure understanding and appreciation of members; and should be made readily
240 available to its membership.

241

242 19. Members must read and understand the detailed internal standard at the
243 earliest opportunity to enable compliance with **PNS OA and other specific end-**
244 **product standards on organic agriculture** . Further, the members must attend PGS
245 orientation. Collectively, PGS subscribes to nationally established standards to ensure
246 coherence and integrity of the organic supply chain.

247

248 **5.4 Clearly defined roles and responsibilities of primary stakeholders**

249 20. The PGS has a formal structure with clearly defined roles and responsibilities.
250 The primary stakeholders (**i.e. farmers, processors, traders and consumers**) have the
251 highest involvement in the development of standards, policies, regulations and
252 conduct of information dissemination activities. Other stakeholders (i.e. supplier
253 groups, support sectors) involvement is dependent on the mandate or interest .

254

255 21. A training must be provided, at least once a year, to
256 farmers/producers **/operators**, peer reviewers, and committees with regard to **PNS**
257 **OA and other specific end-product standards on organic agriculture** . Training can
258 also be organized by the group related to new technologies and information. The
259 training should be spearheaded by the PGS group and can be provided by competent
260 individuals within the PGS group.

261

262 **5.5 Provision for stakeholders' active engagement**

263 22. Stakeholders' engagement or participation is an essential and dynamic part of
264 PGSs, subscribing to the principle of inclusivity, in order to ensure the integrity of PGS.
265 In some cases, the level of involvement or activity of key stakeholders differs in each
266 PGS. The important aspect, however, is that the principle of including primary
267 stakeholders in the PGS is understood and applied.

268

269 23. Primary stakeholders are engaged in the initial design and operation of PGS.
270 Stakeholders' involvement is key in decision-making and essential decisions affecting
271 the operation of PGS itself. Direct involvement in the following activities is important

- 272 • development of internal standards based on PNS OA;
- 273 • development and implementation of verification procedures'; and
- 274 • review and decision process relevant to certification procedure and
275 recognition of producers as members of the guarantee organization.

276

277 24. In order to **promote higher level of transparency**, other stakeholders are
278 invited and may either participate **or observe** at any point of the process, which
279 include in decision-making, peer-review, farmers training, marketing information
280 dissemination and other relevant activities.

281

282 **5.6 Provision for the use of mark or seal**

283 **25. If found to be compliant with relevant standards and other rules and**
284 **procedures, qualified farmers are allowed to label their products as organic. The label**
285 **of organic produce shall contain the name, logo or seal of the PGS group.**

286

287 26. The PGS group is committed to establish suitable checks and balance
288 mechanism for the use of PGS mark or seal that can be placed on the product's label.

289 For any misuse of the mark or seal, the group is aware that there is a corresponding
 290 responsibility and liability for using the PGS mark or seal.

291

292 27. The mark or seal that is used by the PGS provides official endorsement of key
 293 documents that may include producer’s certificates and member identification (I.D.)
 294 system. As such, it carries pertinent information to provide consumer with the
 295 evidence that the product is covered by the PGS.

296

297 28. The mark or seal may also be subjected to registration, which is handled by
 298 the Intellectual Property Office (IPO). Registering the mark or seal may help protect
 299 the product integrity from misuse by other entities outside the PGS group.

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302 **SECTION 6 ORGANIZATIONAL REQUIREMENTS OF A PARTICIPATORY**
 303 **GUARANTEE SYSTEM (PGS)**

304

305 29. Table 1 presents the roles of each stakeholder involved in each level of the PGS
 306 review process. There shall be a clearly defined and documented structure, and
 307 delineated roles and responsibilities to ensure proper functioning of a PGS. The peer
 308 review, assessment, evaluation and guarantee decision are structured and managed
 309 so as to eliminate bias or impartiality.

310

311 Table 1. Levels of PGS review process and roles of stakeholders

Level of Review Process	Person responsible	Roles/process
Self	Farmer (+ consumer*)	They have the highest interest and involvement in the PGS. They are involved in the following processes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of internal standards, procedures and policies; • Conduct of self-review; and • Participate in information dissemination activities.
Peer	Peer reviewers (Farmer-to-farmer)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct of peer review • Prepare and submit reports
Committee	Committee members (composed of farmers, and interested consumers and other stakeholders)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluate peer review reports; • Summarize list of approved and sanctioned farmers; • Prepare individual certificates; and • Prepare organizational self-assessment reports

312 *note: optional

313 31. A federation/government level of review process may be implemented. This
314 is to provide for an external recognition of PGS groups through the conduct of
315 organizational review by a PGS network or a designated government agency.
316

317 32. The mechanism or procedure for the identification of membership of each
318 level (i.e. peer, committee, federation) shall be fully documented to ensure that there
319 is balanced representation of key stakeholders in each level of the PGS structure. No
320 single interest should prevail (i.e. consumer, LGU or LGA).
321

322 33. In order to avoid conflict of interest, the PGS group must ensure that personnel
323 involved in the peer review is different from those who will undertake the committee
324 review tasked to evaluate peer review reports and come up with the PGS-guarantee
325 decision.
326

327 34. The PGS should establish, implement and maintain a procedure for the
328 assessment of qualifications of personnel involved in the PGS-guarantee process. The
329 procedure includes:

- 330 • determination of criteria for the competence of personnel for each function in
331 the PGS-guarantee decision (i.e. peer review, committee review);
- 332 • identification of training needs appropriate to the roles and responsibility of
333 the personnel identified, and conduct of necessary training programs on PGS-
334 guarantee processes requirements, rules and procedures, and other relevant
335 activities;
- 336 • ability to demonstrate that the personnel assigned have the required
337 competencies for the duties and responsibilities they undertake;
- 338 • authorization provided by the PGS group for the personnel to undertake
339 specific functions in the PGS-guarantee process; and
- 340 • mechanism to monitor the performance of PGS personnel.
341

342 343 **SECTION 7 DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF** 344 **PARTICIPATORY GUARANTEE SYSTEM (PGS)**

345 346 **7.1 PGS Establishment**

347 348 **7.1.1 Information dissemination on PNS OA stakeholders**

349 An information dissemination activity is conducted targeting primary stakeholders
350 and relevant stakeholders to increase and have a common understanding on the
351 latest version of PNS OA.
352

353 **7.1.2 Identification of responsible persons for farming/production, peer** 354 **review and committee review**

355 Farmers willing to adopt the PNS OA should be identified and listed. After which, the
356 PGS group shall identify and establish the committees, which will handle specific
357 levels of the system including its operation. Peer reviewers and committee-level
358 reviewers shall be identified and designated based on the qualifications as agreed
359 upon by the PGS group.
360

361 **7.1.3 Adoption of PNS OA to locally-relevant internal standards**

362 The PGS group shall develop its internal standards, based on the latest issuances of
363 PNS **OA and other specific end-product standards on organic agriculture** (refer to
364 Annex A) as minimum requirements, and additional requirements, as deemed
365 necessary. It shall also develop its own manual of operation stating the rules and
366 procedures to be followed by the group including those relevant to the PGS-
367 guarantee.

368

369 **7.1.4 Capacity building of all stakeholders based on the roles in the review**
370 **process**

371 Members of the PGS group shall undergo capacity building activities on the latest
372 issuances of relevant PNS for OA and PGS internal standards, policies and procedure
373 based on roles and functions.

374

375 **7.1.5. Adoption of documentation and recording system**

376 The PGS group has the option to adopt or localized the forms and other documents
377 annexed (refer to Annex B). The type of documentation is equivalent to the need and
378 level in the PGS group.

379

380 **7.2 PGS Process**

381

382 **7.2.1 Self-Review**

383 Farmers applying for PGS guarantee must first be oriented on the systems and
384 provided with a copy of the latest versions of PGS internal standards, relevant PNS
385 for OA and the PGS group's manual of operations. They will also be provided with the
386 application form, producer profile form, and checklist of requirements.

387

388 Farmer applicants must fill up and submit the application form, farmer's pledge, farm
389 maps and producer profile form to the appropriate committee for pre-assessment.
390 Farmer applicants must also declare the method of farming and organic status of their
391 farm.

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393 **7.2.2 Peer Review**

394 The peer review is based on established PGS internal standards and relevant PNS OA.
395 The peer reviewer shall conduct the review based on established rules and
396 procedures as provided by the manual of operation. A peer review report will then be
397 submitted to the committee within the agreed timeline. Peer review serves as
398 confirmatory step of farmer declaration regarding the organic status of the farm. As
399 far as practicable, peer reviewers should provide corrective actions on the non-
400 compliances found during the peer review.

401

402 **7.2.3 Committee Review**

403 Decisions regarding organic status of **operators** will be decided by the committee
404 based on the reports submitted by the peer reviewers. Once approved, the **review**
405 **committee issues the approval to the farmer with a validity of one (1) year. The**
406 **review committee may delegate the issuance of the certificate to the management**
407 **committee.**

408 The PGS certificate should indicate the following: name of farm/farmer, farm address,
409 farm code, farm size, scope of certification, PGS mark or seal, and certificate validity.

410

411 **7.2.4 Renewal Process**

412 For renewal application, organic operators are to submit a letter of intent together
413 with updated documents, if applicable, such as copies of farm maps, farm records and
414 other relevant documents.

415

416 **7.2.5 Complaints and Appeals**

417 Once disapproved or in case of complaints, a farmer applicant may apply for
418 reconsideration/appeal depending on the severity of non-compliance(s) found
419 during peer and committee reviews. The PGS group may establish a committee, which
420 will investigate appeal filed and provide recommendations to the committee for
421 further deliberation and decisions.

422

423 **7.2.6 Sanctions**

424 Members, who are found violating the PGS internal standards and/or the relevant
425 PNS for OA, will be imposed with penalties and sanctions (refer to sample guidelines
426 on sanctions in Annex C) by the PGS group.

427

428 **7.2.7 Review Fees**

429 In order to ensure the sustainability of the operations, the PGS group may collect
430 reasonable fees, which are agreed through consensus and are subject to regular
431 review, to offset the cost of application and peer review.

432

433 **7.3 Traceability per product and per group**

434 A PGS group should have a traceability system and regular product flow monitoring
435 for PGS organic products from its members.

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437 Further, there should be a database of approved and sanctioned farmer members,
438 which should be regularly maintained and updated.

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ANNEX A
(Informative)
List of Philippine National Standards (PNS)
Relevant to Organic Agriculture

PNS No.	Version	PNS Title
07:2016	Current version	Organic Agriculture
40:2014		Organic Fertilizer
42-1:2008		Organic Milled Rice – Specification Part 1: Post harvest operations
42-2:2008		Organic Milled Rice – Specification Part 2: Packaging, labeling and quality standards
112:2012		Organic Aquaculture
182:2016		Organic biocontrol agents – Microbials and botanicals – Minimum data requirements
183:2016		Organic Soil Amendments

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ANNEX B
(Informative)
Sanctions¹

SANCTIONS	SITWASYON KUNG SAAN ITO AY MAAARING IBIGAY
1. Written condition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hindi maayos na record keeping, pagpapabaya sa sakahan, maliliit na paglabas sa standards
2. Penalties o fines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hindi pagsunod sa sanction na naunang ibinigay ng komite
3. Suspension na may takdang panahon hanggang gumawa ng hakbang ang magsasaka upang ayusin ang mga paglabag	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> paulit-ulit na maliliit na paglabag sa standards Malinaw na paglabag sa standards
4. Disapproval ng magsasaka, pag-uulit sa conversion period na dalawang taon	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> malinaw na paglabag sa

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¹ PGS Pilipinas Operations Manual

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ANNEX C
(Informative)
PGS Forms

PGS Application Form²

Date: _____
Name: _____
Address: _____
Name of Organization: _____
Contact Number: _____
Code Number: _____

Farm Information

Total Farm size: _____				
Number of lots in the farm: _____				
Land ownership status (please check): owned Tenant Leased				
Lot #	Area (ha)	Crops planted	Date of last use of chemical input	Indicate organic inputs applied

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Required farm data:

- Farm map

I agree that I will follow and uphold the principles and policies of the Participatory Guarantee System (PGS), including the Philippine National Organic Standards. I will cooperate and fulfill my financial obligations including inspection fee and other obligations that were agreed upon by the PGS Committee.

Conforme

Name and Signature of farmer

Date

² PGS Pilipinas Operations Manual

PGS Farmers Pledge³

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Name: _____

ID Code: _____

Address: _____

I, the undersigned, accepts to become a member of the Participatory Guarantee System (PGS). I promise to adhere to the PGS principles, policies and Philippine National Standards on Organic Agriculture to serve soil health, the environment my family and community.

- I will not use synthetic pesticides such as insecticides, herbicides, fungicides, fertilizers, chemically treated or genetically modified seeds.
- I will work with my fellow farmers and attend meetings to expand and share my knowledge of the standards and organic production techniques.
- I will work to build the soil through ecologically sustainable farming practices such as crop rotations, composting, cover crops and green manures.
- I will care for my livestock in ways that ensures their well-being.
- I will only use bags and containers that are clean and have not been used as container for synthetic chemicals.
- I will work to prevent contamination with the use of suitable buffers and other means.
- I will encourage biodiversity through my farming system.
- I will sell products as organic only when they are grown accordance with Philippine National Organic Standards and have the guaranteed by the PGS.
- I will ensure that on the farm during storage, processing, transport and sale there is no contamination or mixing of organically grown with non-organically grown produce.
- I will accept the decision of the PGS Committee with regards to my certification status.
- I will report even minor or unintentional non-compliances to the organic standards on my farm to my organization.
- All information I have provided on the application and during my farm appraisal is correct and accurate, and I will keep my information up to date with any changes.

Farmers Name: _____ Signature: _____

Organization name (PO): _____

Official representative of PO: _____ Signature: _____

Place: _____ Date: _____

³ PGS Pilipinas Operations Manual

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ANNEX D
(Informative)
Peer Review Format

ID Code _____	Form _____
Inspector: _____	Date of Visit: _____ Time: _____
Farm Location: _____	

A. Farm Documents and Records

Organic Standards	<input type="checkbox"/> available	<input type="checkbox"/> none
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Person Interviewed <input type="checkbox"/> Farmer member <input type="checkbox"/> Others, specify _____ Relationship to farmer _____	Main Crop During Visits			
	Crops	1st	2nd	3rd
	Rice			
	Vegetables			
Status of Land Ownership: <input type="checkbox"/> Owner <input type="checkbox"/> Tenant	Others			
List of materials used in production <input type="checkbox"/> available <input type="checkbox"/> complete list and regularly updated <input type="checkbox"/> needs improvement, specify _____	<input type="checkbox"/> none			
Farm Input Records <input type="checkbox"/> available <input type="checkbox"/> complete list and regularly updated <input type="checkbox"/> needs improvement, specify _____	<input type="checkbox"/> none			
Documents (History, Plan & Map) <input type="checkbox"/> available <input type="checkbox"/> complete list and regularly updated <input type="checkbox"/> needs improvement, specify _____	<input type="checkbox"/> none			

B. Information About the Farm

Lot #	Area (ha)	Crop planted	

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C. Seed / Planting materials sources

Crops	Source of Seed		Describe Seed/Planting Materials Storage Method
	Own	Other Sources (specify)	

D. Farm and Crop Description

Crops	Age of Plant	Overall Description of Crop	Farm bio-diversity (plants and insects, etc)
			<input type="checkbox"/> highly diversified in lot # _____
			<input type="checkbox"/> needs more diversification in lot # _____

E. Soil fertility management and use of organic fertilizers

Lot #	Farm Inputs Used In Organic Fields	
	Inputs used	Quantity (kg./ha)
Describe how farm residues (rice straws, twigs, fallen leaves, etc.) are managed or kept.		
Describe farm elevation (flat, sloping, etc.).		
Has soil erosion occurred in the farm? <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes, in which part of the farm (lot #)? _____		
Describe soil erosion measures employed.		
Is crop rotation being practiced in the farm? <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes, which part (lot #)? _____		
Describe rotation practice:		

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F. Pest Management

Lot #	Pest problems encountered	Pest management methods used

G. Possibilities of contamination from outside the farm

Lot #	Possibility of contamination (if Yes, identify the source and type of contaminant)	Description and size of buffer zone

Source of water for irrigation, please check appropriate box:

- Irrigation, N/A Rainfed deepwell spring
 pipewater treated with chlorine artesian well River

Farm Tools Ownership
 Owned Borrowed

If borrowed, describe method of cleaning:

H. Harvesting and Post-Harvest

Crop	Date of Harvest	Estimated harvest (kg.)	Actual harvest (kg.)	Method of harvesting (Manual/Mechanical)	Containers used (Old/New)



Remarks and other observations:

Signature:

_____ Inspector

_____ Farmer

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ANNEX F
(Informative)
Appeals Format

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DRAFT

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797 Organic Agriculture is a holistic production management system, which enhances
 798 agro-ecosystem health, utilizing both traditional and scientific knowledge. Organic
 799 Agricultural systems rely on ecosystem management rather than external
 800 agricultural inputs. Any system of agriculture based on the Principles of Organic
 801 Agriculture can be regarded as “Organic Agriculture”. The principles guiding this
 802 vision can embrace goals relating not only to organic production goals but also to fair
 803 trade, the autonomy of local communities, cultural differences etc.

804 A shared vision means that all key stakeholders (producers, consumers, retailers and
 805 traders and others such as NGOs) collectively support the principles guiding the PGS
 806 initiative. Participation means that they are engaged since the initial design,
 807 contributing to choose and adopt the principles and standards that will be used by
 808 the group. This could be an international standard, a national standard, or an own
 809 private standard developed by the initiative, based on internationally recognized
 810 organic norms, including specific requirements that are suitable for local conditions.

811

812 **Question 1: Is our PGS based on generally recognized organic principles?**

813

814 Yes No *(Important Characteristic)*

815

816 **Question 2: Is our PGS based on an existing national, regional or international⁴
 817 Organic standard or on our own private standard?**

818

Yes No

819 *Please elaborate, specifying the standard on which the PGS is based. In case the standard
 820 goes beyond organic, please explain how (for example: fair trade, respect for
 821 ecosystems, the autonomy of local communities, cultural differences etc.):*

822

823

824 **Question 3: Is that standard approved in the [IFOAM Family of Standards](#)⁵?**

825

Yes No *(Important Characteristic)*

826

827

828 **Question 4: Did all our stakeholders have an influence in the choice and
 829 adoption of our Organic Norms?**

830

Yes No *(Important Characteristic)*

831 *Please elaborate on how the Organic Norms were selected (if existing beforehand) or
 832 developed and adopted by the stakeholders, describing the process leading to this.
 833 Please list key stakeholders who were involved in the process (only categories, not
 834 names of individuals):*

835

⁴ International examples include the IFOAM Standard and the Codex. Regional standards include the EU regulation, the East Africa Organic Product Standard, the Pacific Organic Standard. National standards include USDA Organic, JAS, Indian NPOP.

⁵ The IFOAM Family of Standards contains all standards officially endorsed as organic by the Organic Movement. IFOAM recommends to any initiative that relies on organic products or ingredients to consider referencing the IFOAM Family of Standards as a criterion for what constitute a trustworthy organic standard.

836 **Question 5: Are our norms easily available and accessible to all stakeholders or**
837 **other interested parties?**

838 Yes No *(Important Characteristic)*

839 *Please elaborate on how people can access the norms, including detailed information*
840 *(These may be available for example through websites, public notices and stakeholder*
841 *meetings):*

842

843

844 **Question 6: Do we have mechanisms in place to ensure farmers fully**
845 **understand what they are agreeing to?**

846 Yes No *(Important Characteristic)*

847 *Please elaborate, explaining such mechanisms and attaching documents in case they*
848 *are available. Examples may include short summary of the standards, regular*
849 *trainings, regular meetings or an office they can contact for more information about*
850 *practices or allowable materials:*

851

852 **Question 7: Are Social Justice Principles embraced by our PGS?**

853 Yes No

854 *Please elaborate, indicating for example how gender issues, food access and affordable*
855 *food, fair wages or other equity issues are approached:*

856

857

858 **Part B: PROCEDURES TO VERIFY PRODUCERS' COMPLIANCE AND**
859 **UNDERSTANDING**

860 Mechanisms to verify producer's compliance to the established norms should actively
861 stimulate participation and encourage the stakeholders to embrace cooperation and
862 provide learning opportunities.

863 The idea of 'trust' assumes that the every individual producer has a commitment to
864 protecting nature and consumers' health through organic production. Mechanisms
865 for expressing trustworthiness can include a declaration (a producer pledge) via a
866 private or witnessed signing of a pledge document. Whatever process is followed, it
867 should be decided upon by and with the key stakeholders and can be revisited like
868 any other formal record of an event and written arrangement.

869 In situations where producers may be unable to read and write, mechanisms will be
870 set in place to engage these producers in ways that are appropriate to their culture
871 and their situation. This might involve culturally specific ways of expressing group
872 solidarity; it might be pictorial or some other hands on activity. In any case, the
873 mechanisms should fit with the context.

874 **Question 8: Do our producers take a pledge, declaration, oath, or promise that**
875 **they will follow the standards (written, verbally stated or documented in some**
876 **culturally appropriate way)?**

877 Yes No *(Important Characteristic)*

878 *Please elaborate on how this is done, providing a copy of the pledge, declaration, oath*
879 *or promise and a document (please attach for example a scanned document or a video;*

880 documents can be provided in original language, with an English translation if
881 available):

882

883

884 **Question 9: Is information (e.g. type of production, areas of compliance and**
885 **non-compliance with the standard, brought-in inputs, etc.) created and**
886 **maintained for each farm?**

887 Yes No (Important Characteristic)

888 Please include details on how information is created and maintained (for example, some
889 groups use paper application, others use videos, etc.):

890

891

892 **Question 10: Does this information include specific questions about farm**
893 **operations to ensure procedures on the farm are in accordance with our**
894 **accepted organic standards?**

895 Yes No (Important Characteristic)

896

897 **Question 11: Are annual on-site reviews carried out for every farm in our PGS?**

898 Yes No (Important Characteristic)

899

900 Please elaborate in case the answer is NO, explaining why not, how often the reviews are
901 carried out for each farm, how are the reviewed farms selected, etc:

902

903

904 **Question 12: Do member producers in general take part in the regular on-site**
905 **review process not only as producers but also as reviewers?**

906 Yes No (Important Characteristic)

907 Please elaborate on how the on-site review is carried out, explaining who are the people
908 involved (farmers, consumers, others, including non-members of the PGS):

909

910

911 **Question 13: As a policy, can all stakeholders (producers, consumers, etc.),**
912 **including those that are not directly part of the PGS group (e.g. other producers)**
913 **visit the producers (Open Gate Policy)?**

914 Yes No (Important Characteristic)

915 **Part C: DOCUMENTED MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS**
Please elaborate:

916

917

918

919 For an organic guarantee system to be transparent and to be able to deliver on a
920 consistent and equitable basis, the PGS systems and procedures should be
921 documented. The depth and complexity of this documentation will vary between PGS
922 and can evolve over time. As with any quality assurance system, there is an

923 expectation of ongoing improvement as lessons are learned and the organization
924 gains experience.

925 **Question 14: Is the following information maintained by our PGS:**

926 a) General Information about each farm / operation

927 Yes No *(Important Characteristic)*

928

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

930 Yes No *(Important Characteristic)*

931

932 c) Record of onsite reviews, including findings summary

933 Yes No *(Important Characteristic)*

934

935 d) Record of attendance at local meetings

936 Yes No

937

938 e) Record of certification for each farm / operation

939 Yes No *(Important Characteristic)*

940

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

942 Yes No *(Important Characteristic)*

943 *Please elaborate on how the members of the public can access this information,*
944 *providing examples and (if available) indicating online resources, such as websites, or*
945 *dedicated offices, etc. :*

946

947

948 **Question 15: Have efforts been made to minimize paperwork necessary to**
949 **certification?**

950 Yes No

951 *Please elaborate explaining how this has been done or, in case the answer is NO, please*
952 *explain if there is a strategy in place in order to minimize paperwork:*

953

954

955 **Question 16: Does the PGS management system have additional mechanisms to**
956 **mitigate risks of producer non-compliance going un-detected?**

957 Yes No

958 *Please elaborate:*

959

960

961 **Question 17: Is traceability ensured from the farm gate to the point of sale?**

962 Yes No

963 *Please elaborate:*

964

965

966 **Question 18: Are the steps to certification process, including the chain of**
967 **responsibilities and decision making available to to the public?**

968 Yes No (Important Characteristic)

969 *Please elaborate explaining how is it possible for stakeholders to understand the steps*
970 *to certification:*

971

972

973 **Question 19: Can stakeholders find out which producers and which products**
974 **are certified by the PGS?**

975 Yes No (Important Characteristic)

976 *Please elaborate on what tools and strategies are adopted by the PGS group in order to*
977 *communicate about the producers/products that are certified:*

978

979

980 **Question 20: Do participants involved in peer-review visits receive training**
981 **before or during the peer-review?**

982 Yes No (Important Characteristic)

983 *Please elaborate how this training is organized:*

984

985

986 **Question 21: Do experienced participants accompany new participants during**
987 **peer-reviews in order to support them and promote experience exchange?**

988 Yes No

989 *Please elaborate:*

990

991

992 **Question 22: Is there an internal mechanism in place to evaluate that the farm**
993 **reviews were completed and that the decisions are consistent?**

994 Yes No (Important Characteristic)

995 *Please elaborate:*

996

Part D: HORIZONTALITY

997

998

999

1000 PGSs are intended to be non-hierarchical. This is reflected in the overall democratic
1001 structure and through the collective responsibility of the PGS. Responsibility should
1002 be shared and participants take turns in filling roles according to a rotation scheme,
1003 producers are directly engaged in the peer review of each other's farms and the
1004 decision making process is transparent.

1005

1006 **Question 23: Is decision and policy making about PGS procedures made by**
1007 **either producers, consumers or regularly elected producer and consumer**
1008 **representatives?**

1009 Yes No *(Important Characteristic)*

1010 *Please elaborate on the procedure adopted for electing producer and consumer*
1011 *representatives:*

1012

1013

1014 **Question 24: Are there mechanisms in place to regularly review and improve**
1015 **PGS procedures and policies?**

1016 Yes No *(Important Characteristic)*

1017 *Please elaborate, explaining in detail the mechanisms or in case the answer is NO, if*
1018 *there is any strategy in place in order to adopt such mechanisms:*

1019

1020

1021 **Question 25: Are our PGS Procedures appropriate to the cultural context in**
1022 **which they are used (for example verbal pledges and video documentation in**
1023 **areas of low literacy)?**

1024 Yes No *(Important Characteristic)*

1025

1026 **Question 26: Are producers and/or consumers or their representatives the**
1027 **primary decision makers about which producers are to be certified? (as**
1028 **opposed to a third party or separate organizational group)?**

1029 Yes No *(Important Characteristic)*

1030 *Please elaborate, explaining in detail how is the primary decision about which*
1031 *producers are to be certified taken:*

1032

1033 **Question 27: If the PGS is a national initiative, is there room for local and**
1034 **regional variations to the rules and operational procedures as long as the main**
1035 **functional points are maintained? (For example, maybe the on-site review can**
1036 **be changed or added to as long as they stick to agreed basic standards)**

1037 Yes No Not applicable

1038 *Please elaborate, giving examples:*

Part E: CONSUMER AND OTHER STAKEHOLDER INVOLVEMENT IN THE PGS

1039

1040

1041

1042 Consumers and producers have complementary interests. One party produces
1043 organic products and the other party buys and consumes them. Thus, the idea behind
1044 engaging consumers in a PGS initiative has many benefits and is a feature of many
1045 established PGS groups. These benefits include strengthening the credibility of the
1046 PGS, by opening up to a “third eye” a certification process which is otherwise mostly
1047 based on second party, and broadening the market opportunities for the certified
1048 products. Also, consumers can share the workload of managing a PGS, provide
1049 valuable expertise in management and may also take a supporting role in the peer
1050 review process. Through involvement in the PGS, consumers acknowledge the value
1051 of organic food and happily pay fair prices for the products.

1052 In case where consumers are not directly involved, it is important that the system be
1053 open to the participation of other stakeholders, such as supporting NGOs, university
1054 or government staff, national organic movement, etc. This involvement can take place
1055 at various levels, such as in the farm reviews, in the certification decisions, or in the
1056 strategic decisions on procedures and standards.

1057

1058 **Question 28: Do consumers and other stakeholders (non-producers) have the**
1059 **option of being active members of the PGS (e.g. participate in overall strategic**
1060 **decisions, in farm reviews, in the certification process and decisions, etc.)?**

1061 Yes No *(Important Characteristic)*

1062 *Please elaborate, explaining in detail in which ways and at which levels consumers can*
1063 *actively participate in the PGS. In case the answer is NO, please explain why:*

1064

1065

1066 **Question 29: Is our PGS initiative endorsed by any consumer group? This could**
1067 **include environmental organizations, health advocacy organizations, etc.**

1068 Yes No

1069 *Please elaborate, explaining in detail how are consumers included in the Certification*
1070 *Process. In case the answer is NO, please explain why:*

1071

1072

1073

Part F: SYSTEMS FOR MANAGING NON-COMPLIANCE

1074 There will always be circumstances where producers are unable or fail to comply
1075 with the standards and norms of their PGS. In most cases it seems these non-
1076 compliances are minor in that they are mostly centered on the perennial challenge of
1077 record keeping, however, in some cases the non-compliance might be more serious,
1078 such as the deliberate use of a prohibited input or the mislabeling of product. It is
1079 logical then that the consequences for non-compliance should be graded to fit with
1080 the seriousness of the non-compliance.

1081 Whatever the consequences might be, they should be agreed upon by the producers
1082 in advance, documented and presented to the producers as part of the agreement
1083 they make to follow the standards and norms. Where consequences for non-
1084 compliance are applied, these consequences should be handed out consistently and
1085 without favor, the process of applying them should be transparent and the outcomes
1086 should be publicly available through an appropriate pathway, such as a website or
1087 public notice.

1088

1089 **Question 30: Are there prescribed consequences for non-compliance?**

1090 Yes No *(Important Characteristic)*

1091 *Please elaborate, explaining the categorization of non-compliances and the specific*
1092 *consequences. In case written documents where this is described are available, please*
1093 *provide a reference and a copy (e.g. operations manual):*

1094

1095

1096

1097 **Question 31: Is there a system for managing non-compliance, that at the very**
1098 **minimum de-certifies producers that have serious non-compliances with the**
1099 **standard?**

1100 Yes No *(Important Characteristic)*

1101

1102 **Question 32: Are non-compliances and their consequences publicly available?**

1103 Yes No

1104

1105 **Question 33: Are producers in the PGS involved in the system for managing non-**
1106 **compliance?**

1107 Yes No *(Important Characteristic)*

1108 *Please elaborate, explaining how does the system for managing non-compliance works*
1109 *or if written documents where this process is described are available, please provide a*
1110 *reference and a copy:*

1111

1112

1113 **Question 34: Does the PGS initiative have mechanisms in place to avoid conflict**
1114 **of interest?**

1115 Yes No *(Important Characteristic)*

1116 *Please explain:*

1117

1118

1119 **Part G: MECHANISMS FOR SUPPORTING PRODUCERS**

1120 There are several ways through which a PGS can provide support for farmers. Regular
1121 meetings and workshops to discuss technical and marketing issues is a useful
1122 mechanism for building the knowledge base and general collective capacity of a
1123 group. Also, experienced producers can share information and their experience with
1124 less experienced producers. Producers can also be supported through input from
1125 technical advisors, newsletters, farm visits, websites. The ability of producers to take
1126 advantage of these will depend on their levels of literacy and access to the media as a
1127 whole. For producers who have low levels of literacy it seems that regular
1128 interactions with technical advisors are important.

1129 **Question 35: Is there a system for producers and other stakeholders (non-**
1130 **producer members) to participate in trainings or sharing meetings with other**
1131 **local member-producers of the PGS?**

1132 Yes No *(Important Characteristic)*

1133 *Please elaborate, explaining how the system works. Include information on training for*
1134 *new comers (producers and non-producer members):*

1135

1136

1137 **Question 36: Does our organization offer agricultural technical advisory**
1138 **services to producers?**

1139 Yes No

1140

1141

1142

1143 A seal (official stamp) is used by a PGS to provide an official endorsement of key
1144 documents such as producer's certificates. Certificates are usually renewed each year
1145 and thus the length of time the seal is valid for is usually noted on the same document.
1146 The use of the seal is controlled and managed by nominated persons (such as the PGS
1147 management committee).

Part H: SEALS AND LABELS

1148 Labels have a different purpose. They are attached to products by the producer and
1149 are intended to provide the consumer with evidence that their product is covered by
1150 an organic guarantee. The label usually carries the PGS logo and sometimes the
1151 producer's number or code to enable consumers to trace the origin of a product if
1152 they choose to do so. Labels are of particular relevance when producers and
1153 consumers are isolated by distance.

1154 **Question 37: Is there a seal or logo available for our farmers to use?**

1155 Yes No *(Important Characteristic)*

1156 *If yes, please paste or attach a copy of the logo and explain who owns or controls this*
1157 *logo?*

1158

1159

1160 **Question 38: Does each producer receive an individual certificate or some proof**
1161 **of their certification status?**

1162 Yes No *(Important Characteristic)*

1163

1164 **Optional: Additional Questions on Sustainability of the Initiative**

1165 **39: How is our PGS initiative funded now? Can the initiative be entirely self-**
1166 **funded in the future?**

1167

1168 **40: If producers pay a fee to be certified, do they feel it is a fair fee? What fee is**
1169 **charged?**

1170

1171 **41: Do producers and other stakeholders participate in the operation of the PGS**
1172 **to keep costs and overhead down? In which ways do they participate?**

1173

1174 **42: Do producers certified by our PGS get a price premium for their products**
1175 **on the market, or do they have better market access?**

1176

1177 Yes No

1178 Please specify:

1179

1180