



ASIAN PRODUCTIVITY ORGANIZATION

PROJECT NOTIFICATION

17 February 2016

1. **Project Code** 16-AG-13-GE-TRC-B
2. **Title** Advanced Training Course on Certification of Organic Products
3. **Timing and Duration** 20–24 August 2016 (five days)
4. **Venue** Tehran, IR Iran
5. **Implementing Organizations**
National Iranian Productivity Organization
3rd Floor, Building No. 3, Management and Planning Organization,
Daneshsara St., Baharestan Sq.,
Tehran 1149943141, IR Iran
Tel: 0098-21-3327-6501-3

Ministry of Jihad-e-Agriculture
Agricultural Research and Education Organization (AREO),
P.O. Box 19395-1113, Yaman Ave., Chamran Highway,
Garden of Agriculture, Tehran
6. **Number of Overseas Participants** Up to 18 qualified participants from Bangladesh, Cambodia, Republic of China, Fiji, India, Indonesia, Japan, Republic of Korea, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Mongolia, Nepal, Pakistan, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Thailand, and Vietnam

However, other member countries with special interest in this project may nominate candidates upon consultation with the APO Secretariat.
7. **Number of Local Participants** Up to six qualified participants
8. **Closing Date for Nominations** 30 May 2016
9. **Objectives**

To provide advanced training to trainers on and practitioners of organic certification and inspection. After completing the course, they are expected to be able to:

- a. Understand the requirements of the latest international organic standards, certification rules and regulations, and inspection procedures and acquire the competencies needed to perform the functions of an organic inspector effectively and efficiently; and

- b. Provide training, consulting, and promotional services to NPOs and other similar organizational clients to build the capacity of numerous stakeholders.

10. Background

The global market for certified organic food products is expanding fast, driven by increased consumer demand for product authenticity and concerns about the negative effects of input-intensive agriculture on natural resources and the environment. The demand for organic food products is expected to continue growing robustly in major markets like the USA and EU. Such trends create greater opportunities for organic producers in developing countries in Asia. To take advantage of this growing export market, however, there is a need to establish credible systems of organic standards and strengthen organic certification systems.

Organic certification is based on established regulatory and audit systems that provide operating guidelines and rules, called organic standards. Currently, third-party certification is a prerequisite to successful sales transactions, and an “organic” claim on a product label requires such certification under the regulations of many governments.

In developing countries, especially those where organic food production and processing are only beginning to emerge as viable commercial ventures, there is no harmonized standard and hence organic product labeling and certification may be unreliable. This issue needs to be addressed if developing countries in Asia seek to benefit from the expanding international markets for these products. There is also a need to develop qualified trainers and inspectors of organic products to facilitate the credible certification of growers, postharvest handlers, and processors.

11. Scope and Methodology

The tentative modules to be covered are:

- a. Organic standards and regulations;
- b. Requirements of regional and international organic standards;
- c. Organic guarantee systems;
- d. Third-party organic certification: key concepts and considerations;
- e. Organic certification processes;
- f. Organic inspection; and
- g. Organic marketing and trade.

The training will employ interactive learning methods such as interactive lectures, group exercises, and site visits. Group exercises will allow more thorough discussions of the organic product certification process and inspection, enabling participants to improve or create the necessary documents (i.e., checklist, inspection report template) relevant to current organic practices. Mock field inspections will give participants a venue to apply the principles learned from the lectures and discussion. At the beginning and end of the course, the participants will have a comprehensive individual examination/assessment to evaluate the level of knowledge gained from the course.

The tentative program itinerary of the training course is given below:

Date/Time	Activity
Fri., 19 August 2016	Arrival of participants in Tehran
Sat., 20 August 2016	Opening session Training modules
Sun., 21 August 2016	Training modules
Mon., 22 August 2016	Training modules/field visit
Tue., 23 August 2016	Training modules
Wed., 24 August 2016	Training modules/examination Program evaluation Closing session
Thurs., 25 August 2016	Departure of participants

12. Qualifications of Candidates

The participants are expected to possess the following qualifications:

Present Position	NPO consultants, trainers, and organic professionals and academics with adequate knowledge and understanding of organic standard requirements and interested in pursuing a career as an organic inspector/auditor/trainer.
Experience	At least three years of experience in the position described above.
Education	University degree or equivalent qualification from a recognized university/institution.
Language	All proceedings of the project are conducted in English, and participants are frequently required to make oral and written presentations. They must therefore be proficient in spoken and written English. Those who are not proficient in English will not be accepted.
Health	Physically and mentally fit to attend an intensive project requiring participants to complete a number of individual and group activities and strenuous fieldwork. It is therefore recommended that member countries do not nominate candidates likely to suffer from physical and mental stress.
Age	Candidates who fit the above profile are typically between 25 and 40 years of age.
APO Certificate	Participants are required to attend the entire program to receive the APO certificate of attendance.

13. Financial Arrangements

To be borne by participants or participating countries

For participants from profit-making organizations, except SMEs from APO member countries

other than Bangladesh, Cambodia, Fiji, Lao PDR, Mongolia, and Nepal:

- a. Round-trip international airfare between the member country and the venue in Tehran.
- b. Participating country expenses of US\$50 per participant, payable to the APO in convertible currency.

For all participants:

- a. Participants' insurance premiums: All participants should be fully insured against accident and illness (including hospitalization and death) for a principal sum equivalent to US\$10,000.00 for the entire duration of the project and travel, and must submit to the APO Secretariat a copy of the comprehensive travel insurance certificate before participation. Such insurance should be valid in the host country. This insurance requirement is in addition to existing government insurance coverage in some member countries. If any participant is unable to insure himself/herself as stipulated above, he/she should secure this insurance in the host country at the commencement of the project and pay the premium himself/herself, if necessary, from the per diem allowance provided. Neither the APO nor the implementing organizations will be responsible for any eventuality arising from accident or illness.
- b. All expenses related to visa fees and airport taxes.
- c. Any expenses incurred by participants for stopovers on the way to and from the project venue as well as for extra stay at the project venue before and/or after the official project period because of early arrival or late departure, for example, due to either limited available flights or any other reason.

To be borne by the host country

- a. Per diem allowances and hotel accommodations for up to 18 overseas participants for up to six days at the rate to be specified later.
- b. All assignment costs of local resource persons.
- c. All other local implementation costs.

To be borne by the APO

- a. All assignment costs of overseas resource persons.
- b. Round-trip economy-class international airfare by the most direct route between the international airport nearest to the participants' place of work and Tehran. As far as practicable, all participants should purchase discount tickets. Please note that the arrangements for the purchase of air tickets should follow the "Guide on Purchases of Air Tickets for APO Participants," which will be sent to the selected participants. It is also available on the APO website and from APO Liaison Officers in member countries.

14. Actions by Member Countries

- a. Each participating country is requested to nominate three or more candidates in the order of preference. Please ensure that candidates nominated meet the qualifications specified under

section 12 above.

- b. No form of self-nomination will be accepted. All nominations must be endorsed and submitted by an APO Director, Alternative Director, Liaison Officer, or their designated officer.
- c. Please note that nomination of a candidate does not necessarily guarantee that he/she will be selected. Selection is at the discretion of the APO Secretariat. A basic criterion for selection is the homogeneity of the participants in terms of qualifications and work experience. Nonselection therefore does not mean that the candidates concerned are not competent enough. Sometimes candidates are not selected because they are overqualified for a project.
- d. Each nomination should be accompanied by the necessary documents. A nomination lacking any of these documents may not be considered: two copies of the candidate's biodata on the APO biodata form together with a passport-sized photograph. The biodata form can be downloaded from the APO website (www.apo-tokyo.org). We encourage submitting the biodata form to the APO Secretariat in electronic form as an attachment to a cover e-mail message from the APO Director, Alternate Director, or Liaison Officer. The nomination documents should be sent to the Agriculture Department, APO Secretariat (e-mail: agr@apo-tokyo.org; fax: 81-3-5840-5324).
- e. The APO Medical and Insurance Declaration/Certification Form. Every candidate must complete and submit a copy of the APO Medical and Insurance Declaration/Certification Form with his/her biodata at the time of nomination. Please note that self-declaration is sufficient for candidates without any of health conditions or illnesses listed on the reverse side of the medical form. However, for all others, medical certification by a licensed physician on the reverse side of the medical form is required.
- f. Necessary documents are to be submitted electronically. In that case, there is no need to send a hard copy by postal mail. However, if the documents are submitted by fax, member countries are requested to mail the originals of the documents to the APO Secretariat as well. If a digital photograph of a nominee is not attached to the electronic biodata form, a hard-copy photograph should be sent to the APO Secretariat by postal mail. Please give the candidate's name and the project code on the reverse side of the photograph.
- g. Member countries are requested to adhere to the nomination deadline given on page 1. The APO Secretariat may not consider late nominations as they have in the past resulted in considerable difficulties to the implementing organization in its preparatory work for the project.
- h. For member countries where nominations are required to be approved by higher government authorities and require a longer time, the APO Liaison Officers/NPOs are urged to send the names of nominees on or before the deadline, indicating that government approval will follow.
- i. If a selected participant becomes unable to attend, he/she should inform the APO Liaison Officer/NPO in his/her country immediately and give the reason for withdrawal. The NPO concerned is requested to transmit that information to the APO Secretariat and the host country promptly.
- j. NPOs are requested to inform the selected participants that they are not to bring family

members or to engage in any private business activities during the entire duration of the project.

- k. Each selected participant should be instructed to arrive at the venue one day before the start of the official project. Also, he/she is expected to return home upon completion of the official project because he/she is visiting the host country for the specific purpose of attending this APO project.
- l. NPOs should inform participants that they must attend all five days of the project to qualify for the certificate of attendance.

15. Actions by the APO Secretariat

- a. Under normal circumstances, candidates who are selected will be informed of their acceptance at least four weeks prior to the start of the project.
- b. If some candidates fail to qualify or be unable to participate after selection, or if some member countries fail to nominate any candidate, their slots may be filled by alternates from the same or another member country on a merit basis.

16. Project Preparation

The participants are encouraged to prepare a short report on the current status of certification of organic products in their countries for sharing and discussions during the course.

17. Postproject Actions

All participants are required to prepare action plans and share the plans with their NPOs. The APO will also request participants to submit progress reports six months after completion of the workshop.

18. Evaluation of Participants

If the conduct/attendance/performance of a participant is not satisfactory, these will be reported to the APO director concerned.

19. Guide for Participants

Other conditions for participation are given in the *APO Guide for Participants*, which is available from APO Liaison Officers/NPOs in member countries and on the APO website (www.apo-tokyo.org).



Mari Amano
Secretary-General