

Asian Productivity Organization

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PROJECT NOTIFICATION

16 December 2010

1. **Project Code** 11-AG-24-GE-WSP-B
2. **Title** Workshop on Development of Standard and Certification Systems for Organic Agricultural Products
3. **Duration** 16–20 May 2011 (five days)
4. **Venue** New Delhi, India
5. **Implementing Organization** National Productivity Council (NPC)
Institutional Area, Lodi Road,
New Delhi - 110003, India
Phone: 91-11-24690331/3
Fax: 91-11-24615002
e-Mail: is@npcindia.org
URL: www.npcindia.org
6. **Number of Overseas Participants** Up to 18 qualified participants from Bangladesh, Republic of China, Indonesia, IR Iran, Japan, Republic of Korea, Malaysia, Nepal, Pakistan, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Thailand, and Vietnam (see 12. Qualifications of Participants)
7. **Number of Local Participants** Up to six qualified participants (see 12. Qualifications of Participants)
8. **Closing Date for Nominations** 28 February 2011
9. **Objectives**
 - a) To review the current status of and trends in the organic agrifood industry in member countries and identify critical areas for improvement to strengthen the industry;
 - b) To enhance participants' knowledge and skills in standard setting and certification processes for organic agrifood production and processing; and
 - c) To familiarize participants with good practices of standard setting, inspection, and certification for agrifood products and formulate action plans for harmonizing and enhancing organic standards and certification systems in Asian countries.

10. Background

The production of and trade in organic agrifood items are expanding fast, driven by increasing consumer demand and the premium prices producers receive. The key driver of demand for organic produce varies in each market. In most EU countries, the trend for organic food is driven by consumer concerns about the impact of production processes on the environment; in the USA, the growth in the organic market is driven by consumer desire to be healthy and fit. In Japan, the industry is driven largely by concerns about food safety and quality since organic food is closely associated with safe production and chemical-free products. In the USA and EU, organic products have gone mainstream and are now sold in conventional supermarkets and other retail outlets. In Japan, retail spaces for organic products are also increasing.

The demand for organic products is expected to grow even more robustly in these major markets as well as in other advanced countries. This augurs well, especially 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 bodies in those countries. In many Asian 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 a lack of reliability in organic product labeling and certification. 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 a critical mass of inspectors of organic products to facilitate the certification of producers.

In India, organic farming has become very popular and the country has accumulated a wealth of experience in promoting organics over the years. Other countries can learn many useful lessons from the host country's success and benchmark against them. The workshop is a reflection of the APO's continuing interest in promoting Green Productivity and sustainable development of the agriculture sector in its member countries, especially through the development of more efficient, sustainable production and distribution systems.

11. Scope and Methodology

This workshop is designed to enhance the competencies of various stakeholders involved in the development of the organic food industry in member countries. The workshop will consist of lead presentations by resource persons, issue papers on the subject by participants, group exercises, and field visits to relevant facilities in the host country. The tentative topics to be covered in the workshop deliberations include:

- a) Overview of the organic agrifood industry;
- b) Organic standard development: challenges and opportunities, problems and solutions;
- c) Packaging and labeling of agrifood products;
- d) Accreditation of certification bodies and certification procedures for operators;
- e) Organic standards, regulatory requirements, and procedures for importation of organic food products in major global markets; and
- f) Good practices of the development of standards and certification systems for organic agrifood products.

12. Qualifications of Participants

The participants are expected to possess the following qualifications:

- (a) Age: Preferably between 35 and 55 years.
- (b) Education: University degree or equivalent qualification from a recognized institution.
- (c) Present Position: Entrepreneurs, managers, and officers of small- and medium-scale enterprises/farms involved in the production, marketing, and trade of organic products; officials of government, standard and certification organizations, organic industry associations, NGOs, or academia involved in regulation, promotion, and extension activities for organic products; or consultants of NPOs and private organizations involved in the development of organic agrifood standards and/or auditing and inspection of organic food production and processing.
- (d) Experience: At least five years of experience in the subject area.
- (e) Language Proficiency: All proceedings of the workshop are conducted in English and participants are frequently required to make oral and written presentations. They should be proficient in both spoken and written English. *Those who are not proficient in English need not apply.*
- (f) Health: Physically and mentally fit to attend an intensive workshop requiring participants to complete a number of individual and group activities and strenuous fieldwork (it is therefore recommended that member countries refrain from nominating candidates likely to suffer from physical and mental strain).
- (g) Attendance: Participants must attend all five days of the workshop to qualify for the certificate of attendance.

13. Financial Arrangements

a) To be borne by the APO:

- i) All deputation costs of overseas resource persons.
- ii) Round-trip economy-class international airfare by the most direct route between the international airport nearest to the participant's place of work and New Delhi. As far as practicable, all participants are strongly encouraged to purchase and use discount tickets. Please note that the arrangements for the purchase of air tickets should be in accordance with the "Guide on Purchases of Air Tickets for APO Participants," which will be sent to the selected participants and is available on the APO website and from APO Liaison Officers in member countries. It should be noted that neither the APO nor the implementing organization(s) will be responsible for paying any additional per

diem allowances and hotel accommodation costs due to early arrival, delayed departure, rerouting of tickets, or any other reason whatsoever.

b) To be borne by participants or participating countries:

i) *For all participants*

- 1) *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 India. 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 organization will be responsible for any eventuality arising from accident or illness.

- 2) Any expenses related to visa fees and airport taxes.
- 3) 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 on account of early arrival or late departure, for example, due to either limited available flights or any other reason whatsoever.

c) To be borne by the host country (India)

- i) Per diem allowances and hotel accommodations for up to 18 overseas participants for up to six days at the rate to be specified later.
- ii) All local implementation costs.

14. Actions by Member Countries

Nominations

- (a) Each member country is requested to nominate two or more candidates for selection in the order of preference. Please ensure that candidates nominated meet the qualifications specified above.
- (b) Please note that when a candidate is nominated it does not follow that he/she is considered selected. Selection is at the discretion of the Screening Committee. 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. Sometimes candidates are not selected because they are overqualified for the given project.
- (c) APO Liaison Officers/NPOs are reminded to make clear in their search for the most appropriate participants that only the APO Liaison Officer/NPO in their country may

send nominations to the APO Secretariat. This should eliminate the mistake of various government/public institutions making nominations directly to the APO Secretariat.

Required Documents

- (d) Each nomination should be accompanied by the documents listed below. A nomination lacking any of these documents may not be considered:
 - i) Two copies of the candidate's biodata on the **APO biodata form** together with passport-sized photograph. The biodata form can be downloaded from the APO website. Downloading information is also available from 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: 81-3-5226-3954).
 - ii) **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 enumerated on the reverse side of the medical form. However, for all others, medical certification by a recognized physician on the reverse side of the medical form is required.
- (e) For reasons of expediency or because of time constraints due to approaching nomination deadlines, NPOs sometimes send their candidates' biodata forms and medical certificates by fax to the APO Secretariat. While this action is very much appreciated, NPOs are requested to mail the originals of the documents to the APO Secretariat as well. They are needed for making clear, clean copies for the host country, especially with regard to the candidates' photos. If the documents are submitted electronically as mentioned in (d)-i), there is no need to send the original by postal mail. 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 specify the candidate's name and the project code on the reverse side of the photograph.

Nomination Deadline

- (f) NPOs are requested to abide by the *nomination deadline of 28 February 2011*. 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.
- (g) For member countries where nominations are required to be approved by higher government authorities and hence require a longer time, the APO Liaison Officers/NPOs are urged to send in the names of nominees on or before the deadline, indicating that government approval will follow.

Others

- (h) The most qualified participant(s) from each member country will be chosen and notified through the APO Liaison Officer/NPO. Should some candidates fail to qualify or be unable to participate after selection, or should 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.

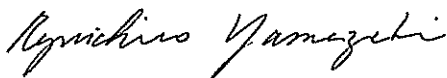
- (i) NPOs are requested to inform the selected participants that they are not to bring family members or to engage in any private business activities during the entire duration of the project. Further, if they become unable to attend the workshop, they should be requested to inform the APO promptly of their inability to participate and the reason for last-minute withdrawal through APO Liaison Officers/NPOs in member countries.
- (j) Each selected candidate is required to arrive at the venue one day before the start of the official project. Also, all candidates are expected to return home upon completion of the official project because they are visiting the host country for the specific purpose of attending this APO project.

15. Country Paper Preparation

Participants are required to prepare issue papers in context of their countries prior to departure for the project venue for presentation at the workshop. In preparing the papers, they are expected to follow the *Guidelines for Preparation of Country Papers* to be provided later.

16. Other Conditions

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 home page (<http://www.apo-tokyo.org>) and will also be sent to the selected participants.



Ryuichiro Yamazaki
Secretary-General