



ASIAN PRODUCTIVITY ORGANIZATION

PROJECT NOTIFICATION

18 March 2013

1. **Project Code** 13-AG-25-GE-WSP-B
2. **Title** Workshop on Packaging and Labeling Standards for Organic Agrifood Products
3. **Duration** 8–12 July 2013 (5 days)
4. **Venue** Manila, the Philippines
5. **Implementing Organization** Development Academy of the Philippines (DAP)
P.O. Box 12788, Ortigas Center, Pasig
Metro Manila, Philippines
Phone: (63-2) 631-2143
Fax: (63-2) 632-2123
Website: www.dap.edu.ph
6. **Number of Overseas Participants** Up to 18 qualified participants from Bangladesh, Cambodia, Republic of China, India, Indonesia, IR Iran, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Mongolia, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Thailand, and Vietnam (see 13. Qualifications of Participants). Other member countries with particular interest in this project may nominate candidates upon consultation with the Secretariat.
7. **Number of Local Participants** Up to six qualified participants (see 13. Qualifications of Participants)
8. **Closing Date for Nominations** 15 May 2013
9. **Objectives**

To acquaint participants with regulatory requirements and established standards for packaging and labeling of organic agrifood products and study how such requirements could affect the marketing of and trade in such products.

10. Background

Organic food is becoming increasingly popular in many countries. To protect consumers against deception and fraud, various governments and industry groups have promulgated regulations and established organic food labeling standards and organic certification systems. However, the range of standards for organic food and the many labels can be confusing for most consumers and producers who would like to export their products to various countries. Currently there are hundreds of private organic standards worldwide; and more than 60 governments have also codified their standards in national regulations. At the international level, the FAO/WHO Codex Alimentarius Commission (the intergovernmental body that sets standards for all food) has produced the International Guidelines for Production, Processing, Labeling and Marketing of Organically Produced Foods. These guidelines have been agreed upon by all member states of the Codex Alimentarius Commission.

The private sector's equivalent to the Codex Alimentarius guidelines is the International Basic Standards for Organic Production and Processing, created by the International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements (IFOAM). Codex Alimentarius and IFOAM guidelines include accepted management principles for the production of plants, livestock, bees, and their products; and for handling, storing, processing, packaging, and transporting products. They also list substances permitted in the production and processing of organic food. These guidelines are regularly reviewed, particularly the criteria for permitted substances and the process by which inspection is carried out and certification held. However, the Codex Alimentarius and IFOAM guidelines are minimum standards, intended to guide governments and private certification bodies in setting their own standards. Governments often develop national organic agriculture standards that are more detailed as they respond to specific national needs. Certification bodies may produce standards that are more stringent than the regulations in force, usually in response to specific consumer demand.

Considering the maze of organic standards, it is essential for organic food producers and potential exporters to understand and be aware of the various requirements for labeling their products as organic. It is also important for them to understand the emerging trends and requirements for the packaging, handling and transporting of organic food products.

11. Scope and Methodology

Scope:

The tentative topics to be covered in this workshop include:

- Trends in production and trade of organic food products;
- Emerging demand and opportunities for export of certain organic food products;
- Major challenges in marketing organic food products in overseas markets;
- Overview of the rules and standards for the labeling and packaging of organic products in selected major markets (Canada, PR China, EU, Japan, USA);
- Procedure for organic certification and labeling of organic products; and
- Emerging trends in the packaging of organic products.

Methodology:

The workshop will consist of resource paper presentations, country paper presentations, knowledge-sharing sessions, site visits to relevant companies, and development of agendas for in-country and regional-level follow-up activities.

12. Qualifications of Participants

The participants are expected to possess the following qualifications:

- (a) Age: Preferably between 30 and 50 years.
- (b) Education: University degree or equivalent qualification from a recognized institution.
- (c) Present Position: Officials of relevant government agencies involved in the promotion and/or regulation of organic food products; officials of organic producers' associations, and managers of agribusiness enterprises involved in the promotion and management of organic food enterprises.
- (d) Experience: At least two years of experience in the subject area.
- (e) Language Proficiency: All proceedings of the workshop are conducted in English, and participants will be required to make oral presentations and written assignments. 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 training course 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.
- (h) After the Project: All participants must 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.

13. Financial Arrangements

a) To be borne by the APO:

- i) All assignment 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 Manila. As far as practicable, all participants should purchase discounted 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. 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) *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 Philippines. This insurance requirement is **in addition** to existing government insurance coverage in some member countries. In case 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(s) will be responsible for any eventuality arising from accident or illness.

- ii) All expenses related to visa fees and airport taxes.
- iii) 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 (Philippines)

- i) Per diem allowances and hotel accommodation for up to six days for all overseas participants.
- ii) All other 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, member countries sometimes send their candidates' biodata forms and medical certificates by fax to the APO Secretariat. While this action is very much appreciated, member countries 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) Member countries are requested to abide by the *nomination deadline of 15 May 2013*. 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) Member countries 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 project, they should be requested to inform the APO promptly of their inability to participate and the reason for last-minute withdrawal through the APO Liaison Officer/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 training course.

15. Country Paper Presentations

Participants officially accepted by the APO are required to prepare country presentations related to the subject of this workshop prior to departure for the project. The guidelines for the presentations will be forwarded to the selected participants.

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


Ryuichiro Yamazaki
Secretary-General