



CHOLA ORGANIC CERTIFICATIONS PVT LTD

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What is meant by organic product?

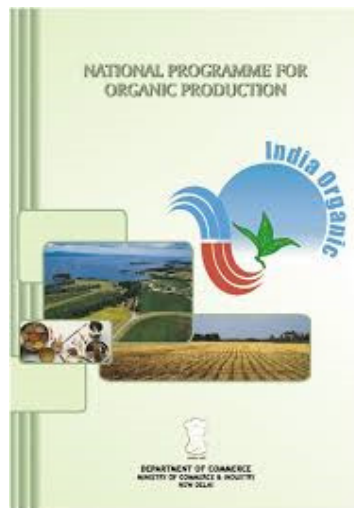
Organic products are produced with natural farming methods without using chemicals inputs, GMO (Genetically Modified Organism) etc. Organic crop production is a system of agricultural production which takes care of soil health, human and animal health and the health of our environment (Soil, water, and air). Organic products are in demand for their chemical residue-free, nutritious, and tasty food.

Are there guidelines for such system of organic agricultural production in India?

Yes. Government of India, through APEDA (Agricultural Produce Export Development Authority) is implementing the NPOP (National Programme for Organic Production). The National Standards for Organic Production is mentioned in this programme. This can be downloaded from the website of APEDA. (www.apeda.gov.in)

How is the implementation of organic farming, processing, and trading monitored in India?

Government of India has authorized APEDA to select and accredit competent organic certification agencies to inspect and certify organic farm production, processing, and trading activities in this country.



How this organic certification helps farmers?

Government of India has notified that any product produced organically as per NPOP standards, can be exported only when they are certified by an accredited certification body. All the importers in the importing countries demand only certified products along with a transaction certificate from the certifier with the details of various compliances. In this way, it is an important procedure for exporters.

Apart from the demand from importing countries, the bulk handling traders of organic goods in India also demand NPOP organic certificate to aggregate the organic goods and export. Many organized retail chains and processors in India also require NPOP organic certificate for assuring their customers about the organic quality.



How much time it takes to get organic certificate in the first time?

For perennial crops like orchards, plantations, and other tree crops, it requires 3 years of conversion period. The conversion is for the land to convert it to organic land from the current conventional practice. During the conversion period, the organic principles like crop rotation, soil biodiversity improvement and various other agronomic techniques are employed to improve soil fertility level. The crops that yield after the 3 year-conversion period will be given the organic certificate.

Till then, the farm or production unit must be annually inspected and certified as “In-conversion to organic- First-year”, “In-conversion to Organic –2nd year” and “in-conversion to organic -3rd year”. The fourth-year scope certificate is the valid Organic certificate for export and other trading operations.

For annual crops like cereals, vegetables etc., the conversion period is 2 years. The third-year crop can be certified organic. To maintain organic status, the organic production unit must continue to undergo inspection and certification by an accredited organic certification body.

How can an organic production unit obtain organic certification?

APEDA in their website, has published the list of accredited certification bodies in India. The producer can select a certification body and take their assistance to get their certificate by paying the required fee and furnishing the documents that are needed for certification.

If a small producer with limited resources wish to produce organic produce and sell it in the local markets with authentic organic seal, what is the procedure?

To help small land holders to get organic certificate, the Department of Agriculture, Government of India has introduced PGS (Participatory Guarantee System). More than 5 farmers can join as a group in a village and follow the same NPOP procedures and cultivate the organic crops. The farmers themselves take an oath that they will strictly follow the organic production procedures. The production system will be inspected by other farmers in the group. Such self-certification method helps small scale land holders to sell their products in the local market with better premium and assurance. These groups are supervised by the regional councils, department of agriculture officials etc.

What is the main difference between the NPOP certification by accredited certification agencies and the PGS certification?

Both systems follow the same standards. The inspection in the case of NPOP certification is done by the third party, a certification body. In the PGS system, the inspection carried out by fellow members in the group along with other stake holders near their village. For more information please see:



For NPOP certification: www.apeda.gov.in



For PGS certification: www.pgsindia-ncof.gov.in