

Small holder Group Certification Procedures

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Definition of an ICS

IFOAM Definition:

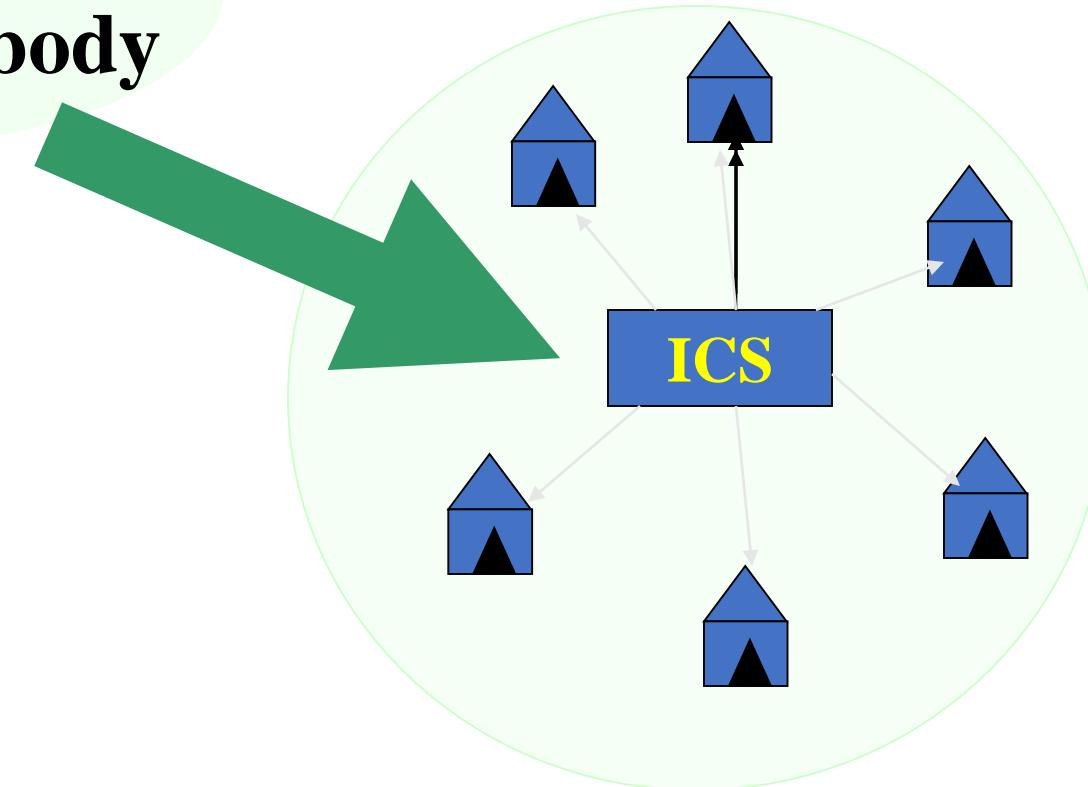
An internal control system (ICS) is a documented quality assurance system that allows the external certification body to delegate the annual inspection of individual group members to an identified body/unit within the certified operator.

Small Holder group certification:

A group of homogenous farmers, practicing organic agriculture come under one umbrella to form a small holder group, for the reason of getting organic certification, developing ICS for meeting the requirements of certification

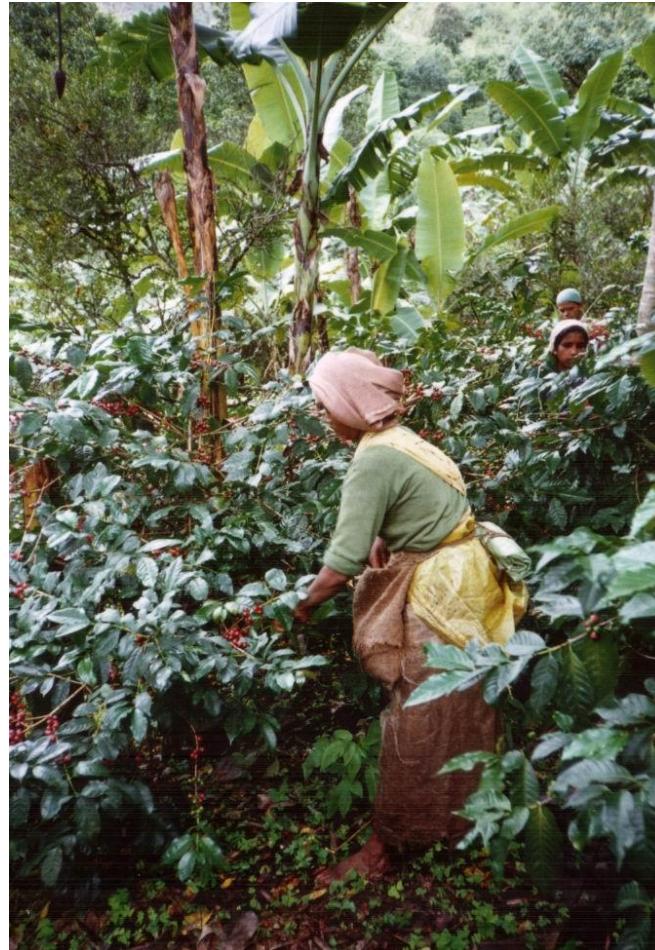
ICS – Certification Concept

External inspection and certification body

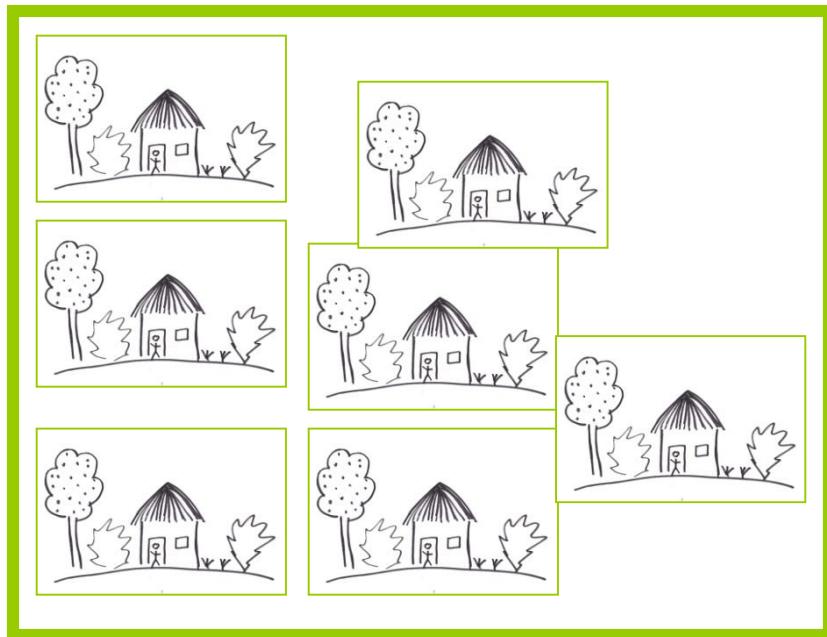


Principles of Smallholder Group Certification

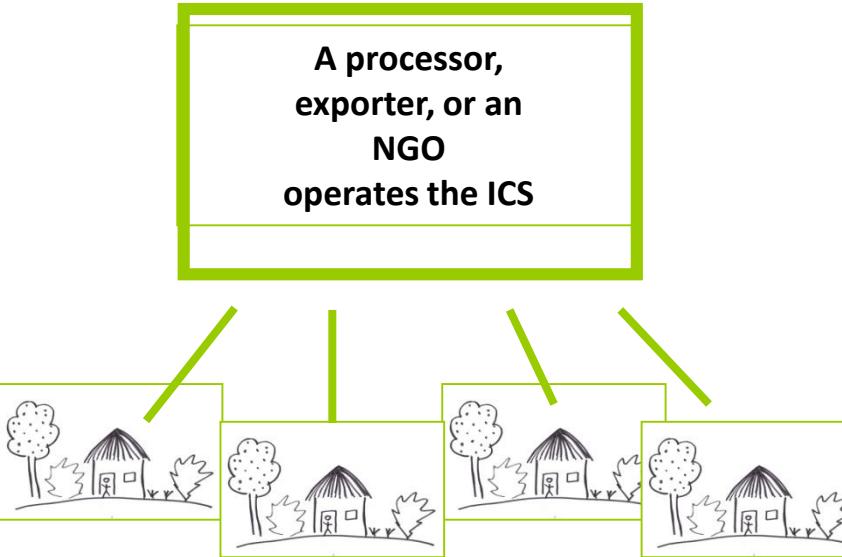
- A central body within the farmers group ensures the compliance of all smallholder farmers with an organic standard.
- The Group has a formal internal control system (ICS).
- One certification for the group (not for individual farmers).



Basic Types of Smallholder Projects



A cooperative
or a farmers association
operates the ICS



Contract Production

Why ICS ?

- A practical and cost effective inspection scheme is achieved.
- Enable the control body to guarantee effective, appropriate checks on the production, processing and marketing of organic products.
- Better communication and cooperation within and to outside the group.
- Effective quality management system can be in place.
- Effective capacity development through organized trainings.
- Better marketing opportunities for organic products

Main requirements for forming a Small holders group (Criteria for setting up an ICS)

- The group has to be large enough to make ICS reliable and feasible.
- Certain homogeneity of members (location, production, marketing).
- Needs to have defined and documented structure.
- Large farmers should not hold > 50% of the total are of the group
- Individual farmers with > 4 Ha. must be inspected by Ext. Cert. Body.
- Organization should have enough resources (staff, infrastructure etc).
- The group shall have coordinated marketing in order to enable product flow.

Minimum Requirements of an ICS

1. Internal regulation/manual
2. Contractual relationships
3. ICS Personnel
4. Training to ICS staff and farmers
5. Internal inspections and reviews
6. Documentation of farm activity in Farm Diary

What is a Smallholder?



To be considered a “smallholder” for smallholder group certification, the following should be fulfilled:

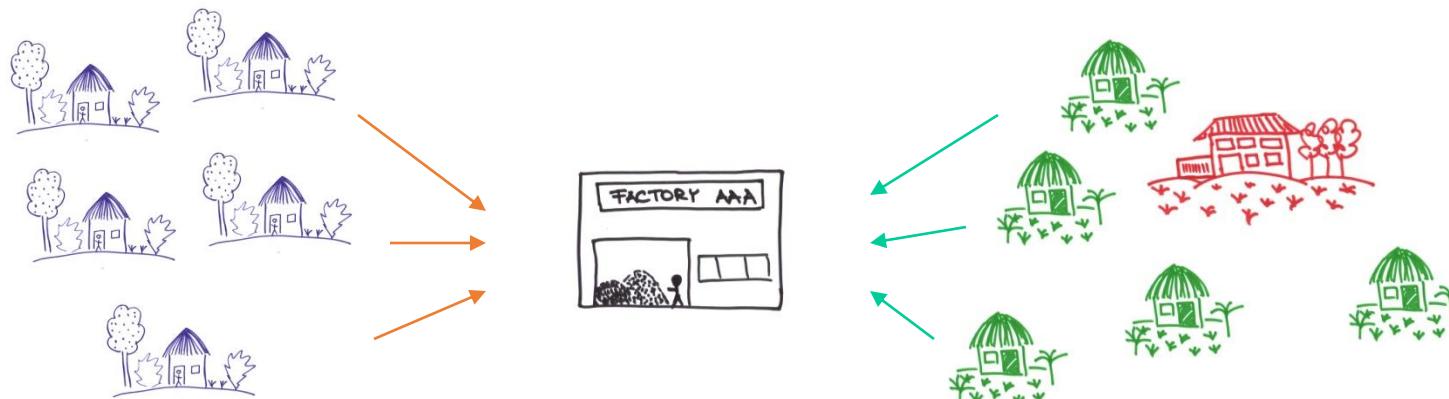
- Farmers having 4Ha and below
- Farm units managed mainly by family labor
- Low-tech production system
- Limited capacity to market on his/her own
- Limited capacity for storage/processing

Other Requirements for Group Certification

Within the group there is homogeneity of members in

- geographical location
- production system
- size of holding

Common marketing system for the group



Group Certification Options for bigger Farms



Groups NOT qualified as smallholder group

- can still be certified as an organized group of growers
- can have assistance in documentation, joint marketing
- must have common marketing system
- **each member farm has to be inspected by the certification body and has to keep its own documentation**

Farms (bigger than “smallholders”) are certified as part of a smallholder group

- Each farm is inspected annually by both the ICS and the certification body.
- Each farm has to keep most farm documentation for itself
- The total organic area of the big farmers should not be more than 50 % of the total organic area of the group.



Registration of the Group (ICS)

- Once the group is formed, it should be registered with the registrar of societies to have a legal status and get a PAN card.
- Once the group finalize the farmers' list, it should register itself with an accredited certification body (CB) by agreeing to pay the necessary certification fees.
- The CB will collect basic details of the group, PAN No. and Society Registration copy and register the ICS on TRACENET of APEDA. The registration certificate and pass-word to use Tracenet will be provided by the CB to the ICS.
- Next, the group should take the GPS co-ordinates of the organic fields of the farmers in the group and enter in Growers List.
- Farmer details like name, village, area, crop (annual/ perennial, variety etc.) GPS etc. should be entered in the tracenet by the ICS group.

ICS Quality Manual

❖ Distribution and Updating *

Overview of project site

❖ Brief description of structure and activities*

Farming system and Practice

Buying, handling and export

❖ Risk Management*

Basic Risk Assessment

Critical control points and continuous management

❖ Internal Organic Standard

Registration of new farmers and contract

Internal Inspection

Yield estimates

❖ Farm control and Approval Procedures

Internal Approval procedures with non compliances and sanctions

ICS documentations

❖ Organization and ICS Personnel *

❖ Training of ICS personnel and Farmers *

❖ Buying, Handling, Processing and Export (Procedures and Personnel) *

Distribution and Update Management of ICS Manual

- All relevant parts of the ICS manual and procedures must be made available in appropriate form to all persons responsible for implementing the respective requirements or procedure.
- Farmers should have access to the manual when required
- Associated organizations/operators must have access to the ICS manual.

Improving and Updating of the ICS manual

- The ICS manual shall reflect the reality of the ICS and current requirements of the certification standard and therefore should be reviewed on a regular basis as updated when necessary.
- Changes are communicated to all staff concerned

Brief description of Structure and Activities of the Organic Project

- The internal ICS manual contains a basic description of the organic project site.
- A general overview on the farming system and agricultural practices of participating farmers is needed
- There must be a description of all the steps that take place from harvest until the final sale of the product to another entity, including indication of whose responsibility the product is under at each step.

Risk Assessment and Risk Management

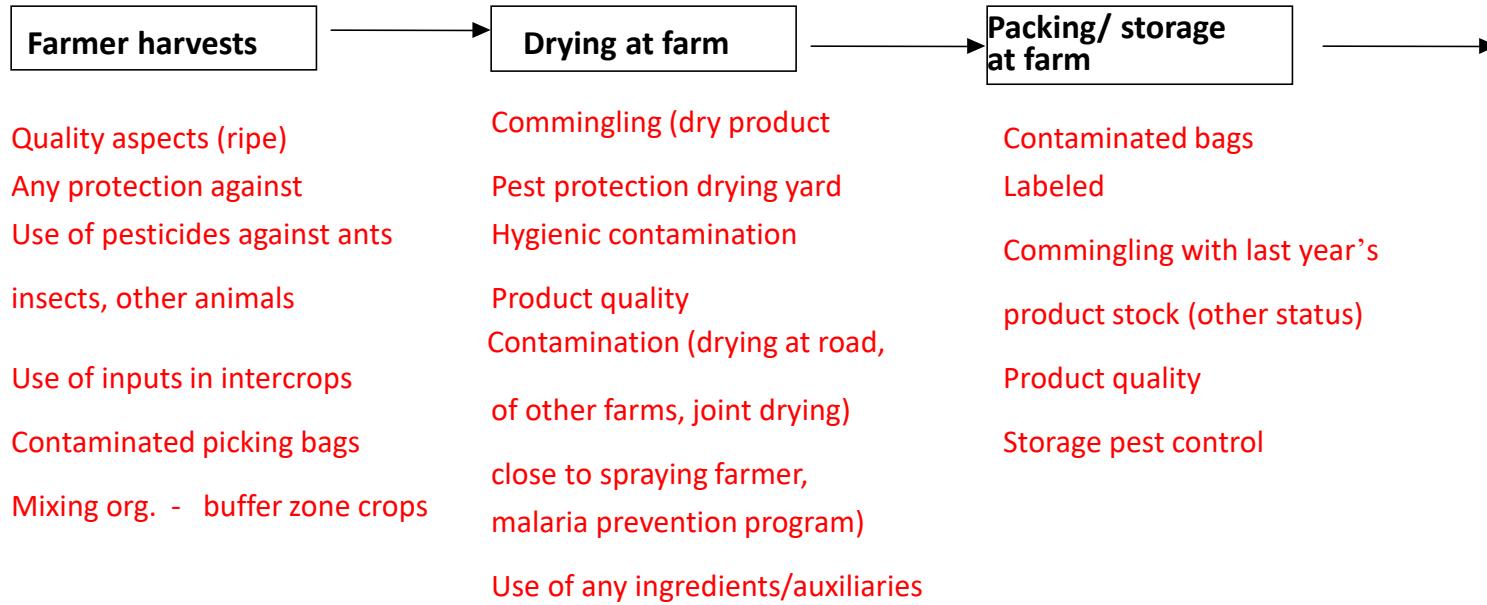
- Risks that may jeopardize organic quality must be known and taken into account in all internal procedures.
- Therefore, the ICS must do an initial risk assessment. All necessary measures must be taken by the ICS to minimize risks.
- The external inspector has to do an overall risk assessment to determine the minimum re-inspection rate and to be aware of critical control points.



Risk Management

- A detailed initial risk assessment must be completed once preferably at the beginning of certification
(first year of certification or when informed about this requirement by certifier)
- The risk assessment has to identify risks on the farm level as well as during buying, processing or (export) transporting, as far as the product is under responsibility of the ICS operator.
- The ICS takes all measures to minimize the identified relevant risks.
- There should be continuous monitoring of the critical control points

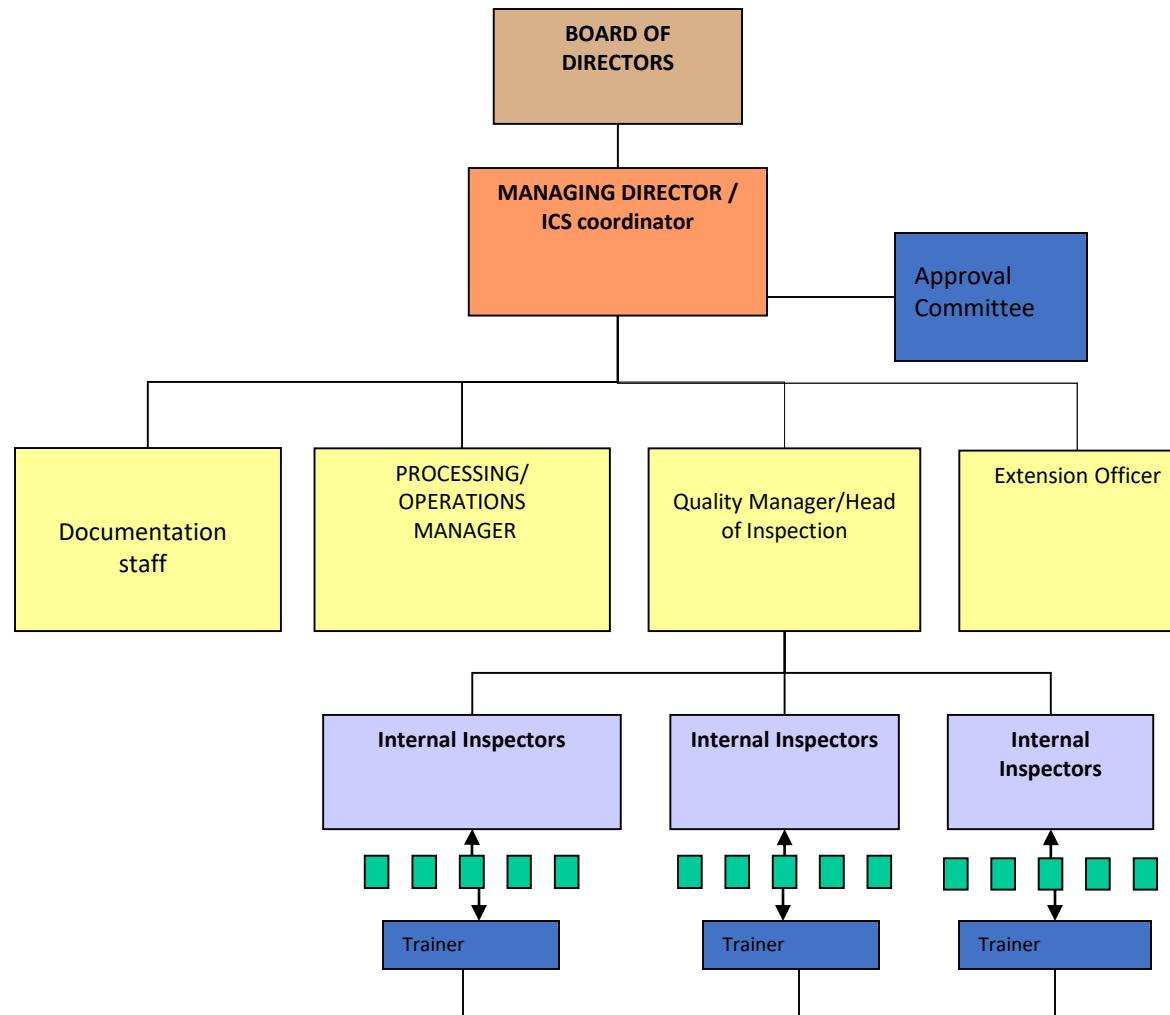
Risk Assessment by the ICS Operator



Exercise

Organization and ICS Personnel

➤ An organizational chart (or similar) must be available



- One person is responsible for the overall ICS implementation but may delegate responsibilities so that, for each ICS procedure or task, one person is in charge.
- All personnel must be qualified and aware of their responsibilities
- Conflicts of interest must be avoided.

➤ **ICS Manager.**

- ✓ coordinating the Internal Control System,
- ✓ organizing the internal inspections,
- ✓ coordinating between field staff and approval staff,
- ✓ coordinating the external inspection,
- ✓ contact person for the inspection body.

ICS manager.....Contd.

- ✓ familiar with agriculture, ecological problems of the area
- ✓ no conflict of interest
- ✓ make communication with ext. cert. body
- ✓ must have received training in organic agriculture
- ✓ manage and instruct inspection staff to guarantee 100% of members are inspected at least once a year
- ✓ organise training for internal inspectors
- ✓ document all inspection activities
- ✓ participate in decision-making process of approval committee
- ✓ write a summary report of all internal inspection reports
- ✓ co-ordinate external inspection

➤ **sufficient number of qualified internal inspectors.**

- ✓ must be sufficiently qualified to perform a thorough and objective internal inspection.
- ✓ There must be a CV, a contract (including his/her duties), and a conflict of interest declaration available for each internal inspector.
- ✓ For every 50 farmers, one internal inspector is required
 - ✓ familiar with agriculture, ecological problems of the area
 - ✓ no conflict of interest with farmers
 - ✓ familiar with internal regulations
 - ✓ received training in organic agriculture and organic inspections according to respective organic standards
 - ✓ visits and inspects registered members according to the inspection schedule and indications of ICS manager.
 - ✓ submits inspection reports to ICS Manager

➤ **There has to be a qualified person (“Organic Approval Manager”) or certification committee who is assigned to take the internal approval decisions.**

- ✓ Approval personnel must be qualified and able to take objective approval decisions.
- ✓ There has to be a CV, a signed declaration of conflicts of interest, a written contract with list of responsibilities available for all approval personnel.

➤ **Field Officer, Extension staff**

- ✓ Training/Extension work for farmers in organic Agriculture
- ✓ Advice/Assistance on production/product quality
- ✓ Keep update farm documentation
- ✓ Report to ICS on major deviations

➤ **Conflict of Interest**

- ✓ personnel must not have conflicts of interest that might hinder work.
- ✓ The Internal Inspector is not allowed to inspect his/her own fields or the fields of his/her immediate neighbors, friends or family.
- ✓ All possible conflicts of interests have to be declared in a written statement.
- ✓ alternative solutions must be found

Training

- **Training of ICS personnel**
- ICS personnel must be continuously trained in order to be aware of organic farming practices, certification requirements and important internal procedures
 - ✓ **Each internal inspector needs to receive at least one training per. year by a competent person.**
 - ✓ **The date of participation and content of the training of all ICS staff needs to be documented in the staff files.**

Farmers Training

- **continuous training of farmers is a very important part of an organic project and is in the responsibility of the ICS operator.**
- **Each farmer needs to receive at least one initial advisory visit by the extension service or in an organized training.**
- **The participation and content of the training needs to be documented.**



Buying, Handling, Processing, Export

Buying procedures

To ensure the integrity of the organic product at the crucial interface of farmer – buyer, the buying procedures need to include the following minimum requirements:

- ✓ The organic status of the delivering farmer is checked.
- ✓ The supplied amount harvested is compared with the estimated yield. In case of doubt, the produce is kept apart until clarification by the organic ICS Coordinator.
- ✓ Deliveries are registered in the buying record and farmer is issued a receipt (stating delivered quantities).
- ✓ All documents have to indicate the organic quality (“organic” or “conversion”).
- ✓ Labeling of the bags as organic/conversion.

Storage and Handling Procedures

During all handling of organic produce the organic quality of the product and compliance with respective documentary requirements of the applicable organic standard must be ensured.

Therefore buying procedures need to include the following minimum requirements:

- ✓ **identification of the product in all steps according to the quality (organic, in transition) during all stages of product flow**
- ✓ **strict separation according to quality (organic, in conversion, non-organic) no prohibited methods (fumigation of containers, irradiation/ionization, etc.)**
- ✓ **Organic warehouse (part) must be labeled as “organic”**
- ✓ **Facility pest management according to standard**

Organic Processing at <Processor name>

Central Processing Units are always subject to full external inspection by the certification body.

1. Ingredients and Processing aids must be defined

- ✓ all agricultural ingredients must be according to the organic Standard
- ✓ only allowed non-agricultural ingredients and processing aids

2. Separation and identification

- ✓ Separation and identification according to quality (organic, in transition, non-organic) during all stages of product flow
- ✓ All processing steps are duly documented

- Export
- Buying, Handling and Processing Personnel
 - Buying Personnel
 - ✓ There are buying officers in charge of ensuring correct buying of organic produce from the farmers.
 - ✓ Buying officers have to sign a contract with ICS operator with a list of responsibilities.
 - Warehouse manager
 - Processing Manger

What is an ‘Internal Organic Standard’?

- ❖ is the reference standard for the internal control.



- Describes the relevant organic farm production requirements
- Is a local interpretation of the applicable organic standards ,What do our members need to do to be organic farms?“
- Is written in simple, practical language in order to be understood by farmers and ICS staff

Internal Organic Standard

- ❖ Scope of Certification
- ✓ All organic regulations or standards according to which certification is requested need to be listed in the internal standard or the internal ICS manual.



- The internal organic standard must include the farm production requirements of the relevant external organic regulations/standards as far as these requirements are important and relevant for the organic activities. It shall also include the necessary production rules to ensure truly sustainable and organic farming.
- Is written in simple, practical language in order to be understood
- It must be presented in an adequate form, according to the knowledge of the ICS staff.
- The requirements of the internal standard (and practical implications for the farmer) must be communicated clearly to all farmers in local language.



The Internal Organic Standard



- Sometimes the rules of production are included in the contract. Some parts may even be somewhere else in the ICS manual → important is that the requirements are defined, not in which document.
- The term „internal regulation“ (ICS Manual) includes the organic production rules (= internal organic standard) but also some procedures, e.g. on registration.
- In some cases also the “external” standard can be accepted, if all requirements of the standard are effectively implemented in the ICS and are well known. Usually not suitable.

Minimum Content of the Internal Organic Standard



The ‘Internal Organic Standard’ regulates the following aspects:



- Organic and non-organic farm units
- Soil management & fertilization (incl. inputs)
- Plant protection (incl. inputs)
- Seeds and planting stock
- Prevention of drift (buffers, etc.) and contamination
- Livestock husbandry
- Post-harvest treatments/processing on the farm
- Conversion period

- Are at least all minimum requirements of applicable standards (your certifier’s interpretation) included, at least as far as relevant?

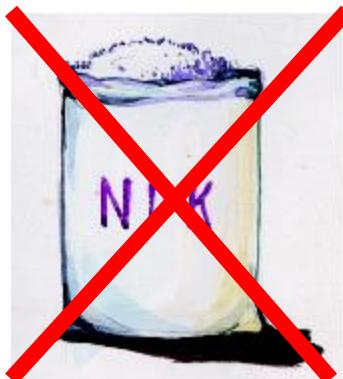
Principles of Organic Production to be Included in the Internal Organic Standard (1)



NOTE: highly dependent on the applied standard & the certifier's interpretation of the standard

Organic and Non-organic Production Unit

- The farm has to convert all crops & areas to organic farming OR ensure a clear separation of organic and non-organic fields.
- All crops on the organic field must be managed organically.
- The same organic crops may not be also produced in non-organic quality.
- Separation of input storage, prevent any contamination of organic fields.



Sustainable Soil Management

- crop rotation, green manure, cover crops, mulching
- use of compost (plant residues, livestock manure)
- restricted use mineral fertilizers (list in standard)
- no chemical fertilizer (e.g., no urea)

Principles of Organic Production to be Included in the Internal Organic Standard (2)

Plant Protection and Weed Management

- Control of pests, diseases, weeds by appropriate cultivation measures (incl. crop rotation), mechanical measures, protection/propagation of natural enemies
- Restricted use of organic pesticides (list in standard), no chemical pesticides
- No chemical herbicides, weed control by slashing/hoeing



Organic Seeds or Planting Stock

- Organic seeds/planting stock; conventional material only under certain conditions
- No GMO



Animal Husbandry (if livestock not certified)

- Animal welfare
- Organic fodder where possible, no preventive medication, no contamination of organic fields

Harvest and Post-Harvest Procedures

- Separation
- No contamination

Understanding the Organic Requirements



- ✓ All ICS staff is trained, knowledgeable, & competent in implementation of internal standard and internal approval requirements and should be familiar with the overall standard requirements of the external certification standard



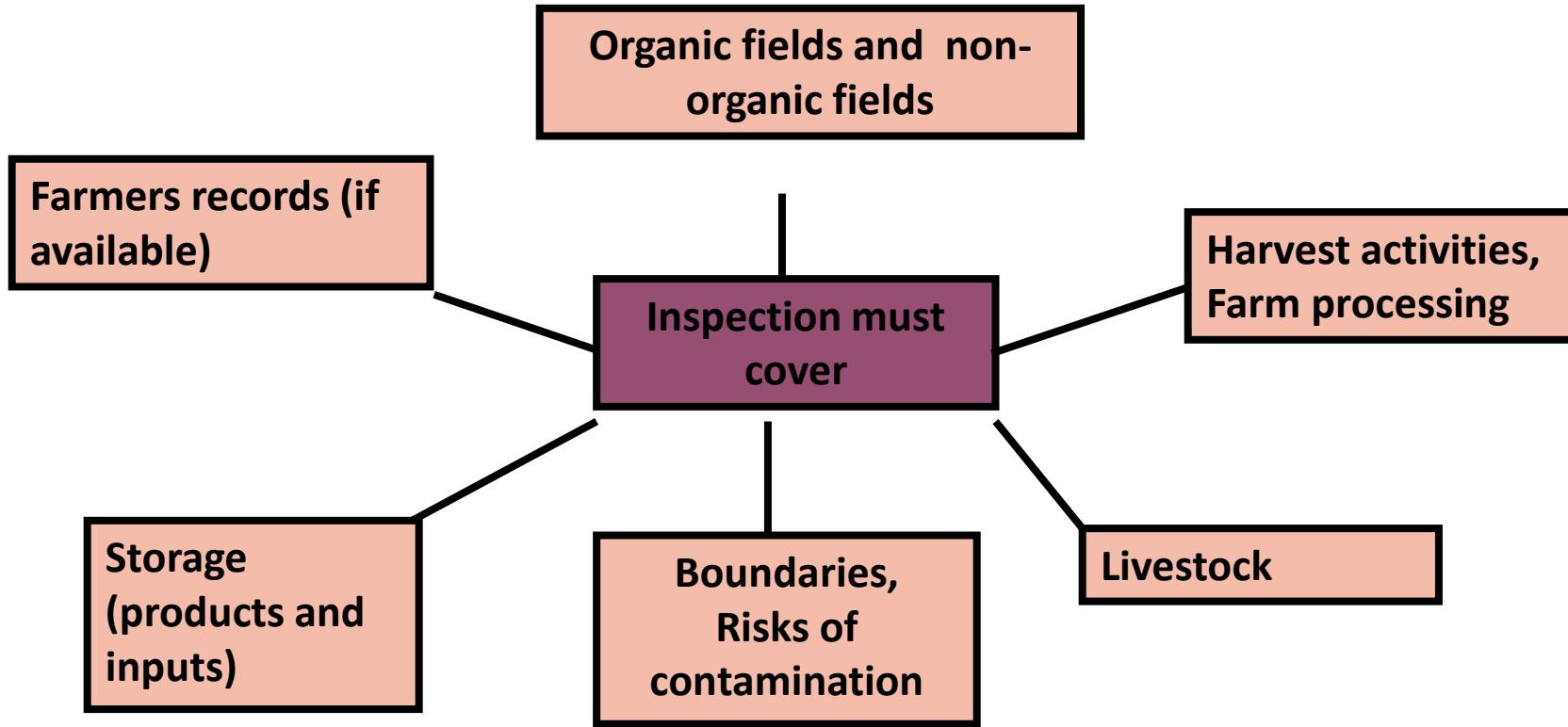
Exercise

Internal Inspection

Each registered farmer is inspected by the internal control at least twice in a year. 100% of the farms are inspected and results documented.



What has to be Checked in the Internal Inspection?



The internal inspection always includes a physical field visit, an interview of the farmer (or representative)

Critical Control Points of Internal Inspections



Have all crops that grow on the organic fields been checked?

- e.g., intercropping conventional cardamom in the organic pepper plot
- is production of all crops on the organic plot(s) checked?
- including seeds of intercrops in organic fields

Are all fields that are managed by the farmer registered?

- no parallel production
- overall activities of farmer must be known
- be aware of inputs for conventional fields (where stored???)
- usually a spot check of conventional fields is required (if they are close, they shall be checked)

Effectiveness of the Internal Inspections

Internal inspections are thorough; all non-compliances with the internal (and external) standard have been duly identified.

Appropriate sanctions are communicated to the farmer. ICS has followed up.

The inspection report is completed and signed by the inspector (A) and by the farmer (B).

Noncompliances found by extension, etc. (not during internal inspection) are also documented.



The internal inspectors are qualified for a thorough and objective inspection. Each inspector receives at least one training per year



- Qualification of inspectors can be checked during farm re-inspections, witness audits, and through interviews
- Can they really do thorough inspections? (e.g., they may be too young to ask elders critical questions)
- Good ideas for effective inspectors trainings may include accompanied inspections and on farm-training in inspection methods
- Participation and content of training must be documented

Yields

There is a system to estimate yields before beginning harvest

- by field officers and/or
- during internal inspection, etc.

Yield estimates are reasonably accurate.

Yield estimates are ready before harvest



Conflicts of Interest



The objectivity of decisions made by the ICS may not be jeopardized by conflicts of interest

- ICS needs conflicts of interest declarations for inspectors & approval staff.
- Conflicts of interest must be avoided. A person may not inspect/approve his/her own farm, nor the farms of neighbors, close friends, or family
- If there have been potential conflicts of interest – check that they have not resulted in unfair assessment or neglect of important facts



An inspector cannot inspect his close friends or family

Difference between Inspection and Extension?

- Internal inspection checks
- compliance with ALL aspects of the internal organic standard
 - Covers more than an average extension visit with focus on advice and documentation
- Internal inspection of each farmer is substituted for external inspection; thus it is a formal and documented complete check of the whole farm and its activities by a neutral person

Inspectio



Id Advice



- Field extension service (farm advice) is an important aspect of an organic project and often field extensionists are at the same time internal inspectors.
- However, field extensionists tend to be very close to the farmers; they often live in the same village and therefore are often not “neutral” enough for the actual inspection.
- Many ICS Operators solve this problem by exchanging field officers (advisors) among project regions for internal inspections.
- However, in certain cases it can also be accepted that one person does both the field extension and the internal inspection, but, at minimum, they should be clearly separate events. This is only possible if the advisor is “distant” enough from farmers to ensure an impartial inspection.
- Informing the farmers of the standard requirements and the functioning is not considered consultancy. An internal inspection may also include some advice.

Internal Inspections

- Every farmer registered in ICS has to be inspected atleast twice before external inspection of CB
- Ensure all farmers are complying with organic standards
- Farmers violating the internal regulations: to be removed from the programme
- The products of those farmers are separated and not mixed with CO products
- The internal inspections and results are to be properly documented
- There should be strict following of sanction catalogue and imposition of sanctions should be done impartially

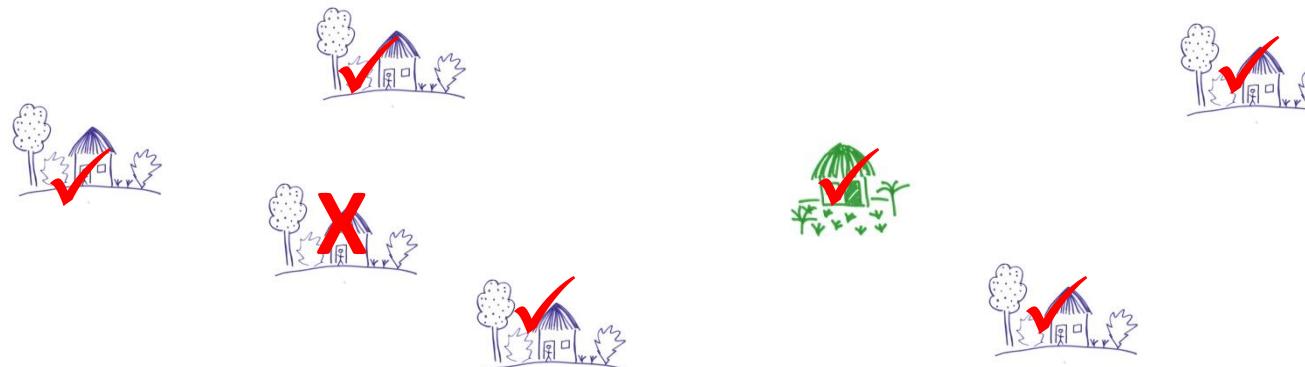
- **The organization must have procedures to approve or reject farmers**
- E.g., the ICS Coordinator screens all reports and, if found ok, signs the report and updates the information in the farmers list.
- All internal farm checklists are screened by the internal approval staff with special focus on critical/difficult cases. The assessment of the internal inspector is checked, the (internal) certification status determined, and conditions set (if necessary).



➤ There has to be a qualified person (“Organic Approval Manager”) or certification committee who is assigned to take the internal approval decisions.

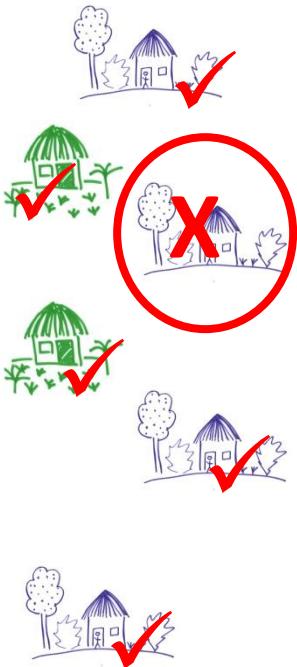


- ✓ Approval personnel must be qualified and able to take objective approval decisions.
- ✓ There has to be a CV, a signed declaration of conflicts of interest, a written contract with list of responsibilities available for all approval personnel.



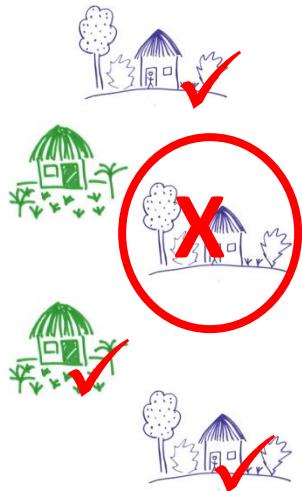
Sanction Procedures

If minor, medium, or major non-compliances have been identified, appropriate measures have been taken to correct them



- There should be a sanction catalogue in place With list of identified non compliances and type of sanctions. It needs to be defined what happens in case of non-compliances (list of sanctions) and how the sanction measures are implemented.
- all relevant staff should be informed
- The sanctions should be documented (list of sanctioned farmers, documentation of identified non-conformities in files).
- Farmers that have used prohibited inputs in their organic crop must undergo again the full conversion period (if they remain in the organic project).
- If any contaminated product that has already been sold as organic, it must have been de-certified, and the ICS must have followed up and taken appropriate measures

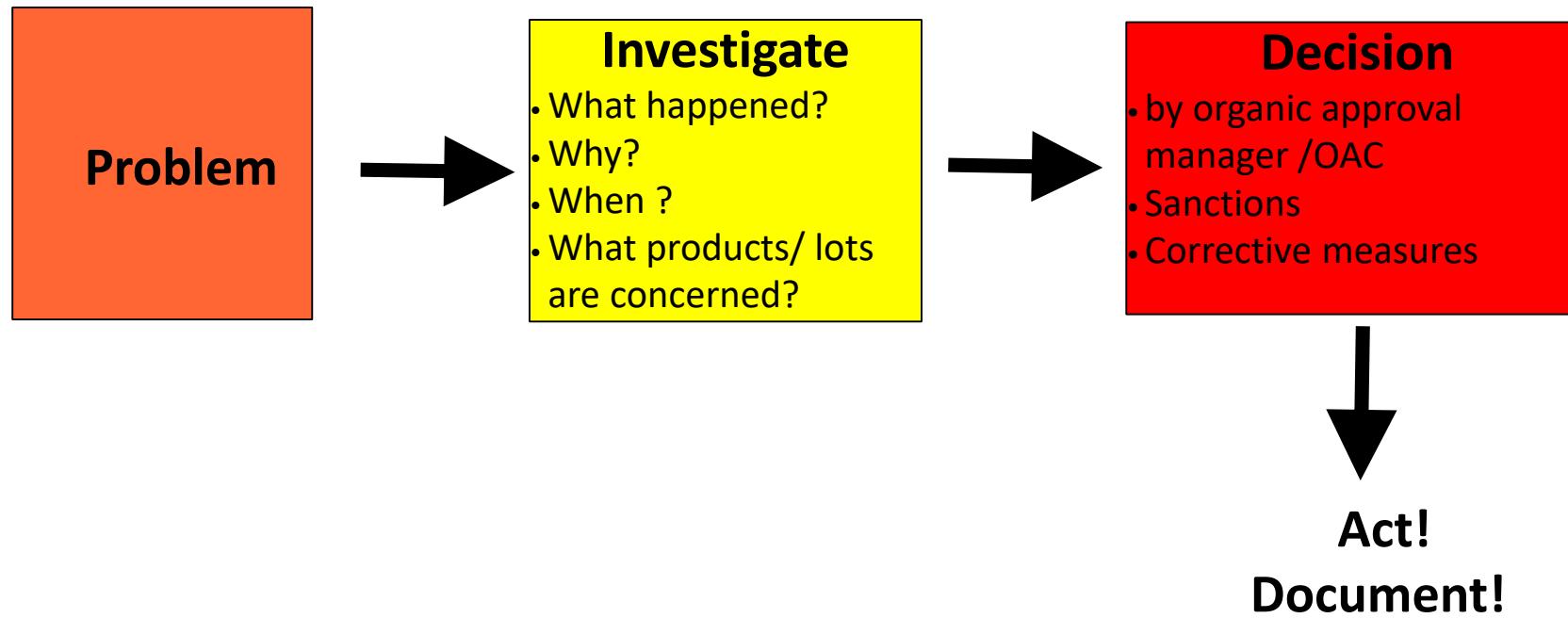




From second certification onwards, the farmers lists reflect at least the internal approval status for each farmers: OK, passive, sanctioned, etc. (A) or states even the exact conversion status: org. / conversion 1/ conversion 2 etc. (B)



What Should Be Done if There Are Problems?



Note: Serious problems should always be reported immediately to the ICS Coordinator

Examples of Types of Sanction

Sanction

- Written condition
- Penalty
ICS will fine farmers Rs. 10
- Suspension for a fixed period until the farmer takes corrective actions requested (remains certified)
- Decertification of farmers --> Renewed conversion period of 36 months
- Farmer banned from ICS membership either permanently or for a set time.

Situation when sanction applies

- Minor deficiencies in record keeping, weak farm management. Minor violations of the standards or regulations
- Repeated written condition for similar problem
Not responding to conditions
Major deficiencies in record keeping
- Repeated minor violations
Clear violation of the standards but not threatening the organic integrity of the product.
- Clear violation of the standards threatening the organic integrity of the product.
- Obvious fraud, intentional obstruction of the inspection process, refusal to respond to written requests

Examples of Non-compliances & Sanctions

| Example of Noncompliance | Example of Sanction / Reaction |
|---|--------------------------------|
| Farmer has sprayed his/her organic crops | |
| Farmer has sprayed home consumption crops intercropped with organic crop | |
| Farmer has sprayed home consumption garden far away from organic garden but not allowed per internal regulation | |
| Farmer has neglected his farm and has not taken any soil improvement measures | |
| De-certified coffee has been mixed with organic coffee of fellow farmers in village | |
| Farmer sells double his estimated harvest | |
| Buying officer has bought from uncertified farmers | |

Examples of Non-compliances & Sanctions

| Example Non-compliance | Example Sanction / Reaction |
|--|---|
| Farmer has sprayed his/her organic crops | <p>Farmer de-certified for 3 years (new conversion).</p> <p>Possibly expelled from organic program.</p> <p>Check whether products already bought.</p> |
| Farmer has sprayed home consumption crops intercropped with organic crop | <p>Farmer de-certified for 3 years (new conversion).</p> <p>Possibly expelled from organic program.</p> <p>Check whether products are already bought.</p> |
| Farmer has sprayed home consumption garden far away from organic garden but not allowed per internal regulation | <p>Farmer suspended as punishment for 1 yr.</p> <p>Sprayed plot recorded on map as conventional.</p> <p>Additional training for farmer.</p> |
| Farmer has neglected his farm and has not taken any soil improvement measures | <p>Written/oral condition to farmer.</p> <p>Additional training.</p> <p>If repeatedly: discuss whether shall remain member.</p> |
| De-certified coffee has been mixed with organic coffee of fellow farmers in village | <p>Find out which lots are “contaminated”; mark these lots as conventional.</p> |
| Farmer sells double his estimated harvest | <p>Send field officer to investigate in the fields.</p> <p>If farmer has sold products of somebody else – expel from organic program.</p> |
| Buying officer has bought from not certified farmers | <p>Find where the conventional product is now, downgrade product to conventional. If already sold, inform certifier.</p> <p>Train buying officer (or dismiss him if fraud).</p> |

Consequences and Necessary Measures after Detection of Farmer's Use of Prohibited Inputs



The fields of the farmer must once again undergo the full conversion period

Check whether the farmer has already delivered produce

Check whether his produce has been commingled with other organic produce



Document the sanction in the farm file, farmers list (take farmer on sanctioned list), and purchase list

Assure that the farmer remains sanctioned for the next 3 years

If produce has been commingled, the certifier needs to be notified immediately and the commingled produce kept separate until further instructed.

Inform the field officer and purchase staff that purchasing from this producer is not allowed during the period of sanction

Minimum Farm Documentation



The following documentation is needed for each farmer. The documentation is usually kept in farm files:

- Formal commitment of growers to fulfill the internal standard (written contract)
- Basic Farm Data Form / Farm Entrance Form with field history
- Updated production information
- Maps (if required for single farmer)
- Notes on important training or advice given to the farmer by field officer / other important notes from field officers
- Annual 'Farm Inspection Checklist'

Summary of the Internal Control



The result of the internal control needs to be resumed as follows:

- **Farmers List with information on**
 - Name and code of the farmer
 - Total area and area under organic crop
 - Date of registration and date of last use of forbidden products
 - Date of internal inspection and result
 - Name of internal inspector
- **List of sanctioned farmers with reason and duration of the sanction**



Farmers List and List of Sanctioned Farmers

| Organisation AAA Farmers List 2003/2004 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|--------------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------|------------------------------------|---------------------------------|-------------------|---------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------|--|--------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Farmer's Code | Name and surname of the farmer | Location (address) | Entrance date to organic programme | date of last use of agrochemicals | Total surface of the farm (ha) | surface of the organic coffee area | surface conventional crops (ha) | Harvest last year | Yield estimation 03 | Name (Code) of internal Inspector | Date of inspection | Result of internal control | Internal approval | Reason for the sanction and duration |
| A) List of organic producers | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| RB-24 | Alfredo Gutierrez | Rio Blanco, Villa Rica | 01.01.2000 | 1999 | 6 | 5 | 1(mais) | 1500 | 1700 | CM | 15.06.2003 | OK but control of erosion | Organic | |
| RB-25 | Marco Sanchez | Rio Blanco, Villa Rica | 01.01.2000 | 1998 | 3 | 2 | --- | 500 | 500 | CM | 15.06.2003 | OK | Organic | |
| B) List of producers in conversion | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| SM-36 | Maria Franco | San Martin, La Maravilla | 01.01.2002 | April 02 | 4,5 | 4 | 0,5 (mais) | 1400 | 1200 | CM | 16.06.2003 | OK | Conv 2 | |
| C) List of sanctioned producers | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| MA-12 | Gerardo Mendoza | Montaña Azul, Belo Horizonte | 01.01.2000 | 15.4.03 | 10 | 8 | 2 (mais) | | | CM | 12.06.2003 | used chemicals in coffee | none | sanctioned for 3 years |
| MA-14 | Jaime Gonzales | Montaña Azul, Belo Horizonte | 01.01.2000 | 1999 | 8 | 6 | 1 (mais) | | | CM | 12.06.2003 | very poor farm management (no improvement) | organic/suspended 1 year | |

Commitment Declaration/Farmers Contract



The written contract (commitment declaration) needs to include:

Obligations of the farmer:

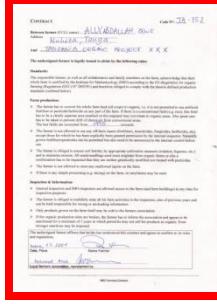
- to comply with the requirements of the internal organic standard (A)
- to give access to the fields, stores and documents (B)
- to accept sanctions in case of deviations (B)

Organic Production Rules

- summary of internal organic standard or reference to internal organic standard (B)



The Farmers Contract



Other aspects often included in the contract



- ICS operator to provide advice to the farmers and to co-ordinate the internal and external inspection and to organise the purchase.
- Prices, product quality requirements.
- Rules for leaving the project / cancellation of contract.
- Farmer needs to announce non-conformities of fellow farmers to the ICS.

Contract or Commitment Declaration?

- Some ICS operators choose to sign the actual contract with farmers only shortly before the farmers reach organic status and their products will be bought.
- In this case there needs to be at least a commitment declaration to adhere to organic rules from the beginning of the certification (often in basic farm data form/farm entrance form). This is an A-requirement.

Hand picking, sun-drying and home storage. Citrus and mango harvest, storage and Processing
Harvest, storage and Processing
sale is done on site.

Confirmation of Farm Manager.

The undersigned here with confirms that all data mention the above a correct and that he intend to participate actively in the organic project. Further on, he binds him self to work according to the known IMO- production standards, not to use any chemical fertilizer nor pesticides and follow the recommendations of the consultants for organic agriculture methods.

R. B. Murray
F. Kaire
Agro-ecology

Name of Interviewer

Date

Signature of farmer

Commitment declaration in the basic farm data form

CONTRACT Code No: TA - 152

Between farmer (FULL name) ALLY AB DALLAH ZENE
Address Huheza, Tanga
And TANZANIA ORGANIC PROJECT X X X

The undersigned farmer is legally bound to abide by the following rules:

Standards:
The responsible farmer, as well as all collaborators and family members on the farm, acknowledge that their whole farm is certified by the Institute for Marketecology (IMO) according to the EU-Regulation for organic farming (Regulation (EEC) N° 2092/91) and therefore obliged to comply with the therein defined production standards (outlined below)

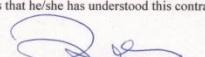
Farm production:

- The farmer has to convert his whole farm land (all crops) to organic, i.e. it is not permitted to use artificial fertiliser or pesticide/herbicide on any part of the farm. If there is a conventional field (e.g. rice), this field has to be a clearly separate area (marked on the map) and may not rotate to organic areas. Also great care has to be taken to prevent drift of chemicals from conventional areas. The last fields are converted from.....1995.....onwards.
- The farmer is not allowed to use any off-farm inputs (fertilisers, insecticides, fungicides, herbicides, etc) except those for which he has been explicitly been granted permission by the internal inspector. Naturally grown fertilisers/pesticides can be permitted but also need to be announced to the internal control before use.
- The farmer is obliged to ensure soil fertility by appropriate cultivation measures (rotation, legumes, etc.) and to minimise erosion. All seeds/seedlings used must originate from organic farms or else a confirmation has to be requested that they are neither genetically modified nor treated with pesticides.
- The farmer is not allowed to store any unallowed inputs on the farm.
- If there is any simple processing (e.g. drying) on the farm, no auxiliaries may be used.

Inspection & Information:

- Internal inspectors and IMO-inspectors are allowed access to the farm (and farm buildings) at any time for inspection purposes.
- The farmer is obliged to truthfully state all his farm activities to the inspectors, also of previous years and can be held responsible for wrong or misleading information.
- Only products grown on the farm itself may be sold to the farmers association.
- If the organic production rules are broken, the farmer has to inform the association and agrees to be sanctioned for a minimum of 3 years in which period he may not sell his products as organic. Even stronger sanctions may be imposed.

The undersigned farmer affirms that he/she has understood this contract and agrees to confirm to its rules and regulations.

Huheza, 1.9. 2001 
Date, Place Name Farmer

Mohamed Assa 
Local farmers association, represented by

IMO-Farmers-Contract

Contract

The Basic Farm Data Form



The basic farm data form/farm entrance form/Registration form needs to include:



- Registration data of the farmer: name, address, code (A)
- Description of all area under management of the farmer (B)
- Organic crops and their respective area or number of plants (B)
- Number of animals (B)
- The date of the last application of prohibited inputs must be recorded for all plots (A)
- Plot/area registration is critical. List of all plots may be most appropriate. Sometimes better to describe the situation per crop or to indicate the cropping information in maps.
- System must be adapted to the situation and must allow an overview of ALL organic/non-organic fields and crops under management of the farmer (→ also fields for non-certified crops)
- In many cases it is better to record field history for each plot (crops of past years) than just the last date of application of prohibited inputs

Maps



An overview map (village or community map) must be available

- shows the location of each farm with the code numbers for each farmer



If rotating annual crops are grown or if there is a conventional farm unit, there must be a farm map for each farmer

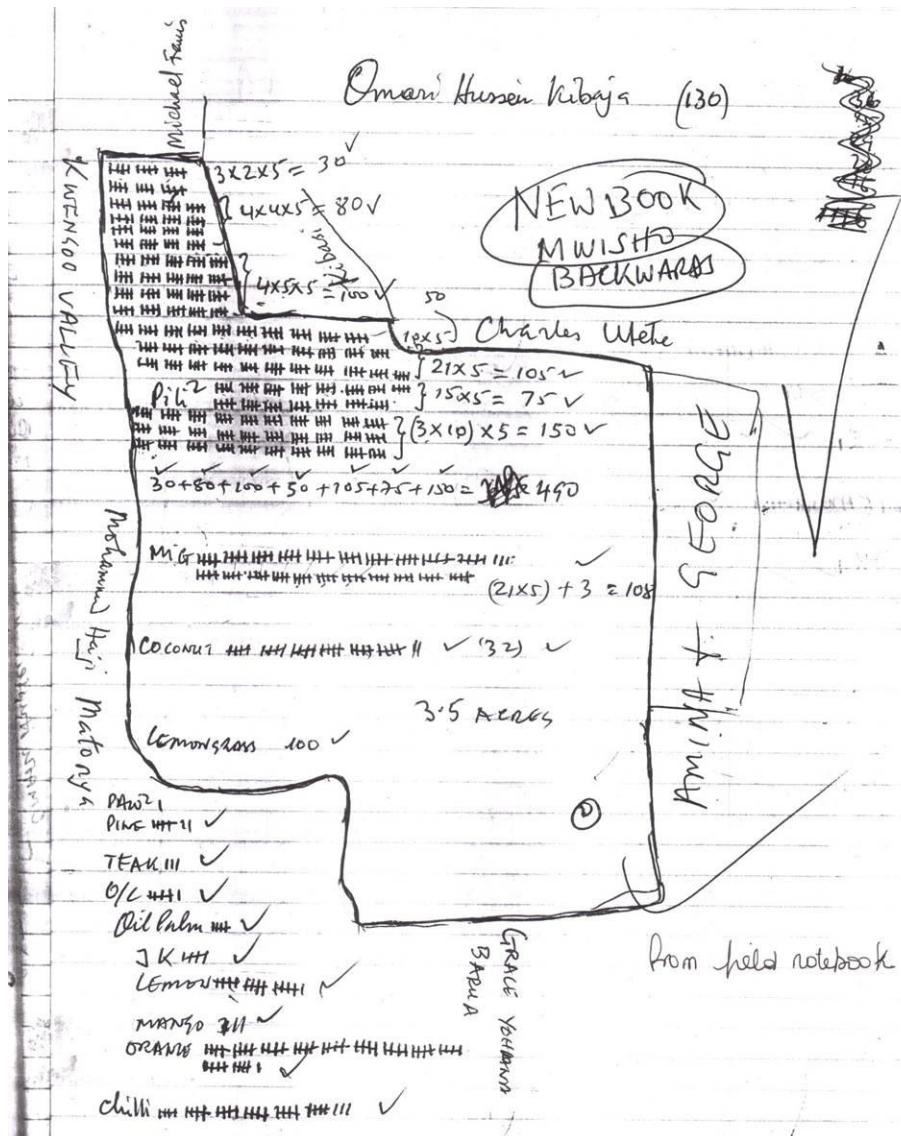
- Needs to show each plot/field and the respective crops
- Neighboring fields, their cultivation system, and risks of drift should be indicated
- Landmarks and streets/paths should be indicated
- Neighboring farms may be combined – if still possible to identify each plot and its crops

All maps must be dated

Sample Map

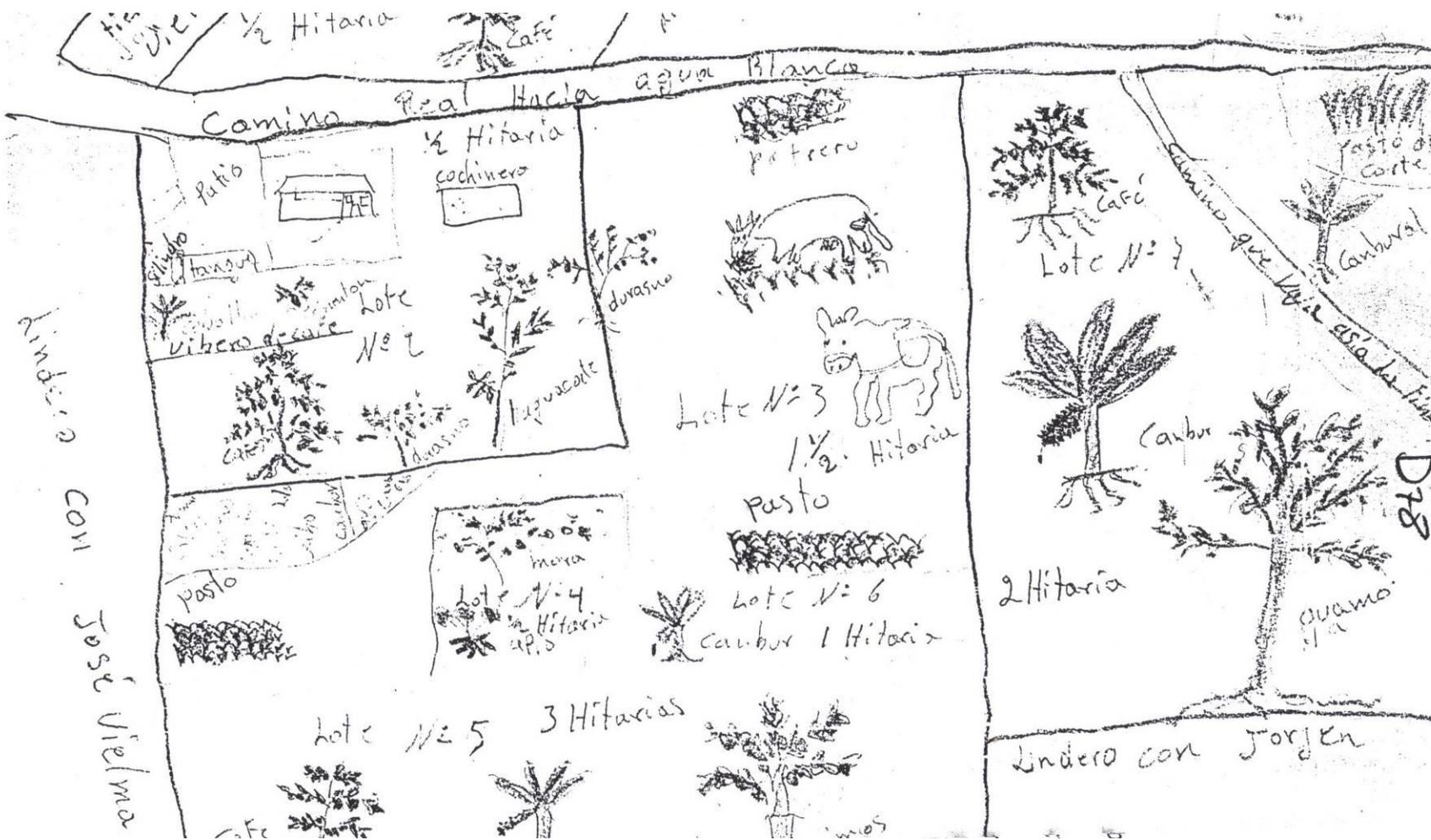


Sample Map



Counting each plant
might be appropriate
in some cases
(intercropped
agroforestry system)

Sample Map



Content of the 'Internal Farm Inspection Report'



The 'Internal Farm Inspection Report' covers all certification-relevant farm aspects



- ✓ Evaluation of cultivation measures: fertilization & soil conservation, plant protection measure, use of inputs, use of seeds
- ✓ Verification if there is a risk of contamination (drift, storing of inputs, use of sprayers etc.)
Measures in case of part-conversion
- ✓ Sustainable animal husbandry (if required by standard)
- ✓ Yield estimates (can also be kept in separate documentation)
- ✓ Harvest and post-harvest handling (if relevant)

The report checks management of all crops (like the inspection) with main focus on the organic plots and all crops on these plots.

Yield Estimates



The internal control needs to provide yield estimates of the crop to be certified for each farmer. The estimates need to be available before harvest (or for a defined harvest period).



Compliance Check in the Internal Farm Inspection Report



The internal inspection report should make a clear compliance statement



- Evaluation of the compliance of the farmer with internal organic standard
- Determination of sanctions in case of non-compliance
- Evaluation of the fulfilment of previous conditions
- Signed by the farmer and the internal inspector
- *Contains sometimes also approval decision of the organisation*

Update Farm Diaries

- Farmers should have a farm diary to make record of all organic activities.
 - Main cultivation measures
 - Use of inputs (seeds, fertilizers, pesticides)
 - Harvested quantities
 - Changes in area
- Continuous recording necessary (either farmer or field officer)
- Information needs to be consolidated (in farm inspection report)



Further Entries in Tracenet

- After providing the basic farmer details, crop and area details, the ICS has to enter in Tracenet the internal inspection dates, inspector's name, his observation of non-compliances (NCs) in the farmers' fields during the two internal inspections, resolving of the NCs, yield estimates etc. and forward the complete data to the CB.
- The CB will verify the details, seek clarifications and incorporate the correct details before deputing an inspector for external inspection by the CB.

3.3.9. Bee keeping.

- Hives shall be situated in organically managed field and/ or wild natural areas and not to be close to conventional fields with exceptions made by certification bodies
- Feeding only after last harvest before the monsoon when foraging feed is unavailable
- Hives primarily made of natural materials
- Wing clipping not allowed
- Veterinary medicines not allowed
- For pest & disease control disinfection formic, lactic, oxalic & acetic acids, sulphur, etheric oil & bacillus thuringiensis used
- Persistent materials not to be used where there is possibility of permeation of honey & where residues are distributed in the area through dead bees

Food and Food Processing

1. General

2. Pest and Disease Control

3. Ingredients, Additives etc

4. Processing Methods

5. Packaging

3.4.1. General

- Co-mingling of organic and inorganic products not allowed
- Certification programme shall set standards to prevent and control pollutants and contaminants
- Organic and non-organic products shall not be stored and transported together except when labelled or separated together
- The means and measures for decontamination ,cleaning or disinfection of all facilities where organic products are kept, Handled, processed or stored shall be regulated by the certification programme
- Storage at ambient temperature, controlled atmosphere cooling, freezing drying ,humidity regulation are the methods permitted for storage
- Ethylene gas is permitted for ripening

3.4.2. Pest and Disease control

- Disruption, elimination of habitat, access to facilities, mechanical biological and physical methods to control the pest in the order of priority
- Irradiation is prohibited
- There shall be no direct or indirect contact between organic products and prohibited substances (e.g. pesticides)
- Persistent or carcinogenic pesticides and disinfectants are not allowed

3.4.3. Ingredients, Additives and Processing aids

- Non organic ingredients only as authorised by certification agency
- One ingredient not to be both organic and non organic in origin
- Water & salt may be used
- Minerals, vitamins & isolated ingredients not to be used
- Microbial & enzymatic preparations except GMO & their products can be used
- Use of additives & processing aids to be restricted

3.4.4 Processing Methods

- Processes allowed are mechanical, physical, biological, smoking, extraction, precipitation, filtration
- Extraction with foodgrade quality water, ethanol, plant& animal oils, vinegar, carbondiooxide ,nitrogen or carboxylic acids
- No irradiation allowed
- No asbestos or harmful products in filtration substances

3.4.5. Packaging

- Material used for packaging shall not contaminate food
- The certification programme shall have a policy to reduce the environmental effects of packaging material

3.5. Labelling

Producer should be identifiable

- Single ingredient products labeled as **organic** only when all standard requirements are met
- In mixed products when a minimum of 95% of ingredients are organic it can be labeled **organic**.
- When the organic ingredients are above 70% and below 95%, in a product, it is labeled as “made with organic ingredients” mentioning proportion organic ingredients.
when the product has below 70% of organic ingredients
the product can not be called organic. Only in the the ingredients table,
against the organic ingredient, the word organic can be mentioned in bracket.

3.5. Labelling (Cont'd...)

- Added water & salt not included in the % calculations of organic products
- Label for conversion & organic products should be distinguishable
- Raw materials to be listed in order of their weight % & additives listed with their full name
- Organic products not to be labelled as genetic engineering or genetic modification free

3.6. Storage and Transport

- Organic products to be handled separately from inorganic products in mixed units
- Bulk stores of organic products to be separated from conventional product stores& clearly labelled to that effect
- Storage areas & transport containers for organic products to be cleaned using methods & materials used for organic production .All sorts of contamination to be avoided

Procedure for Certification

External Inspection (CB)

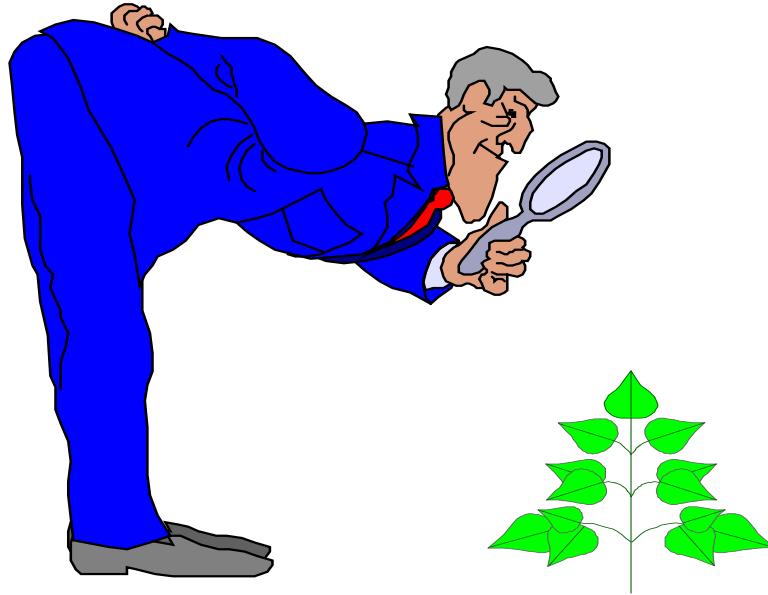


The CB will depute an Inspector to the group after informing the schedule.

The Inspector will make on-site verification of a certain number of organic fields in the group, visit storage area of inputs and produce and check for compliance of all practices as per the (NSOP/ NOP) Standards.

The Inspector will verify all ICS records and may take copy of some records for certification requirements.

Sampling



Wherever necessary, the inspector may take samples of soil, seeds, produce or input products and send it for analysis to find out whether there is any contamination of organic product due to toxic chemicals, heavy metals or GMO.

Submission of Inspection Report in CB office



The inspector's report is sent to an evaluator. The evaluator reviews the Inspection report and makes sure NC action report is obtained from the ICS before sending it to the Certification Committee for decision.

Certification



If there are major Non Compliances, the CB will inform the details of sanctions to the ICS. (Denying Certification, Imposing conditions to improve Quality)

If all the parameters are satisfying, the CB will approve grant of Certification to the ICS. The CB will generate the Scope Certificate after feeding all the necessary details in the APEDA's Tracenet.

*Certificate issued to clients who satisfy
organic requirements*

