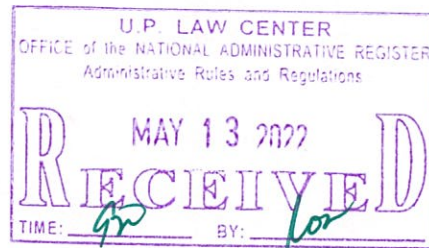




Republic of the Philippines
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
Elliptical Road, Diliman
1100 Quezon City

DEPARTMENT CIRCULAR

No. 02
Series of 2022



SUBJECT: GUIDELINES FOR THE OPERATION OF PARTICIPATORY GUARANTEE SYSTEM (PGS) GROUPS AS ORGANIC CERTIFYING BODIES (OCBs)

WHEREAS, Republic Act No. 10068 (RA No. 10068), otherwise known as the Organic Agriculture Act of 2010, was enacted to provide for the development and promotion of organic agriculture in the Philippines and for other purposes;

WHEREAS, Republic Act No. 11511 (RA No. 11511), an Act amending the Organic Agriculture Act of 2010, reaffirms the policy of the State to promote, propagate, develop further and implement the practice of organic agriculture in the Philippines;

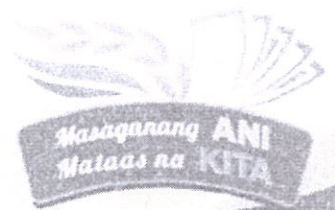
WHEREAS, RA No. 11511 amended the provisions of RA No. 10068 by adding a new section (Section 14) on Participatory Guarantee System (PGS), which provides the basic principles, legal personality, certification, accreditation, organizational levels, promotion, training and inspection of, and incentives for PGS groups;

WHEREAS, Rule 14.3 of Section 14 of the IRR of RA No. 10068 as amended by RA No. 11511, mandates BAFS to *develop guidelines that will set out the principles, characteristics, composition, organization and procedures for the establishment and operation of PGS groups.*

IN VIEW THEREOF, this Circular provides the *Guidelines for the Operation of Participatory Guarantee System (PGS) Groups as Organic Certifying Bodies (OCBs).*

- Section 1. **Objective.** This Circular aims to guide groups in operating a Participatory Guarantee System (PGS) for organic certifying bodies (OCBs) to ensure consistency of operation and delivery of services.
- Section 2. **Scope.** This Circular shall cover all PGS groups represented by the core PGS groups that intend to operate and apply for accreditation as OCBs.
- Section 3. **Definition of terms.** As used in this Circular, the following terms shall be understood to have the meaning correspondingly provided below:
- 3.1. *Appeal* refers to a written request by a farmer-member, candidate or certified farmer-member for reconsideration of an adverse decision made by the PGS group related to their desired certification status.

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NOTE Adverse decisions include, but not limited to, refusal to accept an application, refusal to proceed with the peer review, changes in certification scope, decisions to deny, suspend or revoke certification, and any other action that impedes the attainment of certification.

- 3.2. *Capability building activities* refer to activities for learning and development that will enhance the skills and knowledge of a person. These include activities, such as but not limited to training, formal and informal meetings, peer reviews or group discussions, and evaluations of the PGS initiative and its processes.
- 3.3. *Certification* refers to a procedure by which a government agency or an accredited organic certifying body (OCB)/core PGS group provides written or equivalent assurance that farms, or production and processing systems, conform to organic standards.
- 3.4. *Committee review* refers to a process whereby a committee evaluates the submitted peer review reports and issues certification decisions.
- 3.5. *Complaint* refers to a written expression of dissatisfaction by any person or organization to the competent authority and/or accredited core PGS group relating to its activities and operations.
- 3.6. *Conversion period (or transition period)* refers to the time between the start of organic management and certification of the crop or animal production system or site as organic.
- 3.7. *Core PGS group* refers to the basic grouping unit in the PGS with at least 5 farmers whose farms shall have a combination of crops and livestock (per item (y) of Rule 3.1 of the Implementing Rules and Regulations of the amended Organic Agriculture Act of 2010) production certified organic by BAFS within the municipality, city or province. It may add to its membership farmers from other sectors in agriculture, NGOs, people's organizations, buyers of organic agriculture products, suppliers of organic inputs, among others, who all live or operate within the province and regularly interact with the concerned PGS group.
- 3.8. *Domestic market* refers to market reach of PGS guaranteed products, which denotes national or regional borders or locality (e.g., provincial, municipal or barangay level), wherein farmers may directly link with consumers or indirectly through an intermediary. PGS groups are locally relevant and shall promote food self-sufficiency within the community.
- 3.9. *Impartiality* refers to the presence of objectivity. Objectivity is understood to mean that conflicts of interest do not exist or are resolved so as not to adversely influence the activities of the body. Other terms that are useful in conveying the element of impartiality are independence, freedom from

conflicts of interest, freedom from bias, freedom from prejudice, neutrality, fairness, open-mindedness, even-handedness, detachment, and balance.

- 3.10. *Internal Standard* refers to a document approved by consensus by the PGS group, which can be repeatedly used to provide rules, guidelines, or characteristics of a product, process, or production method fit for their purpose.
- 3.11. *In-conversion period* refers to a labeling term that denotes produce and products of plants that are obtained through production and/or processing in accordance with organic agriculture in the conversion period intended to market as food.
- 3.12. *Organic Certifying Body (OCB)* refers to a legal entity accredited by a government agency to perform inspection and certification activities. It is responsible for verifying that a product sold or labeled as 'organic' is produced, processed, prepared, or handled according to relevant guidelines.
- 3.13. *Participatory Guarantee System (PGS)* refers to a locally-focused quality assurance system which is developed and practiced by people actually engaged in organic agriculture. It is built on a foundation of trust, social network, and knowledge exchange. It is used to certify producers and farmers as actual and active practitioners of organic agriculture.
- 3.14. *Participatory Organic Certificate (POC)* refers to a documentary proof that a core PGS group or a farmer member of the accredited PGS group is compliant with the requirements, standards, and norms of organic farming/agriculture. It shall be issued by a government agency or by an authorized OCB, after the conduct of an investigation and certification activity on the application for certification by the core PGS group. It shall have a validity of three (3) years.
- 3.15. *Peer review* refers to a process where farmer members assess the compliance of production practices of their peers to the internal standards and procedures set by the PGS group; also refers to farm inspection.
- 3.16. *PGS group* refers to a legal association or cooperative of registered farmer-members and other stakeholders in a Participatory Guarantee System.
- 3.17. *Self-review* refers to a process by which a farmer-member assesses his/her own farming practices using the internal standards and procedures set by the PGS group.
- 3.18. *Small farmer/fisherfolk* refers to those utilizing not more than five (5) hectares of land for the single purpose or, of a combination of the following purposes for, agricultural crop production, including rice and corn,

aquaculture, and poultry/livestock raising: *Provided*, That poultry/livestock raising shall not have more than the following:

- Poultry - 1,000 (layers) or 5,000 (broilers)
- Swine/native pigs - 10 (sow) or 20 (fatteners)
- Cattle - 10 (fatteners) or 5 (breeders)
- Dairy - 10 milking cows
- Goat, sheep, and other small ruminants - 50 heads

3.19. *Stakeholders* refers to the collective term for all involved in the establishment, operation, and maintenance of a Participatory Guarantee System. It includes the following:

3.19.1. *Primary stakeholders* refer to farmers, processors, traders, and consumers with the highest level of involvement in the PGS activities.

3.19.2. *Supplier groups* refer to the groups that supply inputs, machineries, equipment, and packaging materials.

3.19.3. *Support sectors* refer to the academic and research institutions, government agencies (LGAs/LGUs/NGAs), financial institutions, NGOs, and people's organizations (POs) sectors that offer technical and/or financial support.

Section 4. **Key Elements of Participatory Guarantee System (PGS).** The PGS group shall embody and embrace the following key elements:

4.1. **Shared vision.** All stakeholders shall have the shared vision in ensuring the integrity of the organic produce and products through compliance with applicable current Philippine National Standards (PNS) for organic agriculture and relevant regulations (Annex A).

4.2. **Participation.** All primary stakeholders shall actively engage in the establishment and operation of PGS embodying the principle of collective responsibility to ensure organic integrity. This collective responsibility is reflected through:

4.2.1. shared ownership of the PGS by engaging in all steps, starting with the development process;

4.2.2. shared understanding of how the system works; and

4.2.3. direct communication between and among all stakeholders.

Active engagement of primary stakeholders helps shape the integrity-based approach in the development of trust. The involvement and

participation of supplier groups and support sectors may be dependent on their interest and/or responsibility.

- 4.3. **Transparency.** The principle of transparency encompasses the openness of the system, involvement of relevant stakeholders, and accessibility of all information. The transparency of the system shall be demonstrated through:
 - 4.3.1. involvement of all stakeholders in the development of internal standards and documented procedures;
 - 4.3.2. conduct of activities to ensure in-depth understanding of how the PGS works; and
 - 4.3.3. establishment of policies and procedures for documentation, dissemination, and accessibility of information to all relevant stakeholders.
- 4.4. **Trust.** The PGS group shall have policies and procedures that will demonstrate trust and build confidence in all its stakeholders. Building of trust shall be demonstrated through:
 - 4.4.1. documented self-review of the farmer based on the frequency set in the procedures of the PGS group (sample self-review and peer review form as provided in Annex B.4), understanding standards, recordkeeping, and documented self-declaration (sample Farmer's Pledge is provided in Annex B.2);
 - 4.4.2. accomplished membership agreement between the stakeholders and the PGS group (sample membership agreement is provided in Annex B.3); and
 - 4.4.3. documented peer review process within the PGS group, as indicated in Clause 5.3.2 of this Circular.
- 4.5. **Horizontality.** The PGS group shall have policies and procedures to ensure that all its relevant stakeholders, regardless of gender, have equal rights, responsibility and accountability in maintaining the integrity, quality and safety of organic produce and products. The level of accountability of a stakeholder depends on the level of review process they are involved in.
- 4.6. **Learning Process.** The PGS group shall have regular capability building activities to ensure that primary stakeholders fully understand the internal standards and procedures, thereby maintaining the integrity of organic produce and product and enhancing the credibility of the PGS. The PGS group shall ensure that its capability building activities are:
 - 4.6.1. documented and records of its conduct are maintained;
 - 4.6.2. led by competent resource person(s);

- 4.6.3. regularly participated by all primary stakeholders;
- 4.6.4. accessible to other stakeholders such as support sectors and supplier groups; and
- 4.6.5. regularly assessed to ensure continual improvement of the activities.

Section 5. **Features and Characteristics of PGS Group.** The PGS group shall have the following features and characteristics:

- 5.1. **Legal personality.** The PGS group, as represented by the core PGS group, shall secure a Mayor's permit from the municipality where the PGS group is predominantly located or regularly interact or conduct business with, as proof of legal personality.
- 5.2. **Clearly defined standards that are consistent with the requirements of applicable current Philippine National Standards (PNS)**
 - 5.2.1. The PGS group shall either develop its internal standards that are consistent with the minimum requirements of the applicable current PNS for organic agriculture and relevant regulations or adopt the applicable current PNS for organic agriculture and relevant regulations as its internal standards.
 - 5.2.2. The internal standards may be translated into local languages to ensure understanding and appreciation of stakeholders.
 - 5.2.3. The list of applicable current PNS for organic agriculture and relevant regulations is provided in Annex A.
- 5.3. **Clearly defined, transparent, and documented management systems and procedures.** The PGS group shall develop and approve its Manual of Operations, which contains the documented management systems and procedures, in a participatory, democratic, and transparent manner appropriate for its situations. The Manual of Operations may also be translated in its local language to ensure implementability and adaptability. The Manual of Operations may be in any format or media, preferably digital. This must be safely stored, accessible, and retrievable, whenever necessary.

The PGS group shall have the following documented management systems and procedures included in the Manual of Operations:

- 5.3.1. *Structure and Organization of a PGS Group.* The PGS group must have a documented organizational structure with clear delineation of roles and responsibilities consistent with Clause 5.4 of this Circular to ensure its effective implementation.

- 5.3.1.1. The PGS group shall establish a procedure for application for membership which includes orientation on the internal standards, and policies and procedures. The farmer-members of the PGS group must be utilizing not more than five (5) hectares of land for the single purpose or, of a combination of, agricultural crop production, including rice and corn, aquaculture, and poultry/livestock raising.
- 5.3.1.2. The PGS group shall establish a procedure for the creation of the committees and the selection of its members that will ensure impartiality and balanced representation in each level of the PGS group structure. At the minimum, the PGS group shall be organized into the following committees:
- 5.3.1.2.1. Management Committee shall manage the effective implementation of the PGS as guided by a Manual of Operations. The Committee shall spearhead the development of its Manual of Operations and shall be responsible for the issuance of POC based on the certification decision of the Certification Committee. The PGS group shall determine the composition of the Committee.
- 5.3.1.2.2. Peer Review Committee shall carry out the inspection (Clause 5.3.4.3), monitoring (Clause 5.3.4.6) of farmer members, and recommend decisions to the Certification Committee. This Committee shall be composed of at least five (5) members of the core PGS group.
- 5.3.1.2.3. Certification Committee shall check the completeness of peer review outputs, assess the severity of noncompliance (NC), define corrections and corrective actions, and validate recommendations submitted by the Peer Review Committee. The Certification Committee shall issue certification decisions and recommend to the Management Committee the issuance of the POC, and enforce sanctions for NC, as necessary. The members of the Committee shall

serve as 'certification officers'. The Committee shall be composed of at least three (3) competent certification officers from primary stakeholders that are not involved in the peer review process.

5.3.1.2.4. Appeals Committee shall receive, evaluate, and make decisions on appeals and complaints, and be accountable for safeguarding the impartiality with respect to the appeals and complaints. The Committee shall provide recommendations to the appropriate committee for further deliberations and decisions. The Committee shall be composed of at least three (3) competent representatives from stakeholders that are not involved in the peer review and certification processes. The PGS group shall ensure that there is no conflict of interest among the members of the Appeals Committee.

5.3.2. *Resource Requirements.* The PGS group shall ensure sufficient financial and manpower resources to organize and maintain its Committees, and to support a functional PGS that assures compliance of individual farmer-members in an objective, consistent, and transparent manner.

5.3.2.1. Financial Resources Sustainability. The PGS group shall ensure that it has sufficient financial resources for the sustainability of its operations.

5.3.2.2. Human Resources. The PGS group shall ensure that its farmer-members and members of the committees are competent to carry out the roles and responsibilities.

5.3.2.2.1. Competence Criteria

5.3.2.2.1.1. All stakeholders should be knowledgeable in internal standards that are consistent with the minimum requirements of the applicable current PNS for organic agriculture and relevant regulations. Knowledge is

typically gained through experience and/or training.

- 5.3.2.2.1.2. All stakeholders should have appropriate training with respect to organic agriculture, food, processing, local trade, specific production areas, and applicable current PNS for organic agriculture and other regulatory requirements. The requirements may vary based on the roles and responsibilities of the member and the scope.
- 5.3.2.2.1.3. The members of the Management Committee should have sufficient knowledge on the documented management systems and procedures of the group, applicable current PNS for organic agriculture and relevant regulations.
- 5.3.2.2.1.4. The PGS group shall ensure a sufficient number of competent peer reviewers and certification officers depending on the size of membership of the group. This shall ensure that the participatory certification process is carried out in a timely, efficient, and consistent manner. To ensure competence of the peer reviewers and certification officers, they shall have the following minimum qualifications:
- a. Knowledgeable on the internal standards of the PGS group or certified as organic practitioner;
 - b. Participated (as observer) in at least 1 peer review of the accredited core PGS

- group or inspection by BAFS;
- c. Knowledgeable on the group's operations and procedures; and
- d. Attended at least 2 trainings on applicable current PNS for organic agriculture

NOTE The sufficient number of the peer reviewers and certification officers is recommended to be at least 30% of the total farmer-members

The PGS group may increase the number of members of the core PGS group if they have met the minimum qualifications.

- 5.3.2.2.1.5. Farmer-members should be an organic practitioner and have sufficient knowledge on internal standards that are consistent with the minimum requirements of the applicable current PNS for organic agriculture and relevant regulations, and of the PGS group's internal policies procedures. Sufficiency of knowledge may be determined through observations, interviews, and review of records (e.g., training certificates, proof of participation, accomplished self-review form, etc.).

5.3.2.2.2. Maintaining and Monitoring of Competence

- 5.3.2.2.2.1. The PGS group shall ensure maintenance of competence of members directly involved in the participatory certification process by identifying training needs at the entry level and

others based on their roles and responsibilities in the group.

5.3.2.2.2. The PGS group shall provide adequate training to its members as guided by a training plan. Training and evaluation records, and other training related materials should be maintained.

5.3.2.2.3. The PGS group shall establish policies to ensure that the peer reviewers and certification officers are competent in performing their assigned roles and responsibilities, and procedures to regularly evaluate their performance.

5.3.2.2.3. Knowledge Resources. The PGS group shall develop a Learning and Development (L&D) Program to encourage learning among stakeholders. At the minimum, the L&D Program shall include the following:

5.3.2.2.3.1. Frequency. Training activities at least once a year for: (1) peer reviewers and certification officers on the participatory certification process, and (2) stakeholders on internal standards, policies, procedures, relevant regulations, and new technologies.

5.3.2.2.3.2. Learning Materials. Develop and update training manuals which contain the internal standards, policies, procedures, relevant regulations, and new technologies. The PGS group shall consider the feedback from regular assemblies, inputs from stakeholders, results of audits by BAFS, and other opportunities for improvement when updating

the internal standards, policies, and procedures of the PGS group.

- 5.3.2.2.3.3. Activities. Capability building activities can be outsourced or organized by the PGS group. The PGS group shall ensure that resource persons (either internal or external to the group) are competent.

- 5.3.3. *Certification Activities.* The PGS group shall cover the certification and other relevant activities of its farmer-members implementing the internal standards that are consistent with the minimum requirements of the applicable current PNS for organic agriculture and relevant regulations.

The scope of the participatory certification shall include crop production, animal production, aquaculture production, processing of organic produce, special products (i.e., wild harvest, mushroom production) agricultural input production (i.e., organic soil amendments, organic biocontrol agents, feeds, seeds, and planting materials).

The requirements and procedures for maintenance of participatory certification status of the farmer-members are, likewise, covered by this procedure.

The details of the participatory certification process are provided in Clause 5.3.4 (Process Requirements). The participatory certification process shall have the following minimum activities:

- 5.3.3.1. The PGS Group, through its Peer Review Committee shall ensure that review of documents, planning, preparatory activities, and specification of requirements (i.e., requirements listed in Annexes A and D) are carried out prior to the conduct of peer review.
- 5.3.3.2. The PGS group, through its Peer Review Committee, shall carry out activities to determine the level of compliance of the farmer-member through peer review, laboratory testing, if deemed necessary, and monitoring.
- 5.3.3.3. The results of the peer review, laboratory testing, if applicable, and monitoring shall be reviewed by the

Certification Committee to evaluate the level of compliance as evidenced by the data obtained during the peer review, and to establish whether the requirements of the internal standards that are consistent with the minimum requirements of the applicable current PNS for organic agriculture and relevant regulations, are met.

- 5.3.3.4. The Certification Committee shall decide on certification based on the results of the peer review.
 - 5.3.3.5. The PGS group shall, likewise, establish procedure for granting, maintaining, suspending, and revoking of certification.
 - 5.3.3.6. The PGS group shall issue a Participatory Organic Certificate (POC) and the terms and conditions on the use of the PGS group's mark or seal, and the Philippine PGS Guaranteed Organic mark.
 - 5.3.3.7. The PGS group, through its Peer Review Committee, shall conduct annual monitoring of its certified farmer members to ensure their continued compliance with the internal standards, policies, and procedures.
 - 5.3.3.8. The PGS group shall ensure impartiality all throughout the participatory certification process.
- 5.3.4. *Process Requirements.* The PGS group shall have defined requirements for its functions and certification process.
- 5.3.4.1. The PGS group shall take into consideration explicitly the following aspects as applicable: retroactive recognition of conversion period, separation and inspection of non-organic production units, parallel/split production, and wild collection.
 - 5.3.4.2. Application for certification. When accepting an application, the Management Committee shall ensure availability of all background information of the farmer-member, and whether another PGS group has issued denial of certification to the said farmer applicant. The PGS group shall review the submitted documents to verify the completeness and veracity of the information provided by the farmer-member. At the minimum, the PGS group shall require the farmer applicant to submit the following:

- a. Accomplished application form;
- b. Signed farmer's pledge;
- c. Farm map, and profile including practices; and
- d. Self-review on the status of their farm (Self-review form in Annex B.4).

5.3.4.3. Peer Review. At least three (3) farmer-members from the core PGS group shall participate in the conduct of the peer review. A peer reviewer shall inhibit themselves during the review of their own farm. The conduct of peer review shall be based on Manual of Operations. The peer review shall include the following:

5.3.4.3.1. interviews with farmer-members and relevant individuals to collect and verify the information provided by the farmer applicant in the accomplished self-review form;

5.3.4.3.2. visits to facilities, fields, and storage units, which may also include visits to non-organic production units to assess the production, processing and handling system, and identify areas of risk to organic integrity; and identification of location coordinates of inspected farms;

5.3.4.3.3. review of records and accounts to verify flow of goods (e.g., production/sales reconciliation on farms, input/output reconciliation and the traceability in processing and handling facilities); and

5.3.4.3.4. should there be any reported changes on the internal standards, policies, and procedures, verify that changes have been effectively implemented, and that correction and corrective measures have been taken.

5.3.4.4. Certification Committee Review. The Certification Committee review shall include review of the results of peer review, laboratory analysis, if there is any, and other evidence of compliance, and issuance of a certification decision based on the results of the review. Every Certification Committee review shall be documented indicating the date and place of review, name of certification officers, and the results of the

review. A certification officer shall inhibit themselves during the evaluation of their own farm.

5.3.4.5. Granting and Maintaining the Certification

5.3.4.5.1. Upon full compliance of all certification requirements, the Management Committee shall issue the POC based on the decision of the Certification Committee, to the farmer-member valid for three (3) years from the date of issuance.

5.3.4.5.2. The POC shall contain, at the minimum, the following information:

- a. name of farmer-member;
- b. name of farm;
- c. farm address;
- d. farm code;
- e. farm size;
- f. scope of certification;
- g. list of commodities and annual estimated volume per commodity;
- h. PGS group's logo;
- i. Philippine PGS Guaranteed Organic mark; and
- j. validity of certificate.

5.3.4.5.3. The PGS group shall not issue POC to farmer-members under the in-conversion period.

5.3.4.6. Monitoring. The PGS group shall conduct annual peer review and other monitoring activities (e.g., farm visit, produce/product sampling for analysis, etc.) within the validity of the POC to ensure the continued compliance of certified farmer-members with the internal standards, policies, and procedures.

5.3.4.7. Renewal of Certification

5.3.4.7.1. For renewal application, the PGS group through the Management Committee shall ensure the availability of farmer member's updated documents such as completed application form, accomplished self-review form, farm records, farm map, and other relevant documents.

- 5.3.4.7.2. The farmer-member applying for renewal of certification shall undergo peer review (Clause 5.3.4.3) and committee review (Clause 5.3.4.4) prior to the issuance of renewed POC (Clause 5.3.4.5).
- 5.3.4.7.3. In case a member of the core PGS group representing a farm applies for renewal of certification with the same core PGS group, the member of the core PGS group must inhibit himself/herself before the application for renewal can be considered.
- 5.3.4.8. Suspension and Revocation of Certification
- 5.3.4.8.1. The PGS group shall refer to the Catalogue of Sanctions issued by BAFS. The withdrawal of membership in the PGS group shall mean forfeiture of the privilege for the farm/farm owner to use the participatory organic certificate.
- 5.3.4.8.2. The PGS group shall specify the conditions and requirements for discontinuation of use and return of certification documents, and any other action if the certification is suspended or revoked.
- 5.3.4.8.3. The decision to suspend or revoke the certification is appealable to the PGS group and may be elevated to the BAFS, in case of any of the following:
- 5.3.4.8.3.1. If the PGS group fails to provide resolution or take action on the appeal within 30 days; or
- 5.3.4.8.3.2. If the appellant substantiates their dissatisfaction with the action taken by the PGS group.
- 5.3.4.9. Handling of Complaints and Appeals
- 5.3.4.9.1. The PGS group shall have a documented procedure to receive, evaluate and make decisions on complaints and appeals.

- 5.3.4.9.2. The PGS group, through the Appeals Committee, shall gather and verify all necessary information to progress the complaint or appeal to a decision.
- 5.3.4.9.3. The PGS group shall communicate the decision of the Appeals Committee to the complainant or the appellant.
- 5.3.4.9.4. The Appeals Committee shall record and track complaints and appeals, as well as actions undertaken to resolve them.
- 5.3.4.9.5. Complaints beyond the activities and operations of the PGS group shall be handled by the Management Committee.
- 5.3.4.10. Sanctions. The PGS group shall impose appropriate sanctions to members who are found violating the group's internal standards, policies, and/or procedures consistent with Annex C (Classification of Findings and Timeline of Implementation of Corrections and Corrective Action Plan) of this Circular.
- 5.3.4.11. Traceability of produce or products per farmer-member. The PGS group shall have a traceability system and regular product flow monitoring for organic produce and products of its certified farmer-members.
- 5.3.4.12. Reporting
 - 5.3.4.12.1. The PGS group shall establish a procedure for a timely reporting of its farmer-members of relevant information such as but not limited to, volume of production of each commodity, sales, market reach, and updates or changes in their organic management.
 - 5.3.4.12.2. The PGS group shall ensure timely reporting and submission of relevant information to BAFS as indicated in Annex D (Report Template) of this Circular.
- 5.3.4.13. Changes affecting PGS group
 - 5.3.4.13.1. The PGS group shall ensure that changes such as new or revised requirements that affect the members are communicated to

- all. The PGS group shall verify the implementation of the changes by its members and shall take actions required by the group.
- 5.3.4.13.2. The PGS group shall consider other changes affecting the certification process, including new applicable PNS for organic agriculture and relevant regulations, if any.
- 5.3.4.13.3. Changes affecting the structure of the PGS group such as changes in the membership of the committees, shall be communicated to all members and to the BAFS.
- 5.3.4.14. Regular Assembly. The PGS group shall hold regular assembly to identify areas for improvement, which may include, but not limited to, revision of Manual of Operations. Areas for improvement may be gathered from peer reviews or group discussions, evaluations, feedback, and results of BAFS' audit(s).
- 5.3.4.15. Promotion. The PGS group shall conduct regular activities to promote organic agriculture in the community.
- 5.3.5. *Records management.* The PGS group shall have policies and procedures for the maintenance of information necessary for the verification of production, storage, processing, purchase, and sales; and other relevant documentation to provide adequate inspection trails and traceability of organic produce and/or products. PGS records shall include the following:
- a. Accomplished Application Forms (Annex B.1)
 - b. Signed Farmer's Pledges (Annex B.2);
 - c. Signed Membership agreements (Annex B.3);
 - d. Records generated from peer review and certification activities (e.g., accomplished self-review and peer review form, accomplished certification decision form, and other documents that provide evidence of compliance);
 - e. Database (as indicated in the Report Template in Annex D);
 - f. Accomplished Appeals Decision Forms and records generated from verifying the filed appeals and complaints; and
 - g. Other records deemed necessary by the group.

5.4. Clearly defined roles and responsibilities of stakeholders

5.4.1. Primary stakeholders

5.4.1.1. The primary stakeholders (i.e., farmers, processors, traders, and consumers) shall have the highest involvement in the development of internal standards, policies, procedures, and information dissemination activities. Involvement of primary stakeholders includes:

5.4.1.1.1. Directly engage in peer review, certification, and monitoring activities;

5.4.1.1.2. Comply with internal standards, policies, and procedures;

5.4.1.1.3. Provide assistance to other stakeholders;

5.4.1.1.4. Provide valuable management expertise to the group; and

5.4.1.1.5. Perform such other functions as deemed necessary by the group.

5.4.1.2. The primary stakeholders shall include the core PGS group which is primarily composed of farmer-members selected by the group. The core PGS group shall have the following roles and responsibilities:

5.4.1.2.1. Develop an understanding of the internal standards;

5.4.1.2.2. Ensure compliance to internal standards, policies, and procedures;

5.4.1.2.3. Make a pledge that they understand and commit to adhere to the internal standards, policies, and procedures of the PGS group;

5.4.1.2.4. Conduct peer review and certification activities of farmer-member;

5.4.1.2.5. Submit complete, accurate, concise and clear record of the peer review signed by the majority of the peer reviewers;

- 5.4.1.2.6. Recommend farms for certification to Certification Committee;
- 5.4.1.2.7. Initiate key field trainings for farmer-members and residents in their locality to promote organic agriculture;
- 5.4.1.2.8. Take actions on noncompliances consistent with Annex C (Classification of Findings and Timeline of Implementation of Corrections and Corrective Action Plan) of this Circular;
- 5.4.1.2.9. Assist noncompliant farmer-members to regain and maintain certification status: Provided that the member of the core PGS group is not involved during the peer review; and
- 5.4.1.2.10. Attend municipal/provincial PGS meetings and share information as instructed.

5.4.2. *Supplier groups.* The supplier groups (i.e., suppliers of inputs, machineries, equipment, and packaging materials) shall ensure that their produce or products are compliant with the applicable current PNS for organic agriculture and relevant regulations. Likewise, they shall be involved in the PGS activities as determined by the PGS group.

5.4.3. *Support sectors.* The support sectors (i.e., academic and research institutions, financial institutions, NGOs, POs) shall support the operations of the PGS group through provision of technical and/or financial assistance. Likewise, they may be involved in the PGS activities as determined by the PGS group aligned with their interest.

5.5. PGS group’s logo

5.5.1. Upon issuance of POC, the certified farmer-member shall be allowed to use the PGS group’s logo accompanied by the Philippine PGS Guaranteed Organic mark to indicate organic status.

5.5.2. The PGS group shall establish policies and procedures to control the use and display of their logo, including the discontinuance of its use. The PGS group’s logo may be subjected to registration, which is handled by the Intellectual Property Office of the




Philippines (IPOPIL) to protect its integrity from misuse by other entities outside the PGS group.


5.5.3. The PGS group shall take appropriate actions against incorrect or misleading use of certificates, Philippine PGS Guaranteed Organic mark, and PGS group's logo.

- Section 6. **Annexes.** All normative annexes of this Circular are required for compliance while informative annexes are provided as reference documents that may be adopted or improved by the group.
- Section 7. **Separability Clause.** If any provision of this Circular be declared invalid or unconstitutional, the other provisions not affected thereby shall remain valid and subsisting.
- Section 8. **Repealing Clause.** All prior issuances, rules, regulations, or part thereof which are inconsistent with this Circular are hereby revoked, amended, or modified accordingly.
- Section 9. **Amendments.** This Circular shall be reviewed as deemed necessary by the BAFS and/or the NOAB. Revisions shall take into consideration significant changes due to legal, market, or standards development.
- Section 10. **Effectivity.** This Circular shall take effect after fifteen (15) days following the completion of its publication in the Official Gazette or a newspaper of general circulation and its filing with the National Administrative Register of the University of the Philippines Law Center.

Done this 28th day of April 2022.

Approved by:


WILLIAM D. DAR, Ph.D.
Secretary

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

in replying pls cite this code :
For Signature: S-04-22-0194
Received : 04/11/2022 11:10 AM



Annex A
(Normative)

**List of Philippine National Standards (PNS) and Regulations
Relevant to Organic Agriculture**

- I. The Philippine National Standards (PNS) for organic agriculture, against which the organic production and its products are evaluated, are the current version of the following standards:

PNS Title	Description
PNS for Organic Agriculture	This Standard specifies the minimum requirements for organic agriculture covering the following scopes, namely: (a) conversion; (b) crop production; (c) animal production; (d) beekeeping; (e) processing; (f) special products; (g) labeling and consumer information; and (h) traceability.
PNS for Organic Aquaculture	This Standard establishes the guidelines for the operation of organic aquaculture in different aquatic environments (fresh, brackish and marine) and the production of quality fishery products that are safeguarded from contamination of harmful and toxic chemical substances and use of artificial ingredients, from pre-production to marketing to enhance food safety for human consumption and to provide options to consumers/markets.
PNS for Organic Soil Amendments	This Standard applies to organic fertilizers, compost / soil conditioner, microbial inoculants, and organic plant supplements.
PNS for Organic biocontrol agents – Microbials and botanicals – Minimum data requirements	This Standard specifies the minimum data requirements for the safety assessment of organic biocontrol agents, specifically for microbials and botanicals.
PNS for Organic Milled Rice - Code of Practice	This standard establishes a system within organic agriculture mainly for post-production operations of organic milled rice, <i>Oryza sativa L.</i>
PNS for Organic Aquaculture feeds	This Standard applies to the formulation and preparation of nutritionally adequate complete organic aquaculture feeds or <i>aquafeeds</i> , either farm-made or



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OIC-Chief, Records Division
Department of Agriculture

[Handwritten signature]

PNS Title	Description
	commercial, for culture of aquatic animals such as fish and crustacean. This also covers organic <i>aquafeeds</i> that are custom-mixed, organic feed ingredients and additives, and other feed products claimed organic.
PNS for Code of Practice for the Production of Organic Soil Amendments	This Code covers the general practices for the production of organic soil amendments in order to achieve the minimum requirements specified under the Philippine National Standard for Organic Soil Amendments. Emphasis is made on how to minimize contamination from microbiological, physical, and chemical hazards in accordance with the relevant provisions under the Philippine National Standard for Organic Agriculture.

- II. The relevant regulations for organic agriculture that must be complied with by the PGS group are the following:

Regulations Title	Description
Department Circular No. 09, Series of 2020--National List of Permitted Substances for Organic Agriculture	This Circular provides the National List of Permitted Substances for Organic Agriculture. The use of the National List shall be in combination with the applicable current PNS relevant to organic agriculture.
Guidelines for the Accreditation of core PGS groups and its Operations as Organic Certifying Bodies	This Circular provides the requirements and procedures for the accreditation of core PGS groups by the Bureau of Agriculture and Fisheries Standards.

Any PNS for organic agriculture and regulations relevant to organic agriculture that will be developed after effectivity of this Circular shall become a normative document for the PGS group to refer to and comply with unless the purpose of the regulations is otherwise not necessary for the PGS group. The BAFS shall provide public announcement on the effectivity of these new regulations, accordingly.

Annex B
(Informative)

Sample PGS Forms

B.1. Membership Application Form

Note: This form is provided as a reference document that may be adopted or improved by the group.

B.1. Membership Application Form
(Note: This form is provided as a reference document that may be adopted or improved by the group.)

Date of application (MM/DD/YY):

I. Classification of membership *(Please check whichever is applicable)*

Primary Stakeholders:	Support Sectors:	Supplier Group:
<input type="checkbox"/> Farmer	<input type="checkbox"/> Academic	<input type="checkbox"/> Planting Materials
<input type="checkbox"/> Processor	<input type="checkbox"/> Financial Institution	<input type="checkbox"/> Inputs
<input type="checkbox"/> Trader	<input type="checkbox"/> NGO	<input type="checkbox"/> Machineries/ Equipment
<input type="checkbox"/> Consumer	<input type="checkbox"/> PO	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Others	

II. Applicant's Information

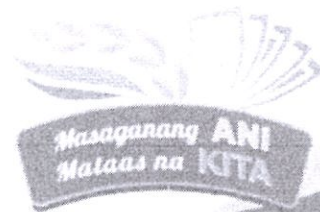
Name of Applicant:			
Sex: <i>(Optional)</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Female <input type="checkbox"/> Male	Date of birth: <i>(MM/DD/YY)</i>	
Please check all that applies	<input type="checkbox"/> Person with disability <input type="checkbox"/> Member of Indigenous Peoples Community <input type="checkbox"/> Senior Citizen		
Contact number:			
Address:			
Name of organization or affiliation, if applicable:			

I agree that I will undergo the process for membership which includes attending the orientation and relevant training. I will cooperate and fulfill my obligations including financial, if necessary.

_____	_____
Signature of Applicant	Date signed
Received by:	
_____	_____
Authorized PGS group representative	Date of receipt

PRIVACY STATEMENT
The (PGS Group Name) is committed to protect and respect your personal data. We recognize our responsibilities and our data subject's right under the Republic Act No. 10173, also known as the Data Privacy Act of 2012.

PRIVACY CONSENT
By filling out this form, you have read and understood the Group's Data Privacy Statement and expressed your consent for (PGS Group Name) to collect, store, use, share, process and update your personal information.



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SLG
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OIC-Chief, Records Division
Department of Agriculture

5/6/22

B.2. Membership Agreement

Note: This form is provided as a reference document that may be adopted or improved by the group.

KNOW ALL MEN BY THESE PRESENTS:

This Agreement is made and entered into by and between:

[name of member] with principal address within the municipality/city of [name of municipality/city], hereinafter referred to as the **Member**.

and

The [name of PGS group] represented herein by their respective **PGS Core Group Members** hereinafter referred to as the first party, "[PGS group]".

WITNESSETH:

- A. That the **Member** of the [PGS Group] shall adhere to the roles and responsibilities as (check whichever is applicable):

- | | |
|--------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Primary Stakeholder (farmer, processor, trader, consumer) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Supplier Group |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Support Sector |

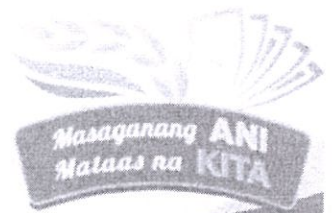
A.1. That as a primary stakeholder:

1. Have the highest involvement in the development and implementation of internal standards, policies and procedures, and conduct of information dissemination activities. Involvement of primary stakeholders includes:
 - a. Make a pledge that they understand and commit to adhere to the Manual of Operations (internal standards, and policies and procedures) of the PGS group;
 - b. Directly engage in the day-to-day operations of their PGS, particularly in the peer review, certification, and monitoring of other farms and farmers;
 - c. Participate in the capability building activities;
 - d. Provide assistance to other stakeholders;
 - e. Provide valuable management expertise to the group; and
 - f. Perform such other functions as deemed necessary by the group.

A.2. That as a Supplier Group member:

1. Ensure that their produce or products are compliant with the applicable current PNS and relevant regulations;
2. Make a pledge that they understand and commit to adhere to the internal standards and procedures of the PGS group;
3. Participate in the capability building activities; and
4. Be involved in the PGS activities and perform other functions as determined by the PGS group.

Page 1 of 2



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Department of Agriculture

A.3. That as a Support Sectors member:

1. Support the operations of the PGS group through provision of technical and/or financial assistance;
2. Make a pledge that they understand and commit to adhere to the internal standards and procedures of the PGS group; and
3. Be involved in the PGS activities and perform other functions as determined by the PGS group.

A. That the **PGS group** shall adhere to the following responsibilities to the Member:

1. Ensure involvement of the Member in the development of internal standards, policies, and procedures;
2. Ensure that the Member has adequate knowledge, understanding, and skills to implement organic agriculture according to the internal standards set/adopted by the PGS group through various capability building activities such as key field trainings for farmer members and residents in their locality to promote organic agriculture;
3. Provide relevant information to all stakeholders;
4. Ensure that the Member obtains and maintains PGS certified status according to the PGS group's shared vision through the principles of participation, trust, horizontality, and transparency;
5. Assist Member to maintain and regain certification status; and
6. Take appropriate action against incorrect or misleading use of certificates and mark or seal.

II. TERMINATION CLAUSE

This Membership Agreement shall remain in effect until terminated by either or both parties in formal writing, subject to the policies and procedures of the PGS group.

III. EFFECTIVITY

This Membership Agreement shall take effect immediately upon signing of both parties.

In witness whereof, the parties have signed this Membership Agreement at _____ this _____ day of [month, year].

Signed by:

Authorized PGS Group Representative
(Signature over printed name)

Member
(Signature over printed name)

Signed in the presence of:

Witness
(Signature over printed name)

Page 2 of 2

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[Signature]
SCILLA H. LEGASPI
OIC-Chief, Records Division
Department of Agriculture
[Signature]

B.3. Farmer's Pledge

Note: This form is provided as a reference document that may be adopted or improved by the group.

B.3. Farmer's Pledge

Note: This form is provided as a reference document that may be adopted or improved by the group.

Name:	
ID Code:	
Address:	

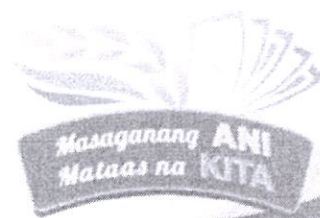
I, the undersigned, accepts to become a member of the Participatory Guarantee System (PGS) group (name of the group). I promise to adhere to the PGS groups internal standards, and policies and procedures. **With this, I swear that:**

1. I will adhere to the internal standards, policies, and procedures set by the group to acquire and maintain organic certification status.
2. I will NOT use synthetic pesticides such as insecticides, herbicides, fungicides, fertilizers, chemically treated or genetically modified seeds or substances and materials not listed in the National List of Permitted Substances for Organic Agriculture.
3. I will maintain the integrity of my organic production system and ensure that there shall be no commingling and contamination with uncertified produce and products during storage, processing, transport and sale.
4. I will work with my fellow farmers and attend Regular Assemblies, meetings and other capability building activities to expand and share my knowledge of the standards, policies, procedures, and organic production technologies.
5. I will advertise, label, and sell my produce and products as organic only when they have undergone a participatory certification process and issued with a Participatory Organic Certificate (POC).
6. I will comply with the policies on the use of the group's logo, and the Philippine PGS Guaranteed Organic Mark.
7. I will allow the peer reviewers, certification committee members, relevant authorities (i.e., BAFS, DA Regulatory Agencies) to access the premises of my farm for the purposes of inspection, audit, and related procedures.
8. I will report all non-compliances to the internal standards, policies, and procedures found on my farm (including unintentional) to the PGS group.
9. I will uphold my responsibilities and accountability as a member of the primary stakeholders of the PGS group.
10. I will exercise my right to vote, and right to be elected in the key positions of the PGS group.
11. I will perform the duties I agreed to be assigned to me and endeavour to uphold them with utmost confidence and impartiality.
12. All information I have provided is correct and accurate, and I will keep my information up to date.

Farmer Member
(Signature over printed name)

Authorized PGS Group
Representative
(Signature over printed name)

Place	
Date Time	



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[Signature]
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B.4. Self-Review and Peer Review Form

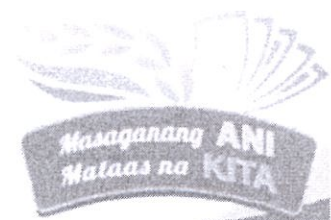
Note: This form is provided as a reference document that may be adopted or improved by the group.

Self-Review and Peer review Form (Sample)

Reference Standards		
Date of Self review		
Peer reviewer(s) assigned		
Date of Peer Review	Details of Peer Review Activity	Remark(s)
Proposed duration of next peer review: (Date)		
Reason(s):		
Any finding(s) that require immediate action of the PGS group and/or reviewers.		

To be filled out by the farmer member during self-review		To be filled out by the peer reviewer	
Direction: Please provide all information. Put 'not applicable' or 'N/A' whenever necessary.		Direction: Please put (✓) for complied/fulfilled; NC - for non-compliance; NA - for not applicable	
Date conducted		Evaluation	Findings
Farmer's Name			
Farm address			
Contact number			
I. Organic Production and Activities			
Activities: Direction: Please check box if applicable			
Farm Production	Crop production <small>(10% produced to 1 Farm Producer)</small>	Aquaculture	
	Animal production <small>(10% produced to 1 Farm Producer)</small>	Beekeeping	
	Special Products	Mushroom production	
Wild harvest <small>(10% produced to 1 Farm Producer)</small>			
Postharvest and minimal processing			
Processing/Input production			

Storage and Handling			
Trading and distribution			
II. Commodities and Quantities for Certification			
Commodities	Area (ha)	Estimated Quantity of Commodity per year (indicate units)	Details of the estimate (Basis for estimated quantity)
III. Farm Description			
A. Crop Production			
Plot No.	Land size/Area	Commodity	Brief Description <small>(Indicate the management practice(s) adopted/used. Proceed to the following sections to provide further details)</small>
Seeds or Planting Materials			
Commodity	Source(s) of seed or planting material(s) <small>Owned Other sources (indicate source)</small>		Brief description of seeds or planting materials storage
Soil fertility management and use of organic fertilizers			
Lot No.	Input(s) used	Amount used (kg/ha)	Details of Application
Other Management Practice(s), if any			
Management Practice	Brief Description		



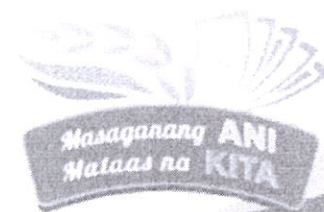
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Pest Management Practice(s)		Brief Description <small>(Indicate the management practice(s) applied)</small>		
Plot No.	Pest Problem encountered			
B. Animal Production				
Animal Species	Stocking Density	Actual Number of heads on-site	Number of days organically reared	Number of days for slaughter or selling
Description of animal housing				
Description of waste management (manure)				
Breeds and Breeding practice(s)				
Type of Animal	Breeding Method	Species/Breed	Number and Source of Stock <small>(own farm, brought in)</small>	
Animal Nutrition				
Animal Species	Feeding stuff/feed ingredient(s)	Origin and Status	Amount	

Description of feeding systems for each animal species				
Description of feeding rations/feed ingredients per animal species per growing period				
In case of supplementation of vitamins or minerals, list down types and sources				
Animal Health				
Animal Species and type of disease or pest	Veterinary Drug Used	Dosage used and Duration of Treatment	Withdrawal period observed	Date of last administration of the veterinary drug
Description of preventive measure to ensure health of the animals				
Description of vaccination practice for animals (indicate vaccine(s) used, administration, and interval)				
Description of monitoring diseases and recording of treatments				
C. Traceability and Recordkeeping				
Description of coding system for production sites				



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Description of recordkeeping system:			
List down available documents and records of purchase, handlings, sales, and inventory of organic products.			
D. Post-harvest and minimal processing			
Post-harvest activities	Location of activities	Person responsible	Description of activities
Water used for cleaning			
Description of cleaning and sanitation procedure for facilities, tools, equipment, and/or machineries			
Description of pest control measure in the facility			
Description of waste management			
<i>All information I have provided is correct and accurate to the best of my knowledge.</i>			
Name and signature of farmer/member			
Date and time			
Peer Review Report			
<i>(To be filled out by the peer reviewers)</i>			
Summary of Findings			
Recommendation(s)			



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[Signature]
SCILLA H. LEGASPI
 OIC-Chief, Records Division
 Department of Agriculture

[Signature]

B.5. Committee Review Form

Note: This form is provided as a reference document that may be adopted or improved by the group.

B.5. Committee Review Form

Note: This form is provided as a reference document that may be adopted or improved by the group.

ID Code:	Name of farmer member:		
Farm:			
Farm Address:			
Name of Peer Reviewer(s):			
Date of Peer Review:		Time:	
Purpose:			
<input type="checkbox"/> New/Renewal application		<input type="checkbox"/> Monitoring	

Summary of Findings:

Finding(s)	Classification (Major / Minor/Administrative)	Corrections and corrective action taken	Date Closed

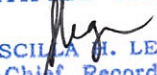
**Use additional sheets if necessary.*

Remarks: (Commendable findings, Opportunities for improvement)

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 Department of Agriculture

5/6/20

Committee Decision:

For Application (New and Renewal):

Approved

Disapproved*

For Monitoring:

Verified Continued Compliance

Verified with Non-compliance(s)

Suspended*
for _____ months.

Revoked*

Other sanction(s), if applicable:

Reason(s) for disapproval/suspension/revocation:

*The applicant or farmer member may appeal for these decisions.

SIGNED:

Chair, Certification Committee

Committee member(s)

Date _____

Received by

Name and Signature
Farmer Member

Date



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[Signature]
SCILLA H. LEGASPI
OIC-Chief, Records Division
Department of Agriculture

[Signature]

B.6. Sample Participatory Organic Certificate

Note: This form is provided as a reference document that may be adopted or improved by the group.

[PGS Group's Mark or Seal] [PGS GROUP NAME] [Address of the PGS Group] [Contact Details]		
[Certificate Number]		
This Participatory Organic Certificate is issued to:		
[NAME OF FARMER MEMBER] [Farmer/Producer Code] [Address of the farmer and farm]		
with the following commodities (produce and products):		
List of Commodity	Approximate Volume of Production per Year	Area (in ha)

The [PGS group name] attests to have peer reviewed the above-mentioned farmer member and its above-mentioned commodities, and have found in accordance with the internal standards, policies and procedures of the group.

Date of Issuance:	DD Month YYYY (e.g. 24 October 2022)	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; display: inline-block;"> [Philippine PGS Guaranteed Organic Mark] (optional) </div>
Date of Expiry:	DD Month YYYY (e.g. 23 October 2025)	

This certificate is in force until its validity expires, provided that the above-mentioned farmer member continues to comply with the internal standards, policies and procedures of the group. Based on the annual monitoring that the PGS group performs, this certificate is updated and kept into force. Terms and conditions apply. Any alterations to this certificate will render the certificate invalid.

_____ Chair/President, Management Committee
Date: _____

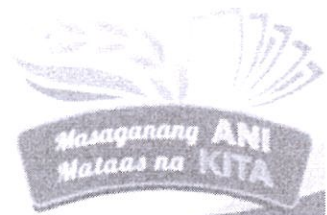
Terms and Conditions:

1. Approved status gives the farmer member the right to use the group's mark or seal and the 'Philippine PGS Organic Guaranteed' mark during the period of validity of its approved organic certification.
2. The mark shall always accompany the logo or name of the PGS Group and its accreditation number and may appear only on organic certificate issuances, and on all certified products under its approved scope/s.
3. In case of disapproval the farmer member has the right to appeal to the Appeals Committee within 2 weeks upon receipt of this decision.
4. The farmer member and their farm shall be subjected to annual monitoring of continued compliance (peer review).
5. Renewal process may start six months prior to the expiration date.


B.7. Appeals and Complaint Form

Note: This form is provided as a reference document that may be adopted or improved by the group.

B.7. Appeals and Complaint Form	
<i>Note: This form is provided as a reference document that may be adopted or improved by the group.</i>	
Part I. Filing of Appeal/Complaint. (To be filled up by the Complainant/Appellant.)	
ID Code (if applicable):	Date:
Name of Complainant/Appellant:	Time:
For Appeal:	
Nature of Appeal:	<input type="checkbox"/> Denied Certification <input type="checkbox"/> Suspension/revocation of Certificate <input type="checkbox"/> Other (e.g. Peer Review Findings)
Narrative: <i>(Note: Attach additional justification for the appeal or complaint, and the corresponding evidence)</i>	
Requested action:	
For Complaints:	
Date and Time of Incident:	
Subject of Complaint:	
Summary of Complaint/Issue:	
Requested Action:	
Page 1 of 2	



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 Department of Agriculture

5/6/22

Part 2. Committee Decision. *(To be filled up by Appeals Committee Representative)*

Action(s) Taken:

Committee Decision

Approved requested action

Disapproved requested action *due to the following reasons:*

In lieu of the requested action, the following is/are the action(s) to be taken:

Signed:

Chair, Appeals Committee

Committee Member(s):



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[Signature]
SCYLLAH. LEGASPI
OIC-Chief, Records Division
Department of Agriculture

[Signature]

Annex C
(Normative)

Classification of findings and timeline for implementation of corrections and corrective action plan

1. Purpose

This document provides clarification and guidance on the classification of findings and the severity of potential non-compliances (NCs) arising from audits, defines the timeline required to close NCs, and verification of implementation of compliance plan by PGS group's farmer members.

2. Classification of findings

According to its severity, all findings shall be classified as *major*, *minor*, or *administrative* in line with the definitions below:

2.1. Major Noncompliance

A systemic failure or significant deficiency - either as a single incident or a combination of a number of similar incidents - in part of the quality system, or the lack of implementation of such a part, governed by applicable standards. A number of NCs identified against one requirement of the relevant standards can represent a total breakdown of the system and thus be considered a major NC.

2.2. Minor Noncompliance

An isolated or sporadic lapse in the content or implementation of procedures or records which could reasonably lead to a systemic failure or significant deficiency of the system if not corrected. If a pattern of minor NCs occurs over successive assessments, it may represent a systemic failure or significant deficiency of the system and a major NC shall be issued.

2.3. Administrative Non-compliance

An act (action or omission) that violates the membership agreement.

Table A. Classification of findings and possible scenario, and corresponding sanction

Classification of NC	Findings	Possible Scenario	Sanctions
Major (standards)	Clear violation of internal standards	Use of GMOs and prohibited substances	Revocation of certification until corrective



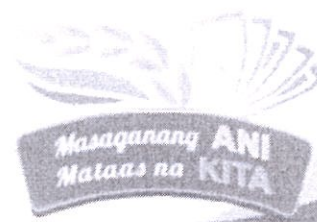
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[Signature]
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Department of Agriculture

Classification of NC	Findings	Possible Scenario	Sanctions
	Validated fraudulent activities	Use of PGS group's mark or seal and/or Philippine PGS Guaranteed Organic mark on products not certified	action(s) are implemented
	Repeated and/or multiple minor non-compliances	Three (3) or more minor non-compliances associated with the same requirement or issue could demonstrate a systemic failure	
Minor (standards)	Poor recordkeeping	No receipts of purchased inputs	To be determined by the PGS group
	Mismanagement of the field	Improper waste disposal	
	Failure to observe BAFS rules on the use of "Philippine PGS Guaranteed Organic" mark.	Use of the "Philippine PGS Guaranteed Organic" mark on tarpaulins	
Administrative	Breach of Membership agreement	Missing attendance to required field day or activity	To be determined by the PGS group
	Repeated and/or multiple administrative non-compliances		

3. Sanction

The PGS group shall adopt this guide for the classification of findings to determine the appropriate sanction(s) for the findings as agreed by the group.



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OIC-Chief, Records Division
Department of Agriculture

S/6/n

4. Timeline for Implementation of Corrective Action Plan

Timelines to implement appropriate action(s) to demonstrate compliance shall become effective after the closing meeting has been held and the Peer Review Results have been acknowledged by the farmer member.

- 4.1. Minor NC shall be fully addressed and compliance demonstrated within a period up to 12 months.
- 4.2. Major NC identified during peer review and other monitoring activities shall be fully addressed and compliance demonstrated within a period up to 3 months.
- 4.3. In cases where the Peer Review Committee concludes that the major NC(s) identified creates a risk to the integrity of the certification, the member may be required to implement action(s) to correct and demonstrate compliance immediately or within a period of less than 3 months.
- 4.4. The implementation of the actions might take more time depending on the severity of the NC. In such cases, the corrective action plan must include any temporary measures or controls necessary to mitigate the risk until the permanent corrective action is implemented.
- 4.5. A Major NC is automatically raised in the event of non-completion of the approved corrective action plan.
- 4.6. Major NC identified in an initial peer review, or during a peer review process for extension of certification scope, preclude recognition being recommended or the scope from being extended.
- 4.7. Extensions of timelines beyond 12 months for minor NC, and 3 months for major NC shall be subject to the approval of the PGS group or its appropriate committee.
- 4.8. A farmer member may only appeal an NC raised by the peer review within the period as determined by the PGS group.



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[Signature]
SCILLA H. LEGASPI
OIC-Chief, Records Division
Department of Agriculture

[Signature]

Annex D (Normative) Report Template

Name of Organization _____
 Name of Authorized Representative _____
 Designation _____

Farmer/Producer Code	Contact details of farmer members			Classification of Membership	Date of Membership Approval (MM/DD/YY)	POC Status
	Name (Surname, Given Name, MI)	Contact Number	Email			
				PS		Active
				SS		Suspended
				SS		Revoked

Name of Organization _____
 Name of Authorized Representative _____
 Designation _____

Farmer/Producer Code	Contact details of farmer members			Participatory Organic Certificate		POC Status	Date of peer reviews conducted (MM/DD/YYYY)	Findings/Reason for Suspension/Revocation
	Name (Surname, Given Name, MI)	Contact Number	Email	Date of Issuance (MM/DD/YYYY)	Date of Expiry (MM/DD/YYYY)			
						Suspended		
						Revoked		

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 with empowered and prosperous farmers and fisherfolk



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 SC LIA H. LEGASPI
 OIC-Chief, Records Division
 Department of Agriculture