EATingCRAFT: EducAtion Towards the CReation of Alternative Food neTworks
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The Introduction to Participatory Guarantee System is available in EN, FR, ES, GR, CZ, Hu, IT here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vb1hfrswKMg

The full documentary is available in EN, FR, ES, PT, KO here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GbwiCwhlAEs
1. What is a guarantee system for organic agriculture?

The different types of guarantee
Organic agriculture is a production system that sustains the health of soils, ecosystems, and people. It relies on ecological processes, biodiversity, and cycles adapted to local conditions, rather than the use of inputs with adverse effects. Organic agriculture combines tradition, innovation, and science to benefit the shared environment and promote fair relationships and a good quality of life for all involved.

-- Official IFOAM Definition --
Consumers pay a premium price, or make an extra efforts to seek organic products, because they believe that such products correspond to particular efforts at the production level.

Producers should produce according to expectations. They commit to follow a set of organic practices.

Organic practices are often laid down in an organic standard, which gives to the producers following such standard the access to an organic label.

Label = consumer recognition and trust.

Who guarantees that the producers really follow the standard? → organic guarantee system
Basis of an Organic Guarantee System

- an **organic standard**, which contains the production requirements that organic farmers, processors (and traders) must comply with;

- an **organic verification system** (also sometimes called conformity assessment system, or “control system” in the case of third party certification), which can be either third party certification or PGS and serves to verify compliance to the standard (in a **consistent** way)

- an organic consumer-facing **label** which is a logo put on the products that have successfully been guaranteed through the organic guarantee system.
Who provides the organic guarantee?

- First party is the producer himself. Second party is the another producer, the buyer, a consumer (etc.). A third party is a person or organization that is independent from the producer and the buyer and has nothing to do with the value chain.

- First party guarantee: Self Claim

- Second party guarantee: e.g. PGS.

- Third-party certification: Independent certification body
Participatory Guarantee Systems (PGS) are **locally focused quality assurance systems**. They certify producers based on active **participation** of stakeholders and are built on a foundation of **trust, social networks and knowledge exchange**.

--- Official IFOAM Definition ---
Do not confuse PGS and Group Certification

Group Certification and Internal Control System:

• An Internal Control System (ICS) is the part of a documented quality assurance system that allows an external certification body to delegate the periodical inspection of individual group members to an identified body or unit within the certified operator. This means that the third party certification bodies only have to inspect the well-functioning of the system, as well as to perform a few spot-check re-inspections of individual smallholders.
How do Third Party and PGS align

- PGS and Third Party are regarded by IFOAM – Organics International as a complimentary approaches to Organic Guarantees and Certification.

- The idea is that different producers in different situations need different solution.
2. PGS development worldwide
Current Status of PGS worldwide

- Around **567’142 smallholders** are benefiting from the system and **496’104** are already **certified**.
- **223 PGS initiatives** exist worldwide of which 57 are under development and 166 are fully operational,
- **South-East Asia and Latin America** are the regions with the highest level of PGS development

Source: IFOAM – Organics International PGS survey 2019
# PGS in Europe: Producers involved

## Farmers involved in PGS

*Source: IFOAM – Organics International PGS survey 2019*

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</table>
The growth of PGS worldwide

Numbers of producers PGS certified worldwide 2013-2019

Source: IFOAM – Organics International PGS survey 2019
The growth of PGS worldwide

Number of PGS initiatives operational worldwide 2013-2019

Source: IFOAM – Organics International PGS survey 2019
The Global Map of PGS initiatives

https://pgs.ifoam.bio/
3. Political justification for supporting PGS
Why supporting PGS?

- PGS offers numerous benefits, including:
  - improved access to organic markets through a guarantee system for small-scale producers (more affordable than third party certification),
  - increased education and awareness among consumers (by involving them in the guarantee process),
  - promotion of short supply chains and local market development,
  - farmer capacity building and empowerment.
  - Create tools for implementing local democracy

- Public support in the initial stage of PGS development is necessary to provide resources for investment in capacity building and organizational development.
4. Enabling measures (combined push-pull)

a. National Data production and dissemination
   Main report section | PPT | Policy Summary

b. Support the institutional development of organic associations
   Main report section | Policy Summary

c. Build organic expertise within the public sector
   Main report section | PPT | Policy Summary

d. Support to PGS development
   Main report section | PPT | Policy Summary

e. Support to urban gardening and collective gardens
   Main report section | Policy Summary
Resources: Why invest in PGS?

Available at: http://www.fao.org/3/ca6641en/ca6641en.pdf
Published for the first time in 2011, this Policy Brief on PGS is a landmark in IFOAM’s advocacy work. The document targets policy makers and advocates that wish to support PGS not only through recognition in their national organic regulatory systems, but also through different form of support aiming at promoting rather than regulating.

Other international organizations supporting PGS development

FAO (Since 2006, when they assisted PGS development in India)

“PGS brings an original example of how to enable small producers to access and secure markets through a participative and collective certification mechanism.”
-Denis Herbel, FAO officer
Forms of support to PGS

- The right regulatory framework is very important: accommodate PGS in the organic regulation (See IFOAM-OI policy brief “How Governments Can Support PGS”).

- Finance projects that set-up PGS initiatives (must be at least 3-years long).

- Ongoing support: partial funding of existing PGS initiatives for expenses such as farmer training, committee meetings, development of standards and operating manuals, communication and networking.
Other examples

- In India the Government has been increasingly supporting PGS for its national market, developing a unique example of a large-scale government-facilitated PGS program, coordinated by its National Centre for Organic Farming, under the Ministry of Agriculture. The government has allocated a significant amount of money to promote conversion to organic farming and adoption of PGS through various programs.

- Peru, several local governments support PGS through local official recognition and supporting their implementation.

- The municipality of Bella Vista in Argentina is an active stakeholder in the set-up of their local PGS.

- The government of Mexico, in 2010 gave support of around EUR 82,000 to the national PGS network to form 20 PGS initiatives.

- In Costa Rica the government provided technical and financial support for the establishment of PGS initiatives.

- Brazil: In 2016, EUR 91,000 for support to family farmers and technicians involved in PGS initiatives.

- Central and local government in the Philippines support PGS through funding initial operation, including training, committee meetings, and development of standards and manual of operations.
4. Key Elements and Features of PGS
PGS and local sustainable food systems is available in EN, FR, CC, HU, GR here: https://youtu.be/VfRmaqWaB5A
These guidelines make the cornerstone of the toolkit. They highlight how, although developed independently in different countries and cultural contexts, PGS initiatives around the world share a common set of key elements and features. This revised edition of the PGS guidelines also propose a step by step approach for implementing PGS and introduce other important concepts like marketing and organisational arrangement.

Available at: https://www.ifoam.bio/sites/default/files/pgs_guidelines_en.pdf
PGS aim to …

**provide a credible organic guarantee to consumers seeking organic produce…**

- …creating meaningful relationships between stakeholders, based on democracy and inclusion
- …at a reasonable cost for the farmer
- …building alternative food networks
- …reestablishing ownerships of production standards and certification
- …supporting agroecological approach (science-practice-movement)
- …fostering food sovereignty
Motivation behind starting a PGS:

- Make organic claims (or differentiate organic produce from conventional produce, or ensure the organic quality of the produce)
- Less administrative burden for producers
- Customers need assurance
- Frustration with OA regulation/3rd party certification
- Improved knowledge sharing and participation
- Community building/empowerment
- Build local food systems

What would be yours?
The Key PGS Elements

- Participation
- Shared Vision
- Transparency
- Trust
- Horizontality
- Learning Process
Key features of PGS

1. Norms conceived by the stakeholders
2. Grassroots organization
3. Suitable to smallholder agriculture
4. Principles and values that enhance livelihoods and promote organic agriculture.
5. Documented management systems and procedures
6. Mechanisms to verify farmer’s compliance
7. Mechanisms for supporting farmers
8. Farmer’s pledge or similar (contract etc..)
9. Seals or labels
10. Clear and previously defined consequences
Participatory Guarantee Systems

**KEY ELEMENTS**

- **Shared Vision**
- **Trust**
- **Horizontality**
- **Transparency**
- **Participation**
- **Learning Process**

**FEATURES**

- **Grassroots Organization**
- **Principles & Values**
- **Norms**
- **Clear, pre-defined Consequences**
- **Documented Management Systems & Procedures**
- **Mechanisms to Verify Compliance**
- **Suitable to Smallholder Agriculture**
- **Seals or Labels**

Source: IFoAM - Organics International (www.ifoam.bio/pgs)
Stakeholders participation is the essence of PGS

They participate in:

• Shaping and selection of standards
• Designing the procedures
• Decision making
• Verification procedures

→ Peer review
Peer review

Process where farmers belonging to the PGS together with consumers and other stakeholders assess the production practices of their peers.

It is the core of the PGS system.

It means that the quality control is not carried out by an external inspector but by the members of the same group.
PGS: more than a guarantee system

• Bring people together

• Is a tool for collective actions bringing opportunities for cooperation and other social processes

• Generates learning and improvement of practices for farmers and consumers

• Build alternative food systems

These benefits may even be perceived as bigger benefits of the PGS than the certification itself
5. First steps in PGS implementation
Group of stakeholders comes together

1. Situation analysis
2. Stakeholders share the vision
3. Agree and then document how the PGS will work
4. Build awareness for standards and make pledge
5. Map farm and record farm details
6. Internal monitoring/peer review
7. Certification approval
1. Situation analysis

To understand if **PGS is relevant/important/necessary** for a certain group of stakeholders, they should understand:

- the context in which it would be implemented,
- the needs of those involved,
- the challenges and the opportunities
2. Build a shared vision

• The PGS development is the implementation of a Shared Vision

• Building a shared vision through a participatory process is an essential step in the PGS development

• People need to understand the benefits they can get from joining a PGS

• They also need to make a commitment towards achieving this common goal.

• No matter how complex or easy is this vision, the important thing is to ensure that it is accepted and understood by all members.
3. Agree and define how the PGS will work

A PGS initiative should have:

- Shared vision (Charter or similar)
- Standards
- Rules/norms: including consequences for non-compliance
- Pledge/contract between members of the PGS
- Documented management systems and procedures
- Certificate
- Producers database
- Logo (optional)
- Legal entity (optional)
How PGS normally work:

1. Standards and Rules conceived by all members

2. Members joining the PGS declare to share the vision

3. Mechanisms to verify compliance

4. Verification of producers through peer reviews

5. Approval

6. Certification

Documents:
1. Standards and Rules
2. Pledge/Contract
3. Farm visit questionnaire
4. Producers database
5. Farm review report
6. Certification + (Logo)
Deciding on the organic standard

- Standards = production rules

- It contains the production requirements that organic farmers, processors (and traders) must comply with.

- A PGS can decide to develop a new organic standard or to adapt an existing one.

- The development or adaptation of standard must be a participatory process

- Involving expert in organic farming could be beneficial
Deciding on the organic standard

- Standards can be lengthy documents. A **summary** is helpful.

- It is important that producers are:
  - aware of what the standards entail
  - have access to the principles and key messages in these standards
  - have access to a copy of the full standard.

Standards can be made available on the website of the PGS initiative i.e. for CNG where they’re summarized and in printer-friendly format: [https://www.cngfarming.org/certifications](https://www.cngfarming.org/certifications)
Examples: Production standards of N&P

15 technical production standards
PGS procedures

• **Describe operational aspects of a PGS:**

- requirements for application and membership
- steps to be followed in the organic verification process
- documentation requirements
- Procedures for improvement of practices
- sanctions relating to non-compliance.

All this information can be summarized in a manual or guidelines that should be distributed to all PGS members.
- Vision + objectives of the PGS
- Process to accept a new producer (Application form + procedure + fee scheme if any)
- Process to renew certificates (checklist + procedure)
- Peer review and decision on certification
- Roles and responsibilities in the PGS (producers and consumers)
- What data needs to be collected and kept?
- What happens in case of non-conformity?
- Rules for using the PGS labels
Input list

- Clearly define which inputs are allowed for producers and processors.
- In case of doubts about an input used during a peer review:
  - Ask for receipt
  - Write down the composition, take a picture of the product
  - Define a group of people within the initiative that are in charge of investigating such cases, including assessing new products coming on the market.
  - If possible consult with a specialist
Non compliance

- **Peer review is a tool for improving practices**, as well as a tool to **verify compliance**.

- There will always be circumstances where producers are unable or fail to comply with the standards and rules of their PGS.

- **PGS initiative should establish from the beginning clear pre-defined consequences for non-compliance**.

- The non-compliance (sanctions) should be graded to fit with the seriousness of the non-compliance.

- They have to be agreed by all stakeholders.

- Producers should be able to make an appeal in case they don’t agree with the sanctions.
4. Build awareness of the standards and make pledge

It’s fundamental that all actors involved understand and agree on the values and norms that define how the PGS will work, training is an essential step.

Once all stakeholders agree in being part of the PGS it’s important to formally ratify this decision through an written agreement or contract (if you deal with illiteracy issue, a recorded verbal pledge can be used)
Contrat d'engagement

Demande de mention 20__

Je soussigné(e), ........................................ Tel : ........................................
(Compéter par le nom d'une personne physique)
Au nom de ........................................ Fax : ........................................
(Compéter, le cas échéant, par le nom de la personne morale)
Adresse : ........................................ E-mail : ........................................

Demande à mention NATURE & PROGRES pour l'année 20__.

Je m'engage à :
- Appliquer au mieux la Charte Nature et Progrès,
- Respecter les règles de production du ou des cahiers des charges Nature & Progrès me concernant,
- Signaler sans délai et soumettre à l'approbation de la Fédération Nature & Progrès toute modification relative à mes produits,
- Observer le règlement d'utilisation de la mention Nature & Progrès et sa charte graphique, en particulier pour l'étiquetage de mes produits, documents de communication, panneaux d'affichage...
- Soumettre tout nouvel étiquetage à la COMAC fédérale ou la COMAC locale agréée,
- Accepter la visite, même imprévue, d'entreprises mandatées par la COMAC fédérale ou par la COMAC locale agréée, pour contrôler la conformité de mes pratiques vis-à-vis de la charte et des cahiers des charges de N&P sur l'ensemble de mon activité, ainsi que ma comptabilité,
- Transmettre les réception, à la COMAC fédérale ou la COMAC locale agréée, une copie du rapport de visite (recto verso) de l'organisme de contrôle pour l'année en cours ainsi que le certificat de conformité correspondant (cette obligation ne s'applique qu'à ceux qui sont certifiés « agriculture biologique »),
- Accepter mon adhésion et de mes frais de mention à la Fédération et au groupement local,
- Transmettre à la Fédération Nature et Progrès le moment de mon chiffre d'affaires de vente de produits sous mention N&P, éventuellement diminué de mes achats d'intrants sous mention N&P, et payer, à réception de la facture, ma cotisation solidaire sur chiffre d'affaires,
- Participer aux activités de mon groupe local Nature & Progrès et de la COMAC.

Ce contrat est renouvelé par tacite reconduction à la fin de l'année civile. Toute résiliation de sera signée dans les meilleurs délais à la Fédération Nature & Progrès par lettre recommandée.

Mon contrôle pour certification en agriculture biologique est fait par : ........................................ (nom de l'organisme certificatif)
Fait le : ........................................ Signature

Liste des productions 20__ pour lesquelles est demandée la mention Nature & Progrès :

[Blank space for list]

Contrat en deux exemplaires. Nous retourner cet exemplaire (2 pages) avec votre règlement à
Nature & Progrès, 13 boulevard Louis Blanc - 30100 Aïles
5. Map farm and record farm details

• Name of the producer and Company
• Address
• Local group to which they belong (if it is a PGS with several groups)
• Kinds of products
• Area of the farm (ha)
• Date on which he or she joined the group (= date of signing the commitment / pledge)
• Date of last peer review
• Certification decision
• Sanctions/ recommendations
• Etc....
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<td>Native utong, pechay, mustard, tomato, spinach, beans, dragong fruit, tonsoy, guayabano, banana, pomelo, jackfruit, mango, star apple, santol, guava, coconut, kalamansi, avocado</td>
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<td>1 ha</td>
<td>13. Mar.17</td>
<td>subukang gumaat ng crates upang hindi masira ang mga produkto; dagdagan ang compost at gumawa ng concoctions</td>
<td>passed from Aug 22, 2017 to Aug 22, 2018</td>
<td>March 2017-June 2017</td>
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<td>3 lots</td>
<td>13. Mar.17</td>
<td>mag-practice ng organic farming (fertilization and pest management); gumaat ng mas mataas na buffer katulad ng (nl), made de cacao at lba pa; hanggang maari, gumaat ng crates upang mapangalagaan ang mga produkto</td>
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<td>March 2017-June 2017</td>
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<td>Tabaan Norte, Tuba, Benguet</td>
<td>AOFA</td>
<td>rambutan, calamansi, jackfruit, pomelo, pineapple, guayabano, mango, maranggay native, longgan, pomelo, cacao, squash, ambiulag</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>23. Mar.17</td>
<td>magkaroon ng storage at packaging area, compost shed; lagyam ng kanal sa farm (lot 2)</td>
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<td>0.03</td>
<td>13. Mar.17</td>
<td>magdagdag ng compost; magdagdag ng concoction para sa nitrogen at insect repellent; magtanim ng sunflower</td>
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<td>March 2017-June 2017</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bejajeng, Taloy Norte</td>
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<td>onions, papaya, sayote, gabii, banana, salt, kamote, kamoteng, kahoy, pechay, sitting labuyo, unhas</td>
<td>0.005 sq.m</td>
<td>13. Mar.17</td>
<td>magtanim ng sunflower para sa contouring at magdagdag ng compost</td>
<td>passed from Aug 22, 2017 to Aug 22, 2018</td>
<td>March 2017-June 2017</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Palina, Taloy Sur, Tuba, Benguet</td>
<td>Ti Ubigt ti Biag Organic Farmer's Association</td>
<td>camote, lamut, cassava, gabii, ginster, tiul, upi, cacao, chinese mal, sili, panigang, sili, labuyo, pechay, mustard, corn, papaya, banana</td>
<td>0.35</td>
<td>21. Mar.17</td>
<td>isapapatuloy ang ng organic agriculture practice; dagdagan ang concoction katulad ng FPI, FFI, etc.</td>
<td>passed from Aug 22, 2017 to Aug 22, 2018</td>
<td>March 2017-June 2017</td>
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<tr>
<td>Palina, Taloy Sur, Tuba, Benguet</td>
<td>Ti Ubigt ti Biag Organic Farmer's Association</td>
<td>ampalaya, beans, eggplant, tomato, wing beans, fern, durian, guayabano, mango, sti apple, cacao, coconut, marang</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>21. Mar.17</td>
<td>maagiay ng buffer sa kanan bang haguls ng farm; dagdagan ang compost at concoction; maagiay ng storage at compost shed</td>
<td>passed from Aug 22, 2017 to Aug 22, 2018</td>
<td>March 2017-June 2017</td>
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Cloud based database

Good Market PGS
Software examples
Software examples
6. Internal monitoring/peer review

One of the main ways PGS ensures compliance with its members adopted organic standards is the peer review of another’s farm.

Peer review is a process whereby people in similar situations assess the production practices of their peers.

In PGS, a peer review takes place when producers, often accompanied by consumers and other stakeholders, visit a farm of another producer in their local group or region, to conduct a farm review. Peer review stands at the very core of PGS.
The Peer Review of Nature et Progrès is available in EN, FR, GR, CZ, HU, IT here: https://youtu.be/lv6hUtPSwG0
7. Certification approval

• The results of the peer review are summarized in a report

• The result are presented to a certification committee

• The decision is based on the results of the peer review reported and summarized in a peer review report
**PGS ENDORSEMENT**

This serves to confirm **Nature’s Heritage Drumblade and Walkerville properties** were assessed by the Bryanston Market PGS on 13 November 2017 and are endorsed to sell their products as:

**NATURALLY GROWN**

Based on compliance with the **Basic Production Principles of Bryanston Market PGS** and the adherence to the required guidelines, the following products are endorsed as grown according to organic principles:

<table>
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<th>Product</th>
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<td>Green Beans</td>
<td>Melon</td>
<td>Sweet potato</td>
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<td>Broccoli</td>
<td>Chillies</td>
<td>Kale</td>
<td>Pumpkin</td>
<td>Swiss Chard</td>
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<td>Leeks</td>
<td>Raspberries</td>
<td>Tomato</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cabbage</td>
<td>Gem Squash</td>
<td>Lettuce</td>
<td>Spinach</td>
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</tr>
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<td>Carrot</td>
<td>Granadilla</td>
<td>Marrows</td>
<td>Sweet Pepper</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For: Bryanston Market PGS Group

Bryanston Market PGS is a member of PGS South Africa (PGS-SA), a voluntary association of growers, retailers and consumers supporting organic agriculture and local food production based on the principles of ecology, health, fairness and care.

PGS-SA is a proud member of FOAM: Organics International and supports the development of organic agriculture in its full diversity worldwide.

This certificate is valid for 12 months from date of issue.

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**PGS - India**

A Participatory Organic Guarantee Programme
Department of Agriculture and Cooperation
Govt of India

**Scope Certificate**

Certify that the product(s) and area(s) of the farm belonging to PGS-India Group
at the address of the farm are in accordance with requirements of
PGS-India National Standards
For Organic Production
For the process of:

**Crop Production**

This Scope Certificate expired until 9/22/2017 with the required standards and PGS-India guidelines.

[Signature]

Signature of PGS India Group Leader
Local Group No: LIG10011107
6. Day to day operations
Day to day operations

A PGS initiative should have:

• A **coordinator/coordination team** supervising the day to day management, usually a member with technical ability and time availability (voluntary or paid position).
Typical roles of PGS coordination

1. Contact point for the PGS initiative.
2. Schedule meetings, trainings, etc.
3. Process PGS applications
4. Keeps and manages data about PGS members (database)
5. Coordinate schedule of the annual farm visits.
6. Follow-up incomplete documentation.
7. Local support for members.
### N&P Coordination team Calendar

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>December-January</td>
<td>Check the renewal of the commitment of N&amp;P certified producers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Check the producers members database (membership status, farm visit fee, etc.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February</td>
<td>New invoices are prepared and sent to all professionals within a week.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Preparation visits to be done for each COMAC with a summary of the budget funded by the federal office, with additional documents (summary sheets, etc.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Organization of a meeting-training day with the members participating the farm visits in the areas without local COMAC.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March to November</td>
<td>Process the farm visit report, consultation, if necessary, with the federal COMAC.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December</td>
<td>Evaluation of the farm visits: as a general reflection on the quality of the farm visits during the year</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Financial sustainability

• PGS rely on a lot of volunteer internal work, especially in the first years of implementation.

• Consumers can share the workload taking over different tasks.

• At least 3 years are needed to set-up a PGS initiative

• The financial sustainability comes from the market access and premium price compensating for their efforts in engaging in the PGS

• Membership fees also support the administration of the scheme and the defrayal volunteers' expenses.
7. Marketing
Marketing

• It is important to **maintain integrity** of organic PGS certified products after they leave the farm.

• Build market linkages → involve local retailers/food-coop

• Develop a **logo** (optional)

• Point of sales → in some cases the PGS establishes its own farmers market or point of sale

• If the PGS doesn’t have point of sale, it is important to verify possible misuse of the logo and check integrity of the products in the place where these products are sold.
Labels
Marketing_CNG Example

- Promotion of retailers that support CNG
- List of all producers

**List of CNG Farms**

United States

- Alabama
- California
- Colorado
- Connecticut
- Delaware
- Florida
- Georgia
- Hawaii
- Idaho
- Illinois
- Indiana
- Iowa
- Kansas
- Kentucky
- Louisiana
- Maine
- Maryland
- Massachusetts
- Michigan
- Minnesota
- Mississippi
- Missouri
- Montana
- Nebraska
- Nevada
- New Hampshire
- New Jersey
- New Mexico
- New York
- North Carolina
- North Dakota
- Ohio
- Oklahoma
- Oregon
- Pennsylvania
- Rhode Island
- South Carolina
- South Dakota
- Tennessee
- Texas
- Utah
- Virginia
- Washington
- West Virginia
- Wisconsin
- Wyoming

**Find CNG Farms Near You**

https://certified.naturallygrown.org/

**Key**

- **Recognized**: The co-op or grocer recognizes CNG certification in its promotional efforts.
- **Preferred**: When selecting vendors, managers of the market, co-op or grocer give preference to CNG producers because of their certification.
- **Required**: Vendors are required to hold a certification and CNG is one of the options.

**Stand out in your field**

**Marketing for Farmers**

https://certified.naturallygrown.org/
The use of the term “Organic” in the EU

• In the EU the use of the term organic is regulated by the regulation 2092/91

• This Regulation applies to the following products:
  • (a) unprocessed agricultural crop products
  • (b) processed agricultural crop and livestock products
  • (c) feeding stuffs

• The labelling and advertising of a product may refer to organic production methods only if it has been certified by a competent authority (third party certification body).

• PGS producers in Europe can not make organic claims on their products, however they can explain to their consumers that they produce using standards that are based on the ideals of the organic movement.
8. Focus on the peer review process
Peer Review

- Process where farmers belonging to the PGS together with consumers and other stakeholders assess the production practices of their peers.

- It is the core of the PGS system.

- It means that the quality control is not carried out by an external inspector but by the members of the same group.
Why

The goal of the peer review should be always two-fold:

• to verify that the standards are being upheld,
• to create the opportunity for producers to review their practices with their peers and reflect on how to improve further.

This is an exchange that goes beyond a simple control
A peer review is:

- An assessment of a producer that is either applying for the first time to become a member of a PGS or either that needs his/her certification to be renovated.
- A verification of the production practices, but it could/should also include an assessment of the broader sustainability goals of a producer.

The assessment is based on:
- Field observations
- Interview with the producer/processor
- Consultation of administrative and accounting documents

- The output from this process is a written report of the peer review visit (dated and signed) with details of what was seen and any non-compliance activities.
Generally, during the peer review, the following stakeholders are involved:

- The team performing the peer review
- The Producer reviewed
How to behave when doing a peer review?

- Being part of the team that review a farm requires acquiring a certain amount of knowledge and competences in order to conduct a visit that can be really constructive for all participants.

- It is also a matter of how the people performing the review position themselves during the visit.

- It is fundamental that a sense of trust and transparency is built among all actors, because if the reviewers are unable to identify the needs of the professional being assessed, the PGS will not be able to play its role in improving practices.
Attitude and ethical behavior of the team

• be attentive and observe carefully,
• be ready to adapt to different people and situations,
• be consistent in keeping the time (it might be necessary to interrupt certain discussions and to postpone them to after the visit),
• be able to rephrase questions if necessary, so as not to put the producer in difficulty if she/he did not understand the question,
• be able to rephrase the answers ensuring mutual understanding among all participants,
• be able to analyze while avoiding personal judgements,
• be able to summaries,
• be able to maintain a certain level of detachment from the situation.
When

- Usually at least once a year
- Always when a new producer apply to become a member
- if producers hold already an organic certificate issued by a third party inspection body, the peer review could be done every second year.
How

Defining how the PGS will ensure compliance, thus how the peer review should be organised and implemented, should be discussed in a participatory way in the initial stage of creation of a PGS initiative.
Tools to gather information

**Objective:** to perform the peer reviews in an efficient, fair and comparable way

→ every PGS develops a set of templates and procedures to help its members achieve this objective.

→ different PGS initiatives have different tools, however a common set of support documents can be identified.

Take care to keep the process easy to follow and understand for all members!
The Organic Standards
Checklist of questions
F. Rapport d’enquête

SYNTHESE DE L’ENQUÊTE NATURE & PROGRÈS 20____

Enquêteur : .......................................................... Accompagnateur(s) : ..........................................................

Date de la visite : ..........................................................
Durée de : h .... à h ..........

Nom de l’adhérent : ..........................................................
Adresse : ..........................................................
Tel : .......................................................... E-mail : ..........................................................

Évaluation de l’exploitation par rapport à la Charte ? : oui □ ou non □

Contrôle A.B. CIE : □ oui □ non □ Organisme : ..........................................................

Joindre le rapport de contrôle au dossier.

Nombre d’Unité de Travail Humain (UHT) : ..........................................................
Dont : familial : .......................................................... ouvriers permanents : .......................................................... saisonniers : .......................................................... stagiaires : ..........................................................

Orientation principale de la ferme (spécialité) : ..........................................................
Surface totale : .......................................................... Surface Agricole Utile : ..........................................................
Bio : ..........................................................
Conversion + année : .......................................................... Conventionnel : .......................................................... Autre (préciser) : ..........................................................

Produits pour lesquels l’adhérent demande la mention N&P

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cultures – animaux – produits transformés</th>
<th>Surface – Nb d’animaux – quantités</th>
<th>Caractéristiques</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Signature Enquêteur : ..........................................................
Signature Adhérent : .......................................................... 1/11

ECOULEMENT DE LA PRODUCTION

Stockage :
□ Stockage à la ferme
□ Certains produits sont-ils stockés à l’extérieur ?
Si oui, lesquels ?
Nom et adresse du stockeur :

Mode de vente :
□ Vente à la ferme
□ Vente sur les marchés (journées et lieux) :
□ Vente aux foires biologiques (dates et lieux) :
□ Vente en gros (vrac ou conditionné), produits, quantités, clients :
□ Achat / Revente de produits. Précisez la nature du produit et les coordonnées du/des fournisseur(s) :

Les quantités vendues sont-elles cohérentes avec la production ou les achat(s) ? (Faire une balance sur 1 mois si possible.)

Panneau de marché conforme ? : □ Oui □ non
Étiquette conforme ? : □ Oui □ non

(joindre une étiquette au dossier pour information) 10/11

AVIS POUR L’ATTRIBUTION DE LA MENTION

Avis de l’enquêteur (appréciation globale et points de non conformité) :

Fait à ..........................................................
Signature Enquêteur N&P : .......................................................... 11/11
Additional documents

Beside these basic documents, several PGS initiatives use also:

- Farm/business management plan
- Records of practices
- Maps
- Other type of record keeping
Several steps:

• **Before the visit → Preparation**

• **On the field:** physically going around the farm and/or the processing workshop

• **The "administrative" part:** to check the accounting elements (verification of invoices, traceability tests ... )
Preparation

The coordinator should:

- Make contact with the producer member that need to be reviewed in advance (at least one month) so that he can prepare the necessary documents (invoices, mapping areas of harvest or foraging ...)
- Make a reminder a few days before.
- Foreseen to schedule visits also to plots, apiaries, etc. distant from the farm itself.

Reviewers and the producer should prepare for the review by:

- Reading the standards and their guide well in advance.
- Reading the visit support materials well in advance and the previous report.
- Note the specific points to check/discuss during the visit.
Example:

1) make an inventory of the type of the productions perform at the farm and report them on the summary sheet → 1.5 hours

2) Read and discuss with the producers the requests for improvement done the previous year. Question the member about what could be done, the context, the difficulties encountered → 1 hour

3) Continue with the "field" part → 0.5 hour

4) Finish with the administrative part → 1 hour

Remember to keep an eye at the time!
Beyond the legal framework that concerns the confidentiality obligations in the business sector, the team performing the review, as any member of the PGS initiative, has a "moral" duty of discretion and confidentiality (which can also be agreed signing a written contract) so as not to harm the producers visited, who open their farm in full confidence.

For example, members of Nature et Progrès signs a document called ‘Engagement déontologique et de confidentialité à Nature et Progrès’.
Peer learning

The peer review is a space for learning, where additional knowledge gaps and needs can be identified.

*The learning process for the producer assessed:*

- Explain and clarify her/his own’s own practices
- Reciprocal learning

*The learning process for the consumers*

- understand and get to know what does it mean farming and the challenges behind this job
Continuous improvement of practices

The objective of a PGS is never the certification in itself.

PGS initiatives always invests in mechanism to support their producers and to work towards a better agriculture and society:

How to do it? → some Examples

- Using the network as a resource
- Organising Professional meetings
- Establishing mentorship
- Looking for resources outside
THANK YOU!
www.eatingcraft.ifoam.bio