

PGS Farm Visit Guidelines

The Technical Leader is responsible for reviewing this document with the Evaluation Team before starting the farm visit(s).

- The Good Market Organic PGS was established to strengthen the connection between organic producers and consumers. The goal is to expand and improve organic production in the country. The tone of the farm visit should be friendly and supportive.
- Evaluators may not volunteer for a farm visit if they have any conflict of interest that may influence their neutrality. You must excuse yourself from the visit if you are a relation, competitor, or potential buyer or if you have a history of service provision, employment, trade, or conflict with a farmer.
- The farmer or on-site farm manager must be present for the visit.
- All information must be shared in the farmer's preferred language. If a discussion happens in another language, it must be translated into the farmer's preferred language.
- Before starting the visit, introduce all team members, review the PGS Producer Promise, and discuss the plan for the visit.
- If the team is visiting a producer group, the evaluation should start with a review of completed internal Evaluation Forms and the group records. Farms for farm visits should be randomly selected. The group coordinator should join for every farm visit.
- Each farm visit should start with a review of the farm map and records. Financial records should not be photographed or removed from the farm. Trade secrets and confidential or proprietary information may not be shared with anyone outside the evaluation team without the farmer's permission.
- Be careful where you walk. Do not step on plants. Do not pick leaves or crops. Do not remove anything from the farm.
- The evaluation team may take evidence photos of the farm. Evaluation team members must get permission before taking any photos of people.
- Only the Technical Leader may give direct feedback and technical advice to the farmer. If other team members have feedback, they should share it with the Technical Leader.
- One Individual Evaluation Form should be completed for each farm visited. The Technical Leader is responsible for the final decision on whether the farm is approved. The decision must be based on observation and evidence.
- If the team is visiting a producer group, a Group Evaluation Form must be completed before the end of the visit. The Technical Leader is responsible for the final decision on whether the producer group is approved. The decision about the group should be based on the group's internal control system, records, and the results of the individual farm visits.
- Farmers and producer groups that are not approved should be encouraged to take corrective action and reapply in the future.