

Good Market Organic Participatory Guarantee System

According to the International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements (IFOAM), any system of agriculture based on the Principles of Organic Agriculture can be regarded as “Organic Agriculture.”

The purpose of organic certification is to answer the question “How do I know this is organic?” When organic products are exported to other countries, the land needs to be certified by an internationally recognized certification agency. The inspection visits and certification process can be expensive for small-scale farmers. Because of this, many countries have started alternative certification systems for local markets where producers and consumers have the opportunity to meet directly.



කාබනික සහභාගිත්ව සහතිකකරණ ඉමවේදය
පාඤ්චේතනාභරණ උත්තරවතා මුහුණත

In a Participatory Guarantee System (PGS), producers and consumers volunteer their time to develop standards and systems, inspect farms, and ensure that products are organic. The goal is to keep costs down and make organic food more accessible and affordable. It can also serve as a stepping-stone for small-scale farmers and make it easier for them to get export-level organic certification in the future.

The Good Market Organic Participatory Guarantee System was started in February 2013 by producers and consumers that want to make organic more accessible and affordable in Sri Lanka. The PGS is being incubated under the Lanka Good Market (Gte) Ltd., but it has a separate bank account and committee, and plans to register independently in the future.

The Good Market Organic PGS is recognized by IFOAM Organics International. The IFOAM PGS logo can be used on producer certificates, but not on products. The Good Market PGS logo can be used on promotional materials and products.

Producers must follow the standards for at least 1 year to be eligible for the PGS.

Process for Independent Farm

1. Sign a **PGS Producer Promise** for crop cultivation and/or animal husbandry. The Producer Promise must be signed by the farm owner or by a resident farm manager.
2. Complete an individual **Evaluation Form** as a self-assessment. Make sure the farm has farm records: (1) a map, (2) a calendar, diary, or record of daily activities, (3) financial records with receipts for inputs and sales.
3. Contact the PGS coordinator at +94773772122 or by email and request an external evaluation visit. (See visit costs below.) The external evaluation team includes at least 3 people with at least 1 qualified technical leader. The team will visit the farm, review farm records, and complete an Evaluation Form.
4. If the farm is not approved, make the recommended corrections and request another evaluation visit when all the standards are met.
5. If the farm is approved, pay the certification fee by cash, check or bank deposit. (See certification costs below.) The certificate is valid for 1 year.

COSTS

The Good Market Organic Participatory Guarantee System is a volunteer-driven initiative that operates on a not-for-profit self-financing basis. Producers and consumers have volunteered their time and contributed resources for documentation, travel, refreshments, meeting venues, accommodation, etc.

Visit Costs

Visit costs apply to every farm visit regardless of whether the producer or producer group is approved.

- Transport to farms (e.g. own vehicle, vehicle hire, pre-booked train or bus service, fuel cost for volunteer vehicle)
- Food and refreshments (e.g. tea, lunch)
- Accommodation for overnight trips (e.g. homestay, guest house)
- Visit fee (Rs. 5,000 per day for long distance visits, Rs. 2,500 for half day visits within 100 km of Colombo)

SPECIAL NOTE: Cocomi Bio Organic is currently covering transport costs and visit fees for farm visits as part of their CSR program to support the organic sector. Producers are still expected to cover food, refreshments, and accommodation for overnight trips.

Certification Fees

The certification fee is only paid if a producer or producer group is approved. It must be paid before a certificate is issued.

- Independent Producer: Rs. 5,000
- Producer Group: Rs. 600 per member with less than 1 acre
- Producer Group: Rs. 1,200 per member with more than 1 acre
- Urban Home Garden: Rs. 1,000 if less than 1 acre in Colombo District

Certification fees cover one year. If a certificate is issued for less than 1 year, the fees will be prorated.