

RULES FOR OPERATORS

An operator engaged in organic certification shall:

- 1 Have letter of agreement (LoA) with the APSOPCA that he / she ensures to fulfill the NPOP standards and other certification requirements including implementing appropriate changes and communicate to APSOPCA.
- 2 Always fulfill the certification requirements; including paying fees, providing information about changes to the certified product, providing access to certified products for surveillance activities, implementing appropriate changes when they are communicated by the certification body.
- 3 Fulfill the product requirement of the certified products.
- 4 Permit and make all necessary arrangements to onsite inspections for the conduct of the evaluation and surveillance (if require) with complete access to documents & records and production area(s), equipment(s), handling location(s), personnel, structures, non-certified production areas, client's subcontractors, investigation of complaints and offices.
- 5 Make claims regarding certification consistent with the scope of certification.
- 6 Not use its products certification in such a manner as to bring the certification body into disrepute.
- 7 Not make any statements with respect to its products certification that the certification body may consider misleading or unauthorized.
- 8 Discontinue the use of all advertising matter indicating that the product fulfills the requirements specified in the standards upon suspension, withdrawal or termination of certification.
- 9 Return the certification documents and accept other actions as required by the APSOPCA upon suspension, withdrawal or termination of certification.
- 10 Comply with any requirements that may be prescribed in the certification scheme relating to the use of marks of conformity and on information related to the product.
- 11 Comply with requirements of the certification body or certification scheme regarding in making reference to its product certification in communication media such as brochures, documents or advertising *etc.*,
- 12 Use certified organic seed or planting material as a source, if not available; use only conventional untreated seed or planting material in organic

certification programme.

- 13 Maintain sufficient Buffer zones as per the requirements of NPOP.
- 14 Take appropriate action to avoid contamination (by drift, soil erosion, commingling, parallel production / split production, prohibited substances etc.,) during organic production.
- 15 Use only cleaned tools and equipments in organic production to avoid contamination.
- 16 Use only “Organic inputs” in farming & shall not use chemical pesticide & fertilizers at any cost.
- 17 Use only permitted substances in all stages of certification process as per NPOP standards. If not, only restricted substances will be admitted after obtaining prior approval from APSOPCA.
- 18 Informs the APSOPCA, without delay, of changes that may affect its ability to conform to the certification requirements *i.e.*, legal, commercial, organizational status or ownership; organization and management, contact address, production sites, product changes and change in OSP.
- 19 Inform APSOPCA about the matters that may affect the integrity of organic production and other requirements for certification.

Ex:.

- a. Modification to the major inputs or other materials with a potential to affect to the quality and safety
 - b. Farming practices or the production methods and in the internal control measures which are significant
 - c. Major changes to the quality management system
 - d. Entry of prohibited substance to the field or handling unit
- 20 Accept authorized representative of APSOPCA to take samples at any stage of production / processing or from any product for testing to be used in the assessment of conformity to NPOP standards or whenever required by law.
 - 21 Make necessary arrangements for all additional inspections in addition to the unannounced inspections.
 - 22 Provide a letter of agreement for all parties involved in the chain of production of certified products with clear responsibilities, if required.
 - 23 Take utmost care during post harvesting process including threshing, drying, handling or storage, transport of organic products in order to avoid

- contamination and commingling with conventional / non-organic products.
- 24 Agree to take maximum attention to avoid mechanical admixtures, contamination and commingling during post-harvest operation.
 - 25 Keep all the organic products separately and labelled neatly as per standards during handling or storage process.
 - 26 Not to use incorrect reference and misleading use of license, certificates, marks or any other mechanism for indicating a product is certified.
 - 27 Keep records of all complaints made known to it relating to compliance with certification requirements and make these records available to the certification body when requested.
 - 28 Take an appropriate action for resolution of complaints against the certified operation or products and document the actions taken.
 - 29 Maintain all records applicable to the organic operations for not less than 5 years.
 - 30 Acquire awareness of National Standards for Organic Production under NPOP, organic farming principles and practices.
 - 31 Agree to impose any type of sanctions as per APSOPCA rules and procedures in case of non-compliances are found and fail to take an appropriate action within the stipulated time.
 - 32 Inform to APSOPCA in case of voluntary withdrawal from certification and return the certificate documents.
 - 33 Inform the Certification Body, in case if he / she wants to change the Certification Body, stating the reasons for their decision and seek "No Objection Certificate".
 - 34 All the parties involved in the chain of production of a certified product have written agreement, with clear responsibilities.
 - 35 Establish, implement and update organic system plan annually and submit to APSOPCA.
 - 36 Maintain all required documents to prove that the operation is fulfilling the requirements of the certified programme and make them available to the authorized representative of APOSPCA to check the compliance to the certification programme.
 - 37 Use the certification only to indicate that products certified are in compliance with the standards.

38 APSOPCA will not allow the operators to switch in and out of the certification system.

39 Agrees to maintain or improve the natural resources including soil and water quality.
