

POLICY SUMMARY: DEVELOPING A NATIONAL ORGANIC LOGO



OVERVIEW

This policy summary provides recommendations on why and how to implement a national organic logo for use on organic products. It outlines options for providing this support, followed by examples from various countries.

RATIONALE

Having a common logo for organic products sold in a particular market has proven to be a decisive element to foster consumer recognition of and trust in organic products and is therefore a very efficient tool for promotion and market development. Ideally there should be one common organic logo that is prominently placed on ALL the products sold as organic in a country: this is a demonstrated decisive factor to build consumer recognition. The full achievement of this objective usually coincides with a mandatory organic regulation for all organic claims. However, in a situation of non-mandatory organic regulation, it is still possible to achieve widespread use of a common organic logo, provided that resources are invested in the logo promotion. The logo can foster consumer demand in domestic markets. It can also help to promote the nation's organic brand in international trade, for example, at international trade fairs.

SUMMARY OF POLICY OPTIONS

This policy option is available in all countries regulating organic agriculture and may be available in some non-regulating countries.

Regulating Countries: A logo is established as part of the national organic regulation, and/or its administrative policies, including the image and rules for its use.

Non-regulating Countries: Governments may be able to recognize or support the development of a common organic guarantee scheme including its logo and promote it. This could include logos of regional governmental schemes or government-recognized private sector schemes in the region.

The logo should be used on organic products only when it is associated with an organic guarantee scheme.

SCOPE

The logo is suitable when there is sufficient organic sector development to have a national or other recognized organic guarantee scheme, which includes standards and conformity assessment. It may also be challenging to introduce a new logo in mature organic sectors where other private logos are already developed and



recognized by consumers. A national logo will be useful for both domestic and export market policy objectives.

POLICY OPTIONS

Logos for government organic regulations

A logo may be part of the organic regulation, which includes its image, rules for use, and provisions for enforcement. Or, it may be developed and implemented administratively under the regulation after the regulation has been implemented. In addition to being used on organic products, the logo may be used to brand the organic unit or program of the country.

The common organic logo can be made freely available for any operator who complies with the regulation without a further licensing process. This is the case for the EU and US logos.

Logos of other organic guarantee schemes

There are precedents for widespread use of regional organic guarantee schemes (standards and conformity assessment components) that have been developed through collaborative public-private processes. Two cases, East Africa and the Pacific Community are featured in this summary. Governments may choose to recognize these schemes, either formally or informally, in lieu of

developing their own regulation, thus avoiding new administrative cost and complexity. Formal recognition is most appropriate where the government has played a strong role in formulation of the recognized scheme as is the case for several countries in East Africa and the Pacific Community.

In this case, the administration of the logo will be done by the owner of the guarantee scheme. It is feasible to strike an agreement with the scheme in case where the government desires to oversee use of the logo within its jurisdiction.



COUNTRY EXAMPLES

Regulating Countries

The **United States, Japan, Tunisia, Republic of Korea, Brazil, and China** all own national organic logos. In the case of the **EU**, the logo is regional. It was developed in a process managed by the EU Commission. Some governments actively promote the logo towards consumers but sometimes the high-impact promotion is rather left to the private sector to do while the government limits itself to a few webpages that explain the meaning behind the logo to the general public (e.g. in the US or EU). Some governments in the EU also have their own logo, for example, the **Denmark's** organic logo, which is recognized by more than 90% of Danish consumers. Users of Denmark's logo must be certified in the Danish government certification system and comply with the EU regulation.

Germany is an example of high impact government promotion of a national logo. The Federal Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Consumer Protection introduced the Bio-Siegel (national "Bio" organic logo) in 2001. It conveys the clear message that the standards of the EU organic regulation are met. Operators may use the Bio-Siegel voluntarily and free of charge, and the procedures to access the logo are simple. In the first three years following the introduction of the Bio-Siegel, the

German government spent EUR 15 million in promoting the label through magazines, posters, TV spots and other media. In 2013, the Bio-Siegel was recognized by over 90% of the consumers in Germany. More than 50% of consumers trusted its message and among them, 70% were willing to buy food bearing the Bio-Siegel.

Non-Regulating Countries

Bhutan: The National Organic Program managed by the government has developed and launched the "Bhutan Organic" logo, to go with national standards and an innovative type of local organic conformity assessment system that is not in a regulatory framework.

India: Since 2002 the government has had both an organic regulation and an accompanying government-managed India organic logo which is heavily used in export promotion. However, the regulation has remained voluntary for the domestic sector. Organic operators can choose to use the India Organic Logo for the domestic market or not (the organic claim per se was not regulated), but if they did, they would have to comply with the regulation.

East Africa Region: The East African Community, an intergovernmental body whose members are **Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Burundi** and **Rwanda**, adopted and owns the



East African Organic Product Standard, which was developed in an intensive, collaborative public-private process. The standard is linked to the regional East African Organic Mark, which is managed by a consortium of the national organic umbrella organizations and legally owned by one of them on behalf of all. This consortium also decides on the East African Organic Guarantee System, i.e. the criteria for granting the use of the logo. The system enables consumer recognition and local market development in the region and is informally supported at various government levels.

Pacific Community: The development of the Pacific Organic Standard was also a collaborative public-private process. A large support role was played by the Secretariat of the Pacific Community

(SPC), an intergovernmental body whose role is to provide technical assistance to its 22 member nations. This standard is now part of a private regional organic guarantee scheme, Organic Pasifika, which is owned by the Pacific Organic and Ethical Trade Community, which currently functions as part of the SPC. The program also specifies a conformity assessment scheme, which includes participatory guarantee systems and third party certification to the standard provided by agreement with several certification bodies based in Australia and New Zealand. The logo is available for use by operators in the scheme using either participatory guarantee or third party certification. Many of the governments are aware and supportive of the scheme, although none formally recognize it.

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