

[DA Department Circular No. 02, s. 2015, June 17, 2015]

GUIDELINES FOR THE CONDUCT OF VALIDATION PROCESS FOR THE REGISTRATION OF ORGANIC PRIMARY AND POSTHARVEST FOOD, NON-FOOD AND INPUT PRODUCERS

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Pursuant to the provisions of Section 16 (Registration of Organic Food and Organic Input Producers) and Section 17 (Labeling of Organic Produce) of the Republic Act (RA) No. 10068 otherwise known as the *Organic Agriculture Act* of 2010, the Department hereby adopts and prescribes this Circular covering the procedures on the validation process for the registration of organic primary and postharvest food, non-food and input producers for the information and guidance of all concerned.

**SECTION 1
OBJECTIVES**

The objectives for issuing these guidelines are to:

- 1.1 provide guidance for the conduct of validation activities such as pre-registration as part of the registration, monitoring and post-market surveillance; and
- 1.2 ensure that products being marketed are conforming with the Philippine National Standards (PNS) for Organic Agriculture (OA) and other relevant PNS.

**SECTION 2
SCOPE**

- 2.1 These guidelines cover the validation activities for the issuance of Certificate of Registration (COR), monitoring of registered organic agriculture and fishery establishments, and post-market surveillance of registered organic primary and postharvest food, non-food and inputs in market outlets.
- 2.2 Validation shall cover the validation of farms/establishments under the following categories:
 - 2.2.1 Primary and Postharvest Food
 - 2.2.1.1 Crops
 - 2.2.1.2 Livestock and Poultry
 - 2.2.1.3 Fish
 - 2.2.2 Non-Food Products (e.g, fiber, feeds, tea bags)

- 2.2.2.1 Planting Materials
- 2.2.2.2 Brood Stocks/Fry /Fingerlings
- 2.2.2.3 Breeding Stocks/Slaughter Stock
- 2.2.2.4 Feeds and Feed Ingredients
- 2.2.3 Inputs
 - 2.2.3.1 Organic Fertilizers (soil conditioners, plant supplements, microbial inoculants)
 - 2.2.3.2 Bio-Control Agents (microbials, macrobials, semiochemicals, botanicals)

2.3 Pre-Registration Activities for Organic Inputs

All organic input establishments applying for a COR with the Department of Agriculture - Bureau of Agriculture and Fisheries Standards (DA-BAFS) shall undergo validation process.

2.4 Monitoring of Registered Organic Establishments

All registered organic establishments shall be subjected to monitoring at any time within the validity of the license, or in case of filed formal complaints.

2.5 Post-Market Surveillance

All registered organic primary and postharvest food, non-food products and inputs in market outlets shall be subjected to validation in order to check compliance with applicable Philippine National Standards for Organic Agriculture (PNS OA) and Aquaculture.

SECTION 3 DEFINITION OF TERMS

As used in this Circular, the following terms shall be understood to have the meaning correspondingly provided below:

- 3.1 Agriculture or Fishery Establishment** – refers to the facility used for production of primary and postharvest foods (including operations carried out in the crop industry, animal husbandry and aquaculture), postharvest handling, preparation, treatment, packaging, transport and/or storage, but excluding those sites, buildings and structures, such as laboratories, administrative offices and other areas where food is not handled and where people handling food do not normally enter. The term "*Agriculture or Fishery Establishment*" also includes facilities involved in activities related to inputs in the primary and postharvest stages of production.
- 3.2 Aquaculture** – refers to fishery operations involving all forms of breeding, raising and farming of fish and other fishery species in fresh, brackish and marine water areas.
- 3.3 Certification** – refers to the procedure by which official certifying bodies or officially recognized certifying bodies provide written or equivalent assurance which foods or food control systems conform to the PNS OA requirements. Certification of food may be, as appropriate, based on a range of inspection activities, which may include continuous on-line inspection, auditing of quality assurance systems, and examination of finished products.

- 3.4 Fish and Fishery/Aquatic Products** – refers to finfish, mollusks, crustaceans, echinoderms, marine mammals, and all other species of aquatic flora and fauna and all other products of aquatic living resources in any form.
- 3.5 Livestock** – refers to any cattle, sheep, goat, swine, poultry or equine animals used for food or in the production of food, fiber or feed or other agricultural-based consumer products (e.g. milk and egg); wild or domesticated game; or other non-plant life, except such term shall not include aquatic animals for the production of food, fiber, feed or other agricultural-based consumer products.
- 3.6 Market Authorization** – refers to the permits and certificates of compliance issued by the DA-BAFS to establishments that sell or offer to sell organic products.
- 3.7 Microbial Inoculants** – refer to biologically active products containing optimum population of one or a combination of active strains of beneficial bacteria, actinomycetes, enzymes, algae and fungi that are useful in different biological activities, such as N₂ fixation, accelerated decomposition of a specific element from the soil for faster nutrient absorption by the plant.
- 3.8 Monitoring** – refers to the scheduled validation activities to verify continued compliance with PNS OA and other related standards after the issuance of COR by the DA-BAFS.
- 3.9 Nonconformity** – refers to a nonfulfillment or failure to meet the requirements of PNS OA and other relevant standards.
- 3.10 Non-Food Product** – refers to agriculture and fishery products that are not used directly for human consumption such as feeds, fiber and tea bags
- 3.11 Organic Agriculture Validation Team** refers to the team of experts and representatives from various regulatory agencies and concerned offices officially designated to perform validation activities.
- 3.12 Organic Certificate** – refers to the official document issued by the officially accredited organic certifying bodies attesting that the entity conforms to organic agriculture requirements. The official document identifies the name and address of the entity certified, effective date of certification, expiration date of certification, certification number, scopes of products and/or process certified, identification of certified sites, name and address of certification agent, and standards to which the entity is certified.
- 3.13 Organic Fertilizer** – means any product in solid or liquid form, of plant (except by-products from petroleum industries) or animal origin that has undergone substantial decomposition that can supply available nutrients to plants with a total Nitrogen (N), Phosphorus (P), and Potassium (K). This may be enriched by microbial inoculants and naturally occurring minerals but no chemical or inorganic fertilizer materials has been added to the finished product to affect the nutrient content.
- 3.14 Organic Input** – refers to organic materials necessary for organic agriculture production such as plant nutrition (fertilizer, compost/soil conditioner, microbial inoculants, plant growth regulator and plant food supplement)) and plant protection or pest management products (bio-control agents), which are used to comply with the requirements of organic agriculture standards.
- 3.15 Organic Product** – refers to the product that has been produced, processed, or handled in compliance with the applicable organic standards