

Organic Policy Template

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Part of the Global Toolkit on Public Support to Organic Agriculture

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__name of the country

Law/Policy number __ of __date

Policy for the DEVELOPMENT AND PROMOTION OF ORGANIC
AGRICULTURE IN __name of the country

Enacted by __political body enacting the law/policy

Considering that:

- *mention existing laws and decrees related to the topic and how they call for sustainability in agriculture*
- *mention here the commitment of the country towards the SDGs, relevant international agreements, such as the Paris Climate agreement, the Convention on Biological Diversity, etc., and any other relevant international policy framework.*
- *organic agriculture is a production system that preserves the environment and natural resources, including soil, water and biodiversity,*
- *organic farming is an economic activity that generates economic, social and health benefits in rural areas,*
- *there is an increasing demand nationally and internationally for organic products*
- *the organic sector in __name of country is in a stage of early development and requires policy support in order to be able to respond to the increasing market demand and untapped public good opportunity with adequate volumes and quality of products and supply chain infrastructure.*
- *__Add more background (general objectives of the law) if needed.*

THE __political body enacting the law/policy HAS ADOPTED THIS POLICY.

Section I. Objectives of the present policy

The present policy intends to:

- Contribute to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals by enhancing environmental protection and sustainability in agriculture on

the national territory through the increase of agricultural land under organic management.

- Develop market opportunities for the nation's farmers and businesses by increasing both organic exports and domestic sales of organic products.
- Improve the nutrition and health of the nation's people by increasing national consumption of organic food.

In order to achieve those goals, the present law focuses on the following objectives:

1. All farmers can receive advice on organic agriculture systems and practices.
2. Research on organic agriculture is equitably supported and provides agronomic solutions for organic farmers in name of the country.
3. Taxes and subsidy policies provide incentives for producers to convert to organic agriculture.
4. Organic businesses receive special support for export marketing.
5. A national organic sector association is cooperating with government to support sector development.
6. Credible organic guarantee systems are accessible to national producers.
7. Consumer awareness about organic food and agriculture is increased.
8. Data on organic agriculture and markets is available.

Section II. Definition of terms

Define the terms which are needed based on content of the policy

Section III. Definition and principles of organic agriculture

Organic agriculture is a production system that sustains the health of soils, ecosystems and people. It relies on ecological processes, biodiversity and cycles adapted to local conditions, rather than the use of inputs with adverse effects. Organic Agriculture combines tradition, innovation and science to benefit the shared environment and promote fair relationships and a good quality of life for all involved.

Organic agriculture is based on the four principles of health, ecology, fairness and care.

The principle of health states that organic agriculture should sustain and enhance the health of soil, plant, animal, human and planet as one and indivisible.

The principle of ecology states that organic agriculture should be based on living ecological systems and cycles, work with them, emulate them and help sustain them.

The principle of fairness states that organic agriculture should build on relationships that ensure fairness with regard to the common environment and life opportunities.

The principle of care states that organic agriculture should be managed in a precautionary and responsible manner to protect the health and well-being of current and future generations and the environment

Section IV. Institutional framework

Article 1: National Organic Agriculture Program

The government of name of country shall establish a National Organic Agriculture Program under which policy support to organic agriculture as foreseen under this policy shall be organized and administered. The National Organic Agriculture Program shall be managed by an organic desk composed of dedicated staff under the Ministry of Agriculture. Budget shall be allocated annually for the operation of the National Organic Agriculture Program.

Article 2: National Organic Agriculture Board

The Ministry of Agriculture shall establish a National Organic Agriculture Board composed of at least the following stakeholders:

- Government staff (staff of the organic desk and/or Ministry of Agriculture)
- Organic producers and processors
- Organic traders or retailers
- Organic sector support organizations (NGO, science and research, consultancies, certifiers, etc.)
- Organic consumers

The National Organic Agriculture Board shall take an active role in the following processes:

- Preparation of amendments to this policy and related documents.
- Development of national organic action plans.
- Development of complementary regulations and guidelines.
- Consultation of national and international stakeholders on all processes above.
- Direction and general guidance for the implementation of the National Organic Agriculture Program.

Section V. Areas of interventions

In order to achieve the objectives of the present law, the Government of __country name shall put in place, within a time frame of __put time frame here, and as part of its National Organic Agriculture Program, the following measures in support of organic agriculture development in the country:

(Keep in this section the chosen priority areas of intervention from the list below, remove unwanted ones and add others that are required. See IFOAM-Organics International Global Policy Toolkit on Public Support to Organic Agriculture for more guidance, ideas and details).

Article 3. The Government shall support the development of organic vocational training and academic programs

More specifically, the government shall:

- a. Develop a pool of professors and teachers within the national academia having expertise in organic agriculture.
- b. Ensure that organic agriculture courses and study options are available within most national agricultural universities and technical education institutions.

Article 4. The Government shall increase the allocation of public resources dedicated to organic agriculture research

More specifically, the government shall:

- a. Support the development of a short, medium and long-term national research agenda for organic farming to be developed within a public-private cooperation between government and the private sector.
- b. Establish one or several special research programs with dedicated budget(s) for organic research, with areas of focus addressing the priorities identified in the aforementioned national research agenda.
- c. Facilitate and enable interaction of national researchers involved in organic farming research with the international organic research community.
- d. Ensure that organic research is conducted in a participatory manner, building on local traditional knowledge and farmers' experiences and needs.
- e. Transmit the results of organic research to the agricultural extension services and farmer organizations.

Article 5. The Government shall ensure the availability of organic advice within national agricultural extension services

More specifically, the government shall:

- a. Develop a strategy for a multi-year transition towards full availability of organic advice provision in all regions of the country and on the full spectrum of agricultural production activities for which organic agriculture is practiced.
- b. In order to implement the above strategy, ensure the development of competences on organic agriculture within the national agricultural extension service, through capacity building of existing staff and/or hiring of new staff.
- c. Develop and install institutional linkages to ensure ongoing dialogue and cooperation between organic extension services and organic research and academic institutions.

Article 6. The Government shall provide state support for access to organic certification and Participatory Guarantee Systems

More specifically, the government shall:

- a. Implement an organic certification cost-share program whereby government shall subsidize, partly or fully, access to third party organic certification for domestic organic producers.
- b. Support the availability of local organic certification services, whether by local or international organic certifiers, by facilitating registration procedures, capacity building of local certification staff, obtaining international recognition, etc.
- c. Support training and technical support programs for farmer groups to set up Internal Control Systems.
- d. Review the organic regulation and related laws and propose amendments as necessary to ensure the official acceptance of Participatory Guarantee Systems as a valid mode of verification for the local market, and develop corresponding PGS approval procedures.

Article 7. The Government shall provide state support for the development of organic inputs

More specifically, the government shall:

- a. Investigate the need and gaps in terms of organic input supply to domestic producers, in partnership with the organic sector organizations. (Inputs can be seeds, fertilizers, crop protectants, feed, natural veterinary products, etc.).
- b. Establish or support projects aimed at organic input development and provision to domestic organic producers.

Article 8. The Government shall support the development organic value addition and export and domestic value chains

More specifically, the government shall:

- a. Provide state support for the development of national organic processing capacities within the private sector.
- b. Support the development of selected value chains bringing domestic organic products into export markets.
- c. Support the development of domestic value chains developing the supply and marketing of a diversity of organic products and the increase in organic marketing channels on the domestic market.

Article 9. The Government shall increase consumer awareness of organic products

More specifically, the government shall:

- a. Support the development and implementation of national organic consumer campaigns in partnership with the private organic sector. These information and promotion campaigns shall aim at informing consumers, public institutions, schools and other key actors in the food chain about the merits of organic farming, especially its environmental, social and health benefits, and to increase consumer awareness and recognition of organic products.

Article 10. The Government shall support the collection and dissemination of data on the national organic sector

More specifically, the government shall:

- a. Establish and maintain a national system to regularly collect statistics on the organic sector, including areas under organic production and number of organic producers.
- b. Make the data publicly available online and establish a system to consider stakeholder input into the data collection, compilation and presentation processes.
- c. Liaise with international organic data collecting organizations to ensure harmonization with international standards for organic data compilation, and ensure accuracy, comparability and coherence with international data compilation processes.
- d. Initiate efforts towards a system to estimate/calculate the value of domestic organic sales and annual organic imports and exports.

Article 11. The Government shall support the institutionalization of the national organic sector and public-private cooperation for organic sector development

More specifically, the government shall:

- a. Support the creation/strengthening of a national organic umbrella organization representing the national organic movement including producers, processors, traders, certifiers, NGOs and other relevant stakeholders.
- b. Support the provision of leadership training and sector competence building to representatives of the various organic stakeholder groups in the country.
- c. Provide organic literacy training to government employees dealing with organic agriculture within the relevant ministries.
- d. Establish institutional mechanisms, through and in addition to the National Organic Agriculture Board, to ensure consultation of and dialogue with the organic movement in every major governmental action or process relating to organic agriculture, including regulatory matters, national organic action plans and other organic policy and program design.

Article 12. The Government shall review and amend existing agricultural and food policies that have a negative impact on organic agriculture development

More specifically, the government shall:

- a. Review the national policies with regards to fertilizer and pesticide subsidies/taxes, and propose amendments to shift the balance of incentives away from synthetic fertilizers and pesticides and more towards the recycling of nutrients on-farm and the use of natural fertilizers and crop protectant substances compatible with organic farming.
- b. Review the national policy approach to Genetically Modified Organisms and propose amendments to protect organic farmers against the risk of GMO contamination and the resulting loss of organic market.
- c. Identify and review any other agricultural and food policy for potential detrimental effect on the organic sector and propose policy amendments to correct or compensate for those negative effects.

Section VI. Monitoring and Evaluation

Article 13: Policy review and evaluation

The government shall ensure regular review of the implementation and impact of this policy (the National Organic Agriculture Program) on organic sector growth. The private sector (beyond the National Organic Agriculture Board) shall be involved in the policy evaluation and in future policy design, national organic action plans formulation, etc.

Article 14: Role of the National Organic Agriculture Board

Processing information collected within the monitoring and evaluation processes, the National Organic Agriculture Board shall make recommendations regarding resource allocation and institutional aspects to ensure optimal functioning and efficacy of the National Organic Agriculture Program in the next implementation periods.

Section VII. Date of effectiveness and approval

Article 15: Date of application

This policy becomes effective on ____put here a date or a time period after approval by the relevant political authority.

Approved on the ____ (date) by ____ (name of authority signing on the policy)