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# Reliable Organic Certification Organization (ROCO)

Approved by the National Centre for Organic and Natural Farming

## Achieve Organic Excellence with PGS Certification



### Value Addition for Agriculture products Through Organic Certification

#### Introduction:

"Welcome to the Reliable Organic Certification Organization, your trusted partner for organic certification. Approved by the National Centre for Organic and Natural Farming, we are here to guide individuals, local groups, processors, and large areas, Livestock Operators, Bee Keepers and Wild Harvest/ Wild product collectors towards achieving PGS certification."

#### What is PGS Certification?

Participatory Guarantee Systems (PGS) are locally focused quality assurance systems that certify producers based on active participation of stakeholders and are built on a foundation of trust, social networks, and knowledge exchange.

#### Benefits of PGS Certification

##### 1. Credibility and Trust

- Certified farmers and groups gain official recognition from **NCONF under the PGS-India system.**
- Consumers develop confidence knowing the produce is grown without chemical fertilizers, pesticides, or harmful inputs.
- Certification acts as a **quality guarantee**, strengthening the brand value of farmers and groups.



##### 2. Market Access and Better Pricing

- Certified products can carry the **PGS-India Organic logo**, which is widely accepted in organic markets across India.

- Farmers get opportunities to sell through **organic retail outlets, fairs, farmers' markets, and government-supported platforms**.
- Access to premium markets often brings **better price realization**, ensuring higher income for farmers.



### 3. Sustainability and Soil Health

- Promotes eco-friendly, chemical-free farming methods that **restore soil fertility and biodiversity**.
- Reduces dependency on costly chemical inputs, lowering the cost of cultivation.
- Encourages crop diversity, mixed farming, and livestock integration for long-term farm sustainability.



### 4. Empowerment and Participation

- Farmers are **directly involved** in the certification process through peer reviews and collective decision-making.
- Builds a strong sense of **ownership, responsibility, and mutual accountability** among farmers.
- Encourages **knowledge exchange** within the community, leading to continuous improvement.



### 5. Low-Cost Certification

- Unlike third-party certification, PGS is **affordable and accessible**, especially for small and marginal farmers.
- Farmers save on certification costs while still getting recognized as organic producers.

### 6. Community Development

- PGS encourages farmers to form groups, cooperatives, and producer companies, which strengthen **collective bargaining power**.
- Facilitates **collective marketing strategies** and supply chain linkages.
- Builds **local food security** and supports rural livelihoods.



### 7. Consumer Connection

- Consumers can directly interact with certified farmers, building **trust-based relationships**.
- Transparency in practices creates a **direct farm-to-table connection**, improving loyalty and repeat customers.



## OUR SERVICES

### For Individuals:

- Guidance on organic farming practices
- Certification of organic produce
- Access to organic farming resources



### For Local Groups:

- Training sessions on PGS standards
- Support in forming and managing PGS groups
- Assistance in collective marketing strategies

### For Processors:

- Certification for organic processing units
- Help in meeting organic processing standards
- Networking opportunities with organic producers



### For Large Areas:

- Comprehensive certification programs for large-scale organic farming
- Consultation on organic farming methods
- Support in maintaining organic standards across large areas

### For Livestock Operators

- Certification for organic dairy, poultry, and meat production units.
- Guidance on organic feed, animal welfare, and healthcare standards.
- Support in record-keeping and compliance with organic livestock norms.



### For Bee Keepers

- Certification for organic honey and bee-related products.
- Training on maintaining hives in organic farming areas.
- Assistance with market access for certified organic honey and by-products.

## For Wild Harvest/ Wild product collectors

- Certification of sustainably collected wild plants, fruits, herbs, and forest produce.
- Training on traceability and documentation of collection areas.
- Support in accessing niche organic and fair-trade markets.



## How to Apply for PGS Certification (Step-by-Step Process)

### 1. Initial Inquiry

Interested farmers, groups, or organizations can contact **Reliable Organic Certification Organization (ROCO)** via phone, email, or our official website. During this stage, we provide basic guidance about eligibility, certification scope, and requirements.



### 2. Information Session

You will be invited to attend an **orientation session** (either online or in person). This session explains:

- The concept and benefits of PGS certification.
- Roles and responsibilities of farmers, groups, and certifiers.
- Key compliance requirements under PGS standards.



### 3. Application Form

Fill out the prescribed **PGS application form**, available both online and at our office. The application requires details such as:

- Name of farmer/group/operator.
- Location and size of land/production unit.
- Crops or products proposed for certification.
- Contact details of the responsible person.



### 4. Documentation

Submit the required documents along with your application. These may include:

- Aadhaar card or ID proof.

- Farm ownership/lease records.
- Farm history and management plan.
- Records of seeds, inputs, and cultivation practices.

## 5. Preliminary Assessment

Our certification team will conduct an **on-site visit** to verify the farm/processing unit and check the practices followed. Observations and recommendations are shared with the applicant for improvements (if required).

## 6. Training

Applicants must attend **training workshops** conducted by ROCO on:

- PGS standards and certification requirements.
- Organic farming techniques and input use.
- Record-keeping and traceability systems.

This ensures that farmers are well-prepared for certification.

## 7. Peer Reviews

A unique feature of PGS certification is **peer review**. Fellow farmers and group members visit each other's farms to assess compliance with organic practices. This builds trust, accountability, and mutual learning.

## 8. Final Assessment

Once peer reviews are complete, the farmer or group submits their **final set of records and forms** for evaluation. Our certification committee carefully examines:

- Peer review reports.
- Farm records and documentation.
- Compliance with organic standards.

## 9. Certification Decision

Based on the assessment, ROCO takes a decision to grant or withhold certification. If approved, the applicant is issued a **PGS Scope**



**Certificate**, which allows them to sell products with the **PGS-India Organic logo**.

## 10. Ongoing Compliance

Certification is not a one-time process. To maintain certification:

- Farmers must participate in **annual peer reviews**.
- Farms must undergo **annual inspections** by ROCO.
- Updated records must be maintained for all activities.
- Participation in refresher trainings is encouraged.



This continuous process ensures **credibility, market access, and sustainability** of the organic system.

For more Information Contact:

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