

[**BAFPS ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER NO. 13, January 03, 2013**]

REVISION TO ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER NO. 07, SERIES OF 2011 RE AMENDMENTS TO ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER NO. 13, SERIES OF 2003, ON THE GUIDELINES IN THE ACCREDITATION OF CERTIFYING BODIES (CBS) FOR ORGANIC AGRICULTURE

WHEREAS, the State shall enhance the competitiveness of Philippine agricultural and fishery products in both domestic and foreign markets;

WHEREAS, Section 15 of Republic Act (R.A) 10068 otherwise known as the Organic Agriculture Act of 2010 mandates the Bureau of Agriculture and Fisheries Product Standards to grant official accreditation to Organic Certifying Bodies in accordance to the Philippine National Standards for Organic Agriculture and related standards;

IN VIEW THEREOF, this Guideline replaces Administrative Order No. 13 series of 2003 and Administrative Order No. 7 Series of 2011 and sets forth the revised rules and regulations for granting Accreditation of Organic Certifying Bodies (OCBs).

I. SCOPE

1. These guidelines provide general policies and procedures for certifying bodies (CBs) seeking accreditation from the Bureau of Agriculture and Fisheries Products Standards (BAFPS).
2. BAFPS shall apply these guidelines to determine and maintain accreditation of certifying agents to the National Organic Agriculture Program (NOAP).
3. This regulation applies to organic certifying bodies, including private business organizations, cooperatives, non-government organizations, people's organizations, foundations and civic-religious organizations who wish to obtain, maintain, or renew accreditation, including applicants with pending applications as of date of effectivity.

II. DEFINITION^[1]

Accreditation - Third party attestation related to conformity assessment body conveying formal demonstration of its competence to carry out specific conformity assessment tasks. (ISO IEC 17011/2004)

Certification - Procedure by which official certification bodies or officially recognized certification bodies provide written or equivalent assurance that foods or food control systems conform to 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 (Reference Codex Alimentarius Commission GL 20-1995)

Certification Body - A body which is responsible for verifying that a product sold or labeled as "organic" is produced, processed, prepared, handled and imported according to the prescribed guidelines (Codex Alimentarius Commission GL 32-1999)

Inspection - Examination of food or food systems for control of food, raw materials, processing and distribution including in-process and finished product testing, in order to verify that they conform to requirements (Reference Codex Alimentarius Commission GL 20-1995)

Non-conformity - Non-fulfillment of a requirement (ISO 9000:2000)

III. CRITERIA FOR ACCREDITATION

1. Must not be engaged in the production of organic agriculture at the time of the application for accreditation and during the lifetime of the accreditation authority as certifying body;
2. Must not provide consultancy services to certification applicants to overcome identified barriers to certification;
3. Must have been engaged in organic agriculture production or related extension services for at least three (3) years;
4. Must have undergone training in organic certification;
5. Must be able to deploy at least one (1) inspector per region;
6. Must have at least one (1) satellite office or processing unit each in Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao in case of only one (1) accredited certifying body in the country;
7. Must have financial resources to undertake certification activities in its coverage areas;
8. Must have clean track record in its financial dealings in their previous transactions;
9. Must comply with the general requirements for Organic Food Certification (ANNEX 1) in accordance to ISO/IEC GUIDE 17065:2012 (General Requirements for Bodies Operating Product Certification System), including the conduct of inspection work outlined in the organization's Operating Manual of Certification Procedures.

IV. PROCEDURES FOR ACCREDITATION

1. Application for Accreditation

The applicant shall submit to the Director of BAFPS the following:

- A. Written application for accreditation identifying each area of operation to engage in, for which accreditation is requested (e.g crops, livestock, wild crops, input, etc.);
- B. Updated institutions organizational profile;
- C. Certificate of Registration from the Security and Exchange Commission (SEC) or other relevant regulatory agencies;
- D. Latest audited financial statements;
- E. ISO/IEC GUIDE 65 (General Requirements for Bodies Operating Product Certification System) accreditation;
- F. Personnel Information (applicant shall demonstrate sufficient number of adequately trained personnel and provide evidence of their expertise to successfully perform the duties assigned).

- Contact details (telephone number, mobile number, and/or email address) shall be included;
- G. Evidence that the applicant's personnel have sufficient expertise in organic production or handling techniques to successfully perform the duties assigned;
 - H. Track record and other pertinent documents attesting to their competency to conduct organic products certification; and
 - I. List of certified operations if the applicant is currently doing certification work.

2. Conduct of Evaluation and Verification

The National Accreditation Committee shall conduct evaluation, inspection and interviews to validate the applicant-institution's submitted documents in accordance to the standard operations and procedures for accreditation of organic certification bodies as prescribed by the Bureau of Agriculture and Fisheries Product Standards.

3. Grant of Accreditation

- A. Certificate of Accreditation shall be issued by the Director of BAFPS to the applicant within thirty (30) calendar days from the date of the submission of the completed documents that complies with all the requirements of these guidelines. The Certificate shall state the area(s) for which accreditation is given the validity of the certificate.
- B. The certifying agent shall also sign a Statement of Agreement which affirms that provisions of this regulation which will be carried out. Furthermore, the accredited CB will affirm that an annual performance evaluation of all persons involved in the certification will be conducted and the necessary measures to correct deficiencies in the certification service will be undertaken.
- C. In the event that the applicant failed to meet the requirements for accreditation, a notice of non-compliance will be issued describing each of the non-compliances and the given time to undertake the corrective measures. Processing of the application will be continued and
- D. Accreditation will be granted if the applicant provides sufficient evidence to demonstrate the actions done for the non-compliance within the specified period. However, if the applicant failed to further comply, notice of denial shall be issued.

4. Provisional Accreditation

- A. Applicants who comply with all the requirements, but whose application for ISO/IEC GUIDE 65 accreditation is still pending may be given provisional accreditation for twelve (12) months within which it must obtain and complete its ISO/IEC GUIDE 17065:2012 accreditation.
- B. Provisional accreditation may be extended twice for a period of six (6) months only upon showing that they have submitted all the requirements for ISO /IEC GUIDE 17065:2012 accreditation for proper completion.
- C. At any time within the twelve-month period, the provisional accreditation may be converted into a full accreditation upon