

Setting up an organic certification organisation

- Things to consider
- Action plan
- Grolink

Things to consider

- When is the time ripe?
- One or more certifiers?
- Private or governmental? For profit or not?
- Local, regional or national programme?
- How to finance the *hunger gap*?
- Need for regulation?

When is the time ripe?

- Is there production?
- Market for the products
- Market for the certification service
- Are the producers organised?
- Are there competent persons and resources available?
- Are there regulations?
- Is local certification a priority?

One or more certifiers?

- Advantage for more than one:
 - Spreading risk of failure
 - Competition
- Disadvantages:
 - Competence and training
 - Less chance to break-even
 - Confusion in the market place and by producers

Is there a proper structure?

- commercial company
- governmental structure
- sector association
- multi-party association
- NGO

Key words: Independence, stakeholder acceptance, efficiency

Regional vs National certification body

Is there a case for establishing
regional certification bodies?

Advantages

- Less cost for overhead and qualified staff
- Economy of scale
- Creating a regional brand – easy to promote
- Facilitation of regional trade - no issues of recognition
- Concentrating resources and external communication
- Stimulation other regional co-operation in marketing, research etc.

Disadvantages

- Local politics, e.g. where to put HQ
- Differences in tradition
- Differences in languages
- Time factors - regional system may be slow to establish
- Regulatory problems (if there are regulations)

Conclusion

It is not possible to make general statements

It has to be assessed with the actual situation in the region at hand.

Regional capacity building

- Inspectors and certification staff training
- Development of documentation and procedures
- Standards development
- Developing common positions
- Communication with the rest of the world

Regional standards

- Can be developed without creating a permanent structure
- Can be part of a regional capacity development programme

Financing option

It is a major problem to finance the establishment of a local certification organisation:

- Voluntary labour
- Selling services to international certifiers
- Private investment
- Government support
- Donors
- Local market development

Need for regulation?

Objectives:

- Export market access
- Domestic market respectability for organic products
- Domestic market prevention of fraud
- General recognition of organic agriculture
- Subsidies or other support programmes

Regulations are not the “magic silver bullet”:

Export markets may be accessible
without regulation

Little evidence that regulation is
improving domestic markets

Organic agriculture can gain
respectability with inclusion in
national plans/strategies

Voluntary regulation is also possible!

Steps

1. Consensus building
2. Business planning
3. Registration of body
4. Training of inspectors and staff (ongoing)
5. Development of standards
6. Mark?
7. Setting up the management
8. Partnership with foreign CB
9. Development of forms and procedures
10. Quality system
11. National regulation?
12. Accreditation

IFOAM

ISO 65

Action Plan - Year 0

- Gathering the interested parties
- Consensus building

Action Plan - Year 1

- Establishment of (national) standards
- Registration of organisation
- Establishment of certification organisation (based on voluntary work)
- Basic training of inspectors and certification staff
- Participation in regional workshops etc.
- Making basic inspection forms

Action Plan - Year 2

- Employing a programme manager
- Designing a nice mark
- Inspecting according to national standards
- Revision of the standards
- Development of inspection and certification documentation
- Considering IFOAM accreditation
- Partnerships with international certification bodies
- Training of staff

Action Plan - Year 3

- Revision of inspection and certification procedures
- Advanced training of certification personnel
- Contacts with national government
- Application for IFOAM accreditation
- Participation in international trade fairs etc.

Action Plan - Year 4

- Revision of standards
- Advanced training of inspectors
- IFOAM accreditation
- National accreditation or recognition



Assistance from Grolink

- Evaluation of situation
- Consultation with stakeholders and government
- Standards
 - National development
 - International equivalence
- Inspection
 - Training of inspectors
 - Development of forms and manuals

Assistance from Grolink (2)

- Certification body
 - Structure
 - Policies and operating procedures
 - Manuals
 - Records and database
- Information and promotion
 - Participation in trade fairs
 - Promotional materials

Assistance from Grolink (3)

- Development of business plan and strategic plan
- Connecting with other certification bodies
 - Service operation
 - Partnerships
- Regulations
 - Consultation with regulatory bodies
 - Preparation of regulations
- Accreditation
 - Preparation for IFOAM Accreditation

How?

- Consultancy visits
- Training and seminars
- Correspondence
- Study visits to other CBs
- Exposure to sector
- Facilitation of agreements with other CBs
- Contacts with regulatory bodies

Where?

- Sweden
- Czech Republic
- Lithuania
- Slovakia
- Japan
- China
- Thailand
- Uganda
- Tanzania
- And where needed.....