

PGS INDIA BASIC ORGANIC STANDARDS

These basic organic standards have been distilled from the IFOAM 2005 standards and the NSOP. Though a complete knowledge of – and compliance with – these basic standards will enable an organic farmer to join the Participatory Guarantee System for marketing his/her produce as organic, he/she is still advised to read the detailed standards at the earliest opportunity.

1. Organic farmers under the PGS perceive the soil as a living medium. Hence they will never use synthetic inputs for plant nutrition. Neither will they rely on synthetic poisons to deal with problem insects or disease or for dealing with fungus or weeds. For managing insects that are causing a problem to farm cultivation, the use of botanical insect repellants, neem extracts, trap crops, mixed cropping, crop rotation is supported. All GMOs are prohibited on PGS farms.
2. Only organic fertilizers may be used. Farms are encouraged to utilize animal wastes, plant residues, green crops and approved mineral inputs or preparations like *panchagavya*, *amrut pani*, EM, which supply beneficial microorganisms and nutrients.
3. As far as possible, the seeds, seedlings/saplings should be of indigenous variety. Seed material that is self-grown or from other organic farms is best.
4. For seed treatment, it is preferable to use traditional methods like organic manure, ash, cow-urine, *beejamrut*, etc. Use of chemically treated seeds should be avoided as far as possible.
5. Organic fields or plots should be clearly demarcated from non-organic fields. The farmer should be aware that chemicals sprayed/used on the neighbouring farm may enter into his/her farm. The farmer may also have to prevent chemically contaminated water from higher, adjoining fields. Therefore, effective

buffers (indigenous plants/channels) to prevent such contamination should be maintained for the purpose.

6. Water used for organic farming should be pollution-free. It is expected that farmers will avoid relying on contaminated sources of irrigation as far as possible.

7. Farm planning should include measures for soil and moisture conservation (contour benches, bunds, plants).

8. All domestic animals and birds on the farm should be protected and treated with respect and in a humane way. Their diet/feed should be organic and treatment should be preferably by indigenous methods.

9. Burning of crop residues is prohibited except where demonstrated to be absolutely necessary for disease control.

10. Farming equipment used for conventional farming must be cleaned before use on organic farms.

11. Bags and containers used to harvest and transport organic produce must be clean and uncontaminated by chemicals and should not have been earlier used to store non-organic crops.

12. Natural and traditional ways and means for storing organic produce including leaf of neem, ash and other similar materials are recommended.

13. The farmer will try and maintain a diary to note down activities relating to the farm. The farmer should also make an effort to keep bills and receipts of purchases and sales made.

14. The conversion period to full organic production is 36 months from the last documented use of a prohibited input. Till that period is over, the farm will be classed as 'transitional' and its produce 'in conversion'.

