

National Project on Organic Farming

Objectives

- To facilitate, encourage and promote development of organic agriculture in the country.
- To encourage production and use of organic and biological sources of nutrients like biofertilizers, organic manure, compost for sustained soil health and fertility and improving soil organic carbon and to promote production and use of biopesticides, bio-control agents etc as alternative inputs in organic farming.
- To act as nodal agency for implementation of quality control regime for biofertilizers and organic fertilizers, as per the requirement of FCO.
- To formulate and define standards for other unregulated organic and biological inputs and bring them under quality control mechanism, define/upgrade standards and testing protocols.
- Develop, maintain, undertake regular efficacy testing and ensure steady supply of mother cultures of biofertilizer and other beneficial microorganisms for nutrient mobilization and plant protection to the biological input production industry.
- To run short term certificate courses on organic system and on-farm resource management.
- To organize regular trainings and refresher courses for State Governments' quality control analysts/inspectors associated with implementation of Fertilizer (Control) Order 1985 (FCO).
- To impart trainers' training on certification systems, organic management, input production and on other related aspects to certification and inspection agencies, extension agencies, farmers, industries and organizations engaged in the production, and promotion of inputs and organic farming.
- To initiate research on validation of established indigenous practices, inputs and technologies leading to development of package of practices.
- To initiate studies/surveys on biological soil health assessment under different farming systems, practices or states.
- To act as central information and data collection centre on all aspects of organic farming and dissemination of information through print and electronic media.
- Publication of training literature, Quarterly Organic Farming Newsletter, Half yearly Biofertilizer Newsletter and validated and documented indigenous practices.
- Technical support to existing certification systems in terms of standards formulation, designing implementation protocols, evaluation and surveillance. Policy, implementation and surveillance support to alternative farmers' group centric low-cost certification system such as PGS.
- Awareness creation through seminars/conferences/trade fairs and publicity through print and electronic media.

- Support Central and State Governments in evaluation, and monitoring of various organic agriculture schemes.

Implementation Components

I Strengthening and up-gradation of NPOF in respect of Buildings, staff and equipments

II. Support and encourage production and use of organic inputs for nutrient mobilization and plant protection through Capital Investment Subsidy for setting up of Commercial input Production units

(i) Fruits & Vegetables Waste/agro-waste Compost Production Units (100 TPD capacity) :

For establishment of large mechanized compost plants by APMCs/ Municipalities/other public sector enterprises/fertilizer companies/private industry/private entrepreneurs etc for fruits and vegetables market waste/ agro waste compost units under PPP or otherwise mode. Assistance will be provided in the form of capital investment subsidy @ 33% of TFO or Rs. 60 lakh whichever is less.

(ii) Biofertilizer and/or Biopesticide production Units : For establishment of state of the art sterile liquid/ carrier based 200 TPA biofertilizers and microbial biopesticides production units under public or private sector. Assistance up to 25% of TFO or Rs. 40 lakh whichever is less, will be available as credit linked back ended subsidy through NABARD.

III. Development and implementation of quality control regime and technical support for organic and biological inputs

i. Quality Control Analysis of Biofertilizer and Organic Fertilizers

As NCOF and six RCOFs have been notified as authorized quality analysis laboratories for organic fertilizers and Biofertilizer under FCO, a capacity will be created for analysis of 15,000 samples of biofertilizers and 11,000 samples of organic fertilizers

ii. Development of quality control regime for other organic inputs

Besides four biofertilizers viz: Rhizobium, Azotobacter, Azospirillum and PSB and two organic fertilizers: City Waste Compost and Vermi-compost, there are large numbers of organic inputs being produced and promoted (such as various other types of composts, de-oiled cakes, poultry manures, concentrated manures, sea-weed extracts, other plant/herbal extracts etc) without any proven details in respect of their quality and efficiency. It is proposed to develop necessary quality standards and testing protocols with necessary bio-efficacy potential of such products for bringing them under some form of formal quality control mechanism. The work will be taken up by NCOF/RCOFs in project mode.

iii. Development, maintenance and supply of authenticated strains of microorganisms

NCOF and RCOFs are the main source of mother culture availability for production of different microbial inoculants. They account for nearly 80% of the total requirement of such strains in the country. It is propose to strengthen this activity with addition of screening and regular bio-efficacy testing of such strains developed and released by research institutes for recommending and supplying region-specific/ location-specific strains. It is also propose to develop a national repository of such microbial strains at NCOF.

III. Human resource development through trainings

a. International Trainers' training/ cooperation and liaison with international bodies :

This being an exclusively new field with practically little expertise in the country, training of officers from DAC, NCOF, State agencies (involved with organic agriculture implementation programme), certification agencies and scientists from ICAR and SAUs (working for development of organic package of practices since last 3 years) are required to be given an international exposure. This also includes the need based visit of foreign experts to India and Indian executive officers/technical experts to different countries to create awareness about Indian organic produce, attend seminar/conferences, participate in exhibitions and develop liaison with international bodies on organic agriculture. Visit by select group of officers from DAC and NCOF to BioFach, Nuremberg and other such events, can also be useful in learning international trends in organic agriculture. A provision of Rs 61.00 lakh is proposed.

b. Certificate Course on organic farming - To create first generation organic agriculture extension workers and field workers it is propose to conduct one month certificate courses on organic production practices, on-farm input management, certification process, documentation, post harvest processing, storage and marketing. The course will be open for rural youth having Degree/Diploma in Agriculture. SAUs/Educational institutes can also sponsor their undergraduate students for such courses. Four such courses will be organized at NCOF, Ghaziabad at cost of Rs 12.00 lakh (@ Rs. 3.00 lakh each). Details in respects of financial requirements are given at **Annexure-X**.

c. Training/Refresher course for analysts – To update the analytical skills and sample collection and handling requirements (as per FCO) of State Government officers, training/ refresher courses are proposed for laboratory Analysts. Twenty five such trainings/refresher courses are proposed during the three years at NCOF/RCOFs at a cost of Rs. 30.00 lakh (@ Rs. 1.18 lakh/training). Details in respects of financial requirements are given at **Annexure-X**.

d. **Trainers trainings** – To create a cadre of organic agriculture trainers it is propose to organize five days customized trainers training courses for Fertilizer inspectors, Senior level extension officers, KVK trainers, NGO trainers and technical staff of production and quality control units etc on FCO, certification systems, organic management, production and quality control of organic inputs and other related aspects. Each course will be custom designed on one or two aspects only as per the requirement of the area and trainers. In all 84 such trainings will be conducted by NCOF/RCOFs during the remaining period of 11th Plan period at a cost of Rs. 66.00 lakh (@ Rs. 0.785 lakh/training). Details in respects of financial requirements are given at **Annexure-X**.

e. **Training of Field Functionaries / Extension Officers on Organic Farming:**

As organic farming is primarily an on-farm management system, to disseminate appropriate management protocols to field functionaries and extension officers, working in both Government and NGO sector, two days training courses are proposed to be organized by NCOF and RCOFs. In all 84 such trainings for the remaining three years period are proposed at a cost of Rs. 30.00 lakh (@ Rs. 0.3575 lakh/training). Details in respects of financial requirements are given at **Annexure-X**.

IV. Capacity building for biological soil health assessment and organic nutrient resource mapping

Deteriorating soil health is a matter of concern in many areas of the country. So far no efforts have been made to assess the soil health from microbiological and biological activities point of view. Also there is need to map organic nutrient resources and identify constraints/strategies for their effective utilization. It is propose to initiate preliminary survey and studies under NPOF in project mode by employing Research fellows through grant of fellowships of 2-3 years duration by NCOF/ RCOFs in collaboration with ICAR or SAUs

V. Encourage and Support Research, studies and/or surveys etc on organic package of practices, inputs and management protocols

To give organic farming a firm direction and to ensure sustained optimum productivity under organic management it is essential to give priority for collection, documentation, standardization and validation of successful indigenous practices of practicing organic farmers, development of on-farm resource based package of practices for different farming systems, development of location specific technology for nutrient management, pest management, validation of soil enrichment and plant protection formulations developed by practicing organic farmers and other

agencies, evaluation and standardization of organic and biological inputs & development of processing technology. NCOF/RCOFs/ ICAR/SAUs will be assisted financially for taking up such type of studies under time bound project mode. Assistance will be available mostly in the form of Project Associates/ Ph.D. scholarships/fellowships for a period of three to four years. Assistance will be limited to manpower cost and contingencies. Purchase of equipments and permanent assets will not be allowed. A Technical Committee constituted by DAC will decide on supporting such initiatives. Provision of Rs. 212.00 lakh is proposed out of which an expenditure of Rs., 12.00 lakh has already been made till March 2009, while amount of Rs. 200 lakh is proposed for the remaining period of 11th Plan.

VI. Publication of Newsletters, Training manuals and literature etc and collection of data related to organic farming and inputs

Quarterly Organic Farming Newsletter and Half yearly Biofertilizer Newsletter are being published under NPOF. It is propose to continue their publication along with other customized literature and training manuals in different regional languages. Such literature will be upgraded on yearly basis to accommodate new information/ knowledge. To serve as central information and data collection centre, statistical information will be collected at NCOF to create a National Data base.

VII. Capacity building for low cost alternative certification-PGS

While technical support to existing certification systems will continue, DAC/ NCOF will also undertake capacity building of alternative certification system such as PGS through policy, implementation, data management and surveillance support. To launch the activity on experimental scale provision of Rs. 50 lakh is proposed for the remaining period of 11th Plan.

VIII. New Initiatives, Market Development, Awareness Creation and Publicity and evaluation

Financial assistance will be provided for following activities leading to market development awareness creation, new initiatives and publicity through print and electronic media

- a. Development of web-portals, web connectivity for data storage, market facilitation and information sharing etc
- b. Special surveys to study the consumer's preference, market potential for various commodities, market demand & market intelligence studies.
- c. International/ National/ Regional/ State level Seminars, exhibitions, trade fairs etc.

- d. Development of Radio/TV programmes, video films, CDs, on various aspects of organic farming and success stories.
- e. Publication of booklets, pamphlets, training material, package of practices, books on technology packages, success stories, conference/ seminar proceedings etc
- f. Advertisement and publicity
- g. New Innovative component not covered above, besides survey and evaluation through independent evaluators.

IX. Evaluation and monitoring of organic agriculture schemes/ programmes of Central and State Governments

Various schemes are being promoted by the Central and State Governments through funding to different implementing agencies. NCOF being the national nodal agency for organic farming will provide technical support and undertake evaluation and monitoring of such schemes to ensure their effective implementation.