PART 2

VOLUNTARY CERTIFICATION

The previous part of this manual described important technical regulations and import requirements of the United States of America, the European Union, Japan and other countries from the Asia-Pacific region. They are compulsory for exporters or producers who want to sell their products into these markets.

This part deals with voluntary private standards and certification. Voluntary standards are not compulsory. Farmers, exporters and other firms can decide whether or not to comply with them, and accept the economic consequences of their actions.

This part provides general information on some of the major voluntary private agricultural certification programmes available in Asia, including contacts where more information can be found.

An international food expo where buyers are showing interest in certified products.

1. QUESTIONS ABOUT CERTIFICATION

What is voluntary certification?

There are three ways of verifying that a standard is met. In the first case, a company may decide to adopt the standard and appoint some of its employees to verify that all its departments comply with it. This is called first-party verification. In the second case, a firm may demand that its suppliers meet the standard and control itself that they do so. This is second-party verification. Finally, a firm may require that its suppliers meet the standard and request an independent organization that is not involved in the business relationship to control the compliance of the suppliers. This is third-party verification, also called certification. Therefore, by definition, the certification activity should always be done by an independent third party. Ideally, the organization that has set the standard should not carry out the certification operations itself. Rather, it should authorize ("designate") competent independent certification bodies to do this work after checking their capabilities.

Farmers and support staff learn about the certification process

A certificate is a written guarantee by an independent certification agency that the production process or the product complies with certain standards. These standards can focus on environmental issues (such as soil conservation, water protection, pesticide use, or waste management), or social issues (such as producer income, workers' rights, occupational health and safety) or on other aspects of production like food safety.

Why do these programmes exist?

Certification brings opportunities to producers such as market access, protection of local resources, improvement of workers' health and living conditions of rural communities. It may also ensure consumer health. Consumers are increasingly aware of the social and environmental problems associated with the production and trade of the food they consume. In response to these concerns, different types of certification programmes have been developed by private organizations or governments.

Why certify?

Certification is used to demonstrate that a product has been produced in a certain way or has certain characteristics complying with a standard. It is mainly used when the producer and the consumer are not in direct contact, for instance in the international market where the consumer cannot easily verify that the product was produced in the manner described by the producer.

Certification can help differentiate the product from other products, which can be helpful to promote the product in the market. Certification can also help improve market access, and in some cases, result in higher producer prices.

In large import markets such as Japan, the United States of America and the European Union, there is a booming market for products certified against certain private standards. Products certified as organic, or fair-trade, for example, tend to fetch higher prices than equivalent non-certified products. These countries import significant quantities of organic products from Asian countries, for example organic tea from the People's Republic of China and India, organic coffee from Timor Leste, organic and fair-trade bananas from the Philippines and organic vegetables from the People's Republic of China and Thailand. However, Asian exporters should not overlook the regional market. Indeed, with the development of large cities, the emergence of an urban middle-class and the growth of supermarkets in Asian countries, national markets for quality products are growing strongly. Thus this manual also gives information on national quality certification schemes and encourages the reader to think about tapping the local and regional export markets, the quality requirements of which may be less stringent than those of the European Union, the United States of America and Japan.

Cost?

There are two types of costs involved: (i) the cost of meeting a standard and getting certified, which depends on the kind of changes the producer will have to make on his or her farm and on the type of certification programme chosen; (ii) the cost of certification, which depends on the time that the inspector(s) spend on the farm inspection (farm audit) and on their travel expenses.

Producers can choose among many different types of certification. Decisions to obtain certification as well as the type of certification chosen are important decisions that influence farm management, investments and marketing strategies. However, since every certification programme has different objectives, requirements differ.

2. ENVIRONMENTAL CERTIFICATION

ORGANIC AGRICULTURE

Organic agriculture is a production method which manages the farm and its environment as a single system. It utilizes both traditional and scientific knowledge to enhance the health of the agro-ecosystem in which the farm operates. Organic farms rely on the use of local natural resources and the management of the ecosystem rather than external agricultural inputs such as mineral fertilizers and agrochemicals. Organic agriculture therefore rejects synthetic chemicals and genetically modified inputs. It promotes sustainable traditional farming practices that maintain soil fertility such as fallow.

Ecological balance in an organic farming community

Main requirements?

There are specific requirements for most organically certified crops as well as livestock, fish farming, bee keeping, forestry and the harvesting of wild products. Organic standards require that there is a conversion period (or time that a farm has to use organic production methods before it can be certified, usually 2 – 3 years).

Some organic farming criteria

Crop production requirements apply to:	Animal production requirements apply to:
• selection of seeds and plant materials • maintenance of soil fertility and the recycling of organic materials • prohibition of genetically modified inputs • diversity of crops on farm • processing, packaging and traceability of products • use of organic fertilizers and compounds for the control of pests, diseases and weeds	• animal health and welfare, • nutrition, breeding • transport and slaughter procedures

How to get certified?

Standards for organic farming have mainly been developed by private certification bodies but a number of Asian countries also have national organic standards and regulations (e.g. Japan, the People's Republic of China, Malaysia, the Republic of Korea, Thailand). In addition, there are private initiatives that promote organic farming (e.g. the Green Net/Earth Net Foundation in Thailand). The European Union, the United States of America and Japan all have national regulations on the labelling of organic products and if producers want to export their products to these countries, they must meet these regulations.

The choice of a certification agency is very important. The certification agency chosen by the producer must be officially recognized in the country where the product is to be sold. National certification agencies are often less expensive than international agencies but they may not be as well known in some foreign markets.

The conversion period of 2 – 3 years is often costly for the producer because the produce must be sold at conventional prices even though

organic methods are used which may result in higher production costs and lower yields, at least initially. In some countries, there is also market demand for products from farms that are in conversion to organic production but have not yet obtained certification. These products are sometimes found with the label "organic in transition". To reduce costs and have a system of mutual support to improve production and compliance with standards, a group of producers can join together and create their own internal control system. To do this, it is important that the producers trust and work well together, as they will largely depend on each other. Guidelines for the establishment and operation of grower groups can be obtained from the International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements (see contact information below).

Organic agriculture may represent an interesting opportunity for many producers in Asia especially for those who presently do not use a lot of agrochemical products. For example, the People's Republic of China exports organic tea worldwide and organic vegetables to Japan, India exports organic tea, the Philippines exports organic bananas and mangoes and Timor Leste exports organic coffee.

Opportunities and constraints

Once the farm is certified, selling organic products might improve the quality of life and income of producers. Producers shift to organic agriculture for a variety of

Certification inspector asks questions and inspects farm

reasons. Some feel that the use of agrochemicals is bad for their health and the environment, while other producers are attracted by the generally higher prices and the rapidly growing market for many organic products in recent years.

Converting to organic agriculture may be easier or more profitable for producers depending on whether they:

- use organic fertilizers and other permitted inputs or use agrochemical products intensively.
- own the land.
- have access to labour (as organic production often demands more labour).

More information on organic agriculture

International:

- International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements (IFOAM):
www.ifoam.org
e-mail: headoffice@ifoam.org Tel.: +49 228 926 5010

- Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO):
www.fao.org/organicag/default.htm

- United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD):
www.unctad.org

- International Trade Centre (ITC):
www.intracen.org

Marketing:

- Organic Trade Services - United Kingdom
www.organicts.com
e-mail: info@organicTS.com Tel.: +44 797 410 3109

- USDA FAS - United States of America
www.fas.usda.gov/agx/organics/index.htm

Research centres:

- FIBL - Switzerland
www.fibl.org/english/index.php
e-mail: info.suisse@fibl.org Tel.: +41 628 657 272

- Organic Research - United Kingdom
www.organic-research.com

- National Sustainable Agriculture Information Service - United States of America
www.attra.org

National support organizations and certification bodies in Asia:

www.fao.org/es/esc/en/20953/21020/highlight_35950en.html

ISO 14001 CERTIFICATION

ISO 14001 is designed to help the implementation of environmental management systems for organizations in both the private and public sectors. It was created by the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) which is a private international network of national standard institutes working along with governments, industry and consumer representatives. While there are a number of other ISO standards that can be used as environmental management tools, only ISO 14001 can be used for certification. The group of ISO standards, which contains various international harmonized voluntary standards, is widely applied across all industrial sectors.

Main requirements?

The ISO 14001 standard requires that the enterprise develop an environmental management system that includes: environmental objectives and goals, policies and procedures for reaching these goals, definition of responsibilities, staff training activities, documentation and a system to review any changes made. The ISO 14001 standard describes the management process that the company must follow and requires that the company respect

the national environmental regulations. However, it does not set specific performance levels or require that particular performance targets be met.

How to get certified?

The ISO 14001 certification is granted by either governmental or private certification agencies under their own responsibility. In some parts of the world, national accreditation bodies accredit certification agencies to do the ISO certification. In most cases, the producer must pay a consultant to help with the preparation process and to make the environmental management plan.

Opportunities and constraints

ISO 14001 is well known in the industrial sector. The certification aims to reduce the impact on the environment with a management system that can also create internal benefits by improving environmental performance (for example by reducing the use of raw materials and energy or by improving waste management). A main limitation of ISO 14001 is that there are no performance requirements. This means that an enterprise with very high environmental targets and one with low targets may both be certified. Therefore, the effect largely depends on the commitment of the individual company. Furthermore, the ISO logo cannot be used on products. However your organization may indicate that it is certified ISO 14001 in its advertizing and public-relations activities. There is no price premium. Since a growing number of companies are becoming ISO-certified, the standard may no longer be a determining factor for market advantage but could lead to other internal benefits within the company.

More information on ISO 14001

International:

International Organization for Standardization (ISO): www.iso.org

National support organizations and certification bodies in Asia:

www.fao.org/es/esc/en/20953/21020/highlight_35950en.html

3. SOCIAL CERTIFICATION

FAIR-TRADE

Fair-trade is based on the fair remuneration of producers. Buyers that commit to fair-trade must pay a minimum price to producers as well as a premium called fair-trade premium. This premium should enable producers to support themselves and to invest in community development. In return, producers that commit to fair-trade must comply with labour rights, environmental and social requirements. Standard setting and certification are under the control of the Fairtrade Labelling Organizations International (FLO). This organization is the worldwide umbrella organization of 20 national non-governmental organizations in Europe, America, Asia and Oceania. Other institutions unrelated to FLO are also setting up fair-trade standards.

Various Asian producer groups benefit from exports of fair-trade products. For example, the Philippines exports fair-trade bananas and sugar to Japan, Thailand exports fair-trade rice, Indonesia fair-trade coffee, India and Sri Lanka fair-trade vanilla, etc.

Fair-trade funds helped to build this children's library and play area.

Main requirements?

To obtain certification, producer associations must function in a democratic manner. There are also rules on how the fair-trade premium has to be spent and requirements for the protection of the environment.

For plantations, there are a number of requirements related to labour rights: workers' treatment, freedom of association and collective bargaining, workers' housing and sanitation; workers' health and safety; and no child or forced labour. In addition, the producer must comply with the environmental and social laws in the producing country and demonstrate continual improvement in annual inspections (audits).

How to get certified?

FLO fair-trade certification can be applied for by a group of producers in a cooperative, a farmer association or by large farms with an organized labour force. Local auditors inspect the farm and the certification agency Flo-Cert Ltd decides whether or not to certify the producer association. Once certified, there is a regular inspection once a year to check that the producers meet the fair-trade requirements and to examine how they used the fair-trade premium. Traders who use the FLO certification mark on their packages currently pay a license fee. Producers have to pay fees which are based on the costs of the inspection.

Opportunities and constraints

A producer association or a plantation can benefit from fair-trade certification since certified products normally receive higher and more stable prices. The price paid to producers is determined by production costs. It takes into consideration any additional costs that might arise from meeting the fair-trade requirements, such as providing living wages for workers. In general, the fair trade premium is meant to provide some

resources to the community to improve the living conditions of its members.

A key constraint in the fair trade system is that a group of producers can only get certified if FLO finds that there is a market for their fair-trade-labelled products. In order to enter the fair-trade system, a necessary first step is to ask FLO and other fair-trade importers for information regarding market opportunities for their products. Another constraint is that when a producer association or a plantation has been certified there is no guarantee that the whole production will be sold and marketed as "fair-trade".

More information on fair-trade

International:

- FLO International, Bonn, Germany:
  www.fairtrade.net
  e-mail : info@fairtrade.net Tel.: +49 228 949 230

- FLO Certification Unit, Bonn/Germany:
  e-mail: info@flo-cert.net

To export fair-trade products to Japan:

- TransFair Japan: www.fairtrade-jp.org/
- AlterTrade Japan: www.altertrade.co.jp/

National support organizations and certification bodies in Asia:

www.fao.org/es/esc/en/20953/21020/highlight_35950en.html

SA8000 CERTIFICATION

SA8000 is a voluntary private workplace certification programme that has been developed by the non-governmental organization Social Accountability International (SAI) with the aim to create better working conditions. The SA8000 standard is based on international workplace norms including those related to social justice, worker rights and working conditions. Some of the very large firms exporting banana, pineapple, tobacco, wine, canned fruits and processed coffee are SA8000-certified. In December 2006 there were almost 500 SA8000-certified facilities in Asia (of which 190 in India, 140 in the People's Republic of China and 58 in Pakistan).

Main requirements?

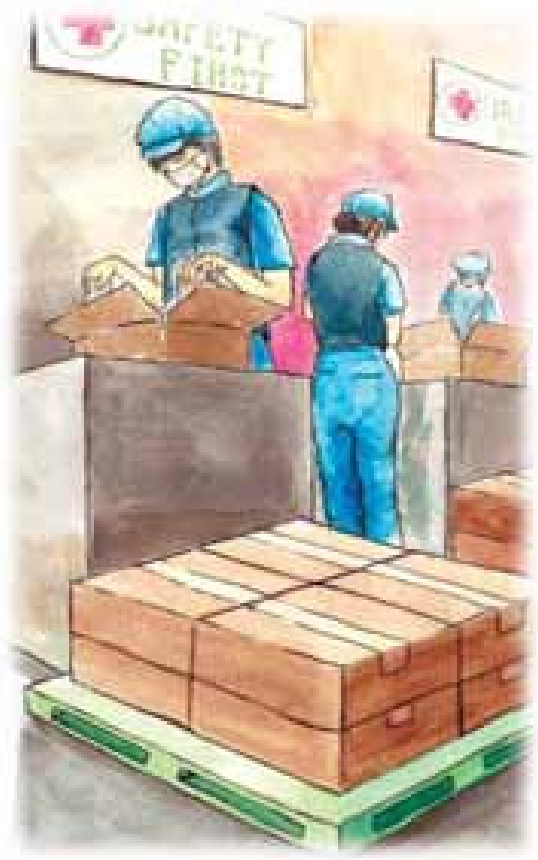
The SA8000 certification sets minimum standards for working conditions to ensure a safe and healthy working environment, freedom of association and collective bargaining and an enterprise strategy for managing social workplace issues. Also there are rules for working hours, wages, prevention of discrimination and the use of children or forced labour.

How to get certified?

Enterprises that operate production facilities can apply for SA8000 certification by one of the certification agencies approved by SAI. After the initial inspection and once the workplace is certified, the company is monitored to ensure continued compliance with the standards. The producing company usually pays the certification fee which includes the audit and corrective or preventative action costs. The SA8000 certification mark is not used on product labels but the company may use it in promotional activities. There is no specific price premium or market for SA8000-certified products.

Opportunities and constraints

The SA8000 certification is one of the most detailed workplace standards for international labour rights. It primarily benefits larger agro-industrial enterprises that can use it in their corporate public relations. The SA8000 standard can help to improve productivity and quality and can also help to recruit and retain workers. Although more common in other industries, the SA8000 standard has only slowly been taken up by the agricultural industry because it is difficult to implement in seasonal production.



A safe and healthy working environment

More information on SA8000

International:

Social Accountability International
Tel.: +1 212 6841414
e-mail: info@sa-intl.org
Web: www.sa-intl.org

For a list of SA8000-certified organizations:
www.sa-intl.org/index.cfm?fuseaction=document.showDocumentByID&nodeID=1&DocumentID=60

National support organizations and certification bodies in Asia:

www.fao.org/es/esc/en/20953/21020/highlight_35950en.html

4. FOOD SAFETY AND GOOD PRACTICE CERTIFICATION

Growing demand for food safety certification

European supermarket chains are increasingly demanding that their suppliers be certified against a private food safety standard such as GLOBALGAP, BRC and IFS. These chains account for over 60 percent of fresh produce retail sales in many European countries. In addition, each individual retail company may impose even stronger quality requirements on its suppliers so as to differentiate its products from that of its competitors.

Likewise in the Asian market, some minimum certification on food safety is required by local supermarket chains or local agroprocessing businesses and these customers will ask for extra quality requirements to purchase the producer's product. Both in Asia and in the international market, farmers and food producers will be increasingly required to be certified against a food safety standard.

This chapter deals with different types of voluntary standards for food safety and good production practices. It starts with standards for good agricultural practices (GAP). These standards are relevant to farmers as they cover the agricultural production process, from inputs to the farmgate. It presents GLOBALGAP, a voluntary standard required by many supermarket chains in Europe, and the national and regional GAP standards currently operating in Asia. The chapter goes on to describe standards for good manufacturing practices (GMP). These standards mainly apply to firms that process agricultural products to produce foods.

4.1 Good agricultural practices (GAP)

4.1.1 Introduction to GAP

What are good agricultural practices (GAP)?

Good agricultural practices are "practices that address environmental, economic and social sustainability for on-farm processes, and result in safe and quality food and non-food agricultural products" (FAO 2003).

What are GAP codes, standards and regulations?

Good agricultural practices (GAP) codes, standards and regulations are guidelines which have been developed in recent years by the food industry, producers' organizations, governments and NGOs, aiming to codify agricultural practices at farm level for a range of commodities.

GLOBALGAP inspector checking produce destined for Europe

Why do GAP codes, standards and regulations exist?

These GAP codes, programmes or standards exist because of growing concerns about food quality and safety worldwide. Their purpose varies from fulfilment of trade and government regulatory requirements, in particular with regard to food safety and quality, to more specific requirements of specialty or niche markets. Their objectives range from ensuring safety and quality of produce in the food chain; capturing new

market advantages by modifying supply chain governance; improving natural resources use, workers' health and working conditions to creating new market opportunities for farmers and exporters in developing countries.

What are the main benefits and challenges?

The benefits of GAP codes, standards and regulations are numerous, including food quality and safety improvement; facilitation of market access and reduction in non-compliance risks regarding permitted pesticides, MRLs and other contamination hazards. The main challenges related to GAP implementation include an increase in production costs, especially record keeping, residue testing and certification, and inadequate access to information and support services.

More information on GAP:

FAO GAP: www.fao.org/prods/GAP/index_en.htm

4.1.2 Regional and national GAPs

4.1.2.1 GLOBALG.A.P.

On 7 September 2007, EurepGAP changed its name to GLOBALGAP to reflect its increasingly global scope. GLOBALGAP is a private sector body that sets voluntary certification standards and procedures for good agricultural practices. It was originally created by a group of European supermarket chains. GLOBALGAP aims to increase consumers' confidence in food safety by developing good agricultural practices which must be adopted by producers. The focus of GLOBALGAP is on food safety and traceability, although it also includes some requirements on worker safety, health and welfare, and conservation of environment. GLOBALGAP is a prefarmgate standard, which means that the certificate covers the process of the

certified product from before the seed is planted until it leaves the farm. It should be borne in mind that GLOBALGAP is a purely private standard.

GLOBALGAP has so far developed GAP standards for fruits and vegetables, combinable crops, flowers and ornamental plants, green coffee, tea, pigs, poultry, cattle and sheep, dairy and aquaculture (salmon). Other product scopes are under development (check their Web site).

Main requirements?

The GLOBALGAP standard requires that producers establish a complete control and monitoring system. Products are registered and can be traced back to the specific farm unit where they were grown. GLOBALGAP rules are relatively flexible about field practices such as soil fumigation and fertilizer usage. There are strict regulations about pesticide storage and pesticide residue limits. In addition, it is important to record and justify how the product was produced, so detailed records must be kept about farm practices.

How to get certified?

GLOBALGAP does not issue the certificates itself but has authorized registered certification bodies to do this. Firstly, it is recommended to read the GLOBALGAP general regulations and control points of the respective product scope before contacting a certification body which will accomplish the certification procedure. Farmers who want to get certified to GLOBALGAP have to take certain costs into account. Generally they have to pay for registration, inspection and certification.

Both individual producers and groups of producers can apply for certification, the cost of which depends on the certification agency chosen and the time spent on the inspection.

In addition to the certification fee charged by the certification agency, the producer must also pay an annual producer registration fee to maintain the certification.

Main opportunities and constraints

To get the GLOBALGAP certification, the producer, or group of producers, needs a complete administrative system to keep track of all farm activities.

This requires a sufficient administrative and financial capacity; consequently it is easier for large-scale producers to meet the requirements.

The GLOBALGAP-certified producer may also have an advantage when selling products to retailers that require GLOBALGAP certification. As of September 2007, GLOBALGAP had 35 retail and food-service members (34 in Europe and one in Japan).

There is no special price premium or product label associated with GLOBALGAP, as it is a minimum standard focused on business-to-business relations.

More information on GLOBALG.A.P.

International:

Stakeholder Liaison
GLOBALG.A.P. c/o FoodPLUS GmbH
www.globalgap.org
e-mail: info@foodplus.org Tel.: +49 221 579 9325

GLOBALG.A.P. contact person in the People's Republic of China:
Project Manager China
Tel.: +86 133 2113 8571

Certification bodies that are accredited by GLOBALG.A.P. in Asian countries:

www.globalgap.org/fruit/cbs.html?countryid=211&continentid=16

4.1.2.2 ASEANGAP

ASEANGAP was developed by the ASEAN Secretariat (with member country representatives) and launched in 2006 as a standard for good agricultural practices during the production, harvesting and post-harvest handling of fresh fruits and vegetables in the ASEAN region. The purpose of ASEANGAP is to enhance the harmonization of national GAP programmes within the ASEAN region, enhance fruit and vegetable safety for consumers, sustainability of natural resources and facilitate the trade of fruits and vegetables regionally and internationally.

What are the main requirements?

ASEANGAP consists of four modules covering:

- Food safety
- Environmental management
- Worker health, safety and welfare
- Produce quality.

Each module can be used alone or in combination with other modules. This enables progressive implementation of ASEANGAP, module by module, and based on individual country priorities.

How to get certified?

Certification is carried out by national authorities in each of the ASEAN countries.

Main opportunities and constraints

Since ASEANGAP is intended to enhance harmonization of product standards and facilitate trade there are great opportunities for certified producers to enhance their exports of fresh fruits and vegetables to other ASEAN countries. For the less developed ASEAN countries there is an opportunity to use ASEANGAP as a benchmark in developing national GAPs, as the ASEANGAP includes implementation guidelines and training materials as well as a code of recommended practices. Member countries can benchmark their country GAP programmes against ASEANGAP to achieve harmonization.

The main constraint of ASEANGAP is that it only covers fresh fruits and vegetables. It does not cover products that present a high risk to food safety such as fresh cuts. It is still a very new standard in a regional and international context. ASEANGAP is not a standard for certification of organic products or GMO-free products.

More information on ASEANGAP

ASEANGAP: www.aphnet.org/gap/ASEANgap.html

4.1.2.3 Malaysia - SALM certification

Malaysia has developed a number of quality assurance programmes for primary producers with a number of voluntary farm certification schemes including the fresh fruit and vegetable sector certification (SALM); livestock certification (SALT); fisheries and aquaculture certification (SPLAM) and organic sector certification (SOM). The implementation of GAP standards in Malaysia started with the introduction of the Farm Accreditation Scheme of Malaysia (SALM) in 2002 by the Department of Agriculture (DOA). SALM is a programme designed to accredit farms that

adopt Good agricultural practices, are operated in a sustainable and environmentally friendly way, and yield quality products that are safe for consumption.

Three major aspects are evaluated under SALM, namely:

- Environmental setting of farms
- Verification of farm practices
- Safety of farm products

What are the main requirements?

Under these three aspects 21 elements are evaluated, of which 17 types of records must be maintained. Information available from SALM-certified farms include land use, soil type, source and quality of irrigation water, soil preparation including soil fumigation, fertilizer programmes, harvesting techniques and field transport, post-harvest treatment and packaging, and farm waste disposal.

How to get certified?

The farmer must first register with the Department of Agriculture and undergo a farm visit by a team of auditors, whose report is subject to approval by the Secretariat. A second farm visit results in the preparation of a technical report for the Farm Accreditation Committee. On acceptance, the farm is provided with a GAP certificate and approval to affix the SALM logo. Farms then undergo verification of farm practices and sequential residue analyses of farm produce and water.

Main opportunities and constraints

SALM-registered farms are reported to get priority in the local market because they qualify as preferred suppliers and offer a degree of

differentiation. However no premiums are offered to products from certified farms. SALM-registered farms are eligible to qualify for the "Malaysia Best" logo, a branding exercise administered by the Federal Agricultural Marketing Authority (FAMA). On the export front, through a bilateral agreement with Singapore, consignments receive preferential treatment.

However as the scheme is managed, audited and certified by the Department of Agriculture, there is a lack of transparency. The SALM scheme has also not received recognition of equivalence with other countries' or private standards, although benchmarking to GLOBALGAP, initiated in September 2007, will change this situation.

More information on Malaysia - SALM

- Department of Agriculture, Malaysia:
  www.doa.gov.my/main.php
- SALM scheme, Malaysia:
  www.doa.gov.my/main.php?Content=contentdetails&ContentID=12&CurLocation=0&Page=1

4.1.2.4 Thailand - Q GAP and ThaiGAP certification

In response to quality and safety requirements of both export and domestic markets, the Government of Thailand has made significant steps towards the development, introduction and implementation of quality and safety "Q" certification programmes. A "Q" scheme has been developed to certify each step of food production safety with a "Q" logo used for all agricultural products (crops, livestock and fisheries). The Department of Agriculture grants several certificates including Q GAP, Q Packing house and Q Shop, among others. A Quality Management System: Good Agricultural Practice (GAP) for

on-farm production was developed by modifying concepts of international standards with 3 levels of certification. Level 1 is pesticide-residue safe; Level 2 is pesticide-residue safe and pest free, and level 3 is pesticide-residue safe, pest free and with premium quality.

What are the main requirements?

The standard defines eight control points, their requirements and how to inspect them. These control points are: water source, cultivation site, use of agricultural hazardous substances, product storage and on-site transportation, data records, production for disease and pest-free products, management of quality agricultural production and harvesting and post-harvest handling. The first five control points are required for Level 1; control points 1 to 6 for Level 2, and all eight control points for Level 3 certification.

How to get certified?

The scheme is voluntary and managed by the government. The National Bureau of Agricultural Commodity and Food Standards (ACFS) is the accreditation body, while the Department of Agriculture provides certification and implementation functions. Farmers submit their application form and relevant documents to their local Office of Agricultural Research and Development (OARD) which carries out the inspection. The farmer is informed of the results of the inspection and is given a number of days to detail how any corrective action will be taken. The GAP Inspection Form is then submitted to the OARD board, which reviews and presents it to the Sub-committee on GAP certification. This sub-committee compiles and submits the information to the Committee on Food Safety Management which then issues the GAP certificate.

Main opportunities and constraints

Currently, certification against Q GAP is exempted from any fees. The scheme is both audited and certified by the Department of Agriculture. The system and certification mark is not internationally benchmarked. In order to create a standard that may be benchmarked internationally, the Thai Chamber of Commerce in collaboration with the Thai Government has started work on developing ThaiGAP. At the time of publication of this manual, collaboration between Thai stakeholders and GLOBALGAP had only just started on ThaiGAP. It was planned that ThaiGAP would obtain benchmarking with GLOBALGAP by the end of 2008.

More information on Thailand - Q GAP and ThaiGAP

- Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives Thailand:
www.acfs.go.th
www.doa.go.th/en/

- Inspection Manual for Certification:
www.aphnet.org/workshop/SPS%20matters/Thailand/thai%20gap.pdf

- The Thai Chamber of Commerce, Bangkok
www.thaiechamber.com
Tel: + 66 2622 1860

4.1.2.5 Japan - JGAP certification

The Japan Good Agricultural Initiative (JGAI) was formed by a group of Japanese producers in April 2005, to establish a system that ensures the safety of agricultural produce by establishing one common standard of good agricultural practices in Japan - JGAP. The Japanese Ministry of Agriculture announced in June 2006 that JGAP would become the national standard, meaning that several private retailers and the current ministry

GAP scheme will come under the same umbrella. It was decided to benchmark JGAP against GLOBALGAP in order to strengthen the recognition of the scheme by retailers within the country and internationally. GLOBALGAP benchmarking was completed in August 2007.

What are the main requirements?

The JGAP scheme is divided into four chapters:

- Food safety, including critical control points on fertilizers, seed, produce handling
- Environmental considerations including water, soil, energy, neighbouring sites
- Workers' welfare and safety including minimum wage and training
- Sales management including record keeping and traceability

How to get certified?

JGAP is managed by a steering committee which has ultimate authority to guide the policy of JGAP. The steering committee has a technical committee which develops the standards and general regulations and a council, which represents the wider stakeholder group of suppliers and retailers. Certification is carried out by qualified third-party private sector auditors.

Main opportunities and constraints

JGAP provides opportunities to Japanese farmers because it reflects the specific features of Japanese agriculture, in terms of the scale of farming, environmental and legal issues, institutions and language. The challenges of the JGAP lie in implementing the GAP among small farmers at lower cost, organizing the farmers and harmonization of all the individual retailer GAP schemes.

JGAP has been benchmarked to GLOBALGAP with a new Approved Modified

Check List (AMCL) benchmarking procedure, where only the Critical Control Check Points are benchmarked. A JGAP logo exists, but will only be used for business-to-business transactions and not at final point of sale.

More information on Japan - JGAP

JGAP: www.jgai.jp/

4.1.2.6 The People's Republic of China - Green Food and ChinaGAP certifications

The Chinese Government has established a state agroproduct and food certification system in the food chain and has developed two GAP programmes to introduce certification in farming. These two GAP programmes are intended to stimulate agriculture, reduce the risks linked to food safety, coordinate various sectors of the supply chain of agricultural products and stimulate the development of international good agricultural practice standards and relevant certification and accreditation activities. The Ministry of Agriculture has developed the Green Food standard to develop good agricultural practices for the Chinese national market whereas ChinaGAP is being developed jointly by the Chinese Government and GLOBALGAP to supply international markets. A memorandum of understanding was signed with GLOBALGAP in April 2006 to initiate the formal benchmarking procedure.

What are the main requirements?

The ChinaGAP certification will take a two-tier approach. The Second Class certification farmers need only to comply with the "major musts" based on the GLOBALGAP system, while the First Class certification requires compliance with all the major and minor musts. The First Class ChinaGAP certification is envisaged to be compatible with the GLOBALGAP certification.

How to get certified?

The Chinese regulations on Certification and Accreditation were published in November 2003, and the State Council has authorized the Certification and Accreditation Administration (CNCA) to manage, administer and authorize the certification process and train inspectors, testing bodies and auditors. CNCA published the ChinaGAP codes, rules and training documents and started with initial pilot certification and accreditation activities in 18 provinces of the People's Republic of China as of mid 2007.

Main opportunities and constraints

ChinaGAP is an opportunity for Chinese farmers to improve the quality and safety of their agricultural production. Since the requirements for First Class certification are very high, only a limited number of Chinese farmers will be able to become certified. At the time of publication of this manual, 217 enterprises were operating in accordance with ChinaGAP and 116 enterprises had already been certified for ChinaGAP. Benchmarking with GLOBALGAP was also due to become effective in the near future.

A coffee plantation may require environmental, social, and food safety certification

More information on Green Food and ChinaGAP

Green Food Development Center of the Ministry of Agriculture: www.greenfood.org.cn

Certification and Accreditation Administration (CNCA): www.cnca.gov.cn

4.1.2.7 India - IndiaGAP

At the time of publication of this manual, the Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority of India had initiated the development of an IndiaGAP standard. One of the objectives of the standard is to gain benchmarked recognition with GLOBALGAP so as to open the European market to Indian agricultural producers.

More information on IndiaGAP

Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority, New Delhi
Email: headq@apeda.com Tel: +91 11 2651 3204

4.2. Good manufacturing practice certification

4.2.1. International Food Standard (IFS) certification

In 2002 German retailers developed a common standard called International Food Standard (IFS) for food safety management systems. In 2003 French food retailers (and wholesalers) joined the IFS Working Group and contributed to the development of the current version of the normative document. The IFS standard has been designed as a uniform tool to ensure food safety and to monitor the quality level of producers of retailer-branded food products. The standard can apply for all steps of the processing of foods subsequent to their agricultural production.

What are the main requirements?

The IFS programme allows for two levels of certification:

- the "foundation level" is considered as the minimum requirements for the international food industry

- the "higher level" is considered as a superior standard in the food industry

The "foundation level criteria" include 230 items, whereas the "higher level criteria" include 60 additional criteria. Furthermore, 46 recommendations are formulated for companies who wish to demonstrate "best practices" in the sector. For each criterion of the standard, a certain number of points are assigned according to the compliance and to the criterion level. The certificate (foundation or higher level) is delivered depending on the number of points gained.

How to get certified?

IFS certification is site-specific meaning that the audit scope is limited to the site where the audit takes place, but all types of products produced in this site must be taken into account. The re-evaluation frequency is once a year. For a "higher level" certification that has already been confirmed twice and does not concern seasonal products, the re-evaluation frequency is reduced to 18 months. The certification costs vary by certification body, but the average is US$2 000 for 1.5 days for an on-site audit.

Opportunities and constraints

IFS certification is required by almost all German and French retailers and by retailers in a number of other European countries. At present, retailers demand IFS certification only from the suppliers of private-label food products.

The number of IFS-certified suppliers in Asia is still low, but since the use of the standard in Europe is increasing and the number of IFS-accredited certifying bodies in Asia is increasing, there are great opportunities for exporters to strengthen their competitiveness at the European market by becoming certified under the IFS certification scheme.

More information on IFS

IFS:
www.food-care.info
e-mail: info@food-care.info Tel.: +49 (0) 30 726 250 74,

4.2.2. Safe Quality Food (SQF) codes

Safe Quality Food (SQF) codes were established by the Western Australian Department of Agriculture in 1996. In 2003 the worldwide ownership of the standards was transferred to the Food Marketing Institute (FMI) in the United States of America and at present SQF codes are managed under the SQF Institute established under FMI.

What are the main requirements?

The SQF programme is a fully integrated voluntary food safety and quality management protocol designed for the food industry with application at all links in the food supply chain. The codes are based on Codex Alimentarius HACCP Guidelines. Two certification programmes have been established for different types of food product suppliers:

- SQF 1000: Specific to primary producers and to issues of concern to them (prefarmgate production, harvesting, preparation of primary products).
- SQF 2000: Specific to food industries and to issues of concern to them (raw materials and ingredients, processed or prepared foods, beverages or services).

Each programme allows for three levels of certification:

- Level 1 (Food Safety Fundamentals): This certificate assures that the company implements prerequisite programmes (Good Agricultural or

Manufacturing Practices), and fundamental food safety controls.

- Level 2 (Accredited HACCP Food Safety Plans): This certificate assures that the company implements prerequisite programmes and a food safety plan in accordance with the HACCP method.
- Level 3 (Comprehensive Food Safety and Quality Management Systems Development): This certificate assures that the company implements prerequisite programmes and a food safety plan, which is based on the principles of HACCP and which prevents the incidence of poor quality.

To implement Level 2, producers must comply with Level 1 plus additional requirements. Likewise to implement Level 3, producers must comply with Level 2 plus additional requirements. For each level, compliance with the provisions is obligatory without any tolerance margin.

How to get certified?

Only registered SQF auditors working with licensed and accredited certification bodies can certify against SQF codes. Once Level 1 has been achieved, a supplier will be placed into the SQF register which is made available on the SQF Web site.

Main opportunities and constraints

SQF certification provides many benefits and value to suppliers. By complying to one internationally recognized voluntary standard, SQF reduces the need to undergo multiple audits to different standards, allowing suppliers to shift resources from complying with multiple audits for a range of certification schemes. SQF is a business-to-business scheme, mainly designed for primary producers selling to food manufacturers, so there is no product label.

More information on SQF

The SQF Institute:
www.sqfi.com
Tel.: +1 202 220 0635

Asia Pacific SQF certifier:
Silliker Global Certification Services Pty Ltd,
www.silliker.com/australia/home.php
Tel.: +61 (0)3 8878 3204 Fax: +61 (0)3 8878 3210

4.2.3. British Retail Consortium standard (BRC)

The BRC standard is a private voluntary standard developed by the British Retail Consortium (BRC). The standard has been set up in order to protect consumers' health and to enable British retailers to comply with the United Kingdom Food Safety Act. Therefore, the BRC standard can be considered as a tool that provides retailers with a common basis for the audit of their suppliers of food products. The use of this standard requires the adoption and implementation of HACCP principles, the setting up of a documented and effective quality management system as well as the control of working environment, products, processes and personnel. It can be applied by any food supplier company.

The application of the BRC Standard requires certification by a third party. Certified products are differentiated in the market as they carry the BRC logo.

More information on the BRC

BRC standards:
www.brc.org.uk/standards/

4.2.4. ISO 22000

The ISO 22000 standard has been developed to facilitate the setting up of food safety management systems. It incorporates the HACCP principles as well as traceability measures. ISO 22000 has been elaborated by the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) along with the Confederation of the Food and Drink Industries of the European Union (CIAA), the International Hotel and Restaurant Association (IH&RA), the CIES Global Food Safety Initiative (GFSI) and the World Food Safety Organization (WFSO). Therefore, ISO 22000 harmonizes the requirements of national food safety management systems worldwide on a non-governmental, voluntary basis. Any stakeholder of the food chain (crop producers, feed producers, food producers, processors, wholesalers, retailers) can apply for this standard. ISO 22000 can be used independently or in combination with other management system standards. The ISO logo cannot be used on products.

More information on ISO 22000 Standards

International Organization for Standardization: www.iso.org

4.2.5 National support organizations and certification bodies for GAP and GMP in Asia

www.fao.org/es/esc/en/20953/21020/highlight_ 35950en.html

5. CERTIFICATION FOR INTRINSIC FOOD QUALITY

In recent years a number of voluntary private certification programmes have arisen to highlight specific characteristics of foods that are not directly related to their physical, chemical or biological properties. Instead, these programmes focus on cultural or geographical features. This chapter introduces two such schemes: geographic indications and halal.

5.1. Geographical indications (GI)

A geographical indication (GI) is a private voluntary standard that has been registered by a producers' group or a local government authority through the national administration in charge of intellectual property. GIs are a seal of quality which helps to promote know-how, tradition, diversity and quality for raw produce and processed foods. GIs differentiate the product signalling distinctive specific quality characteristics that are essentially attributable to its origin, as the product comes from a determined geographic area. Generally these characteristics are already recognized to some extent by consumers at local, national or even international level. GIs confer legal protection of the geographically related product name and prevent the unauthorized use of the geographical indication on labels of products from other regions. It is thus seen as an appropriate marketing tool for regional and international trade of characteristic local products.

Examples of already existing Asian GIs include Binh Thuan Dragon Fruit and Phu Quoc Fish Sauce from Viet Nam, Doi Tung Coffee from Thailand, and Longjing Tea from China. Many Asian countries have agricultural and food

products which could benefit from GI protection and promotion, for example Darjeeling Tea from India or Bali Coffee from Indonesia.

To register a new GI, producers must submit an application to the administration in charge of intellectual property in their country. The application must state a geographically linked name for the product, a name that must already be in common use or with a historical reference. Producers must also demonstrate the causal relation between the product characteristics and the geographic location of production or the traditional knowledge in the area of production. On this basis, they define a code of practice for the production and transformation processes, which they commit to comply with. This is meant to characterize the unique specificity of the product which will allow local producers to associate their product with the geographical name. Finally, a third party must inspect and certify the quality of the production and transformation processes on behalf of the government, which is the final guarantor of the quality of the product. Once registered, producers and manufacturers who are located in the geographic area and who meet the code of practice can use the GI label created by the originator of the product and protected by the government.

More information on geographical indications in an Asian context

www.ecap-project.org/activitiesevents/at_regional_level/eu_asean_seminar_on_the_protection_and_promotion_of_geographical_indications_gis.html

For information on geographical indications in Europe:
www.ec.europa.eu/agriculture/foodqual/quali1_en.htm

National support organizations and certification bodies in Asia:
www.fao.org/es/esc/en/20953/21020/highlight_35950en.html

5.2. Halal certification

Halal is an Arabic word meaning lawful. It refers to things or actions permitted by Islamic law. When associated to food, it is usually used to describe something that a Muslim is permitted to eat, drink or use. The opposite of halal is haram, which is Arabic for unlawful or prohibited. For producers and traders, this implies making sure that all the inputs, tools, machinery and labour used in the production, processing, storage and distribution chains of the products have been kept separated from anything that is considered haram. The process covers food as well as non-food products, such as some medicines and cosmetics. Halal certification is becoming increasingly important for agrifood marketing in Asia as the value of world halal food trade is estimated at US$150 billion. For many practicing Muslims travelling abroad or living in countries dependent on food imports, the halal logo is becoming a trusted quality sign for purchasing agrifood products that are certified as lawful under Islamic law. There is anecdotal evidence of markedly increased sales for distribution outlets and restaurants that are certified halal. Thus, the halal logo can be envisaged by stakeholders in agrifood chains as a marketing tool to reach the Muslim consumer.

Halal requirements differ slightly from country to country, but Malaysian halal certification is increasingly becoming an international benchmark for good Islamic practices. "Halal certificates" are granted by approved Islamic centres to facilities that are inspected, registered, and supervised by certified inspectors. Certification fees are negotiated with the certifying body, usually an approved Islamic centre, which has a registered logo for product labels. This certification process verifies that the food product is Halal, fit for Muslim consumers, and originates from certified production and processing premises. Lack of collaboration amongst the world's

Halal-certification authorities and concerns about enforcement are challenges currently faced by participants in this market.

More information on Halal certification requirements

www.gov.my/MYGOV/BI/Directory/Business/BusinessByIndustry/AgricultureAndAgroBasedIndustry/AgroHalalCertification/

6. CERTIFICATION OF AQUACULTURE PRODUCTS IN ASIA

Fish products from capture fisheries and aquaculture are a widely traded international commodity. About 38 percent of global fish output by live weight enters international marketing channels for export. It is estimated that nearly half of all fish products are now produced by aquaculture and are becoming increasingly important in the fish products trade. The Asia-Pacific Region produces more than 80 percent of all aquacultural production and is therefore also a key region in the trade of these products.

The aquacultural sector shares many common features with agricultural and livestock production (unlike the capture fisheries sector) and consequently faces similar challenges as other agricultural products in terms of quality control and access to export markets. Increasingly stringent demands by retailers and consumers relating to the safety of aquacultural products that may arise from production practices is pushing the sector to look towards mechanisms for assuring consumers and buyers. Environmental and social issues in some aquaculture production systems, unconnected to food safety, have also created sufficient public concern to lead to some buyers requesting greater assurance of responsible production. This has led to a recent rapid rise in demand for certification of some aquacultural products, a trend which is considered to be steadily rising. With most countries in Asia giving increased attention to food safety, there is a growing proliferation of product certification systems, "good aquacultural practice" guidelines, codes of conduct, and other mechanisms or schemes intended to provide a basis for safe and sustainable seafood production. Such proliferation may be counterproductive as it may lead to buyer or consumer confusion and public misunderstanding as to what is actually being assured by the various certification schemes. A lack of harmonization or benchmarking amongst standards and schemes also

prevents adequate comparison between different schemes, which raises the potential problem of lack of recognition in certified products.

Certification of aquacultural products is still at a relatively early stage. At the time of publication of this manual, responding to a request made by the Committee on Fisheries: Sub-Committee on Aquaculture (COFI/AQ), FAO and the Network of Aquaculture Centres in Asia-Pacific (NACA) have initiated a process for the development of a guideline for aquaculture certification to enable certification schemes to demonstrate a reasonable degree of consistency and ensure that aquaculture certification can be undertaken in a credible manner. These guidelines are also intended to ensure that all aquacultural producers from developed and developing countries and small- and large-scale operations are able to benefit equally from the opportunities offered by aquaculture certification and are not unduly disadvantageous to small-scale producers.

More information on these guidelines

Please contact the Technical Secretary of FAO's Sub-Committee on Aquaculture (COFI/AQ) or visit:
www.fao.org/fi/website/FIRetrieveAction.do?dom=org&xml=FI_org.xml&xp_nav=3.2

NOTES

For many producers, the market for certified agricultural products is very complex and the advantages and requirements associated with the numerous certification programmes are not always clear. In addition, producers do not always know the difference between the compulsory or voluntary nature of standards applied to export products. Therefore, this manual has been designed in order to clarify voluntary certification.

After having read its content, the reader should be able to understand the main voluntary private certification schemes, the importance of these schemes, the difference between these programmes as well as their advantages and constraints. The manual also provides information sources on the main import regulations in the United States of America, the European Union, Japan and other countries in the Asia-Pacific region.

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