FAO in Organic Agriculture

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Introduction

What is Organic Agriculture?

CODEX Definition

1. What Organic Farmers do not
2. What positive things organic farmers do instead
3. Holistic view of the FARM
Synonyms or not??

Problems understanding the organic / Alternative market

1. Proliferation of Certificates
2. Statistics not always reliable
3. Equivalency of certificates
4. Confused consumers
Organic Agriculture & FAO

History

• 1997 IFOAM obtains liaison status
• 1999 COAG recommends cross sectoral programme
• 1999 Codex commission endorses guidelines on organic agriculture
• PAIA/ORGA MTP (2002-2007)
Organic Agriculture & FAO

Activities

• Norms & standards
• Markets
• Environment
• Production
• Food security
Norms & Standards

- Codex Alimentarius
- IFOAM standards
- National standards
- Non-standard organic agriculture (??)
- Private standards
Codex Alimentarius

Objectives:

• Protect the health of the consumers
• Ensure fair competitions of OA producers
Codex Alimentarius

Aims

1. Protect Consumers against Fraud
2. Protect producers against misrepresentation
3. Ensure adherence of production, storage, preparation, identification, certification & Labeling with guidelines
**Codex Alimentarius**

4. Harmonize provisions for production, storage, preparation, identification, certification & Labeling

5. Provide international guidelines for food control systems

6. Maintain & Enhance organic agricultural systems for preservation (?)
Equivalency of Certificates

Bilateral Equivalency

- Country

- Agreement on Equivalency of Certificate
Equivalency of Certificates contd.

INTERNATIONAL Accreditation:

IDEAL MODEL:
One RECOGNIZED INTERNATIONAL standard
Cost of certification

Sources of costs

- Field boundaries
- Conversion period
- New techniques
- International / national certification costs
How does FAO help

• Provides commodity and market studies
• Provides technical and policy studies and field projects
• It provides a forum to discuss issues surrounding technical and policy issues (production, certification, marketing)
Marketing Aspects

What are the problems?

- Harmonization + Equivalency of certificates on national and international level.
- Cost of certification for farmers, particularly small farmers
FAO’s role in Networking

- Differentiation of Organic statistics
- Dissemination of Information
- Information For a
- Support to Networks
Environmental Impact
Environment Sustainability

• Most information available
  – for temperate climate

• Valid in low-potential area (tropic)?
  – Not know, under study.

• Organic Agriculture, Environment and Food Security (2002)
Bio-diversity
Technical Practices

- Soil fertility
- Plant protection
- Quality seed
- Horticulture production
- Post-harvest techniques
- Capacity building
Soil fertility

• Soil organic matter – a key for productivity
  – Nutrient source
  – Improved soil property
  – Resilience against drought, diseases
  – Sustainability
Soil fertility

- Composting, MULCHING
- Bio-fertilizer production
- Integrated FARMING SYSTEMS (PLANT-ANIMAL ASSOCIATIONS)
- LOW TILLAGE
- ROTATIONS
Crop protection

- Synthesized pesticides

- IPM
  - Biological control
  - Less pesticides

- OPM
  - PREVENTION STRATEGIES
  - Biological control
  - Low / non toxic pest management products
Crop protection

• Regional IPM projects (12 countries in Asia)
  http://www.communityipm.org/countries.htm

IPM NOT EQUAL TO OPM!

• Publication including OPM products
Quality Seeds

• Availability

• Targeted efforts for:
  - Collection
  - Breeding
  - Exchange
  of appropriate genetic resources
  (LOCALLY ADAPTED, OPEN-POLLINATED, GMO-FREE)

• Organic Seeds Conference
  – July 2004
  – FAO, IFOAM, ISF
Horticulture production

- Increased income generation
- Technical information needed
Horticulture production

- Expert group
  - Collaboration with Tropical Fruit Network
  - For successful organic horticulture system in developing countries
- Publication (coming soon)
  - General framework for tropical fruits production
  - Guidelines for organic pineapple, citrus and mango production
Post-harvest

- Storage, processing and packing
- Maintain / increase product value
- Reduce loss
- As important as production
Post-harvest

- Medical, aromatic and natural dye plants (south Asia)
- Coffee (southeast Asia)
- Analysis of new market opportunities (coming soon)
- Guidelines on Handling and Processing Organic Fruits and Vegetables in Developing Countries
  - Collaboration with the New Zealand Institute for Crop and Food Research)
Capacity building

• insufficiency of formal and informal training
  – organic farming: diverse and site-specific
Capacity building

• FAO contribution to graduate and post-graduate trainings in organic agriculture (several universities in Italy)
• Training manual on organic agriculture in Latin America and Caribbean (with Cuba)
Summary

• Market aspects – OK
• Current status of organic agriculture sector – OK
• Organic standards – OK
• Harmonization and equivalency issue – OK (take time)
• Statistics on organic agriculture – OK (take time)
• Technologies for competitive organic production in developing countries
• Linkage between organic agriculture, rural development, and food security (poverty reduction)