

Frequently Asked Questions regarding certification of organic agricultural produce under Agmark

Q. 1. What are the salient features of the Agricultural Produce (Grading & Marking) Act, 1937?

Ans :

- i. It is an Act to provide for the grading and marking of the agricultural and other produce.
- ii. Agricultural produce has been defined as to include all produce of agriculture or horticulture and all articles of food or drink wholly or partly manufactured from any such produce, and fleeces and the skins of animals.
- iii. The Act has provision for making Rules to carry out the provisions of the Act. General Grading and Marking Rules, 1988 and 112 Specific Commodity Grading and Marking Rules are notified.

The Act can be accessed at the website: <http://agmarknet.nic.in> by clicking on the icon "Grades and Standards".

Q. 2. What are General Grading and Marking Rules, 1988?

Ans. General Grading and Marking Rules, 1988 give detailed procedure of grant of Certificate of Authorization, setting up of laboratories, action on irregularities, consumer protection measures, etc. These Rules are applicable to all the agricultural commodities certified under Agmark.

The Rules can be accessed at the website: <http://agmarknet.nic.in> by clicking on the icon "Grades and Standards".

Q. 3. What are Specific Commodity Grading and Marking Rules?

Ans. The Specific Commodity Grading and Marking Rules provide commodity specific grade standards, packaging requirements, labeling requirements, etc. Till date, 112 Specific Commodity Grading and Marking Rules covering 203 agricultural commodities have been notified.

The Specific Commodity Grading and Marking Rules can be accessed at the website: <http://agmarknet.nic.in> by clicking on the icon "Grades and Standards".

Q.4. What is the Group wise break up of commodities for which Grade standards are notified under Agmark?

Ans. The group wise break up of commodities is as under:

Name of the Group:	No. of commodities notified
1. Food grain and allied products	30
2. Fruits and Vegetables	44
3. Spices and condiments	26
4. Edible Nuts	08
5. Oil Seeds	15
6. Vegetable Oils and Fats	19
7. Oil cakes	08
8. Essential oils	08
9. Fibre crops	05
10. Live stock, Dairy and poultry products	10
11. Other products	30
TOTAL	203

Q.5. From where we can get the names of these 203 commodities?

Ans. The names of 203 commodities can be obtained from the agmarknet website by clicking on the icon “Grade and Standards” under the head “List of commodities for which Agmark Grade Standards have been formulated and notified under the Agricultural Produce (G&M) Act, 1937”.

Q. 6. Who is implementing the provisions of the Act and the Rules?

Ans. Directorate of Marketing and Inspection, an attached office of the Department of Agriculture and Cooperation, Ministry of Agriculture, Government of India is implementing the provisions of the Rules.

Q. 7. What is the legal back up for notifying Organic Agricultural Produce Grading and Marking Rules, 2009.

Ans. Organic Agricultural Produce Grading and Marking Rules, 2009 have been notified as per the provision in Section 3 of the Agricultural Produce (Grading & Marking) Act, 1937. These Rules provide for organic certification of agricultural commodities included in the Schedule appended to the Act. The Rules can be accessed at the website <http://agmarknet.nic.in> by clicking on the window “Organic Certification”.

Q.8. Which commodities are covered for organic certification under Agmark?

Ans. All commodities included in the schedule under the Act are covered for organic certification under Agmark.

Q.9. Which standards are prescribed for organic certification under Agmark ?

Ans. Organic certification under Agmark shall be carried out as per the standards prescribed in National Programme for Organic Production (NPOP) notified by the Director General of Foreign Trade, Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Government of India, vide notification No. 72 (RE-2003)/2002-2007 dated the 21st July, 2004 and as revised from time to time and Specific Commodity Grading and Marking Rules. NPOP and various Specific Commodity Grading and Marking Rules can be accessed at the website: <http://agmarknet.nic.in> by clicking on the icon "Grades and Standards".

Q. 10. What is Organic Agriculture?

Ans. National Programme for Organic Production defines organic agriculture as a system of farm design and management to create an eco system, which can achieve sustainable productivity without the use of artificial external inputs such as chemical fertilizers and pesticides.

Q.11. Who is eligible for grant of Certificate of Authorisation for carrying out organic certification under Agmark?

Ans. Any Accredited Inspection and Certification Agency under the National Programme for Organic Production is eligible to apply for seeking Certificate of Authorisation. At present 18 agencies are accredited under the National Programme for Organic Production.

Q. 12. How can a Accredited Inspection and Certification Agency (AICA) get Certificate of Authorization for certification of organic agricultural commodities under Agmark?

Ans. The AICA desirous to get Certificate of Authorization for organic certification under Agmark has to comply with the requirements in Rule 3 of General Grading and Marking Rules, 1988, Rule 9 of Organic Agricultural Produce Grading and Marking Rules, 2009 and requirements in Specific Commodity Grading and Marking Rules. The details can be had from the Guidelines for grant of C.A. for organic certification available on the website : <http://agmarknet.nic.in> by clicking on the window "Organic Certification".

Q. 13. How can a person /grower group get their agricultural produce certified as organic under Agmark?

Ans. The person(s) can get registered with the Certificate of Authorisation holder as a Licensed Operator. They may contact the Certificate of Authorisation holder for details of getting registered as a Licensed Operator. The names and addresses of the C.A. holders can be accessed at the website.

Q. 14. How can a consumer know that a organic product is certified under Agmark?

Ans. All agricultural commodities grown and/or processed organically and certified under Agmark have **Agmark India Organic Insignia** printed on the container. Consumers should check the Agmark India Organic insignia, batch number./lot number, date of packing and best before date while making the purchase. Consumer should ensure that container is properly sealed and is not tampered with. The Agmark India Organic Insignia is reproduced below :



AGMARK

C.A. NO :

Name of the commodity.....

Grade – Agmark India Organic.

Q.15. What are the advantages of Agmark certified organic product to a farmer/processor?

Ans. Agricultural commodities grown organically and following the system prescribed in National Programme for Organic Production are certified under Agmark by any of the Accredited Inspection and Certification Agency granted Certificate of Authorisation for the grading and marking of organic agricultural produce. A farmer/processor may get better prices for the commodity since consumer is assured of the genuineness of the organic integrity.

Q. 16. What are the advantages of Agmark certified organic product to a consumer?

Ans. A consumer is assured of the organic integrity of the product certified under Agmark since it has been grown and processed as per the standards prescribed in National Programme for Organic Production and certified as per the provisions in Organic Agricultural Grading and Marking Rules by an agency which has a system to check the organic integrity of the product.

