

AO No. 09, Series of 2016

Implementing Rules and Regulations on Accreditation of Private Organic Agriculture Extension Service Providers (OA ESPS)

May 18, 2016

The AO is hereby adopted, promulgated and issued to carry out the provisions of Rule 9.2 to 9.5, Section 9 of the IRR of the RA No. 10068, specifically:

- a. To hasten and improve organic agriculture public-private partnership on extension services to the DA stakeholders;
- b. To provide opportunities and wider participation of the private sector in the conduct of extension services on organic agriculture;
- c. To recognize and harness the efforts and capabilities of private institutions/services on organic agriculture;
- d. To provide a variety of extension activities to Agricultural Extension workers, farmers, IPs, and other stakeholders in support to the thrusts of AFMA and of the Organic Agriculture Act.

Salient Extension Provisions

The AO provides guidelines on the implementation accreditation process of private extension service provider (ESPs) to be Organic Agriculture (OA) ESPs pursuant to the National Organic Agriculture of 2010 (RA 10068). This is to encourage their participation and to undertake training and other complementary extension activities on organic agriculture, for target clientele along the value chain (input suppliers, producers, traders, processors, and consumers).

Salient Extension Provisions

Article II Coverage

Section 4. Coverage. Accreditation shall apply to any of the following institutions/organizations which offer OA extension programs:

- a. Rural-based organizations
- b. Cooperatives
- c. People's organizations
- d. Non-government organizations
- e. Business Entities
- f. Foundations
- g. Faith-based organizations

Article IV

OA ESP Accreditation Council and Secretariat

Section 6. National OA ESP Accreditation Council.

6.1. The National Executive Officer

The ATI Director who shall serve as the National Executive Officer of the OA ESP Accreditation Council. As such, he/she shall be responsible for the execution of policies and directions of the National Council

6.2. The following members shall compose the National OA ESP Accreditation Council as endorsed by the respective sector:

- a. One representative from the AFEN
- b. One representative from the Association of College of Agriculture in the Philippines (ACAP), Philippine Association of State Universities and Colleges (PASUC)
- c. One representative from the private sector who is involved in agriculture selected from a federation
- d. One representative from the National Organic Agriculture Board (NOAB) extension committee; and
- e. One representative from the Bureau of Agriculture and Fisheries Product Standards (BAFPS)

6.3 Election and Term of Office. The members shall elect the vice-chairman from among themselves.

Each member shall have a three (3) –year term of office without reappointment. In case of vacancy due to retirement, resignation, transfer, incapacitation or death, the Council may nominate replacement/s from among themselves to serve the unexpired portion of the term subject to the approval of the ATI Director.

6.4 Functions of the National Organic Agriculture Accreditation Council The following shall be the functions of the National Accreditation Council:

- a. Provides the overall policy ESP guidelines and directions of the program;
- b. Issues Accreditation Certificate through the Council's Executive Officer;
- c. Continuously undertake appraisal and evaluation of the capability and competence of accredited Organic Agriculture ESPs.

Section 7. Regional OA ESP Accreditation Council 7.1. The Regional Executive Officer the Center Director of the Agricultural Training Institute shall serve as the Regional Executive Officer. As such, he shall be responsible for the execution of policies and directions of the Regional Council.

7.2 Membership. The following members shall compose the Regional OA ESP Accreditation Council as endorsed by the respective sector:

- a. One representative from the Regional Agriculture and Fisheries Extension Network (AFEN)
- b. One representative from PASUC
- c. One representative from the Local Government Units Organic Agriculture Committee
- d. One representative from the OA private sector
- e. Regional OA Focal Person

7.3 Election and Term of Office. The members shall elect the vice-chairman from among themselves. Each member will have a three (3)-year term of office without prejudice for re-appointment. In case of vacancy due to retirement, resignation, transfer, incapacitation or death, the Regional Council may nominate replacement/s to serve the unexpired portion of the term subject to the approval of the Director of the Agricultural Training Institute at each level.

The members shall elect the vice-chairman among themselves. Each member will have a three (3)-year term of office without prejudice for reappointment. In case of vacancy due to retirement, resignation, transfer, incapacitation or death, the Regional Council may nominate replacement/s to serve the unexpired portion of the term subject to the approval of the Director of the Agricultural Training Institute at each level.

7.4 Functions of the Regional OA Accreditation Council The following shall be the functions of the Regional Accreditation Council:

- a. Provides the regional policy guidelines and directions of the program;
- b. Evaluates the applicant's eligibility for accreditation; and
- c. Evaluate /approves and issues accreditation certificates
- d. Provides report to the National Council's Executive Officer through the National Secretariat for issuance of accreditation certificate.

Article V

Criteria for Accreditation

Section 11. Eligibility.

The following shall be considered for accreditation if they meet the eligibility requirements:

- a. Business entities, POs/RBOs/corporations/e-learning institution/faith-based organization duly organized under the Laws of the Philippines and registered with Security and Exchange Commission (SEC)/Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE);
- b. Cooperatives duly registered with the Cooperative Development Authority (CDA);
- c. Non-profit and non-stock organizations duly registered with SEC;

d. Corporations with supporting relevant government laws and regulations allowing them to engage in extension services and;

e. Joint Venture among Filipino OA ESPs and foreign entities may be allowed, if it will result in better extension services, subject to the laws set forth by SEC and the provisions of this IRR.

Section 12. Credibility.

- a. Must have a positive image and high degree of acceptability among stakeholders in the area/s to be served, including membership in or affiliation with any reputable local, national, and/or international federations.
- b. Must also have an accumulated experience of not less than five (5) years in agriculture and fisheries extension (AFE) work, especially using participatory/community-based approaches and documented positive impact on stakeholders.
- c. Must not also have any record of an anomaly in its previous transactions.

Section 13. Technical Capability

- a. The OA ESP must have the competence to carry out training and other training-related services especially in community organizing, use of participatory approaches, popularization of training materials, regenerative agricultural technologies, agribusiness and management skills, and is operating at the municipal/ provincial/ region-wide area for local level OA ESPs, and in two or more regions for national-level OA ESPs.
- b. The OA ESP must have training designs and summary of evaluation results of at least ten (10) trainings conducted for the last five years.
- c. The OA ESP must show at least first-level certification that their products are organically produced.

Section 14. Resource Capability

14.1. Training Services

The OA ESP must have at least two (2) trainers and five (5) faculty-on call or resource persons who meet the following eligibility requirements:

14.1.1. Training Program

The current offerings of the OA ESP applicant shall be evaluated based on the following criteria:

- a. Relevance – the training program shall respond to the needs of organic agriculture as identified in the National Organic Agriculture Programs.
- b. Objectives – Its objectives shall be clearly defined, realistic and attainable.
- c. Content – The content /curriculum of the training program shall be in consonance with its objectives. Topics shall be in a logical sequence with due consideration to effectiveness of presentation in terms of trainees comprehension.
- d. Methodology – There shall be an effective, simple, and comprehensive presentation of topics, clear description of participatory learning interventions, examination schemes and test instruments related to course objectives. There shall likewise be a relevant and practical application of theories and concepts.
- e. Qualifications of Participants – Minimum qualifications of participants shall be set for proper identification of participants to a specific training course.
- f. Evaluation Procedures – The training program shall carry out effective evaluation instruments before, during and after training

14.1.2. Manpower Trainers

- a. Capable of developing training designs, training modules, visual aids, monitoring, and evaluation tools;

b. Must have undergone at least 40 hours of training in trainers skills/presentation skills and other related areas;

c. Must possess BS Degree; and

d. Must have effective communication skills, as well as presentation/facilitating techniques.

Faculty on-call

a. Must have at least three (3) years' experience on the subject matter of expertise; and

b. Must have a good extension communication skills

Training Management Staff

They must have at least two support staff who possess thorough experience and adequate competence to deliver training support services (visual aids preparation, training process documentation, administration and processing of training evaluation, etc.)

14.1.3 Facilities and Equipment

a. Must have a permanent office and address where they conduct their business.

b. Size of the training room and dormitory – The training room and dormitory shall be able to accommodate a minimum of 30 participants. If the OA ESP does not own such facilities, it should be capable to rent or lease extension venues in the locality having the required size.

c. Lighting and Ventilation - Lighting fixtures shall be so designed to ensure an atmosphere conducive to training. The training room shall also be well ventilated.

d. Restrooms – There shall be separate restrooms for male and female with enough supply of water and light.

e. Classroom Facilities, Equipment - The classrooms must have basic facilities such as chairs and tables, blackboard/whiteboard, sound system, overhead projector, electric fans, and standby generator.

f. Workshop/On-the-Job Facilities and Equipment - depending on the training program/s being offered, there shall be an adequate provision for techno demo area, appropriate facilities, and equipment.

g. Resource Center/Library – a reading room in the training facilities must be adequately provided with relevant reference materials, books, journals, magazines, kits and other materials related to the programs being conducted.

h. Transportation and Communication Facilities - there shall be a standby utility vehicle and available telephone or mobile phone units during the conduct of the training.

The presence of the following shall be an added advantage:

i. Refreshment/Dining Area – a refreshment/dining area accessible to the trainees;

j. Kiosks or similar facilities - with a capacity of 8 – 10 persons for small workshop group discussions; and

k. Prayer Room

14.2. Demonstration Services

The technologies promoted should be agri-fishery in nature and based on the needs of the region, province, municipality/city, and the barangays.

14.2.1 The Demonstration/Learning Site

1. Must be accessible to any means of transportation;
2. Must have a good source of water and dependable power supply, and relatively peaceful;
3. Must be contiguous or compact depending on the commodity (crop-livestock-fishery) combination of their own choice.

Article VI

The Accreditation Process

Section 15. The OA ESP Accreditation Process

15.1. The Phases

Phase 1. Filling of Application.

The OA ESP shall accomplish the prescribed application form in duplicate and file it together with the required documentary requirements to ATI Central Office for national OA ESP's and at the ATI RTC's for the local OA ESPs.

Phase 2. Documentary Evaluation.

Initial screening shall be done by the National/Regional Secretariat through an evaluation of the documents submitted to determine whether these documents meet the eligibility requirements set by ATI. A report outlining the results of the review shall be prepared. The documentary evaluation shall be completed within 15 working days from receipt of the application and required supporting documents.

Phase 3. Ocular inspection/ Validation of the National Council and Secretariat.

- a. Upon completion of the documentary evaluation, an ocular inspection and field validation be conducted to confirm the OA ESP's compliance to approved standards.
- b. A report of its findings and / or recommendations shall be submitted within 15 days from the date of the completion of the inspection and field validation.

Phase 4. Approval/Disapproval

- a. The National/ Regional Council, in the case of National OA ESP's and the Regional Executive Officer in the case of local OA ESP's shall approve/disapprove applications within 10 working days upon submission of the Inspection Report.
- b. In case of incomplete submission of documents, ATI will give the applicant 10 working days within which to comply or submit the required documents. Failure to comply within the prescribed period shall mean automatic disapproval.
- c. In case of disapproval, the applicant may file request for recommendation within 10 days upon receipt of disapproval notice.

Phase 5. Award of the Certificate

- a. Upon approval of the application, the Council through its Executive Officer shall sign and issue the Certificate for national OA ESP's within 10 minutes working days.
- b. Upon approval of the applications, the Regional Council through its Executive Officer shall sign and issue the Certificate of Accreditation for regional OA ESP's within 10 working days.

Article VII

Validity

Section 16. The validity of Certificate of Accreditation.

The Certificate of Accreditation shall be valid for a period of three (3) years from the date of issue unless sooner canceled by the Council.

Article X

Obligations of Accredited OA ESPs

Section 23. Obligations of the accredited OA ESP

The accredited OA ESP agrees to do the following:

- a. Display the certificate of accreditation in a conspicuous place within the OA ESP's Office;
- b. Inform the ATI of all changes significantly affecting its activities/ operation (such as changes of ownership, address, personnel, and By-laws) as this may require additional audit;
- c. Not to use its accreditation in such a manner as to bring ATI into disrepute and does not make any statement regarding its accreditation which ATI may consider misleading or unauthorized; and
- d. Must conduct a minimum of 6 trainings within the period of accreditation.

Article XI

ATI Obligations

Section 24. Records and Retention of Documents

ATI shall maintain the documents of the accredited OA ESP for a retention period of five years after the validity of the accreditation has expired.

Section 25. Database of Accredited OA ESPS

ATI shall maintain a database of accredited OA ESPs that shall be available to the public upon request and for a fee of one hundred pesos (Php100) per copy.

Section 26. Notification of Changes in the Accreditation Procedure ATI shall notify the OA ESPs relevant changes in its accreditation process.

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