

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Pacific Organic Policy Toolkit
<http://www.organicpasifika.com/poetcom/>

Q: What led to the development of the Pacific Organic Policy Toolkit?

A: Until recently, the development of organic farming and markets in the Pacific region has been driven and supported by farmers and advocates with assistance from international organizations such as the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and from the Pacific Community (SPC). POETCom, supported by SPC, has been a main driver and hub for Pacific organic sector development. Although some Pacific governments have participated in organic sector development projects instigated by POETCom and SP, they have generally not taken a lead to support organic agriculture in their countries. But recently, Pacific governments have shown interest, some keenly so, to learn about what they can do to facilitate organic farming and market development. The shift appears to be related to growth and visibility of organic agriculture and businesses, and also growing recognition of the potential of organic agriculture to help governments fulfil their sustainable development goals. POETCom started to field inquiries from governments about how to provide more support to developing their organic sector. Coincident to this trend, SPC in 2014 launched the European Union-supported [Pacific Agriculture Policy Project \(PAPP\)](#), which aims to :

- Strengthen regional agricultural development strategy;
- Improve the dissemination and adoption of applied agricultural production research technologies;
- Contribute to agricultural enterprise development through improved market linkages.

Pacific governments are key partners in the implementation of PAPP, whose aims align well with the needs for organic sector development. Recognizing this, POETCom and PAPP have worked in partnership to support the development of this online toolkit to assist governments to identify and implement policies and programs to support organic agriculture and market development.

Q: How was the toolkit developed?

A: In December 2015, POETCom contracted [IFOAM – Organics International](#) to prepare the toolkit with guidance from POETCom. A concept for the toolkit and a survey was sent to a list of government contacts and POETCom members. After stakeholders’ affirmation of the concept, the toolkit content was developed and included in POETCom’s website. In September, 2016, the toolkit’s function and content was tested in stakeholder workshops in Fiji and Vanuatu, where participants gained hands-on experience by navigating the toolkit. Feedback from the workshop was valuable for preparing the final version, which was launched in December 2016.



Q: Are there such toolkits in other regions?

A: Not yet: the Pacific region is pioneering this type of regional support to organic sector development. However, IFOAM – Organics International has developed a comprehensive online toolkit with a global scope. It contains in-depth descriptions rationale and examples for the same support measures covered in the Pacific Toolkit. Access to the global toolkit is through the [Organic Policy and Guarantee](#) section of the IFOAM – Organics International website.

Q: How does this toolkit help farmers?

A: The Pacific Organic Policy Toolkit is not a direct instrument for organic farmers but it aims to support them. It may be used by farmers and other advocates to work with their governments to create supportive policies. Government policies and programs can support farmers with capacity development, organic research and its dissemination, new market opportunities etc. After the right policies and programs are developed and implemented, farmers should have an enhanced environment in which to thrive.

