कृषि और प्रसंस्कृत खाद्य उत्पाद
निर्यात विकास प्राधिकरण
(वाणिज्य एवं उद्योग मंत्रालय, भारत सरकार)

**Agricultural and Processed Food Products
Export Development Authority**
(Ministry of Commerce & Industry, Govt. of India)

APEDA/ORG/CB'S/2010 / / 269
June 17th , 2010

Dear Certification Bodies,

During evaluation/surveillance of CBs, it has been reported that there is no uniformity in the procedures in certifying grower groups. In most cases, it has been seen that the CBs are not following the NPOP group certification norms, risk assessments are not being carried out and the numbers of farmers have been found to be in the range of 5000-8000. This has resulted in many infringements in the organic trade affecting the credibility of group certification in India.

In light of the above, the NAB, in its 15th meeting held on 13th April 2010, has decided to reduce the size of the number of members in a grower group to a maximum of 500 as this will help in maintaining the credibility of the production and certification of organic products. You are, therefore, requested to follow this norm w.e.f. 15th July 2010. The Tracenet is also being modified accordingly.
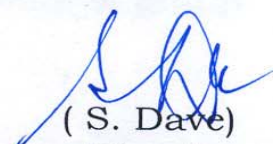
You are also advised to comply with the following instructions for implementing this new norm as per the status of the ICS:

a) In case the grower group project is yet to be registered under the CB (New project/s), the norm for the number of farmers in an ICS (minimum 25 farmers and maximum 500 farmers) is to be followed with immediate effect.

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3rd Floor, NCUI Building, 3 Siri Institutional Area, August Kranti Marg (Opp. Asiad Village), New Delhi-110016, Tel.: 26513204, 26513219, 26514052, 26534191, 26514572, 26526197/78 Fax : 26534870 E-mail : headq@apeda.com
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b) In case the CB has already registered the grower group (entry into the TRACENET is also completed) with more than 500 farmers (New Project/Existing Project), either the Scope certificate issued/yet to be issued, the cap of 500 farmers per ICS will be applicable on the renewal of the project.

Please note that the other norms of group certifications related to similar production, geographical proximity and separate inspection of four hectare farms remain the same as given in the NPOP (chapter V).

Yours faithfully,

(S. Dave)
Director