



OrganicFarmNZ

Property Management Plan – Guidance Notes

1. Introduction

These Notes are to assist you to complete your PMP.

The primary purpose is to show POD members, the Certification Manager, auditor and the Certification Committee that you are complying with the BioGro standard, and any other OrganicFarmNZ requirements.

Your PMP, Records Spreadsheet and the annual review process, can also support you and your fellow Pod members in your commitment to organic growing. We hope it does, and you just don't see completing documentation as a tedious compliance procedure.

We are making a commitment to digital/online documentation (see below), so that all those involved in the certification process can access your PMP and supporting documents. While this is not public information, many people may have access to your information supplied. We need to demonstrate to anyone that our system of certification is robust. Towards the end of the PMP you consent to people having access to it.

This is a 'living document' so please amend and contribute to it through your NCC rep.

Please don't be intimidated by all of the reading and documentation involved. Being certified organic and producing safe and suitable food is a learning process – your knowledge in a few year's will be substantially greater than it is now. It's great that you have started!

2. The Basic Format

SECTION A provides basic information about you and your property to be certified.

SECTION B covers the history of your property, your overall vision and your year-on-year management practices.

SECTION C deals with your activities of the *current year*.

RECORDS SPREADSHEET - this should contain most of the supporting information along with and certificates, declarations and other verficiations

If you are a new grower, complete the whole PMP. For subsequent years, use your PMP from the previous year, but for any changes type them in using **red**.

3. Digital/Online

We are committed to digital/online record keeping. While we will continue to support those of you who only have the resources to complete the certification process based on paper, it is becoming increasingly difficult to practically do so. We hope that you will move from paper to digital, and from there to online.

Some regions are committed to use the 'cloud' services of Google. So the PMP, Records Spreadsheet and any supporting documents are uploaded to Google Drive. This means that Pod members, CM and auditor can all have access to your documentation. This makes it easier as well as establishing that our system is robust from a verification perspective.

For online records, you should keep a folder on your own computer which is a 'mirror' of the documents in your Google Drive folder. An adequate description of the file in your Google Drive folder should be given eg. 'PMP 2017 – T Brown & W Smith'.

If your documentation is online, once your annual Certificate is issued, the CM will convert the PMP, Records Spreadsheet and supporting documents to a pdf document so that it can no longer be changed. This becomes your historical documentation.

We are trying to make this all easy by developing apps to assist you with record keeping. For example, verification of the status of an Off-Property Input can be established by simply taking a photo of it with your mobile phone and uploading the photo to your records.

4. Filling in the PMP

Each question is designed so that your answers will be:

- 'yes' or 'no'
- 'nil'
- 'none'
- 'not applicable' or 'n/a'
- Writing information

The boxes in the table expand to hold your typed in information.

When you join us, we try and allocate a mentor to you initially to assist you with the certification process and in particular completing your first PMP and setting up your Records Spreadsheet. We also try to allocate you to a Pod as soon as possible. So use your mentor and Pod members to assist you with completing documentation.

This guide is a 'living' document, so if you have any suggestions to change it, raise this at your next regional meeting.

5. Specific Question in the PMP

A2.6 We do recommend that you certify your whole property. However there may be reasons why you only want to certify part of your property eg. contamination of a specific area, areas where neighbour's activities intrude onto your organic operation, etc.

B.1 & B.2 There are two maps needed for the PMP. The first map is a location map to assist your POD and the auditor to visit your property. Make it easy on these people by providing a good map. Mostly a screenshot of Google Maps will suffice.

The other map is a land use map. Hand written maps are fine, as are more sophisticated digital maps. You should make an effort to make your map/s reasonably accurate as to scale. The basic outline of your property can be taken from your certificate of title or from Google Maps. The map/s should include:

- A reasonably accurate outline of the boundaries of your property
- A north symbol
- A legend/key
- Your neighbours and a brief description of what they do on their property (the description best put in the legend)
- Location of house buildings, farm buildings, processing areas, animal shelters
- Fencing, gates, raceways, hedges/shelterbelts
- Growing areas – paddocks/pasture, gardens, fruit/nut/berry trees, woodlots
- Quarantine areas, washdown areas, stock loading
- Water supply features – irrigation, bores, town supply, storage, reticulation
- Effluent/sewerage disposal/treatment, offal pits, farm refuse dumps
- Buffer zones
- Roadside areas
- Any areas of significant erosion, compaction or dampness
- Significant features – streams/ponds/lakes/wetlands, hills, gullies, forests/natural areas, lawns, swales/drainage, some indication of water catchment areas
- Any areas that have been or may have been contaminated – sheep dip sites, biocide/synthetic fertiliser storage areas, old offal pits, farm refuse dumps

The maps can be placed as a separate file on your Google Drive folder or inserted as a page on your PMP.

B3.2 – 3.5 Information about these questions can be included in the maps. The purpose is to try and identify areas of past contamination of your property.

B4.1 This might include:

- Fellow gardeners/farmers
- Am a member of ? and discuss gardening/farming issues with members
- Have a personal library on farming/gardening
- Subscribe to ? magazines
- Look at and collect online information
- Have a ? qualification in ?
- Regularly attend workshops and field days on organic farming

B4.4 The BioGro Standards are available online at www.biogro.co.nz/biogro-standards

B4.7 The Operational Guidelines are available at www.organicfarm.org.nz/ofnz-farmers/documentation

B5.1.1 For example spray drift, windblown dust, water runoff and watercourses, etc.

B5.1.2 Include references to spraying, application of synthetic fertilizer, shelter-belts, roadside verge management, agreements with neighbours and local authorities, etc.

B5.1.3 Explain where water comes on to the property (naturally and via town supply), where it goes to, and the catchment area. This may be adequately shown on your Land Use Map

B 5.1.4 For example town supply, bore, springs, river, dam, etc

B5.1.5 Town water supply or rainwater usually does not need testing but bore water, river and spring water if used in quantity or for washing produce for sale generally requires testing. If you are using water to wash food and in the processing of food, this water must comply with Part 2 of this [Food Notice](#) .

B5.1.6 For example, runoff from neighbouring land, 1080 use, etc.

B5.1.7 For example, erosion of river banks and slopes, soil creep, pugging.

B5.1.9 For example, possums, noxious weeds. Permission needs to be sought from the Certification Manager for non-certified, or restricted inputs.

Regional Councils and DOC may be of assistance in providing traps for possums and rodents and in advising on non-chemical methods of weed management.

www.doc.govt.nz/get-involved/run-a-project/restoration-advice/weed-control/to-control-or-not/

B5.1.10 For example, bush, wetlands, woodlots on your property, how these are protected and/or enhanced, and how they contribute to the overall biodiversity of your operation.

B5.1.11 What are they, the area, and how are they managed.

B5.2.1 For example, cultivation techniques, cover crops, fallows, mulch, particular plants grown.

B5.2.2 For example applying compost, mulches, mineral fertilizers, BD preparations, green crops, livestock/livestock rotations, building microorganisms, compost teas, plant extracts, companion planting.

B5.2.3 In your first year of conversion, you are required to obtain a soil test for heavy metal, DDT and DDE – obtained from a recognized testing laboratory.

B5.2.4 For example diverse pasture species, renewal practices, grazing/rotation practices, hay/silage practices.

B5.2.5 For example, mowing practices, orchard sward species, grazing between rows, treatment of prunings, encouragement of beneficial insects.

B5.2.6 Provide details of shelter, shade, species diversity, insect habitat, and measures to enhance soil microorganisms etc.

B5.2.7 Whether irrigated and crops involved. Describe reticulation for stock water, water for produce cleaning, water for shed/equipment cleaning. Describe the water sources (springs, streams, ponds, bore, town supply, rain water). Describe equipment involved.

B5.2.8 If non-certified stock are brought onto your property you need to have a specified area to quarantine them for 48 hours. You also need to quarantine animals that are treated with restricted animal remedies. So your quarantine area may need to be covered/partially covered to protect sick animals.

B5.2.9 Wash down areas need to be appropriate to the scale of your operation. Written permission from your Certification Manager may be required for machinery clean down procedures on partially certified properties.

B5.3.2 For example, cows strip grazed behind electric fence, moved daily on a 30 day rotation winter and 25 day rotation summer;, poultry rotated weekly using 3 pens; sheep moved to a new paddock weekly on 10 week rotation.

B5.3.3 & .4 Include details of both feed grown on the property and supplementary off-farm feeds. The latter should preferably be certified organic but if this is unattainable it should not contain any GM material, except for GM-derived Vit B2 and Vit B12. A derogation is required for non-certified feed, which should include a non-GM declaration.

B5.3.5 Processing includes making jam, pickles, and the like, but does not include the packing of fruit or vegetables, milk, or nuts. It does not include processing for home use. If any processing involves the use of inputs these should be detailed, together with their certification status.

Your processing, and possibly packing and selling non-processed produce, may require compliance with the Food Act 2014 and Animal Products Act 1999. At this stage, compliance with the BioGro standard and those Acts are separate processes.

Section C – The Current Year

Insert the dates for the current year you wish to be certified.

C1.1 That is, changes from the previous year for which you completed a PMP.

C2.4 Provide details such as names and dates, purpose for which contractor used, clean-down if appropriate, and provide contractor declaration if relevant.

C3.1 Provide details of any activities by your neighbours or others that might have compromised the organic integrity of your property, any actions you have taken as a result, and the outcomes of those actions.

C3.2 Prohibited inputs may only be used with permission of the Certification Manager. Their use will usually mean that your property will no longer be certified and will have to go through the conversion process again.

C3.3 If prohibited products are stored you need to name the product and explain why they are being stored.

C3.4 Restricted inputs may only be used with permission of the Certification Manager.

C5.1 & 5.2 See our paper in Google Drive 'Soil Testing and the BioGro Standard', to give you some guidance as to the approach you might take to soil testing.

C5.4 Include comments on the volumes made, approximate % components of the compost, source of components of the compost, comments on the consistent temperatures attained, whether compost covered or not, how many times turned and watered, the observed effectiveness of the compost made.

C5.8 Include source of seeds and certification status e.g. save your own, purchase, from neighbours, from other growers.

C6.1 Include species, breed, age and number.

C6.2 Provide details of all livestock owned by you, or grazed on your land, that are treated and/or quarantined on your property in the current certification year, including livestock ID, type and date of first/last treatment, time in quarantine, outcome of treatment.

7. Food Act Compliance

7.1 Introduction

The [Food Act](#) was passed in 2014. Any new producer/processor since then has to comply with the Act, and all existing producers/processors have to comply by October 2018. The [Food Regulations 2015](#) and various Food Act Notices contain further provisions relating to food.

The Act takes a risk based approach. The food industry is classified into food sectors according to the risk each sector poses to public health. From least to highest risk food sectors are assigned to:

- Exempt
- National programmes 1-3 ('NP')
- Food control plan ('FCP'). These can be generic (developed by MPI) or custom

Under [Schedule 3](#) of the Act horticultural producers are exempt from a NP or FCP if they minimally process and handle (for example, wash or rinse) horticulture produce they have grown themselves and sell this produce directly to consumers (eg. from their property, roadside stall, farmers market).

However under [Section 14](#) all food producers/processor are required to produce 'safe and suitable' food. 'Safe and suitable' is defined in [Section 12](#).

The Act only applies to people who are essentially in the business of selling food. So, for example, the Act doesn't apply to people who grow and process food for their own consumption.

Most of OrganicFarmNZ producer members would either be exempt or subject to NP 1. Some of our members process their own produce on their property and would probably be subject to NP 2 or NP 3.

At the end of July 2017 OrganicFarmNZ applied to MPI for exemptions under the Food Act. As at August MPI are in the process of considering this. So you will need to separately comply with the legislation according to the requirements applicable to your particular operation.

The Animal Products Act 1999 works together with the Food Act. Animal products include meat, milk, seafood, honey and eggs. However there is an exemption to some egg producers with fewer than 100 hens:

[11F Certain primary processors of eggs exempt](#)

No risk management programme is required for the production, processing, or sale of eggs by a primary processor of eggs who—

(a) produces eggs for sale for human or animal consumption from 100 female birds or fewer (all species included); and

(b) sells all eggs that are intended for human or animal consumption direct to the consumer or end user; and

(c) does not sell any of the eggs to any person for further sale.

7.2 How the compliance process works

MPI have produced two documents which set out their requirements under national programmes – [Scope of Operations](#) and [National Programme Overview](#). The latter document is in the process of being upgraded by MPI.

In the Scope of Operations document, you will need to make an assessment of what food category you are in.

The National Programme Overview categorises what you need to do to produce food that is safe and suitable, as follows:

- **Places.** For example, how is your packing shed designed and used so that it is clean and free from vermin and other contaminants.
- **People.** Essentially, do you and any staff know how to harvest, pack and process food so that it is safe and suitable.
- **Product.** For example, you know whether the ingredients you use in your products (ie. not from your property) are safe and suitable
- **Processes.** For example, are utensils, equipment and surfaces clean before preparing food and are they properly maintained.
- **Records.** You need to keep records relating to your operation to confirm compliance with the above.

Your operation may be subject to a food control plan, or you may choose to operate under one. In this case, you are probably best to work with your local authority and get advice from them. However as the Food Act is in transition, you may not always get accurate advice about your particular operation. Share your knowledge and experience with all of us, so we can all learn about the Food Act and how to make safe and suitable food.

8. After You Have Filled in Your PMP

If your region uses online storage, you should upload your PMP, RS and supporting documents to Google Drive and email your Pod leader to confirm this. If you are not in a Pod, email the Certification Manager.

If you are using hard copy, follow your hard copy processes.

You should then direct credit your annual subscription to your regional body's bank account

Fees are set at your regional body's AGM each year. For your region, these are listed on our website at <http://www.organicfarm.org.nz/regions>

Once the above is done, if you are in a Pod, your Pod leader will arrange for a Pod peer review day. If you are not in a Pod, the Certification Manager will arrange for an auditor to visit your property.

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OrganicFarmNZ