

Organic Bazaars: Participatory guarantee system and fair trade of organic produce

Daniel, J.¹

Keywords: organic agriculture, organic markets, fair trade, participatory guarantee system, local certification

Abstract

Though organic agriculture certification by certification agencies has existed for over two decades, it has not been very successful in bringing most of the organic farmers from developing countries within the ambit of organic agriculture for various reasons. These include cost of certification, access to certification procedures, and capacity to assimilate and document information. Being recognized as an organic farmer certainly improves the marketability of one's produce. However, the certification alienation has a negative impact on the majority of small and marginal organic farmers to market their produce as organic.

This paper deals with a guarantee system that is designed and implemented by the farmers themselves—commonly termed the Participatory Guarantee System (PGS)—and associated marketing mechanisms that involve the producers and consumers. The peer appraisal and support at the local level, together with consumer–producer dialogue for marketing the produce, ensures fair-trade principles.

Organic bazaars based on the concept of PGS and associated marketing have been tried in 13 locations of India and found to be a viable alternative that is relevant to the small farmers in India.

¹ Institute for Integrated Rural Development, 54 Kanchan Nagar, Nakshatrawadi, Aurangabad 431002, India, e-mail: jdaniel@iird.org.in, Internet: www.iird.org.in