

## Terms of Reference

<b>Title</b>	<b>: Organic EU certification advisory</b>
<b>Client</b>	<b>: BioFruit Coop (BFC)</b>
<b>Country</b>	<b>: Vietnam</b>
<b>Project number</b>	<b>: 22BIOF – 9131</b>
<b>Assignment number</b>	<b>: ADV.17204</b>
<b>Period</b>	<b>: Aug – Dec 2023</b>
<b>Cooperative advisor (BA)</b>	<b>: Thai Hong Lam</b>

### Introduction cooperative

Bio Fruit Coop (BFC) has been established in early 2020 initially by a group of 14 engineers and farmers who are experienced years in the fresh fruit industry in Vietnam. Locating in the Mekong delta, the cooperative is collecting and trading pomelo, lemon, and some other tropical fruits from farmers in different provinces, mainly in but not limited to Hau Giang, Vinh Long, Can Tho, Ben Tre, Long An.

In 2022, the total number of members is about 280 (140 households) cultivating on more than 230 hectares, of which 80 hectares are GlobalGap certified. The organization has 120 staff, most of them are agri-technicians, agri-extension workers, and full-time laborers at the processing factory. The co-op's revenue in 2022 is VND 65 billion. The total production volume for 2022 is about 2,500 tons, of which nearly 50% is for export to high-value markets (UK, Netherlands, Poland, Romania, Russia, Canada).

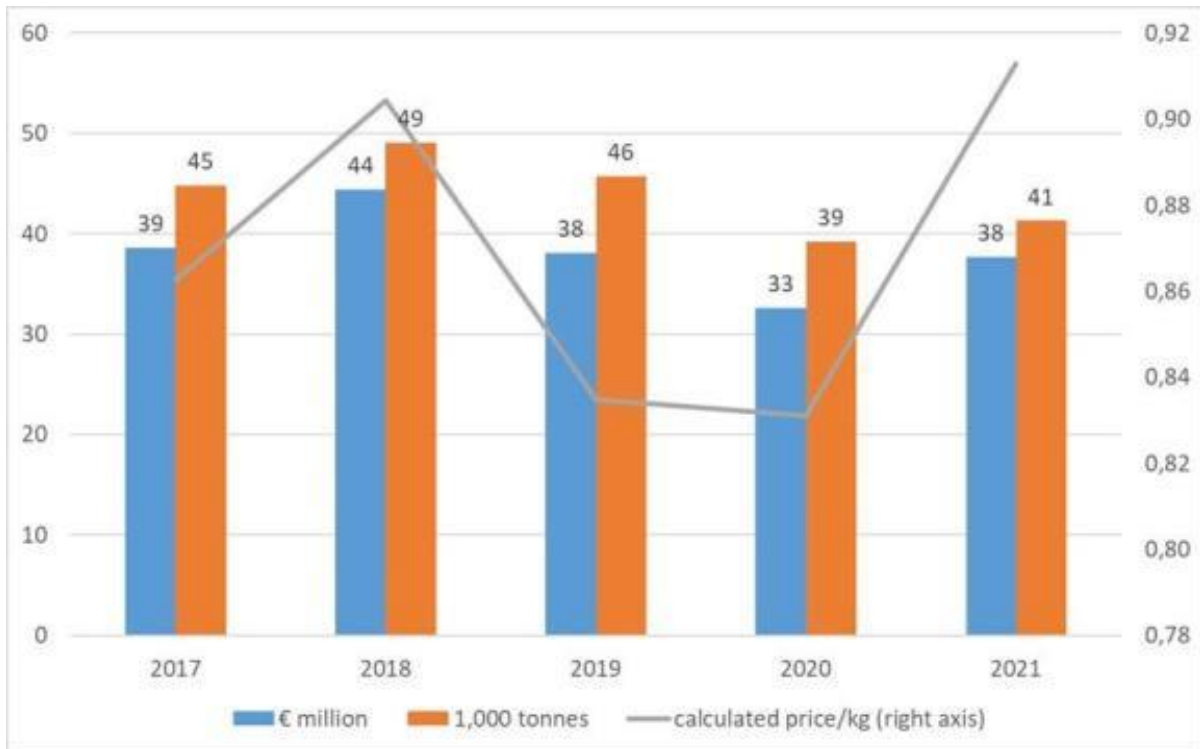
The main service BFC provides for members is purchasing, pre-processing, and operating for sale in domestic and export markets. Besides that, the cooperative supervises strictly the usage of production inputs as well as the process of growing, caring, and harvesting through their technical staff. The product portfolio of BFC includes seedless lime (<60%), red/green pomelo (<40%), jackfruit, watermelon, coconut, pineapple, and dragonfruit.

### Background of the assignment

BFC has becoming Agriterra's client from March 2022. The key business of BFC is the export of lime and pomelo to the European market and it likely has a high opportunity to develop and expand further in terms of market diversification, product portfolio, trade volume, and economic value. The EU is the largest fruit and vegetable import market in the world, worth around 135 billion euros per year. This accounts for 45 percent of the global trade value of fruit and vegetables. EU countries are recovering strongly after their social distancing period, and demand for food products is increasing rapidly, including Vietnam's tropical fruits and vegetables.

As the world becomes more health-conscious, the demand for organic products is rising, especially EU market. One such product that has seen significant growth in recent years is organic coconut and processing products from it.

**Figure: European imports of coconut in the period 2017 - 2021**



Source: Eurostat & ITC Trade Map

Peak imports of coconuts in 2018 reached 49,000 tonnes, after which it dropped to 39,000 tonnes in 2020. 2020 in particular showed a dip due to the COVID-19 pandemic and several lockdowns. Normally, coconut prices fluctuate according to annual availability. In 2021 there was a notable price increase. This was mainly due to continuous logistical problems and higher freight rates, especially from Asia. Despite the price increase, 2021 showed an upward trend in the European market. Coconut used to be an exotic product in Europe, but with the promotion of all kinds of healthy by-products coconut is not a strange fruit to consumers anymore. For example, the coconut water market has an expected growth of 13% (CAGR) for the period 2021-2025.

To catch up with this trend, BioFruit will open new enterprise to produce coconuts according to European organic standards to export coconut and its processed products to EU market. BioFruit expects to expand organic production areas to 100ha in Hau Giang, Tra Vinh and Ben Tre with the participation of 60-80 farmers. The co-op requested technical support from Agriterra to get organic EU certification.

### Main objective

The purpose of the consultancy will be to support the BioFruit cooperative to prepare for application for EU organic certification in coconut. The consultant will be responsible for working with the producers and BioFruit management team to collect the relevant information, provide technical guidance, fill in the forms and liaise with the organic certification body to ensure the correct submission of documentation and any necessary follow-up to get organic EU certification.

### Specific objectives

#### 1) Profile section

- Set up assessment profile including: assessment checklist, hazard assessment records, and farm map.
- Prepare a plan to test: soil, water and products.
- Guide farmers to record the profile according to organic EU regulations.
- Prepare a package for farming techniques according to organic EU regulations.

## 2) Farming section

- Provide guidance for farmers to cultivate, and follow the organic process.
- Provide training for farmers on certificates: labor safety, safe use of agro-pharmaceuticals, food safety and hygiene.
- Set the status of the construction parts: warehouse, toilet, and medicine mixing platform.

## 3) After evaluation

- Coordinating the farm to fix errors arising during and after the evaluation process.

## Deliverables

- Assessment checklist, hazard and farm maps completed
- Soil, water and products of 02 coconut farms tested
- Farming technical package prepared in compliance with organic EU
- Training and advisory for farmers and cooperative staff conducted
- Follow-up support for BioFruit to get organic EU certification
- A final report of the assignment prepared and approved by BioFruit and Agriterra.

## Expected results/impacts

- Needy conditions for coconut production area and factory are well-prepared to apply for organic EU certification.
- Supports the co-op open new enterprises and expand their product to the high-end market of the EU.
- Reduce the use of chemical pesticides, insecticides, and fertilizer and promote green production mode.
- Improve the living environment and climate change adaptation in target areas.
- Improve accessibility to high-end markets and increase income for 60 - 80 farmers in the next 3 years.

## Assignment details

- Composition of the Agriterra assignment team including: **Thai Hong Lam (CA)** and 01 External consultant
- Duration of the assignment: The time frame of the assignment will be 32 days in the period of **Aug – Nov 2023**.
- Arrangements: The consultant will arrange hotel, and transportation for him/herself

## Tentative programme

# working days	Day	Programme	Available
1	Aug 1-3	Review the existing situation of organic-related documents and field situation	Consultant, CA and the Co-op

1	Aug 4-5	Consultation with each producer and BOD of BioFruit to introduce the scope of work, discuss the information needed, and delegate responsibilities.	Consultant, CA and the Co-op
2	Aug 7-10	Set up assessment profile including assessment checklist, hazard assessment records, and farm map.	Consultant and the Co-op
3	Aug 12-20	Prepare a plan to test: soil, water and products.	Consultant and the Co-op
5	Aug 14-Sep 15	Guide farmers to record the profile according to organic EU regulations.	Consultant and the Co-op
4	Aug 14-Sep 15	Prepare a package for farming techniques according to organic EU regulations.	Consultant and the Co-op
5	Sep 16-Sep 30	Provide training for farmers on certificates: labor safety, safe use of agro-pharmaceuticals, food safety and hygiene.	Consultant and the Co-op
3	Oct 1-10	Set the status of the construction parts: warehouse, toilet, and medicine mixing platform.	Consultant and the Co-op
2	Oct 10-15	Develop a sustainability plan and present to each producer BioFruit team to finalize the plan.	Consultant and the Co-op
4	Nov 5-10	Coordinating the farm to fix errors arising after the evaluation process.	Consultant and the Co-op
2	Nov 15-30	Preparation of final activity report	Consultant, CA and the Co-op

### Selection criteria

- Knowledge and/or experience with organic certification and associated requirements
- Good experience and analytical skills particularly within fruit development in the MRD context
- Demonstrated ability to deliver against project outcomes and against project timelines
- Proven experience with environmental management, sustainable farming practices fruit production practices
- Proven experience delivering training and advisory for farmers and cooperatives

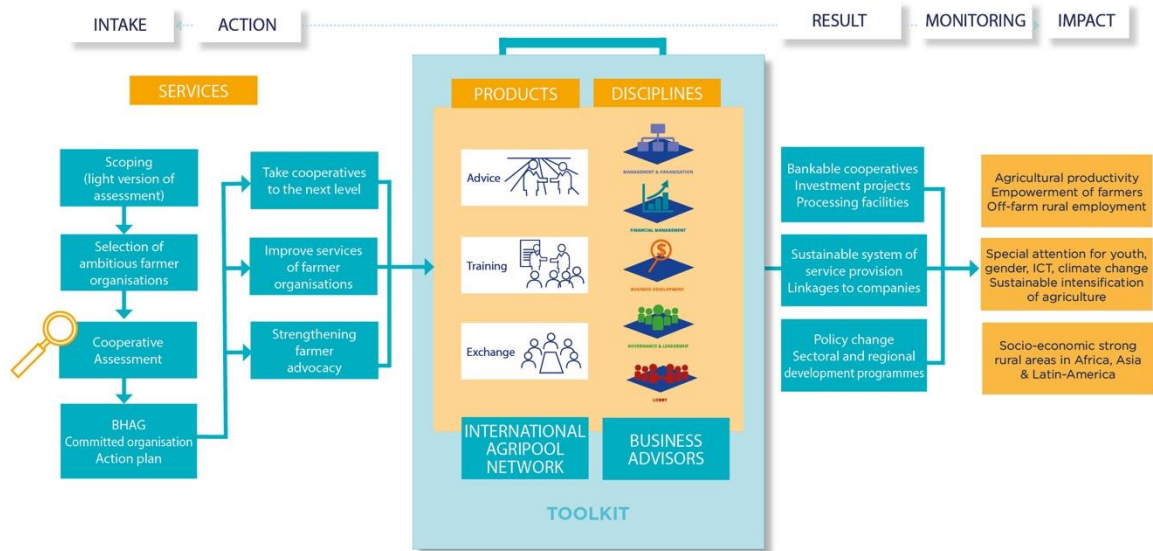
**The closing date for application: 7 August 2023.**

**How to Apply:** Interested candidates can send your application to [vietnam@agriterra.org](mailto:vietnam@agriterra.org) with title: Organic EU consultant.

Please be advised that only short-listed applicants will be contacted.

# Agriterra, for cooperatives

## HOW DOES AGRITERRA WORK



Agriterra provides high quality, and hands-on advice, training and exchange services, to cooperatives and farmer organisations with maximum impact for socio-economically strong and productive rural areas. In 2019, with 163 employees, Agriterra advises 291 cooperatives in 21 countries. With our programme we reach more than 850.000 farmers. Over the past few years, we have already mobilised more than 50 million euro made available through policy changes. More than 129 cooperatives are linked to banks with a mobilised loan for working capital and investments of more than 75 million euros, while 51 clients have a processing facility with increased production.

Through professionalising and strengthening cooperatives in Latin America, Africa and Asia, Agriterra contributes to positive economic development and better income distribution. Farmers organised in strong, competitive and trustworthy cooperatives are indispensable for a vibrant rural economy, fostering agricultural development and off-farm employment in rural areas.

Agriterra draws on a century of cooperative knowledge in the Netherlands disclosed via its extensive network in the Dutch agri-food sector. These experts and Agripool experts from farmers organisations all over the world, work together with business advisors from the Netherlands and national business advisors in the countries where Agriterra staff is based.