

Organic Market Development Task Force Terms of Reference

1. Background and Rationale

The global demand for organic products has been steadily increasing, driven by consumer preferences for healthier, environmentally friendly, and ethically produced goods. To capitalize on this trend and enhance the competitiveness of organic products, there is a need to establish a dedicated Task Force on Organic Market Development. This Task Force will focus on identifying market opportunities, addressing challenges, and promoting the growth of the organic sector.

2. Objectives

The primary objective of the Task Force is to develop and implement strategies to expand the market for organic products, both domestically and internationally. This Committee will advise COTA management team on market opportunities and barriers to drive growth of the organic market. It will inform the work that COTA is doing on the Organic Action Plan Market Pillar.

This includes:

- Identifying key market trends and opportunities for organic products.
- Addressing barriers to market entry and growth.
- Enhancing the visibility and appeal of organic products.
- Facilitating collaboration among stakeholders in the organic sector.

3. Scope of Work

The Task Force will undertake the following activities:

Market Analysis and Research:

- Identify/conduct market research to identify current and potential markets for organic products.
- Analyze consumer preferences and trends in the organic sector.
- Assess the competitive landscape and identify key competitors and market leaders.

Stakeholder Engagement:

- Engage with producers, processors, retailers, distributors and other stakeholders in the organic sector.
- Facilitate dialogue and collaboration among stakeholders to address common challenges.

Policy and Regulatory Advocacy:

- Review existing policies and regulations affecting the organic sector.
- Putting forward recommendations for policies and regulatory frameworks that will facilitate market growth.

Marketing and Promotion:

- Advise on marketing and promotional strategies to increase consumer awareness and demand for organic products.
- Advise on initiatives to differentiate organic products in the market.

Capacity Building and Training:

- Identify training needs and opportunities for stakeholders in the organic sector.
- Promote best practices in organic farming, processing, and marketing.

4. Membership

The Task Force will comprise of COTA representatives from the following groups:

- Organic producers and farmer associations
- Organic product processors and manufacturers
- Organic importers or exporters
- Organic brokers or sales agents
- Research institutions and academic experts in organic and market development

The following groups may be consulted on an ad hoc basis but will not be considered members of the Task Force:

- Retailers and distributors of organic products
- Government agencies and regulatory bodies
- Consumer advocacy groups
- Non-members of COTA with relevant expertise

5. Governance and Meetings

- The Task Force will be chaired by COTA Staff.
- Meetings will be held 6-8 times a year by video conference, with additional meetings scheduled as needed.
- Subcommittees may be formed to address specific areas of focus, such as marketing, policy, or research.

6. Duration and Review

- The Task Force will be established for an initial period of two years, with the possibility of extension.

7. Confidentiality and Conflict of Interest

- The Task Force shall not enter into any discussion, activity or conduct that may infringe, on its part or on the part of its members, any applicable competition laws outlined in the [Competition Act](#). By way of example, members shall not discuss, communicate or exchange any commercially sensitive information, including information relating to prices, marketing and advertising strategy, costs and revenues, trading terms and conditions with third parties, including purchasing strategy, terms of supply, trade programs, or distribution strategy.
- Members of the Task Force will adhere to the principles of confidentiality to protect sensitive information. Information received or research provided is for the purposes of the Task Force and is not to be circulated outside the committee nor used for personal gain by COTA members.
- Any conflicts of interest must be disclosed to the Chair and the participant must excuse themselves from the topic in which there is a direct conflict of interest.
- The Task Force will work on topics of common purpose and relevance to the industry rather than company-specific topics.