AS ISO 18716:2025
ISO 18716:2024

Professional farmer organization — Guidance



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- Australian Food and Grocery Council
- Australian Institute of Food Science and Technology
- Australian Olive Association
- Australian Olive Oil Association
- CSIRO
- Dairy Industry Association of Australia
- Grains & Legumes Nutrition Council
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Australian Standard®

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This page explains the meaning of the language and structure of this Standard.

Refer to Standards Australia's Standardisation Guide 006 for more details about drafting rules.

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Requirements

To conform to a Standard, all requirements in the Standard need to be met.

A requirement is any statement in the Standard which uses the word "shall".

Recommendations, permissions and possibilities

The following words are commonly used in Standards, but statements using them do not have to be followed to conform to the Standard:

(a) "should" means that something is recommended.

(b) "may" means that something is permitted.

(c) "can" means that something is possible.

Structure of Standards

A Standard always has the following parts:

(i) The Preface states who developed the Standard, what the Standard is aiming to do, and how it relates to other documents.

(ii) The Scope states what the Standard is about, what it covers and what it does not cover.

(iii) The Normative references clause lists other documents that are referenced in the Standard as part of requirements.

(iv) The Terms and definitions clause defines important terms to help with understanding the Standard.

A Standard may also include other parts, such as the following:

(1) A normative appendix sets additional requirements that need to be conformed to.

(2) An informative appendix provides additional information or guidance. An informative appendix provides additional information or guidance. They usually do not contain requirements. If an informative appendix does contain requirements, the Standard will explain when those requirements apply.

(3) A Bibliography lists documents referenced in the Standard but not as part of requirements.

Many Standards include notes. Notes provide recommendations and/or guidance only. They never contain requirements.

Preface

This Standard was prepared by the Standards Australia Committee FT-024, Food Products.

The objective of this document is to give guidance on the characteristics and best practices of a professional farmer organization.

This document is applicable to commercially oriented farmer organizations. It does not apply to purely socially oriented farmer organizations or individual farmers. It provides a common standard of professionalism for commercially oriented farmer organizations, which can serve as guidance to inform, harmonize, and complement existing and future organizational development and assessment processes.

This document is applicable to large and small farmer organizations, without regard to the number of members, volume of business, output or capital investment, nor to the specific crop or product. It can also be applicable, when adapted, for very small or nascent organizations, for specific or differentiated products or for markets with special requirements.

It does not address every capacity or aspect of professionalism that can be of importance to a specific customer or market, nor imply the need for uniformity in organizational type or structure.

This document is identical to, and has been reproduced from, ISO 18716:2024, *Professional farmer organization — Guidance*.

As this document has been reproduced from an international document, a comma is to be read as a full point when referring to a decimal marker.

Australian or Australian/New Zealand Standards that are identical adoptions of international normative references may be used interchangeably. Refer to the online catalogue for information on specific Standards.

The terms “normative” and “informative” are used in Standards to define the application of the appendices or annexes to which they apply. A “normative” appendix or annex is an integral part of a Standard, whereas an “informative” appendix or annex is only for information and guidance.

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Foreword

ISO (the International Organization for Standardization) is a worldwide federation of national standards bodies (ISO member bodies). The work of preparing International Standards is normally carried out through ISO technical committees. Each member body interested in a subject for which a technical committee has been established has the right to be represented on that committee. International organizations, governmental and non-governmental, in liaison with ISO, also take part in the work. ISO collaborates closely with the International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC) on all matters of electrotechnical standardization.

The procedures used to develop this document and those intended for its further maintenance are described in the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 1. In particular, the different approval criteria needed for the different types of ISO document should be noted. This document was drafted in accordance with the editorial rules of the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 2 (see www.iso.org/directives).

ISO draws attention to the possibility that the implementation of this document may involve the use of (a) patent(s). ISO takes no position concerning the evidence, validity or applicability of any claimed patent rights in respect thereof. As of the date of publication of this document, ISO had not received notice of (a) patent(s) which may be required to implement this document. However, implementers are cautioned that this may not represent the latest information, which may be obtained from the patent database available at www.iso.org/patents. ISO shall not be held responsible for identifying any or all such patent rights.

Any trade name used in this document is information given for the convenience of users and does not constitute an endorsement.

For an explanation of the voluntary nature of standards, the meaning of ISO specific terms and expressions related to conformity assessment, as well as information about ISO's adherence to the World Trade Organization (WTO) principles in the Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT), see www.iso.org/iso/foreword.html.

This document was prepared by Technical Committee ISO/TC 34, *Food products*.

This first edition cancels and replaces ISO/IWA 29:2019, which has been technically revised.

The main changes are as follows:

— the Introduction has been updated to further clarify the background and purpose of the document;

— Clause 1 has been extended to further elaborate on the farmer organizations the document is applicable to;

— Clause 3 has been updated;

— Clause 4 has been updated to further elaborate technical elements;

— Clause 5 has been incorporated into Clause 4;

— Annex A has been extended.

Any feedback or questions on this document should be directed to the user's national standards body. A complete listing of these bodies can be found at www.iso.org/members.html.

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Introduction

Farmer organizations can play an important role in agricultural development and in farmers' well-being by, for example, enabling members to improve agricultural and environmental management practices, increase yields and productivity, access better markets, gain exposure to model farmers, access affordable financing, and engage with other key business partners. This can increase the creativity, innovation, socio-economic inclusion, effectiveness and profitability of farmer organizations and their stakeholders.

There are numerous stakeholders with an interest in the professionalization of farmer organizations, including, but not limited to, governments, financial institutions, value chain actors (e.g. suppliers, buyers, aggregators, transporters), business development service providers, international development and non-governmental organizations, and the farmers themselves. Each of these actors can have their own expectations, tools and approaches. For decades, this has led to fragmentation, redundancy and limited efficiency in the provision of services to and by farmer organizations. For example, it is not uncommon to find farmer organizations that have received the same training many times, and yet are unable to demonstrate the clear progress toward professionalization that can help them access more or better markets, financing and enhanced benefits for their members.

The purpose of this document is to establish common guidance and best practices that describe a professional farmer organization. The guidance can be used to develop more harmonized and efficient farmer organizations. This facilitates different stakeholders to more effectively align in their support for farmer organizations and for farmer organizations to demonstrate professionalism in a universally understood way. The guidance is based on the premise that the more professionally a farmer organization operates, the better it will engage with its stakeholders (e.g. members, clients, business partners) and the more likely it is to have better business opportunities and greater sustainability. Figure 1 illustrates how establishing common global guidance can lead to improved business performance.



Figure 1 — From common global guidance to improved business performance

Organizational development is a process of continuous learning and improvement. It is not expected that all farmer organizations must meet every criterion described in this document. Rather, this guidance is intended to build a common vision of professionalism that can be used as a tool to inform and support different actors, including farmer organizations and the business development service providers, investors, funders, partners and others that work with them, to increase the professionalism of farmer organizations, leading to improved performance and value for members.

The guidance may be applied in a range of ways, including, but not limited to:

— supporting farmer organization members and staff (where applicable) to supervise and hold their organization and leadership accountable, and guiding staff to execute their day-to-day responsibilities;

— building confidence of buyers, suppliers, investors and others doing business with farmer organizations;

— directing and harmonizing the expectations and actions of providers of training, assessment, advisory, and other organizational and business development services for better efficiency and effectiveness;

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— aligning the vision and interventions of stakeholders, including, but not limited to, government, non-governmental organizations, civil society organizations, service providers, donors, investors and capacity builders in their efforts to professionalize farmer organizations;

— encouraging active engagement with broader stakeholders.

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