

Request for Proposals

OCA Farm Programme Data/Sample Collection and Reporting in Turkey

Proposal Submission Deadline: 02 March 2023, 23:00 CET

The Organic Cotton Accelerator has initiated this Request for Proposals (RfP) process to identify a qualified consultant/consultancy to guide and execute the OCA's Farm Programme data/sample collection and reporting in Turkey.

1. Background

THE ORGANIC COTTON ACCELERATOR

The Organic Cotton Accelerator (OCA) is a multi-stakeholder organisation dedicated to organic cotton. As a global platform, we are committed to bringing integrity, supply security and measurable social and environmental impact to organic cotton.

OCA envisions a future where we have fully realised the Organic Cotton Effect - organic cotton's powerful and positive impact on people, planet, and prosperity. We unite the sector to unleash the potential of organic cotton – from field to fashion.

Since our establishment in 2016, with founding partners Laudes Foundation, H&M, Kering, Eileen Fisher, Textile Exchange, Tchibo, Inditex and C&A, OCA has been committed to convening the sector around a common agenda and using our platform's collective investments and programmes to act as a catalyst for change.

As a multi-stakeholder organisation, OCA is structured to:

1. Convene the sector around a common agenda: Our global organic cotton platform unites all stakeholders in a common vision, mission, and agenda, driving real change in business practices across the sector
2. Improve farmer profitability and prosperity: Our farm-level programme creates a secure market for farmers and delivers transparency at the start of the supply chain.
3. Bolster the integrity of the organic cotton sector: Our investments in seed, research, industry standards and traceability innovations create the conditions for a healthy and enduring sector.

More information on the organisation is available on www.organiccottonaccelerator.org

FARM PROGRAMME

OCA's programmes are focused on creating the conditions for organic cotton to thrive – by putting farmers first. We enable brands and retailers to act in their own supply chain in a concerted action, so we truly move the market. In OCA's flagship Farm Programme, we create a direct relation between organic farm groups and brands and retailers to create secure offtake and better prices for organic farmers and access to organic seeds and training, with the aim to strengthen the business case for organic farmers to grow organically and support their livelihoods. We operate complementary and on

top of the organic certification system and add value to the sector by addressing critical issues that go beyond certification. Through our Farm Programme, we evidence continuous improvement in social and environmental impact, and invest in the security and resilience of organic cotton directly at the farm level.

Brands invest in OCA's programme because our approach delivers the assurance that their investment in organic is delivering meaningful impact – it goes directly to farmers in the form of verified premium payments; it enables the delivery of quality farm services by our Implementing Partners, and it gives them greater visibility over the source of the organic cotton entering their supply chain.

We envision a future where, every time a farmer switches to organic cotton, there is a ripple effect of positivity; farmers earn more, their families and communities flourish, and their land and soils are fertile for future generations, protecting our planet. We call this the **Organic Cotton Effect**. But we're not there yet -and it's going to take a collaborative effort to realise this vision. OCA unites the sector to unleash the potential of organic cotton and deliver positive change for people and the planet. We believe that working together we can create the conditions for organic cotton to thrive.

Every dollar invested in OCA Programmes improves farmer profitability and prosperity, contributes to environmental sustainability, and ultimately bolsters the integrity of the cotton sector. We support farmers because they are the catalysts for this change. They are stewards of the land; support the farmer, you strengthen the sector and you safeguard the planet.

CURRENT M&E FRAMEWORK¹

OCA has developed an M&E framework, detailed in the [Farm Programme Guidelines](#) to track and learn about the effectiveness of the farm projects in contributing to the aspired goals. This document provides an overview of the data collection, management and validation processes that will be in operation for OCA's farm projects. The data which will be collected and shared among respective OCA partners and will facilitate fact-based learning about the impact of sourcing practices on the business case of organic cotton farmers. This should inform future design of OCA's Farm Programme and the adoption of best practices in sourcing strategies in the coming years. OCA also hopes that the increased level of transparency brought by M&E system will foster trust among the different actors involved in the farm projects and contribute to enhancing the overall credibility of our efforts.

In summary, the design and implementation of a solid M&E system for the sourcing interventions serves the following objectives:

- **Performance measurement:** assessing the direct results of the OCA (OCA contributor Brand) intervention practices, and to what extent they lead to improvements in the business case for farmers. Evaluating both local conventional and piloted activities to enable continuous and comparative learning.
- **Enhancing transparency and credibility:** enhancing the credibility of the farm projects and their results through adherence to a verifiable and transparent data collection system.
- **Communicating results:** share results with sector stakeholders and consumers to showcase the impact of the intervention activities.
- **Continuous improvement and learning:** contributing towards a cycle of shared measurement and continuous learning to improve future intervention design and understand possible changes.

¹ The relevant resources can be found on [OCA's website](#).

2. Scope of Work

OCA is seeking interest from third party validator (TPV) to validate data and facilitate testing of seed cotton and lint for the organic cotton projects under OCA's Farm Programme, located primarily within Turkey. Further details about the project and exact allocations will be made available at a later stage of the selection process. For design/methodology and budgeting purposes, please consider the following assumptions for this proposal:

- *Number of initial projects: ~ 3*
- *Total number of farmers in these projects: ~ 80*
- *Total lint commitment of each project: ~ 2000 MT*

The scope of work for the TPV covers three broad areas:

- Data collection and validation
- Sampling, testing & reporting
- Suggesting improvements to OCA's M&E processes

Data collection and validation:

1. Create detailed workplan for project visits, data collection analysis and reporting. It is expected that the visits to the projects will be scheduled at critical stages of the cotton season to collect relevant data and facilitate sampling and testing of the seed cotton and lint.
2. Interview the project farmers, conventional (control) farmers as well as the Implementing Partners (IPs) to gather quantitative data and qualitative information as detailed by the OCA secretariat
 - Collecting quantitative data in accordance with OCA's Farm Programme Guidelines and Verification Manual with project farmers, control farmers and the Implementing Partners. An overview of the indicators for the coming 2023-24 season is shown in file: *OCA Turkey Farm Programme Indicator List_2023-24*. Please note that indicators maybe adjusted in collaboration with the selected TPV for the 2023-24 season.
 - Collecting qualitative data from project farmers, control farmers and the IPs for each of the projects, as the interview schedules and checklists developed by OCA in consultation with the TPV.
 - Two in depth project farmer case studies to be documented based on a checklist developed by OCA.
 - Payment validation: ensuring that the seed & cotton premium payment to farmers for cotton procured match the data documented by the IP correctly.
3. Conducting process validation: Undertaking a thorough process validation at the project level alongside the data collection. Observations of the TPV (backed by relevant data) will feed into a detailed Performance Improvement Reports (PIRs) for each project. The PIR consists of an analysis of the IP's self-reported data, credibility and reliability compared to TPV's data. The gaps will be highlighted in the report along with suitable recommendations from the TPV. The template of the PIR will be developed by OCA, in consultation with the TPV.
4. Submission of Results Report Dashboard: ensure that all raw data is cleaned and analysed against the self-reported data of the IP. This is to be provided in the form of an excel dashboard which will be developed and shared by OCA. In addition the TPV will share a 2-page qualitative overview for each project with the OCA team along with the dashboard.

SAMPLING, TESTING AND REPORTING

1. Collate ginner level chemical residue test reports provided by the IPs in an agreed format.
2. Coordinate with the IPs and collect samples as per the [Standard-Operating-Procedure-for-GMO-Sampling-and-Testing](#). Please note that payments of all GM tests are to be paid directly by the IP to the labs. Collection, packaging and delivering the samples to the pre-selected labs (by OCA's IPs) is the responsibility of the TPA and the costs should be budgeted in the financial proposal.
3. Collating and coordinating reports from labs and reporting to OCA: Providing OCA with quality checked data from the reports provided by the labs, in an agreed format.

SUGGESTING IMPROVEMENTS TO OCA'S M&E PROCESSES

1. Suggest improvements in OCA's [Verification Manual](#) and [Standard-Operating-Procedure-for-GMO-Sampling-and-Testing](#): Based on ground realities, suggest improvements through an End of Year (EOY) report.

3. Methodology & Processes

Sample Sizes – data collection & validation

The sample size as detailed in the [Verification Manual](#) will be followed to collect data from all 15 projects. Please note that the sample size will vary based on the risk category in which the project has been classified by OCA based on the performance in 2021-22 season. This information will be provided by OCA upon selection of the TPA. For purpose of calculation for your proposal, please use medium risk category.

Data must also be collected from control farmers (Minimum 10 or at thereafter 10% of the standard sample OCA farmers) in each project.

Sample Sizes – data sampling

The sample size as detailed in the [Standard-Operating-Procedure-for-GMO-Sampling-and-Testing](#) will be followed to collect chemical residue and GMO data from all projects.

Data collection and sampling:

Two phases spread across two visits by TPVs are proposed by OCA for 2023-2024 cotton season with additional visits to be planned as and when required. You can find more details on each phase in Section 6.1 of the [Verification Manual](#).

4. Proposal Outline

We would request you to share the proposal with us detailing the following:

1. **Suitability for this project and relevant experience** of your organization and the proposed team members including their CVs
2. **Budget line items** to include costs for personnel involved, travel, accommodation and GM sampling, in an excel sheet. Please take into account the assumptions provided in the RfP with regards to number of farmers and projected lint production to provide a clear understanding of costs and timelines
3. **Proposed methodology, activity plan and timeline** in an excel sheet
4. **Contingency planning** should also be included as a word document covering the following:
 - Alternate validation process, in case, restrictions are imposed hindering physical visits in 2023 and 2024 (due to COVID 19 or any other such conditions).
 - Data capturing methodology (assuming limited or no mobility on ground) to ensure quality, credibility and completeness of information and the process proposed by you
 - Plan for GM sampling for farm and gin stages which will require physical visits for sample collection and can only be done by your team (not IPs)
5. **2 references** who can recommend your work, preferably from an organization working in the agro-commodities supply chain as OCA. We will get in touch with your references in the final stage of the selection process

Please note that the final commissioning of this project to an organisation will be contingent upon the following: These details will be requested at a later stage by OCA during the selection process.

- Registration in Turkey under the relevant laws and holding valid company registration Licenses/certificates supporting these may be requested by OCA
- Background verification of the organization through references
- Allocation of required staff for this project: please refer to Chapter 3 in the [Verification Manual](#)
- Provision of health and accidental insurance coverage for the team members who will be responsible for data collection and project visits

Issuance of this request for expressions of interest does not constitute a funding commitment on the part of OCA. OCA will not pay for any expenses incurred in the preparation and submission of the proposal. The successful applicant will, to receive funding, agree to OCA's terms and conditions in its service agreement. OCA offers no commitment to respondents other than the promise to keep all responses confidential in their entirety.

5. Proposed Timeline

Activity	Timelines
RFP issued by OCA Secretariat	14 January, 2023
Deadline: Interested parties submit a max. 10-page proposal including a detailed budget, delivery timelines, and similar project executions	02 March, 2023
Interview with OCA if the proposal is selected for the next round	30 March, 2023
Selected organisation notified and meeting with OCA	21 April, 2023
Signing of the contract	10 May, 2023

6. Key Deliverables

Deliverable details		Deadline
Deliverable 1	Submission of tentative workplan (per project) with timeline for data collection in visit 1, 2 and chemical residue and GMO sampling for all stages	By June 30, 2023
Deliverable 2	Tentative list of sample project farmers to be covered in Visits1 & 2	By July 15, 2023
Deliverable 3	GMO reporting: Provide OCA data for seed cotton tests at farmer level done by the TPA	By October 01, 2023
Deliverable 4	Review meeting 1 – Update on validation activity	By October 15, 2023
Deliverable 5	Chemical residue reporting: Provide OCA data for seed and lint cotton tests at gin level done by the TPV	By November 30, 2023
Deliverable 6	Submit input for the progress update reports to be drafted by OCA (OCA Secretariat will gather inputs through bi-weeklycalls with the TPA ground team)	On-going
Deliverable 7	PIR final reports submitted to OCA (expected to be shared with OCA on an on-going basis)	By January 15, 2024
Deliverable 8	Robust case study of two farmers/project with photos and consent forms	By February 15, 2024
Deliverable 9	All data collected by TPA quality checked and shared with OCA	By March 15, 2024
Deliverable 10	Results reports dashboard shared with OCA	By April 15, 2024
Deliverable 11	EOY report on process-level improvements in OCA's Verification Manual and Standard-Operating-Procedure-for-GMO-Sampling-and-Testing	By April 30, 2024

Please note that in addition to three review meetings mentioned in table above, bi-weekly calls will be scheduled between OCA Secretariat Amsterdam and the TPA ground team to gather information on each project on an on-going basis. Each call will be of maximum 1 hour duration.

7. Point of Contact

This RFP is open to contacted parties, through to **02 March 2023, 23:00 CET**. Questions regarding this RFP should be directed to Ruud@organiccottonaccelerator.org.