



Database Objectives

- Governments that are developing their own norms can benchmark these against existing norms.
- The norms comparisons are a key resource for determination of equivalency between governments.
- Governments use the information as a basis for initiatives to bring standards into close alignment.

Problems of Comparisons

- Comparisons of standards are not themselves harmonized.
- Comparisons are redundant and consume too many resources .
- Static nature of the comparisons.
- Not easily accessible.
- Lack flexible formatting to enable different types of comparisons.

Features

- Publicly available, easily accessible
- Subject matter organization
- Multi-standards comparison
- Quality-neutral
- Database framework is stable and robust
- Stable hosting by an invested partner
- Credible in government and private sectors
- Committed and reliable updating of data

Functionality of Database

- Search by norm, headings and subheadings, and/or subject matter using a hierarchy of category, subcategory and key words.
- Analyze for norms with higher requirements
- Display actual norms comparatively, in actual format
- Print and export functions
- Web linked
- English and Spanish to start

Norms

- Codex Alimentarius Guidelines
- IFOAM Basic Standards
- EU 2092/91
- NOP
- JAS
- Some key private standards (?)
- IFOAM Accreditation Criteria
- ISO Guide 65

Sample of Search Hierarchy

- Category: Crop Production
- Subcategory: conversion/transition, pest and disease control, soil fertilizing, crop rotations
- Keywords: animal manures, mineral fertilizers, compost

Platform and Management

- Recommendations for Platform
 - SQL or similar enterprise platform
- Recommendation for Management
 - Centralized data input under a data manager

Options for Development

- Custom Development
- Adaptation of Existing Databases
 - EU database project (in development)
 - Ecert (existing)
 - Organic Equivalency Technologies SEM (partially developed, on hold)
 - IOAS (in planning stage)
 - US NOP work

EU Database

- Advantages
 - Enables detailed searches
 - Free Access!
 - Customized comparative summaries (user friendly)
- Disadvantages
 - All norms referenced against the EC Regulation 2092/91 and cannot be compared against each other.
 - Customized comparative summaries (labor intensive)
 - Norms themselves not available in table format - but only as downloads.

NOP

- Not applicable for further consideration
- Excel-based
- Confidential information

IOAS Database Project

- Advantages
 - Subject-based, not referenced to any specific norms
 - Enables detailed searches
 - ITF involvement at early stage makes it easier to achieve specific ITF objectives
 - May be less costly than other viable options
- Disadvantages
 - Not yet developed
 - IOAS plans no multi-lingual features
 - Ownership by one particular accrediting body in private sector

Organic Equivalency Technologies

- Advantages
 - Late stage of development
 - Multiple norms comparisons
 - Enables detailed searches
 - No single "reference" standard
- Disadvantages
 - More sophisticated than necessary
 - Acquisition and completion costs could be infeasible for ITF (but are currently unknown)

eCert

- Advantages
 - Already functioning and commercially proven
 - Enables detailed searches (hierarchical)
 - Multiple comparisons, no "reference" norm
 - Multi-lingual
 - More "certain" cost estimates
- Disadvantages
 - Some of its sophisticated features not applicable for ITF

Costs

- Development
 - 50-100K Euro
- Maintenance
 - 15 - 35 K Euro annually

Value Assessment

- Importing Country Governments: Low value/use
 - They have existing systems to meet their needs to examine other standards.
- Exporting Country Governments:
 - Medium to high value
 - But is their capacity to pay for the service?

Alternative Solution

- An International "harmonized" standard would reduce the need for comparisons