



Small Producers' Symbol Handbook

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Fundación de Pequeños
Productores Organizados, A.C.

Teléfono: (+52) 55 5264 7205

info@tusimbolo.org • info@yoursymbol.org

www.tusimbolo.org • www.yoursymbol.org

FUNDEPPO





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1 Introduction

- a. The official language for all documents associated with the Small Producers' Symbol is Spanish. In the case of any doubt arising from a translated version, the Spanish document shall be used as the only valid version.
- b. This document cancels and replaces:

Small Producers' Symbol Handbook
Version 2. 15-Jan-2011
Edition 1. 28-Jan-2011
- c. The Small Producers' Symbol Handbook describes the process and the conditions under which the Small Producers' Symbol may be used.
- d. This Handbook includes the following Annexes, which are an integral part of the Handbook:
 1. Declaration of Principles of the Small Producers' Symbol
 2. General Standard of the Small Producers' Symbol
 3. Code of Conduct for the Small Producers' Symbol
 4. Regulations on Graphics for the Small Producers' Symbol
- e. These annexes and other important documents are available to those interested, at the Symbol's website: www.tusimbolo.org.
- f. The Small Producers' Symbol Handbook and its annexes are subject to reviews and modifications, in accordance with the procedures established by the Foundation for Organized Small Producers (*Fundación de Pequeños Productores Organizados—FUNDEPPO*), the entity promoting and administering the Small Producers' Symbol.
- g. This Handbook is a guide to understanding the overall, basic functioning of the Small Producers' Symbol. For details on each of the Symbol's specific aspects, it is important to refer to the annexes. The annexes are documents that regulate the way in which the Small Producers' Symbol may be used.
- h. If you would like to see the changes between this new edition and the previous one, please consult the chart listing the changes, presented at the end of this document.

2 Vocabulary and Acronyms

- a. **CLAC:** Latin American and Caribbean Network of Small Fair Trade Producers (*Coordinadora Latinoamericana y del Caribe de Pequeños Productores de Comercio Justo*) (www.clac-comerciojusto.org).
- b. **Buyer (BUY):** A company that buys products certified with the Small Producers' Symbol to place them on the final consumer market under its own name or trademark, and that complies with the respective criteria in the applicable General Standard of the Small Producer's Symbol.



- c. **Collective Trading Companies owned by Small Producers' Organizations (C-SPO):** Companies that are majority-owned by two or more Small Producers' Organizations certified with the Small Producers' Symbol, and that trade products certified with the Small Producers' Symbol to place them on the market.
- d. **Intermediaries (INT):** Trading companies that buy and sell Small Producers' Symbol products, and do not place these products on the final consumer market under their own name or trademark.
- e. **Maquila Companies (MAQ):** Service providers that intervene in the trading or processing of products, but do not buy or sell these products.
- f. **Certification Entity (CE):** FUNDEPPO or other certification entity authorized by FUNDEPPO to operate the certification or registration program for the Small Producers' Symbol. The list of Certification Entities can be found at: www.tusimbolo.org
- g. **Small Producers' Organization (SPO):** A Small Producers' Organization that meets the criteria for Small Producers' Organizations in the General Standard of the Small Producers' Symbol. When a trading company is part of the structure of a single Small Producers' Organization that is certified with the Small Producers' Symbol, it is considered to be part of the Small Producers' Organization.
- h. **Small Producers' Symbol:** An international distinction that communicates the origin, quality and values of products from Small Producers' Organizations, in its different representations.
- i. Other important definitions and abbreviations can be found in the other documents in the Small Producers' Symbol system, including standards and procedures.

3 Small Producers' Symbol

3.1 What is the Small Producers' Symbol?

- a. A distinction that identifies organized small producers in Latin America and the Caribbean, and that permits consumers to recognize their products on the market.
- b. The symbol represents the high quality of products from organized small producers, based on their work to promote dignified living in their communities, local economies, and the health and environment of producers and consumers.
- c. The graphic image of the Small Producers' Symbol represents a house that has been built solidly and is open to everyone, as well as balance and unity between producers and consumers, between men and women, and between nature and dignified living. Its colors represent the vitality of the land, of crops, new life and the heart.

3.2 Who is behind the Small Producers' Symbol?

- a. The Small Producers' Symbol is an initiative launched in 2006 by the Latin American and Caribbean Network of Small Fair Trade Producers (*Coordinadora Latinoamericana y del Caribe de Pequeños Productores de Comercio Justo—CLAC*), with support from the Fair Trade and Solidarity Economy movements in a number of continents.



- b. To guarantee the appropriate use of the Symbol, small producers' organizations created FUNDEPPO (Foundation of Organized Small Producers), with the aim of ensuring that this Symbol truly benefits small producers, communities and consumers.
- c. FUNDEPPO works with skilled professionals and entities to independently and reliably certify compliance with the Symbol's standards.

3.3 Why was the Symbol created?

- a. For several decades, those of us working in small producers' organizations in disadvantaged countries have been struggling for a better future for our children, promoting sustainable production and fair prices.
- b. Today, we can affirm that our organizations have managed to establish solid collective enterprises and to sell a wide variety of quality products around the world, for the benefit of producers' families and communities, as well as the environment.
- c. In a world economy that is increasingly dominated by large-scale private corporations, we need this Symbol in order to continue to compete on the basis of the quality and unique values of our products and our work.

3.4 What are the Principles and Values behind the Symbol?

- a. The principles and values of the Small Producers' Symbol are those that have been cultivated and practiced in small producers' organizations in Latin America and the Caribbean for several decades.
- b. These are values that promote participative democratic organization, respect for the environment and economic justice.
- c. The Small Producers' Symbol has a Declaration that lists all the values promoted by the Symbol, establishing the difference between these values and those prevailing in the current globalized market.

3.5 What are the basic criteria for the Symbol?

- a. Participating small producers' organizations operate on the basis of democracy, transparency and respect for the environment.
- b. The costs of sustainable production should be covered, and producers should be recognized for their work that allows their families to live with dignity and that respects the environment
- c. Participating Buyers, Collective Trading Companies owned by Small Producers' Organizations, Intermediaries and Maquila Companies make a serious commitment, with transparency, to small producers' organizations, and to the principles and values of the Small Producers' Symbol.
- d. Local economies are promoted, and efforts are made to generate added value for producers and their communities.
- e. For details on the criteria, the General Standard of the Small Producers' Symbol may be consulted.



3.6 What are the Symbol's basic documents?

Document	Description
Small Producers' Symbol Handbook	The Small Producers' Symbol Handbook is a general guide to understanding the functioning and scope of the Small Producers' Symbol.
Declaration of Principles and Values	This document reflects all the Principles and Values behind the Small Producers' Symbol.
General Standard of the Small Producers' Symbol	This is the basic standard that specifies the criteria that must be met by Small Producers' Organizations, Buyers, Collective Trading Companies owned by Small Producers' Organizations, Intermediaries and Maquila Companies in order to participate.
Code of Conduct	The Code of Conduct is a document that describes the values and behaviors to which participants in the Small Producers' Symbol system must commit. The Code of Conduct is not certified for participants, but violations of this Code may lead to dissent processes filed against the certifications and registrations that have been granted.
Certification Procedures for Small Producers' Organizations	The complete procedures for the Symbol's certification process for Small Producers' Organizations.
Registration Procedures for Buyers, Collective Trading Companies owned by Small Producers' Organizations, Intermediaries and Maquila Companies	The complete procedures for the Symbol's registration process for Buyers, Collective Trading Companies owned by Small Producers' Organizations, Intermediaries and Maquila Companies of products from certified Small Producers' Organizations.
User's Contract	The User's Contract is a document signed after positive results for certification or registration have been received from the examination process. This contract serves to legally assure proper use of the Small Producers' Symbol.
Regulations on Graphics	Regulations on the practical use of the Small Producers' Symbol in relation to its overall graphic representation and its practical applications in materials and products.
Dissents Procedures	Procedures that describe the process to be followed in appealing certification results, and in filing a complaint against a certification entity or an organization or company that is participating or has applied for participation. The procedures also specify the process for requesting mediation between two commercial parties.
Regulations on Costs	Document that specifies the costs of Certification and Registration and of using the Symbol.



3.7 What is the scope of the Symbol?

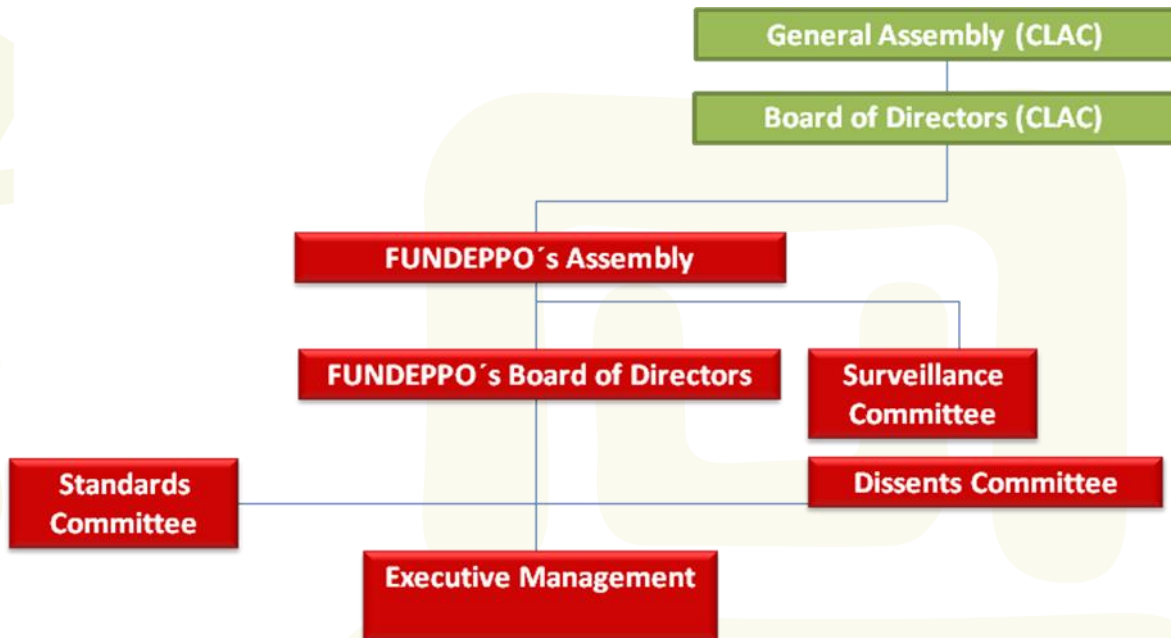
- a. Originally, the Symbol was open to Small Producers' Organizations (SPOs) in all the countries in Latin America and the Caribbean. It was later extended to Small Producers' Organizations from Africa and Asia, including only developing countries.
- b. It can be used by certified Organizations and registered Buyers, Collective Trading Companies owned by Small Producers' Organizations, Intermediaries and Maquila Companies in the markets in approved countries:
 - Several countries in Latin America and the Caribbean (www.tusimbolo.org)
 - Developing countries in Africa and Asia
 - European Community, Switzerland, Canada, the United States of America.
- c. In the case of countries that have not been approved, Organizations (SPOs), Buyers (BUY), Collective Trading Companies owned by Small Producers' Organizations (C-SPOs), Intermediaries (INT) and Maquila Companies (MAQ) may present a request for obtaining approval.
- d. The Symbol may be applied to agricultural and beekeeping products and crafts. FUNDEPPO's approval must be requested for other products.

3.8 Who certifies and registers?

- a. In order to carry out the Certification and Registration processes, FUNDEPPO has qualified internal and external personnel.
- b. FUNDEPPO has Certification Entities (CEs) that it has authorized to operate the Certification and Registration programs, thus facilitating processes at a local level. .

3.9 How are decisions made?

- a. FUNDEPPO, the Foundation operating the Small Producers' Symbol, has specific bodies involved in decision-making, and small producers' organizations are represented in those entities.
- b. The following is FUNDEPPO's overall organizational chart:



c. With regard to decision-making, the following documents are among those available on FUNDEPPO's web site:

- Terms of Reference for Standards Committee
- Procedures for Defining Standards
- Dissents Procedures
- Form for suggesting changes to General Standard

4 How to use the Symbol?

4.1 Introduction

1. To become familiar with the details of the certification process for Small Producers' Organizations, it is important to consult the document entitled "Certification Procedures for Small Producers' Organizations" available on the Small Producers' Symbol web site. A diagram that summarizes the certification process can be found at the end of this Handbook (9.1).
2. To become familiar with the registration process, it is important to consult the document entitled "Registration Procedures for Buyers, and other stakeholders" also available on the Symbol's web site. A diagram that summarizes the registration process can be found at the end of this Handbook (9.2).



4.2 Becoming informed

To become informed, what is recommended is to consult some of the basic Small Producers' Symbol documents, in addition to this Handbook. Some of the most important documents are:

1. Declaration of Principles and Values
2. General Standard
3. Code of Conduct
4. Certification or Registration Procedures
5. Evaluation Form
6. Regulations on Costs

After reading these documents, organizations or companies interested in using the Small Producers' Symbol can assess whether it is in their interest or within their possibilities to become certified or registered.

4.3 Applying for Certification or Registration

1. The application form, available on the Symbol's web site, is completed, requesting certification or registration.
2. The signed application is sent to FUNDEPPO (info@tusimbolo.org) or to an authorized Certification Entity.
3. If the application meets the basic requirements, it is reviewed to determine whether the Quick Procedure or Complete Procedure will apply. The Quick Procedure consists of a Document-based Evaluation, and the Complete Procedure consists of both a Document-based Evaluation and a Field Evaluation. The Quick Procedure may apply in the case of a first-time evaluation or when the previous procedure was a Complete Procedure. The Symbol's Risk Determination Procedures are used to determine which of the two procedures will apply.
4. FUNDEPPO makes the application available to participants, in order to present the opportunity for any objections to be filed in response to the intention by small producers' organizations or companies to become certified or registered, respectively. Any objections filed must make reference to the General Standard or Code of Conduct. Objections filed will be assessed, and when necessary, sent to the Dissents Committee.

4.4 Document-based Evaluation or Evaluation Plan

1. FUNDEPPO will assign one of its evaluators or a Certification Entity (CE) that will in turn assign one of its own evaluators. The evaluator will ask the applicant to complete and return an evaluation form with some annexes. The evaluation form is focused on the Critical Criteria in the General Standard, that is, the criteria that must be met in all cases in order to be able to participate. The main annex for Small Producers' Organizations is their List of



Members, and for Buyers, Collective Trading Companies owned by Small Producers' Organizations, Intermediaries and Maquila Companies, it is their list of supplier organizations.

2. When the Quick Procedure applies, the applicant must pay the Fee for the Document-based Evaluation in order for its application for certification or registration to be processed by the evaluator.
3. When the Complete Procedure applies, the evaluator will complete an initial document-based review, and then present the applicant with an Evaluation Plan and a budget for the certification or registration process, for approval and payment by the applicant.

4.5 Certification or Registration

1. If the payment for certification or registration is approved and received, the evaluator will conduct the evaluation.
2. In the case of a Quick Procedure, exclusively document-based, the evaluator may request complementary information from the applicant. If the information provided is insufficient for conducting a document-based evaluation, the evaluator will notify the applicant that a Field Evaluation will be necessary, with its corresponding Evaluation Plan and cost.
3. In the case of a Complete Procedure, the evaluator will collect and verify any missing information during the Field Evaluation.

4.6 Examination

1. The evaluator will prepare a report based on the document-based evaluation and/or field evaluation, and will send it to the Examination Committee in the assigned Certification Entity.
2. The Certification Entity will notify the applicant of the evaluation results.
3. If there are any points of non-compliance, the assigned Certification Entity will specify these to the applicant, and will also indicate the time periods for presenting Corrective Actions to resolve them.
4. The applicant must present any necessary Corrective Actions in the required manner and within the specified timeline in order to receive a positive resolution.

4.7 Monitoring Evaluations

1. In some justified cases, it may be necessary for the Certification Entity to conduct a Monitoring Evaluation in order to verify that any points of non-compliance have been resolved.
2. In the case of any Monitoring Evaluations, the evaluator or the Certification Entity must have previously presented a Working Plan and budget, for approval by the applicant.



3. In the case of objections against the results of the examination, the applicant may present an appeal for which Dissents Procedures have been established.

4.8 Signing of User's Contract

1. After positive results for Certification or Registration have been received from the examination, the applicant may sign the User's Contract for the Small Producers' Symbol with FUNDEPPO.
2. The User's Contract specifies the conditions under which the Small Producers' Symbol may be used and the certification or registration obtained may be referred to.
3. Annexed to the User's Contract will be this Handbook and its respective annexes, including Regulations on Graphics and the Code of Conduct, which must be respected at all times.

4.9 Granting of Certification to Small Producers' Organizations

1. In the case of a Small Producers' Organization, the applicant is required to pay the annual enrollment fee to FUNDEPPO before it may obtain certification with the Small Producers' Symbol.
2. With the payment of its enrollment fee to FUNDEPPO, the Small Producers' Organization will automatically obtain the right to request membership in CLAC, without the need for payment of an additional fee.

4.10 Granting of Registration to Buyers, Collective Trading Companies owned by Small Producers' Organizations, Intermediaries and Maquila Companies

After positive results from the examination have been issued, the applicant has received notification of these results, and the User's Contract has been signed, Registration in the Small Producers' Symbol system will be granted.

4.11 Annual Evaluations

1. Annual evaluations are required for maintaining certification or registration.
2. If the Procedure applied on the previous occasion was a Quick (Document-based) Procedure, then the following Procedure will be a Complete Procedure (Document-based Evaluation and Field Evaluation). If the previous evaluation was conducted through a Complete Procedure, the following may be a Quick Procedure, as long as the necessary information is provided during the process.

4.12 Control Evaluations

1. Authorized Certification Entities may conduct Control Evaluations in order to protect the credibility of the Small Producers' Symbol. The purpose of these evaluations, based on



the list of participants, is to corroborate in the field the information from evaluations conducted, on the basis of a sample taken from the participating groups.

2. Control Evaluations are conducted with timely coordination between the Certification Entity and the Small Producers' Organizations, Buyers and Collective trading companies owned by Small Producers' Organizations, Intermediaries or Maquila companies selected.
3. The costs of Control Evaluations are included in the costs for annual certification or registration, and therefore do not involve additional costs for the organization or company evaluated.

4.13 Dissent

1. At any time, applicants or certified participants may make any dissent known, by filing a complaint, appeal, objection or request for arbitration with regard to decisions made or actions taken by those collaborating with the Certification Entity.
2. The Dissents Procedures are available on the Symbol's web site (www.tusimbolo.org).

5 Costs, payments and reports

5.1 Small Producers' Organizations

- a. First, Small Producers' Organizations pay fees to the Certification Entity to cover the costs involved in the evaluation and certification process. Regulations for Costs involved in the Small Producers' Symbol are available on the Symbol's web site, www.tusimbolo.org, and specify FUNDEPPO's fixed rates for the Quick Procedure and basic reference rates for the Complete Procedure.
- b. Secondly, Small Producers' Organizations pay an annual enrollment fee to FUNDEPPO, after receiving the results of the certification process and before receiving their Certification from the Certification Entity. Annual enrollment fees are specified in the Regulations on Costs.
- c. Payment of the annual enrollment fee by Small Producers' Organizations includes the right to membership in CLAC, based on an agreement between FUNDEPPO and CLAC,¹ with no additional fees required.

5.2 Buyers, Collective Trading Companies owned by Small Producers' Organizations, Intermediaries and Maquila Companies

- a. These applicants pay fees to the Certification Entity to cover the costs involved in the evaluation and registration process. Regulations on Costs involved in the Small Producers' Symbol are available on the Symbol's web site, www.tusimbolo.org, and specify FUNDEPPO's referential rates.

¹ Latin American and Caribbean Network of Small Fair Trade Producers (*Coordinadora Latinoamericana y del Caribe de Pequeños Productores de Comercio Justo*).



- b. Buyers pay FUNDEPPO a percentage of the value of purchases on a quarterly basis, at which time they also present their reports on purchases. The percentage is specified in the Regulations on Costs.

5.3 General

- a. Users must report to FUNDEPPO on a quarterly basis, indicating the volume and value of sales (for Small Producers' Organizations) and of purchases (for Buyers) of products with the Small Producers' Symbol. Reports must specifically indicate the volumes and characteristics of the products sold or purchased.
- b. Reports must be presented within 21 calendar days immediately following the end of each quarter, calculated from the date on which the User's Contract enters into effect.

6 Validity

- a. FUNDEPPO may modify the contents of the Small Producers' Symbol Handbook when it deems necessary, and will notify Users.
- b. When FUNDEPPO makes changes to the contents of the Small Producers' Symbol Handbook, it will grant a reasonable period of transition, to allow Users to make any necessary modifications.
- c. Users of the Small Producers' Symbol may make observations regarding the modifications that FUNDEPPO has implemented and communicated, within a time period of 21 calendar days. If no observation is made within this time period, it will be understood that Users have no objections to the modifications implemented and have a commitment to operate accordingly.
- d. In the case of disputes regarding the contents of this Manual, the jurisdiction clause in the User's Contract will apply.

7 Annexes

The following Annexes are part of this Handbook, and are also available on the Symbol's updated web site, www.tusimbolo.org:

1. Declaration of Principles and Values of the Small Producers' Symbol
2. General Standard of the Small Producers' Symbol
3. Code of Conduct for the Small Producers' Symbol
4. Regulations on Graphics for the Small Producers' Symbol

8 Important References

The following documents are some of those available on the Symbol's web site, www.tusimbolo.org, and may be useful for those interested in using the Small Producers' Symbol:

1. Evaluation Form for Small Producers' Organizations

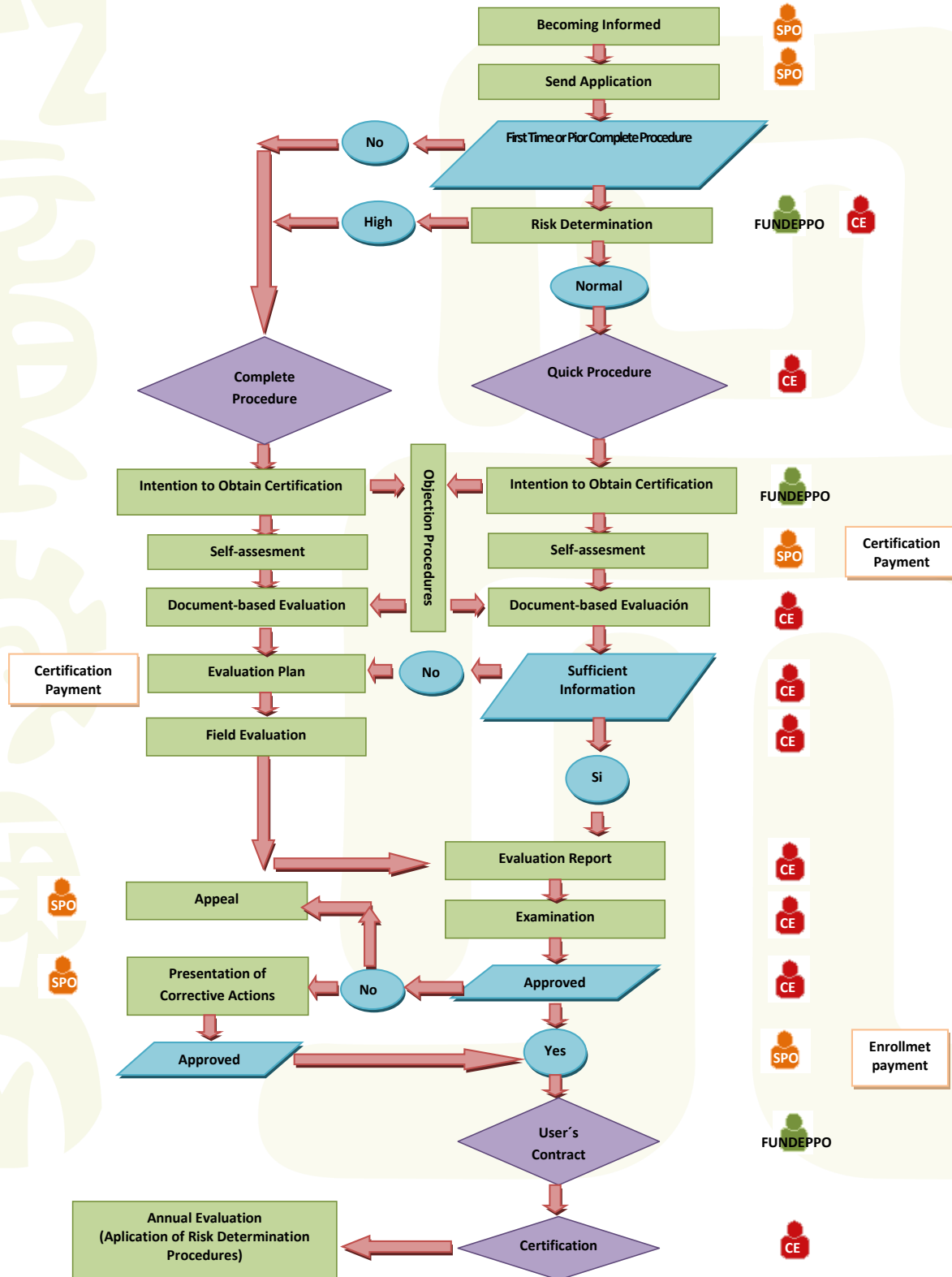


2. Evaluation Form for Buyers, Collective Trading Companies owned by Small Producers' Organizations, Intermediaries and Maquila Companies
3. Request for Certification
4. Request for Registration
5. Form for User's Contract for the Small Producers' Symbol
6. Certification Procedures for Small Producers' Organizations
7. Registration Procedures for Buyers, Collective Trading Companies owned by Small Producers' Organizations, Intermediaries and Maquila Companies
8. Procedures for Defining Standards
9. General Introduction to the Small Producers' Symbol

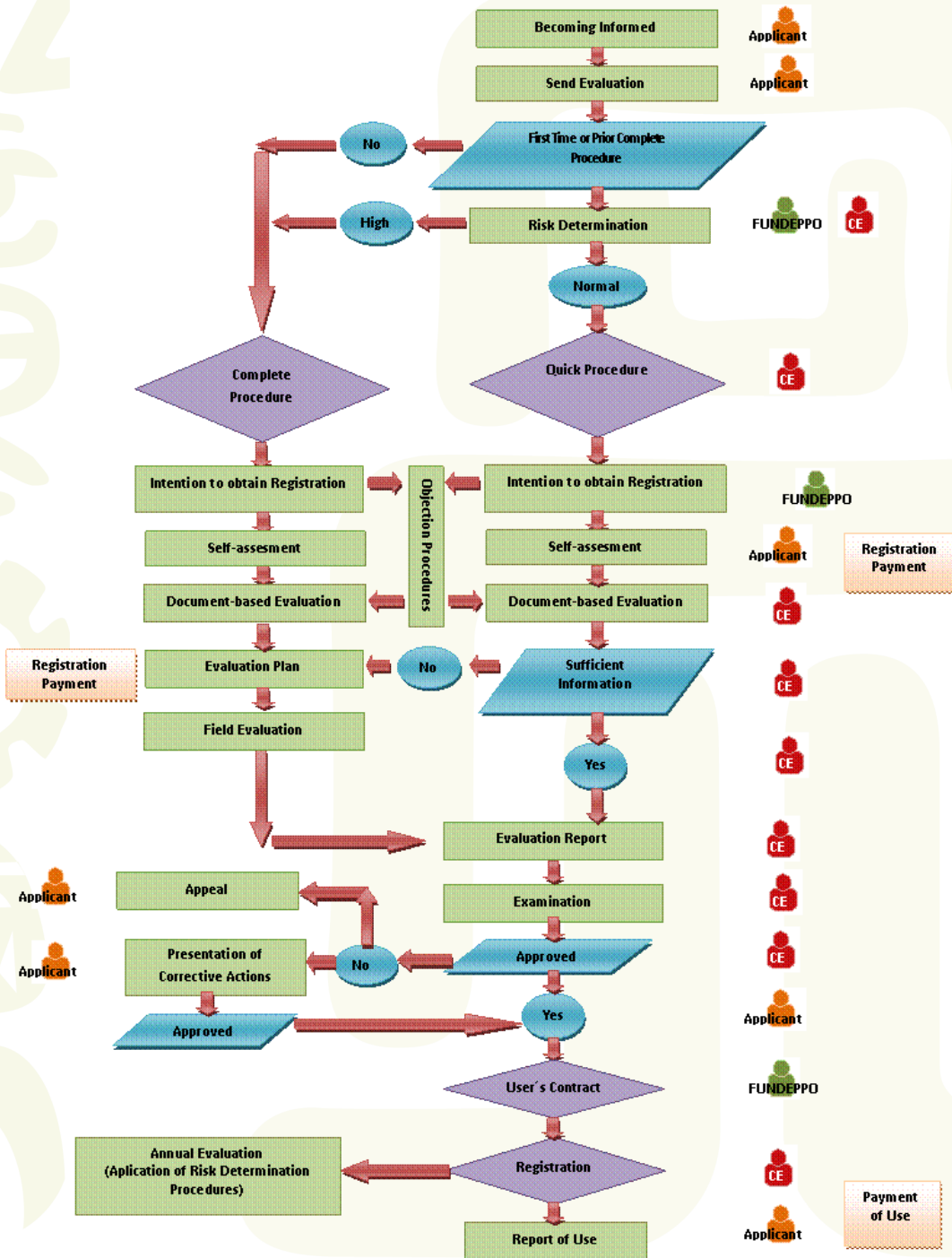
If you have any questions or wish to make any suggestions, please contact us at: Info@tusimbolo.org.

9 Diagrams

9.1 Certification of Small Producers' Organizations



9.2 Registration of Buyers, Collective Trading Companies owned by Small Producers' Organizations, Intermediaries and Maquila Companies





CHANGES WITH RESPECT TO PREVIOUS DOCUMENT

Previous Document

Small Producers' Symbol Handbook

Version 2. 15-Jan-2011

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#	Change	Reason	Type of Change	Date Effective
1	The term "Buyers" was replaced with "Buyers, Collective Trading Companies owned by Small Producers' Organizations, Intermediaries and Maquila Companies" throughout the entire document.	To clarify all the actors participating.	Content	08-Aug-2011
2	3.8	A point has been included to explain who certifies and registers.	Content	08-Aug-2011
3	4.4, 4.9 and 4.10	The information referring to the use of the Symbol has been modified in order to clarify the concepts of the Document-based Evaluation and the Granting of Certification and Registration.	Content	08-Aug-2011
4	4.8	The moment at which the User's Contract is signed has been included in this point.	Content	08-Aug-2011