

ASSESSMENT OF ORGANIC CERTIFICATION IN THE GINGER VALUE CHAIN IN FIJI

Fiji national workshop on the MSG Green Trade Project and Joint IMPACT-SAFE workshop on non-tariff measures (NTMs) and International Trade Promotion

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What will be discussed?



Content

1. Background
2. Ginger Value chain in Fiji
3. Perception of ginger value chain stakeholders regarding sustainability certification
4. Opportunities and Challenges for organic ginger in Fiji
5. Conclusions and policy options



Background

Voluntary Sustainability Standards (VSS)

“Standards specifying requirements that producers, traders, manufacturers, retailers or service providers may be asked to meet, relating to a wide range of sustainability metrics, including respect for basic human rights, worker health and safety, the environmental impacts of production, community relations, land use planning and others.”



Seal-of-approval



Market access



Effective marketing tool



Price Premium

66 % of consumers are willing to pay a premium for sustainable products
(Nielsen survey)



Challenges with VSS adoption in developing countries



Focus VSS: Organic

- The organics movement in the Pacific has been driven from the grassroots level, the non-governmental organisations, farmer organisations and dedicated individual farmers who have recognised this potential and sought to move the industry forward. This led to the development of the **Pacific Organic Standard**.



- The Pacific Organic Standard is the **world's third regional organic** standard and considers both local agricultural traditions and the international standard requirements from IFOAM and Codex Alimentarius. Thus, while the Pacific stakeholders hold true ownership of the standard, the standard is also aligned with existing international standards.
- The standard **covers organic production and processing and is appropriate for Pacific Island countries and territories' unique social, cultural, environmental and agricultural conditions**. However, it does not cover conformity assessment procedures, leaving the door open for local stakeholders to develop their own locally appropriate organic guarantee systems for serving local, national and regional markets.

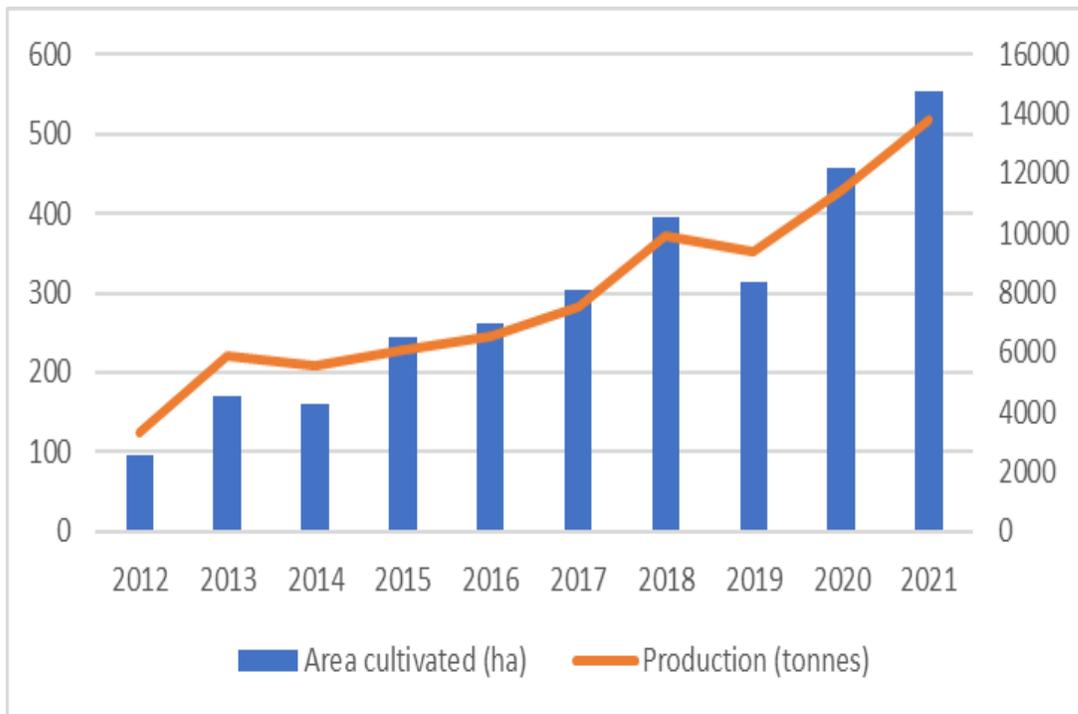


- The products certified under the Pacific Organic Standard bear the **Organic Pasifika mark**. They are certified by an internationally accredited and **Pacific Organic and Ethical Trade Community (POETCom)**-approved certifying body or through a robust, POETCom-registered **Participatory Guarantee System (PGS)**.

Ginger in Fiji

- Ginger production in Fiji started around the 1950s and gained importance, given its potential to provide food and income benefits while improving employment for farmers.
- There are currently 717 ginger growers in Fiji, out of which 611 are registered from the central areas of Navua, Namosi, Naitasiri, Rewa, and Tailevu. Meanwhile, the western division has 106 registered farmers.

Production trend of ginger in Fiji 2012-2021



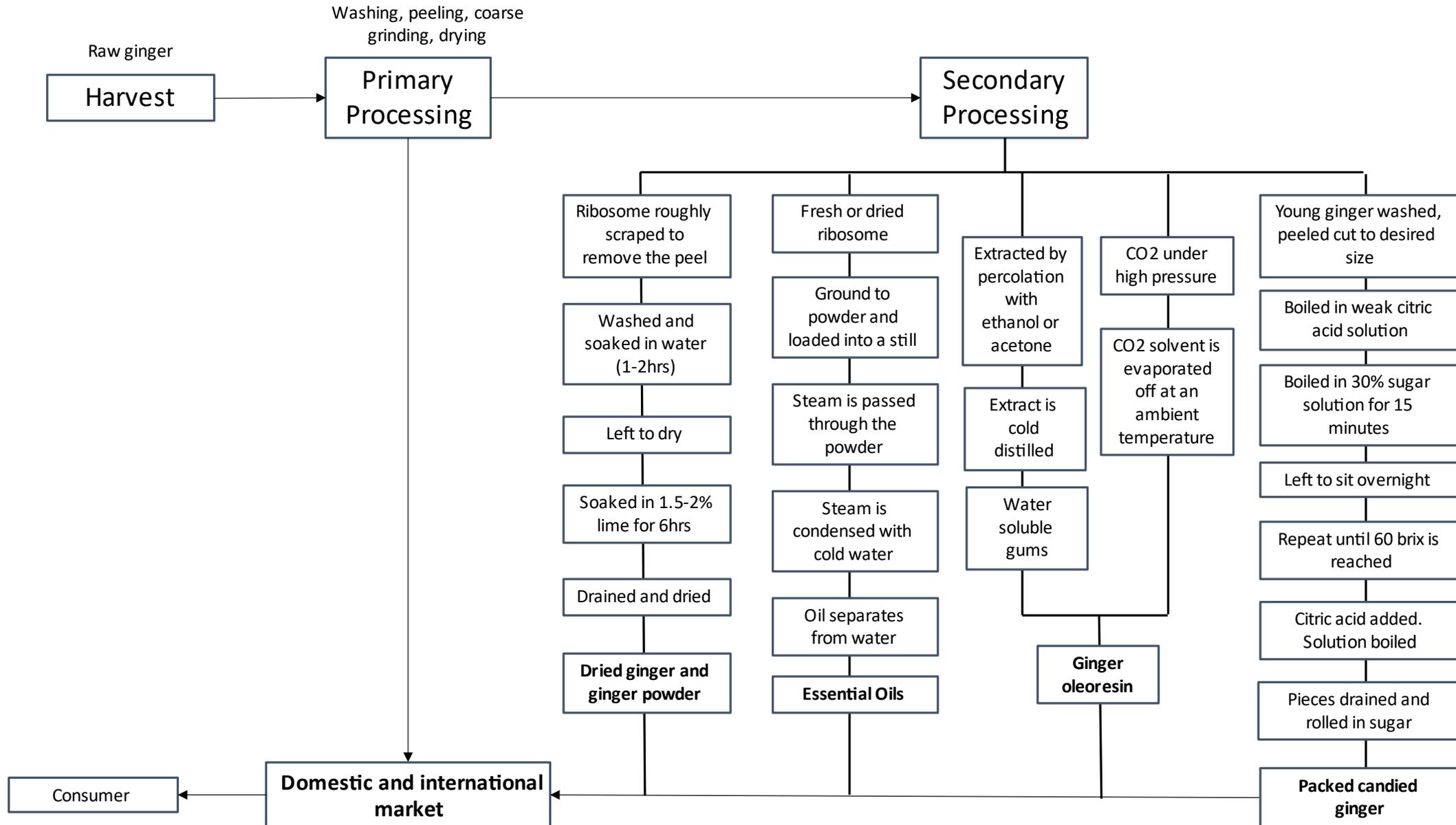
(source: <https://www.fao.org/faostat/en/#data/QCL>)

- Ginger is also one of the fast-growing export commodities of Fiji, with exports to Australia, New Zealand, the European Union, the United States of America, the United Kingdom and Canada.
- Fresh baby ginger has been designated a high-priority commodity by the Fijian government to access Australian markets.
- Organic ginger is also gaining importance as a high-value commodity which is being developed by the agriculture ministry together with the Ministry of Industry, Trade and Tourism of Fiji.

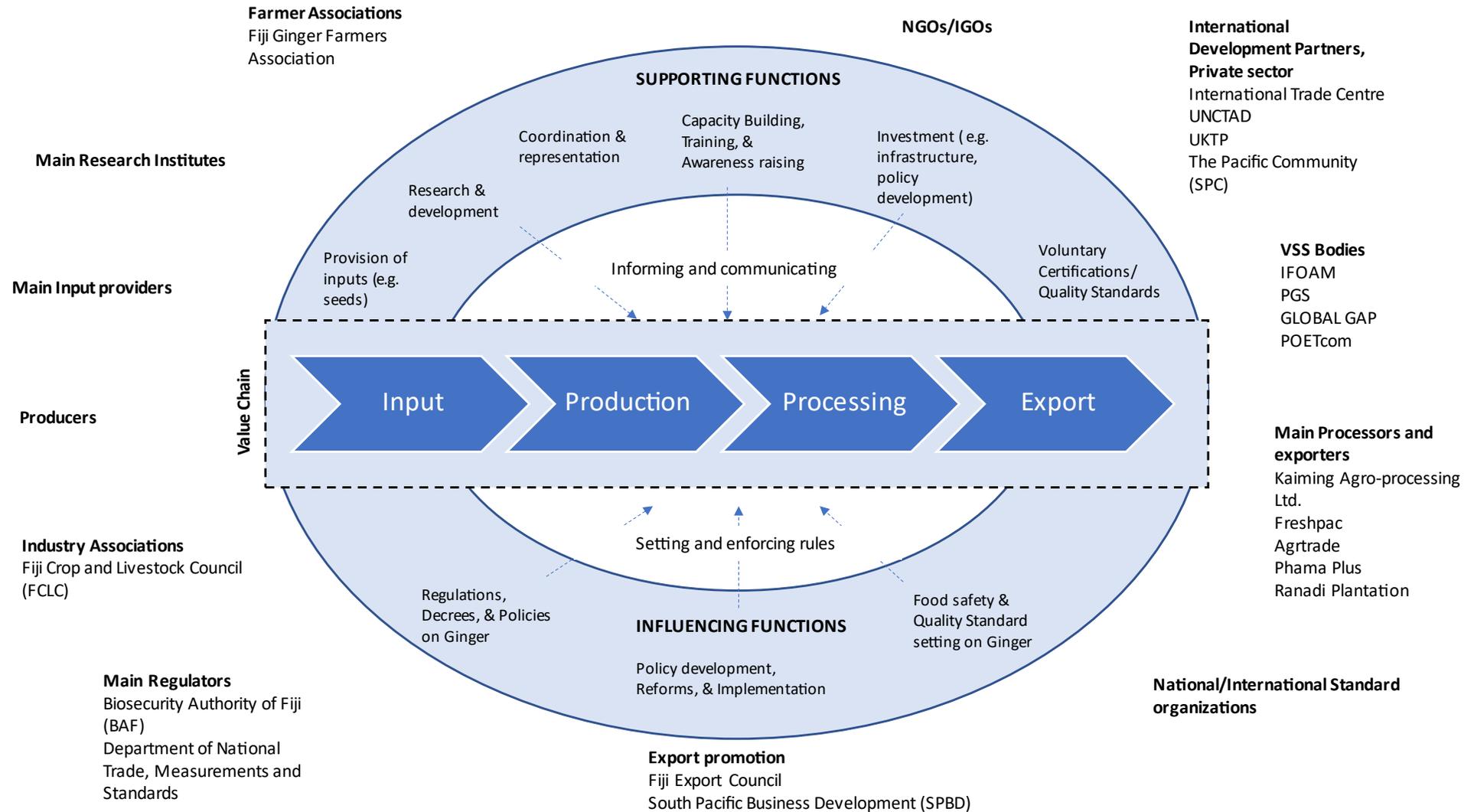


Ginger Value Chain

The ginger production chain



Ginger Value chain stakeholders

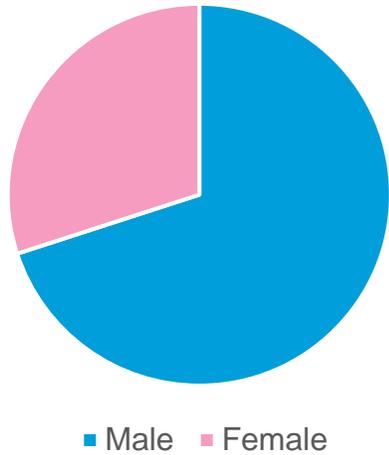




Perception of ginger value chain stakeholder regarding sustainability certification- focus on organic

Characteristics of respondents

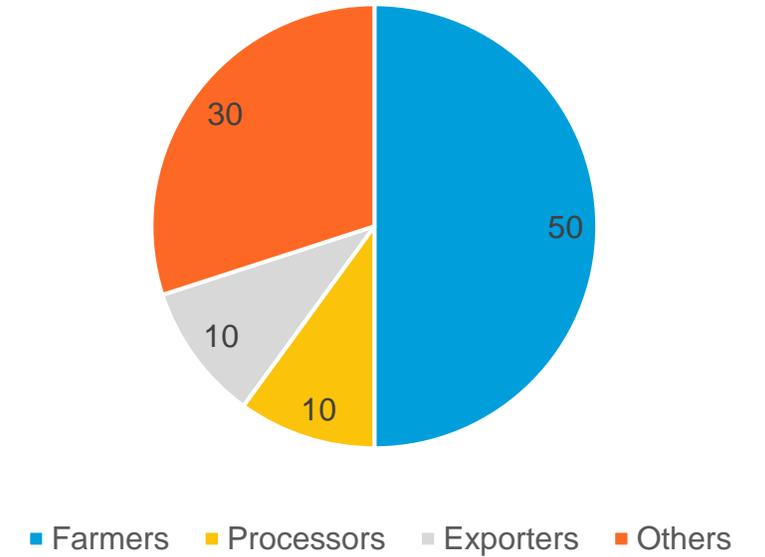
Gender



Education level



Role in value chain



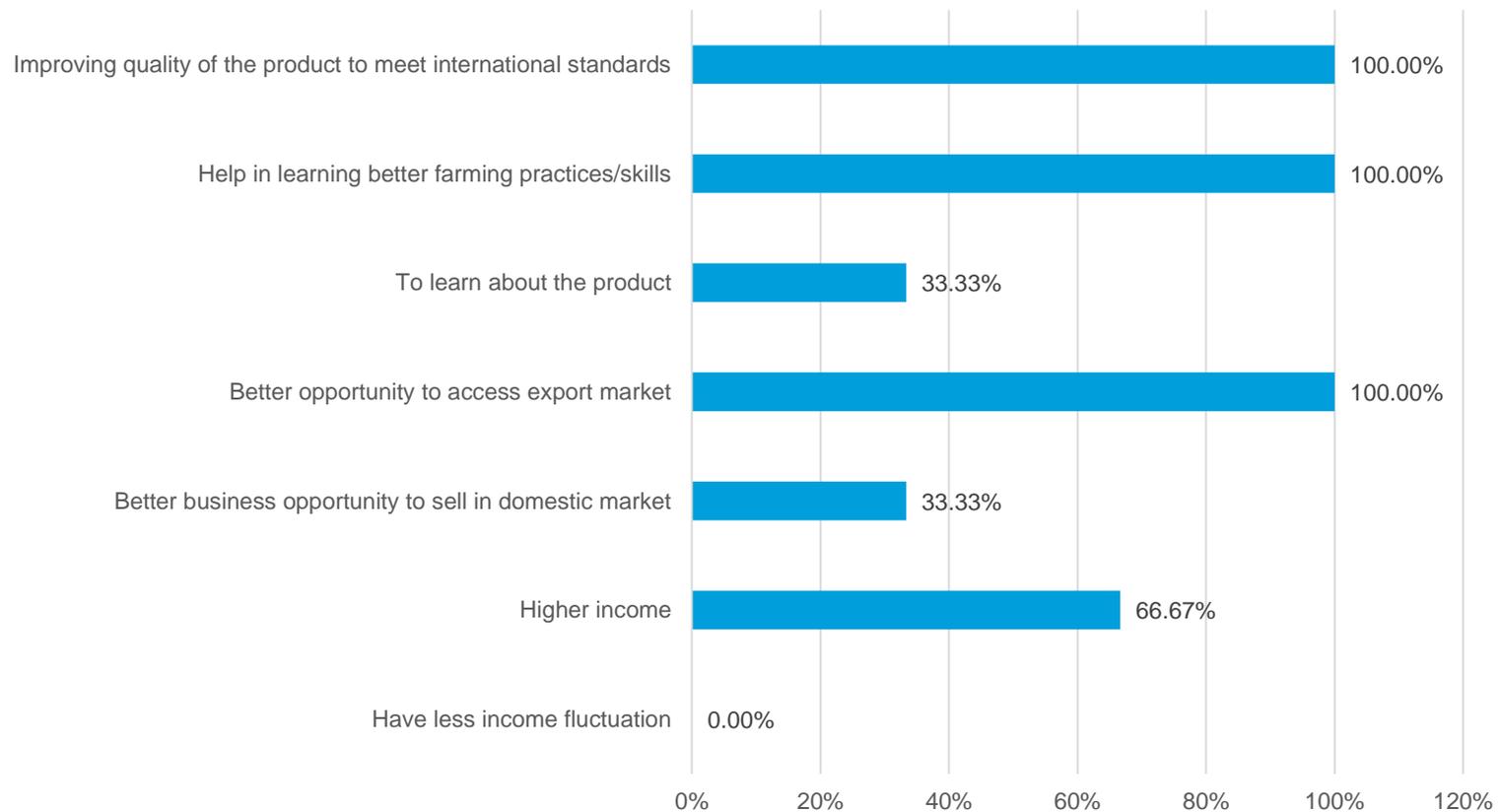
Awareness and interest in getting certified

- Limited awareness about certification
- Non-certified respondents reflected that having a certification linked for them to getting a certificate that can open doors to access specific markets or opportunities while also gaining the trust of customers.
- All respondents marked that they were aware of the process to get certified.

Awareness and interest in getting certified

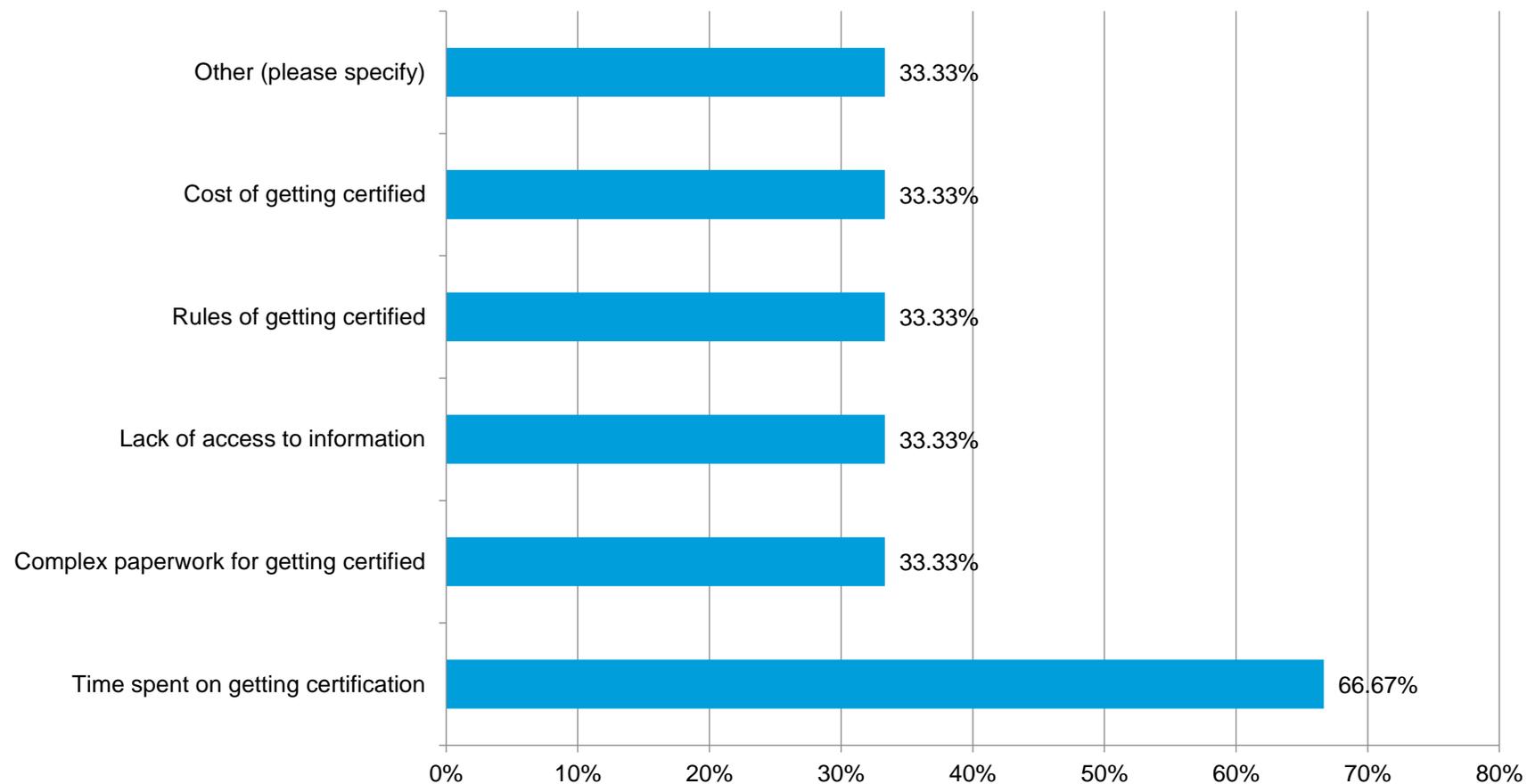
- All of the non-certified respondents marked that they would like to get organic certification in the future
- This was because of the following understanding among them regarding the importance of organic certificate in the future:
 1. There are customers who think organic and so it would be good to consider going into this process.
 2. Organic certified produce has a niche market, and people are becoming more health conscious now and becoming wary of what they eat.
 3. Sustainable production is important to the long-term economic viability of the farm.

Motivation to get certified



Non-certified actors: Motivation to get organic certification

Ease of getting organic certification



Non-certified actors: barriers to organic certification

Contribution to the SDGs





Opportunities and challenges

Opportunities



- Considerable existence, growth and acceptance of the PGS system.
- The producers are aware of the importance of organic certification in the future and the benefits that it can possibly bring.
- Interest among the producers to get certification as they perceived that it would provide access to the niche organic market and customers demanding organic products.
- They also believed that it would enable sustainable production which can lead to long term economic viability of the farm. There is thus an already existent motivation to get certified.

Challenges

- Lack of capacity and time needed to get certification
 - Most of the survey respondents mentioned that the time required to get and maintain certification is a burden.
 - The management, reporting, training, complex paperwork, and internal auditing needed to get and maintain organic certification can be the possible obstacles
 - Can PGS serve as a solution?
- Costs to get certified
 - Many respondents of the survey also indicated that the costs to get certified are high.
 - The costs for third-party certification can arise from the costs for audits and the costs that are needed to amend the current practices to bring them in line with the requirements set by the standard.





Conclusions and next steps

Supporting farmers to overcome challenges related to organic certification

Reducing barriers to obtaining and maintaining organic certification for ginger producers

- **Providing training material to farmers to understand the procedure easily and navigate the complex paperwork required to be certified.**
- **Identify possible subsidies for the cost or partial cost of the annual fees associated with third-party certifications.**

A national management body for the production and certification of organic ginger

Establish a national management body in support of organic certification

- **Identify a proper structure to oversee the management and support for organic certification in Fiji.**
- **Leverage the already existing PGS groups to foster sharing and learning via a multistakeholder framework.**
- **Identify possible opportunities to collect data on organic producers in Fiji via existing online platforms.**

Thank you!

