

# SOUTH AFRICA



## Bryanston Market Participatory Guarantee System

*The mission of the initiative is to create reliable and transparent organic assurance system for farmers and consumers to enable smallholders to participate in the benefits of the PGS and promote organic agriculture .*

### Map

The initiative is situated in the greater Johannesburg area in Gauteng Province. This urban area is the most densely populated and industrialised in southern Africa. Most of its food is supplied by industrial farming operations via centralised distribution systems.

The Participatory Guarantee Systems (PGS) members produce and supply a range of agroecological farming products from smallholdings and farms in and around the city.



### Context



The Bryanston Market PGS bring together agroecological producers whose customers require some guarantee that the produce conforms to organic standards of production, but who cannot afford the high costs of third party organic certification. All market some of their produce via a farmer's market in northern Johannesburg. The membership is highly diverse and located on land within, and on the outskirts of the city.

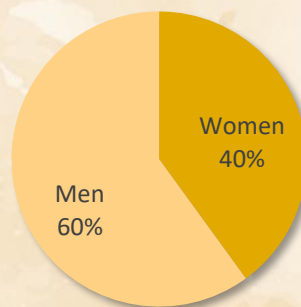


## Description

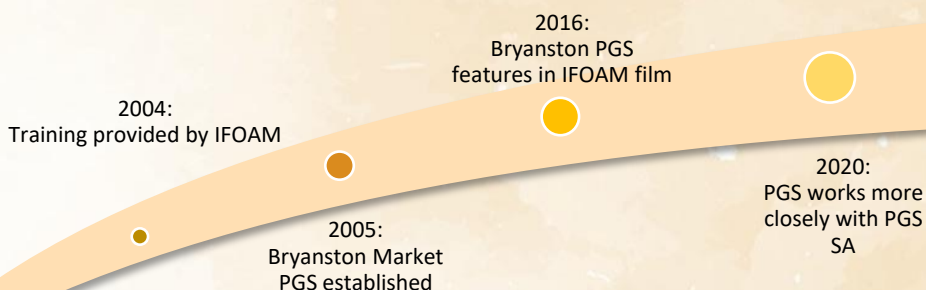
Bryanston Market PGS was established in 2005. It is a **community based organic assurance system** that enables **market access** for smallholder organic farmers. The area of the farms of members varies greatly: from **small backyard gardens** to farms on land up to **12 hectares** in extent. However, they all share their **commitment to organic agriculture** and to their **community**. The label “**Natural Assurance**” means the farmers production practices and records have been **assessed** by the Bryanston Market PGS group and are **compliant with organic agriculture principles**.

The organisation is **governed by its members**, who elect a committee to manage the day-to-day affairs of the PGS, including farmers and retailers. The members of the PGS produce independently and deliver some of their product to a **shared market stall** at the Bryanston Market and to other retailer members of the group. The members conduct **seed exchanges** at each AGM of the group.

16 farmer  
members



## Trajectory





## Results and Benefits



16 members benefit from **access to urban markets** that pay a **premium price** for farm produce. The label “Natural Assurance” reflects compliance with organic agriculture principles and incentivises consumers to pay higher prices.

The **community-based organic assurance system** enables smallholder organic farmers to **earn a good income** from their land. This diverse group of farmers shares a common commitment to organic agriculture and to their community.



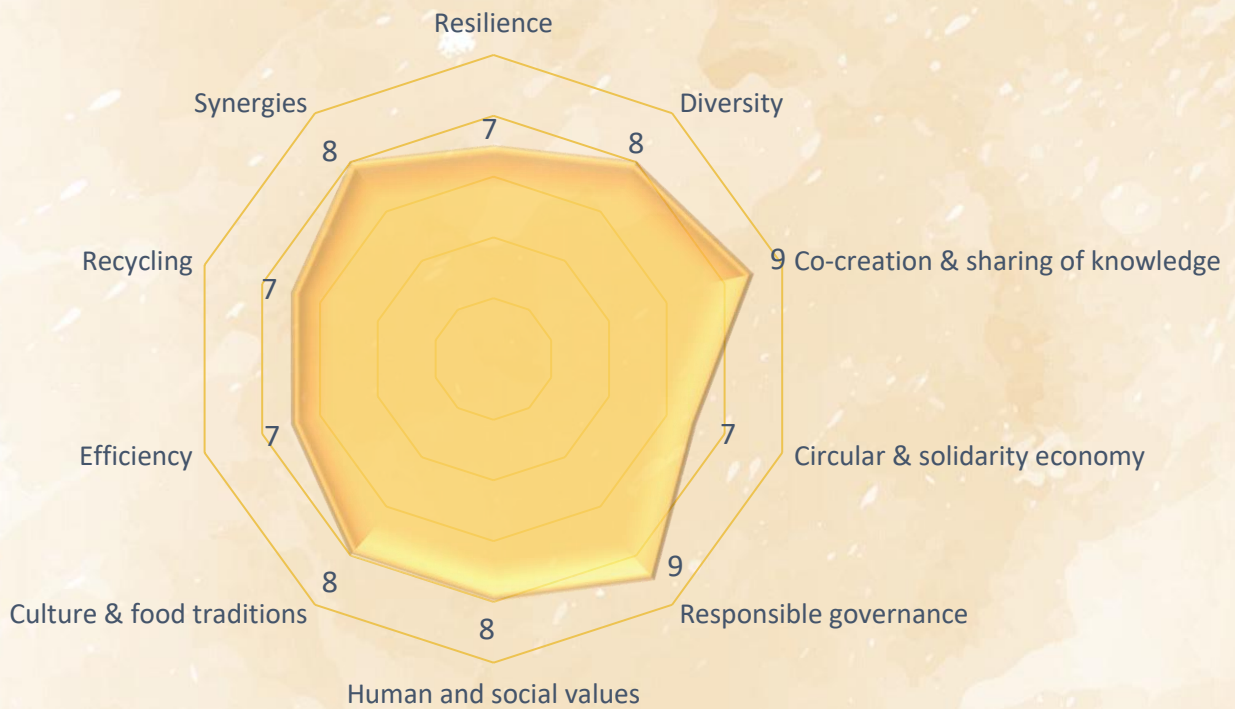
The farmers’ production practices and records are **regularly assessed** by the Bryanston Market PGS group, including consumers and traders. On-going internal social control based on a shared vision ensures **compliance with the principles**.

Over time the **soils** farmed by members have **improved** and are now **rich and fertile**. The skills of members to manage all aspect of agroecological production have steadily developed.



Bryanston Market PGS incorporates a **great diversity** of membership and enterprises. Some members with larger areas of land have provided access to those that do not own land.

# Lessons learned & reflected FAO principles



## Resilience: 7

Biodiverse farming systems of the PGS have increased the culinary biodiversity and contributed to food security. Linking members to consumers, researchers and activists enhances the resilience of the food system and of the producer and consumer communities. The production system reduces requirements for water and external inputs.

## Diversity: 8

Biodiverse production systems and practices and diverse people strengthen the PGS. Knowledge exchanges share and integrate all forms of knowledge in production systems. Knowledge of traditional crops and their preparation is also shared and promoted.

## Co-creation & sharing of knowledge: 9

The initiative places high value on knowledge sharing amongst members and includes consumers and traders in knowledge sharing processes. Different sources of knowledge are all mutually respected and members integrate these knowledge forms in their practices.

## Synergies: 8

Links local producers to the local markets shortens the supply chains and enhances the localized food system. The biodiverse production systems of agroecological farms are more productive and value the ecology of farms. Ecosystem services have developed and added value to the restoration and preservation of natural systems.

## Recycling: 7

Composting of all organic waste recycles nutrients and rainwater harvesting and water conservation reduces irrigation. Farm systems are planned to enhance nutrient and water cycling. Participants and their communities are more aware of the natural resources and the environment.

## Human & social values: 8

The PGS is based upon common values and actively promotes the social and economic empowerment of its members based on a shared vision of organic agriculture and social equality. More equitable pricing ensures improved social well-being and livelihoods. The PGS has actively supported women membership and integrated youth into the PGS system.

## Culture & food traditions: 8

The PGS promotes the preservation of indigenous crops and open pollinated varieties of seed stock. More culinary biodiverse products are available at a local level, including indigenous foods that had previously disappeared from urban diets.

## Efficiency: 7

The farming system is entirely organic and members generate compost and vermiculture products to fertilise their crops. Cover cropping, crop rotation and animal integration reduce the need for external inputs and keep costs of production low.

## Responsible governance: 9

The initiative is a horizontal structure that is built upon the participation of all members of the PGS group. A healthy degree of participation is a requirement for on-going membership and thus access to the organic guarantee provided by the PGS. Decisions are taken democratically.

## Circular & solidarity economy: 7

Through encouraging the participation of retailers, farmers, consumers in the PGS, a more circular economy has developed. Local trade within the group ensures the value circulates. Short supply chains also promote the circulation of value within communities.

# Contacts and Bibliography

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## Bibliography :

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GbwiCwhIAEs>

**The Avaclim project aims to create the necessary conditions for the deployment of agroecology in arid areas.**

**For more information : [www.avaclim.org](http://www.avaclim.org)**

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