

PRODUCER PARTNER GUIDELINES

The purpose of SERRV International and its marketing programs, **EQUO and A Greater Gift**, is to promote the social and economic progress of people in developing regions of the world. SERRV does this by purchasing and marketing handcrafts, foods, and agricultural products in a just and direct manner and by promoting sustainable development within our producer partner organizations.

PREFERRED PRODUCER PARTNER: A cooperative organization, association, or non-profit group of farmers or artisans, working for the social and economic improvement of their community.

Essential Qualities

- 1) An established, organized group assisting economically disadvantaged people within a developing country or community. SERRV assists groups working with those who are marginalized by gender, ethnicity, caste, handicap, or for circumstances beyond their control are deprived of opportunities for gainful employment.
- 2) Producers should be paid a fair and adequate wage or compensation for work done, within the context of the local economy. We expect that the artisans/farmers are receiving an amount at least equal to that country's legal minimum wage.
- 3) The production or working conditions should be safe and healthy.
- 4) The organization is concerned about the welfare of its member artisans and farmers, both socially and economically. The artisans and farmers should be well represented in management decisions which may seriously affect them. Where workers and management are not the same entity, they should cooperate with one another in a positive, non-exploitative, non-paternalistic context of mutual respect.
- 5) The products which are produced by the group must be saleable through SERRV's marketing channels. Agricultural products must meet USDA labeling and food safety requirements, foster sustainability, and be grown using limited amounts of agrochemicals.
- 6) The producer group must be able to carry out the following functions: documentation, packing, invoicing, delivery, financing, and accounting.

Desirable Qualities

- 1) An emphasis on community programs focusing on areas such as education, health, housing, and cultural heritage.
- 2) Provide training to develop and strengthen business skills of farmers, in areas such as costing of products, bookkeeping, quality control, and developing new products or techniques.
- 3) Utilization of raw materials and production processes which are environmentally sustainable.
- 4) Ability to export.
- 5) Organic-certification.

Determining Producer-SERRV Goal Compatibility

SERRV will need to know the goals, organizational structure, and methodology of potential producer partners. The primary avenues for obtaining this information are the Supplier Information Form, other written correspondence, referrals from other ATOs, and personal discussion. Within 60 days of receipt of this necessary information, along with photographs of the products and wholesale prices, a committee within SERRV will evaluate the compatibility of the producer organization with SERRV's criteria and a written response will be provided. Upon request, SERRV will provide information about its own policies and procedures. **PLEASE DO NOT SEND UNSOLICITED SAMPLES.**

EXCEPTIONS: Certain organizational structures other than those listed in the above-mentioned producer criteria may be compatible with our goals and objectives. These cases will be reviewed on an individual basis with possible additional criteria guidelines. These additional guidelines include, but are not limited to, a site visit to verify information provided, and some indication that the group is supportive of the principles of the Fair/Alternative Trade movement on which SERRV was founded.