



# Palau Organic Growers Association POGA

**President**  
Mark Vereen  
**Secretary**  
Carolyn D. Ngraidis

## Main Activities

- Working with POETCom that overlooks the organic practices in the Pacific
- Educating local farmers and producers on organic farming
- Collecting data for organic produce in Palau
- Implementing local produce to schools

## Background of Establishment

The members from the Palau Chamber of Commerce created Palau Organic Growers Association (POGA) in 2011.

## Purpose

Finding out the best organic farming practices and sharing that with the local farmers and producers. Being the link between government, farmers and producers to increase production while compiling data for future farming.



## Member's Voice Ms. Carolyn D. Ngraidis

The traditional way of farming in Palau is organic, but due to the introduction of pesticides by foreign farmers, we would like to find a way to eliminate it. We work closely with POETCom that works with 17 Pacific countries, and our mission is to promote and expand organic farming while finding the best organic practices.

In 2019, a team from POETCom came to Palau to work on a project educating women organic farmers conducting a series of workshops to see how we can create an organizational structure, introduce the Pacific Organic Standards and the Pacific Guarantee System for certifying organic farmers. At the end of the project, they certified 15 individuals.

This whole pandemic was a wake-up call for everyone. When there was no shipment into Palau, and 80% of our foods are imported, we had to increase local production. With climate change and uncertainty, we had to prepare for the future. The former President, Tommy E. Remengesau Jr., told the community to use this time to clear land and to start farming. We work closely with the Bureau of Agriculture and have become partners in developing national policies and regulations regarding organic best practices and eliminating pesticides. We are sourcing a specialist to come in and help us compile a database of all farmers in Palau. This will help us identify what we have now, who's growing what, plan for food security, and increase and diversify crop production. Our soil is not ideal for farming since most of our lands are volcanic. However, I believe anything can grow in Palau as long as we have our determination, collaborate with government partners to combat climate change, soil improvement and seek ways to improve the soil by composting methods. Many states have already started to look into biogas and its liquid compost, which is essentially energy and compost made from your organic household waste.

One of our goals is also to improve sales of the local produce. We currently have a market every Thursday morning, but in the future, we would like to have a central market in Palau available every day selling local produce. We have been working with the Minister of Education and Minister of Agriculture to use local organic products in the school lunch, but this has yet to happen due to the inconsistency in the product supply. Most of the farmers now are at the age of retirement but the younger generations do not want to get involved with farming. A lot of the farmers now just stick to a few types of crops because of the fear of diversifying and not being able to manage it in the end. With the right information and knowledge, this can change. Our government needs to start collaborating with the farmers and producers, sharing information with the respective agencies involved in farming and agriculture.

## Contact Information

 (680)-488-3400

 P.O.Box 1742 Koror, Palau 96940

 [www.facebook.com/Palau-Organic-Grower-s-Association-POGA-100762269005862](https://www.facebook.com/Palau-Organic-Grower-s-Association-POGA-100762269005862)