



GLOBALG.A.P. publishes an updated GFSI option for the Integrated Farm Assurance standard and embarks on a major revision process

Dear Ms. Lauren Maloney,

In order for GLOBALG.A.P. to maintain recognition for its Integrated Farm Assurance (IFA) standard for the sub-scopes Fruit and Vegetables and Aquaculture, and to gain recognition for the Hop sub-scope against the Global Food Safety Initiative (GFSI) benchmarking requirements v7.2, an updated version of the IFA standard will be published 21 February 2020. Furthermore, GFSI will launch a new version (v8) at the end of February 2020 and the abovementioned sub-scopes may need to be updated again to maintain recognition.

To avoid further changes in 2020 for those producers who do need to show compliance with a GFSI-recognized standard, GLOBALG.A.P. has created the optional IFA version 5.3-GFS for the affected sub-scopes Fruit and Vegetables, Hop, and Aquaculture.

The GFSI recognizes food safety certification programs that meet their benchmarking requirements. Certain retailers and buyers value GFSI-recognized certification, allowing food businesses that hold these certificates to access their markets. For this reason, GLOBALG.A.P. has earned and maintained GFSI recognition for select standards for the last 12 years.

The changes made to create v5.3-GFS of the IFA standard have a particular impact on group certification, especially for those groups that hold certificates for high-risk products. High-risk products include fresh herbs, leafy greens, lettuce, romaine, spinach, arugula/rocket, berries, cantaloupe melons, and any other product associated with known foodborne disease outbreaks. In these cases, all producer members shall be included in the yearly audit plan and sampling of producer members according to the square-root rule by the certification body is not possible.

In addition, more emphasis is put on the annual management review, where food safety resources, the status of actions from previous management reviews, external and internal changes that are relevant to the quality management system, and effectiveness of the quality management system are reviewed. Evidence of this management review shall be available and verified by the external CB auditor.

All changes are reflected in the edition update register of the normative documents.

No changes have been made that affect the control points and compliance criteria of the Fruit and Vegetables and Aquaculture sub-scopes. A few changes have been made to the Hop sub-scope control points and compliance criteria and these are explained in the edition update register.

Backed by the GLOBALG.A.P. Integrity Program, the GLOBALG.A.P. technical committees and the GLOBALG.A.P. Board maintain their confidence in the robust rules of group certification, annual external audit of the quality management system, and an inspection of a sample of the group members, irrespective of the certified products. Therefore, v5.2 will be operational in parallel to v5.3-GFS. For those producers that have to show compliance with a GFSI-recognized standard, v5.3-GFS becomes mandatory to use by 21 May 2020. For those not requiring a GFSI-recognized certificate, IFA v5.2 will continue to be valid until GLOBALG.A.P. has completed its revision and v6 is published in 2021.

The GLOBALG.A.P. [revision process](#) to develop v6 has started and the aim of v6 will be to offer a flexible and simplified certification experience, maximizing the ever-growing capabilities for digitalization in the auditing and certification processes, and including more elements of customized, science-based risk assessments.

All documents can be downloaded free of charge from the GLOBALG.A.P. website and if you have any questions, do not hesitate to contact standard_support@globalgap.org.

Sincerely,

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Chief Standards Officer / Vice President

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