



**GLOBALG.A.P.**

# **GLOBALG.A.P.** **General Regulations**

## **Crops Rules**

ENGLISH VERSION 5.4-1-GFS

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## **1 INTRODUCTION**

This Version 5.4-1-GFS is only applicable to the Fruit and Vegetables sub-scope and Aquaculture scope of the Integrated Farm Assurance Standard and serves as a basis with amendments for the Produce Handling Assurance Standard and the Harmonized Produce Safety Standard.

This document describes additional certification rules for any party seeking certification for crops in accordance with the GLOBALG.A.P. Integrated Farm Assurance (IFA) Standard, the GLOBALG.A.P. Produce Safety Standard (PSS), and the Harmonized Produce Safety Standard (HPSS).

These Crops Rules shall be used in combination with the GLOBALG.A.P. General Regulations that define the certification rules that apply for all GLOBALG.A.P. Standards.

The term “shall” is used throughout this document to indicate those provisions which, reflecting the requirements of GLOBALG.A.P., are mandatory.

## **2 CERTIFICATION SCOPE**

### **2.1 Integrated Farm Assurance (IFA) Standard/Produce Safety Standards (PSS)**

#### **2.2 Crops Sub-Scopes**

Crops Rules apply for all sub-scopes under the Crops scope:

- (i) Fruit and Vegetables: GLOBALG.A.P. certification covers fruit and vegetables used for fresh, cooked, or processed consumption by humans. Crops (vegetables or herbs) grown solely for medicinal or aromatic purposes cannot be certified.

**NOTE for Herbs:** Products classified as herbs in general are listed in the ‘GLOBALG.A.P. Product List’ as individual products with separate identification numbers.

However, where more than one herb product is grown, residue testing does not have to be performed on each individual product (herb), but according to the risk of the group of herbs.

Also, the use of plant protection products on herbs is applicable to herbs as a group and not for each individual product (herb).

#### **2.2.1 Modular Structure of Crops IFA/PSS Standards**

The IFA Crops Standards are composed of scope and sub-scope modules. The evaluation of compliance with the Standard implies the verification of applicable modules. It is not possible to certify the respective sub-scope without also verifying compliance with the applicable scope. The compliance criteria of the scope shall be interpreted according to the inspected sub-scope.

Examples:

- (i) Apples shall be certified under the Fruit and Vegetables module, which automatically requires compliance with the All Farm Base and Crops Base modules.

For more information on the structure and modular approach, please see ‘GLOBALG.A.P. General Regulations Part I – General Requirements’.

### **2.3 Harmonized Produce Safety Standard**

These Crops Rules, in addition to the HPSS addendum to the General Regulations, apply to the production of all products listed as fruit and vegetables in the ‘GLOBALG.A.P. Product List’.

#### **2.4 Harvest Exclusion**

- (i) If produce is sold in the field *before harvest* and the buyer is responsible for harvesting, the IFA control points related to harvesting in section FV 5 and control points and compliance criteria of section 3 in the HPSS can be excluded from the producer’s certificate.
- (ii) As long as the harvesting process (whether carried out by the producer or subcontracted) takes place while the produce belongs to the producer, all points relating to harvest shall be included in the inspection and the certificate.



- (iii) “Harvest exclusion” applies where the produce does not belong to the producer anymore at some point in time prior to harvest commencing and the producer has no control over the harvesting process. It is also not an activity that is subcontracted by the producer.
- (iv) The producer shall apply for exclusion per product during registration with detailed justification.
- (v) The certification body (CB) will make the decision as to whether harvesting may be excluded or not based on the following requirements. The producer shall have a contract with the buyer that states that the harvester/buyer will do all of the following:
  - a) Take ownership of the produce before harvesting
  - b) Take responsibility for ensuring that harvest takes place only after the pre-harvest interval (PHI) has been observed
  - c) Handle the produce after harvest (not just during harvest)
  - d) Buy all the produce (harvest exclusion is not possible if the producer harvests some part of the crop and sells another part before harvest)
- (vi) If the producer does not know the buyer at the time of registration with GLOBALG.A.P., the following shall be provided:
  - a) A declaration from the producer to inform the buyer (new owner who is harvester *and* post-harvest handler) about the pre-harvest interval (PHI)
  - b) A contract with the buyer as soon as the buyer has been identified that includes all issues under point (v). If harvesting is excluded for the producer or producer group, produce handling shall also be excluded for that producer or producer group.

## 2.5 Post-Harvest Produce Handling Exclusion

- a) Produce handling includes any type of post-harvest handling of products such as storage, chemical treatment, trimming, washing, or any other handling where the product may have physical contact with other materials or substances. Details of the specific process (per product) applicable to the producer have to be included in the checklist notes.
- b) If produce handling does not take place under the ownership of the applicant, it shall be declared during registration and indicated on the certificate.
- c) Produce handling shall not be included when harvesting is excluded (see 2.3 ‘Harvest Exclusion’ above).
- d) Produce handling shall always be *included* as long as the product belongs to the producer during handling (by the producer or subcontractor), unless there is written evidence (contract, agreement, etc.) that the producer has no control over the packing/handling/storage, the product is not returned to the producer *and the producer is not responsible for the product anymore*.
- e) If the produce handling unit (PHU) already has a post-farm gate food safety certification recognized by GFSI for scope B111 ([www.mygfsi.com](http://www.mygfsi.com)), the GLOBALG.A.P. inspector shall inspect segregation and traceability as well as post-harvest treatments if applicable, unless there is a bilateral agreement between GLOBALG.A.P. and the GFSI recognized post-farm gate standard owner stating that these points are included in the scope of the post-farm gate certificate.

If a producer does not perform product handling on farm, but at the facility of *another producer* who does have GLOBALG.A.P. certification (including product handling), the CB may accept another CB’s certificate, or the CB may decide to perform its own inspection of the PHU.

## 3 PARALLEL PRODUCTION/OWNERSHIP

In crop certification, parallel production in one production site is not allowed unless there are distinctive visible differences detectable by the average consumer between the certified and non-certified product (e.g. cherry tomatoes and roma tomatoes).

For the IFA sub-scope Flowers and Ornamentals, despite the product list only describing generic categories, parallel production and parallel ownership definitions are as follows:

### **Parallel Production (PP):**

PP is the situation where individual producers, producer members, or producer groups produce the same *species* partly as certified and partly as non-certified. It is also PP if not all the members of a producer group producing a *species* that is registered for certification are included in the scope of the certificate.

Example: A producer grows roses. Only a part of the rose production will be certified.

A situation in which a producer produces one *species* as certified and another *species* as non-certified is not parallel production (e.g. roses certified and carnations non-certified).

### **Parallel Ownership (PO):**

PO is the situation where individual producers, producer members, or producer groups buy non-certified products of the same *species* they grow under certified production.

Example: A producer grows certified roses and buys non-certified roses from other producer(s).

## **4 ASSESSMENT PROCESS**

### **4.1 Inspection Timing**

The following rules apply together with the inspection timing rules described in the GLOBALG.A.P. General Regulations.

#### **4.1.1 Initial (First) Inspections**

- (i) The initial inspection shall cover harvesting activities of each product to be included for certification, as well as produce handling if it is included. Other field work can be checked at a different time where feasible, but this is not obligatory.
- (ii) The inspection shall take place as close to harvest as possible for the inspector to verify as many control points as possible.
- (iii) If the inspection is made before harvest, it will not be possible to inspect certain control points. As a result, either a follow-up visit will be required, or proof of compliance shall be sent by fax, photos or other acceptable means. *No certificate will be issued until all control points have been verified and all non-conformances have been closed.*
- (iv) If harvest takes place before the inspection, the producer shall retain evidence for compliance of control points related to that harvest, otherwise some control points may not be able to be checked and certification will not be possible until the following harvest.
- (v) The CB shall make sure that in the sampling for unannounced visits, those producers that did not receive a first inspection or the subsequent inspection during harvest have a greater chance of getting an unannounced inspection during the next harvest (this needs to be conveyed to the producer when discussing inspection timing). Additionally, the CB shall make every effort to carry out the subsequent inspection during harvest.
- (vi) **Multiple crops:** The producer may be seeking certification for more than one crop and the crops may not all have the same seasonal timing, i.e. harvest of one crop does not necessarily coincide with the harvest of other crops. The requirements above are applicable to crop groupings based on similarities in production and harvest processes and their risks. The CB shall verify all control points of these groupings, before the product(s) can be added to the certificate.

Example: A visit during apple harvesting is not required when apples are being added to a certification scope that already includes pears. However, the apples can only be added to the certificate once all control points applicable to them have been verified. However, adding spinach to the certification scope would require an assessment during the spinach harvesting period.

#### **4.1.2 Subsequent Inspections**

- (i) The inspection shall be carried out at a time when relevant agronomic activities and/or handling (but not only storage) are being carried out. Inspection timing shall allow the CB to gain assurance that all registered crops, even if not present at the time of inspection, are handled in compliance with the certification requirements. Inspections off-season or when the farming activities are minimal shall be avoided.



- (ii) In an Option 1 multisite with QMS or Option 2 scenario, producers and/or sites with high risks products shall be included in an annual inspection schedule. No sampling can take place and the products need to be inspected annually.  
High risk products are identified in the 'GLOBALG.A.P. Product List'.
- (iii) If produce handling is included in the certification scope, the produce handling facility(ies) shall be inspected annually. This inspection shall be carried out while in operation. Only when the CB has carried out a risk assessment that clearly shows that the risk is low, can produce handling be inspected during operation once every 2 years. The risk assessment should take into account the product(s) being packed as well as known food safety incidences related to the respective product(s) and any directives from GLOBALG.A.P. to look at specific points. The CB shall keep justification of the reason for the chosen inspection timing on record. This exception is only applicable for Option 1 producers without QMS.
- (iv) If produce handling is excluded from the certification scope, inspection has to be scheduled during harvest season at least every 2 years. In the respective year, the harvest season of at least one registered product per product grouping has to be inspected. Crop groupings are based on similarities in production and harvest processes and their risks. The CB shall keep justification of the reason for the chosen inspection timing and the crop groupings used on record.  
Crops may be grouped according to the following:
  - a) Mechanical harvest: The only method of harvesting. In this case there is no need to observe the harvest while in operation. It is sufficient to check only the machine and harvesting machine operation related records after or before the harvest.
  - b) Manual harvest of low risk products. The product is low risk when:
    - i. Always cooked before eating, or
    - ii. Always cleaned before eating i.e. cannot be eaten without cleaning, or
    - iii. Dry nuts, or
    - iv. Products with inedible skin or shell, or
    - v. Product with pathogen reduction step after harvest (still unprocessed) and/or,
    - vi. No known food safety incidences related to the respective product
  - c) Manual harvest of high-risk products. All other products that are not under 2) are considered as high risk.
  - d) Harvest that involves water or ice
  - e) Packing in field
- (v) If the producer does not commit to continue with the certification for the next cycle, the CB shall make sufficient provisions to avoid situations where one certificate could be used to cover more than one harvest and growing cycle of the same annually harvested crop, e.g. by shortening the certificate validity. The CB can set the deadline for reconfirmation according to the harvest period of the crop.

Example: Harvest season for blueberries is the entire month of October. The first inspection takes place during October 2015 and the certificate is issued from the end of November 2015 to the end of November 2016. This certificate may cover the harvest and sales of the 2015 and 2016 harvests. Therefore, the CB shall set the deadline for reconfirmation (re-acceptance of the product), e.g. for October 1st, 2016 and if the producer does not reconfirm by that date, the CB shall shorten the validity of the certificate.

- (vi) **Multiple consecutive crops:** During the inspection, the production process of all crops included in the certification scope shall be assessed on farm via site visits, interviews with the producer and workers, review of documents, records, etc. The producer shall keep evidence of compliance with the applicable control points for all registered crops.  
In the years during which there is no requirement to carry out the inspection during harvest season and where crops do not have the same seasonal timing, the CB shall select a date where relevant agronomic activities can be seen on farm for at least one of the products.



## **4.2 Inspection of Product Handling Units (Option 2 and Option 1 Multisites with QMS)**

In fruit and vegetables, for the annual CB audit the square root of the total number of central product handling sites registered (those where the products of more than one grower is handled) shall be inspected while in operation. If there is only one central product handling facility, it shall be inspected every year (see also General Regulations Part III, 5.5. 'Inspection of Product Handling Units (Option 2 and Option 1 multisites with QMS)'). Sampling is not applicable for product handling sites handling high risk products.

## **4.3 Inspection Duration**

- a) The inspection duration shall allow for an opening meeting with the farm management, a complete evaluation of all standard requirements, completion of the applicable checklist and the presentation of the results to the producer.
- b) The usual GLOBALG.A.P. production site inspection duration for GLOBALG.A.P. IFA Crops is between 3 and 8 hours (Option 1 producer).
- c) The minimum of 3 hours duration shall apply to the simplest circumstances (one location, one or few crops, simple machinery, few workers, no produce handling, subsequent inspection, documentation is well organized, etc.).
- d) Option 2 producer group members might have inspections of shorter time duration depending on the complexity of the farming situation.
- e) Factors that will increase the minimum of 3 hours (the list is not exhaustive and is applicable for Option 1 and for Option 2 members) are as follows:
  - Initial inspection
  - Addition of new crops during subsequent inspections
  - Addition of new locations during subsequent inspections
  - Storage included
  - Produce handling included
  - Different types of products (product groups)
  - Different types of harvests (harvesting methods)
  - Multiple sites and locations
  - More sub-scopes (N/A to PSS and HPSS)
  - Subcontractors used (not checked by third party)

**VERSION/EDITION UPDATE REGISTER**

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If you want to receive more information on the modifications in this document, please see details in the [document version with traceable changes](#) or contact the GLOBALG.A.P. Secretariat at [translation\\_support@globalgap.org](mailto:translation_support@globalgap.org).

When the changes do not introduce new requirements to the standard, the version will remain “5.0” and an edition update shall be indicated with “5.0-x”. When the changes do affect compliance with the standard, the version name will change to “5.x”. A new version, e.g. V6.0, V7., etc., will always affect the accreditation of the standard.

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