GFSI BENCHMARKING REQUIREMENTS

KEY CHANGES
V7 TO VERSION 2020

For more information on Version 2020 please see **"What's Changing in Version 2020"** on the GFSI Library at: **publications.mygfsi.com**

NEW ELEMENTS

Part II: Requirements for the Governance of Certification Programmes

SECTION 1: Ownership, Development and Maintenance

CLAUSE NUMBER	CLAUSE NAME	REQUIREMENTS
1.2	Ownership	The Certification Programme Owner shall have the authority to establish and amend the Certification Programme.
1.4	Ownership	The Certification Programme Owner shall not provide any consultancy on their Certification Programme.
1.11	Certification Programme Development and Maintenance	The consultation period shall allow sufficient time for stakeholders to review the Certification Programme under development and send their comments to the Certification Programme Owner.
1.18	Documentation requirement	The Certification Programme Owner shall establish, implement and maintain a Quality Management System.
1.19	Complaint procedure	The Certification Programme Owner shall implement an effective documented complaint procedure. This procedure shall be publicly available without request.

SECTION 2: Accreditation

CLAUSE NUMBER	CLAUSE NAME	REQUIREMENTS
2.7	Relationship with Accreditation Bodies	The Certification Programme Owner shall inform Accreditation Bodies if activities with a Certification Body is withdrawn or suspended for reasons related to the requirements of the accreditation standard.
2.8	Relationship with Accreditation Bodies	The Certification Programme Owner shall inform Accreditation Bodies of any relevant information and developments related to the Certification Programme.
2.9	Relationship with Accreditation Bodies	The Certification Programme Owner shall agree on their process for the extension of the scope of activities of Certification Bodies with the Accreditation Bodies.

2.10	Certification Bodies List	The Certification Programme Owner shall ensure that a list of active Certification Bodies is publicly available without request. This list shall include the scope of activities of the Certification Bodies.
2.11	Certification Bodies Requirements	The Certification Programme Owner shall have documented requirements for Certification Bodies to operate the Certification Programme.
2.13	Accreditation of Certification Bodies	The Certification Programme Owner shall define clear scope(s) of accreditation for the Certification Bodies.

SECTION 3: Relationship with Certification Bodies

CLAUSE NUMBER	CLAUSE NAME	REQUIREMENTS
3.4	Relationship with Certification Bodies	The Certification Programme Owner shall ensure that Certification Bodies use the Certification Programme in its entirety for the relevant GFSI scope of recognition.
3.8	Relationship with Certification Bodies	The Certification Programme Owner shall inform Certification Bodies of any relevant information and developments related to the Certification Programme. This shall include any changes to the Certification Programme.
3.9	Relationship with Certification Bodies	The Certification Programme Owner shall publish guidance / requirements to Certification Bodies on transition arrangements when a new version of the Certification Programme is issued. The Certification Programme Owner guidance / requirements may encompass elements such as the following: • terms and conditions of transition period between previous and new versions; • defined timeline for transition; • comparative information between previous and new versions; • timeline in which Certification Bodies are required to cascade information to all auditors and certified organisations.
3.11	Integrity Programme	The Certification Programme Owner shall ensure that results of the integrity programme are communicated to and reviewed with the Certification Bodies at least once a year.

SECTION 4: Certification Bodies Personnel

CLAUSE NUMBER	CLAUSE NAME	REQUIREMENTS
4.1	Certification Body Personnel Competence	The Certification Programme Owner shall ensure that all management, administrative, technical and auditing personnel meet the competence required by the Certification Bodies, the Certification Programme and the GFSI Benchmarking Requirements.
4.5	Certification Body Personnel Competence: Certification Personnel	The Certification Programme Owner shall ensure that Certification Body's competence requirement for the personnel carrying out the technical review include understanding of the Certification Programme's normative documents and of the Certification Programme's requirements on the completion of audit's report and checklist.
4.12	Maintenance of Auditor Skills and Competence	The Certification Programme Owner shall ensure that auditors are regularly trained and evaluated on their understanding of the Certification Programme.

SECTION 5: Management of Audit and Certification

CLAUSE NUMBER	CLAUSE NAME	REQUIREMENTS
5.1	Audit Programme – scope of the audit	The Certification Programme Owner shall ensure that the Certification Bodies clarify the activities and products of the audited organisation to include in the scope of the audit.
5.6	Audit Programme – unannounced audit	The Certification Programme Owner shall ensure that Certification Bodies perform at a minimum: • For scopes AI, AII, BI, BII and BIII: 10% of audits unannounced per year or one audit every 4 years for each certified organisation; • For scopes C0, CI, CII, CIII, CIV, DI, E, FI, G, H, JI, K and I: one audit unannounced every 3 years for each certified organisation. For scopes FII and JII, unannounced audits may be available as an option.
5.12	Audit Programme – auditor selection	The Certification Programme Owner shall ensure that Certification Bodies have rules for the appointment of auditors to audits to ensure impartiality, including rotation of auditors.

5.14	Audit Reporting	The Certification Programme Owner shall ensure that Certification Bodies have processes in place to address situations when reports may be translated.
5.27	Management of Certification	The Certification Programme Owner shall define minimum requirements for Certification Bodies considerations when organisations switch between GFSI-recognised Certification Programmes. This should include but not be limited to an evaluation of the organisation's audit history, last unannounced audit, etc.

PART III: Requirements for the Content of Standards

The Codex Alimentarius Guidelines on food hygiene and its HACCP annex constitutes an internationally-recognised reference for food business operators and competent authorities to oversee food safety. As such, in addition to the following key elements, the Certification Programme Owner shall ensure that the site has knowledge and align their practices to best industry practices and the Codex Alimentarius General Principles of Food Hygiene.

CLAUSE NUMBER	CLAUSE NAME	REQUIREMENTS
FSM 2	Management commitment and food safety culture	Evidence of the senior management's commitment to establish, implement, maintain and continuously improve the Food Safety Management System shall be provided. This shall include elements of food safety culture, at a minimum consisting of: communication, training, feedback from employees and performance measurement on food safety related activities.
FSM 14.2	Traceability	Documented tests of the traceability system shall be undertaken to ensure this is operating effectively.
FSM 15	Product development	Product design and development procedure shall be established, implemented and maintained for new products and changes to product or manufacturing processes to ensure safe and legal products are produced.
FSM 18.2	Product labelling and product information	When product is unlabelled, all relevant product information shall be made available to ensure the safe use of the food by the customer or consumer.

GMP 10	Site inspections / checks	A programme of site inspections / checks shall be established, implemented and maintained to ensure the site environment and processing equipment are maintained in a suitable condition to ensure food safety, as applicable to the activity of the site.
GAP 2	Local environment	All grounds within the site shall be maintained to prevent contamination and enable the production of safe products.
GAP 9	Site inspections / checks	A programme of site inspections / checks shall be established, implemented and maintained to ensure the site and equipment are maintained in a suitable condition to ensure food safety, as applicable to the activity of the site.

STRENGTHENED ELEMENTS

Part II: Requirements for the Governance of Certification Programmes.

SECTION 1: Ownership, Development and Maintenance

CLAUSE NUMBER	CLAUSE NAME	REQUIREMENTS
1.3	Ownership	The Certification Programme Owner shall neither have conformity assessment nor certification activities for the Certification Programme. In particular, the Certification Programme shall not be developed, managed or owned by a Certification Body or group of Certification Bodies.

SECTION 3: Relationship with Certification Bodies

CLAUSE NUMBER	CLAUSE NAME	REQUIREMENTS
3.13	Office Visits	The Certification Programme Owner shall implement a risk-based programme of Certification Bodies office audits, focusing on the implementation of the Certification Programme's requirements by the Certification Bodies. Risk factors may include: • the number of countries in which a Certification Body operates; • the number of auditors employed; • languages in which audits are undertaken; • number of certified companies; • number of centralised Certification Body offices; • number of audits undertaken per auditor; • grading and number of non-conformances; • product recalls; • number of relevant complaints.
3.14	Key Performance Indicators	The Certification Programme Owner shall define and monitor Key Performance Indicators for Certification Bodies including complaints, results of desktop assessments and office visits. The Key Performance Indicators shall be communicated to and reviewed with the Certification Bodies at least once a year.

SECTION 4: Certification Bodies Personnel

CLAUSE NUMBER	CLAUSE NAME	REQUIREMENTS
4.10	Initial Audit or Qualification	The Certification Programme Owner shall ensure that Certification Bodies have a documented programme for initial auditor qualification. This shall include as a minimum that auditors will be assessed on their performance during at least 3 food safety audits against the GFSI-recognised Certification Programme the auditor is being qualified for, including at least one witness audit, and until they are assessed as competent.

SECTION 5: Management of Audit and Certification

CLAUSE NUMBER	CLAUSE NAME	REQUIREMENTS
5.8	Audit Programme – audit duration	The Certification Programme Owner shall define the expected duration of audits and the rationale for the determination of the duration of the audit; it is expected the duration of an audit to be at minimum: • Half a day for scopes AI, AII, BI, BII, BIII, E, FI and FII; • One day for scopes G, I, JI and JII; • Two days for scopes C0, CI, CII, CII, CIV, DI and K; in order to effectively assess an organisation's systems and premises against the Certification Programme's normative documents and provide confidence in the certification process.
5.13	Audit Reporting	The Certification Programme Owner shall have in place a clearly defined system for the generation and issue of audit reports. The Certification Programme Owner shall ensure that Certification Bodies provide the report to audited organisations within a defined timeline.

SECTION 6: Multi-site Certification

The following scopes of recognition may be considered for certification of multi-site organisations, based on a sampling of the sites:

- AI FARMING OF ANIMALS FOR MEAT/ MILK/ EGGS / HONEY
- AII FARMING OF FISH AND SEAFOOD
- BI FARMING OF PLANTS (OTHER THAN GRAINS AND PULSES)
- BII FARMING OF GRAINS AND PULSES
- BIII PRE-PROCESS HANDLING OF PLANT PRODUCTS, NUTS AND GRAINS
- G PROVISION OF STORAGE AND DISTRIBUTION SERVICES

It shall be stressed that certification of multi-site organisations based on sampling is not compulsory for a Certification Programme Owner within these scopes of recognition and a Certification Programme Owner may opt for single site certification only.

However, where a Certification Programme Owner permits the use of certification of multi-site organisations based on sampling, then the Certification Programme shall satisfy the below GFSI Benchmarking Requirements.

CLAUSE NUMBER	CLAUSE NAME	REQUIREMENTS
6.1	General Requirements	Certification Programmes shall ensure that Certification Bodies meet or exceed the requirements defined in IAF MD1 current version.
6.2	General Requirements	The Certification Programme Owner shall clearly specify the conditions for certification of multi-site organisations based on sampling.
6.3	General Requirements	All sites included in the scope of certification of a multi-site organisation shall be operated under the same Food Safety Management System and under the control of a central function.
6.4	General Requirements	There shall be a legal or contractual link between the sites and the central function.
6.5	General Requirements	The central function shall request certification as a multi-site organisation based on sampling in their application to the Certification Body. The central function, not the individual sites, shall be contracted to the Certification Body.
6.6	General Requirements	The central function shall be included in the scope of the certification.
6.7	General Requirements	The central function shall be audited by the Certification Body at least annually and before the Certification Body undertakes the auditing of sample sites. If necessary, a small number of the sample sites may be audited prior to the audit of the central function.

6.8	Central Function	The central function shall ensure management commitment to the system / integrity and clearly describe the roles and responsibilities of management, internal auditors and other members of the organisation. The central function shall be separate and independent from the sites.
6.9	Central Function	The central function shall have authoritative control of the Food Safety Management System of all sites within the certification and shall maintain traceability and issue, maintain and retain all relevant documents relating to the sites within the programme.
6.10	Central Function	The central function shall have an effective customer complaint procedure.
6.11	Central Function	The central function shall manage and maintain relations with the sites for the activities related to the scope of certification.
6.12	Central Function	The central function shall have in place sufficient management and technical capacity to implement and maintain the internal audit programme.
6.13	Central Function	The central function shall be subject to management review in accordance with Certification Programme requirements and shall be itself subject to internal audit.
6.14	Internal Audit	An internal audit programme based on site and risk profile shall be in place and undertaken by the central function. This programme shall ensure audits of all sites, the central function and the management system at least annually.
6.15	Internal Audit	The internal audit programme shall have documented procedures and be both practical and feasible in operative terms.
6.16	Internal Audit	Clear requirements for internal auditors and technical reviewers shall be defined, documented and reviewed by the Certification Body.

6.17	Internal Audit	Internal auditors shall meet similar or comparable requirements to those for external auditors, as set out within each Certification Programme Owner's rules. This shall include, at a minimum, requirements related to internal auditor education, training, work experience or other qualifications. Their qualifications shall be assessed annually by the Certification Body. Certification Programme Owners may require the organisation's internal auditors to successfully complete the Certification Programme Owners specific auditor training.
6.18	Internal Audit	Internal auditors shall be regularly evaluated, calibrated and monitored.
6.19	Internal Audit	Internal auditors shall be assigned by the central function to sites to ensure impartiality.
6.20	Internal Audit	Internal audit reports shall be reviewed by the central function and include addressing the non-conformities resulting from the internal audit.
6.21	Site Audit Sampling	The Certification Programme Owner shall have a system in place for the Certification Bodies to define a risk-based sampling programme that includes a minimum sample size determined by the Certification Programme Owner. The sampling programme shall include provisions to increase sample size based on various risk factors (e.g., audit scope, types of activities on-site, findings of the central management system audit, findings at sampled sites, customer requirements, etc.), size of the group or multi-site organisation and the internal structure.
6.22	Site Audit Sampling	The Certification Programme Owner shall ensure that Certification Bodies audit a sample of the sites every year.
6.23	Site Audit Sampling	The annual sampling size of the Certification Body audit sampling programme shall be based on IAF MD1 current version. The square root sample of the Certification Body's audit of the sites shall be calculated per risk category. The sampling programme can be adjusted based on the use of monitoring technologies.
6.24	Site Audit Sampling	The programme shall be partly selective and partly non-selective, but at least 25% of the sample shall be randomly selected from the total number of sites. Selected sites shall be identified based on the organisation's internal audit programme findings and the site risk profiles.

6.25	Management of non-conformities	Non-conformities found on sites shall be assessed to ascertain if these indicate an overall Food Safety System deficiency and therefore may be applicable to all or other sites. If non-conformities relate to all or other sites, corrective action shall be undertaken and verified both by the central function and by the Certification Body.
6.26	Management of non-conformities	In the event that non-conformities are found when auditing sites, which may not jeopardise certification but may raise concerns on conformity of the organisation, the Certification Body shall increase the sample size to ensure adequate confidence in the conformity of the organisation.
6.27	Management of non-conformities	If the central function, or any site fails to meet the critical Certification Programme requirements, then the whole organisation, including the central function and all sites, will fail to gain certification. Where certification has previously been in place, this shall initiate the Certification Body's process to suspend or withdraw its certification.

In addition, Certification Programmes recognised against those scopes:

- AI FARMING OF ANIMALS FOR MEAT/ MILK/ EGGS / HONEY
- AII FARMING OF FISH AND SEAFOOD
- BI FARMING OF PLANTS (OTHER THAN GRAINS AND PULSES)
- BII FARMING OF GRAINS AND PULSES

- BIII PRE-PROCESS HANDLING OF PLANT PRODUCTS, NUTS AND GRAINS

shall satisfy the below criteria.

CLAUSE NUMBER	CLAUSE NAME	REQUIREMENTS
6.28	Site Audit Sampling	A risk-based approach shall be in place to determine the eligibility of commodities. Certain crops or activities deemed "high-risk" shall not be eligible for multi-site or group certification.
6.29	Site Audit Sampling	The sampling programme shall be determined so that all members within the group or multi-site organisation are audited within a defined period, based on the risk of the commodity, for example 3-5 years.
6.30	Site Audit Sampling	A proportion of the sites selected to be audited by the Certification Body shall be unannounced. The unannounced audit sample size shall be determined by the risk of the commodity, but be at a minimum of 20% of the sample size.
6.31	Certificates	The Certification Programme Owner shall determine the methodology for issuing certificates to the central function and the sites. A certificate shall be issued to the central function of the group or multi-site organisation. Separate certificates may only be issued to sites that were audited as part of the sample programme. Those certificates shall be clearly distinguishable from certificates that are issued to individually certified companies and shall state explicitly that the recipient is part of a certified group or multi-site organisation, and any limitations to the scope of certification shall be transparent to customers.
6.32	Certificates	If the multi-site organisation is allowed to sell their product outside of the group or multi-site organisation, in all cases the member sites shall be transparent about the source and scope of certification, by providing customers with a copy of the certificate as issued above.

In addition, Certification Programmes recognised against those scopes:

- G PROVISION OF STORAGE AND DISTRIBUTION SERVICES

shall satisfy the below criteria, where:

- Tier 1 (T1): Main / National / Regional Distribution Centres or Central Warehouses: Food, Feed or Packaging Distribution or Storage Facilities, at a single site or location and operating under one Food Safety Management System. T1 facilities can have T2 facilities and / or sites (T3) managed by the organisation seeking the certification (each site shall have a certificate, no multi-site sampling option available).
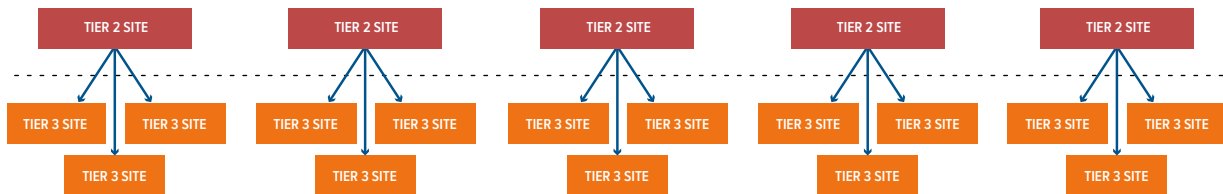
- Tier 2 (T2) and Tier (T3): Satellite Warehouse, Distribution Hub, Cross Docking site: Food, Feed or Packaging Distribution or Storage Facilities, at a single site or location and operating under one Food Safety Management System. These sites are always linked to a larger T1 distribution centre, storage warehouse or organisation with multiple T1 facilities or in the case of a T3 site via a T2 site. T2 sites and T3 sites are always managed and under the direct control of a T1 facility or an organisation with multiple T1 facilities seeking certification (multi-site sampling option available).

SINGLE SITE CERTIFICATION

TIER 1 SITE

MULTI-SITE CERTIFICATION

| TIER 2 SITE | TIER 2 SITE | TIER 2 SITE | TIER 2 SITE | TIER 2 SITE |

| TIER 3 SITE | TIER 3 SITE | TIER 3 SITE | TIER 3 SITE | TIER 3 SITE | TIER 3 SITE | TIER 3 SITE | TIER 3 SITE | TIER 3 SITE | TIER 3 SITE |

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MULTI-SITE CERTIFICATION

CLAUSE NUMBER	CLAUSE NAME	REQUIREMENTS
6.33	General Requirements	Multi-site certification shall only apply to organisations with more than 20 sites operating similar processes.
6.34	General Requirements	A Certification Programme shall certify each Tier 1 facility site of a company's distribution and / or warehouse operations with each T1 site having its own single certificate. However, a multi-site approach may be used to include all T2 or below (e.g. T3) satellite sites linked to the T1 organisations' certification.
6.35	General Requirements	All sites within a multi-site sampling programme shall be operating under the same storage conditions (e.g. ambient stable, refrigerated, frozen or combinations of these) and have the same risk profile (e.g. size of site, shift patterns, management structure and employee numbers). Therefore, it is recognised that an organisation could have several multi-site sampling programmes based on different process and risk profile, but these programmes shall be clearly defined and documented.
6.36	Site Audit Sampling	The sample size shall meet the requirements defined in the table 2.

Table 2: Minimum sample size for the certification of multi-site organisations based on sampling for scope G

N° OF SITES	MINIMUM SAMPLE SIZE
20-25	5
26-50	8
51-100	10
101-250	16
251-500	23
501-1000	32
Over 1000	Roundup number of square root of total number of sites

PART III: Requirements for the Content of Standards

CLAUSE NUMBER	CLAUSE NAME	REQUIREMENTS
GMP 3	Site design, construction, layout and flow of operations	The site, both the exterior and the interior, shall be designed, constructed and maintained to minimise food safety risks. The layout and flow of operations shall be suitable for the intended purpose and designed to minimise food safety risks.
GMP 7	Training	Procedure shall be established, implemented and maintained to ensure that all employees are trained, and retrained as necessary to have an understanding in food safety, commensurate with their activity.
GMP 8.1.1	Housekeeping, cleaning and disinfection	Procedure of housekeeping, cleaning and hygiene disinfection shall be established, implemented and maintained. Its effectiveness in minimising food safety risks shall be verified, based on the risks associated with the product or activity. Cleaning activities shall not represent a food safety risk.
GMP 8.1.2	Housekeeping, cleaning and disinfection	Procedure of housekeeping, cleaning and hygiene disinfection shall be established, implemented and maintained. Its effectiveness shall be verified, based on the risks associated with the product or activity. Cleaning activities shall not represent a feed safety risk.

GMP 8.1.3	Housekeeping, cleaning and disinfection	Procedure of housekeeping, cleaning and hygiene disinfection shall be established, implemented and maintained. Its effectiveness in minimising food safety risks of cleaning shall be validated and verified, based on the risks associated with the product or activity. Cleaning activities shall not represent a packaging safety risk.
GMP 11	Air and water quality	Air, compressed gases, and water (including ice and steam) in any form which could impact food safety shall be regularly monitored, and adequately stored and handled in order to minimise food safety risks. Water not intended for use in food production, if available on site, shall be managed to minimise food safety risks.
GMP 13	Pest control	A procedure shall be established, implemented and maintained to prevent, monitor and control or eliminate the risk of pest infestation at the site.
GMP 19	Maintenance	Effective planned maintenance shall be in place for the site and equipment to minimise food safety risks. Maintenance activities shall not represent food safety risks.
GAP 3.1	Location, design and layout	Structures, including all adjoining rooms, equipment, facilities and feeding systems shall be located, designed and constructed to facilitate proper cleaning and pest control. Where appropriate, the design and layout shall permit compliance with good hygiene practices including protection against cross contamination between and during operations.
GAP4.1.3	Prevention of cross-contamination	Effective measures shall be taken during production, storage and transport to prevent cross-contamination of grain and pulses from agricultural inputs, cleaning agents, veterinary medicines or personnel who come directly or indirectly into contact with other sites, animals or grain and pulses.
GAP4.4.1	Prevention of cross-contamination	Procedures shall be in place to ensure that the application of agricultural and veterinary inputs is managed properly to minimise the potential for microbial or chemical contamination
GAP7.1	Personnel training	A system shall be established, implemented and maintained to ensure that all employees are trained, and retrained when necessary, to have an understanding of food safety commensurate with their activity.