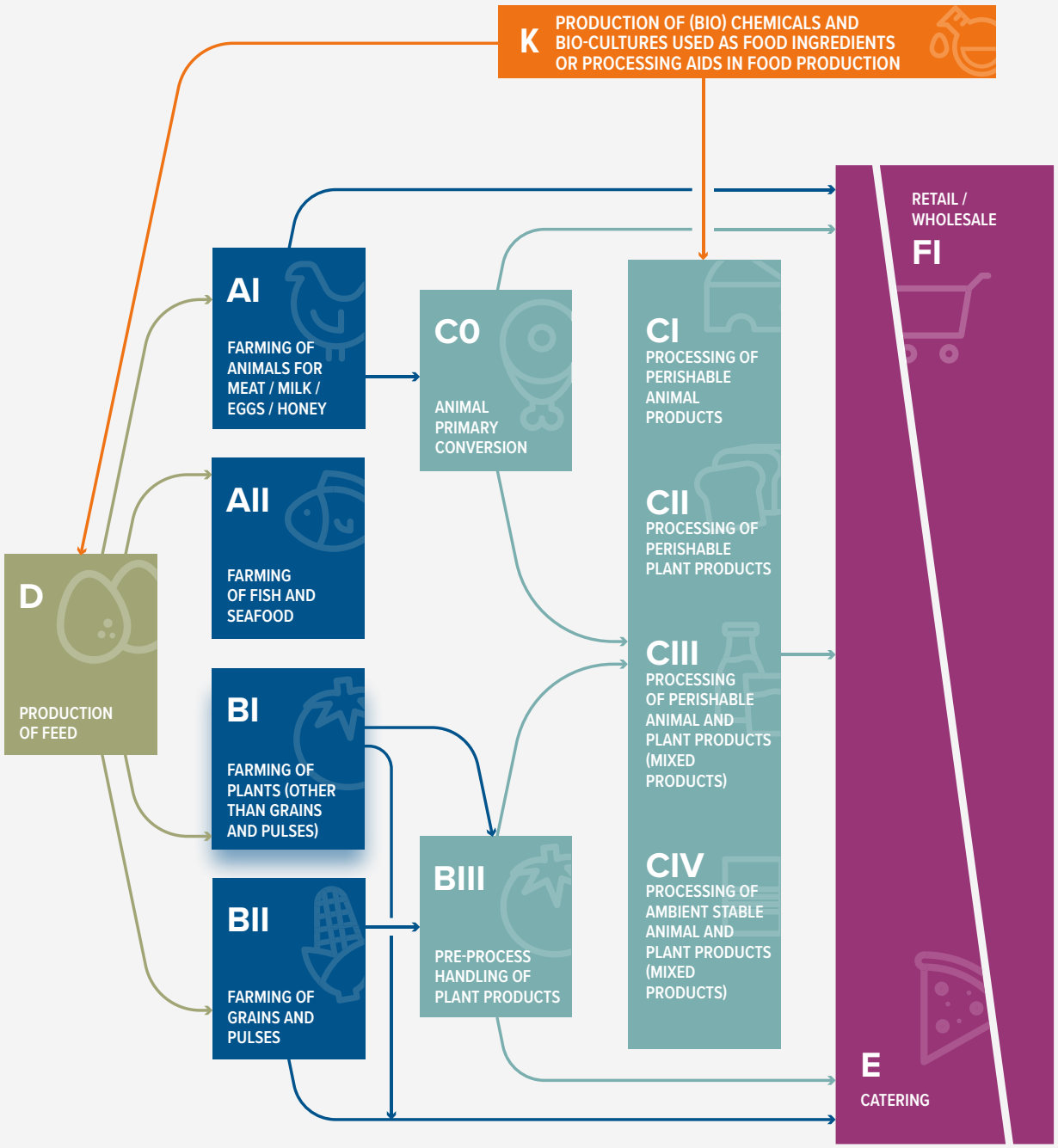
GFSI BENCHMARKING REQUIREMENTS VERSION 2024

PART III
REQUIREMENTS FOR THE CONTENT OF PROGRAMMES

BI Farming of Plants (other than grains and pulses)



FII	FOOD BROKER / AGENT
G	PROVISION OF STORAGE AND DISTRIBUTION SERVICES
H	PROVISION OF FOOD SAFETY SERVICES
I	PRODUCTION OF FOOD PACKAGING
JI	HYGIENIC DESIGN OF FOOD BUILDINGS AND PROCESSING EQUIPMENT (FOR BUILDING CONSTRUCTORS AND EQUIPMENT MANUFACTURERS)
JII	HYGIENIC DESIGN OF FOOD BUILDINGS AND PROCESSING EQUIPMENT (FOR BUILDING AND EQUIPMENT USERS)

Part III - *BI* Farming of Plants (other than grains and pulses)

Part III of the GFSI Benchmarking Requirements defines the key elements required in a Certification Programme in relation to:

- **Hazard and Risk Management Systems** (Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP) or HACCP-based systems);
- **Food Safety Management Systems;**
- **Good Industry Practices, Good Manufacturing Practices, Good Agricultural Practices.**

This document applies to Certification Programmes applying for the scope of recognition BI- Farming of Plants (other than grains and pulses). This scope includes the following product, services and activities:

- **Growing or harvesting of plants (other than grains and pulses), including horticultural products and hydrophytes for food.**
- **On farm storage of plants (other than grains and pulses), including horticultural products and hydrophytes for food.**

The requirements – named key elements – were identified by a multi-stakeholder group including industry experts to ensure relevance to this scope while ensuring harmonisation of food safety programmes across industry. Although the structure of each scope of Part III of the Benchmarking Requirements is aligned, some of the key elements may be specific to the industry included in this scope.

GFSI-recognised Certification Programme Owners are required to address each key element outlined in this document. The detailed content of each individual Certification Programme must however be independently developed and is not expected to be a direct copy of the GFSI Benchmarking Requirements.

GFSI has defined in a Glossary terms used in key elements. Part IV, the Glossary, is an integrated part of the GFSI Benchmarking Requirements and definitions shall be applied accordingly in Certification Programmes. In the GFSI Benchmarking Requirements, food is used as an umbrella term and refers to the object of each of the scope, i.e. food, feed, packaging as applicable.

Certification P rogrammes r equiring C ertification Bodies to operate according to ISO / IEC 17021 shall ensure they meet the ISO 22000 requirements as well as the Benchmarking Requirements for applicable sectors outlined in Part III. If this is not possible, then the ISO 22000 requirements shall prevail.

Certification P rogrammes r equiring C ertification Bodies to operate according to ISO / IEC 17065 shall ensure they meet the Benchmarking Requirements for applicable sectors outlined in Part III.

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.

SECTION 1: HACCP AND RISK MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS REQUIREMENTS

REFERENCE	ELEMENT	THE PROGRAMME SHALL REQUIRE THAT
HACCP 1.1	Hazard and Risk Management System	A systematic, Hazard and Risk Management System (or HACCP system) based on the current version of Codex Alimentarius General Principles of Food Hygiene shall be implemented to identify specific hazards, the measures for their control shall be based on scientific evidence of risk to health. This system shall take all relevant laws into consideration.
HACCP 1.2	Hazard and Risk Management System	The scope of the Hazard and Risk Management System (or HACCP system) and applicable prerequisite programmes shall be clearly defined in accordance with the product(s)/activities undertaken at the site and included within the site's scope of certification.
HACCP 1.3	Hazard and Risk Management System	The prerequisite programmes shall be designed, established and verified where possible, to support the application and implementation of the Hazard and Risk Management System (or HACCP system).
HACCP 1.4	Hazard and Risk Management System	There shall be commitment from senior management for implementation of an effective Hazard and Risk Management System (or HACCP system).
HACCP 1.4.1	Hazard and Risk Management System	Appropriate knowledge and expertise for the development of an effective Hazard and Risk Management System (or HACCP system) shall be used.
HACCP 1.4.2	Hazard and Risk Management System	The Hazard and Risk Management System (or HACCP system) shall be reviewed regularly and updated when there is a significant change that could introduce new hazards and/or control measures.

SECTION 2: FOOD SAFETY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM REQUIREMENTS

REFERENCE	ELEMENT	THE PROGRAMME SHALL REQUIRE THAT
FSM 1	Management Responsibility	A clear organisational structure identifying the job functions and responsibilities of at least those employees whose activities affect food safety shall be established, implemented and maintained.
FSM 2	Management Commitment and Food Safety Culture	A commitment from senior management to establish direction, engage personnel, and provide sufficient resources to maintain a positive food safety culture and continuously improve the Food Safety Management System shall be provided.
FSM 2.1	Food Safety Culture	A demonstrable commitment from all personnel to the production and safe handling of food shall be available.
FSM 2.2	Food Safety Culture	A food safety culture assessment plan shall be established, implemented and maintained to identify areas of improvement to drive a positive behaviour. This shall include elements consisting of at a minimum: communication, training, feedback from employees and performance measurement on food safety related activities.
FSM 3	Management Review	The senior management shall review all elements of the Food Safety Management System, including the Food Safety Culture plan, the Hazard and Risk Management System (or HACCP plan or HACCP-based plans) plans regularly, and in case of any change that impacts food safety, to ensure their continuing suitability and effectiveness.
FSM 4.1	Food Safety Legislation	Procedures shall be established, implemented and maintained to ensure compliance with applicable legislation (both countries of production and intended sale).
FSM 5	Food Safety Management System	The elements of the Food Safety Management System shall be established, implemented, maintained and continuously improved and shall have a scope appropriate to the range of business activities to be covered.

FSM 6	Food Safety Policy and Objectives	A clear, concise and documented food safety policy statement shall be in place, as well as measurable objectives specifying the extent of the organisation's commitment to meet the food safety needs.
FSM 7.1	Food Defence	A food defence threat assessment procedure shall be established, implemented and maintained to identify potential threats and prioritise food defence measures.
FSM 7.2	Food Defence	A documented food defence plan shall be in place specifying the measures implemented to mitigate the public health risks from any identified food defence threats.
FSM 7.3	Food Defence	This food defence plan shall be developed, implemented, verified, maintained and reviewed on regular basis or when a new threat is established.
FSM 7.4	Food Defence	Appropriate knowledge and expertise for the development and maintenance of an effective food defence threat assessment plan shall be used.
FSM 8.1	Food Fraud	A food fraud vulnerability assessment procedure shall be established, implemented and maintained to identify potential vulnerability and prioritise food fraud mitigation measures.
FSM 8.2	Food Fraud	A documented food fraud management plan shall be in place specifying the measures implemented to mitigate the public health risks from the identified food fraud vulnerabilities.
FSM 8.3	Food Fraud	This food fraud management plan shall be developed, implemented, verified, maintained and reviewed on regular basis or when a new vulnerability is established.
FSM 8.5	Food Fraud	Appropriate knowledge and expertise for the development and maintenance of an effective food fraud assessment plan shall be used.
FSM 9.1	Documentation Requirements	A procedure shall be established, implemented and maintained for the management and control of documented information required to demonstrate the effective operation and control of processes and the Food Safety Management System.

FSM 9.2.1	Documentation requirements	All the above-mentioned documented information shall be securely stored for the time period required to meet customer and legal requirements, or for a period exceeding the shelf-life of the food if customer or legal requirements are not available. It shall be effectively controlled and readily accessible when needed.
FSM 10.1	Specified Requirements / Specifications	Specified requirements or specifications shall be established, implemented and maintained for all inputs to the process, including services that are purchased or provided and have an effect on food safety. Microbiological, physical, chemical and allergenic specifications used for food safety purposes shall be based on appropriate scientific principles.
FSM 10.2	Specified Requirements / Specifications	A review process of the specified requirements or specifications shall be in place.
FSM 11	Procedures	Effective procedures and instructions shall be established, implemented and maintained for all processes and operations having an effect on food safety.
FSM 12	Resource Management	The resources needed to establish, implement, maintain, review and improve the Food Safety Management System shall be identified and assigned.
FSM 13.1.1	Purchasing and Supplier Performance	Purchasing processes shall be controlled to ensure all inputs to the process, including externally purchased materials and services which have an effect on food safety, conform to specified requirements or specifications as well as food safety and regulatory requirements.
FSM 13.2.1	Purchasing and Supplier Performance	A procedure for the evaluation, approval and continued monitoring of suppliers which have an effect on food safety shall be established, implemented and maintained. The procedure shall address procurement in emergency situations to ensure that food still conforms to the documented specified requirements or specifications, and the supplier has been evaluated. The results of evaluations, investigations and follow up actions shall be recorded.
FSM 13.3	Purchasing and Supplier Performance	Outsourced processes that may have an effect on food safety shall be identified and controlled. Such controls shall be documented in the Food Safety Management System.

FSM 14.1.1	Traceability	Procedures shall be established, implemented and maintained to ensure product identification from the supplier (minimum one step back) through any processes undertaken to the recipient of the food (minimum one step forward).
FSM 14.2	Traceability	Documented tests of the traceability system shall be undertaken to ensure this is operating effectively
FSM 17.1	Control of Measuring and Monitoring Equipment/Devices	The equipment/devices used to measure parameters critical to ensure food safety shall be identified.
FSM 17.2	Control of Measuring and Monitoring Equipment/Devices	The identified equipment/devices shall be regularly calibrated; calibration shall be traceable to a national or international standard or method.
FSM 19.1	Testing	A procedure shall be established, implemented and maintained to ensure that analyses of food parameters critical to food safety are undertaken by competent laboratories and using appropriate sampling and testing methods and that such analyses are performed in accordance with the applicable requirements of ISO/IEC 17025.
FSM 20	Internal Audit	An internal audit procedure shall be established, implemented and maintained; it shall cover all elements of the Food Safety Management System.
FSM 21	Complaint Handling	A procedure for the management of complaints and complaint data shall be established, implemented and maintained to ensure that complaints are assessed and corrective actions implemented, when necessary.
FSM 22	Serious Incident Management	An incident management procedure, including product recall and withdrawal, shall be established, implemented and maintained. The recall procedure shall be regularly tested for effectiveness.
FSM 23	Product Release	A product release procedure shall be established, implemented and maintained.

FSM 24.1	Control of Non-conformity	A procedure shall be established, implemented and maintained to ensure that any non-conformity impacting food safety and any non-conforming products are clearly identified and controlled to prevent unintended use or delivery.
FSM 25	Corrective Actions	A procedure shall be established, implemented and maintained for the determination and implementation of corrective actions in the event of any significant non-conformity relating to food safety.

SECTION 3: GOOD INDUSTRY PRACTICE REQUIREMENTS

REFERENCE	ELEMENT	THE PROGRAMME SHALL REQUIRE THAT
GAP 1	Land Used For Production	Land used for production shall be evaluated for hazards and contamination. Control measures shall be implemented to reduce hazards to acceptable levels.
GAP 2	Local Environment	All grounds within the site shall be maintained to prevent contamination and enable the production of safe products.
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.
GAP 3.7	Location, Design and Layout	Adequate drainage and waste disposal systems and facilities shall be provided.
GAP 3.8.1	Location, Design and Layout	The systems described under GAP 3.7 shall be designed and constructed to avoid potential for contamination of water courses, highways and neighbouring fields with animal waste, residual agricultural chemicals and silo seepage.

GAP 4.1.2	Prevention of Cross-contamination	Effective measures shall be taken during production, storage and transport to prevent cross-contamination of produce from agricultural inputs, cleaning agents, veterinary medicines or personnel who come directly or indirectly into contact with other sites, animals or produce.
GAP 4.4.1	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.
GAP 4.5	Prevention of Cross-contamination	There shall be a provision for handling product that has dropped to the ground.
GAP 5	Employee Facilities	Employee facilities including hand washing and toilet facilities, and public facilities where applicable, shall be provided, designed, maintained, cleaned and operated to minimise food safety risks.
GAP 6.1	Personnel Health and Hygiene	Personal hygiene standards shall be established, implemented and maintained to minimise food safety risks.
GAP 6.2	Personnel Health and Hygiene	Where necessary suitable protective clothing and footwear shall be provided to minimise food safety risks.
GAP 6.3.1	Personnel Health and Hygiene	People known or suspected to be suffering from or to be a carrier of a disease or illness likely to be transmitted through produce shall not be allowed to enter any food handling area. Any person so affected shall immediately report illness or symptoms of illness to the management.
GAP 6.4	Personnel Health and Hygiene	The requirements of the personnel health and hygiene section shall apply to employees, contractors and visitors commensurate to their impact on food safety.
GAP 7.1	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.
GAP 7.2	Personnel Training	Agricultural workers who apply agricultural chemicals shall be trained and qualified in the proper application procedures of such chemicals.

GAP 8.1	Housekeeping, Cleaning and Disinfection	An appropriate housekeeping, cleaning and disinfection programme shall be established, implemented, maintained and monitored. Its effectiveness in eliminating food safety risks shall be measured.
GAP 8.2	Housekeeping, Cleaning and Disinfection	Cleaning facilities, equipment and chemical materials shall be suitable for their intended use and shall be stored and used appropriately.
GAP 9	Site Inspections / Checks	A programme of site inspections and checks shall be established, implemented, and maintained to confirm that these activities occur at a frequency based on risk and any significant changes that may impact food safety. The programme shall cover the site and equipment to ensure they are maintained in a condition suitable for safeguarding food safety, are relevant to the site's activities and verify that inspections and checks are conducted as required.
GAP 11.1	Water Quality	Indoor primary production facilities shall maintain a supply of water fit for its purpose and that does not compromise food safety, for handwashing, irrigation, equipment and post-harvest washing, with appropriate facilities for its storage and distribution.
GAP 11.2.1	Water Quality	Procedures shall be in place to identify the sources of water used on the farm (municipality, reused irrigation water, well, open canal, reservoir, rivers, lakes, farm ponds etc.) and to assess its suitability for the intended use.
GAP 11.3	Water Quality	Based on risk assessment, measures shall be in place to protect sources of agricultural waters from potential contamination, including corrective actions to minimise the risk of contamination (e.g., from livestock, sewage treatment, human habitation).
GAP 11.4	Water Quality	Based on risk assessment, water shall be tested for microbial and chemical contaminants. Frequency of testing shall depend on the water source and the risks of environmental contamination including intermittent or temporary contamination (e.g. heavy rain, flooding etc.).
GAP 11.5	Water Quality	If agricultural water is stored, tanks, containers or cisterns shall not be a source of contamination for water or product.

GAP 13.2	Pest Control	Based on risk assessment, operations shall assess potential contamination associated with wild and domestic animals.
GAP 14.1	Input - Manure, Biosolids and Other Natural Fertilisers	Proper treatment procedures (e.g. composting, pasteurisation, heat drying, UV irradiation, alkali digestion and sun drying management practices including appropriate delays between application of agricultural inputs and harvesting of the crop or combinations of these) shall be designed to reduce or eliminate pathogens in manure, biosolids and other natural fertilisers. As a minimum, the use of untreated biosolids shall be prohibited.
GAP 14.2	Input - Manure, Biosolids and Other Natural Fertilisers	Procedures shall be in place to ensure that the producer is required to take into consideration the World Health Organisation (WHO) guidelines on the safe use of waste water and livestock excreta in agriculture, as appropriate.
GAP 14.3	Input - Agricultural Chemicals	Only agricultural chemicals which are authorised for the cultivation of the specific produce / grains and pulses shall be used. They shall be used according to the manufacturer's instructions, local legislations and for the intended purpose.
GAP 14.4	Input - Agricultural Chemicals	Residues of agricultural chemicals shall not exceed levels as established by applicable legislation (in both countries of production and intended sale), or by the Codex Alimentarius Commission.
GAP 14.5	Input - Agricultural Chemicals	Documentation of agricultural chemical applications shall be maintained. Records shall include at a minimum information on the date of application, the chemical used, the crop sprayed, the concentration, method and frequency of application and records on harvesting to verify that the time between application and harvesting respects the required pre-harvest interval / withholding period.
GAP 14.6	Input - Agricultural Chemicals	Agricultural chemicals shall comply with applicable legislation (both country of production and intended sale), be correctly labelled, stored in a safe, well-ventilated place away from production areas, living areas and harvested crops and disposed of in a manner that does not pose a risk of contaminating crops.

GAP 15	Transport	All containers and vehicles used for the storage and transportation shall be suitable for the intended purpose to minimise food safety risks.
GAP 18.1	Equipment	Equipment and containers coming into contact with livestock and produce shall be made of materials that are non-toxic and designed and constructed to ensure that they can be cleaned, disinfected and maintained to avoid contamination.
GAP 18.2	Equipment	Equipment shall be used, maintained, transported and stored to minimise food safety risk.