CERTIFICATION GUIDELINES

COMPOUND FEED MANUFACTURING (CFM)
Scope: Livestock and Aquaculture Feed
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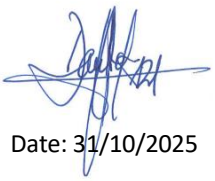
Technical Department  Date: 31/10/2025	CFM Operations Manager  Date: 31/10/2025	Quality Manager  Date: 31/10/2025	07
CAUSE OF THE NEW REVISION: Update to Chapter 1.12. COMPLAINTS, APPEALS AND LITIGATIONS			

Certification Guideline Index

1. GLOBALG.A.P. CERTIFICATION SYSTEM BY ACERTA

1.1. Introduction.

This document describes the certification rules for any interested party seeking certification according to the GLOBALG.A.P. Standard. for Compound Feed Manufacturing (CFM) version 3.1.

In general, all the rules detailed in the corresponding GLOBALG.A.P. General Rules v6 are applied, but there are several exceptions to this rule for the CFM standard that have been consulted with GLOBALG.A.P. and confirmed in writing to ACERTA and which will be specified throughout this document where applicable.

The scope of GLOBALG.A.P. Certification covers the following:

- All stages of production, from purchasing, handling and storage, to processing and transportation of compound feed for animals intended for food production (livestock and aquaculture).
- Does not include the production of ingredients such as forage or grains (simple feed materials), premixes, additives or medications (prepared feed supplements), etc.; but it does cover the production of compound feeds (which can be complete or complementary) that may be produced using any or all of these ingredients as raw materials.
- The production of home-mixed feeds that do not leave the farm where they were produced, as well as grazing/forage materials for animals, are not covered by this standard.
- Only products included in the GLOBALG.A.P. Product List, published on the GLOBALG.A.P. website, can be registered for certification. The GLOBALG.A.P. Product List is not limited and can be extended based on demand; however, species that are not included in the GLOBALG.A.P. Product List. such as, for example, rabbits, horses, guinea pigs, ducks, ostriches, etc., could be certified as long as they are intended for human consumption and as long as the manufacturer has requested the GLOBALG.A.P. Secretariat. its inclusion in the Product List and that the Secretariat has approved it.
- The standard does not cover the production of food for pets, since they are not intended for food production (human consumption).
- The compound feed manufacturer must be audited and certified as an entire entity, without exclusion of any production line operating at the same plant/site. The animal feed manufacturer may exclude certain plants/sites from the scope of certification. But if a site is included in the scope of certification, all production lines that produce feed intended for food production must be included.
- Only products that are produced by producers themselves. Producers cannot receive certification for the production of products that are not produced by themselves.

1.2. Registration in the CFM-GLOBALG.A.P. Program: Application Procedure

1.2.1. Applicants.

An applicant:

- Cannot register the same product more than once with different CBs.
- Cannot register the same product more than once under different certification options.
- Can register different products with different CBs and/or different certification options.

a) New Applicant.

When a new applicant contacts ACERTA in order to get information of the certification in accordance with the Compound Feed Manufacturing (CFM)-GLOBALG.A.P. Program, ACERTA's Commercial Department or the Technical Department (consisted of the team of internal auditors of ACERTA) will contact the applicant and send him the document ***GG CFM Certification request form*** **(*)** requesting necessary information to propose a cost estimate.

(*) ***GG CFM Certification request form*** **(**hereinafter ***Certification request form)***: document where it is registered the general info of the producer, the scope of certification (including whether voluntary Section C will be audited and what sub-sections thereof), declarations regarding to Parallel Production, Parallel Ownership and purchase of certified products, production centres identification, specific information about al products (hereinafter when we say "product" we refer to the types of feed (compound feed) for animals that are to be certified), and the ***Annex to GLOBALG.A.P. Certification Agreement*** (that includes the ***GLOBALG.A.P. Sublicense and Certification Agreement*** and the ***Acceptance of the Data Access Rules for GLOBALG.A.P. Database***). The ***GLOBALG.A.P. Sublicense and Certification Agreement*** (hereinafter ***Sublicence and Certification Agreement***) is the contract between the Certification Body (CB) and the producer. It sets the legal framework in order to grant the GLOBALG.A.P. Certification.

The Certification request form includes two links to the **Guide for Use of the ACERTA Brand** and to the **GLOBALG.A.P. Certification Guidelines.**

- **Inclusion and customization of the voluntary Section C**.

The producer must choose (and state in the **Certification Request Form**) whether or not they wish to include in the audit all sections (four in total) of the CFM standard.

Sections A, B and D are mandatory and are defined as the core content of the standard.

The inclusion of section C, titled "Social and Environmental Governance – Additional Section", can be customized:

- Auditing Section C is not mandatory to achieve certification.
- The producer can choose whether to include the entire Section C or which subsections they want to include (C1, C2, C3, C4 and/or C5).
- If the producer chooses to audit this section, all or part of it, it will be reflected in their certificate as a specific attribute of the product. In the case of being audited for all sections, you will see that it is indicated on the certificate that "they have been audited and certified in all sections of the CFM standard".

ACERTA must include Voluntary Section C in the GLOBALG.A.P. Database by production site (in the case of a multisite) and by product (option that will be visible in the GLOBALG.A.P. certificate and through the online validation of the certificate).

Once the ***Certification request form*** is received and reviewed, using ACERTA's Customer Relationship Management, the quotation **(*)** is made and reviewed by the Administration Manager.

(*) ***GG CFM General Quote*** *(*hereinafter ***Quotation):*** includes the costs derived from the certification process and a specification of the items detailed in it: application procedure and management of the information in the GLOBALG.A.P. Database, certification audit and issuing of the "report", decision making by the Certification Committee, issuance of the certificate (where applicable). The official GLOBALG.A.P. fees are also indicated in the quotation, according to the latest version published by GLOBALG.A.P., and a calculation is made of the estimated auditor's travel expenses. The payment method is also specified in the quotation.

The applicant who wants to begin the certification shall send this quotation appropriately accepted. The Technical Department includes the accepted quotation in ACERTA's Customer Relationship Management and files the

computerized copy in the corresponding folder to the applicant´s file in local server.

Once the accepted quotation is received, the Technical Department will send the applicant the next document:

- ***"SGC Certification Agreement"*** *(hereinafter* ***Certification Agreement***), ***Annex to the Certification Request Form***: which includes the conditions that will regulate the commercial relationship between ACERTA and the company requesting certification. The duration of the contract will be 1 year.

If ACERTA receives notification that a producer will not continue with certification for the next cycle, it must take sufficient precautions to avoid situations in which reference is made to an expired certificate for products produced after its expiration.

b) Certification maintenance: Renewal.

Registered producers (i.e.: persons, companies, individual producers that are legally responsible for the production process and products covered within the scope) must re-register annually their certified products **before the certificate expiry date.**

For this purpose, between 2 and 4 months before the expiry date, the Technical Department informs the holder of the certificate (or the relevant office) of the new activities of the certification maintenance to be carried out, by sending the documents to be completed and/or signed:

- ***Certification Request Form,*** which includes the ***GLOBALG.A.P. Certification Guidelines,*** the ***Acceptance of the Data Access Rules for GLOBALG.A.P. Database*** *and the* ***GLOBALG.A.P. Sublicense and Certification Agreement.***
- ***Quotation.***
- ***Certification Agreement.***

However, ACERTA shall apply the rules for initial (first) audit if the certificate has expired for more than 12 months.

When a producer changes from one CB to another CB or requests the services of a new CB, it is not considered a first audit, but subsequent (Renewal or Recertification) audit.

1.2.2. Certification Request

Once the Technical Department has received all the documents related to the applicant's certification request:

- The Technical Department reviews the ***Certification Request Form*** sent by the applicant including all the relevant information for the assessment of the scope (among others, the data provided detailing production sites).

- A folder is created in the local server for each applicant, appropriately identified with its corresponding year, country and producer's name in order to file and maintain electronic records.

- Once the ***Certification Request Form*** is reviewed and closed, the Technical Department will register said feed manufacturer in the GLOBALG.A.P. Database (if it is registered with ACERTA for the first time) and will accept the information provided in the request form in the GLOBALG.A.P. Database, always within 28 calendar days after the registration. The Certification Request Form is considered closed once the Technical Department has received the Certification Agreement, the Quotation and the Annex to GLOBALG.A.P. Certification Request Form signed, and always after verifying that Certification Request Form is completed. An email is sent to the

producer automatically by the GLOBALG.A.P. database, confirming the acceptance of the producer by ACERTA and its GNN. If the producer has a GLN, it must be communicated and used.

- The Technical Department assigns a registration number (only for producers registered with ACERTA for the first time).

- The registration number (inscription number) for producers under option 1 consists of the word ACERTA, followed by a four-digit number.

Example: ACERTA XXXX.

- The Technical Department sends the producer an email confirming that the company has been registered in the database, as well as its GLOBALG.A.P. number. (GGN) and ACERTA registration number.

- The Technical Department registers the applicant's request in ACERTA's Customer Relationship Management and, once the quotation has been accepted by the applicant and the Certification Agreement and Sublicence Annex have been signed, the file number will be created. The file number consists of the acronym "GGCFM", the code assigned to the customer and the digits corresponding to the year in which the work is carried out, and the number of works carried out to this customer in this year (assigned by ACERTA's Customer Relationship Management).

E.g.: GGCFM.00344-23/001

Any objective evidence found that indicates that the applicant has been misusing the GLOBALG.A.P. claim shall lead to the exclusion of the applicant from certification for 12 months after evidence of misuse. In addition, the applicants will be listed and the list must be checked before registration in the database. Any case of misuse shall be communicated to the GLOBALG.A.P. members.

GLOBALG.A.P. registration fees are generated once ACERTA registers and accepts the aquaculture products in GLOBALG.A.P. database. This admission starts the invoicing of registration costs. Only ACERTA is allowed to register and accept products in the GLOBALG.A.P. database.

1.2.3. Certification Options and adaptation to Section C.

The methodology and level of the audit during the certification process will depend on the following points and will be defined based on the information collected in the **Certification Request form.**

a) Certification Option.

For GLOBALG.A.P. certification, the word "producer(s)" refers to the persons (individuals) or companies (companies, individual producer or group of producers) that are legally responsible for the production processes and the products in the corresponding scope, sold by those people or companies.
Manufacturers can only obtain GLOBALG.A.P certification. under individual certification Option 1 (single site or multisite production).

Sections A, B and D of the CFM standard are mandatory for the audit and are defined as **core content** of the CFM standard.

Section C of the CFM standard, titled "**Additional Environmental and Social Governance**," can be customized (it is voluntary). Compliance of all requirements in Section C is not required to achieve CFM certification. The producer can select individual subsections of section C for audit and even customize within subsections C1, C2, C3, C4 and C5 of section

C.

If a manufacturer of compound feed complies with section C or parts of it, this must be indicated on the certificate with a specific product attribute.

Producers who are audited under all sections A, B, C and D must have a specific product attribute indicating on the certificate that they have been audited and certified under all sections of the CFM standard.

However, only auditors approved by GLOBALG.A.P. may carry out the audits (see section 3 "Requirements for auditors" of this document.

1. Option 1 – Individual Certification.

An individual producer (legal entity) that constitutes **a** Legal Entity that manages a single site or location (feed mill) that may or may not be its property, but that meets the following characteristic:

- The product is, at all times, the property of the Option I producer.

Once certification is obtained, the individual producer will be the certificate holder and the certificate will only be associated with one production site (feed mill).

2. Opción 1 – Individual Certification with multiple production sites (Feed mills) without implementation of a QMS (Multi-site Producer).

An individual producer (legal entity) that constitutes **a** Legal Entity that manages several production sites or locations (feed mills) that do not operate as separated legal entities.

In individual certification Option 1 with multi-site production, plants/sites (feed mills) are not allowed to be sampled to be audited, regardless of whether the applicant manufacturer operates a single quality management system (QMS) covering all the plants/sites.

The legal entity holding the certificate is legally responsible for the whole production of the feed mills registered in the production location, whether owned or rented, as well as for its inclusion in the market.

The product sold as Option 1 – Multisite without implementation of a QMS must be traceable to the legal entity that holds the certificate.

Once certification is achieved, the individual producer will be the certificate holder and the certificate will only be associated with the production site/s (feed mills) that are owned by the same legal entity (producer) or rented, and that have successfully completed INDIVIDUALLY the certification process, being the certification cycle (validity of the certificate) unique for each legal entity (GGN) and the same for all audited feed mills, regardless of the dates on which they have been audited.

b) Parallel Production/Ownership Declaration

This is one of the exceptions to the General Regulations of GLOBALG.A.P. v6 for the CFM v3.1 standard which, instead of using the definition of Parallel Ownership as it appears in version 6 of the General Regulations, for CFM continues to be governed by version 5.2 of the General Regulations (previous version). In such a way that the concepts of both Parallel Production (PP) and Parallel Ownership (PO) remain in force, as stated in version 5.2.

1.2.4. Definitions.

Parallel Production (PP): It is that situation in which a producer produces the same product partly in a certified way and partly in a non-certified way.

Parallel Production, as defined by GLOBALG.A.P. in its General Regulation v5.2 (previous paragraph), that is, a certified manufacturing process together with a non-certified one (for the same product), **is NOT allowed** in a compound feed manufacturing plant/site; that is, it is not possible for a compound feed manufacturing plant/site to have compound feed for livestock or for aquaculture species that comes partly from CFM-certified production and partly from non-CFM-certified production (at the same production site).

It is not considered Parallel Production, and therefore it is permitted, when lines that produce pet food are excluded from the audit and from the certification; nor when a manufacturer produces, for example, certified compound feed for aquaculture and non-certified compound feed for livestock (*).

In any case, *the producer must inform ACERTA if they incur in Parallel Production during the registration process; in which case they cannot be certified*.

(*) Note: When a producer produces one product as certified and another product as non-certified, it is not Parallel Production (for example, certified compound feed for livestock and non-certified compound feed for aquaculture).

Parallel Ownership (PO): according to the definition in the GLOBALG.A.P. General Regulations v5.2, it is that situation in which a producer purchases non-certified products of the same ones that he produces under certified production.

It is not considered to be Parallel Ownership when:

- A producer purchases additional certified products from another GLOBALG.A.P certified producer.
- A certified producer handles products as a subcontractor of non-certified producers, for example, the certified producer does not purchase the non-certified products.

- **Requirements.**

In order to access **Parallel Ownership (PO)** of GLOBALG.A.P. certified and non-certified products —of the same accepted products—, the following points must be met:

- *The producer must inform ACERTA if they are going to register with PO during the registration process*. Multisite Producers must also include a clear identification of all their feed mills (production sites) that buy/sell non-certified products of the same products included in the scope of the certification — and, therefore, also of the products that they have to register as “with PO” for each feed mill (production site)—. When a feed mill (production site) incurs in Parallel Ownership, the legal entity (producer) must register for Parallel Ownership.

- *ACERTA must register for "Parallel Ownership" in the GLOBALG.A.P. Database by production site (feed mill) and by product* (option that will be visible in the GLOBALG.A.P. certificate and through the online validation of the certificate).

- *The different Production Sites (feed mills) within the same legal entity must be identified*: at least one joint production site for all certified processes and another joint production site for all non-certified processes. Parallel Production at the same production site is not allowed for CFM.

- *A producer can declare Parallel Ownership at any time from its registration, but*:

    1) During the validity of their certificate, it would involve an extraordinary audit to evaluate compliance with the specific requirements and update the information in the GLOBALG.A.P. Database and in the Certificate.

    2) It cannot be used as a corrective action in the event of a non-conformity detected by ACERTA. The company will be sanctioned and must implement corrective actions for all production.

- *Registration for Parallel Ownership at the beginning of the season*: when they are still not sure whether they will buy non-certified products, ACERTA must evaluate if they have traceability and segregation procedures and if

they are ready for implementation. From the moment producers begin purchasing products from non-certified sources, ACERTA must require evidence of implementation (documentary or by an on-site assessment).

- *All products must be traceable to their respective Production Sites (Feed mills) while they remain on the site and once they leave it*: certified and non-certified products are kept fully isolated at all times. The traceability and registration system must reflect the implementation of Parallel Ownership.

- *The GGN is used to validate the certificate. It is made available through the identification of the final products with the producer's GGN*, when the product results from a certified process, which is an obligation for all producers registered for PO.

Production Site is defined as a feed mill — owned or leased and ultimately managed by a legal entity, where the same resources are used (e.g., water source, workers, equipment, warehouses, etc.).

Requirements for production sites:

- All production sites must be owned or rented and must be under the direct control of the legal entity.
- For production sites that do not belong to the legal entity, there must be a signed document that includes a clear indication that the site owner has no responsibility, influence or decision-making capacity regarding the production operations in the rented area. There must also be written contracts in place between each owner of the production sites and the legal entity, which includes the following elements:
  - Name and legal identification of the certificate holder/producer member.
  - Name and/or legal identification of the owner of the production site.
  - Contact address of the site owner.
  - Details of each production site.
  - The signature of the representatives of both parties.
- The certificate holder is legally responsible for all the registered production, including the distribution of the product on the market.

1.2.5. Evaluation of Request Form and Issuing of Working Order.

The Operations Manager, the GLOBALG.A.P. Scheme Manager or the Technical Department (approved auditors by ACERTA for the CFM scope) will draw up a working Program by using ACERTA's Customer Relationship Management from the review made to the ***Certification Request Form***. He/she will assign an auditor team, determine the appropriate working days, define the interval of dates to undertake the audits, and inform the auditor or auditor team, in writing, of the assignation and sample to be carried out, and the necessary details of the audit to be carried out.

This communication is called a ***Working Order*** and will include the ***Certification Request Form*** attached in cases where it is necessary; for example, when the WO is issued to outsourced auditors who do not have access to the ACERTA server.

The communication of the ***Working Order*** is reflected in ACERTA's Customer Relationship Management and is saved in the server folder corresponding to the audit in question.

1.3. Previous Visit.

When an applicant requests it to ACERTA, a previous visit can be carried out.

Initially, the designated auditor team for carrying out the work agrees the date of the visit with the applicant usually by telephone or email. Then, the applicant is sent the ***Audit Plan***, where the date of the audit is confirmed, and all the information and activities to be carried out and the persons involved, are detailed. Simultaneously, the auditor sends a copy of this document to the Technical Department, to be registered in ACERTA's Customer Relationship Management and filed it in its corresponding folder on the server.

The visit will be carried out by the auditor team, either ACERTA own staff or subcontracted, and it will begin with an initial meeting with the producer or his/her representative. In this previous audit, the compliance of the producers and production sites detailed by the applicant will be assessed in accordance with the GLOBALG.A.P. Program (production site is defined as a production area - feed mill - owned or rented and ultimately managed by a legal entity, where the same resources, workers and equipment are used). It will end with a closing meeting and the findings will be mentioned to the producer.

The auditor team who carries out this visit will prepare a ***Previous Visit Report***, where all non-compliances detected will be detailed and the applicant will be informed of the continuation of the process moving forward. The Technical Department will send a copy of this report to the applicant within 15 days from the end of the previous visit.

In this stage of the process, the applicant shall not be requested a corrective action proposal, in the event of any non-compliance being detected.

1.4. Audit.

If a previous visit has been carried out, from the reception of the report, the applicant may contact ACERTA in order to request the continuation of the process. In the same way, ACERTA will be able to contact the applicant if the time elapsed since the report was sent is considered, and to know the applicant's intentions as to the continuation of the certification process.

It can be possible that from the initial ***Certification Request Form*** to the audit date, one or more modifications related to the scope to be certified can arise. If any change is made regarding the initial recorded information, the producer shall inform ACERTA to carry out the corresponding changes.

Only in the case of remote audits, the producer must send to ACERTA the document ***GLOBALG.A.P. & GRASP Agreement for remote audits*** duly filled out and signed as a signal of acceptance of all the conditions applicable to this kind of audits.

REMOTE audits for all certification options will be carried out following the current official GLOBALG.A.P. Remote Procedure in force.

In case the producer opts to use the **Off-site Module**, the process will follow the current official GLOBALG.A.P. procedures, as described below in this document.

Once the Technical Department and/or the auditor agrees on the date of the audit with the producer, the Operations Manager is informed, and the ***Working Order*** is issued.

In preparation for the audit, the auditor will confirm that the information received is correct.

When all the issues related to the scope of the audit have been set, the auditor will prepare the ***Audit Plan*** and send it to the applicant, who must return it signed as a sign of acceptance, to finally be sent to the ACERTA's Technical Department, which will file it in its corresponding folder on the local server. If the applicant does not agree with any aspect, he/she will be able to notify it within the 3 subsequent days after the communication. In this case, the auditor or the Technical Department and the applicant shall have to reach an agreement and a new ***Audit Plan*** will be sent.

The representative and responsible person of the company is aware that only the auditors identified in the Audit Plan or equivalent document can perform the audit and commits to report immediately ACERTA in case of any incidence in this regard, as well as prevent access to the facilities of persons who claim to act on behalf of ACERTA but who are not identified in the aforementioned documents.

The auditor shall communicate to the Technical Department any information found during the audit that it is not correctly

reflected in the ***Certification Request Form*** or in the ***Working Order***. This communication is made through the "Comments / Updates" box located in the "Front Page" tab of the ***GG CFM Audit Report*** document.

Once the scope and duration of the audit has been definitively specified, the client is invoiced for the amount corresponding to the performance of the audit, including the auditor's travel, GLOBALG.A.P. fees, the review of the report and the issuance of the certificate, if applicable.

1.4.1. Audit Development.

The certification/recertification audit will begin with an initial meeting in which the auditor team and the representatives of the company will be introduced. The methodology to be followed during the audit will be explained and the document "Presentation of the GLOBALG.A.P. Program" can be used.

During the audit, the methodology described and defined in the GLOBALG.A.P. Program will be followed.

In the case of a multi-site producer Option 1 without QMS, before the certificate can be issued, all production sites where the products registered for certification are produced must be audited, the result must be combined into a single checklist that include all registered sites and summarize the result for the entire legal entity (producer).

At the end of the complete audit process carried out by ACERTA, ACERTA must prepare a complete written report that summarizes the audit activity carried out, provides evidence and objective information on how the producer meets the requirements of the standard and, when applicable, list the non-compliances and/or non-conformities identified (differentiating between Major Musts, Minor Musts and Recommendations).

The audit will end with a closing meeting in which the audit team will inform the company representative of the audit conclusions, identifying all the requirements in which non-compliance has been found.

During the closing meeting, the producer representative must sign or confirm the result of the audit carried out by ACERTA (including at least the date and duration of said audit [start and end time], the name of the ACERTA auditor, the scope of the audit carried out by ACERTA, the audited sites, the facilities, the result of compliance [in %] for the different P&C levels and the list of results). A documented or electronic confirmation by the producer is accepted as equivalent to the producer's signature. In the case of a digital signature, it must be authentic and valid (i.e., JPG images are not considered valid signatures).

Comments should be recorded in accordance with the audit methodology guide, where available, to allow review of the audit history after the event. Comments should include details of the evidence reviewed during the audit conducted by ACERTA. If no audit methodology guide has been published for a given scope or standard, it is mandatory to provide comments for all Major and Minor Musts, Complied, Non-Complied and Non-Applicable P&Cs audited in all audits conducted by ACERTA. Comments and evidence, such as which document(s) were sampled, which workers were interviewed, etc., should be site and product specific and included in the checklist to ensure that all P&Cs have been properly audited for all applicable sites and products.

Copies of the ACERTA audit report, objective evidence of implementation of corrective actions and/or the fully completed audit checklist must be provided to regulatory authorities upon request, in accordance with applicable national legislation. They must also be provided by default to the GLOBALG.A.P. Secretariat and, when requested, to the Accreditation Body. It should only be provided additionally if the producer allows access by written authorization.

The ACERTA report (e.g., ACERTA audit report, corrective action report), audit checklist (completed and distributed externally), and all audit-related documentation will be protected from editing on the ACERTA server to which only authorized personnel have access.

When the country of destination (registered in the GLOBALG.A.P. Database) includes the USA and/or Canada, ACERTA will provide the final report of the audit carried out, including the checklist of the completed audit, to the producer no later than at the time of the certification decision.

Additionally, if requested by any producer, ACERTA must provide the complete audit report, including the completed audit checklist, within five business days of the certification decision. It is not mandatory to submit the report before it has undergone an internal technical review. If the automatically generated audit report (including checklist) is available in GLOBALG.A.P. IT systems, this report should be used.

When the GLOBALG.A.P. requires it, the ACERTA audit report and the completed audit checklist must be uploaded/transferred to GLOBALG.A.P. IT systems.

ACERTA has an established process for when translations of reports are requested (**SGC Report Translation Procedure**).

The initial audit must cover the full scope, including all stages and activities related to the manufacturing process of each product to be included in the certification in accordance with what is specified in the scope of this standard.

The applicant must have records from the date of registration onwards or from at least 3 months prior to the performance of the first audit; whichever is longer.

Compound feed manufacturing plants should only be audited when **activities related to the manufacturing of these feeds** are being carried out. Units that were visited when compound feed manufacturing was not taking place at the plant cannot be certified.

The Subsequent Audit (Renewal or Recertification) must also be carried out at the time they are carrying out **activities related to the manufacturing of these feeds**. Units that were visited when compound feed manufacturing was not taking place at the plant cannot be certified. The entire certification scope must be audited annually by ACERTA before issuing the certificate. This also applies if the producer changes CB.

Subsequent audits can be performed at any time during the audit time frame, which covers a period of eight months: from four months before the original expiration date of the certificate and (only if ACERTA extends the validity of a certificate in GLOBALG.A.P. IT systems) up to four months after the original expiration date of the certificate. A minimum period of six months must elapse between the two recertification audits. There can be no audit carried out by ACERTA until the producer has been re-registered in the GLOBALG.A.P. IT systems. The second registration process must be completed before the date of the subsequent audit.

a) Certification Cycle.

This is one of the exceptions to the General Regulations of GLOBALG.A.P. v6 for the CFM v3.1 standard which, instead of being 3 years, for CFM continues to be 1 year, as in the previous version.

b) Off-site module / On-site module.

ACERTA, at the request of the applicant, may divide the announced audits—both the initial and subsequent ones—into 2 modules, which must be verified by the same auditor:

- Off-site module: The off-site module must be carried out no later than four weeks (28 days) before the on-site module. It must consist of an administrative review of the documents sent by the producer to ACERTA before the on-site module. ACERTA must schedule a deadline for the producer to submit the documents to be evaluated off-site. That date must also begin the four-week period to carry out the evaluation during the on-site phase.

  Documentation that the ACERTA auditor can audit off-site includes, for example, self-assessment, risk assessments, procedures required in various P&C, analysis programs (frequency, parameters, locations), analysis

reports, licenses, the list of hazardous products and additives, premixtures and drugs used (if applicable), evidence of laboratory accreditation, certificates or evaluation reports of subcontracted activities. Documentation can be supported by interviews and a remote audit carried out by ACERTA of the facilities.

The off-site module should be recorded in the audit checklist, with sufficient comments for specific P&Cs. Comments must be provided for all P&Cs of Major and Minor Musts, Complied, Non-Complied and Non-Applicable, unless otherwise indicated in the audit methodology guide (if available).

- On-site module: The on-site module must be carried out after the off-site stage and will consist of an on-site audit by ACERTA of the remaining content of the checklist, the production process, the facilities/sites and the verification of the information already reviewed off-site. The on-site module should include, at a minimum, inspection of good manufacturing practices and related food safety requirements to determine compliance.

The date, time, and duration of the off-site and on-site modules of each audit conducted by ACERTA must be specifically confirmed by email by the producer and ACERTA.

If non-conformities are found during the entire audit process carried out by ACERTA (off-site and on-site modules together), the countdown to the deadline to close them begins with the on-site closing meeting, when the result of the audit is signed or specifically confirmed by email by the producer.

This system does not reduce the total duration of the audit performed, but allows for more efficient use of time on site. The duration of the on-site module should never be less than two hours.

In accordance with information security and data protection measures and regulations, the producer and ACERTA must mutually agree on the use of the ICT platform for carrying out the audit by ACERTA before its start.

Explain to the producer which documents, activities and facilities are planned to be audited through real-time video transmission (streaming) and which will be evaluated based on records/recorded information. If applicable, ACERTA must also inform the producer of the people who must be interviewed. Check the compatibility of the ICT platform between the producer and ACERTA by holding a test meeting. Encourage and consider the use of webcams, cameras, etc. if a physical evaluation of an event is desired or necessary. Video and/or audio recording, screenshots, and evidence storage should also be mutually agreed upon. ACERTA must retain records of the agreement. If evidence of an agreement is not available, ICT should not be used for the off-site module.

If the use of ICT is impossible due to technical limitations (e.g. no telephone or Internet connection in the feed mill), the off-site module is limited to the review of documents or records.

The feasibility of the audit performed by ACERTA must be determined to ensure that the objectives of this audit can be achieved. The eligibility criteria to determine when it is appropriate for an audit to be conducted using ICT are as follows:

- An acceptable period to perform the off-site module.
- The ability of the producer to designate one or more representatives who are able to communicate in the same language as the ACERTA auditor and to use the agreed platform.
- ACERTA's capacity and aptitude to carry out the off-site module in the chosen medium/forum.
- The availability of a list of activities, areas, information and personnel who will participate in the off-site module.

Off-site module should be performed in quiet environments whenever possible to avoid interference and background noise (e.g., through loudspeakers). Both parties should do everything possible to confirm what has been heard, stated and read throughout the audit.

The off-site module must be carried out in the same way as the on-site module, according to the GLOBALG.A.P. General Regulations (e.g. opening meeting, clarification of results, non-conformances).

The start time, end time and participants of the off-site module must be recorded. Evidence of the opening and closing meetings must be preserved, even if several sessions have been held. The electronic acknowledgment of receipt is

equivalent to a “signature”.

In the audit report carried out by ACERTA, the fact that the audit was carried out off-site, as well as the computer programs used and any technical problems found during said audit, must be indicated.

If a satisfactory connection is not available or conditions cannot be maintained during the scheduled time of the off-site phase, the ACERTA auditor performing the audit may terminate the audit before the scheduled time. This should be documented in the audit report.

The audit carried out by ACERTA can continue later only if the auditor and the producer agree on this. The continuation of the off-site phase must follow the planning previously described. This should be confirmed during the opening meeting.

The following verification means (tools) can be used:

- Interview with the producer's representative. Interviews with workers can be carried out by telephone or video call.
- Video call in which the producer's representative shows the records.
- Video call in which the producer's representative transmits a video of the site/facility to the ACERTA auditor. However, all observed evidence must be recorded on the checklist. Video transmission of the site/facility may be carried out by the producer's representative, or a designated person chosen by ACERTA; does not necessarily have to be an auditor.
- Sending images/videos instantly during interviews. The files must include information about the time and georeferencing of the place, or this information must be available by other means.
- The audit report carried out by ACERTA must contain details about the different means (tools) used during the audit carried out in order to demonstrate the correct application of this procedure.
- ACERTA must inform the producer when, how, why and what to do with the recordings, or take images or video footage. It will also indicate which of these files will be kept as evidence, why, and for how long they will need to be stored. The producer must agree and, if applicable, give consent and send/present/transmit the evidence within the agreed period.

1.4.2. Documents.

The following document will be used during the on-site audit:

GG CFM Audit Report (hereinafter ***Audit Report***): the auditor must always use the current revision of the document. This document is composed of different tabs: ***Instructions, Front Page, Feed Mill Checklist, Traceability Test, Feed Mill Results, CA Plan*** *and* ***Guidelines.*** All of them are integrated in the same document, but the most relevant are listed below:

- ***Feed Mill Checklist:*** The fully completed audit checklist should include all applicable P&Cs, requested comments, results, and objective evidence of the implementation of corrections and/or corrective actions.
- ***Traceability Test:*** the auditor must carry out a traceability test.
- ***Feed Mill Results:*** are the conclusions of the audit. At the end of the audit, the auditor will print the page ***“Feed Mill Results”*** of the ***Audit Report*** and the company’s representative and the auditor will both **sign the preliminary results of the audit** as evidence of this being carried out, and a copy will be given to the auditee detailing the non-compliant control points detected, which can be modified in the technical review and decision phase if needed. An electronic signed copy will be sent to ACERTA. A documented or electronic confirmation by the producer is equal to the ‘signature’ of the producer. In this document the auditor will indicate if the detected non-compliance is a non-conformance.
- ***CA Plan*** (Corrective Action Plan)***:*** each non-compliance will be detailed together with the auditor’s motivation in a Corrective Action Plan – a table that is part of the electronic file ***Audit Report*** – and a **copy of this table** will be given to the producer in order to facilitate the implementation of the corrective actions (if needed), which must be returned filled out together with evidence of the corrective actions implemented.

EMPLOYEE CODES GGAP-GRASP: document for exclusive internal use that collects and traces the name, surnames and position of the people mentioned throughout the justification of the control points, to whom a consecutive code is assigned (e.g. E1) in order to maintain their anonymity in the ***Audit Report***.

During the closing meeting, the producer representative must sign or confirm the result of the audit carried out by ACERTA (including at least the date and duration of said audit (start and end time), the name of the ACERTA auditor, the scope of the audit carried out by ACERTA, the audited sites, the facilities, the result of compliance [in %] for the different levels of P&C and the list of results). A documented or electronic confirmation by the producer is accepted as equivalent to the producer's signature. In the case of a digital signature, it must be authentic and valid (i.e. JPG images are not considered valid signatures).

In addition, the ACERTA auditor will give a copy of the detected non-compliances to the producer to facilitate the implementation of corrective actions (if necessary). This document will indicate whether the non-compliance detected represents a non-conformity.

1.4.3. Products to certify.

a) Initial audits and/or products registered for the first time.

This section concerns producers seeking GLOBALG.A.P. Certification for the first time. and to producers who wish to add a new product to an already existing GLOBALG.A.P. Certificate.

No audit can be performed until ACERTA has accepted the applicant's registration.

Each production process of products registered and accepted for the first time for certification **must be fully evaluated** (all applicable control points must be verified) **before the certificate is issued**.

In initial audits, after a favorable decision is made, a Certificate of Conformity will be issued including those products whose production processes have been completely evaluated.

A new product (initial audit or new product in a subsequent audit) may only be included in the certificate after all applicable points have been evaluated.

A new product may be added to an existing certificate with a scope extension audit as long as all applicable control points for that product are verified.

Products that have been shipped before registration with GLOBALG.A.P. cannot be certified.

Records corresponding to a product prior to the producer's registration with GLOBALG.A.P. are not valid.

b) Subsequent Audits (renewal)

In subsequent years, the certificate issued after the favorable certification decision of the renewal audit will include all the products registered in the previous certificate and registered and audited during the visit. The certification cycle (certificate validity) will be established for each legal entity (GGN) and will be unique and the same for all audited production sites, regardless of the dates on which they have been audited.

1.4.4. Audit results.

In subsequent years, the certificate issued after the favorable certification decision of the renewal audit will include all the products registered in the previous certificate and registered and audited during the visit. The certification cycle (certificate validity) will be established for each legal entity (GGN) and will be unique and the same for all audited production sites, regardless of the dates on which they have been audited.

This is one of the exceptions to the GLOBALG.A.P. General Regulations v6 for the CFM v3.1 standard which, instead of including 10% of renewal audits being mandatory unannounced, is still governed by the GLOBALG.A.P. General Regulations. v5.2, excluding renewal audits for the calculation of the 10% of unannounced audits that ACERTA must carry out among its certified clients annually per scope.

a) Non-compliance (of a control point).

A Minor MUST or a GLOBALG.A.P. recommendation is not met in the checklist, according to the compliance criteria.

Comments on all control points considered non-compliant during the audits must be noted in the **Audit Report**. Always, after an audit, the calculation demonstrating compliance must be available.

For multi-site producers without QMS, the compliance level is calculated for the entire legal entity in a single checklist. Any applicable P&C, common to all sites, is to be considered for all sites.

b) Non-conformities.

Non-conformity (NC): Situation in which a GLOBALG.A.P. rule, necessary to obtain the certificate, is violated.

- **Non-conformities due to Major Musts: 100%** of all applicable control points that constitute **Major Masts are not met.**
- **Non-conformities due to Minor Musts: 95%** of all applicable control points that constitute **Minor Musts are not met.**
- **Recommendations: no minimum compliance percentage required.**

ACERTA will apply the corresponding sanction.

c) Non-conformities due to Contractual Matters.

Contractual non-conformity: Violating any agreement signed in the contracts between ACERTA and the producer related to GLOBALG.A.P. requirements.

The producer must comply with the signed agreements (GLOBALG.A.P. Sublicense and certification agreement and Service Agreement with ACERTA in its current versions).

The producer must meet the requirements defined in the GLOBALG.A.P. General Regulations applicable in its most current version.

ACERTA may impose the corresponding sanction on all products.

Examples: marketing a product that does not comply with legal requirements; false communication from the producer about GLOBALG.A.P. certification; misuse of the GLOBALG.A.P. trademark; failure to make payments agreed in the contractual conditions; etc.

1.4.5. Timing.

The deadline for closing the CA PLAN will be:

I. **If the non-compliance implies a non-conformance:**

(See Control Program (only Spanish version) Chapter 3: Assessment criteria)

The audited company will prepare and submit the corrective action proposal, which shall include the description of the

measures taken to solve the non-conformance, the term for its implementation and the responsible person, as well as the evidence of the implementation and, where appropriate, the effectiveness of these measures. The applicant has the following timeframes to close the CA PLAN:

(i) For Initial Certification Audits and follow-up audits for the addition of new products (extension of scope):

- This section is applicable to producers seeking GLOBALG.A.P. Certification for the first time and to producers who wish to add a new product or production facility to an existing GLOBALG.A.P. Certificate.
- **A maximum term of 3 months since audit date**. If an individual producer does not comply with 100% of Major Must and 95% Minor Must control points within 28 days after an initial audit, the status "open non-conformance (ONC)" is set in the GLOBALG.A.P. Database.
  This is another exception to the GLOBALG.A.P. General Regulations v6 for the CFM v3.1 standard, since, as the Database is still used instead of the AOH, at this specific point what was established in the GLOBALG.A.P. General Regulations v5.2 is followed.
- If the status "open non-conformance" is set and no corrective actions are sent to close the CA PLAN in a maximum term of 3 months since audit date, an initial audit will need to be performed again at producer's expense to continue with the certification process.

(ii) For Renewal Audits:

- **A maximum term of 28 calendar days since the last audit day.**
- Each non-conformance shall be assessed in accordance with section 1.4.4: Audit results.
- **If 28 calendar days have passed after the renewal audit** before closing the CA PLAN, ACERTA will set the status "suspension of product" in the GLOBALG.A.P. database within 24 hours.

If the non-conformance is against a **Major Must, the General Requirements or contractual**, the period given for compliance -before suspension is applied- will be decided between the audit team that carried out the visit and the Operations Manager or Scheme Manager. This period shall never exceed 28 days and may be shortened according to the criticality of the non-conformance in terms of safety of workers, environment and consumers. An immediate suspension shall be issued where a serious threat to food safety, the safety of workers, the environment, consumers and/or product integrity. The decision will be communicated through a direct communication by warning letter.

If no corrective actions are sent in the established time, ACERTA will apply the required sanction. (see point 1.6.3 Sanctions).

In the case that non-compliances are a non-conformance, the auditor must send all the related documents to the Technical Department no later than 7 calendar days after the non-conformance is considered closed, (always within 28 days or 3 months if the Open Non-Conformance Status has been issued) after audit, in electronic format the Audit Report, which will contain the CA Plan, evidence of implementation provided by the company and the auditor's final assessment.

When assessing the corrective actions, the adequacy of the measures taken to solve the non-conformances, their implementation stage and their effectiveness will be considered. For this purpose, other audits, analyses, etc., can also be required, being this determined, in that case, by the Operation Manager or Scheme Manager.

In this case, the applicant will be informed of the necessity of undertaking a new audit, its scope and his/her acceptance, in writing, of the additional costs derived from it, which will be specified also in writing. Once the applicant has accepted

it, the Administration Manager will issue and send the corresponding invoice to the applicant.

II. If the non-compliance does not imply a non-conformance:

(See section 1.4.4: Audit results).

The producer will be able to choose if he wants to make and submit the corrective action proposal, which shall include the description of the measures taken to solve the non-compliance, the term for its implementation and the responsible person, as well as the evidence of the implementation and, where appropriate, the effectiveness of these measures.

In this case, the evidence of corrective actions will be sent to the auditor **within 7 calendar days after audit date**.

If the non-compliance does not imply a non-conformance, the auditor should send all the documents to the Technical Department no later than 7 days after the last audit day if the producer chooses not to submit corrective actions, and 14 days after the last audit day if the client chooses to submit the corrective action proposal.

In both cases, from the conclusions obtained from the assessment of the corrective action proposals provided by the applicant, the auditor makes the ***"Corrective Action Assessment Report"*** – format included within the digital file ***Audit Report*** (CA PLAN) – which includes the table of the Corrective Action Plan submitted by the company, where each corrective action has been reviewed by the auditor, the final result of compliance level and the advice about the certification (or not certification) is stated.

The auditor in charge of the file is responsible for giving the Technical Department all the appropriate documentation in electronic format: full ***Audit Report*** (including ***Traceability test***, ***Final conclusions of the audit*** and ***Corrective Action Assessment***), evidence of implementation provided by the company (where applicable), ***Preliminary Results of the audit***, signed by the auditor team and the company's representative and ***EMPLOYEE CODES GGAP-GRASP.***

1.5. Certification decision.

All the reports will be filed in electronic format by the Technical Department in the corresponding folder in the local server, which is the responsible of this action.

In order the certification decision to be taken, the responsible person, in accordance with the decision-making structure detailed in the quality procedure "SGC Procedure for the Assessment of results", will take into account the levels of compliance described by GLOBALG.A.P.

To begin the decision-making process, the Technical Department will be in charge of providing the documents to be assessed, including at least: ***Certification Request Form***, full ***Audit Report*** (including ***Final Conclusions of the audit***, ***Traceability Test***, ***Corrective Action Assessment (CA PLAN))***, evidence of implementation provided by the company (where applicable), ***Preliminary Results of the audit*** signed by the auditor team and the company's representative (a documented or electronic confirmation by the producer is accepted as equivalent to the producer's signature; in case of a digital signature, this must be authentic and valid, i.e. an image is not valid) and ***EMPLOYEE CODES GGAP-GRASP.***

The Technical Department will be responsible for this process to be completed, providing to the person responsible for making the **decision** with all the necessary documents for that purpose.

The certification decision will not be delayed more than **28 calendar days** after the close of the ***CA Plan***, or 28 calendar days since the last audit day, in the case that non-compliances detected do not imply a non-conformance.

1.5.1. Level of compliance.

For the **decision to be favorable** to the **granting/maintenance of the certification**, the following must be met:

- **100%** of the "**MAJOR**" control points are met.
- **At least 95%** of the "**MINOR**" control points are met.
- Recommendations: There is no minimum percentage of compliance.

In addition, the producer must comply with the signed agreements - **Sublicense and Certification Agreement and Certification Contract** with ACERTA in their current versions - and with the requirements defined in the General Regulations of GLOBALG.A.P. in its applicable version (version 6).

1.6. Notification of certification decision and Certificate.

1.6.1. Favorable decision.

As soon as the decision has been satisfactory, according with Control Program Chapter 3: Assessment Criteria of the Control Program, the Technical Department shall update the information in the GLOBALG.A.P. Database.

The Technical Department will issue and send the ***Certificate of Conformity*** and its **Technical Annex (*)** including all the information required by the General Regulations and according to the information available in the GLOBALG.A.P. Database at that moment. It will be sent once the payment of the invoice has been confirmed. If the payment is not confirmed, the Technical Department will inform the producer about the satisfactory decision and, in the case in which the countries of destination declared by producer include the USA and/or Canada, the Audit Report will also be attached, and will send the certificate once the payment has been confirmed.

In addition, the interested party is provided with the ***GLOBALG.A.P. User Guidelines of trademark and QR code logo*** and the ***GG CFM Notification of results***, and, in the case in which the countries of destination declared by producer include the USA and/or Canada, the Audit Report will also be attached.

(*) Note: This is one of the exceptions to the GLOBALG.A.P. General Regulations v6 for the CFM v3.1 standard which, instead of using GLOBALG.A.P. IT systems. For the issuance of the certificate, it continues to be governed by the GLOBALG.A.P. General Regulations v5.2 for the issuance of the paper certificate and the GLOBALG.A.P. Database. for the issuance of the e-certificate.

Validity dates of the certificate will be the following:

Valid from:

- Initial certification: The initial date of validity is the date on which the ACERTA makes the certification decision.

- Subsequent certifications: The initial "valid from" date for subsequent certificates issued shall always revert to the "valid from" date in the original certificate except when the certification decision is made after the expiration of the previous certificate. In this case the "valid from" date shall coincide with the date of the certification decision.

Valid to:

- Initial certification: Date "valid from" plus 1 year minus 1 day. ACERTA may shorten the certification cycle and the validity but cannot prolong it unless an extension is given following Point 1.11 of this document.

- Subsequent certifications: The validity date for subsequent certificates issued shall always revert to the "valid to" date on the original certificate.

If a certificate that was not extended nor "re-accepted" expires and the subsequent audit (to be performed by the same CB) is going to take place in less than 12 months after the expiration date, a new certification cycle should start. The old cycle can be reinstated by setting the same “valid to” date as before (ACERTA shall apply the rules for initial (first) audit if the certificate expired for more than 12 months).

The cycle remains the same if the certificate was extended.

I. Other considerations.

ACERTA or their subcontracted parties may issue communications other than the certificate related to the producer status (registered, audited, etc.) as long as it is clear that it is not a certificate and it contains the sentence: The actual GLOBALG.A.P. status of this producer is always displayed at:

https://database.globalgap.org/globalgap/search/SearchMain.faces

1.6.2. Unfavourable Decision.

The **certification decision will be unfavourable** when any of the mandatory conditions established for obtaining the certification are not met. In this case, the corresponding sanction will be applied.

When the decision is unfavourable, the applicant may communicate his/her disagreement within the following **30 calendar days** after receiving the certification decision notification, or it may request an extraordinary audit which will have to be carried out within six months, having previously accepted the additional costs derived from it.

If the applicant does not agree with the decision, ACERTA makes a complaints and appeals form available to its clients on its website. Once ACERTA has received it duly completed, the appeal procedure described in the quality procedure “Complaints, appeals and lawsuits” will be followed.

1.6.3. Sanctions.

Three types of sanctions exist within GLOBALG.A.P.: **Warning**, **Suspension** and **Cancellation**.

- If non-conformance is detected, at a producer or at the site level, ACERTA shall apply a sanction (warning, suspension or cancellation).
- Producers cannot change CB until the non-conformance that led to the respective sanction is satisfactorily closed.
- ONLY ACERTA is entitled to lift it, provided there is sufficient and timely evidence of corrective action (either through a follow-up visit or other written or visual evidence).

a) Warning.

A Warning will be issued for non-conformances detected (non-conformity with the P&C, the GLOBALG.A.P. General Regulations or contractual requirements).

If there is a non-conformance detected during the audit, the producer must be served a warning when the inspection is finalized (in the Preliminary Results). This is a provisional report that could be overridden by the Operational Manager or GLOBALG.A.P. Scheme Manager or the decision-making committee for this file, if applicable.

The period for solving the non-conformances is stablished in the point “1.4.3 Timing” of the present GLOBALG.A.P. Control Program for CFM.

For non-conformities that have not been found in the audit, ACERTA will establish the deadlines for implementation of

the corrective actions based on the type and severity involved by the appropriate nonconformity.

If the cause of warning is not solved in the stablished period, the producer will be sanctioned with a suspension within 24 hours.

b) Suspension.

ACERTA shall issue a Suspension when a certified producer cannot show evidence of corrective action in the established time or when Non-conformances have not been solved, after exceeding the warning time.

A product cannot be partially suspended, the entire product must be suspended.

ACERTA can issue a suspension for certain products or for the two possible products included in the scope of the CFM standard (aquaculture feed and livestock feed).

Only ACERTA can lift the suspensions it has imposed.

ACERTA shall issue an immediate suspension where a serious threat to food safety, the safety of workers, the environment, consumers and/or product integrity (e.g. selling non-certified products as certified). The situation will be communicated through a direct communication by warning letter.

If a clear link has been established between a producer and a public health alert outbreak by a competent government authority, ACERTA must impose suspension of certification while a review of the producer's certification is conducted.

If a producer has been declared by a court of law to be violating a national or international law and these actions may jeopardize the reputation and credibility of FoodPLUS GmbH and/or the GLOBALG.A.P. standard, ACERTA must suspend the producer's certificate with immediate effect. If ACERTA does not do so, GLOBALG.A.P. has got the right to inform the accreditation body and change the status of the certificate in GLOBALG.A.P. IT systems, so that it does not appear as valid. In this case, ACERTA must accept civil liability in this matter.

After the suspension is applied, ACERTA will set a time period allowed for correction. This period will normally be one month, but ACERTA reserves the right to reduce or extend this period depending on the severity of the cause of the suspension, but it will never exceed 12 months.

During this time (**period of suspension**), the producer will be prevented from using the GLOBALG.A.P. logo/trademark, License/certificate or any other type of document that has any relation to GLOBALG.A.P.

ACERTA could **lift** it when there is sufficient evidence of corrective action by the producer within the period stipulated by ACERTA (either by means of a **complementary audit**, on-site or off-site, announced or unannounced, which may be a complete inspection or only an evaluation of the evidence presented, whose expenses will be borne by the producer, or by submitting written or visual evidence).

If the cause of the suspension is not resolved within the time period set, the certificate and the producer will be sanctioned with a cancellation. The suspension remains if ACERTA does not lift it or impose a cancellation.

c) <u>Self-declared product suspension by the producer.</u>

A producer may voluntarily ask ACERTA to temporarily suspend one or the two of their product(s) unless ACERTA has already established a sanction previously. This may occur if the producer has difficulty in complying with the GLOBALG.A.P. relevant standard and needs more time to close any non-conformance.

This suspension will not delay the renewal date, nor will it allow the producer to avoid paying registration and other

applicable fees.

The deadline for closing non-compliance is set by the producer himself, which must be agreed upon with ACERTA, but must be closed out before ACERTA may lift the suspension.

In the GLOBALG.A.P. IT Systems the product status "self-declared suspension" shall be set for the respective products.

d) Cancellation.

A Cancellation of the contract will be issued where ACERTA finds evidence of fraud and/or lack of trust to comply with GLOBALG.A.P. requirements, where:

- ACERTA finds evidence of fraud and/or lack of trust to comply with GLOBALG.A.P. requirements.
- ACERTA finds evidence indicating that the producer has made improper use of the GLOBALG.A.P. declaration. Any case of misuse can be reported to GLOBALG.A.P. members Community.
- A producer cannot show evidence of implementation of effective corrective action before the suspension period set by the ACERTA has elapsed.

In this case, the technical department will request to GLOBALG.A.P. database the company to be cancelled and the same day of the cancellation, a certificate will be issued whose validity date is the date of cancellation.

The cancellation of the contract will result in the **total prohibition** (on all products and sites) of the use of the any logo/trademark, License/certificate, or any device or document that could relate to GLOBALG.A.P.

The certificate holders that have had a Cancellation sanction applied shall not be accepted for GLOBALG.A.P. certification **until 12 months after** the date of Cancellation.

1.6.4. Burden of proof.

In the case of information (e.g., MRL exceedance, microbial contamination, etc.) about a GLOBALG.A.P. certificate holder, which could have a potential impact on the certified status/claim being transmitted to the GLOBALG.A.P. Secretariat, it is the responsibility of the certificate holders and ACERTA to refute the claim by verifying and providing evidence of compliance with the GLOBALG.A.P. CFM Standard.

ACERTA may conduct additional audits or on-site visits to investigate claims.

ACERTA must inform the GLOBALG.A.P. secretariat on the results and actions taken within the defined period.

If the certificate holders and ACERTA do not provide the requested evidence of compliance within the period of time defined by ACERTA, the corresponding sanction will be applied.

ACERTA will provide the requested evidence of compliance within the period of time defined by the GLOBALG.A.P. Secretariat, other way, ACERTA will be exposed to be sanctioned according to the sanctioning procedures described in the GLOBALG.A.P. General Regulations.

In case the evidence includes laboratory analyses, accredited laboratories (ISO 17025) and independent sampling (according to the rules as set out in the relevant Control Point) shall be included.

If the certificate holder is facing a claim relating to food safety (i.e. potentially involved in a foodborne outbreak), comprehensive worker welfare, environmental protection or animal welfare, or has been involved in judicial process or been declared by a court of law to have violated a national or international law, and these actions may jeopardize the reputation and credibility of FoodPLUS GmbH and/or the GLOBALG.A.P. standard, the certificate holder must inform ACERTA within 24 hours.

1.7. Scope extension audits.

It is a type of audit that is carried out with the aim of adding a product or a production site (feed mill) that has not been audited in any previous audit and that is currently not included in the certificate, consisting of a complete audit.

The methodology for carrying out these audits is explained in Chapter 2 of the ACERTA Control Program.

1.8. Unannounced Audits.

This is one of the exceptions to the General Regulations of GLOBALG.A.P. v6 for the CFM v3.1 standard which, instead of including 10% of renewal audits being mandatory unannounced, is still governed by the GLOBALG.A.P. General Regulations v5.2, excluding renewal audits for the calculation of the 10% of unannounced audits that ACERTA must carry out among its certified clients annually by scope.

ACERTA shall carry out unannounced audits to 10% of the certified producers in Option 1 during the valid period of the certificate. The methodology to carry out these audits is explained in Chapter 2 of ACERTA's Control Program.

In the case of a favourable decision of an Unannounced Audit, ACERTA will send to the auditee a letter informing of the favourable report issued (***GG CFM Notification of results***).

1.9. Registration of additional producers / production sites.

- **Option 1**:

Additions in case of Option 1 may be carried out during the cycle of validity of a certificate, always subject to a favourable certification decision taken by ACERTA and based on in situ audit or in a documentary study. This decision will be taken by the Operations Manager.

The decision shall depend on the type of addition and the existing risk. That risk shall depend on several aspects: new areas of expansion of the facility, if there are new processing lines for new species (see ACERTA Control Program (only Spanish version) section 2.2.2. - Certification / Renewal Audit), the geographical location of the new production site, etc.

1.10. Extension of the certificate validity.

ACERTA may extend the certificate beyond the 12 months for a maximum period of 4 months (12 months + 4 months, 16 months in total), only if there is a valid reason, which has to be recorded. If the certificate has expired, it can no longer be extended.

The following conditions must be met:

- ACERTA must have the necessary registration documents for the next certification before an extension will be granted (signed contract and sublicense agreement and complete application).
- On producer's demand, ACERTA (the CB who issued the certificate extended) re-accepts the product in the GLOBALG.A.P. Database for the full next cycle within the original validity period of the certificate.
- ACERTA must have written confirmation from the producer for the extension and clearly communicate that this action means that the CB cannot be changed for the next certificate.
- Before an extension is granted, the corresponding official GLOBALG.A.P. system fees must be paid. complete for the next certificate.

- The producer must be audited during the extension period. The producer cannot change the CB for the certificate after the one in which the extension was granted.

- The validity period of the certificate remains the same if there was an extension of the certificate, that is, the next validity of the certificate must be calculated by subtracting the duration of the extension period from the normal validity period of 12 months.

- If the certificate has expired more than 12 months ago, ACERTA must apply the rules corresponding to an initial audit.

The only reasons that are considered to be valid for an extension are the following:

- ACERTA wants to schedule the on-site audit after the certificate has expired in order to observe a certain part of the production process because it was not seen in the previous audit/audit, because it is considered to be a high-risk process in terms of product safety, or to be able to see a newly added product or process.

- ACERTA needs to be able to extend some certificates because of resource restraints.

- ACERTA was not able to conduct the on-site audit and/or the producer was not able to receive the CB audit due to circumstances beyond its control (force majeure) e.g.: natural disaster, political instability in the region, epidemic or unavailability of the producer due to medical reasons.

The producer cannot change the CB in the cycle subsequent to the one for which the extension was granted.

In this case, the cycle remains the same.

1.11. Transfer between Certification Bodies.

Transfer between Certification Bodies takes place when a producer that is found in the GLOBALG.A.P. IT Systems changes from the original GLOBALG.A.P. approved CB (outgoing CB) to ACERTA (accepting CB).

The transfer of producers between CBs can take place when a producer's certificate has expired and also if there is no binding service contract between the producer and the outgoing CB. The outgoing CB may shorten the validity of the issued certificate in order to facilitate the transfer, but always by mutual agreement with the producer and in coordination with the accepting CB to avoid gaps in the certification.

Only producers found in the GLOBALG.A.P. IT Systems and that are not sanctioned will be accepted by ACERTA. Producers must first solve any outstanding sanction before being able to transfer to ACERTA. Moreover, for accepting the transfer, the producer shall sign the ***Sublicense and Certification Agreement*** with ACERTA.

If the signing of the GLOBALG.A.P. Sublicense and Certification Agreement and the date of the audit carried out with the incoming CB are later than the expiration date of the certificate issued by the outgoing CB, then there will be a period in which the producer will not have a valid certificate. In this case, the audit that ACERTA will carry out will be considered initial (see point 1.4.3 a) Initial audits and/or products registered for the first time.

However, if the signing of the GLOBALG.A.P. Sublicense and Certification Agreement and perhaps also the date of the audit carried out by the incoming CB are before the expiration date of the certificate of the outgoing CB, then the decision on certification can only take effect as soon as the previous certificate has expired. In this case, the audit that ACERTA will carry out will be considered a Subsequent Audit (Renewal or Recertification) (see point 1.4.3 b) Subsequent Audits (renewal).

The outgoing CB remains responsible until their certificate expires. The producer can sign a GLOBALG.A.P. Sublicense and Certification Agreement with ACERTA while the agreement with the outgoing CB is still valid. The GLOBALG.A.P.

Sublicense and Certification Agreement is binding on ACERTA only when the outgoing CB has released the unique GLOBALG.A.P. identification number (GGN) of the producer in GLOBALG.A.P. IT systems.

If during the validity of the certificate issued by the outgoing CB, ACERTA detects non-conformities that are not resolved within 28 days, the outgoing CB must be informed so that it can take appropriate follow-up actions.

In the case of a transfer of a producer with a valid certificate with the outgoing CB, the registration of the products in the GLOBALG.A.P. IT systems may not be performed prior to the audit performed by ACERTA, and the certification decision may not be made within 28 days following the audit performed by ACERTA/closing of non-conformities. This will occur with the expiration date of the certificate with the outgoing CB.

ACERTA will keep the existing GGN of the transferred producer.

When a producer is changing the certification body with which they are associated, they will communicate to ACERTA the previous registration number(s) (GGN) they had with the former certification body or any other one with which the applicant was previously registered in accordance with the GLOBALG.A.P. Program. This information shall be detailed in the ***Certification Request Form***. In case of failure to do this, ACERTA or the client must pay a fine of 200€ per affected individual producer.

A certificate is not transferable from one owner to another when a production site changes the legal entity or owner. In this case a complete audit, following the rules for renewal audit, is required. The new legal entity shall receive a new GGN.

1.12. Complaints, appeals and Litigations.

Detailed information regarding the management process for complaints, appeals and lawsuits is available on ACERTA Certification's website: https://acerta-cert.com/en/appeals-and-complaints/