CERTIFICATION GUIDELINES

Integrated Farm Assurance Scope: Crops Base
Sub-scope: Fruit and Vegetables
Sub-scope: Combinable crops
Versión 5.2 Feb 2019

GLOBALG.A.P.

EDITED BY	REVIEWED BY	APPROVED BY	ISSUE No
Technical Department Fecha: 17/06/2019	Operations Manager Fecha: 17/06/2019	Quality Manager Fecha: 17/06/2019	16
Update GLOBALG.A.P. IFA 5.2 Feb 2019. Merged Control Program of Fruits and Vegetables and Combinable Crops sub-scopes			

INDEX

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

1.1. Introduction

This document describes the certification processes for producers to be certified with Acerta for the Programme GLOBALG.A.P. Integrated Farm Assurance (IFA) Sub-scope: Fruit and Vegetables.

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

- The controlled production process of primary products. It does not cover wild/catch, wild fish/catch or crops harvested in the wild.
- 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.
- 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 IFA-GLOBALG.A.P. Programme: Application procedure.

1.2.1. Applicants

An applicant:

- May not register the same product with different Certification Bodies.
- May not register the same product with different certification options
- May register different products with different CBs and/or different certification options
- May not register Production Sites or group members in different countries with ACERTA. (Exception: The GLOBALG.A.P Secretariat may grant exceptions on a case-by-case basis or within national interpretation guidelines).

a) New Applicant

When a new applicant contacts ACERTA in order to get information of the certification in accordance with the Integrated Farm Assurance (IFA)-GLOBALG.A.P. Programme, Sub-scope: Fruit and Vegetables, ACERTA's Commercial Manager contacts him as well, and confirms under which option the applicant wants to be certified.

The applicant is requested some basic information which will let ACERTA make the appropriate quotation.

Next, by the ACERTA management computer system (SIG), the quotation, which will be reviewed by the Administration Manager, is made.

The quotation includes the costs derived from the certification process and a specification of the items detailed in the said costs: application procedure, management of the information in the GLOBALGAP Database, certification inspection, issueing of the ***"report"***, decision taking and at the customer's request, a previous inspection to the facilities. The method of payment 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 quotation accepted in the SIG and files the computerized copy in the corresponding folder in local server.

Once the accepted quotation has been received, the Technical Department will send the applicant the related documentation.

- ***"Certification Request Form"***, document to be sent back to ***ACERTA*** completed to formalize the certification procedure. In this document the information concerning all the vegetable products (species) to be certified will be detailed

- ***"Certification Agreement",*** between ACERTA and the applicant company, document where the conditions which will regulate the commercial relationship are specified. The duration of the contract will be 1 year.
- ***"Certification Guideline"***, document where the activities included in the certification process are detailed.
- ***"Declaration for Options 1"*** (in case of Cooperative societies - Options 1 individual producer)
- ***"Sublicence Agreement"***. Contract between the Certification Body (CB) and the producer. Sets legal framework in order to be granted the GLOBALG.A.P. Certification.

If the producer does not commit to continue with the certification for the next cycle, the CB shall make sufficient provisions to avoid situations where one certificate could be used to cover more than one harvest and growing cycle of the same annually harvested crop, e.g. by shortening the certificate validity.

b) Certification Renewal: Previously certified applicant

Registered producers and/or producers with certified products must re-register annually **before the expiry date.**

For this purpose, 6 months before the expiry date, the Technical Departement 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:

- ***Predefined quotation***
- ***"Certification Request Form"***
- ***"Certification Agreement"***
- ***"Certification Guideliness"***
- ***"Declaration for Options 1"***
- ***"Sublicence Agreement***

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

When a producer changes from one CB to another, it is not considered a first inspection, but subsequent inspection.

1.2.2. Request Form

After the Technical department has received all the documents related to the Aplicant certification request:

- The Technical Department reviews, then, the **"Certification Request Form"** sent by the (including the data provided detailing production sites and Produce Handling Units, the fields, and when option 2, the identification of the producers

- A folder is also opened in local server for each applicant, appropriately identified with its corresponding code in order to file and keep the records.

    - Once the "Certification Request Form" is reviewed, ACERTA will register the producer/Producer Group in the GLOBALGAP Database, (if the producer / producer group is registered with Acerta for the first time) and accept the information related to the request in the GLOBALGAP Database, always within 28 calendar days after the registration, and the Database sends automatically to the applicant a mail confirming the file acceptation by ACERTA and his/her GGN.

    - If the producer has applied for its own GLN, this number shall be reported and Acerta will register the organization under its own number in database and withdraw the GGN accordingly. The GLN replaces the GGN in the GLOBALG.A.P. system.

- The Technical Department assign registration number (only for producers registered with Acerta for the first time)

  The registration number (inscription number) for producers under option 1 and producer groups consists of the word ACERTA, followed by a number of four digits.

  Example: ACERTA XXXX.

The inscription number for producers belonging to option 2 consists of the word ACERTA, followed by a number of four digits (reg number of Producer Group that are belonging to), plus a middle dash and another two digits for the identification of the producer included in the producer group.

Example: ACERTA 0012 – 04

- The Technical Department registers the applicant's request in the Acerta's SIG and create the file number: The file number consists of the acronym "PEU", 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 the system).

Example: PEU.00344-08/001

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 products in GLOBALGAP database. This admission starts the invoicing of registration costs. Only ACERTA is allowed to register and accept products in the GLOBALGAP database.

1.2.3. Request Form evaluation and Working Order

The Operation Manager Scheme Manager or an approved auditor designed by Acerta will draw up a working programme by using the SIG from the review made to the "Certification Request Form". Based on the information provided by Certification request, he/she will assign an auditor team, determine the appropriate working days, and 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, by the **"*Working order*"**.

1.3. Previous visit

At the applicant's request, **ACERTA** will perform a previous visit.

Initially the designated auditor team for carrying out the work agrees the date of the visit with the applicant by telephone. Then, the applicant is sent the Audit Plan, where the date of the inspection is confirmed, and all the information and activities to be carried out and the persons involved, are detailed. Simultaneously, the auditor sends the Technical Department a copy of this document, to be registered in the SIG.

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 the previous audit, the compliance of the producers and farms detailed by the applicant in accordance with the GLOBALG.A.P. Programme will be assessed.

The previous visit will finish with a meeting in which the conclusions obtained will be commented.

The auditor team who carries out this visit will make a Previous Visit Report, where all non-compliances detected will be detailed and the applicant will be informed of the continuation of the process from then on. 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.

1.4. Audit

If a previous visit has been carried out, from the reception of the report, the applicant might 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 long enough to know the applicant's intentions with regard to the continuation of the certification process.

It can be possible that from the initial **"*Certification Request Form*"** to the inspection, 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.

Once the auditor designated has received the **"*Working order*"**, the audit date will be agreed with the applicant (by telephone, email…)

With a view to the organization of the inspection, the auditor / inspector will confirm that the information received is correct.

When all the issues related to the scope of the inspection have been set, the auditor will make the **"*Audit Plan*"**, and send it to the applicant and ACERTA's Technical Department. 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 / inspector or the Technical Department and the applicant shall have to reach an agreement and a new **"*Audit Plan*"** will be sent.

The auditor / inspector shall communicate to technical department any information found during the inspección that it is not correctly reflected in ***"Certification Request Form"*** or in **"*Working order*".**

If the day of the audit, the auditor / inspector considers that it would be reasonable to change the sample because of a justifiable cause, she / he will be able to do it, but it will be necessary to communicate it to Acerta Head Office and under the criteria specified in Chapter 2 Inspection methodology of Control Programe.

Once the scope of the inspection has been definitely set, especially the number of producers included in case of Options 2 and the minimum inspections required (in accordance with the criteria established in *Chapter 2: Inspection Methodology for the certification in accordance with GLOBALG.A.P. Control Programme*), the cost corresponding to the registration fees established by GLOBALG.A.P. will be charged to the customer.

1.4.1. Audit development

The certification inspection will begin with an initial meeting in which the auditor team and the representatives of the company will be introduced, and the methodology to be followed during the inspection, will be also explained by the power point document "Presentation of the GLOBALG.A.P. Programme".

During the audit, concerning both options 1 and options 2, the methodology described in GlobbalGAP defined Program will be followed.

The audit will finish with a closing meeting in which the auditor team will inform the representative of the company of the conclusions obtained, identifying all the control points in which non compliances have been detected (differentiating Major Musts, Minor Musts and Recommendations).

a) OFF SITE / ON SITE MODULE

Acerta, by applicant request, may divide announced inspections (both initial and subsequent) into 2 modules, which shall be verified by the same auditor/inspector:

- Off-site module: This consists of a desk review of documentation sent by the producer to the CB before the inspection.
- On-site module: This consists of an on-site inspection of the remaining content of the checklist, the production process on-site, and verification of the information assessed off-site.

The methodology of this module will be defined in the document OFF SITE / ON SITE MODULE METHODOLOGY.

1.4.2. Documents

The following documents will be used:

1. ***Audit report*** (Cover / On-field Check list / Quality System Check list);
The auditor / inspector must use the currently approved Audit Report file. ***Traceability test:*** The auditor / inspector must carry out a traceability test.

2. ***Final Conclusions of the Audit*** (Field results/Field results with FV5 Major/ QS Results)
Then, the auditor / inspector will print the appropriate page of "***Final conclusions of the Audit"****, *Field results or Field results with FV5 Major (Options 2, if applies) and Quality System Results (Options 2)*, selected from the electronic file ***"GLOBALGAP Check list"*** and the company's representative and the auditor / inspector will both sign the "***Final conclusions 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. An electronic copy will be sent to Acerta Head Office.

The producer/producer group representative shall sign or confirm the inspection and audit outcome (including at least the scope of the inspection/audit, the result in % of compliance for the different levels of control points, list of findings and duration) during the closing meeting. A documented or electronic confirmation by the producer is equal to the 'signature' of the producer.

3. ***Corrective Action Plan*** (CA PLAN) - ***Corrective Action Assessment Report*** (CA PLAN)
Each non-compliance will be detailed together with the auditor's / inspector's motivation in a ***Corrective Action Plan*** – a table taking part of the electronic file ***"GLOBALGAP Check list"*** (CA PLAN) – and a **copy of this table** will be given to the producer/producer group in order to facilitate the implementation of the corrective actions (if it will be necessary). In this document the inspector will mark if the non-compliance detected means a non-conformance.

1.4.3. Timing

The deadline for closing Caplan will be:

I. In the case that the non-compliance requires implies a non-conformance

(see Control Program Chapter 3: Assesment criteria)
The inspected company will be able to make 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. For this purpose, the applicant has:

(i) For Initial Inspections

- ☛ This section is applicable to producers seeking GLOBALG.A.P. Certification for the first time, and to producers who want to add a new product to an already existing GLOBALG.A.P. Certificate
- ☛A maximum term of **3 months since inspection date**.
- ☛ If an individual producer or producer group does not comply with **100% of Major Must and 95% Minor Must control points** within 28 days after an initial inspection, the status "open non-conformance" is set in the GLOBALG.A.P. Database.
- ☛ The status "open non-conformance" cannot be given to producer group members' products
- ☛ If the status "open non-conformance" is set and no corrective actions are sent in a maximum term of **3 months since audit date** an initial audit needs to be performed to continue with the certification process (not necessary the product in harvest).

(ii) For Renewal Inspections

- ☛ A maximum term of **28 calendar days since inspection date**.
- ☛ Each non-conformance shall be assessed in accordance with *Chapter 3: Assessment Criteria*.
- ☛ If **28 calendar days have passed after the initial audit** before corrective evidence is not provided, ACERTA will be set the status "suspension of product" in database.

If the non-conformance is against a **Major Must, contracts, or the General Requirements**, the period given for compliance before suspension is applied will be decided between the audit team and the Operation 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. Thi situation will be communicate through a direct communication by warning letter.

If no corrective actions are sent in the established time, ACERTA will apply the required sanction.

In the case that the non-compliance requires a non- conformance, the auditor / inspector must send all the related documentes to the Technical Department as soon as the Non Conformance is considered closed, within 28 days (or 3 month if the Non-Conformance Status has been lifted) after inspection.

When assessing the corrective actions, the adequacy of the measures taken to solve the non conformance, its implementation stage and its effectiveness will be taken into account. For this purpose, other audits, analyses, etc can be 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 the corresponding invoice and send it the applicant.

II. In the case that the non-compliance does not require a non-conformance

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 evidences will be sent to the auditor / inspector within **7 calendar days after inspection date**.

The auditor should send all the above documents to the technical department no later than 1 week if the producer choose that he does not want to submit the corrective action and 2 weeks if they client choose 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 / inspector makes the ***"Corrective Action Assessment Report"***, – format included within the electronic file ***"GLOBALGAP Check list"*** (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 / inspector, 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 the responsible for giving the Technical Department all the appropriate documentation, in electronic format ***Audit Reports***, ***Traceability test***, ***Final Conclusions of the audit***, ***Corrective Action Assessment Report*** and ***evidence of implementation*** (where applicable) provided by the company.

1.5. Certification decision

All the reports will be filed in the corresponding folder in electronic forma in local server by the Technical department.

In order the certification decision to be taken, the responsible person, in accordance with the decision-making structure detailed in the quality procedure PC-03 "Assessment of the results and certificate awarding", will take into account what is described in the chapter 3 Assesment criteria of GlobalGAP Contorl Program.

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***, ***Audit Reports***, ***Final Conclusions of the audit, Traceability Test, Corrective Action Plan Assessment Report*** and ***evidence of implementation*** provided by the company.

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

The certification decision will not be delayed more than **28 calendar days since inspection date, or 28 calendar days** after the producer has shown sufficient evidence of corrective actions, in the **case that the non-compliance requires a non-conformance**

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*, the Technical Department shall updated the data in the GLOBALG.A.P Database and GLOBALG.A.P will send an automatic e-mail confirming the certification of the producer.

The Technical Department will issue the certificate and send it to the holder the **Certificate of conformity and Technical Annex**, including all the information required by the General regulations and according to the information available in the GlobalGAP Database and will send it together with GLOBALGAP User guidelines of trademark once the payment has been confirmed.

If the payment is not confirmed, the technical department will inform to the producer about the satisfactory decision and will send the certificate once the payment has been confirmed.

Validity dates of the certificate will be the following:

Valid from:

Initial certification: The initial date of validity is the date on which the CB makes the certification decision (e.g. 8 February 2016).

Subsequent certifications: The "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 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.

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

If a new product is added during the validity of a certificate, the certification cycle (valid from-valid to) is kept as it was.

If a certificate that was not extended and not "re-accepted" expires and the subsequent inspection (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) inspection if the certificate expired for more than 12 months)

The cycle remains the same if the certificate was extended.

a) 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: www.globalgap.org/search.

b) Initial inspections and Crops registered for the first time.

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

No inspection can take place until Acerta has accepted the applicant's registration.

Each production process for products registered and accepted for certification for the first time must be **completely assessed** (all applicable control points must be verified) **prior to issuing the certificate**.

In initial inspections, once the decision is favorable, a Certificate will be issued including allt he products whose production process has been completely assessed.

A product that has not yet been harvested after an initial audit, or a new product (not registered in previous cycle) in a renewal audit, shall not be included in the certificate.

It is possible to add a new product to an already existing certificate during an unannounced inspection (Option 1 without QMS) or during a surveillance inspection (Option 2/Option 1 with QMS), provided all applicable control points for this product are verified.

Products that are harvested before registration with GLOBALG.A.P. cannot be certified.

Records that relate to harvest or product handling before the producer has registered with GLOBALG.A.P. are not valid.

In case of multiple crops included in the certification process, of which all requirements of the protocol could not be inspected in harvest during the main inspection will be followed the rules specified in the point Control Program point 2.2.2 Certification / Renewal Inspection: section IV. Moment – Multiple crops. Only with a favorable decision for this evaluation, the Certificate and Technical Annex can be modified to include all the crops.

c) Renewal crops

In the subsequent years, the certificate issued after the favorable decision of the renewal audit, will include all the renewal crops (those that were registered and inspected for this cycle and contained in previous certificate) although all of these crops were not inspected during harvest.

1.6.2. Unfavorable decision

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

If the applicant did not agree with the decision, the Technical Department will provide him/her the Appeals record. Once ACERTA has received it duly completed, the appeal procedure described in the quality procedure PC-05, “Complaints, appeals and lawsuits” will start.

1.7. Surveillance Inspections

The surveillance inspections is carried out in order to add a crop, if a crop has not been inspected during the initial/renewal audit, according to the point 2.2.2 Certification / Renewal Inspection: section IV. Moment – Multiple crops.

When acertificate holder, producer / Producer group, wants to add a surface (field, production site…) that currently is not include in the certificate, the situation will be evaluated as described in 1.10 Registration of additional producers/Production Sites, and it will be decided if a surveillance audit is needed.

Also, ACERTA shall carry out surveillance inspections of producers to all the companies certified under option 2 during the valid period of the certificate.

Methodology for these audits is described in Control Program Chapter 2: Inspection Methodology.

1.8. Unannounced Surveillance Audits

ACERTA shall carry out unannounced audits to 10% certificated producers in option 1 during the valid period of the certificate.

ACERTA shall carry out unannounced audit of quality system to 10% certificated producers in option 2 during the valid period of the certificate.

The methodology, to carry out these audits, is explained in the Chapter 2: Inpection Methodology of the control programme of ACERTA.

In the case of a favorable **report** of **Unannounced Surveillance Inspections**, ACERTA will send to the auditee a letter informing of the favorable report issued.

1.9. Unannounced Reward Program

Option 1 Producers and Option 1 Multisites without QMS producers may opt to participate in the Unannounced Reward Program. The caracteristics of the program are:

- The applicant will inform to Acerta that is interested in being audited under this program by selecting the corresponding option in Certification request during the registration process.
- Under the Unannounced Reward Program, producers will be excluded from the additional 10% unannounced inspection. However, the annual inspection will be unannounced following the same rules described for unannounced audits.
- Inspections under the Unannounced Reward System shall always be carried out using the entire IFA checklist, according to the relevant scopes and sub-scopes.
- Participants of the Unannounced Reward Program are excluded from the off-site module inspection methodology.
- Participation in the Unannounced Reward Program is registered as an attribute in the GLOBALG.A.P. Database.
- In justified circumstances (e.g. complaint follow up), CBs still have the right to schedule unannounced inspections during the certificate validity period.
- If the producer also needs to be audited for an add-on and the add-on rules explicitly exclude unannounced add-on assessments, the producer will not be able to participate in the Unannounced Reward Program.

1.10. Registration of additional producers/farms/Production Sites

a) Option 1

Additions in case of Options 1 may be carried out during the cycle of validity of a certificate in place, 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 extension and the existing risk. That risk shall depend on several aspects: **the percentage extension, if there are new crops, if the crop belongs to a group of crops previously inspected** (see section 2.3.2. - Certification / Renewal Audit), **the location of the new farm, etc**.

b) Option 2 and Option 1 with QMS

During the period of validity of the Certificate, new Producers (in Option 2) / Production Sites (in Option 1 MultiSite with QMS) may be added to the list of registered producers / production Sites. The producer group or Option 1 MultiSite with QMS is responsible for communicating, immediately, any addition or withdrawal to/from the previous list to ACERTA.

Up to 10% of new Producers/Production Sites in one year can be added to the certified list without the necessary requirement of a new audit.

When the number of approved registered producers (in Option 2) or production sites (in Option 1 multisites with QMS) increase by more than 10% in one year, or a Certificate holder wants to register a new crop, then, a surveillance audit for scope extension is needed.

Regardless of the percentage by which the number of approved registered producers / production sites increases in one year, when the newly registered farms increase the area of previously approved registered products by more than 10% in one year, or there is a change of 10% in the producers (in Option 2) or production sites (in Option 1 multisites with QMS), a surveillance audit for scope extension is needed.

Moreover, members of a producer group can leave the Group and register with another group with any of the products that have been registered before under the following conditions:

- There isn't any pending sanction on the Group member issued by the Group or any issues, relevant to a producer Group member, raised by ACERTA that have not been closed out,
- The contract between the group and the member is respected,
- When the group has ceased to exist and/or is cancelled by ACERTA
- Or in special cases where FoodPlus needs to agree on, case by case.

1.11. 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. Always meeting the following conditions:

- The product is re-accepted in the GLOBALG.A.P Database for a full next cycle within the original validity period of the certificate.
- The full certification license fee and registration fee shall be paid for the next cycle
- The producer shall be re-inspected during that extension period

Here are the only reasons that are considered to be valid:

- Acerta wants to schedule the on-site inspection/audit after the certificate has expired in order to observe a certain part of the production process, because it has not been seen in the previous inspection/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, process or a new or particular member of a producer group.
- Acerta needs to be able to extend some certificates because of resource restraints.
- Acerta was not able to conduct the on-site inspection/audit and/or the producer was not able to receive the CB inspection 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.

1.12. Transfer between Certification Bodies

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

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

ACERTA will keep the existing GGN of the transferred producer.

When a producer or producer group is changing the certification body with which they are associated, they will communicate to ACERTA Certificación, S.L. the previous registration number(s) 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. Programme. This information shall be detailed in the ***"Certification Request Form"***. Failure to do this will result in a surcharge of the registration fee of EURO 100 to an Option 1 producer and EURO 500 to an option 2 producer group, that will be charged to the producer or producer group

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

Individual producer members of a producer group are not allowed to leave the group and register with another group (for the products registered) if there is any pending sanction on the producer issued by the group, or there are any issues relevant to the producer raised by the CB that have not been closed.

1.12.1. Producer Transfer

This type of transfer of a producer from one CB to ACERTA takes place after the producer's certificates has expired and also if there is no binding service contract between producer and the original CB. The producer will apply for certification for the next cycle to ACERTA. It is not necessary to wait until the current certificate is expired to initiate certification request to Acerta.

The Operations Manager or Scheme Manager or the Technical Department will carry out, by the database and documents provided a review of the certification status of the potential customer prior to its transfer.

Minimum Requirements to be reviewed:

- Firstly, **a search in the GLOBALG.A.P. Database** will be carried out, in order to verify the current status of the producer and the certificate – in terms of authenticity, duration, and scope of activities covered by GLOBALG.A.P., hold in respect of the site or sites wishing to transfer.
- In particular, whether a producer has had **a sanction** applied by the outgoing CB, which **has not yet been closed out**. In cases where sanctions are outstanding, the sanction must be resolved and closed out with the outgoing CB **before** any transfer of the producer to ACERTA.
- Whether any **contractual commitments** with the outgoing CB are still outstanding, which would impede a correct transfer.
- A consideration of the last evaluation/re-evaluation reports, subsequent surveillance reports and any outstanding non-conformities arising there from. This consideration should also include any other available, relevant documentation regarding the certification process i.e. handwritten notes, verification list, complaints received and corrective actions taken.

Two situations are possible:

a) Expired Certificate

If the date of acceptance (signing of Sublicence and Certification Agreement) and the date of audit are AFTER the certificate from the outgoing CB expired, because it is only possible to audit during harvest, there will be a period when the producer does not have a valid certificate.

If the certificate with the other CB has expired when ACERTA receives the request form: ACERTA will carry out an **initial audit (**see point 1.6.1. b) Initial inspections and Crops registered for the first time)

b) Valid certificate

If the Date of Acceptance (signing of Sublicence and Certification Agreement) and perhaps also the Date of Audit is BEFORE the certificate from the outgoing CB expired, the certification decision can only take effect as soon as the certificate expired. In this case, the certification cycle of the producer will remain the same as before. If, during the validity of the certificate issued by the outgoing CB, the accepting CB detects non-conformities that are not closed after 28 days, the Acerta shall inform GloobalGAP about the non-conformities detected so it can be taken appropriate actions.

If the producer has a current certificate with the other CB when ACERTA receives the request form: ACERTA will carry out a **renewal audit**. **(**see point 1.6.1. c) Renewal crops)

If during a producer transfer, during renewal audit, Acerta has not seen the harvest of all products included in the certification scope, an unannounced inspection (within the 10% rule) shall be scheduled during the following 12 months, in order to inspect the harvest process of products not seen.

1.13. Complaints, Appeals and Lawsuits

For the purposes of this document, the following definitions are established:

Complaint: Act by which a natural or legal person states his/her disagreement with ACERTA's procedures in any issue related to its activity (administrative, economic, technical, etc).

Appeal: Act by which a natural or legal person states his/her disagreement with a decision made by ACERTA.

Lawsuit: Act by which a natural or legal person or even ACERTA decides to settle the resolution of any discrepancy to the arbitration of a third party.

Complaints

Any natural or legal person will be the right to issue a complaint against ACERTA. The complaints may be communicated oral or in writing. In both cases, ACERTA shall record it in the corresponding Complaints Form. The complaint will be internally assessed by ACERTA. Where required by the complaint, the applicant will be informed of the decisions adopted as soon as possible.

Appeals

Any customer or applicant for certification will have the right to give notice of appeal against the decisions adopted by ACERTA. In this case, he/she shall have to communicate it in writing (fax or letter) addressed to ACERTA's Management, using for this purpose the Appeals Form, and explaining the reasons by which he/she does not agree with the decision adopted. ACERTA's Management will assess the case and will inform the applicant of the decisions adopted within a maximum period of 10 days.

The decisions made are not susceptible to be appealed again.

Lawsuits

In order to solve the lawsuits arising in connection with the certification or any other activity between ACERTA and other party, these will be ruled by arbitration of the Madrid Chamber of Commerce and Industry, by one or more arbitrators to be appointed in accordance with those rules.