

IFS Food Doctrine



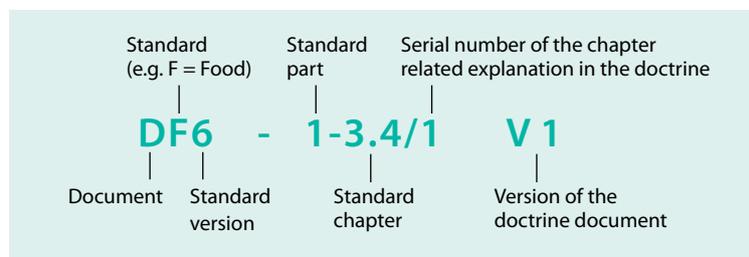
Foreword

This document provides additional clarification to the IFS Food Standard published in April 2014. The doctrine is available to certification bodies, certified companies and all other IFS users.

All explanations and decisions of this document apply from the date of its publication unless a different date of application is specified.

The following doctrine is a collection of several descriptive documents. Each document has its own name and the first three signs indicate the type of document. In the example below, the first two letters stand for Doctrine Food, and the number 6 for the Standard version 6. The second section of the name specifies the part of the Standard to which the documents refers. (The IFS Food Standard is divided into different parts which are again subdivided into different chapters.) The third section indicates the chapter of the Standard and the number after the backslash marks the number of the explanation in the doctrine itself.

E.g. DF6-1-3.4/1 V 1 means the document is the first IFS Food doctrine explanation which refers to the chapter 3.4 in the first part of the IFS Food version 6.



The document name is followed by the version of the Doctrine document to enable the reader to follow the changes.

This new document system enables the user to exchange only the modified pages instead of the whole document. All changes are described in the content overview on the first pages and these pages will be updated with each change. Please note that the comment “reworked wording” indicates a grammatical correction or improvement of the language flux. Any changes of the content are additionally marked.

In the digital version of the doctrine links allow users to search for specific clarifications. Clicking on the explanation of interest will lead to the relevant document.

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EXTRACT FROM THE IFS FOOD V6, APRIL 2014

PART 1 – 3. Types of audit

1.3.4 Extension audit

In specific situations, such as new products and/or processes to be included in the audit scope or each time the audit scope would need to be updated on the certificate, then, for an IFS Food certified company, it is not necessary to perform a complete new audit, but to organize an on-site extension audit during the validity period of the existing certificate. The certification body is responsible for determining relevant requirements to be audited and relevant audit duration. The report of this extension audit shall be represented as an annex adjoined with the current audit report. Conditions for passing the extension audit (relative score $\geq 75\%$) are the same as normal one, but only focused on specific requirements which have been audited; the original audit score does not change.

If the extension audit demonstrates compliance, the certificate shall be updated with the new scope and uploaded in the audit portal.

The updated certificate shall keep the same due date of end of validity as the current certificate.

If, during the extension audit, a Major non-conformity or a KO (Knock Out non-conformity) has been identified, the full audit is failed and the current certificate shall be suspended as described in 5.8.1 and 5.8.2.

> 1.3.4	Extension audit
> 1.3.4.1 DF6-1-3.4/1 V1	When an extension audit has been performed, how is the renewal audit managed during the following year?
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CLARIFICATION ON PART 1 – 3.4 EXTENSION AUDIT

1.3.4.1 When an extension audit has been performed, how is the renewal audit managed during the following year?

The renewal audit shall include the activity which has been audited during the extension audit (all in one certificate).

In case of seasonal products, there will be one renewal audit and one extension audit, in order to cover all products and processes.

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CLARIFICATION ON PART 1 – 3.4 EXTENSION AUDIT

1.3.4.2 If a company manufactures products at different periods over the course of the year, how can they ensure coverage of the IFS Food certificate?

Example of a company processing two kinds of products (A and B) in different periods of the year.

- During the “main” initial audit, the audit shall be focused on the processing activities of products A and on the documentation related to processing of products B. After this audit, the certificate should specify: “Production of products A – production of products B will be checked during an extension audit in month X”
- After the extension audit, the certificate should be updated and specify: “Production of products A and B”
- After the renewal audit, the certificate should mention: “Production of products A and B” and an extension audit shall be performed at a later time to verify on-site the processing activities of products B.
- Same procedure as above for the next renewal audits, annually.

CLARIFICATION ON PART 1 – 3.4 EXTENSION AUDIT

1.3.4.3 In which situations should an extension audit be performed in order to fulfil the IFS requirement specifying that “Lines shall be working during the audit”?

Extension audits shall be performed to observe processes which were not working during the audit. However, the application scope of this requirement should be limited to avoid that extension audits are systematically performed for lines which were not working during the audit.

Therefore, an extension audit shall be performed as long as HACCP study (and especially the CCP's) and/ or product and/ or tech scopes are different from the one(s) audited during the “main” audit.

CLARIFICATION ON PART 1 – 3.4. EXTENSION AUDIT

1.3.4.4. In case of seasonal processes, how should the audit process be managed?

In case of seasonal processes (e.g. wine making process), the “main” audit shall always be performed during the most hazardous processing step (e.g. bottling for wine). It shall be guaranteed that all processes which have an impact on food safety are audited even if the processes are seasonal. If it is not possible for the auditor to assess the different processing steps when not operating at the same time, there are two possibilities:

- No extension audit is performed to assess the steps which couldn't be audited when operating during the main audit.
- The certificate shall only specify the processing step(s) which has/ have been audited (e.g. bottling of wine)
- An extension audit is performed to assess the steps which couldn't be audited when operating during the main audit and the certificate shall specify all the audited steps of the process.

The key rule is that the certificate shall be transparent and shall only specify what has been audited when operating.

CLARIFICATION ON PART 1 – 3.4 EXTENSION AUDIT

1.3.4.5 Processing of sparkling wine: when to perform the audit?

For the production of sparkling wine and champagne via bottle fermentation, there are two sensitive processing steps:

- Tirage: operation of re-fermentation in which after the first bottling step, the bottle is opened again to add extra yeasts before re-closing the bottle)
- Disgorging: operation after the re-fermentation in which the sediments are removed via the ejection of the temporary cup previously frozen.

Therefore both two steps of tirage and disgorging shall be assessed on-site during an IFS Food audit.

When using tank fermentation procedures, at least the filling must be audited.

EXTRACT FROM THE IFS FOOD V6, April 2014:

PART 1 – 4. Scope of the audit

1.4.1 Management of product exclusion from the audit scope

IFS Food is a Standard for auditing retailer and wholesaler branded food product suppliers and also other food product manufacturers and only concerns food processing companies or companies that pack loose food products. IFS Food can only be used when a product is “processed” or when there is a hazard for product contamination during the primary packing. As a result, IFS Food shall not apply to the following activities:

- importation (offices, e.g. typical broker companies)
- transport, storage and distribution.

For clarification of the scope determination between IFS Food and other IFS Standards (Broker, Logistics, Cash & Carry/Wholesale and HPC) please see Annex 1.

The scope of the audit shall be defined and agreed between the company and the certification body before the audit takes place. The scope shall be clearly and unambiguously stated in the contract between the company and the certification body, in the audit report and on the certificate.

The audit shall be performed at a time to ensure the full scope of products and processes, as mentioned in the report and on the certificate, can be effectively assessed.

If, between two certification audits, new processes or products different from those included in the scope of the current IFS audit are implemented (e.g. seasonal products), the certified company shall immediately inform its certification body, who shall perform a risk assessment to decide whether an extension audit should be performed or not (see also 3.4). The results of this risk assessment, based on hygiene and safety risks, shall be documented.

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// 1.4.1 Management of product exclusion from the audit scope

The audit shall be specific to the site where all the processing of the product is undertaken. Where decentralised structures exist and the audit of a certain location is insufficient for gaining a complete view of the company's processes, then all other relevant facilities shall also be included in the audit. Full details shall be documented within the company profile in the audit report.

The audit scope shall include the complete activity of the company (i.e. the same kind of production on several lines for products under supplier brands and retailer/wholesaler brands) and not only the production line for retailer/wholesaler branded products. The scope shall be reviewed and agreed at the beginning of the audit after an initial risk assessment. Furthermore, the scope can be modified after the risk assessment (for instance, if a further activity interferes with the one concerned by the audit scope).

The audit scope shall make reference to the audited product scopes and technology scopes (see Annex 3).

[...]

If, under exceptional circumstances, the company decides to exclude specific product ranges (product lines) from the scope of the audit, then this shall be clearly noted and included in the audit report and on the IFS certificate.

> 1.4.1	Management of product exclusion from the audit scope
> 1.4.1.1 DF6-1-3.4/1 V 1	What are the IFS rules for accepting exclusions in the audit scope, as exclusions should be managed under exceptional circumstances?"
> 1.4.2	Management of outsourced processes
> 1.4.2.1 DF6-1-4.2/1 V 1	How are outsourced processes managed in IFS Food? Should they be included in the audit scope? Should they be audited on-site?
> 1.4.3	Management of trade products
> 1.4.3.1 DF6-1-4.3/1 V 1	What is the definition of trade products and can those be included in the scope of an IFS Food audit?
> 1.4.4	Scope of application
> 1.4.4.1 DF6-1-4.4/1 V 2	Origin certification and other certification under specific regulations

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CLARIFICATION ON PART 1 – 4. SCOPE OF THE AUDIT

1.4.1.1 What are the IFS rules for accepting exclusions in the audit scope, as exclusions should be managed “under exceptional circumstances”?

By definition, all processes which are managed by the company/ legal entity, on the same site, and which are under their responsibility shall be included in the scope of an IFS Food audit.

All processes and products shall be included in the audit scope. The identification of exclusions shall only be an exceptional situation and can only be related to product exclusions.

Only for those exceptional situations where the audited company would like to exclude product(s) from the scope, IFS has developed a questionnaire to be completed by certification bodies, in order to determine if exclusions are possible. The auditor shall always check during the audit if defined exclusions are relevant and in line with the questionnaire. This questionnaire is available in the IFS login area.

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CLARIFICATION ON PART 1 – 4. SCOPE OF THE AUDIT

1.4.2 Management of outsourced processes

1.4.2.1 How are outsourced processes managed in IFS Food version 6?

If a food processing site being IFS Food audited outsources parts or all of its processes, including packaging, to another site, the requirements of relevant chapters shall be assessed and the following rule applies:

Requirements for the site being IFS Food audited:

- **Scope of certification:** product and technology scopes applicable for the site being IFS Food audited.
- **Certificate and report:** the following sentence shall be added beneath the description of products and processes: "Beside own production, company has outsourced processes and/or products."
- **Company profile:** detailed description of processes and/or products outsourced and related certification status of the site appointed for the outsourcing process.
- **Auditor competences:** auditor qualification for product/s and processes of the site being IFS Food audited.
- **Audit time calculation:** audit duration related to the product/s and processes of the site being IFS Food audited.

Requirements for the site appointed to carry out the outsourced process (part or full process):

- IFS Food certification is required, unless the customer has accepted other conditions (written confirmation required).
- If there is no IFS Food certificate and no written customer confirmation, the food safety and quality management system for outsourced process(es) and/or products must be assessed during the audit.

Note:

- 1) Outsourced storage and/ or transport activities shall not be considered as outsourced processes and shall be managed in relevant IFS Food chapters (4.14 and 4.15), especially through the assessment of requirements 4.14.6 and 4.15.7.
- 2) If the outsourced process is freezing and/or thawing process, an IFS Logistics certification is also accepted for the site appointed to carry out the outsourced process.
- 3) The rule of outsourcing applies for both private label products and company branded products.
- 4) If requirements for outsourced processes and/or products are not respected, it may lead to a non-conformity scoring for the site being IFS Food audited.

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CLARIFICATION ON PART 1 – 4. SCOPE OF THE AUDIT

1.4.3 Management of trade products

1.4.3.1 What is the definition of trade products and can those be included in the scope of an IFS Food audit?

Trade products are products which are manufactured, packed and labeled by and under a different company name than the company being IFS Food certified.

Trade products, as above defined, are not covered by the scope of the IFS Food audit. Therefore, the following requirements apply:

- It's not possible to include trade products in the audit scope of IFS Food audit and no specific mention on the certificate is necessary
- it shall be specified in the company profile of the audit report whether the company also manages trade products, but those will not be included in the IFS Food certification.

If a food processing company would like to also certify these trade products (processed, packed and labeled by and under a different company name), a combined audit with IFS Broker shall be performed.

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CLARIFICATION ON PART 1 – 4. SCOPE OF THE AUDIT

1.4.4 Scope of application

1.4.4.1 Origin certification and other certification under specific regulations

Products certified under specific certifications like for example “origin certification” and: gluten free, PDO, PGI and organic may be mentioned on an IFS Food certificate, as some of these products may be private labels. In this case there shall be a reference (on the certificate, on the company profile, or both), explaining that the goal of the IFS Food audit is not to assess the full specification or origin certification, which is subject to a different and separate certification process.

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EXTRACT FROM THE IFS FOOD V6, April 2014:

PART 1 – 5. The certification process

1.5.2 Certification body selection-contractual arrangements

In order to undertake the IFS audit, the company shall appoint a certification body which is approved to perform such audits. Only those IFS approved certification bodies – which shall be accredited to ISO/IEC Guide 65 (ISO/IEC 17065 norm) for IFS Food and shall have signed a contract with IFS (see Part 3) – can carry out IFS Food audits and issue certificates. The list of all IFS international approved certification bodies, by country, is available on the website www.ifs-certification.com.

Certification bodies can have auditors qualified for one or several scopes. Confirmation of the product scopes and technology scopes for which the certification body can perform audits shall be obtained from the individual certification body.

IFS audits can be carried out by an audit team, only if all members of the audit team are IFS approved auditors. Additional requirements for audit teams are described in detail in Part 3 of the Standard, chapter 3.5.

An auditor is not allowed to perform more than 3 consecutive audits of the same company's site (whatever the time between audits); rules in case of audit team are also detailed in Part 3, chapter 3.5.

A contract shall exist between the company and the certification body detailing the scope of the audit, the duration and reporting requirements. The contract shall have a reference to Integrity Program (see chapter 12), in relation to the possibility of on-site audits organized by Quality Assurance Management of the IFS offices.

// 1.5.2. Certification body selection-contractual arrangements

The audit shall take place when products of the audit scope are being processed. The audit shall preferably be carried out in the language of the company and the certification body shall make every attempt to appoint an auditor whose native language or main working language is the language of the company. Furthermore, languages used by the auditor for leading an audit – among native language – shall be approved by IFS offices prior to undertaking audits (see also Part 3).

[...]

It is the responsibility of the company to verify that the certification body is accredited for IFS Food certification.

> 1.5.2	Certification body selection-contractual arrangements
> 1.5.2.1 DF6-1-5.2/1 V2	Are there any IFS rules for the use of translators during an IFS Food audit?
> 1.5.2.3 DF6-1-5.2/3 V1	Uploading documents during the process of borrowing of auditors: new system
> 1.5.2.4 DF6-1-5.2/4 V2	Use of a technical expert within an audit team in specific emerging markets

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CLARIFICATION ON PART 1 – 5.2. CERTIFICATION BODY SELECTION-CONTRACTUAL ARRANGEMENTS

1.5.2.1. Are there any IFS rules for the use of translators during an IFS Food audit?

An IFS Food audit shall be carried out in the language of the production site. Therefore the use of a translator is not allowed if the production site language is:

- German
- French
- English
- Chinese
- Italian
- Spanish (exempted Middle and South America)

In general the audit shall preferably be carried out in the language of the production site. If this is not possible, it is mandatory to use a translator under the following conditions:

- The translator shall have a technical background or shall be an approved auditor for another food safety/quality scheme.
- The translator shall be independent from the audited company, to avoid any conflict of interest.
- 20% of total audit duration shall be added to ensure proper audit performance.

CLARIFICATION ON PART 1 – 5.2 CERTIFICATION BODY SELECTION-CONTRACTUAL ARRANGEMENTS

1.5.2.2 Auditor sharing

To cover all the necessary product and tech scopes of an audit, there are two possibilities to share auditors between certification bodies:

1) Borrowing of auditors

For a spot sharing of auditor, both certification bodies shall compose a short agreement concerning the lending/ borrowing of the auditor. The agreement shall contain at least:

- day of audit
- name of company
- name of shared auditor
- signature of both certification body managers of the IFS contracted certification bodies
- Signature of a responsible person notified to IFS from both IFS contracted organizations

2) IFS certification body working group

If certification bodies wish to share auditors more frequently a short contract can be requested from the IFS office in Berlin. This agreement allows two or more certification bodies to work together by sharing one pool of auditors. The responsibilities for the audits, training of auditors, reviewing etc. are clearly separated. Only audit date and scope can be seen by the partner; company names are invisible.

CLARIFICATION ON PART 1 – 5.2 CERTIFICATION BODY SELECTION-CONTRACTUAL ARRANGEMENTS

1.5.2.3 Uploading documents during the process of borrowing of auditors: new system

The auditXpress™ version released on 30th of March 2016 allows a selection of all IFS Standard related approved auditors.

The rule for lending auditors applies but it is not necessary to contact IFS for the upload of the report. IFS will be informed automatically when audits are uploaded using auditors assigned to different certification bodies.

The search bar can be used to find and select the auditor who performed the audit. Furthermore the lead- or co-auditor status can be assigned at this point.

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CLARIFICATION ON PART 1 – 5.2 CERTIFICATION BODY SELECTION-CONTRACTUAL ARRANGEMENTS

1.5.2.4 Use of a technical expert within an audit team in specific emerging markets

In exceptional cases, when a CB does not have direct access to an IFS Food auditor or cannot sign a short term contract with another CB to access their auditors, IFS allows the following exception. Audits may be carried out by a team consisting of:

- an approved IFS Food auditor, and
- a technical expert

This exception is valid until further notification in the following countries, where there are relatively few IFS-approved auditors:

- Albania
- Algeria
- Americas
- Russia
- Ukraine

The technical expert shall meet the following criteria:

- Have a contract with the CB for which the work is to be undertaken. The contract shall include clauses to ensure confidentiality and prevent conflicts of interest.
- Meet the criteria for work experience laid down in the IFS Food auditor qualification requirements (product and technology scopes for IFS Food version 6).
- Have completed a training course in HACCP or Risk Assessment, as defined in the IFS Food auditor requirements or have demonstrable competence in these areas.
- Have received background training on IFS Food from the certification body.

The CB shall also ensure the following requirements are met:

- Maintain evidence of the experience and qualifications justifying the person's status as a technical expert. This shall be made available on request to the IFS offices.
- The role of the technical expert within the audit team shall be clearly defined and the qualified IFS Food auditor shall be considered as the team leader. The technical expert must be accompanied during the whole audit by the IFS Food lead auditor. The benefit for the IFS Food auditor is that this audit performed with an expert can be used as evidence when applying to a scope extension.
- The use of a technical expert has to be notified at latest 14 days before the audit date as a comment in the diary function of the IFS portal. The technical expert shall appear on the IFS Food audit report in the participants' list.

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EXTRACT FROM THE IFS FOOD V6, April 2014:

1.5.3 Duration of an audit

IFS has implemented a tool to calculate the **minimum** audit duration based on the following criteria:

- total number of people (part time workers, shift workers, temporary staff, administrative people, etc.),
- number of product scopes,
- number of processing steps ("P" steps).

This tool is available on www.ifs-certification.com.

[...]

It is mandatory for all certification bodies to use this calculation tool to determine the minimum audit duration.

The determination of final audit duration is the responsibility of the certification body and may be higher than this minimum calculated duration (depending on the specific structure of the company).

If, through its expertise, the certification body assesses that the calculated audit duration results in an unacceptably high value and needs to be decreased, some flexibility about determination of audit duration is accepted, under the following conditions:

- If the calculation tool provides a duration ≤ 2 days, this duration shall be used as a minimum value.
- If the calculation tool provides a duration > 2 days and ≤ 3 days, the certification body can decrease the duration, but it shall always be ≥ 2 days. In this case, it shall be justified in the company profile of the audit report.
- If the calculation tool provides a duration > 3 days and ≤ 4 days, the certification body can decrease the duration, but it shall always be ≥ 3 days. In this case, it shall be justified in the company profile of the audit report.
- Etc.

The calculated audit duration does not include time for audit preparation and report generation.

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// 1.5.3 Duration of an audit

A normal audit day duration is 8 hours.

Independently from audit duration, besides on-site audit, preparation of the audit shall be at least 2 hours.

1/3 of the audit duration shall be spent, as a minimum, in the production area of the site.

Additionally, time for generation of the audit report is typically 0,5 days.

Note 4: For multi-location companies, audit duration could be decreased by a maximum of 0,5 days, if requirements have already been audited at the central managing site.

Note 5: For an audit team, the minimum audit duration shall be **0.75** day. In addition to the calculated audit time with the above tool, minimum 2 hours shall be added. This additional time shall be allocated to the team and not to an individual auditor for common tasks (e.g. opening and closing meeting, discussion about audit findings, etc.)

See also Part 3, chapter 3.5 about audit team. [...]

> 1.5.3	Duration of an audit
> 1.5.3.1 DF6-1-5.3/1 V 1	Multi-site auditing: is double time reduction allowed (first decreasing due to the general rule in the audit protocol, second decreasing due to the specific rule for multi-site auditing - 0,5 days rules)?
> 1.5.3.2 DF6-1-5.3/2 V 1	Is there a minimum audit duration for an IFS Food audit which should not be decreased?
> 1.5.3.3 DF6-1-5.3/3 V 1	Is there an IFS table with examples of products and location in relevant product scope(s)?
> 1.5.3.4 DF6-1-5.3/4 V 1	What is the definition of "total number of employees"?
> 1.5.3.5 DF6-1-5.3/5 V 1	Use of preservatives in food processes and selection of related P steps to calculate audit duration and select appropriate auditor

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CLARIFICATION ON PART 1 – 5.3 DURATION OF AN AUDIT AND USE OF CALCULATION TOOL

1.5.3.1 Multi-site auditing: is double time reduction allowed (first decreasing due to the general rule in the audit protocol, second decreasing due to the specific rule for multi-site auditing - 0,5 days rules)?

- If the calculation tool provides an audit duration below 2 days, the decreasing of 0,5 days in case of multi-site is allowed
- If the calculation tool provides an audit duration of more than 2 days, only one decrease is possible, which corresponds to the maximum decrease provided by either one or other of the rules for decreasing
- In both cases, reduction shall be justified in the audit report.

[ALL CLARIFICATIONS >](#)

CLARIFICATION ON PART 1 – 5.3 THE CERTIFICATION PROCESS

1.5.3.2 Is there a minimum audit duration for an IFS Food audit which should not be reduced?

Yes, the minimum audit duration shall always be 0.75 days, even for an individual site of a multi-site company.

[ALL CLARIFICATIONS >](#)

CLARIFICATION ON PART 1 – 5.3 THE CERTIFICATION PROCESS

1.5.3.3 Is there an IFS table with examples of products and location in relevant product scope(s)?

A table with examples of products is available on the IFS website and will be updated each time it is necessary.

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CLARIFICATION ON PART 1 – 5.3 THE CERTIFICATION PROCESS

1.5.3.4 What is the definition of “total number of employees”?

If, for instance, the company normally has 300 employees (during most time of the year), but, during one month, the company has additional 100 employees, than these employees shall be inserted in the total number of employees of the company to calculate audit duration.

The company shall count the total maximum number of employees reached during a year (here 400).

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CLARIFICATION ON PART 1 – 5.3 DURATION OF AN AUDIT AND USE OF CALCULATION TOOL

1.5.3.5 Use of preservatives in food processes and selection of related P steps to calculate audit duration and select appropriate auditor

In case any preservatives are used in a recipe – including dimethyl dicarbonate – it is not necessary to select processing step P4 to define audit scope, calculate audit duration and select appropriate approved auditor.

Nevertheless, especially for auditors approved for product scope 8 (beverages), specific attention should be paid during the audit to processes where dimethyl dicarbonate is used (e.g. validation and control of the process).

[ALL CLARIFICATIONS >](#)

EXTRACT FROM THE IFS FOOD V6, April 2014:

1.5.8.4 Specific management of the audit process in case of multi-site companies

- All KO requirements shall be audited at all sites even if some of them are partly managed at the central managing site.
- In the audit report of each site, only the audit date of the respective site shall be mentioned; the audit date of managing site is not additionally necessary.
- In case that a Major non-conformity or a KO scored with D has been issued during the audit of the central managing site, all audited production sites are also affected and the certificates of these sites shall be suspended (according the procedure described above).
- After a successful audit of the central managing site (or after positive follow-up after a Major was issued in the central managing site), the certificates of the production sites can be reinstated. Depending upon which non-conformity has been issued in the central managing site, a new audit of the production sites may also be necessary.

> 1.5.8.4 Specific management of the audit process in case of multi-site companies

> 1.5.8.4.1 DF6-1-5.8.4/1 V 1 How is a situation managed where a deviation, which had been identified during the central managing site audit, has been solved and checked by the auditor during the site audit?

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CLARIFICATION ON PART 1 – 5.8 SCORING AND CONDITIONS FOR ISSUING AUDIT REPORT AND CERTIFICATE

1.5.8.4.1 How is a situation managed where a deviation, which had been identified during the central managing site audit, has been solved and checked by the auditor during the site audit?

If there is objective evidence that the deviation first noticed at the central managing site has completely been solved, it should be possible to rate the respective requirement as an A. This can be accepted under the following conditions:

- The respective central managed process can also be checked completely at the production site and the previously rated deviation at the central managing site can be solved with objective evidence
- The check of corrective actions which allow closing the deviation shall be done during the audit of all sites
- The auditor needs time to check the implementation of corrective actions for this deviation noticed previously at the central managing site. More than likely a full reduction of audit time (0,5 days) would no longer be applicable (as normally this audit situation would make possible). This decision is under the responsibility of the certification body.

EXTRACT FROM THE IFS FOOD V6, April 2014:

PART 1 – 6. Awarding the certificate

1.6.1 Deadline for awarding the certificate

The certification body is responsible for the decision to award or not award the IFS Food certificate. The decision is made by person(s) other than those who have carried out the audit. The certification shall be valid effectively from the date of issue stated on the certificate itself and shall end after 12 months. The date for the renewal audit shall be calculated from the date of the initial audit, not from the date of issue the certificate. If the audit is not performed in due time, the retailers or other users will be informed via the audit portal.

The time between the date of the audit and the awarding of certificate is determined as follows:

- 2 weeks to draw up the pre-report of the audit
- 2 weeks for the company to respond to the deviations and nonconformities (i.e. draw up the action plan)
- 2 weeks for the auditor to check the proposed corrective actions, for the certification procedure and upload of the audit report, the action plan and the certificate to the audit portal.

In total: 6 weeks between the date of audit and uploading the audit report to the audit portal and awarding the certificate:

- Target time: 6 weeks,
- Maximum time: 8 weeks.

> 1.6.1	Deadline for awarding the certificate
> 1.6.1.1 DF6-1-6.1/1 V 1	Is the date to be considered as the starting point for calculating - 8 weeks / + 2 weeks for the certification cycle the first or the last day of audit?
> 1.6.1.2 DF6-1-6.1/2 V 1	Which day is the last day of the certificate validity?

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CLARIFICATION ON PART 1 – 6.1 AWARDING THE CERTIFICATE

1.6.1.1 Is the date to be considered as the starting point for calculating - 8 weeks / + 2 weeks for the certification cycle the first or the last day of audit?

The last day of audit shall be used to calculate the time window – 8 weeks / + 2 weeks.

[ALL CLARIFICATIONS >](#)

CLARIFICATION ON PART 1 – 6.1. AWARDING THE CERTIFICATE

1.6.1.2 Which day is the last day of the certificate validity?

The date of beginning of validity of the certificate is: initial audit date (last day) + 8 weeks.

The last day of the certificate validity is: initial audit date (last day) + 8 weeks – **1 day** + 1 year.

[ALL CLARIFICATIONS >](#)

EXTRACT FROM THE IFS FOOD V6, APRIL 2014

PART 2 – 6. Food defense and external inspections

2.6.1.3. Defense assessment

6.1.3 If legislation makes registration or on-site inspections necessary, evidence shall be provided.

2.6.4.1. External Inspections

6.4.1 A documented procedure shall exist for managing external inspections and regulatory visits. Relevant personnel shall be trained to execute the procedure.

> 2.6	Food defense and external inspections
> 2.6.1 DF6-2-6.1/1 V1	Clarification about the (non) applicability of requirements 6.1.3 and 6.4.1.

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CLARIFICATION ON PART 2 – 6.1 CLARIFICATION ABOUT THE (NON) APPLICABILITY OF REQUIREMENTS 6.1.3 AND 6.4.1.

2.6.1 6.1 Defense assessment, requirement 6.1.3

IFS Food 6 Standard: “If legislation makes registration or onsite inspections necessary, evidence shall be provided.”

IFS Food defense Guidelines: “This requirement is not applicable if no legislation exists in the country where the audit is done and where the products are sold.”

Clarification: “This requirement is not applicable if no food defense legislation exists in the country where the audit is done and where the products are sold.”

6.4 External inspection, requirement 6.4.1

IFS Food 6 Standard: “A documented procedure shall exist for managing external inspections and regulatory visits. Relevant personnel shall be trained to execute the procedure.”

IFS Food defense Guidelines: “This requirement is not applicable if no legislation exists in the country where the audit is done which ask for external inspections and/or regulatory visits or if the company doesn’t export to the uS and no FDA inspection could happen.”

Clarification: This requirement is not applicable if no food defense legislation exists in the country where the audit is done which ask for food defense external inspections and/or food defense regulatory visits or if the company doesn’t export to the US and no FDA food defense inspection could happen.”

As a result, food safety inspections which are performed by authorities are not involved in this requirement.

[ALL CLARIFICATIONS >](#)

EXTRACT FROM THE IFS FOOD V6, APRIL 2014

PART 3 – 3. Requirements for IFS Auditors

3.3.1 Requirements before applying for the IFS examinations

Before applying for IFS examinations, auditors shall have met the following requirements:

- They shall have signed a contract with the certification body (see topic 6.1.3 of ISO/IEC 17065).
- They confirm to the certification body that, for a period of at least 12 months, they will perform IFS audits only for the respective certification body. They may, however, work for several certification bodies on other standards. In special cases, IFS should be contacted and may allow exceptions.
- They shall have participated at the IFS in-house course organized by the certification body.
- They shall have submitted all the relevant information about their competence to the certification body.
- The certification body shall have observed and confirmed the professional qualification and competence of the auditors.

> 3.3.1 Requirements before applying for the IFS examinations

> 3.3.1.1 IFS yearly in-house training: which way of training is allowed (e.g. webinars, face-to-face training, etc.)
DF6-3-3.1/1 V1

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CLARIFICATION ON PART 3 – 3.1 REQUIREMENTS BEFORE APPLYING FOR THE IFS EXAMINATIONS

3.3.1.1 IFS yearly in-house training: which way of training is allowed (e.g. webinars, face-to-face training, etc.)

One requirement of IFS Food is the yearly 2-days in-house training of auditors. The purpose is sharing experience, calibration and updating knowledge of relevant legal requirements.

This 2-day course cannot be performed via webinar only. The 2-day course shall include at least one day face-to-face meeting. The other 8 hours of training can be done either via face-to-face meeting or via webinar, as long as it's dedicated to IFS.

[ALL CLARIFICATIONS >](#)

EXTRACT FROM THE IFS FOOD V6, April 2014:

3.3.2 General requirements for auditors when applying for IFS examinations

Candidates applying for qualification as IFS auditors shall meet the following requirements and provide evidence with the application documents. An outline CV is available from IFS.

a) Education in the food sector

1) A food-related university degree (bachelor's and/or master's degree equivalents) and two (2) years professional experience in the food industry in relation to food production activities (quality, production, R & D, ...).

or

2) If the candidate started directly as an auditor after completing his/her food-related university degree then the candidate shall have five (5) years professional experience in the food processing industry.

or

3) If the candidate has a university degree but not a food-related one, (bachelor's and/or master's degree equivalents) then the candidate shall have five (5) years professional experience in the food industry – in relation to food production activities (quality, production, R & D, ...).

or

4) Professional education in food processing (high degree) and five (5) years professional experience in the food industry – in relation to food production activities (quality, production, R & D, ...).

b) General audit experience

A minimum of ten (10) complete audits shall be performed by the auditor in the food processing industry during the previous two years. The audits shall have been carried out in different companies.

Read more on next page >

c) Food hygiene (including HACCP) training

Qualified training on the basis of the Codex General Principles for Food Hygiene.

d) Training in auditing techniques based on Quality Management System or Food Safety Management System

Duration: one week/40 hours or equivalent.

e) Specific and practical knowledge per product scopes and technology scopes auditors apply for (see Annex 1 for product and technology scopes)

[...]

> 3.3.2	General requirements for auditors when applying for IFS examinations
> 3.3.2.1 DF6-3-3.2/1 V1	Which evidence should be provided to be approved for languages in addition to the native language?
> 3.3.2.2 DF6-3-3.2/2 V1	Specific training program for "Auditors in Progress (AIP)"
> 3.3.2.3 DF6-3-3.2/3 V1	Auditor qualification: product and technology scope

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CLARIFICATION ON PART 3 – 3.2 GENERAL REQUIREMENTS FOR AUDITORS WHEN APPLYING FOR IFS EXAMINATIONS

3.3.2.1 Which evidence should be provided to be approved for languages in addition to the native language?

The following evidence is accepted by the IFS offices to validate another language on the auditor's CV:

- Acceptance of language certificates comparable to the CEFR (Common European Framework of Reference for Languages) level B2 and higher
or
- 2 years work experience in the food sector in the respective country
or
- At least 10 performed audits in the respective language of the country (trainee audits are not accepted), that includes reporting in this language without a translator
or
- For initial approval only: attendance at the oral exam, without translator, for receiving the auditor approval in the respective language.

[ALL CLARIFICATIONS >](#)

CLARIFICATION ON PART 3 – 3.2 GENERAL REQUIREMENTS FOR AUDITORS WHEN APPLYING FOR IFS EXAMINATIONS

3.3.2.2 Specific training program for “Auditors in Progress (AIP)”

In general, the requirements and conditions of the respective IFS Standards Food 6, Logistics 2.1 and Broker 2, part 3, chapter 3, have to be met by every certification body and auditor.

If an auditor has no own auditing experience, a new adaption of topic 3.2 b) of the IFS Food Standard 6 is possible, if the candidate meets the requirements of 3.2 a).

In this case the trainee can attend the exam session before participating in an adjusted program for gaining audit experience.

The other rules for auditors in the Standards are not affected and shall be fulfilled.

Please note: The supervising lead auditor and observer who is witnessing the AIP during the auditing part of the program and the AIP shall be a member of the same CB. This ensures that the improvement of the AIP can be followed up.

Step 1: Curriculum Vitae and further qualification

A complete CV (based on IFS Auditor CV template) shall be sent to IFS. Information concerning education, work experience (product scope competences), food hygiene training (including HACCP) and training of auditing techniques shall be provided.

Step 2: Exams

After the written and oral exams are passed the candidate becomes an “IFS auditor in progress”.

Step 3: Auditing experience 9+1

The AIP must participate in 6 audits of any GFSI recognized “post farm” scheme or IFS Global Markets program. The following 3 audits must be IFS certification audits. The 10th audit is the final witness audit, which shall be an IFS certification audit for a product scope of the AIP’s scope approval.

The auditing experience must be gained within two years after the passed exams.

Read more on next page >

// 3.3.2.2 Specific training program for “Auditors in Progress”

The tasks have to be performed in following order:

N° of audits	Tasks	Possible audit types
Audit 1-3	Shadow Observer	GFSI recognized “post farm” scheme or IFS Global Markets Program
Audit 4-6	Active participation in the audits under supervision and responsibility of an experienced lead auditor	GFSI recognized “post farm” scheme or IFS Global Markets Program
Audit 7-9	Active participation in the IFS certification audit under supervision and responsibility of an IFS approved auditor	Any IFS certification audit under supervision of an approved IFS auditor with the fitting scopes .

Audits 1-3 can be performed before attending the IFS exams.

Audits 4-10 can only be performed after passed exams!

The 10th audit is the final witness audit, after audits number 4-9 have been performed.

! The audit team shall never be separated during the audits.

! Audits 1-9 can be counted for scope extensions and can be performed in any product scope.

IFS Global Markets Food assessments can only be accepted if the assessment was conducted on intermediate level or lasted for at least one working day.

For each of these audits under observation, the respective templates for the auditor in progress program shall be provided to IFS. The audit number (1-9) shall be documented in the report (see IFS website: www.ifs-certification.com). All these templates need to be written in English and shall not only include the evaluation grade, but also the descriptive review of the topic. Only one AIP is allowed to attend at these training audits at the same time.

Step 4: Witness audit in the product and tech scopes of the auditor in progress

The AIP shall conduct the 10th audit on his/her own, witnessed by an experienced IFS approved auditor who performed at least 10 IFS audits. The rules of witness audits for IFS approved auditors apply (see glossary of IFS respective Standard). The observer witnessing the AIP needs to cover all scopes (product and tech scopes) of the audit, as he has the responsibility for this audit. The report of the witness audit shall be documented in an assessment template provided by IFS (see IFS website: www.ifs-certification.com)

Read more on next page >

// 3.3.2.2 Specific training program for “Auditors in Progress”

The audit scope shall fit with AIP’s scopes of competencies.

Step 5: Release of “auditor in progress”

If the witness audit was conducted successfully, the certification body will officially release the auditor and inform IFS. The completed CV and respective audit templates shall be sent to IFS and IFS needs to approve and activate the auditor in the database. Only after this activation date, this newly approved IFS auditor is allowed to perform IFS audits on his own.

[ALL CLARIFICATIONS >](#)

CLARIFICATION ON PART 3 – 3.2. GENERAL REQUIREMENTS FOR AUDITORS WHEN APPLYING FOR IFS EXAMINATIONS

3.3.2.3. Auditor qualification: product and technology scope

Clarification:

For product and tech scopes: Audits shall have been carried out in several production sites. Not more than 3 audits in the same production sites are accepted.

IFS Global Markets Food assessments can be accepted for scope extension in combination with other recognized audits and with the suitable professional background.

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EXTRACT FROM THE IFS FOOD V6, APRIL 2014

3.3.3. IFS examination process

Auditors who comply with the requirements mentioned in chapters 3.1 and 3.2 can take part in an IFS written examination and, if successful, in an oral examination. If successful, the auditor is officially authorised to perform IFS audits. The auditor is registered on the audit portal, and a personal IFS auditor certificate is issued. Starting from the day of passing the oral examination, the auditor is allowed to perform IFS Food audits for the product and technology scopes he/she was authorized for by IFS offices until the end of the second calendar year. The IFS auditor certificate mentions the duration of validity, the name of the certification body, and the auditor's languages and product and technology scopes.

The auditor cannot perform IFS audits when his/her IFS auditor certificate expires. The certification body is responsible to maintain auditor's IFS approval so that there are no gaps during the auditor approval.

During the IFS certificate's period of validity, auditors shall be continuously trained – at least two (2) days once a year – by the certification body on food-related legislation, Standard requirements, audit practices, etc. This training shall be documented by the certification body.

Additionally, as mentioned in 2.4, every auditor shall be monitored by an IFS on-site witness audit at least once every two (2) years. This audit can be performed at any time during the year of end of validity of auditor's certificate.

Auditors' approval shall be re-assessed before end of validity of the auditor certificates. For the re-approval, auditors shall have performed a minimum number of ten (10) IFS Food audits (5 audits per year) (performed as lead auditor or co-auditor, but not as trainee, see also current examination regulation) and shall have participated in a calibration training course, organised by IFS, led by approved calibration trainers and with IFS training material. Subsequent to passing the initial examination, the first mandatory calibration training shall be successfully completed before the end of second calendar year following the date on which the initial examination was successfully completed. Then, the re-approval shall be managed every two (2) calendar years, based on the same rule.

[...]

If either of these rules (a minimum number of 10 IFS Food audits (5 per year) and participation in a calibration training course in time) are not fulfilled, the auditor shall participate again in the IFS initial examination (written and oral). Further requirements for the re-approval process are laid down in the examination regulation.

Detailed regulation for examinations and for international IFS examination schedules are provided by IFS and are available online on the audit portal within the specific area which can be accessed by certification bodies.

- > 3.3.3 IFS examination process
- > 3.3.3.1 Do certification bodies need to send an updated CV to IFS offices for the re-approval process?
DF6-3-3.3/1 V1
- > 3.3.3.2 Language of observers during IFS witness audits
DF6-3-3.3/2 V1

CLARIFICATION ON PART 3 – 3.3. IFS EXAMINATION PROCESS

3.3.3.1. Do certification bodies need to send an updated CV to IFS offices for the re-approval process?

Yes, certification bodies shall send to IFS offices an updated CV of each auditor when registering at the calibration training course.

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CLARIFICATION ON PART 3 – 3.3. IFS EXAMINATION PROCESS

3.3.3.2. Language of observers during IFS witness audits

The observer, during the witness audit to be performed every 2 years to maintain auditor approval, shall be approved for the language in which the auditor performed the audit.

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