



ASEAN AUSTRALIA DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION PROGRAM (AADCP)
Phase II

ASEAN GAP Certification Manual

Quality Assurance Systems for ASEAN Fruits and Vegetables



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1. Preambles

1.1 Introduction

The objective of the ASEAN GAP implementation is to enhance ASEAN agricultural products quality and competitiveness on the international market as well as on the ASEAN market by promoting ASEAN Good Agricultural Practices (GAP).

This Manual serves as guidelines and references for the conduct of national GAP certification by Control Authorities (CA) or Control Bodies (CB) among the ASEAN Member States (AMS) with the aim of facilitating intra and extra regional trade of products originated from GAP certified farms. This Manual was developed based on the understanding that national regulatory and food safety requirements in each AMS which should take precedent. The notes and examples in this Manual aim to provide additional information intended to assist in understanding and use of the document. This Manual may also serve as one of the references for the development of Mutual Recognition Arrangement (MRA) for inspection and certification systems on GAP production.

1.2 Abbreviations

For the purpose of the ASEAN GAP Manuals, the following abbreviations will be used:

ABs: Accreditation Bodies

AMSs: ASEAN Member States

ASEAN: Association of South East Asian Nations

CBs: Control Bodies

CAs: Control Authorities

ICS: Internal Control System

GAP: Good Agricultural Practices

Each abbreviation used at the national and regional level should be clearly explained in the national regulation. The list of useful abbreviations must be the subject of a specific paragraph in the national regulations.

1.3 Definitions

Sharing the same vocabulary will facilitate exchanges at national, regional and international level. In order to insure implementation of equivalent production rules and control measures, use of a common glossary is recommended. It is recommendable that each country lists the technical wording used in the national regulation and give a clear definition for every item. Then each AMS should have a correspondence table between the national wording and the regional and international one.

This work has been done at the ASEAN level. For the purpose of the ASEAN GAP Manuals, the following definition will be used:

'Accreditation' means an attestation by a national accreditation body that a control body meets the requirements set by harmonised standards and, where applicable, any additional requirements

including those set out in relevant sectoral schemes, to carry out a specific conformity assessment activity.

'Applicant' means a legal entity applying for registration to achieve ASEANGAP-standard certification. This applies to single farmers as well as to farmer groups only.

'Audit' means systematic, independent documented process for obtaining records, statements of facts or other relevant information and assessing them objectively to determine the extent to which specified requirements are fulfilled. For group certification where Internal Control System-ICS is applied and established, 'Audit' means assessment of a farmer group's compliance with the standard requirements regarding the quality management system.

'Auditor' means a person conducting audits and complying with the defined auditor's qualification.

'Certification' includes the whole process of assessment, review and conformity determination.

'Certification scheme' means certification system related to specified products, to which the same specified requirements, specific rules and procedures apply.

'Competent authority' means the central authorities of a Member State responsible for the organisation of official controls and of other official activities, in accordance with the national Regulation (Ministry of agriculture, specific department of the ministry of agriculture...).

'Control authority' means a public administrative organisation of a Member State to which the competent authorities have conferred, in whole or in part, their competences in relation to the application of the national regulation.

'Control body' means a separate private legal entity to which the competent authorities have delegated whole and/or certain official control tasks.

'Official control task' means either an inspection or certification task.

'Certifier/reviewer' means a person reviewing the assessment results of inspections/audits and taking certification decisions

'equivalent' means different systems or measures that they are capable of meeting the same objectives and principles by applying rules which ensure the same level of assurance of conformity.

'Food law' means the laws, regulations and administrative provisions governing food in general, and food safety in particular at national level.

'Handling unit' means a production site, where product handling activities take place.

'ICS' means the quality management structure of farmer groups to set up and implement internal control systems for their group members.

'Inspection' means verification of a product-process, service, or installation or their design and determination of its conformity with specific requirements or, on the basis of professional judgement, with general requirements.

'Inspector' means a person conducting inspections and complying with the defined inspector's qualification.

'National accreditation body' means the sole body in a Member State that performs accreditation with authority derived from the State.

'Non-compliance' means the non-fulfillment of compliance criteria of control points.

'Non-conformance' means the non-fulfillment of conformance rules leading to a sanction.

'Official controls' means activities performed by the competent authorities in order to verify compliance by the operators with the national regulation.

'Operator' means any registered person and/or legal entity subject to one or more of the obligations provided for in national GAP regulation.

'Parallel Production' means the situation, when one operator produces the same product(s) in certified and uncertified quality.

'Parallel Ownership' means the situation, when one operator purchases the same product(s) in certified or uncertified quality, which he produces as certified.

'Product handling' means any handling of products done post-harvest, where the product may have physical contact with other materials or substances. It includes e.g. sorting, trimming, packing, storing, washing, treatments, but it excludes processing.

'Private control body' means an independent third party (private) to which the competent authority has delegated certain official control tasks.

'Production site' means a production area (e.g. with separate on-site address, handling unit) that is owned or rented and ultimately managed by one legal entity, and where the same input factors (e.g. water supply, workers, equipment, stores, etc.) are used.

'Related bodies' means entities that may have access to data and/or may be perceived to influence decisions made during the certification process such as IT subcontractors, webmasters, committee members, training organisations, organisations promoting certification or administrative/governmental entities.

'Scheme owner' means person or organization responsible for developing and maintaining a specific certification scheme.

'Surveillance' means systematic iteration of conformity assessment activities as a basis for maintaining the validity of the statement of conformity.

2 General CB and CA (Control Body and Control Authority) requirements

2.1 Equipment/Facilities/Transportation

2.1.1 Equipment and facilities

The CB/ CA shall:

- a) have available to it suitable and adequate facilities and equipment to permit all activities associated with the inspection/audit/certification services to be carried out.

- b) have procedures for:
 - selection of qualified suppliers
 - issuing appropriate purchasing documents
 - inspection of received materials
 - ensuring appropriate storage facilities
- c) have clear rules for the access to and the use of specified facilities and equipment for its staff.
- d) ensure the continued suitability of the facilities and the equipment mentioned. All such equipment shall be properly identified.
- e) ensure that all such equipment is properly maintained, in accordance with documented procedures and instructions. Where applicable the condition of stored items shall be assessed at appropriate intervals to detect deterioration.
- f) ensure that, where appropriate, equipment is calibrated before being put into service and thereafter according to an established programme.
- g) have documented procedures for dealing with defective equipment. Defective equipment shall be removed from service by segregation, prominent labelling or marking. The CB/CA shall examine the effect of defects on previous inspections.
- h) record relevant information on the equipment. This will normally include identification, calibration and maintenance.
- i) If the CB/ CA uses Computers or automated equipment in connection with inspections, it shall ensure that:
 - computer software is tested in order to confirm that it is adequate for use
 - procedures are established and implemented for protecting the integrity of data
 - computer and automated equipment is maintained in order to ensure proper functioning
 - procedures are established and implemented for maintenance of security of data

2.1.2 Transport

The CB/CA shall have reliable transport systems:

- to ensure delivery of inspection/audit and certification services when and where they are needed and
- for the transmission of samples to laboratories.

3 Sampling, Laboratories and Communication

3.1 Sampling

CBs/ CAs shall have clear procedures for sampling methods to ensure, that representative samples are provided to the analysing laboratory. Those procedures shall cover the national regulations for sampling.

3.2 Laboratories

When a CB/ CA outsources evaluation activities of testing and analysing (e.g. of soil, water, pesticide residues) to external bodies (laboratories), it shall ensure that those bodies meet the applicable requirements of ISO/IEC 17025. The impartiality requirements of the evaluation personnel stipulated in the relevant standard shall always be applicable.

3.3 Communication facilities

The CB/ CA) shall provide communication facilities to ensure adequate compliance action and to address potential recalls. Consideration should be given to developing electronic information exchange systems, in particular to facilitate trade, protect consumer health, and to combat fraud.

It is highly recommended to provide a common database (or ASEANGAP database which will be defined in future by ASEAN) for this purpose, which is used by all AMS countries. The database should at least include the following:

- a. Operator code (or defined in future by ASEAN as identification number / ASEANGAP number)
- b. Certification status
- c. All information of the issued certificates
- d. List of cancelled operators
- e. Rapid alert system for exchanging information between the different parties involved

The already existing rapid alert system implemented in the Philippines could be a starting point for this section.

A data protection system and clear data access rules shall be established when providing a data base.

4 Operator registration

4.1 General registration requirements

4.1.1 General Preconditions

- a) The applicant is officially registered as a legal entity in the country of production by its respective competent authority. In the case of competent authorities operating as CBs/ CAs the official registration of farmers may be implemented by the same competent authorities.
- b) CBs/ CAs are obliged to check the official registration status of the applicant with the respective competent authority.
- c) All registered production sites shall be owned or rented and under the direct control of the legal entity.
 - a. For production sites that are not owned by the legal entity, there shall be a signed document, which includes a clear indication that the site owner does not have any responsibility or input or decision capacity regarding the production operations over the rented-out site. There shall also be written contracts in force between each production site owner and the legal entity.
 - b. Products produced in a non-registered production site cannot be certified, and likewise products that are not registered but are grown on a registered production site cannot be certified.

4.1.2 Additional Preconditions for Farmer Groups

- a) Farmer groups can only be certified if the relevant GAP-standard includes farmer group certification in its regulation. In that case the GAP-standard holder defines clear requirements for the establishment of ICS and provides related documents (e.g. ICS checklist).
- b) Farmer groups shall develop and implement a sound ICS with procedures as defined in the GAP-standard.
- c) Farmer groups shall market certified products of their member farmers. As members of farmer groups are no legal certificate holders those are not allowed to market certified products under their name with reference to the group certificate.
- d) Product traceability and segregation
 - o There shall be a documented procedure for the identification of registered products and to enable traceability of all products, both conforming and non-conforming, to the applicable production sites. A mass balance exercise shall be carried out, at least annually, per product to demonstrate compliance within the legal entity.

- Products meeting the requirements of the GAP-standard and marketed as such shall be handled in a manner that prevents mixing them with non-certified products. An effective system shall be in place to ensure segregation of certified and non-certified products. This can be done via physical identification or product handling procedures, including the relevant records.
- Effective systems and procedures shall be in place to negate any risk of mislabeling of certified and non-certified products. Certified products entering the process (either from group members/production sites or from external sources) shall be immediately identified with the identification number or any other reference that is clearly explained in the company policy and provides a unique reference to the certification status. This reference shall be used on the smallest individually identified unit.
- There shall be a final document check to ensure correct product dispatch of certified and non-certified products.

4.2 Scope of registration

4.2.1 Scope

An applicant:

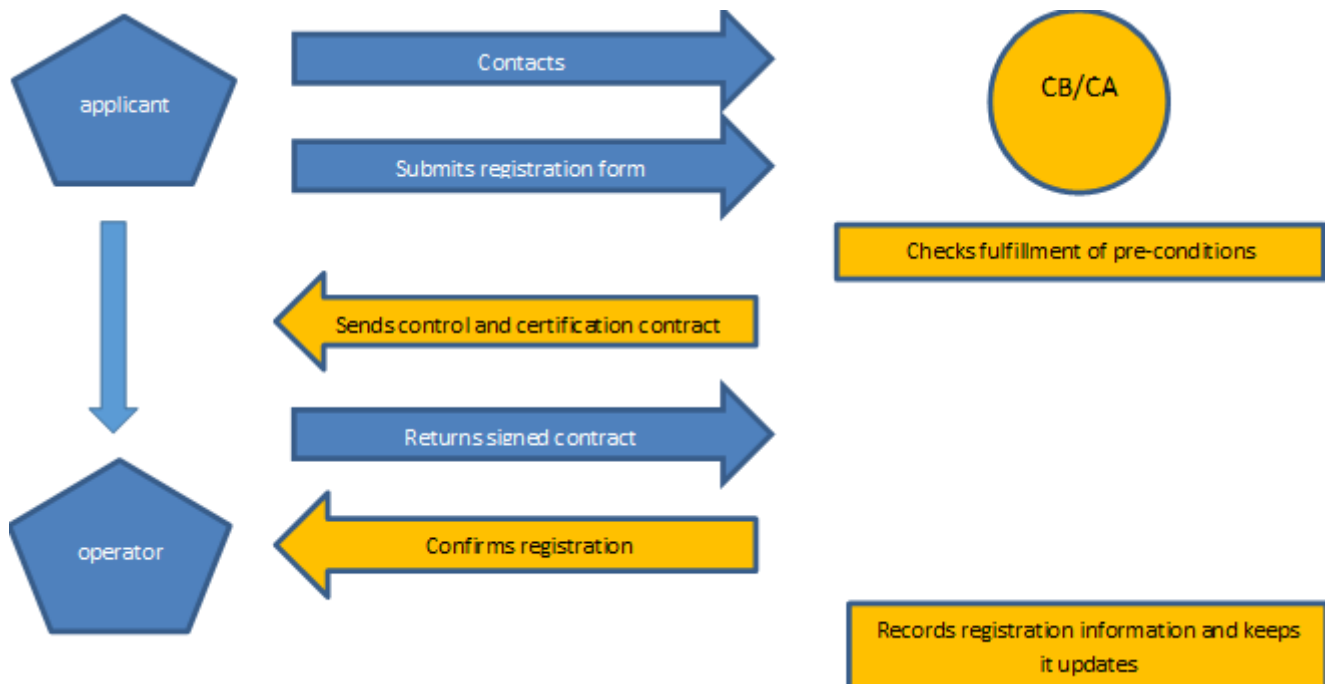
- a) may register for one or more crops/products included in the certification scope of the relevant GAP-standard.
 - Only products that are produced by the operator or by its group members themselves can receive certification.
 - Operators can just register the same products, which they partly also grow and produce uncertified, if the national GAP-standard allows it specifically and provides detailed requirements for product separation and product flow calculation within the GAP-standard checklists (= parallel production is allowed).
 - Operators can just register the same products, which they also purchase from other farmers (certified or not-certified), if the national GAP-standard allows it specifically and provides detailed requirements for product separation and product flow calculation within the GAP-standard checklists (= parallel ownership is allowed).
- b) may register one or more production sites for certification.
- c) may not register with more than one CB/ CA for certification.
- d) may not register production sites or group members in different countries.
- e) shall identify and register all production sites, where the product(s) that are included in the certification scope are produced.

4.2.2 Obligations

- a) By registering, the operator commits to comply with the certification requirements at all times, communicate data updates to the CB/ CA and to pay applicable inspection and certification fees according to the policies of the respective AMS. The payment of the relevant fees does not guarantee the issuing of a certificate.
- b) The operator is willing to grant the staff of the CB/ CA and authorities access to all establishments, facilities and production sites related to the certification scope.
- c) The operator shall not misuse the certification system of the GAP standard. Any objective evidence found that indicates such a misuse shall lead to the exclusion of the operator from certification. In addition, the operator will be listed in the ASEANGAP database, if available, as excluded.

4.3 Registration process

4.3.1 Overview



4.3.2 Tasks of applicants

An applicant shall:

- contact as a first step its CB/ CA i.e. relevant control authority or its choice of an officially approved control body.
- submit the relevant registration form that shall include all the necessary information to the CB/ CA:

Operator

- Company name and address
- Full name of contact person
- Contact (e.g. phone, fax, e-mail)

Production sites

- Name/description and address (if different from operator data)
- product(s) to be registered
- areas of actual cultivation of each registered product
- rented or owned
- harvest included/excluded per product

Handling units (including handling by subcontractors)

- Name/description and address (if different from operator data)
- list and description of all handling activities
- rented or owned
- harvest included/excluded per product

Group members (only for farmer groups)

- Name and address
- Full name of contact person
- Contact (e.g. phone, fax, e-mail)

- product(s) to be registered
 - areas of actual cultivation of each registered product
 - rented or owned
 - harvest included/excluded per product
 - date of last internal inspection
- c) sign a control and certification contract with the CB/ CA. The contract includes obligations defined in 4.2.2.
- d) receive a confirmation by the CB/ CA regarding the completed registration process within 28 calendar days.
- e) be assigned with a unique identification number i.e. operator code (or in future ASEANGAP number), which is used as a unique identifier for all ASEANGAP activities.

4.3.3 Tasks of CBs/ CAs

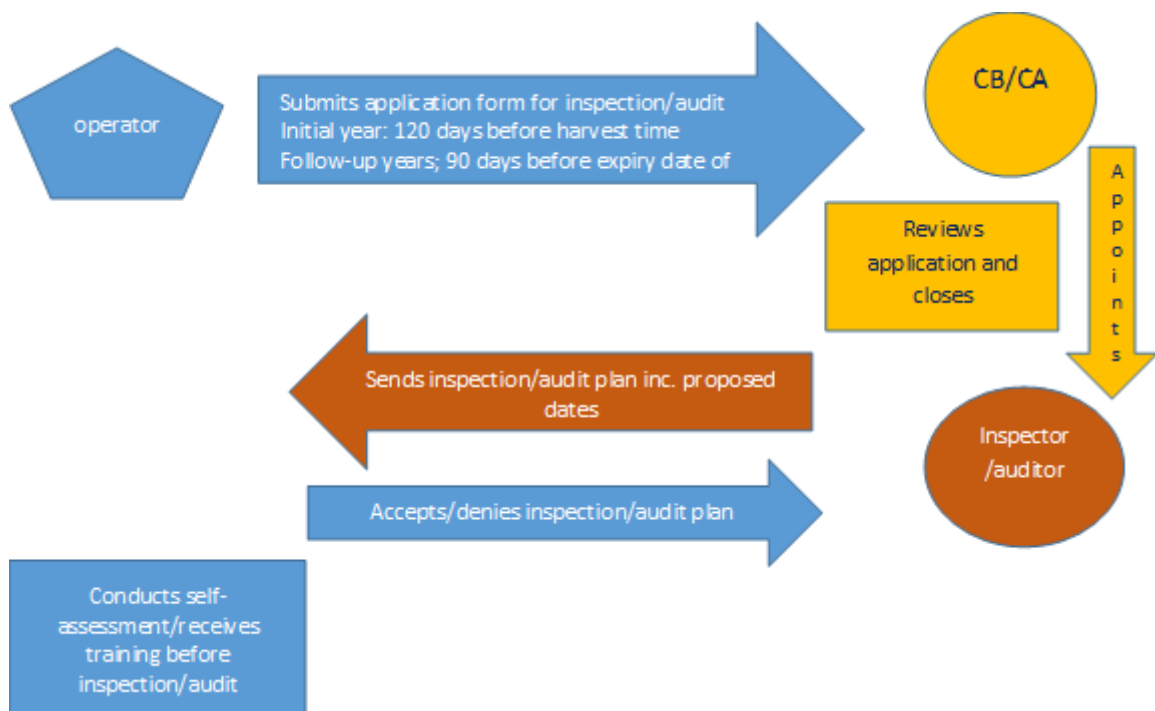
CBs/ CAs shall:

- a) record all the information requested in 4.3.2 b) during registration
- b) ensure that all group members approved by a farmer group and included in the farmer group internal register shall be registered individually. This information shall be kept up-to-date at all times.
- c) keep the registration information be updated regularly whenever there is a change. It shall be updated at the latest with the re-registration of products for the next certification cycle.
- d) finalize the registration process, in case of initial certification and transfers from other CBs/ CAs, before inspection can take place.

5 Assessment process (single farmer and farmer groups)

5.1 Application for assessment

1) Overview



- 2) CB/ CA shall provide forms to registered operator for inspection application. Those application forms cover information on:
 - changes on registration data (e.g. new products, cancellation of products, size of production area of registered products)
 - location information of plots where registered products are grown (e.g. map or GPS)
 - location information of all handling units (e.g. map or GPS)
- 3) Operator shall apply at least **120 days before harvest time** of registered crops in case of initial inspection/audit or at least **90 days before expiry of the actual certificate** in case of recertification inspections/audits by sending complete application forms to the chosen CB/ CA. In case of surveillance inspections the CBs/ CAs are responsible to receive application information in time for inspection planning.
- 4) If the operator does not commit to continue with the certification for the next cycle, the CB/ CA shall make sufficient provisions to avoid misuse of the certificate by shortening the certificate validity.
- 5) The CB/ CA shall review the application documents and request further information if incomplete or unclear.
- 6) Acceptance of application of the operator and the proposed products shall be confirmed by the CB/ CA.
- 7) The CB/ CA shall appoint an approved inspector with the conduction of the inspection.
- 8) The inspector shall define an inspection/audit plan on the application information and taking into account identified risks and send it to the operator.
- 9) By accepting the inspection/audit plan the inspection is to be considered as scheduled.
- 10) If the certification is implemented by control authorities, it might be possible to combine the registration and application process, as relevant information on the producer is already available at the control authority.
- 11) Overview of the different assessment types single farmers

Self-assessment		conducted by	When
a) Own self-assessment		operator	Annual
b) Training/consulting visit		authority, NGO	
External assessment	Sub-types	conducted by	When
Announced inspections	Initial inspection using complete checklist	CB/ CA	1 st year
	a) Recertification inspection using complete checklist or b) Surveillance inspection with risk-based focus	CB/ CA	a) international: annual AMS region: every 2 nd year b) international: N/A AMS region: every 2 nd year
Unannounced inspections with defined focus		CB/ CA	complaints or suspicion
Additional inspections		CB/ CA	adding new products

12) Overview of the different assessment types farmer groups

Self-assessment		conducted by	When
Internal audit and inspections using complete checklists		operator	Annual
External assessment	Sub-types	conducted by	When
Announced audits and /or inspections	Initial audit and inspections using complete checklists	CB/ CA	1 st year
	Recertification audit and inspections using complete checklists	CB/ CA	annual after 1 st year
Unannounced audits and/or inspections with defined focus		CB/ CA	complaints or suspicion
Additional audits and inspections		CB/ CA	adding new products/ group members

5.2 Self-assessment

It is recommended to ask single farmers to perform a self-assessment by using the official checklist in order to achieve certification. Alternatively, trainings or consulting visits of authorities or NGOs can replace self-assessments by the operator.

Farmer groups shall perform internal inspections/audits and receive external inspections/audits by the chosen CB/ CA.

5.2.1 Farmer groups

a) Farmer groups shall conduct the **annual** self-assessment through their ICS. It is divided into:

1. A minimum of one **internal audit of the ICS** to be carried out by the internal auditor before the external initial CB/ CA audit and thereafter once per annum.
2. A minimum of one complete **internal inspection of 100% of the registered group member, production site and handling unit** to be carried out by internal inspectors before the external initial CB/ CA inspections and thereafter once per annum.
3. A minimum of one **internal review of each internal inspection** to be carried out by the internal auditor after the internal inspections and before the external initial CB/ CA audit/ inspection and thereafter once per annum.

b) Internal **audit** requirements:

- It is permitted for the same person to initially develop the ICS and then undertake the required internal annual audit, however the person responsible for the day-to-day ongoing management of the ICS is not allowed to undertake the internal audits.
- Records of the internal audit, audit findings and follow up of corrective actions resulting from an audit shall be maintained and available.
- The completed ICS checklist with comments for every control point shall be available on site for review by the CB/ CA auditor during the external audit.
- Where the internal audit is not performed in one day but continuously over a 12-month period, a pre-defined schedule shall be in place.
- There shall be a procedure to handle non-compliances and corrective actions, which may result from internal or external audits and/or inspections, customer complaints or failures of the ICS.

c) Internal **inspections** requirements:

- Inspections shall be carried out at each registered group member (and corresponding production sites) or production site at least once per calendar year by using the official single farmer check list.
- New members of the group and new production sites shall always be internally inspected and approved prior to entering into the internal group member register.
- The original inspection reports and notes shall be maintained and available for the CB/ CA inspection.
- The inspection report shall contain the following information:
 - o Identification of registered operator and/or production site(s)
 - o sites and facilities inspected
 - o Signature of the registered operator or production site responsible
 - o Date
 - o Inspector name
 - o Registered products
 - o Evaluation result against control point
 - o The checklist shall include detailed comments. This is needed to enable the audit trail to be reviewed after the event.
 - o Details of any non-compliances identified and period for corrective action
 - o Inspection result with calculation of compliance
 - o Duration of the inspection
 - o Name of internal auditor who approved the checklist.
- Where the internal inspections take place continuously over a 12-month period, a pre-defined schedule shall be in place.
- Subcontractors
 - o Where any services are subcontracted to third parties, procedures shall exist to ensure that these activities are carried out in accordance with the requirements of the GAP-standard.
 - o Records shall be maintained to demonstrate that the competency of any subcontractor is assessed and meets the requirements of the standard.
 - o Subcontractors shall work in accordance with the group's ICS and relevant procedures and this shall be specified in service level agreements or contracts.

d) Internal review requirements

- The internal auditor (or audit team) shall review and make the decision on whether the operator or site is compliant, based on the inspection reports presented by the internal inspector.
- In case there is only one internal auditor who also performs the internal inspections, another person, e.g. management representative identified in the group, shall approve the internal inspections.
- Non-compliances, corrective actions and sanctions
 - o There shall be documented procedures for the identification and evaluation of non-conformances and non-compliances to the ICS by the group or by its members, respectively.
 - o Corrective actions following non-compliances shall be evaluated and a timescale defined for action.
 - o Responsibility for implementing and resolving corrective actions shall be defined.
 - o A system of sanctions in case of non-conformances shall be operated with group members. In case of contractual non-conformances (e.g. not complying with one of the internal policies), sanctions are to be decided by the farmer group.

- Mechanisms shall be in place to notify the approved certification body immediately of suspensions or cancellations of registered operators or production sites.
- Records shall be maintained of all sanctions including evidence of subsequent corrective actions and decision-making processes.
- Withdrawal of product
 - Documented procedures shall be in place to effectively manage the withdrawal of registered products.
 - Procedures shall identify the types of event that may result in a withdrawal, persons responsible for taking decisions on the possible withdrawal of products, the mechanism for notifying customers and the approved certification body, and methods of reconciling stock.
 - The procedure shall be capable of being operated at any time.
 - The procedure shall be tested in an appropriate manner at least annually to ensure that it is effective and records of the test retained.

5.3 External Assessments by CBs/ CAs

5.3.1 Announced annual inspection

5.3.1.1 General requirements

- a) Inspection frequency: Each operator shall undergo at least one announced inspection at the initial assessment and thereafter annually.
- b) There shall be a minimum period of 6 months but no more than 12 months between 2 inspections.

5.3.1.2 Initial and recertification inspection.

- a) Each production process for products registered for certification shall be completely assessed (all applicable control points shall be verified), prior to issuing the certificate.
- b) Initial and Recertification inspections shall be carried out at a time when relevant agronomic activities and/or handling (but not only storage) are being carried out.

Inspection timing shall allow the CB/ CA to gain assurance that all registered crops, even if not present at the time of inspection, are handled in compliance with the certification requirements. Inspections off-season or when the farming activities are minimal shall be avoided.

- c) Each initial and recertification inspection is followed by a complete review and a certification decision.
- d) The inspector/auditor shall assess each control point in the checklist and comment at least all Major Musts and all not-applicable control points.
- e) Single farmer:

The **inspection content** of shall include:

- all accepted products and production processes
- all registered production sites
- each registered handling unit (e.g. including storage of organic fertilizer on the field)
- used machinery
- a risk-based random sample of plots cultivated with registered products
 - at least 1 plot per registered product
 - during harvest season at least 1 plot, where actual harvest activities take place
- critical locations (e.g water source)
- where relevant, the administrative sites

The **inspection items** shall include:

- opening meeting with farmer/quality manager
- review of all relevant documentation
- evaluation of records
- discussion/interviews with key staff
- completion of checklist and inspection reports
- closing meeting including review of non-conformances identified

f) Farmer groups

- The external assessment process of farmer groups is divided into two elements:
 1. **External on-site audit** of the quality management system of the group
 2. **External on-site inspections** of a sample of the square root of the total number of registered group members, production sites and handling units **per product**
- The on-site audit shall discover whether the ICS and administrative structure and the internal audits and internal inspections of group members/production sites/handling units meet the respective GAP-standard requirements.
- The on-site audit of the ICS shall take at least 6 to 8 hours, depending on the size of the farmer group.
- External on-site inspections of farmer group members shall be conducted as complete single farmer inspections as defined in chapter 5.3.1).

- Selection example for the square root of registered group members:

A farmer group has a total number of 65 group members. From the 65 members:

- 25 produce mangoes
- 18 produce mangoes and papayas
- 24 produce papayas
- 8 produce tomatoes

The sample to be externally inspected is:

- $\sqrt{43} = 7$ mango producers
- $\sqrt{42} = 7$ papaya producers
- $\sqrt{8} = 3$ tomato producers

If the CB/ CA selects a member growing mangoes and papayas, those ones can be counted twice for mangoes and papayas.

The same rule applies for production sites and handling units.

- The final selection and communication to the farmer group of which group members/ handling units to inspect shall be carried out by the CB/ CA during the audit of the ICS, using criteria based on the group structure and defined in a sampling procedure, which is risk-based. The notification shall normally not exceed 48 hours (two working days) per operator.
- CBs/ CAs may, based on justifiable criteria, increase the verification rate of the total numbers of registered group members/ handling units. The farmer group has the right to appeal such a decision. Reasons for an increase could arise from any of the following:
 - o Failure to comply with significant requirements at the level of the ICS or of the handling units affecting the group members' compliance
 - o Customer complaints; e.g.: illegal pesticide residue detection
 - o Significant inconsistencies between the internal audit/inspection reports and the CB/ CA inspection/audit findings
 - o The possible need to determine if the Non-compliance is structural or not
 - o Number of products

- The assessment content shall include:
 - o all relevant administrative sites
 - o all personnel and operations declared as relevant for the ICS
 - o all accepted products and production processes
 - o central product handling unit
 - o used machinery
 - o as a minimum complete inspection of the square root (or next whole number rounded upwards if there are any decimals) of the total number of the group members (inspection covers 5.3.2.1c)
 - o as a minimum complete inspection of the square root (or next whole number rounded upwards if there are any decimals) of the total number of registered handling units on group level
- The assessment items shall include:
 - o opening meeting with management
 - o review of all relevant documentation
 - o evaluation of records
 - o discussion/interviews with key staff
 - o review of internal audits and inspections conducted
 - o conduction of external inspections of group members
 - o comparison of the results of the external and internal inspections to judge the adequacy of the ICS of the farmer group
 - o completion of the checklist and the audit reports
 - o closing meeting including review of non-conformances identified
- The final report and result can only be concluded after the two elements have been assessed.

g) Special requirements for **Initial** inspections/audits:

- No inspection can take place until the CB/ CA has accepted the applicant's registration.
- Initial inspections/audits shall be carried out to operators applying for the first time. When an operator changes from one CB/ CA to another it is not considered an initial inspection, but a recertification inspection. Operators without a valid certification (e.g. break of certification for 1 or more years) shall always start with an initial inspection/audit.
- The applicant shall have records from the registration date onwards or for at least 3 months before the initial inspection takes place, whichever is longer and the CB/ CA shall inspect them.
- Products that are harvested/processed before registration with the CB/ CA cannot be certified. Records that relate to harvest or product handling before the operator has registered with the CB/ CA are not valid.
- The initial inspection shall cover harvesting activities of as many products as possible as well as produce handling if it is relevant for certification. The inspection shall take place as close to harvest as possible for the inspector to verify as many control points as possible.
- A product that has not yet been harvested shall not be included in the certificate (i.e. it is not possible to certify a product in the future).

h) Special requirements for **Recertification** inspections/audits:

- As international accepted GAP-certification systems ask for annual inspections and certifications per operator on the basis of the complete checklists, it is recommendable to require those at least for international exports. For mutual recognition within the ASEAN region longer certification cycles could be agreed on. For the regional implementation a mixture of recertification and surveillance inspections/audits shall be possible as defined under 5.3.1.3 b

- The decision of the CB/ CA for the production system to be inspected shall be risk-based and especially focus on food-safety issues and shall not take place during the same period every year.

5.3.1.3 Surveillance inspection/audit

For mutual recognition within the ASEAN region **certification cycles** have been agreed to be **2 years for single farmers**. As farmer groups implement an ICS with crucial responsibilities, recertification should be guaranteed annually. This means that this option for national or regional trade should **just** be possible **for single farmers**.

- a) Initial inspections shall be conducted as defined in chapter 5.3.1

As the certification cycle is 2 years, recertification inspections including review and certification decision take place every 2nd year. In between surveillance inspections are conducted focussing on risk-based topics. Surveillance inspection are just followed by a review and a certification decision if non-conformances are detected.

- b) Recertification inspections every 2nd year shall be conducted as defined in chapter 5.3.1.3 a).

- c) Surveillance inspection:

The extent and the content of surveillance inspections is defined by the CB/ CA based on a risk assessment for each operator.

The CB/ CA provides clear instructions to the inspectors regarding the inspection items to be covered and the control points of the checklist to be inspected on-site. The inspection shall focus on:

- the check of the practical implementation of the standards by intense farm tours and interviews
- a risk-based choice of certain chapters of the checklist of which all control points need to be inspected (e.g. use of plant protection products, water use and irrigation).

- d) Surveillance inspections shall cover at least:

- chosen products and production processes
- production sites of risk-based focus
- handling unit of risk-based focus
- a risk-based random sample of plots cultivated with registered products
 - 1) at least 1 plot of any registered product
 - 2) during harvest season at least 1 plot, where actual harvest activities take place
- where relevant, the administrative sites

5.3.2 Unannounced inspections/audits

- a) Unannounced inspections/audits shall be conducted additionally in case of complaints against an operator or whenever the CB/ CA has doubts on the compliance of an operator with the requirements.
- b) The extent and the content of unannounced inspections are defined by the CB/ CA based on a risk assessment related to the operator.
- c) The CB/ CA may inform the operator in advance of the intended visit. This notification will normally not exceed 48 hours (2 working days). In the exceptional case where it is impossible for the operator to accept the proposed date (due to medical or other justifiable reasons), the operator will receive one more chance to be informed of an unannounced inspection.
- d) The operator shall receive a written warning if the first proposed date has not been accepted. The operator will receive another 48-hour notification of a visit. If the visit cannot take place because of non-justifiable reasons, the operator will be sanctioned.

- e) During unannounced audits of **farmer groups** CB/ CA shall conduct an external audit of the ICS of the group and of handling units. External inspections of group members may be added by the CB/ CA when the results of the audit are unsatisfactory.
- f) The unannounced inspection/ audit of **farmer groups** shall cover:
 - all relevant administrative sites
 - all personnel and operations declared as relevant for the ICS
 - all accepted products and production processes
 - central product handling unit
 - as a minimum complete inspection of the square root (or next whole number rounded upwards if there are any decimals) of the total number of registered **handling units** on group level

5.3.3 Additional inspections/audits

a) Single Farmers

Additional inspections shall be conducted in the case a single farmer wants to add a new product to an already existing certificate before next external inspection takes place. **All applicable control points for this product** shall be verified during the additional inspection.

b) Farmer Groups

- New group members and new sites may be added (subject to internal approval procedures being met) to a certificate in effect. It is the responsibility of the certificate holder (farmer group) to immediately update the certification body on any addition or withdrawal of operators and/or sites to/from the list of registered operators.
- Up to 10% of new group members (in groups) or sites in one year can be added to the approved list by registering the operators or sites with the approved certification body without necessarily resorting to further verification by the certification body.
- When the number of approved registered group members (in groups) or sites increases by more than 10% in one year **or**
 - o the newly registered farms increase the area of previously approved registered products by more than 10% in one year,
 - o further external sample inspections (minimum is the square root of new group members/sites) of the newly added operators/sites and optionally an audit of the ICS will be required during that year before additional operators/sites can be added to the approved list.
- Regardless of the number of operators/sites/farm area, if a new product is to be added to the certificate before the next external audit, external inspection shall be carried out to the square root of the group members growing the new product.

5.3.4 General requirements for all kind of inspections/audits

- a) All kind of inspections shall be carried out by a CB/ CA inspector. Audits shall be carried out by a CB/ CA auditor.
- b) The inspector/auditor shall prepare an inspection/audit report signed by the auditee during the closing meeting, showing the result of the assessment. A documented or electronic confirmation by the operator is equal to the 'signature' of the operator. The report shall be provided together with the checklist and all relevant documents to the CB/ CA within **14 calendar days** after the last inspection day.

- c) In the checklists (official single farmer checklist/official ICS checklist) the compliance with control points is indicated with a “Yes” (for compliant), “No” (for not compliant), “N/A” (for not applicable) and NI (for not verified). NI can just be used in case of surveillance inspections if the control point has not been chosen to be object of the inspection.
- d) The inspection/audit report shall contain at least the following information:
 - o Identification of registered operator and/or production site(s)
 - o Signature of the registered operator or production site responsible
 - o Date(s) of inspection/audit
 - o Name of inspector
 - o Registered products
 - o Evaluation result against control points in the checklist
 - o The checklist shall include detailed comments. This is needed to enable the inspection/audit trail to be reviewed after the event.
 - o Details of any non-compliances identified and period for corrective action
 - o Inspection/audit result with calculation of compliance
 - o Duration of the inspection/audit
 - o Name of certifier/reviewer
- e) In case non-conformances are found during the whole assessment process the countdown to the deadline for closing them begins with the on-site closing meeting.
- f) In all cases, the calculation to show compliance (or non-compliance) shall be available after the inspection.
- g) In case the CB/ CA finds any uncertainties or contradictions when reviewing the inspection/audit results, it shall address clear questions to the inspector/auditor. If necessary, the inspector/auditor need to collect further information from the operator for finalizing the assessment of the open issues. This task shall be done in a timely manner to avoid slowing down the certification process.

5.3.5 Inspection/audit Methodology

The GAP-standard shall define inspection/audit methodology for each control point. At least the following methods shall be covered:

- Document Review

The methodology of document review consists of examination of existing relevant documentation of the operator by the CB/ CA. The document review is always one element of any on-site inspection.

- Visual Observation

Relevant sites and production units shall be visually observed during inspection for verification of the effective situation on the farm and the correct implementation of requirements.

- Interviews

Interviews with workers shall be conducted whenever possible during the inspection/audit especially on hygiene and worker’s health and safety issue. It may also help to verify the described production process.

- Cross Checks

Information gathered shall be cross checked with other information of different sources.

Example: The farmer explains to have a licence for the used irrigation water. The document of the licence itself shall be checked and verified whether it is valid for the relevant water source for irrigation.

- Challenge Information

Information received shall be challenged regarding its adequacy related to the production situation.

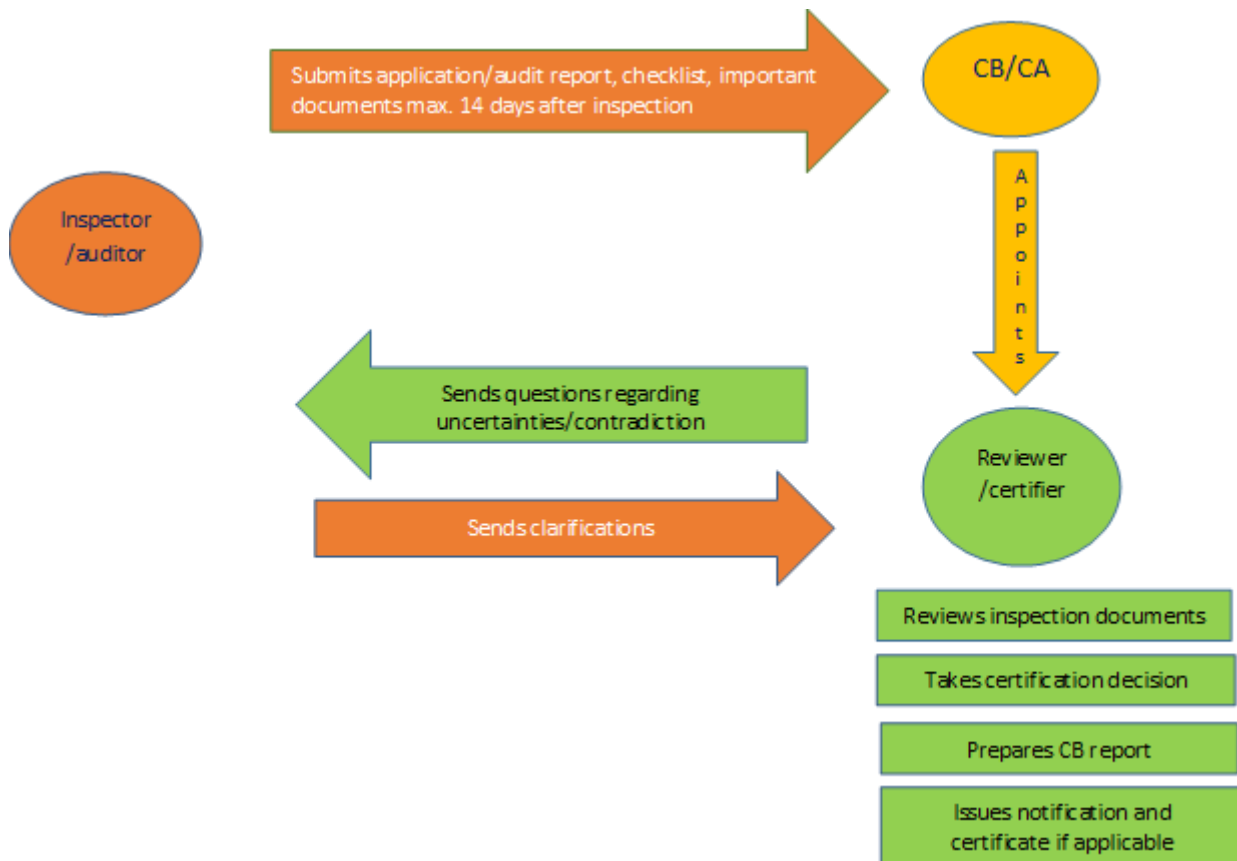
Example: The content of risk assessments shall relate to the specific situation on the farm, the registered product and the production process.

- Sampling

If any severe doubts on the correct implementation of good farming practice arises, sampling of products, soil or parts of plant shall be conducted during inspection/audit.

6 Certification process

6.1 Overview



6.2 General certification requirements

- The operator shall comply with the contractual agreements signed with the CB/ CA and with the requirements defined in the GAP-standard and the GAP-manual in their current version.
- The certifier who takes the certification decision or at least one member of the certification committee of the CB/ CA shall comply with auditor qualifications.
- Each CB/ CA shall be responsible for the information filed:
 - documentation related to GAP-standard and its procedures
 - inspection and certification documentation
- Non-conformance detected during inspection and certification must be closed by the operator within **90 calendar days for initial certification** and within **30 calendar days for recertification**, besides the CB/ CA explicitly defines a longer period related to the content of the control point (e.g. problems with erosion may need a longterm plan for resolving).

- e) The CB/ CA shall take the certification decision within a maximum of **120 calendar days for initial certification** and a maximum of **60 calendar days for recertification** after the end of the inspection/audit.
- f) Operators cannot change CB/ CA until the non-conformance that led to the respective sanction is satisfactorily closed.
- g) Any complaints or appeals against CBs/ CAs follow the CB's/ CA's own complaints and appeals procedure, which each CB/ CA shall have and communicate to its clients.
- h) Only the legal certificate holder (i.e. the legal entity that is indicated on the certificate) may market products with reference to the GAP-standard Certificate. Members of a farmer group are not legal certificate holders. Thus they shall not market any products under their name with reference to the group certificate. All products that are sold without reference to the certificate shall be recorded in the group mass balance system.

	Max. times for operators to close Non-conformances (NCs)	Max. times for CBs/ CAs to take certification decision
Initial Year	90 calendar days from notification	120 calendar days from last inspection day
Subsequent Years	30 calendar days from notification	60 calendar days from last inspection day

6.3 Conformity determination (Non-conformance and sanctions)

6.3.1 Non-Compliance and Non-Conformance

- a) The GAP-standard consists of three levels of criteria: Major Musts, Minor Musts and Recommendations.
- b) Conformance rules for compliance with certification requirements to obtain certification:
 - Major Musts:** 100% compliance with all applicable Major Must control points is compulsory.
 - Minor Musts:** x*% compliance with all applicable Minor Must control points is compulsory.
 - Recommendations:** No minimum percentage of compliance required.

* Percentage shall be defined by ASEAN as soon as criteria levels have been defined per control point of the ASEANGAP-standard (compare workshop 2 report).

NOTE: A score for example of 79.8% cannot be rounded up to 80% (the pass percentage).

- c) The control points to be taken into consideration to calculate the percentage of compliance for Major and Minor Musts depend on the product and situation on the farm. The applicant shall ensure that each individual site and product complies with the certification requirements. Thus the compliance percentage shall be calculated taking into account all the control points applicable to each site and product.
- d) **Non-compliance** means that a single control point is not fulfilled by the operator.
- e) **Non-conformance** means that the total result of all assessed control points does not comply with the conformance rules as defined in b). E.g. at least 1 Major Must and/or more than x% of the Minor Musts are not fulfilled.
- f) **Contractual Non-conformance** is any breach of the agreements signed in the contract between the CB/ CA and the operator.

Examples: trading with a product that does not comply with legal requirements; false communication by the operator regarding the GAP-Certification; payments are not made in accordance with contractual conditions.

6.3.2 Review and certification decision

- a) After finalisation of the inspection/audit the CB/ CA shall appoint an approved certifier/reviewer with the review and forward the complete inspection/audit documentation.
- b) By reviewing the inspection results and the registration information the certifier/reviewer shall resolve any uncertainties, contradictions or false evaluation before taking the certification decision. Possibly the certifier/reviewer need to address clear questions to the inspector/auditor for resolving contradictions.
- c) On completion of the full evaluation process, a full written report will be produced which summarizes the evaluation activity undertaken, provides objective evidence and information on how the operator complies with the requirements of the standard, and where applicable, lists any non-compliances and/or non-conformances identified.
- d) The CB/ CA report shall contain the following:
 - o inspection report as defined in 6.3.2 c)
 - o Calculation of the total applicable Major Must, Minor Must and Recommendation control points, and % of the Minor Must non-conformances
 - o List of non-compliances, non-conformances and follow up actions. This includes the relevant control point, the observation of what has been non-complied/conformed, evidence of non-fulfilment of the requirement, deadline for corrective action, description of the corrective action by the operator, reference to objective evidence of implementation of the corrective action, evaluation result of the corrective action (open/closed) and the relevant dates of these actions.
 - o Conclusion of compliance or not
 - o Date of certification decision
 - o Certifier/reviewer(s) name
 - o Stage of the report, e.g.: preliminary or final. The CB/ CA may further define different report stages
- e) The completed inspection/audit checklist including all applicable control points, comments/justification (where required) and the objective evidence of implementation of the corrective action shall be available. It is not necessarily part of the final report, but must be available on request.
- f) Copies of the report, the objective evidences of implementation of the corrective actions or the fully completed inspection/audit checklist shall only be provided to other parties if the applicant provides access by written authorization except to the regulatory authorities when requested according to the applicable national legislation, and the AB and CB/ CA.

6.3.3 Non-conformance and Types of Sanctions

- a) If non-conformance is detected, the CB/ CA shall apply a sanction (warning, suspension or cancellation) as indicated in this section.
- b) ONLY the CB/ CA or the farmer group that has issued the sanction is entitled to lift it, provided there is sufficient and timely evidence of corrective action (either through a follow-up visit or other written or visual evidence).
- c) All corrections and corrective actions shall be assessed; with clarification provided to show whether the action(s) taken and evidence provided are sufficient to close the non-conformance.

- d) Evidence of the resolution of non-conformances can be provided in the form of documentary evidence and/or photographic evidence as appropriate. Evidences shall be filed and shall be made available on request.
- e) There may be occasions where demonstration of the resolution of a non-conformance can only be confirmed by a further site visit. Where this is required, a charge may result.
- f) Farmer groups:
 - All non-conformances with the ICS shall be resolved before a certificate can be issued.
 - Satisfactory corrective actions shall be completed to achieve the approval level on an operator and/or production site and/or handling unit level before a certificate can be issued to the group.
- g) Lifting of a sanction: A sanction will not run out with the certificate validity, but stays with the operator until such time that the non-conformance is closed.

6.3.3.1 Warning

- a) A warning is issued for all types of non-conformance detected.
- b) If a non-conformance is detected during the inspection, the operator shall be served a warning when the inspection is finalized. This is a provisional report that could be overridden by the CB/ CA certification authority.
- c) Initial inspection: If the cause of the warning is not resolved within **90 calendar days**, a complete inspection shall be performed before a certificate can be issued.
- d) Recertification inspection:
 - Non-conformances shall be closed within **30 calendar days**.
 - In the event of non-conformances with contracts or general requirements the CB/ CA shall decide what period is given to the operator for closing the non-conformance before suspending the certificate. This period shall never exceed **30 calendar 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 (i.e. sale of non-certified products as certified) is present. This will be communicated via an official warning letter.

6.3.3.2 Product Suspension

- a) If the cause of the warning is not resolved within the defined period (maximum of **30 calendar days**), a suspension shall be imposed by the CB/ CA immediately.
- b) CBs/ CAs can lift product suspensions imposed on single farmers and farmer groups issued by them.
- c) A suspension can be applied to one, several or all of the products covered by the certificate.
- d) A product cannot be partially suspended for a single farmer, but shall be suspended entirely.
- e) When the suspension is applied, the CB/ CA shall set the period allowed for correction (not longer than **12 months**).
- f) During the period of suspension, the operator is prohibited from using the GAP-standard logo or certificate or label any batch as certified in relation to the suspended product.
- g) If an operator notifies the CB/ CA that the non-conformance is resolved before the defined period, the respective sanction can be lifted, subject to satisfactory evidence and closing off.

- h) If the cause of the suspension is not resolved within the defined period, a cancellation is imposed.
- i) The suspension remains as long as the CB/ CA does not lift it or impose a cancellation.

6.3.3.3 Cancellation

- a) A cancellation of the contract shall be issued where:
 - The CB/ CA finds evidence of fraud and/or lack of trust to comply with the GAP-standard requirements,
 - An operator cannot show evidence of implementation of effective corrective action before the suspension period set by the CB/ CA has elapsed.
- b) A cancellation of the contract results in the total prohibition (all products, all sites) of the use of the GAP-standard logo, certificate, or any device or document that may be linked to the GAP-standard.
- c) Operators that have received a cancellation shall not be accepted for GAP-standard certification within **12 months** of the date of cancellation.

Type	Period for operators for corrective actions
Warning	Initial: 90 calendar days Recertification/surveillance: 30 calendar days
Suspension	12 months
Cancellation	12 months

6.3.3.4 Notification and Appeals

- a) The operator shall either resolve the non-conformances communicated or appeal to the CB/ CA in writing against the non-conformances, explaining the reasons for the appeal.
- b) If the non-conformances are not resolved within the permitted period, the sanction will be escalated.

6.4 Communication of conformity assessment results (certificate, data base)

6.4.1 Certificate and Certification Cycle

- a) The certificate can only be issued to the operator’s legal entity.
- b) A certificate is not transferable from one legal entity to another when production sites change legal entity. In this case a complete inspection, following the rules for recertification inspections, is required. The new legal entity shall receive a new registration number.
- c) The **validity of the operator certificate** should not be more than 2 years subject to annual surveillance.
- d) Extension of certificate cycle:
 - The validity may be extended for a maximum period of 3 months only if there is a valid reason, which has to be recorded. Here are the only reasons that are considered to be valid:
 - o The CB/ CA 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 farmer group.

- The CB/ CA needs to be able to extend some certificates because of resource restraints.
- The CB/ CA was not able to conduct the on-site inspection/audit and/or the operator was not able to receive the CB/ CA inspection audit due to circumstances beyond its control (force majeure) e.g.: natural disaster, political instability in the region, epidemic or unavailability of the operator due to medical reasons.
- The operator shall be re-inspected during that extension period.
- The operator cannot change the CB/ CA in the cycle subsequent to the one for which the extension was granted.
- If a certificate that was not extended a new certification cycle should start. The validity of the certificate will start on the date of the certification decision.

6.4.2 Paper Certificate Requirements

- a) After a positive certification decision, the CB/ CA shall issue a certificate according to the latest version of the GAP-standard template. The format may be different but it shall include the same information.
- b) The paper certificate may only be issued based on the information available at that time in the ASEANGAP Database, if available, for that unique ASEANGAP number.
- c) A list of all production sites and handling units to which the certificate relates shall be issued in an appendix referred to in the certificate. The CB/ CA shall keep this list up-to-date.
- d) Certificate Information:
 - The scope of certification (e.g. fruit and vegetables)
 - Certified product(s): Also if GAP-standard follows a whole-farm certification approach.
 - Date of certification decision: Date when the CB/ CA makes the certification decision after all non-conformances are closed
 - Valid from
 - Valid to
 - Harvest exclusion (yes/no)
 - Product Handling exclusion (yes/no)

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

6.4.3 Harvest exclusion

- a) If produce is sold in the field before harvest and where harvest is not subcontracted by operator and the buyer is responsible for harvesting, the harvest shall be excluded from the operator's certificate. In this case the entire produce of the respective product does not belong to the operator anymore at some point in time prior to harvest commencing and the operator has no control over the harvesting process.
- b) As long as the harvesting process (whether carried out by the operator or subcontracted) takes place while the produce belongs to the operator, all points relating to harvest shall be included in the inspection and the certificate.
- c) The operator shall apply for exclusion per product during registration with detailed justification.
- d) The CB/ CA will make the decision as to whether harvesting may be excluded or not based on the following requirements. The operator shall have a contract with the buyer that states that the harvester/buyer will do all of the following:
 - Take ownership of the produce before harvesting.

- Take responsibility for ensuring that harvest takes place only after the Pre-Harvest Interval (PHI) has been observed.
- Handle the produce after harvest (not just during harvest).
- Buy all the produce (Harvest Exclusion is not possible if the operator harvests some part of the crop and sells another part before harvest).

If the operator does not know the buyer at the time of registration the following shall be provided as soon as possible:

- A declaration from the operator to inform the buyer (new owner who is harvester AND post-harvest handler) about the Pre-Harvest Interval (PHI).
- A contract with the buyer as soon as the buyer has been identified that includes all issues above. If harvesting is excluded for the farmer or farmer group, produce handling shall also be excluded.

6.4.4 Product Handling Exclusion

- a) Produce handling includes any type of post-harvest handling of products such as storage, chemical treatment, trimming, washing or any other handling where the product may have on-site contact with other materials or substances. Details of the specific process (per product) applicable to the operator have to be included in the checklist notes.
- b) If produce handling does not take place under the ownership of the applicant, it shall be declared during registration and indicated on the certificate.
- c) Produce handling shall not be included when harvesting is excluded.
- d) Produce handling shall always be included as long as the product belongs to the operator during handling (done by the operator or subcontractor).
- e) If an operator does not perform product handling on farm, but at the facility of another operator who does have GAP standard certification (including product handling), the CB/ CA may accept another CB's/ CA's certificate (of the same GAP standard) or the CB/ CA may decide to perform its own inspection of the handling unit.

7 Transfer between certification bodies

7.1 Registration with a new CB/ CA

The objective is to assure the maintenance of the integrity of GAP-Standard certificates issued by one CB/ CA and to guarantee that an operator's history is addressed in the review process when entering into contract with another CB/ CA.

- a) The operator shall apply for certification always for the next cycle to another CB/ CA ("accepting CB/ CA").
- b) The transfer of operator can take place when an operator's certificate has expired and also if there is no binding service contract between the operator and the outgoing CB. The outgoing CB may shorten the validity of the issued certificate.
- c) If an operator who has already been registered changes CB/ CA, the operator shall communicate the identification number (or ASEANGAP number) to the new CB/ CA. Failure to do so will result in a penalty defined by the GAP-standard holder. The accepting CB/ CA shall keep the existing identification number of the transferred operator. Double registration is not allowed, as one operator can have only one number.
- d) Certificate holders who are sanctioned cannot change CB/ CA until the outgoing CB/ CA closes the corresponding non-conformance. In case a sanctioned operator wants to change CB/ CA and the

certification cycle has already expired, as an exception, the outgoing CB/ CA can lift the non-conformance of an expired certificate without having received evidences of corrective actions. But, in this case, the outgoing CB/ CA shall ensure that the accepting CB/ CA is fully aware of the cause of the non-conformance.

- e) Individual group members of a farmer 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 farmer issued by the group, or there are any issues relevant to the farmer raised by the CB/ CA that have not been closed.
- f) If an operator wishes to change to a new CB/ CA, the accepting CB/ CA shall as a first step for all applicants carry out a search in the ASEANGAP Database to verify the status before any further actions are taken.
- g) The accepting CB/ CA shall close the registration process, including contracting the operator before accepting the transfer.
- h) Validity of certificate:
 - If the certification decision of the incoming CB/ CA is made after the outgoing CB's/ CA's certificate has expired, there will be a period when the operator does not have a valid certificate.
 - If, however, the certification decision of the incoming CB/ CA is made before the outgoing CB's/ CA's certificate has, the certification decision can only take effect as soon as the certificate expires.
 - The outgoing CB/ CA remains responsible until its certificate expires. The operator may sign a contract with the accepting CB/ CA while under contract with the outgoing CB/ CA. The contract is binding for the accepting CB/ CA only once the outgoing CB/ CA has released the operator's identification number (or ASEANGAP number) in the database (or ASEAN GAP database as defined in future by ASEAN as ASEANGAP database).
 - If, during the validity of the certificate issued by the outgoing CB/ CA, the accepting CB/ CA detects non-conformities that are not closed after 28 days, the accepting CB/CA shall inform the outgoing CB/ CA about the non-conformities detected so that it can take appropriate follow-up actions.
- i) In case of transfer, the certification decision might not be taken within 60 calendar days.
- j) If during an operator transfer the incoming CB/ CA has not seen the harvest season of all products included in the certification scope, an unannounced inspection shall be scheduled during the following 12 months, in order to inspect the harvest process of products not seen.

Annex 1: Inspector qualifications

1 General condition

Inspectors will just be able to inspect single farmers and farmer group members once the CB has verified factual evidence (as described below) of their qualifications and experience.

2 Formal qualification and work experience

2.1 Option 1:

- a) At least a post high school (post secondary education) diploma or equivalent (minimum course duration of 2 years) in a discipline related to the scope of certification as per chapter 5.2.1, e.g. for fruit and vegetable the disciplines shall cover agriculture or horticulture.
- b) A minimum of 2 years experience gained after finishing post high school studies and overall 3 years experience in the agricultural industry.

2.2 Option 2:

- a) A post high school (post secondary education) diploma with a minimum duration of 2 years in a food related discipline.
- b) A minimum of 4 years industry experience either in a practical capacity on farm/site or in a technical production management role in the relevant scope of certification.

3 Technical skills

3.1 Inspector Training

All trainings shall be confirmed by a course certificate or evidence of training indicating as well duration and content of the training.

- a) **GAP-standard trainings** related to the national GAP requirements shall be successfully completed. The 1-day training shall also cover the topics plant protection, fertilizers and integrated pest management.
- b) At least 1-day practical inspection course setting out **basic principles of inspection**.
- c) Training in **HACCP principles** either as part of formal qualifications or through the successful completion of a formal course based on the principles of Codex Alimentarius (the formal course may be an internal training by the CB/ CA). The minimum training duration shall be 0.5 days.
- d) **Food hygiene training** either as part of formal qualifications or through the successful completion of a formal course (the formal course may be an internal training by the CB/ CA). The formal course duration shall be a minimum of 0.5 days. The Food Hygiene training course shall cover: site management, water, fertilizer, equipment, facilities and personal hygiene, and it shall also include practical case studies.

3.2 Communication Skills

- a) “Working language” skills in the corresponding native/working language. This shall include the locally used specialist terminology in the respective working language.

3.3 Initial training before approval of the inspector by the CB / CA

- a) The CB/ CA shall put a training program in place customized to the inspector applicant/ trainee.
- b) The applicant inspector shall take part as an observer in a minimum of one inspection of a single farmer or a farmer group member in the relevant scope conducted by an already qualified inspector or auditor respectively.
- c) The CB/ CA shall witness a minimum of one inspection of a single farmer or a farmer group member by the applicant inspector.
- d) The witness inspection shall be assessed and verified in a report including as a minimum the following competences:
 - Technical knowledge
 - Ability to identify food safety risks/food hazards
 - Ability to evaluate the HACCP system and identify/challenge critical control points
 - Up-to-date knowledge of plant protection products, fertilizer applications and IPM principles
 - Ability to carry out traceability checks and mass balance analyses
 - Wherever the control point refers to local legislation, knowledge of the relevant requirements
 - Having the sufficient communication and behavioral skills as to be able to conduct an inspection
 - “Working language” skills in the corresponding native/working language
- e) For the CB’s/ CA’s first inspector the CB’s/ CA’s internal procedures apply.

3.4 Maintenance of Competency

- a) The CB/CA shall have in place a procedure to ensure that annually every inspector conducts at least five inspections, at a number of different operators, against the GAP-standard. Witness inspections shall also be acceptable to maintain competency.

Exceptions to this rule, e.g. if the CB/CA does not have a total of five clients, shall be discussed with and confirmed in writing beforehand by the competent national authority.
- b) The CB/CA shall carry out a witness inspection and/or re-inspection for each of its inspectors at least once every four years to verify competence.
- c) If it is not possible to maintain competency from one year to the other, the requirements of an initial training in chapter 3.3 apply.

3.5 Rotation of the inspector

- a) The CB/CA shall have procedures in place to ensure that the same inspector does not inspect an operator for 4 consecutive years.

For example, inspector number 1 inspects an operator in years 1, 2, 3 and 4; in year 5 another inspector (inspector number 2) has to do the annual inspection. In years 6, 7, 8 and 9 the inspector number 1 may do 4 consecutive inspections again.

- b) When the CB/ CA has only one inspector in a given country/region, exceptions may be given case-by-case by the competent authority.

4 Key tasks

4.1 General tasks

- a) To inspect farms for assessing compliance with the GAP-standard.
- b) To produce timely and accurate reports on such inspections in accordance with ISO 17065 and the timelines and system requirements of the certification manual.
- c) To maintain up-to-date files of all quality policies, procedures, work instructions and documentation issued by the CB/ CA.
- d) To keep abreast of developments, issues and legislative changes pertaining to the scope in which inspections are carried out.
- e) To carry out any other tasks the CB/ CA may assign, outside the scope of the GAP standard as long as these activities do not contradict ISO 17065.

4.2 Independence and Confidentiality

- a) Inspectors are not permitted to carry out any activities that may affect their independence or impartiality, and specifically are not permitted to accept bribes and to have carried out consultancy activities in the last two years for the operators they are performing inspections on. Training is not considered to be consultancy, provided that, it is confined to the provision of generic information that is freely available in the public domain, i.e. the trainer cannot provide company-specific solutions.
- b) Inspectors shall strictly observe the operator's and the CB's/ CA's procedures to maintain the confidentiality of information and records.

Annex 2: Auditor qualifications

1 General conditions

- a) Auditors will just be able to audit ICS of farmer groups once the CB/ CA has verified factual evidence (as described below) of their qualifications and experience.
- b) Auditors shall have inspector's approval by its CB/ CA and also comply with inspector's qualification defined in Annex 1.

2 Formal qualification and work experience

Auditors shall comply with the formal inspector qualification and work experience as per Annex 1 chapter 2.

3 Technical skills

3.1 Auditor training

All trainings shall be confirmed by a course certificate or evidence of training indicating as well duration and content of the training.

- a) 1-day training related to **group certification requirements** of the national GAP-standard shall be successfully completed.
- b) **Lead Assessor Training**
 - Practical auditing experience of minimum 10 days in management systems (e.g.: ISO 9000, ISO 14000, ISO 22000, OSHAS 18000), BRC Food, IFS Food, farmer group audits of organic growers). This does not include witnessing or observing of audits, but includes being witnessed or observed as auditor-in-training.
 - Successful completion of a Lead Assessor training course based on ISO 19011 principles that shall have a minimum duration of 37 hours, and shall be externally recognized by the industry.
 - The Lead Assessor training course shall cover applicable standards on quality auditing, auditing techniques, focus of the audits (psychological aspects and communication) and reporting, and it shall also include a practical case study.

3.2 Communication Skills

Auditors shall comply with inspector's communication skills as per Annex 1 chapter 3.2.

3.3 Initial training before approval of the auditor by the CB/ CA

- a) The applicant auditor shall take part as an observer in a minimum of one audit conducted by an already qualified auditor.
- b) The CB/ CA shall witness a minimum of one ICS audit by the applicant auditor. Only another auditor can witness the audit.

3.4 Maintenance of Competency

- a) The CB/ CA shall have in place a procedure to ensure that annually every auditor conducts at least five audits or 10 audit days, at a number of different farmer groups. Witness audits shall also be acceptable to maintain competency.

Exceptions to this rule, e.g. if the CB/ CA does not have a total of five clients, shall be discussed with and confirmed in writing beforehand by the competent national authority.

- b) These requirements are not valid for those auditors whose main task it is to be part of the certification body decision-making committee.
- c) The CB/ CA shall carry out a witness audit and/or re-audit for each of its auditors at least once every four years to verify competence
- d) If it is not possible to maintain competency from one year to the other, the requirements of an initial training in chapter 3.3 apply.

3.5 Rotation of the auditor

- a) The auditor in the audit team of farmer groups shall rotate (no more than 4 consecutive years to audit the same ICS). However, the inspector(s) in the audit team may remain the same.

For example, auditor number 1 audits a group ICS in years 1, 2, 3 and 4; in year 5 another auditor (auditor number 2) has to do the annual audit. In years 6, 7, 8 and 9 the auditor number 1 may do 4 consecutive audits again. This also applies for farmer group member inspections.

- b) When the CB/ CA has only one auditor in a given country/region, exceptions may be given case-by-case by the competent authority.

4 Key tasks

4.1 General tasks for ICS audits

- a) To audit and assess an ICS of farmer groups for compliance with the GAP-standard according to the ICS Checklist.
- b) To produce timely and accurate reports on such audits in accordance with ISO 17065 requirements and the timelines and system requirements of the certification manual.

4.2 Independence and Confidentiality

- a) Auditors are not permitted to take ultimate certification decisions regarding own audits they have carried out themselves.
- b) Auditors are not permitted to carry out any activities that may affect their independence or impartiality, and specifically are not permitted to accept bribes and to have carried out consultancy activities in the last two years for the operators they are performing audits on. Training is not considered to be consultancy, provided that, it is confined to the provision of generic information that is freely available in the public domain, i.e. the trainer cannot provide company-specific solutions.
- c) Auditors shall strictly observe the operator's and the CB's/ CA's procedures to maintain the confidentiality of information and records.
