



Dear GLOBALG.A.P. scheme manager,

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1. Technical communication

This technical communication is uploaded to the GLOBALG.A.P. document center and the CB extranet. It is also sent to the scheme managers of each approved and provisionally approved certification body (CB), to the technical committees, to the hosts of the national technical working groups, to the GLOBALG.A.P. Board, to the GLOBALG.A.P. accreditation bodies, and to all benchmarked scheme and benchmarked checklist owners. You can ask us to add selected persons to the mailing list or to send these technical news releases to all your registered staff by sending your request to Valentin Pazachev at pazachev@globalgap.org.

Several of the chapters included have been previously communicated to you and have been added with little or no changes. These are marked with *Previously communicated: Month XX, XXXX*. Chapters with new information have been marked with (NEW) next to the title.

2. Integrated Farm Assurance (IFA)

2.1 IFA version 6: Development news (New)

Over the last two years, GLOBALG.A.P. has been coordinating the revision of its flagship Integrated Farm Assurance (IFA) standard, which includes more than just a new version (version 6). We are updating our whole portfolio of farm assurance solutions, including our services, to offer more streamlined, digitalized solutions for the entire sector.

When will v6 be launched?

IFA v6 final (interim) will be launched in April 2022 for fruit and vegetables (FV), flowers and ornamentals (FO), hops (HOP), and aquaculture (AQ) and will become obligatory one year later in April 2023. In September 2022, the IFA v6 final will be launched. Combinable crops (CC), plant propagation material (PPM), tea (TE), and livestock standard will be published later.

Will IFA v6 have GFSI recognition?

IFA v6 will be released in two editions: **IFA v6 Smart** and **IFA v6 GFS**.

During the third public consultation phase, we received the feedback that some elements of the IFA v6 fruit and vegetables standard are still too prescriptive and did not suit the needs of those who do not need GFSI recognition. It was decided that to offer a standard that is simplified and truly offers a risk-based, outcome-oriented approach, there will need to be a separate solution for those that need GFSI recognition. GLOBALG.A.P. is committed to offering an option with GFSI recognition for those that need it.

This results in two IFA editions: A v6 edition that is suitable for most producers and a v6 edition that will be adapted for GFSI requirements.

Both editions of IFA v6 take a holistic approach and cover the same six topics.

IFA v6 Smart is GLOBALG.A.P.'s **flagship edition** and is appropriate for the majority of producers, **who do not need GFSI recognition**.

IFA v6 GFS has been amended to comply with GFSI requirements **for producers who need GFSI recognition.**

What scopes does IFA v6 cover?

Scope refers to the three different food production sectors that IFA v6 covers: Plants (previously called Crops Base), aquaculture, and livestock.

There are no sub-scopes anymore but different “product categories” – for example, FV and FO are not individual standards but part of the plants scope.

Certificates will be issued at scope level. For example, if a producer gets certified for both FV and FO, they will receive one certificate for plants with FV and FO listed as product categories.

Will IFA v6 be an accredited standard?

IFA v6 will be accredited, the same as previous versions. All CBs shall be accredited within six months after the date of provisional approval on scope level. As there are no sub-scopes, therefore are no CB and auditor approval required on sub-scope level. Once a CB is approved and accredited for a scope (e.g., AQ), it may certify all product categories with the scope (e.g., finfish, crustaceans, molluscs, seaweed).

Do CBs need to be trained?

All already approved and new in-house trainers (IHTs) shall attend a full IHT training per scope (online or face-to-face) and pass the respective tests. All product categories (previous sub-scopes) will be included in the scope-level tests (e.g., plants will include FV, FO, CC, TE, PPM, and HOP).

All new and approved CB QMS auditors will have to attend QMS auditor training online or in person and pass the tests.

CB farm auditors (previously called inspectors) shall complete the necessary GLOBALG.A.P. farm auditor online tests for the relevant scope once these are available in their working language. All product categories (previous sub-scopes) will be included in the scope-level tests (e.g., plants will include FV, FO, CC, TE, PPM, HOP).

GLOBALG.A.P. will start offering CB training in IFA v6 in May 2022.

2.2 Interim outcome from GFSI office assessment for IFA v5.4 (New)

This serves as formal notification of the following change to IFA v5.4, control point AQ 7.1.2 coming into effect **immediately**. The normative documents will not be updated to reflect this change.

Control Points and compliance criteria (CPCCs): Removal of the reference to 12 months in AQ 7.1.2. As per GFSI requirements, compound feed is to be sourced from certified sources only and this 12-month grace period will not be permitted.

2.3 No notification for unannounced inspections/audits for IFA v5.4-GFS, PHA, and HPSS

Previously communicated: 24 September 2021

GFSI has announced that their interpretation for the unannounced inspections/audits has changed for their GFSI version 2020 Benchmarking Requirements. According to the new interpretation, from 1 October 2021, the unannounced inspections/audits must be fully unannounced **without** any prior notification to the producer/producer group. Therefore, GLOBALG.A.P. hereby informs you that this new rule shall replace the current 48-hour notification period for IFA v5.4-GFS, Produce Handling Assurance (PHA) v1.2, and Harmonized Produce Safety Standard (HPSS) v1.2.

The timing, duration, and the calculation of the 10% unannounced inspections/audits are unchanged. The IFA v5.4-GFS and the PHA general regulations will be updated accordingly.

All other standards, including IFA v5.2 and IFA v5.3-GFS, are unaffected.

In case of any further question, please contact the standard support standard_support@globalgap.org.

2.4 IFA v5.3-GFS and IFA v5.4-GFS are different standards (New)

GLOBALG.A.P. considers v5.3-GFS and v5.4-GFS different standards. Each standard also has its own general regulations and accreditation. For example, 10% unannounced inspections are per scope – it would be implied that the CB conducts 10% unannounced for v5.3-GFS and 10% unannounced for v5.4-GFS.

2.5 Clarification for IFA v5.3-GFS, IFA v5.4-GFS CP FV 5.7.1 (New)

The control point reads, “Is the source of water used for final product washing potable or declared suitable by the competent authorities?” CBs have noted that the wording of this control point has led to some confusion during the auditing process.

Water applied directly to product during post-harvest processes shall have a water analysis at the point of application – or as near to the point of application as possible – that proves compliance with the required standard.

Water tests can be provided by the producer or by the water distribution system, but they shall refer to a sample taken **as near as possible to the point of use**, and the water report shall contain all needed parameters and shall not be more than 12 months old.

Reliance on official approval of water systems only does not ensure the water at the point of application conforms to the required standard.

If product is washed with bottled water or the water supply is treated on-site prior to application, documentation shall be available to support the procurement and/or maintenance of wash systems to remain within the accepted parameters.

2.6 Clarification for IFA v5.4-GFS, CPCC FV 5.9 (New)

Clarification for IFA v5.4-GFS, CPCC FV 5.9.1, environmental monitoring: FV 5.9 appears in the harvest and post-harvest handling section of the FV module.

Therefore, the requirement to include environmental monitoring in a producer's risk assessment, where the producer determines whether to perform environmental monitoring, is applicable to the **harvest and post-harvest production**, including harvest activities and equipment, packing in-field, storage, and the product handling unit (PHU). Water testing, given as an example in the compliance criteria, could refer to water used at or post-harvest and is a suggestion of how to apply the criteria.

Please note environmental monitoring is still **not** required on-farm; however, all producers must address whether and how environmental monitoring fits into their food safety verification procedures.

2.7 Select the correct version of IFA

Previously communicated: 2 November 2020 and [changes highlighted](#)

As communicated in the technical news, issue 01/2020: "Producers who supply customers demanding compliance with a GFSI-recognized standard need to use IFA v5.3-GFS from **21 May 2020** onward (with GFSI v7.2 recognition). Other producers – those who do not need GFSI compliance – may choose between IFA v5.2 and IFA v5.3-GFS.

Already valid IFA v5.2 certificates issued before 21 May 2020 will have GFSI v7.1 recognition until they expire normally, or until 19 May 2021 at the latest.

For an IFA v5.2 certificate to have GFSI v7.1 recognition, its certification decision in the database must be made before **21 May 2020** at the latest. The last possible date of certification decision is 20 May 2020."

GLOBALG.A.P. asked CBs to forward a notification as soon as possible to all their clients who need IFA FV certification.

IFA v5.2 continues to be valid (but no longer GFSI-recognized) until IFA v6 is published in 2021.

In summary, there are two parallel valid versions of IFA until v6 is introduced:

Time period	With GFSI recognition	Without GFSI recognition (for audits after 21 May 2020)
From May 2020	IFA v5.3-GFS	IFA v5.2
From 2021 (date tbc)	IFA v5.4-GFS	IFA v5.2

Please inform (in writing) all your current and future clients during the registration/re-registration process of the available IFA versions and clarify that:

- IFA v5.3-GFS and IFA v5.4-GFS certificates can be extended up to six months (same as IFA v5.2)
- IFA v5.3-GFS and IFA v5.4-GFS inspections/audits can be conducted in two modules (on- and off-site) but **not** fully remotely (remote audit is possible in IFA v5.2)

3. Chain of Custody: GLOBALG.A.P. Advisory Board decision on the Chain of Custody standard

Previously communicated: 9 July 2021

The Advisory Board confirmed the need to set up a Chain of Custody (CoC) Technical Committee to maintain and improve the CoC standard. This committee, supported and guided by the GLOBALG.A.P. Secretariat, will work independently of the Advisory Board and be responsible for technical decisions.

The GLOBALG.A.P. Secretariat sent out invitations to all retail, supplier, and associate community members.

Due to the time needed to make a smooth introduction of the CoC Technical Committee, GLOBALG.A.P. has decided to extend the exemption period for implementing the CoC standard for companies with no agricultural production that trade, pack, and market products as produced under GLOBALG.A.P. certified production processes until 1 October 2022.

Who must implement the CoC standard?

“The legal entity that labels GGN shall be a holder of a valid certificate of a GLOBALG.A.P. IFA, CFM, CoC, or an equivalent standard/scheme certificate.” [GLOBALG.A.P. general regulations part I, annex I.1]

“The use of the GLOBALG.A.P. claim in business-to-business communication is reserved for companies with a valid CoC or Integrated Farm Assurance (IFA) certificate.” [Chain of Custody general regulations, section 1]

“Following the introduction of the GGN label and the GGN label portal, the certification according to the CoC standard is mandatory for GGN label logo licensees and is used to identify the supply chain actors who take legal ownership or physical control over a product from GLOBALG.A.P. certified production processes.” [Chain of Custody general regulations, section 1]

NOTE: Agricultural producers selling only products included on their IFA certificate do not need to implement the CoC standard.

What is the CoC standard?

The GLOBALG.A.P. CoC standard lays out strict requirements for handling products from certified processes and for the proper segregation and tracing of products from certified and non-certified processes from farm to retailer. This prevents products from GLOBALG.A.P. certified production processes from being substituted or diluted with products whose processes are not certified, either in error or for economic gain (food fraud). The CoC standard thus ensures that any product bearing a GLOBALG.A.P. Number or sold with a GLOBALG.A.P. certification claim is truly sourced from farms using GLOBALG.A.P. certified production processes.

Therefore, the CoC standard is an essential tool in combating economically motivated adulteration, which in the GLOBALG.A.P. context is defined as the intentional substitution or dilution of products from certified processes with products from non-certified processes for the purpose of economic gain.

The standard is designed to manage the risk of accidental or deliberate:

- Misidentification of products from non-certified production as products from certified production (product substitution)
- Mixing of products from certified and non-certified production that are then sold as certified (product dilution)

For the above reasons, GLOBALG.A.P. will not be able to defend any claims (such as traceability or residue exceedance problems) after October 2022 in situations where the product supply chain includes companies without CoC certification.

Further information on the CoC standard can be found here:

https://www.globalgap.org/uk_en/for-producers/globalg.a.p./coc/index.html.

What support will be provided by GLOBALG.A.P.?

The support explained in a previous communication sent on 29 October 2020 will continue until the end of the extension period:

1. GLOBALG.A.P. will provide a communication pack, including CoC FAQs, to support your communication with suppliers.
2. Free, informative online webinars are available to support supply chain members in their implementation of the CoC standard.
3. Discretionary direct support and advice for individual companies are available by arrangement with GLOBALG.A.P.
4. CBs will be able to issue a CoC certificate to companies during the transition period, even if parts of their supply chains are not yet fully covered by a CoC certification. In these cases, the companies will be required to ensure that full traceability is maintained, and the certified status is validated internally.
5. Further information on this topic will be provided in the online CoC workshops.
6. GLOBALG.A.P. will also continue to investigate any integrity complaints, even if a supply chain is not yet fully covered by CoC certification.
7. Your GLOBALG.A.P. key account manager will contact you to organize a meeting to discuss the implementation of the GLOBALG.A.P. Advisory Board decision.

Due to the difficulty of achieving certification for the entire supply chain at the same time or in a complete upstream sequence, GLOBALG.A.P. has decided to offer a transition period during which, even if part of the supply chain is not yet certified, an upstream company can nevertheless receive CoC certification if certain preconditions are met.

Technical specification: Exemption procedure for the transition period (only applicable for crops)

Temporary exemption for companies seeking CoC certification – CoC-SC 2.1

This exemption applies for a limited period and refers to the possibility of CoC certification when not all suppliers have CoC certification as required (CoC checklist v6, CoC-SC 2.1). The exemption is only applicable for traders/brokers, with or without physical possession of packed products.

Together with the application for CoC certification, the company must provide the certification body with the following documentation.

Requirements for the company seeking CoC certification:

- a) Evidence of sending a letter/e-mail to all suppliers requiring them to achieve CoC certification before 1 October 2022. (This letter/e-mail must be sent before 1 October 2022, and there should be evidence of acceptance by the supplier(s). The communication shall include the acceptance by the supplier for receiving a visit/second party CoC inspection by the certified company or by the company CB any time necessary/appropriate.)
- b) Supplier list with information about the IFA/CoC certification status of every supplier
- c) Evidence that the products have been packed by a company with IFA/CoC certification and information about the traceability of the products through the non-certified production part of the chain

Requirements for the supplier company without certification:

- a) Registration with an approved CB as per general regulations part I, 4.2. (The CB registers the company in the GLOBALG.A.P. database and assigns a CoC Number (status “accepted” in the database).)
- b) Signed commitment with the CoC client and with the CB to have the certification inspection before 1 October 2022
- c) Letter accepting the possibility of a visit by GLOBALG.A.P. or the CB if appropriate

Once in possession of this documentation, the CB can choose to perform the inspection and grant certification to the company even if not all suppliers have CoC/IFA certification.

NOTE: This exemption cannot apply to companies engaged in (re)processing, (re)packing, and/or (re)labeling of products from certified production processes, in storage and handling of bulk products (unpacked, unsealed, or unlabeled), or directly in storage and handling of packed but unlabeled products.

Temporary exemption for companies seeking CoC certification with high-risk subcontractors – CoC general regulations, section 5 (New)

This exemption applies when not all high-risk subcontractors of a company already (or to be) holding CoC certification have CoC certification yet or when it is not possible to include the high-risk subcontractor(s) on the CoC certificate as required in CoC general regulations, section 5. (Subcontractor(s) that engage in (re)processing, (re)packing, and/or (re)labeling of certified products, that engage in storage and handling of bulk products (unpacked, unsealed, or unlabeled), or that engage directly in storage and handling of packed but unlabeled products are classified as *high risk*.)

For a limited period of time (until 1 October 2022), GLOBALG.A.P. will accept the inclusion of these high-risk subcontractors *without CoC certification* on the company's approved subcontractor list.

Prior to outsourcing activities to a new contractor, the organization shall inform its CB of the outsourced activity and the subcontractor's name and contact details.

In the case of initial certification, the applicant company must provide the CB with the following documentation together with the application for CoC certification.

Requirements for the company seeking CoC certification:

- a) Evidence of sending a letter/e-mail to all high-risk subcontractors without certification not included on the company's certification process requiring them to achieve CoC certification before 1 October 2022
- b) Evidence that the subcontracted site holds certification according to a GFSI-recognized food safety system at the time when the subcontracted process takes place
- c) An outsourcing agreement with each subcontractor without certification specifying at minimum that the subcontractor shall:
 - (i) Conform to all applicable certification requirements and the organization's procedures related to the outsourced activity
 - (ii) Not further outsource any processing
 - (iii) Commit to achieving CoC certification before 1 October 2022
 - (iv) Accept the right of the organization's CB or GLOBALG.A.P. to audit the subcontractor if considered necessary (e.g., for compliance investigation, traceability test)
- d) The organization shall provide documented procedures to its subcontractor(s) that ensure the following:
 - (i) During the outsourced activity, the subcontractor shall not mix or contaminate products from GLOBALG.A.P. certified production processes with any other products from non-GLOBALG.A.P. certified processes.
 - (ii) The subcontractor shall be able to demonstrate a mass balance for the products from certified processes.

Requirements for the high-risk subcontractor company without certification: Certification according to a GFSI-recognized food safety system

Once in possession of this documentation, the CB can choose to perform the inspection and certify the applicant company even if not all its high-risk subcontractors have CoC certification or are included in the company's certification process.

4. Produce Handling Assurance (New)

4.1 Observation audit requirement waived if auditor already has GFSI approval (New)

Existing IFA FV, CC, and HO auditors for all versions with approval in another fully recognized GFSI certification program already meet the skills and qualifications required by the PHA general regulations, Annex III.2, "CB auditor qualifications (Options 1 and 3)." GLOBALG.A.P. will therefore waive the requirement that an observation audit of PHA must occur before a PHA witness assessment for auditor approval takes place.

Witness assessments are still required (as for any standard) before approval. Qualifications are checked by the accreditation body and the Certification Integrity Program (CIPRO), and CBs must show evidence that the auditor is already approved for another certification program recognized for GFSI.

4.2 PHA for subcontracted PHUs (New)

In IFA certification when the PHU is subcontracted, and the producer still owns the product and product handling, product handling and the PHU is included in the scope of certification. In this case, the PHU shall be added to the IFA certificate annex.

Where the subcontracted PHU has PHA certification, the subcontracted PHU shall **still** be included in the IFA certificate's annex.

4.3 Retailers accepting PHA (New)

With the recent recognition from GFSI for scope BIII pre-process handling of plant products, PHA is a market-ready solution for on-farm and standalone post-harvest handling operations. A growing list of buyers, including Ahold-Delhaize, Walmart, Costco Wholesale, Publix, Wegman's, and Wendy's have formally acknowledged their acceptance of PHA with GLOBALG.A.P. PLUS, any buyer using GFSI recognition as their screen for identifying acceptable certificates should now accept PHA.

For Costco Wholesale, operations are required to comply with the Costco Facility Addendum in addition to the PHA standard.

Producers and handling operations should always check with their buyer to ensure correct expectations.

5. Add-on-related updates

5.1 Change of product attributes for Coop Italia Pesticide Transparency add-on

Previously communicated: 25 June 2021

As already communicated to CBs, GLOBALG.A.P. removed the product attribute “Assessment Level” for the Coop Italia Pesticide Transparency add-on in the database.

Removal of this attribute has already begun, and we will inform you again as soon as this is completed. We apologize for the inconvenience.

Previously communicated: 16 August 2021

We would like to inform you of changes made to the general rules specifications and checklist of the Coop Italia Pesticide Transparency add-on.

These changes regard the minimum number of required residue tests as well as corresponding sanctions:

1. In section 5.2.2 d) of the general rules specifications, the new sampling size for residue tests to detect residues of any of the active ingredients included in the Coop Italia Pesticide Transparency List for Option 2 producer groups and Option 1 multisite with a QMS is now set as at minimum the square root of the number of registered producers per product and production type. The compliance criterion CIPT 5 of the checklist has also been changed to agree with the general rules specifications, section 5.2.2 d).
2. In section 6.2 c) of the general rules specifications, presence of any of the active ingredients included in the Coop Italia Pesticide Transparency List in residue tests has been included as reason for a sanction.

The new version of the Coop Italia Pesticide Transparency add-on general rules specifications version 1.0-1 and the checklist version 1.0-2 including these changes is available through the [GLOBALG.A.P. document center](#) and the add-on page of the [GLOBALG.A.P. website](#). The changes are obligatory from the date of publication, which was 9th August 2021.

The Italian versions of the add-on documents were also updated according to the final English version.

Please make sure to use the latest version of the checklist during assessments.

5.2 GLOBALG.A.P. guideline for the inspection of Crops for Processing with GRASP (New)

On 15 October 2021, GLOBALG.A.P. published the GLOBALG.A.P. guideline for the inspection of Crops for Processing (CfP) with GRASP.

This document describes all requirements and the certification rules for any producer or producer group with GLOBALG.A.P. CfP certification seeking to be assessed under GLOBALG.A.P. Risk Assessment on Social Practice (GRASP) as well. GRASP shall have the same scope as CfP (not including processing) and cannot be applied as standalone; that is, a valid CfP certificate is necessary as basis for a GRASP assessment.

GRASP assessors' qualification requirements:

The qualification requirements for GRASP assessors shall follow the latest GRASP version. CfP can only be audited by inspectors/auditors approved for CfP. Additionally, the combined CfP and GRASP assessment may only be conducted by one inspector/auditor if that inspector/auditor is qualified for both. An audit team may be formed where a CfP approved inspector/auditor and a GRASP assessor conduct the audit jointly.

All IFA IHTs for Crops Base already approved for CfP shall attend the update training for CfP, which will include the guideline for the inspection of CfP with GRASP. In case the IFA Crops Base IHT approved for CfP is a different person from the GRASP IHT, both shall participate in the update training before the first combined assessment. Training sessions will be announced by GLOBALG.A.P. Academy on the GLOBALG.A.P. website. Fees are calculated according to the latest version of the GLOBALG.A.P. fee table.

Documents:

For GRASP application:

- a) The GRASP general rules, latest version, and the GLOBALG.A.P. general regulations, latest version
- b) The GRASP add-on module, i.e., the control points and compliance criteria (CPCC)
- c) The GRASP add-on checklist
- d) The guideline for the inspection of CfP with GRASP
- e) Any GRASP national interpretation guidelines (NIGs)

For CfP application:

- f) The CfP general rules, latest version
- g) The CfP checklist, latest version
- h) The guideline for the inspection of CfP with GRASP (this document)

All applicable documents are available in the document center as well as with direct access through quicklinks on the GRASP webpage on the GLOBALG.A.P. website. The guideline is available in English.

5.3 Technical clarifications on GRASP general rules (New)

Self-assessments/Internal assessment documents and checklists. Clarification to GRASP general rules, 5.1.b, paragraph 2. Self-assessment checklist:

Option 2 producer groups **shall either** use Option 1 checklist for every producer group member and PHU **or** the GRASP **internal producer group checklist** provided on the GLOBALG.A.P. website.

REMINDER: The checklists for Option 1/3, Option 1/3 multisite with or without QMS, and Option 2/4 producer groups are based on the GRASP CPCCs and must be used for external assessments, internal group assessments, and self-assessments. Only these checklists shall be used during GRASP assessments. GRASP CB assessors shall check that internal group assessments and self-assessments comply with the GRASP general rules, section 2.1 c) and 5.1 a) and b). If other documents than those mentioned above are used for internal group assessments and self-assessments, the GRASP CB assessment cannot take place and shall be rescheduled.

GRASP full reassessment due to change on commercial requirements by GRASP observers. Transition period for exception in the application of GLOBALG.A.P. general regulations part I, 5.3.2 to GRASP waiting period between assessments.

Based on the GRASP general rules, section 7.3, in case of non-compliances in initial assessments, the producer has three months (or less, as agreed by the producer and CB) from the date of assessment to undertake corrective actions to rectify the situation before the final assessment results are uploaded to the GLOBALG.A.P. database. The CB shall upload the GRASP checklist within a maximum of 28 calendar days after closure of any outstanding non-compliances.

In case of subsequent assessment, the producer has 28 days (or less, as agreed by the producer and CB) from the date of assessment to undertake corrective actions to rectify the situation before the final assessment results are uploaded to the GLOBALG.A.P. database.

Once the non-compliances are corrected, the corrected GRASP checklist shall be uploaded to the GLOBALG.A.P. database. The CB shall upload the GRASP checklist within a maximum of 28 calendar days after closure of any outstanding non-compliances.

If the non-compliances are not corrected, the GRASP checklist with all non-compliances, outstanding corrective actions, and respective remarks shall be uploaded to the GLOBALG.A.P. database. This is then the final assessment report, which is also issued by the CB to the producer/producer group as the proof of assessment.

However, there are some GRASP observers setting new commercial requirements about GRASP compliance levels (e.g., require the result “fully compliant”). Producers who have already been GRASP assessed and their corrective action time has already expired, face difficulties to meet the observers’ requirements and ask for a new GRASP assessment before six months from the previous assessment pass. Due to this, the GLOBALG.A.P. Secretariat decided to launch a transition rule to **allow additional full GRASP re-assessment before six months** from the previous GRASP annual assessment.

GLOBALG.A.P. will allow an exception to the application of the GLOBALG.A.P. general regulations part I, section 5.3.2 for subsequent GRASP assessments (not for IFA) due to changes in GRASP observers' requirements. There shall be a minimum period of **one month** between two GRASP assessments.

This exception will apply **only** for **six months** after the release of this technical news issue and will be applicable **once** per producer/producer group.

Producers/Producer groups who need this exception to comply with GRASP observers' requirements of compliance shall ask their CB to send a request for an exception to standards_support@globalgap.org including justification (GRASP observers' requirements and respective GGN).

Registering the same CB for conducting a GRASP assessment and inspection/audit for a GLOBALG.A.P. primary production standard or equivalent benchmarked scheme/AMC. Clarification on GRASP general rules, section 5.2, "Third party assessment" in relation to section 4.2.1, "General," d) (ii).

To ensure the "one-stop-shop" principle of GLOBALG.A.P. certification, the GRASP assessment should be conducted together with the inspection/audit for a GLOBALG.A.P. primary production standard or equivalent benchmarked scheme/AMC (GRASP general rules, 5.2).

Even though coordination among CBs is possible, this may cause uncertainty to the producer assessed and the possibility of delays with commercial harm. Therefore, GRASP general rules, section 5.2, shall be observed and understood as eliminating the possibility of an applicant registering for the GRASP assessment with a different CB from the one granted the primary production certification (i.e., IFA, CfP), (GRASP general rules, 4.2.1, d) (ii)).

A transition period of **one year** from the "valid to" date (starting from the publication of this technical news issue, so no later than 14 October 2023) of the current GLOBALG.A.P. primary production standards or equivalent benchmarked schemes/AMC certificate is granted for all already certified producers/producer groups. After this transition period, GRASP general rules, section 4.2.1, d) (ii) will **no longer** apply, and applicants shall register with the same CB for both.

During the transition period, the clarification will be applied as follows:

1. For initial primary production inspection/audit with (new) GRASP:
The GRASP assessment shall be conducted by the **same** CB that conducted the GLOBALG.A.P. primary production standard inspection/audit.
2. For subsequent primary production inspections/audits with GRASP:
 - a) If registrations with different CBs impede, in any way, conducting a GRASP assessment together with the inspection/audit for primary production standards or equivalent benchmarked schemes/AMC, then the CB conducting the inspection/audit for the primary production standards or equivalent shall conduct the GRASP assessment.

- b) To be used only once: If registration by different CBs does not prevent conducting together the GRASP assessment and GLOBALG.A.P. primary production inspection/audit, then both CBs will proceed one more time. In this case the CB of the GLOBALG.A.P. primary production inspection/audit will be responsible of the coordination and shall communicate this to GLOBALG.A.P. In case of producer groups, this CB shall inform the CB conducting the GRASP assessment of the sample assessed during the primary production inspection/audit.
3. Procedures for 2 a) and 2 b) when different CB registrations exist:
 - a) The CBs shall reach an agreement at least three months before the GLOBALG.A.P. primary production inspection/audit about:
 - (i) Which CB will conduct the GRASP assessment
 - (ii) How the assessment will proceed to avoid delays
 - b) This shall be notified to GLOBALG.A.P. (standards_support@globalgap.org) by the CB conducting the primary production audit.
 4. If no agreement is reached, the CB of the primary production inspection/audit shall conduct the GRASP assessment, avoiding delays to the producer.

This CB shall keep proof of producer approval of the change of CB for GRASP and immediately notify the producer and the GLOBALG.A.P. Secretariat (standards_support@globalgap.org) of said change.

5.4 Producers with IFA certification and GRASP full compliance considered compliant with PMA Ethical Charter (New)

The Ethical Charter on Responsible Labor Practices is a framework of responsible labor principles and values adopted January 2018 by the Produce Marketing Association (PMA) and the United Fresh Produce Association (United Fresh) in an effort to increase transparency and accountability in the produce industry. GLOBALG.A.P. formally endorses the Ethical Charter and has benchmarked the IFA plus GRASP add-on to the Ethical Charter Measurement Criteria so that producers may show evidence of compliance of these practices, either voluntarily as an endorser or as a verification if required by their buyer.

Those producers who have IFA certification in combination with the GRASP add-on with full compliance are considered as compliant with the PMA Ethical Charter. Ethical recruitment is not explicitly covered by GRASP but may be covered by a country's NIG or, where not included in the NIG, can be met by inclusion in the producer or producer group's self-declaration (GRASP control point 3). For example, this practice is included in the US NIG for GRASP, and therefore US producers with IFA certification and GRASP full compliance directly meet all Ethical Charter requirements. For those producers outside of US, GRASP meets this expectation when producers include assurance of ethical recruitment in their self-declaration (GRASP control point 3). The self-declaration is verified on-site by the assessor.

Learn more about the Ethical Charter, its endorsers, and the option to endorse it [here](#).

For questions regarding GLOBALG.A.P.'s relationship with the Ethical Charter, please contact Roberta Anderson at anderson@globalgap.org.

5.5 Newly published GRASP NIGs

Previously communicated: 29 September 2021

We are pleased to inform you that the GRASP NIG Tanzania was published on 12 August 2021 in the document center of the GLOBALG.A.P. website.

You can download it [here](#).

For any questions regarding GRASP NIGs, please contact Anita Britt at graspnig@globalgap.org.

5.6 Produce Safety Rule exempted products (New)

The US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has exempted certain products from the Produce Safety Rule (PSR) ([see "Exemptions"](#)). However, importers may require compliance to the PSR regardless of exempted status. For example, figs are exempted products according to the FDA, whereas some importers require adherence to the PSR as a part of their Foreign Supplier Verification Program (FSVP). Therefore, GLOBALG.A.P. has not excluded any FV products from the Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA) PSR add-on.

This topic has been previously addressed in our FSMA PSR add-on [FAQs](#) and [training presentations](#).

5.7 GROW v3.0 clarification (New)

Kindly note the following correction in terms of clarification:

Applicable requirement: GROW v3 checklist, module 2, clause 2.3, “Assessor Guidance” 2: “If there are no ‘high-risk’ crops, control point 2.4 and 2.5 can be marked as ‘not applicable.’”

Clarification: Please note that the above guidance is true for control point 2.4 of the hygiene module in the GROW checklist, but in the case of control point 2.5, it is always applicable when post-harvest handling (e.g., wet or dry sorting, washing, packing, etc.) takes place under the ownership of the producer (even if it is sub-contracted to another PHU), no matter the risk classification of the product.

5.8 New version of GLOBALG.A.P. PLUS v1.1 (New)

The new GLOBALG.A.P. PLUS normative documents v1.1 were approved with a date of 1 October for mandatory use. The GLOBALG.A.P. PLUS general rules specifications and checklist were uploaded to the CB extranet on 4 October and shall be used for all future assessments. The edition update registers in the documents indicate all changes.

We kindly ask all approved GLOBALG.A.P. PLUS CBs to confirm the receipt of this GLOBALG.A.P. PLUS update news by clicking on the corresponding box in the CB extranet.

5.9 Reminder for GLOBALG.A.P. PLUS (New)

Here we would like to remind all CBs that they are not allowed to use GLOBALG.A.P. PLUS if they are not approved for this add-on.

CB auditors/inspectors shall not conduct any kind of assessment for GLOBALG.A.P. PLUS if they are not approved by GLOBALG.A.P. – not even second-party audits based on the buyer’s request or a pre-audit assessment.

CBs interested in being approved to conduct assessments for the GLOBALG.A.P. PLUS add-on shall contact the GLOBALG.A.P. CB Administration team: terheggen@globalgap.org.

We also want to stress the importance of cascading down this information to the CB branches to make sure it reaches all the markets where GLOBALG.A.P. PLUS is being requested.

6. GLOBALG.A.P. Audit Online Hub

6.1 GLOBALG.A.P. Audit Online Hub upload rules

Previously communicated: 23 August 2021

As previously communicated, 15 February to 15 August 2021 was designated as a trial period during which GLOBALG.A.P. approved CBs were required to use the Audit Online Hub (AOH) to upload 25% of all audits/inspections conducted per month.

Since the Certification Body Committee (CBC) meeting took place on 21 September 2021, we have decided to extend this trial phase until **31 October 2021**. The percentage of files to be uploaded will not increase before then.

During this extended trial phase, GLOBALG.A.P. will continue monitoring CBs. Whenever possible, GLOBALG.A.P. will advise CBs on systematic errors and general performance in their use of AOH.

From 15 August 2021 until **31 October 2021**, the upload requirements remain as follows:

1. From **15 November 2020**, all (i.e., 100% of) checklists for the FSMA PSR add-on (including its IFA checklist part) shall be uploaded (requirement unchanged).
2. From **15 February 2021**, 25% of all checklists for IFA v5.2, IFA v5.3-GFS, IFA v5.4-GFS, HPSS v1.2, or PHA v1.2 shall be uploaded per month for the next three months (until 30 September 2021) (requirement updated).
3. From **1 April 2021**, all (i.e., 100%) checklists for the Nurture Module v11.2 shall be uploaded. The Nurture Module checklists consist of the Nurture Module and IFA checklist (see “Nurture module scheme rules,” 5 D)) (requirement unchanged).
4. From **15 May 2020** (when the GLOBALG.A.P. Remote procedure was first published), all (i.e., 100%) inspections conducted according to the GLOBALG.A.P. Remote procedure for IFA v5.2 and the FSMA PSR add-on shall be uploaded (requirement unchanged).
5. From **25 January 2021** (when the Nurture Module v11.2 was released in AOH), all inspections conducted according to the GLOBALG.A.P. Remote procedure for the Nurture Module shall be uploaded (requirement unchanged).
6. Those IFA checklists uploaded for the FSMA PSR add-on, the Nurture Module, or because of the use of GLOBALG.A.P. Remote may be counted toward the 25% referenced in item 2 of this list (requirement unchanged).
7. At the end of the trial period (**31 October 2021**), there will be an evaluation meeting with the CBC to determine further strategy based on the feedback collected (updated requirement).
8. During the trial phase (until **31 October 2021**), AOH use is not considered in CB key performance indicator scoring, and no sanctions for unintentional operational mistakes will be issued (requirement unchanged).
9. The 25% shall be counted per certificate holder – i.e., the CB may choose any combination of standards, Option 1 inspections, and Option 2 audits (requirement unchanged).
 - a) Example: The CB has inspected/audited 100 IFA v5.2 Option 1 producers and 20 IFA v5.2 Option 2 producer groups as well as 100 IFA v5.3-GFS Option 1 producers and 20 IFA v5.3-GFS Option 2 producer groups. Total number of certificate holders inspected/audited is thus 240. The CB shall upload 25% of 240 = 60 inspection/audit checklists. CB may select any 60 checklists – e.g., 60 IFA v5.2 Option 1 producer inspection checklists – to comply with the upload rule.
 - b) If the CB chooses to upload an Option 2 or an Option 1 with QMS checklist, the CB shall upload the QMS checklist for the producer group/producer as well as the checklists for all sampled producer group members/production sites (requirement unchanged).
9. The number of checklists to be uploaded shall always be rounded up to the next whole number (requirement unchanged).

Example: CB has inspected/audited 45 certificate holders. 25% of 45 = 11.25, so 12 checklists shall be uploaded.

10. All deadlines are linked to the date of inspection/audit and not to the date of certification decision (requirement unchanged).
11. Initial, recertification, surveillance, and unannounced inspections and audits are included (requirement unchanged).

From 15 May 2021, GLOBALG.A.P. is strictly enforcing the rule that requires a percentage of inspection/audit checklists be uploaded to AOH. The following sanctions apply for CBs that do not meet this obligation:

12. If the number of inspection/audit checklists not uploaded per month to AOH exceeds 10 inspection/audit checklists or 5% (whichever is fewer) of the total inspection/audit checklists required for the month, a first warning shall be issued to the CB. The CB has until the end of the following month to upload the missing audit checklists.
13. If, in the consecutive month, 10 inspection/audit checklists or 5% (whichever is fewer) of the total inspection/audit checklists required for the month are missing, or if the previous missing inspection/audit checklists are not uploaded within the deadline, the first warning will be escalated to a second warning. The CB has until the end of the following month to upload the missing inspection/audit checklists.
14. If, for the third month in a row, 10 inspection/audit checklists or 5% (whichever is fewer) of the total inspection/audit checklists required for the month are missing, or if the previous missing inspection/audit checklists are not uploaded within the deadline, the second warning will be escalated to a Yellow Card. The CB has until the end of the following month to upload the missing inspection/audit checklists.
15. If, for the fourth month in a row, 10 inspection/audit checklists or 5% (whichever is fewer) of the total inspection/audit checklists required for the month are missing, or if the previous missing inspection/audit checklists are not uploaded within the deadline, the Yellow Card will be escalated to a Red Card. The CB has until the end of the following month to upload the missing inspection/audit checklists.

Regarding section 5.8 of document 210517_AOH_upload_rules_en (and point 11 of this text), we would like to clarify its content.

There are timelines referring to the mandatory starting date of uploads and not to the starting date that we monitor the number of uploads each month.

Uploads become mandatory linked to the **date of inspection/audit**.

But percentage of files to be uploaded each month to AOH is calculated comparing certification decisions in the database versus certification decisions in AOH.

For the new deployment process for AOH, please see [here](#).

6.2 Checklists uploaded to AOH with closure of non-conformances (New)

All GLOBALG.A.P. checklists uploaded to AOH shall also include the non-compliance and non-conformances, date of closure of non-conformances (NCs), and a short description of the correction/corrective action in the final report.

To ensure NCs are captured, when uploading reports to AOH, the uploaded file must show non-compliances and non-conformances as “No” so that the system captures the NCs in the NC summary. These NCs can be closed by the inspector/auditor within AOH or by another qualified person in the certification body decision-making committee before submitting the report as closed to GLOBALG.A.P.

Alternatively, AOH has a specific tab “NC/CA” (CA = corrective action), which is mandatory to be completed with all the information requested: Corrective action due date, status (open/closed), who issued the NC, who closed it, date of closure, and a short description of the action(s) taken. The AOH wiki page ([here](#)) will be soon updated to contain further information on how to show NCs and CAs within AOH final reports.

Files with evidence of the implemented corrective actions may also be uploaded into AOH, but this is not yet mandatory. The CB must maintain evidence of corrective actions either by upload to AOH or keeping such records on file in their own system.

7. GLOBALG.A.P. database updates

7.1 Producer group with own fields – update

Previously communicated: 21 July 2021

Here we address the situation when the Option 2 certificate holder (legal entity) has its own production area in the group (i.e., it is also a producer group member).

We have made some amendments to the GLOBALG.A.P. database enabling to reflect the:

- **Quantities** registered for the producer group as own fields
- **Total number of producers**, counting the producer group also as a producer

For now, this is only applicable for producer groups with own fields for the following standards:

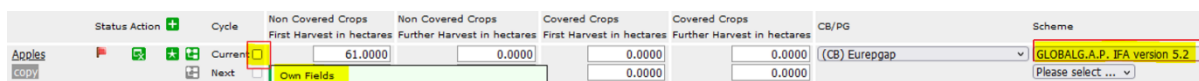
- **IFA v5.1**
- **IFA v5.2**

We will update you once we extend this feature for further standards.

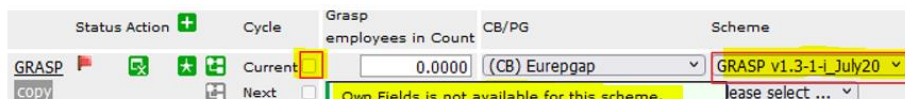
The information will be visible in the Annex of the online certificate and in the public search. CBs can update the data via:

- **Web interface:** The new “Own Fields” checkbox is available for each product of a producer group under *Manage Products > Affiliation*. When the CB **activates this checkbox** by ticking it, this means that the producer group **has own fields and the quantities entered will be displayed** as “Own Fields” in the certificate and in the search.

Where “Own Fields” is applicable for the respective standard (IFA v5.1 and v5.2): The information text “Own Fields” will appear when you hover the mouse over the checkbox.



Where “Own Fields” is **not** applicable for the respective scheme: Information text “Own fields is not available for this scheme” will appear when you hover the mouse over the check box.



- **Product upload sheet:** The following two new attributes are available in the product upload sheet.

Attribute	Value
own_fields_box	0 = no own fields 1 = own fields
own_fields_box_next	0 = no own fields 1 = own fields
If the producer group has own fields, then the quantity shall be entered respectively.	

- For Option 2 producer groups where “Own Fields” is applicable (IFA v5.1 and v5.2): Compulsory to **fill**. Leaving empty results in an error message “Obligatory field has been missed.”
- For Option 1 and 2 producer group members: Please do not enter a value and leave it **empty**. Do not delete the columns.
- For all standards other than IFA v5.1 and v5.2 (where this feature is not yet implemented): Please do not enter a value and leave it **empty** for both producer group members and producer groups. Do not delete the columns.
- **SOAP/API:** The following two new attributes will be available in the API.

Attribute	Value
<ownFields></ownFields>	0 = no own fields 1 = own fields
<ownFieldsNext></ownFieldsNext>	0 = no own fields 1 = own fields
If the producer group has own fields, then the quantity shall be entered respectively	

- For Option 2 producer groups where “Own Fields” is applicable (IFA v5.1 and v5.2): Attributes and values shall be **included** in the API request as mentioned above.
- For Option 1 producers and Option 2 producer group members: Send the API request **without** the field <ownFields> and <ownFieldsNext>.
- For all standards other than IFA v5.1 and v5.2 (where this feature is not yet implemented): Send the API request **without** the field <ownFields> and <ownFieldsNext> for products in all Options.

The CBs **shall** have updated the information where necessary (select the information “Own Fields” and enter the quantity of the producer group’s own cultivation) in the database by **21 September 2021**, at the latest.

To assist you with this process we sent you an overview of all your producer group clients with products from IFA v5.1 and v5.2 certified production processes.

7.2 Avoid multiple clicks of “Execute” button in database (New)

We would like to kindly ask CBs not to click multiple times on the “Execute” button in the database, as that creates multiple cycles that are assigned in the database and causes further problems.

7.3 Exception in use of GLN (New)

Here we address the situation where a GLN already exists and the producer’s clients ask to use this GLN in all product labels, regardless of the certification status. To avoid confusing products from certified and non-certified production processes, the GLOBALG.A.P. Secretariat will grant exception to producers who already hold a GLN and whose clients request to use it for all products that shall be labeled and will still allow them to get a GGN.

The GGN will be used to identify **only** products from GLOBALG.A.P. certified production processes as the exact status already reflects in the GLOBALG.A.P. database.

The GLN will not appear in the GLOBALG.A.P. database nor on the GLOBALG.A.P. certificate.

Please contact standard_support@globalgap.org to ask for exception if your clients request it.

7.4 Amendment of minimum data access rules (New)

Today, GLOBALG.A.P. collects the location data for legal entities and (to a limited extent of standards) also the location data for production sites and PHUs.

According to the current valid [data access rules](#) (v3.4), section 3.2:

1. The “Location” data set of the **certificate holder legal entity** is stated not to be visible by default to anyone beside the GLOBALG.A.P. Secretariat and the respective CB:

	GLOBALG.A.P. Secretariat	Certification body	Market participants	Public
Location: Certificate holder legal entity	Is visible by default	Is visible by default	Is not visible by default	Is not visible by default

2. The “Location” data set of the **production site or PHU** is stated not to be visible by default to anyone beside the GLOBALG.A.P. Secretariat and the respective CB:

	GLOBALG.A.P. Secretariat	Certification body	Market participants	Public
Location: Production site and/or PHU	Is visible by default	Is visible by default	Is not visible by default	Is not visible by default

“Location” is considered as geo coordinates (northern/southern latitude + western/eastern longitude). This implies that geo coordinates (for both cases) cannot be accessed by any market participants or the public unless the producer explicitly grants access to the information. Not having this information visible by default means producers need to actively share this information with respective stakeholders.

What is changing?

The following amendment will be done in the current [data access rules](#) in regards to the above mentioned standards, section 3.2, according to:

1. The “Location” data set of the **certificate holder legal entity** is amended to be visible by default to market participants in addition to the current settings. This default setting shall only be effective for Option 1 and 3 producers as well as Option 2 and 4 producer groups (certificate holders) but not producer group members:

	GLOBALG.A.P. Secretariat	Certification body	Market participants	Public
Location: Certificate holder legal entity	Remains visible by default	Remains visible by default	Is made visible by default ¹	Remains not visible by default
¹ Only for Option 1 and 3 producers as well as Option 2 and 4 producer groups (certificate holders) but not producer group members				

2. The “Location” data set of the **production site and/or PHU** is amended to be visible by default to market participants in addition to the current settings. This default setting shall only be effective for Option 1 and 3 producers as well as Option 2 and 4 producer groups (certificate holders) but not producer group members:

	GLOBALG.A.P. Secretariat	Certification body	Market participants	Public
Location: Production site and/or PHU	Remains visible by default	Remains visible by default	Is made visible by default ¹	Remains not visible by default
¹ Only for Option 1 and 3 producers as well as Option 2 and 4 producer groups (certificate holders) but not producer group members				

Having this information visible by default means companies registered with GLOBALG.A.P. and considered as market participants will have access to this information.

Justification

There is a general demand from retailers and supply chain stakeholders (e.g., suppliers) to have easy access to the geographical location of producers in their supply chains for the following purposes:

- Risk management: Social and natural resources risks
- Crisis management: Access to relevant producer data
- Supplier management: Support for sourcing processes
- Sustainability solutions such as GRASP and SPRING, as well as the impact-driven approach are only fully valuable if the users can map the results and visualize their producer base.

With this step we harmonize the minimum data access rights settings of the location with the ones currently active for the postal address (for the legal entity similar as for sites and PHUs), which can be obtained in the same table in section 3.2 of the data access rules v3.4. Doing similar for geo coordinates is, to our understanding, just stringent since most postal addresses can be turned into geo coordinates nowadays.

The reason why we want to amend these data access rules but at the same time limit this to Option 1 and 3 producers as well as Option 2 and 4 producer groups (certificate holders) but not to producer group members is to find balance between actual retail demand toward this while protecting producer group members' identities. Option 2 producer group members may choose whether to make their addresses visible to market participants.

The Secretariat put forward this request to the Systems and Rules Technical Committee on 14 September according to the governance obligations of the [data policy](#), and the Systems and Rules Technical Committee has not raised any objection towards this.

There will be a a three-month transition period, ending 14 December 2021, to inform your clients. CBs shall inform their clients about this change.

The new GLOBALG.A.P. data access rules will be uploaded to the GLOBALG.A.P. website.

8. Updated GLOBALG.A.P. product list (New)

There have been some updates to the GLOBALG.A.P. product list.

The latest version of the GLOBALG.A.P. product list (v5.12_Oct 2021) is available on the GLOBALG.A.P. website: [GLOBALG.A.P. Product List](#).

Scientific names updated

- Added *Vaccinium angustifolium* under blueberries
- Added *Rosa roxburghii* under rose hips

New products added

These products are already in the GLOBALG.A.P. database and ready with immediate effect.

New product	Identification number	
	Sub-scope FV	Sub-scope PPM
Philippine lime/Calamondin	100914	100913
Scarlet eggplants	100915	100916
Waxy corn	100912	100911

9. GLOBALG.A.P. fee table 2021 North America update (New)

To CBs operating in USA and Canada:

Please find the updated GGNA fee table [here](#).

The primary reason for this change is to include the PHA fee table, which was previously included in the PHA general regulations. No changes have been made to any fees affecting the producers.

We have adjusted an error in the fee listed for inspector/auditor registration fee, which is €50 per person per year (formerly written as €150).

Additionally, we corrected the due date of the annual Farm Assurer and membership fees to the December prior to the membership year (formerly January) to align with GGNA invoicing procedures. As always, we welcome you to contact us if you see errors. A new fee table will be published with our IFA v6 in 2022.

10. SRP online exams

Previously communicated: 22 September 2021

The SRP online exams are now available in English. All inspectors and auditors registered for this standard with English as their working language need to pass this exam by 18 December 2021 or before they conduct their next inspection/audit.

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Sincerely,

GLOBALG.A.P. Certification Body Administration, Benchmarking, and Compliance team