



Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations

A SCHEME AND TRAINING MANUAL ON GOOD AGRICULTURAL PRACTICES (GAP) FOR FRUITS AND VEGETABLES

Volume 1 The scheme - standard and implementation infrastructure



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Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
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PREFACE

Food safety has gained increasing importance over the years due to its impact on the health of consumers and the growth in the domestic and international trade in food products. Production of safe food is essential for protecting consumers from the hazards of foodborne illnesses. Further, food safety is an integral part of food security and also contributes towards increasing competitiveness in export markets.

Food safety hazards may occur at different stages of the food chain starting right from primary production and extending to secondary and tertiary processing, storage and distribution, and packaging. It is therefore very important to address food safety starting from the farm level. Implementing good practices during on-farm production and post-production processes is of immense importance for assuring a safe food supply. Good Agricultural Practices (GAP), as defined by FAO, are a “collection of principles to apply for on-farm production and post-production processes, resulting in safe and healthy food and non-food agriculture products, while taking into account economic, social and environmental sustainability”.

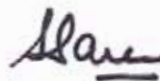
Many importing countries as well as domestic buyers, especially organized retailers, are now requiring producers to implement GAP as a prerequisite for procurement to ensure the quality and safety of their produce and because of which there is now a greater focus on implementing such systems.

There has not been much focus on adopting GAP in the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) countries, and most of the food safety standards are aimed towards either the end products or the processing sector. A similar situation exists in the other countries. Based on a request from some SAARC countries, a regional project on “Development of Standards and Scheme for Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) Implementation and Certification in Countries of SAARC” was developed. Under this project a regional scheme on GAP for fruits and vegetables for SAARC countries has been developed in three parts: Part I consists of a common standard on GAP for the horticulture sector along with criteria for certification; Part II deals with the establishment of a national implementation structure for GAP in a country; and Part III deals with the certification and accreditation aspects of GAP.

The project has supported some pilot countries to internalize and adopt the GAP scheme – both the standard and the supporting implementation infrastructure through internal multi-stakeholder consultations. This ensures the development of national schemes based on international processes, guarantees reliable certification and strengthens the quality of infrastructure for GAP in the pilot countries. The common GAP standard and implementation system in these countries is also expected to promote trade in the SAARC region.

The countries selected for the pilot projects were Bangladesh, Bhutan, Maldives, Nepal and Sri Lanka. These pilot projects comprised identification of the scheme owner and the certification body in each of the pilot countries, adoption/adaptation of the scheme documents, strengthening certification and accreditation infrastructure for GAP, structured training sessions and awareness programmes for the scheme owner and certification and accreditation personnel, as well as training of trainers (TOT) programmes for those individuals who would after intensive training train and counsel farmers/ farmer groups selected by these countries.

This publication comprises two volumes: Volume 1 documents the entire scheme and Volume 2 covers a training package on this scheme. It is hoped that the publications will be useful not only to SAARC countries but also to other countries.



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Abbreviations and acronyms

ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
CAB	Conformity assessment body
CB	Certification body
CC	Certification Committee
EMM	Environment Management Module
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FMP	Farm management plan
FSM	Food safety management
GAP	Good Agricultural Practices
GM	Genetically modified
GMO	Genetically modified organism
GRM	General Requirements Module
IAF	International Accreditation Forum
IEC	International Electrotechnical Commission
ISO	International Organization for Standardization
MLA	Multilateral arrangement
MRL	Maximum residue limits
NAB	National accreditation body
NC	Non-conformity
PQM	Produce Quality Module
QMS	Quality management systems
SAARC	South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation
SC	Steering Committee
SO	Scheme Owner
SPS	Sanitary and Phytosanitary
TBT	Technical Barriers to Trade
TC	Technical Committee
WHSM	Worker Health, Safety and Welfare Module
WTO	World Trade Organization

INTRODUCTION

Food safety has gained increasing importance over the years because of its significance both from health and trade perspectives. The production of safe food is essential for protecting consumers from the hazards of foodborne illnesses and is important both in the domestic food business as well as for increasing competitiveness in export markets. Hazards may occur at different stages of the food chain starting right from the primary production, e.g. residues above permitted levels, microbial contaminants and heavy metals. It therefore becomes important to address food safety right from food production at farm level. Implementing Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) during on-farm production and post-production processes resulting in safe agricultural products is of immense importance for ensuring a safe food supply.

GAP, as defined by FAO, are a “collection of principles to apply for on-farm production and post-production processes, resulting in safe and healthy food and non-food agricultural products, while taking into account economic, social and environmental sustainability.”

Many importing countries as well as domestic buyers, especially organized retailers, are requiring producers to implement GAP as a prerequisite for procurement to ensure the quality and safety of their produce. In addition, implementing GAP also helps promote sustainable agriculture and contributes to meeting national and international environmental and social developmental objectives. It has been documented that implementation of GAP encourages promotion of the optimum use of resources such as pesticides, fertilizers, and water, and eco-friendly agriculture. Its social dimension would be to protect the agricultural workers' health from improper use of chemicals and pesticides.

Many of the SAARC countries had not adopted GAP and did not have an institutional infrastructure for supporting GAP in terms of standards as well as their implementation, certification and accreditation. Most of the food safety standards were focused on end products. It was therefore important to support the SAARC countries to develop GAP standards and to help them build a certification and accreditation mechanism to enable the implementation and verification of GAP.

With the above background, FAO, at the request of some SAARC countries, through a regional project on “Development of Standards and Scheme for Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) Implementation and Certification in Countries of SAARC” developed a common standard on GAP for the horticulture sector along with a national system for its implementation.

This GAP scheme has been developed as a regional scheme that may be adopted as it is or adapted by countries to suit their needs. The process for development of the scheme was through initial discussions on a draft at a regional workshop in September 2014 that was then implemented in four pilot countries, namely Bangladesh, Bhutan, Maldives and Nepal. The standard and national implementation structure in terms of a Scheme Owner (SO), certification body (CB) and accreditation body (AB) system was first agreed upon and was followed by support provided to the SO and CB to set up their processes and systems based on the draft scheme. Based on experiences in the four countries, the Scheme has now been revised. The Scheme can be used by any country globally.

This GAP scheme comprises three important areas or sections: standards for GAP; the structure for implementation in the country; and the certification and accreditation aspects. These three parts comprise the complete scheme. It may be mentioned here that the GAP standards can be implemented by the producer without necessarily getting certification. However, in case the producer requires to get his farm certified, Part III provides information on this. Part II deals with the role of the government in establishing the GAP national implementation structure. Additional guidance on the documents to be developed and maintained by producer/ producer groups, SO, CB and AB is given

in the annexes that cover the list of documents required under the system. The structure of the documents is as follows:

Part I – The GAP standard or requirements in relation to food safety, quality, environmental management and workers health, safety and welfare (each is a separate module which can be implemented individually or in various combinations).

Part II Establishing a national implementation structure for GAP in a country
Section 1 – Options and structure for implementing GAP in a country
Section 2 - Guidance for establishing a Scheme Owner (SO)
Section 3 – Rules for the use of a certification mark.

Part III Certification and accreditation for GAP
Section 1 – Certification criteria (detailing the requirements for on-farm production of fruits and vegetable based on the standards as well as certification body requirements)
Section 2– Certification process
Section 3 – Requirements for certification bodies (CBs)
Section 4 – Requirements for accreditation bodies (ABs) for GAP.

Annexes

Annexes – Documentation needed under the GAP scheme
Annex 1. Producer and producer group documentation
Annex 2. Scheme Owner documentation
Annex 3. Certification body documentation
Annex 4. Accreditation body documentation.

In order to align the scheme to other national and international requirements, various national and international standards such as ASEAN GAP, GLOBALG.A.P, other country's GAP, prevalent industry standards and best practices, and related International Organization for Standardization (ISO) standards and guides have been referred to.

This scheme is designed in a manner that has wide relevance in SAARC countries and also in countries of other regions with the objective of ensuring the safety of produce in primary production, which ultimately leads to safer products across the value chain thus ensuring safer foods and enhancing regional and global trade. This will in turn result in increasing the livelihoods of the farmers and alleviating poverty in countries where the GAP scheme is implemented.

PART I

STANDARD FOR GOOD AGRICULTURAL PRACTICES (GAP): FRUITS AND VEGETABLES

1. OBJECTIVE

The fundamental objective of laying down this standard is to strengthen Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) for fruits and vegetables in countries. The challenges currently being faced by most countries include the absence of standards for good practices in the farming sector. Most of the food safety standards are focused on end products, whether mandatory technical standards or voluntary standards.

2. PURPOSE

The purpose of this document is to set out Good Agricultural Practices to be implemented by producers of fruits and vegetables to improve the safety and quality of their produce, while at the same time protecting the environment and safeguarding the health and safety of their workers.

3. SCOPE

This standard specifies the requirements of GAP with respect to all types of fresh fruits and vegetables covering activities such as production, harvesting and post-harvest handling of farm produce and pack house operations for produce either for sale for direct human consumption or to be used for further processing by the food industry.

The standard may be used for all types of production systems, namely conventional production systems where produce are grown in the soil and hydroponic systems where produce are grown in inert media. Production may occur in the open or in a protected environment.

High-risk products such as sprouts and minimally processed produce such as cut fruits and vegetables are not covered by this standard. The standard does not provide any basis for certification of organic products or GMO free products, but these products can also be certified as GAP compliant in cases where GAP requirements are implemented. In some countries the regulatory policy does not permit cultivation of GM crops and therefore this aspect needs to be addressed accordingly.

This standard further categorizes the criteria/requirements, based on their importance, as “critical”, “major” or “minor”.

4. REFERENCES

Many standards, guidelines and certified systems for GAP from around the world were used as references to prepare this standard. The main sources of information were:

- ASEAN Secretariat. 2006. Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) for production of fresh fruits and vegetables in the ASEAN region.
- FAORAP. 2014. Training manual on implementing ASEAN GAP in the fruit and vegetable sector: its accreditation and certification.

- GLOBALG.A.P. 2015. Integrated farm assurance – all farm base – crops base – fruit and vegetables: control points and compliance criteria, version 5.0.

5. STRUCTURE OF THE STANDARD

5.1 This standard specifies the requirements, in the form of five modules, to be met with respect to GAP in the farms producing fruits and vegetables. The first four modules are stand-alone modules and may be implemented depending upon the objective to be met, namely food safety, environmental management, produce quality, and worker health, safety and welfare. A fifth module is on general requirements that need to be met by farm (single or as group) in addition to the four modules. It also contains criteria for internal control system for farms that seek to apply for recognition as a group or group certification. Each of the four modules can be used alone or in combination with other modules. This enables the progressive implementation of GAP module by module based on individual country/producer priorities. A comparison of the requirements in each module is given in Appendix 1.1.

5.2 Each module is designed as a complete section enumerating criteria/requirements for control that need to be implemented on a farm, whether a single unit or a group of farms coming under a common group with internal management. The module also gives a checklist in the form of a table that contains the verification indicator for each of the criteria or a checkpoint and can be used by the producer for self-checking or for checking by the auditor. This also includes a column allowing for comments.

5.3 The criteria/requirements have been categorized, based on their importance, as “critical”, “major” or “minor” as explained below:

- i. “Critical” requirements – these are required to maintain the integrity of the produce and failing to adhere to these may result in a serious food safety incident resulting from a breach in food safety and product integrity.
- ii. “Major” requirements – these are mandatory and must be followed.
- iii. “Minor” requirements – these are important but may not be essential depending upon the produce category.

Compliance criteria:

Critical – 100 percent compliance shall be compulsory.

Major – 90 percent compliance shall be compulsory.

Minor – 50 percent compliance shall be compulsory.

The term “shall” is used in this document to indicate those provisions that are mandatory, i.e. those that are categorized as “critical” or “major”. The term “should” is used in this document either for provisions that are categorized as “minor” or to indicate recognised means of meeting the requirements of the standard.

6. Glossary

A glossary defining various terms is given at Appendix 1.2.

7. FOOD SAFETY MODULE (FSM)

The purpose of this module is to minimize harmful effects of production and post-production practices on the safety of the produce. The good agricultural practices for controlling food safety hazards are grouped into eleven elements (7.1–7.10).

7.1 Site history and management

- i. Site history shall be assessed to identify the risks of contamination to crops grown, from the previous use of chemical and/or biological hazards on the site or on adjoining sites and the risks shall be documented. **(Major)**
- ii. Where significant risks are identified, the site shall not be used for production of fresh produce without first taking some action to manage the risks. **(Critical)**
- iii. If remedial action is required to manage any risk, a monitoring programme shall be put in place to make sure that contamination of the produce does not occur and records of monitoring shall be maintained. **(Critical)**

7.2 Planting material (Propagation material)

- i. If planting material is produced on the farm, a record shall be kept of any fertilizers and/or chemicals used and the reason for usage. The records shall cover the treatments with dates, trade name, and active ingredient, name of operator, method of application, dosages and reason for its use. **(Major)**
- ii. A document that guarantees seed quality (free from injurious pests, diseases, virus, etc.) shall be on the farm. A record/certificate of seed quality shall be kept stating variety purity, variety name, batch number and seed vendor. **(Major)**
- iii. The planting material shall be free of visible signs of pest and disease. In case of in-house propagation, only quality rootstock and scion material shall be used. Alternatively, propagation material shall be sourced from a certified nursery (government / private nurseries / agricultural institutions / accredited tissue culture laboratories). **(Major)**
- iv. If seeds are treated with additives/pesticides (fungicides, insecticides, biocides and/or others), these shall be approved additives/pesticides. The treatment shall be done as per recommended technologies. **(Major)**
- v. If planting material is obtained from another farm or nursery, the name of the farm and date of supply shall be recorded. **(Major)**
- vi. Varieties known to be toxic to humans shall not be grown. **(Major)**

7.3 Genetically modified organisms (GMO)

- i. Planting or trials with GM crops shall be done if permitted by the applicable legislation in the country. **(Critical)**
- ii. If a producer is growing GM crops, as permitted by the country's legislation, this shall be documented. **(Critical)**
- iii. The producer shall inform clients about the status of the product with respect to GMOs. **(Critical)**
- iv. A written plan shall be available for handling GM material (crops and trials), setting out strategies to minimize contamination hazards (such as accidental mixing of adjacent non-GM crops) and maintain product integrity. **(Critical)**

- v. The producer shall inform clients about the status of the product with respect to GMOs. **(Critical)**
- vi. A written plan shall be available for handling GM material (crops and trials), setting out strategies to minimize contamination hazards (such as accidental mixing of adjacent non-GM crops) and maintain product integrity. **(Critical)**
- vii. GM crops shall be stored separately from other crops before dispatches to avoid adventitious mixing. **(Critical)**

7.4 Fertilizers and soil additives (Plant nutrient management and fertilizer use)

- i. Assessment of the chemical and biological risks related to fertilizers and soil additives used for each crop grown shall be carried out and records of any significant hazards identified shall be maintained. **(Major)**
- ii. If any significant hazards are identified, measures shall be taken to minimize the risk of contamination to produce. **(Critical)**
- iii. Application of fertilizers and soil additives should be based upon soil analysis and/or recommendations of National Soil Service Centre/technically competent personnel/institutions/ authorities or based on own experience. **(Minor)**
- iv. Fertilizers and soil additives should be selected and applied so as to minimize the risk of heavy metal contamination to produce. **(Minor)**
- v. Fertilizers and soil additives should be applied through recommended application practices at appropriate stages of crop growth. **(Minor)**
- vi. Untreated organic materials shall not be applied where significant risk of contaminating produce is identified. If organic materials are treated on-farm, the method of application, date and duration of treatment shall be recorded. If organic material is obtained from outside the farm and there is a significant risk identified, documents shall be available from the supplier to show that the material has been treated to minimize the risk of contamination to produce. **(Major)**
- vii. Untreated human sewage shall not to be used for production of fresh produce. **(Critical)**
- viii. The facilities for storage, mixing and loading of fertilizer/soil additives and for composting of organic material shall be located and constructed and maintained in a manner to minimize the risk of contamination to production sites and water sources. **(Major)**
- ix. Records shall be maintained for fertilizers and soil additives detailing the source, product name, date and quantity obtained and also for the application detailing the date, name of product, rate and method of application and name of the operators. **(Major)**
- x. The inorganic and organic fertilizers shall be stored separately from harvested farm produce. **(Major)**

7.5 Water (Irrigation/Fertigation)

- i. The water available for irrigation/fertigation shall be free from harmful contaminants. **(Major)**
- ii. Assessment of the source of water used for irrigation, application of chemicals or handling, washing, treating the produce or cleaning and sanitation should be done at least annually to minimize the risks of chemical and biological contamination and records shall be kept. **(Minor)**
- iii. Where water testing is required to assess the risk of contamination, tests shall be conducted at a frequency appropriate to the conditions impacting the water supply and records shall be maintained. **(Critical)**

- iv. Where a significant risk is identified, either a safe alternative water source shall be used or the water treated before use. **(Major)**
- v. Untreated sewage water shall not be used during production or for post-harvest handling. Where treated water is permitted, the water quality shall comply with applicable national regulations. **(Critical)**
- vi. The farmer should maintain irrigation equipment as per manufacturer's guidelines/ manual. **(Minor)**
- vii. The farmer shall employ adequate measures to prevent the flow of water into the fields from undesirable sources such as municipal landfill areas, hospital and industry waste dump areas, etc. **(Major)**

7.6 Chemicals (Plant protection products or other agro and non-agrochemicals)

Chemicals used on the farm can be categorized as agrochemicals that are applied on the farm or produce such as fertilizers, pesticides, seed treatment material, plant growth regulators and additives, and non-agrochemicals such as grease, fuels and oils that are required for other purposes. The requirements for chemicals are:

- i. Only pesticides permitted under a country's regulations shall be used. **(Critical)**
- ii. Chemicals shall be purchased only from registered/licensed suppliers. **(Major)**
- iii. Mixing of two or more chemicals should not be done, unless recommended by technically competent personnel/institutions/authorities. **(Minor)**
- iv. The dosage as recommended by competent authorities shall be applied and excess chemicals shall not be used. **(Major)**
- v. Surplus chemicals shall be disposed of in a manner to avoid contamination to the produce. **(Major)**
- vi. Withholding periods for the interval between chemical application and harvest shall be maintained as per the pre harvest interval mentioned on the label. **(Major)**
- vii. Equipment for applying chemicals shall be maintained in working condition and checked for effective operation by a technically competent person. **(Major)**
- viii. Equipment shall be washed properly after every use and washing water shall be disposed of in a manner to avoid contamination to produce. **(Major)**
- ix. Chemicals should be stored in a well-lit, sound and secure structure, which is located and constructed to minimize the risk of contaminating produce and equipped with notices and emergency facilities in the event of a chemical spill. **(Minor)**
- x. Liquid chemicals shall not be stored on shelves above powders. **(Major)**
- xi. Chemicals shall be stored in the original container with a legible label and according to label directions; if chemicals are transferred to another container, the container shall be clearly marked with the name of the chemicals, the dosage to be used and the withholding period. **(Major)**
- xii. Empty chemical containers shall not be reused and shall be collected in a secure place and properly disposed of according to the country's regulations and in a manner to avoid contamination of produce and the environment. **(Major)**
- xiii. Obsolete or expired chemicals shall be clearly identified and kept in a secure place till disposal. These shall be disposed of through official collection channels or in legal off-site areas. **(Major)**
- xiv. A record of chemicals obtained should be maintained, detailing the chemicals used, name of the supplier, date and quantity obtained, date of manufacture and expiry. **(Minor)**

- xv. A record of application for each crop shall be maintained giving details of chemical, reason for application, treatment location, dosage, method, date of application and name of operator. **(Major)**
- xvi. A record of chemicals held in storage shall be maintained detailing chemical name, date and quantities procured and date of complete use or disposal. **(Major)**
- xvii. If chemical residues in excess of maximum residue limits (MRL) are detected in the market where the product is traded or exported, the marketing of the product shall cease and the cause of contamination shall be investigated. Corrective actions shall be taken to prevent recurrence and a record kept of the incident and the actions taken. **(Major)**
- xviii. Non-agrochemicals shall be handled, stored and disposed of in a manner to avoid any risks to food safety. **(Major)**
- xix. Integrated Pest Management (IPM), if implemented, shall require careful consideration of available pest control techniques and the subsequent integration of appropriate measures to discourage the development of pest populations, while keeping the use of plant protection chemicals at minimal level. **(Major)**

7.7 Harvesting and handling produce

- i. Harvested produce shall not be placed directly on the soil, or on the floor of the handling, packing or storage areas. **(Major)**

Equipment, containers and materials

- ii. Equipment, containers and materials that come in contact with produce shall be made of material that will not contaminate the produce and is easy to clean. **(Major)**
- iii. The containers used for storage of chemicals, waste, and other dangerous substances shall be clearly identified and not be used to hold or store produce. **(Major)**
- iv. Equipment and containers shall be regularly maintained to minimize contamination of produce and shall be kept in areas separate from chemicals, fertilizers and soil additives to avoid cross contamination. **(Major)**
- v. Equipment, containers and material shall be checked for soundness and cleanliness before use and cleaned, repaired or discarded as required. **(Major)**.
- vi. The producer shall, at least once a year or as per the legal requirements of the country, have his measuring devices calibrated for ensuring correctness of measurement. **(Major)**

Buildings and structures

- vii. Buildings and structures used for growing, packing, handling and storage of produce shall be constructed and maintained to minimize the risk of contaminating produce. **(Major)**
- viii. Grease, oil, fuel and farm machinery should be segregated from handling, packing and storage areas to prevent contamination of produce. **(Minor)**
- ix. Sewage, waste disposal and drainage systems shall be constructed so as to minimize the risk of contaminating the production site and the water supply. **(Major)**
- x. Lights in the packinghouse or store should be shatter proof or protected with a shatterproof cover. **(Minor)**
- xi. Where equipment and tools that may be sources of physical hazards are located in the same building as handling, packing and storage areas, these should be isolated by a physical barrier or not used during the handling and packing of produce. **(Minor)**

Cleaning and sanitation

- xii. Equipment, tools, containers and materials that may be sources of contamination of produce should be identified and regularly cleaned and sanitized. **(Minor)**
- xiii. Appropriate cleaning and sanitation chemicals should be selected to minimize the risk of these chemicals contaminating produce. **(Minor)**

Animal and pest control

- xiv. Household and farm animals should be kept out of the production site (especially where crops are grown in or close to the ground. and around handling, packing and storage areas. **(Minor)**
- xv. Measures shall be taken to prevent the presence of pests in and around handling, packing and storage areas. **(Major)**
- xvi. Baits and traps used for pest control shall be located and maintained to minimize the risk of contaminating produce. The location of bait traps shall be recorded. **(Major)**

Personal hygiene

- xvii. Workers shall be trained in personal hygiene practices and training records kept. **(Major)**
- xviii. Written instructions on personal hygiene should be provided to workers and displayed in prominent locations. **(Minor)**
- xix. Toilets and hand washing facilities shall be available to workers and maintained in a hygienic condition. **(Major)**
- xx. Sewage shall be disposed of in a manner that minimizes of direct or indirect contamination to produce. **(Major)**

Produce treatment

- xxi. The quality of the water applied to the edible parts of produce shall be equivalent to that of drinking water. **(Major)**
- xxii. Chemicals applied for post-harvest and waxes shall follow the same practices as under the chemical section and shall comply with instructions and recommendations from competent authorities. **(Critical)**
- xxiii. Specific test on produce should be included if required by an importing country. **(Minor)**

Storage and transport

- xxiv. Produce shall be stored and transported separately from goods that are potential sources of chemical, biological or physical contamination. **(Major)**
- xxv. Produce should be stored in cool places and overloading should be avoided. Produce should be covered to reduce moisture loss during transportation. **(Minor)**.
- xxvi. Containers filled with produce shall not be placed in direct contact with soil, where there is a significant risk of contaminating produce from soil. Pallets, if used, shall be checked for cleanliness, chemical spills, foreign objects and pest infestation and rejected if there is any risk of contaminating produce. **(Major)**
- xxvii. Vehicles used for transporting produce shall be kept clean and maintained in good condition. These shall be checked before loading for cleanliness, chemical spills, foreign objects and pest infestation. **(Major)**

7.8 Traceability and recall

- ii. Production sites shall be identified by a name or code and recorded on a site map. **(Major)**
- iii. Packed produce shall be clearly marked with name and identification to enable traceability of the produce to the farm or site where the produce is grown. **(Major)**
- iv. A record detailing the date of delivery and destination of each produce consignment should be maintained. **(Minor)**
- v. Where produce is identified as contaminated or potentially contaminated, it shall be isolated, but if such identification is made after the produce is sold the buyers or consumers shall be notified immediately. **(Critical)**
- vi. The cause of contamination shall be investigated and corrective action taken to prevent its recurrence and a record kept of the incident and the action taken. **(Major)**

7.9 Training

- i. The farmers and workers shall be given sufficient training in the areas of responsibility relevant to GAP and records of training shall be kept. Some of the aspects that need to be included in any training are:
 - a. the proper purchase, handling, storage and use of chemicals, including labelling requirements, selection of chemicals or bio-pesticides, which are approved and recommended by the competent authorities for the crops grown **(Major)**;
 - b. the application of suitable Integrated Pest Management and avoidance of use of inorganic chemicals **(Major)**;
 - c. information and updates on the maximum residue limits (MRL) as specified in the national regulations, Codex standards or the importing country's standards where the produce is to be traded **(Minor)**;
 - d. checking that chemicals are used correctly and before shelf-life/expiry date. **(Minor)**; and
 - e. importance of testing for chemical residues at a frequency required by customers or the market and the method of drawing of samples for testing. **(Major)**.
- ii. The training needs shall be reviewed once a year.

7.10 Documents and records

- i. Records of GAP shall be kept for two years or more in accordance with statutory requirements, if any, or business requirements. **(Major)**
- ii. Obsolete (out-of-date) documents shall be discarded and only current versions shall be in use. **(Major)**

7.11 Review of practices

- i. A review to be carried out at least once a year to identify new or emerging risks related to food safety and actions to correct any deficiencies identified and corrective actions taken. **(Major)**
- ii. A record of the review undertaken and corrective action taken shall be kept. **(Major)**

OPTIONAL REQUIREMENTS

7.12 Fertilizers and soil additives (Plant nutrient management and fertilizer use)

- i. Documents should be made available to demonstrate that application of fertilizers/nutrients (organic or inorganic) is done by a competent/ trained person. **(Minor)**
- ii. Records should be made available to demonstrate that the types and dosages of fertilizers/nutrients are in tune with the soil test – crop response studies and/or recommendations of National Soil Service Centre/ National Research Centre (NRC)/other approved organizations for the crop. **(Minor)**
- iii. A record indicating competence of producer(s) should be maintained to demonstrate their competence and knowledge in determining types and dosages of fertilizers in case advisers are absent. **(Minor)**
- iv. A competent qualified adviser should make the recommendations on the type and quantity of fertilizers/nutrient being used. **(Major)**

7.13 Chemicals (Plant protection products or other agro and non- agrochemicals)

- i. It should be ensured that chemicals are applied correctly by testing produce (in an accredited laboratory) for chemical residues at a predetermined frequency in line with the competent authority requirement of the country where the produce is traded. **(Minor)**
- ii. Records for technical authorization of all chemicals applied along with their quantities should be maintained. **(Minor)**
- iii. A documented procedure should be available for correct handling and filling (as stated on the label) when mixing plant protection chemicals. **(Minor)**
- iv. The application of such formulations should be economically justified and have minimal adverse impact on the environment. **(Minor)**

7.14 Criteria/requirements control

The criteria referred to and levels of controls required with respect to each criteria/requirements of the Food Safety Module are given in the table below. The table also contains the verification indicator to verify the criteria that can be used for the self-assessment or the assessment by the auditor/inspector. A column is also included for comments. The column “Compliance status” is required to be filled with “Yes” or “No”.

Food Safety Module (FSM)

Clause No.	Requirement (Category)	Verification indicators	Self /Auditor comments	
7.	FOOD SAFETY MODULE			
7.1	Site history and management			
i.	Site history shall be assessed to identify the risk of contamination to crops grown from the previous use of chemical and/or biological hazards on the site or on adjoining sites and the risks shall be documented (Major)	Site history assessment record		
ii.	Where significant risks are identified, the site shall not be used for production of fresh produce without first taking some action to manage the risk (Critical)	Records and visual evidence		
iii	If remedial action is required to manage any risk, a monitoring programme shall be put in place to make sure that contamination of the produce does not occur and records of monitoring shall be maintained (Critical)	Monitoring programme and applicable records		
7.2	Planting material			
I	If planting material is produced on the farm, a record shall be kept of any fertilizers and/or chemicals used and the reason for usage. The records shall cover the treatments with dates, trade name, active ingredient, name of operator, method of application, dosages and reason for its use (Major)	Records of on-farm planting material treatment		
ii	A document that guarantees seed quality (free from injurious pests, diseases, virus, etc.) shall be on the farm. A record/certificate of seed quality shall be kept stating variety purity, variety name, batch number and seed vendor (Major)	Visual confirmation of planting material		
iii.	The planting material shall be free of visible signs of pest and disease. In case of in-house propagation, only quality rootstock and scion material shall be used. Alternatively, propagation material shall be sourced from a certified nursery (government / private nurseries /	Visual check and certificates		

	agricultural institutions / accredited tissue culture laboratories). (Major)			
iv.	If seeds are treated with additives/pesticides (fungicides, insecticides, biocides and/or others), these shall be approved additives/pesticides and treatment done as per recommended technologies (Major)	Records of seed treatment		
v.	If planting material is obtained from another farm or nursery, the name of the farm and date of supply shall be recorded (Major)	Traceability records of procured planting material		
vi.	Varieties known to be toxic to humans shall not be grown (Major)	Varieties identified and records		
7.3	Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs)			
i.	Planting or trials with GM crops shall be done if permitted by the applicable legislation in the country (Critical)	A copy of the country regulations and a compliance statement		
ii.	If producer is growing GM crops, as permitted by the country's legislation, this shall be documented (Critical)	GMOs documentation		
iii.	The producer shall inform clients about the status of the product with respect to GMOs (Critical)	Details of communication		
iv.	A written plan shall be available for handling GM material (crops and trials) setting out strategies to minimize contamination hazards (such as accidental mixing of adjacent non-GM crops) and maintain product integrity (Critical)	Written plan and visual check		
v.	GM crops shall be stored separately from other crops before dispatches to avoid adventitious mixing (Critical)	Visual observation and dispatch records		
7.4	Fertilizers and soil additives (Plant nutrient management and fertilizer use)			
i	Assessment of the chemical and biological risks related to fertilizers and soil additives used for each crop grown shall be carried out and records of any significant hazards identified shall be maintained (Major)	Risk assessment documentation		
ii	If any significant hazards are identified, measures shall be taken to minimize the risk of contamination to produce (Critical)	Measures taken and visual assessment		

iii	Application of fertilizers and soil additives should be based upon soil analysis and/or recommendations of National Soil Service Centre/technically competent personnel/ institutions/ authorities or based on own experience (Minor)	Application records and recommendation		
iv	Fertilizers and soil additives should be selected and applied so as to minimize the risk of heavy metal contamination to produce (Minor)	Application records		
v.	Fertilizers and soil additives should be applied through recommended application practices at appropriate stages of crop growth (Minor)	Application records		
vi	Untreated organic materials shall not be applied where significant risk of contaminating produce is identified. If organic materials are treated on-farm, the method of application, date and duration of treatment shall be recorded. If organic material is obtained from outside the farm and there is a significant risk identified, documents shall be available from the supplier to show that the material has been treated to minimize the risk of contamination to produce (Major)	Documentary evidence of compliance		
vii	Untreated human sewage shall not be used for production of fresh produce (Critical)	Visual inspection		
viii	The facilities for storage, mixing and loading of fertilizer/soil additives and for composting of organic material shall be located, constructed and maintained in a manner to minimize the risk of contamination to production sites and water sources (Major)	Visual inspection		
ix	Records shall be maintained for fertilizers and soil additives detailing the source, product name, date and quantity obtained and also for the application detailing the date, name of product, rate and method of application and name of the operators (Major)	Farm dairy/records verified		
x	The inorganic and organic fertilizers shall be stored separately from harvested farm produce (Major)	Visual verification		

7.5	Water (Irrigation/Fertigation)			
i.	The water available for irrigation/fertigation shall be free from harmful contaminants (Major)	Verify		
ii.	Assessment of the source of water used for irrigation, application of chemicals or handling, washing, treating the produce or cleaning and sanitation should be done at least annually to minimize the risks of chemical and biological contamination and records should be kept (Minor)	Annual assessment records		
iii.	Where water testing is required to assess the risk of contamination, tests shall be conducted at a frequency appropriate to the conditions impacting the water supply and records shall be maintained (Critical)	Test reports		
iv.	Where a significant risk is identified, either a safe alternative water source shall be used or the water treated before use (Major)	Check for safe alternative/ water treatment records		
v.	Untreated sewage water shall not be used during production or for post-harvest handling. Where treated water is permitted, the water quality shall comply with the national regulations (Critical)	Visually/ water quality test reports		
vi.	The farmer should maintain irrigation equipment as per manufacturer guidelines/manual (Minor)	Maintenance schedule		
vii.	The farmer shall employ adequate measures to prevent flow of water into the fields from undesirable sources such as municipal landfill areas, hospital and industry waste dump areas (Major)	Physical structure present		
7.6	Chemicals (Plant protection products or other agro and non-agrochemicals)			
i	Only pesticides permitted under a country's regulations shall be used (Critical)	List of permitted pesticides and application records		
ii	Chemicals shall be purchased only from registered/licensed suppliers (Major)	Invoices and/or proof of purchase		

iii	Mixing of two or more chemicals should not be done, unless recommended by technically competent personnel/ institutions/authorities (Minor)	Mixing protocols documents		
iv	The dosage as recommended by competent authorities shall be applied and excess chemicals shall not be used (Major)	Recommendations		
v	Surplus chemicals shall be disposed of in a manner to avoid contamination to the produce (Major)	Disposal records		
vi	Withholding periods for the interval between chemical application and harvest shall be maintained as per the preharvest interval mentioned on the label (Major)	Application and harvesting records		
vii	Equipment for applying chemicals shall be maintained in working condition and checked for effective operation by a technically competent person (Major)	Physical verification of equipment and maintenance records		
viii	Equipment shall be washed properly after every use and washing water shall be disposed of in a manner to avoid contamination to produce (Major)	Cleaning records		
ix	Chemicals should be stored in a well-lit, sound and secure structure, which is located and constructed to minimize the risk of contaminating produce and equipped with notices and emergency facilities in the event of a chemical spill (Minor)	Visual inspection on construction, notices and emergency services		
x	Liquid chemicals shall not be stored on shelves above powders (Major)	Physical verification		
xi	Chemicals shall be stored in the original container with a legible label and according to label directions; if chemicals are transferred to another container, the container shall be clearly marked with the name of the chemicals, the dosage to be used and the withholding period (Major)	Physical verification		
xii	Empty chemical containers shall not be reused and shall be collected in a secure place and properly disposed of according	Standard operating procedure (SOP), on-site check and interviews		

	to the country's regulations and in a manner to avoid contamination of produce and the environment (Major)			
xiii	Obsolete or expired chemicals shall be clearly identified and kept in a secure place till disposal. These shall be disposed of through official collection channels or in legal off-site areas (Major)	Ministry of Agriculture with service providers and SOP carried out by farms		
xiv	A record of chemicals obtained should be maintained, detailing the chemicals used, name of the supplier, date and quantity obtained, date of manufacture and expiry (Minor)	Farm diary and proof of purchase		
xv	A record of application for each crop shall be maintained giving details of chemical, reason for application, treatment location, dosage, method, date of application and name of operator (Major)	Application records		
xvi	A record of chemicals held in storage shall be maintained, detailing chemical name, date and quantities procured and date of complete use or disposal (Major)	Storage records		
xvii	If chemical residues in excess of MRL are detected in the market where the product is traded or exported, the marketing of the product shall cease and the cause of contamination shall be investigated. Corrective actions shall be taken to prevent recurrence and a record kept of the incident and the actions taken (Major)	Check for any such case and corrective and preventive action record		
xviii	Non-agrochemicals shall be handled, stored and disposed of in a manner to avoid any risks to food safety (Major)	SOP and on-site verification		
xix	Integrated Pest Management (IPM), if implemented, shall require careful consideration of available pest control techniques and the subsequent integration of appropriate measures to discourage the development of pest population while keeping the use of plant protection chemicals at minimal level (Major)	IPM policy and records		

7.7	Harvesting and handling produce			
i.	Harvested produce shall not be placed directly on the soil, or on the floor of the handling, packing or storage areas (Major)	Physical verification of practices		
	<i>Equipment, containers and materials</i>			
ii.	Equipment, containers and materials that come in contact with produce shall be made of material that will not contaminate the produce and is easy to clean (Major)	Visual inspection		
iii.	The containers used for storage of chemicals, waste, and other dangerous substances shall be clearly identified and not be used to hold or store produce (Major)	Containers present and labeled		
iv.	Equipment and containers shall be regularly maintained to minimize contamination of produce and shall be kept in areas separate from chemicals, fertilizers and soil additives to avoid cross contamination (Major)	Maintenance schedule or visually		
v.	Equipment, containers and material shall be checked for soundness and cleanliness before use and cleaned, repaired or discarded as required (Major)	Visual check		
vi.	The producer shall, at least once a year or as per the legal requirements of the country, have his measuring devices calibrated for ensuring correctness of measurement (Major)	Calibration report		
	<i>Buildings and structures</i>			
vii	Buildings and structures used for growing, packing, handling and storage of produce shall be constructed and maintained to minimize the risk of contaminating produce (Major)	Verification of building and structure		
viii	Grease, oil, fuel and farm machinery should be segregated from handling, packing and storage areas to prevent contamination of produce (Minor)	Visual check of segregation		
xi	Sewage, waste disposal and drainage systems shall be constructed so as to minimize the risk of contaminating the	Visual verification of		

	production site and the water supply (Major)	drainage systems		
x	Lights in the packing house or store should be shatter proof or protected with a shatter proof cover (Minor)	Shatter proof material		
xi	Where equipment and tools that may be sources of physical hazards are located in the same building as handling, packing and storage areas, these should be isolated by a physical barrier or not used during the handling and packing of produce (Minor)	Isolation of physical hazards		
<i>Cleaning and sanitation</i>				
xii	Equipment, tools, containers and materials that may be sources of contamination of produce should be identified and regularly cleaned and sanitized (Minor)	Cleaning/sanitation records and visual check		
xiii	Appropriate cleaning and sanitation chemicals should be selected to minimize the risk of these chemicals contaminating produce (Minor)	List of chemicals		
<i>Animal and pest control</i>				
xiv	Household and farm animals should be kept out of the production site (especially where crops are grown in or close to the ground and around handling, packing and storage areas (Minor)	On-site verification		
xv	Measures shall be taken to prevent the presence of pests in and around handling, packing and storage areas (Major)	Pest control records		
xvi	Baits and traps used for pest control shall be located and maintained to minimize the risk of contaminating produce. The location of bait traps shall be recorded (Major)	Visual check and records		
<i>Personal hygiene</i>				
xvii	Workers shall be trained in personal hygiene practices and training records kept (Major)	Training records		
xviii	Written instructions on personal hygiene should be provided to workers and displayed in prominent locations (Minor)	Written instructions displayed		

xix	Toilets and hand washing facilities shall be available to workers and maintained in a hygienic condition (Major)	Availability of facilities		
xx	Sewage shall be disposed of in a manner that minimizes of direct or indirect contamination to produce (Major)	Manner of disposal of sewage		
<i>Produce treatment</i>				
xxi.	The quality of the water applied to the edible parts of produce shall be equivalent to that of drinking water (Major)	Test reports		
xxii	Chemicals applied for post-harvest and waxes shall follow the same practices as under the chemical section and shall comply with instructions and recommendations from competent authorities (Critical)	Chemical list		
xxiii	Specific test on produce should be included if required by importing country (Minor)	Test report		
<i>Storage and transport</i>				
xxiv	Produce shall be stored and transported separately from goods that are potential sources of chemical, biological or physical contamination (Major)	On-site segregation		
xxv	Produce should be stored in cool places and overloading should be avoided. Produce should be covered to reduce moisture loss during transportation. (Minor)	Visual check		
xxvi	Containers filled with produce shall not be placed in direct contact with soil where there is a significant risk of contaminating produce from soil. Pallets, if used, shall be checked for cleanliness, chemical spills, foreign objects and pest infestation and rejected if there is any risk of contaminating produce (Major)	SOP and visual check		
xxvii	Vehicles used for transporting produce shall be kept clean and maintained in good condition. These shall be checked before loading for cleanliness, chemical spills, foreign objects and pest infestation (Major)	Maintenance and cleaning records		

7.8	Traceability and recall			
i	Production sites shall be identified by a name or code and recorded on a site map (Major)	Code and site map		
ii	Packed produce shall be clearly marked with name and identification to enable traceability of the produce to the farm or site where the produce is grown (Major)	Visual check for markings		
iii.	A record detailing the date of delivery and destination of each produce consignment should be maintained (Minor)	Records		
iv	Where produce is identified as contaminated or potentially contaminated, it shall be isolated, but if such identification is made after the produce is sold the buyers or consumers shall be notified immediately (Critical)	SOP and mock drills		
v	The cause of contamination shall be investigated and corrective action taken to prevent its recurrence and a record kept of the incident and the action taken (Major)	Root cause analysis and corrective action records		
7.9	Training			
i. a.	The proper purchase, handling, storage and use of chemicals, including labelling requirements, selection of chemicals or bio-pesticides, which are approved and recommended by the competent authorities for the crops grown (Major)	Records and recommendations		
i.b.	The application of suitable Integrated Pest Management and avoidance of use of inorganic chemicals (Major)	Pest management documented verified		
i.c.	Information and updates on the maximum residue limits (MRL) as specified in the national regulations, Codex standards or the importing country's standards where the produce is to be traded (Minor)	List of permitted MRLs		
i d	Checking that chemicals are used correctly and before shelf-life/expiry date (Minor)	Usage record/label instructions		
i e	Importance of testing for chemical			

	residues at a frequency required by customers or the market and the method of drawing of samples for testing. (Major) .	Test produce frequency with reports		
ii	The training needs shall be reviewed once a year	Review report		
7.10	Documents and records			
I	Records of GAP shall be kept for two years or more in accordance with statutory requirements, if any, or business requirements (Major)	Records retention policy, visual check of records		
li	Obsolete (out-of-date) documents shall be discarded and only current versions shall be in use (Major)	Visual check		
7.11	Review of practices			
i.	A review to be carried out at least once a year to identify new or emerging risks related to food safety and actions to correct any deficiencies identified and corrective actions taken (Major)	Review records		
ii.	A record of the review undertaken and corrective action taken shall be kept (Major)	Review and corrective action records		
	<i>OPTIONAL REQUIREMENTS</i>			
7.12	Fertilizers and soil additives (Plant nutrient management and fertilizer use)			
i.	Documents should be made available to demonstrate that application of fertilizers / nutrients (organic or inorganic) is done by a competent/ trained person (Minor)	Competence records		
ii.	Records should be made available to demonstrate that the types and dosages of fertilizers/nutrients are in tune with the soil test – crop response studies and/or recommendations of National Soil Service Centre/ National Research Centre (NRC)/other approved organizations for the crop (Minor)	Records of type and dosage of inputs		
iii.	A record indicating competence of producer(s) should be maintained to demonstrate their competence and knowledge in determining types and	Records and knowledge assessed by		

	dosages of fertilizers in case advisers are absent (Minor)	interviews		
iv.	The recommendations on the type and quantity of fertilizers/nutrients being used should be done by a competent qualified adviser (Major)	Record of type and quantities prescribed by adviser		
7.13	Chemicals (Plant protection products or other agro and non- agrochemicals)			
i.	It should be ensured that chemicals are applied correctly by testing produce (in an accredited laboratory) for chemical residues at a predetermined frequency in line with the competent authority requirement of the country where produce is traded (Minor)	Chemical application dosage records along with test reports		
ii.	Records for technical authorization of all chemicals applied along with their quantities should be maintained (Minor)	Authorization records		
iii.	A documented procedure should be available for correct handling and filling (as stated on the label) when mixing plant protection chemicals (Minor)	Availability of procedure		
iv	The application of such formulations should be economically justified and have minimal adverse impact on the environment (Minor)	Formulation and application records		

8. ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT MODULE (EMM)

This section deals with good agricultural practices to be implemented in order to minimize harmful effects of production and production practices on the environment. When addressing these, consideration shall be given to the country's National Environmental Policy. These practices are grouped into 13 elements (8.1 – 8.13).

8.1 Site history and management

- i. Sites used for production shall comply with the country's recommendations to restrict production on steep slopes. **(Major)**
- ii. For new sites, the risk of causing environmental harm on and off the site shall be assessed and a record kept of the hazards assessed. The risk assessment shall take into consideration prior use of a site, the potential impact of crop production and post-harvest handling on and off the site, and the potential impact of adjacent sites on the new site. If there is a significant risk to the environment identified, the new site shall either not be used for crop production and post-harvest handling or measures to prevent or minimize these potential hazards shall be taken before use. **(Critical)**
- iii. Highly degraded areas shall be managed to avoid further degradation. **(Major)**
- iv. Management of the site activity shall conform to the country's environmental conditions covering air, water, noise, soil, biodiversity and other environmental issues. **(Major)**
- v. A farm layout map shall be maintained showing the crop production sites, environmentally sensitive or degraded areas (if any), storage and mixing areas of chemicals, water storage, watercourse and drains, building structures and roads. **(Major)**

8.2 Planting material

- i. Diseases or pest-resistant planting material should be selected to minimize the use of chemicals. **(Minor)**
- ii. The planting material should be selected based on compatibility with soil type, soil fertility and so that the use of additional nutrient supplying chemicals is avoided. **(Minor)**

8.3 Soil and substrates (Substrate management)

- i. The production practices selected shall be suitable for the soil type and not increase the risk of environmental degradation. **(Major)**
- ii. Where possible soil maps should be used to plan for crop rotation, or a fallow period to increase soil fertility should be encouraged. **(Minor)**
- iii. Production practices to improve and maintain soil structure as well as soil compaction shall be used to avoid erosion. **(Major)**
- iv. If chemicals are used to sterilize soils and substrates, a record shall be kept detailing the site name, name of the product or material, name of the chemicals, the date of application, dosage and method of application and operator's name. **(Critical)**

8.4 Fertilizers and soil additives

- i. Fertilizers and soil additives shall be applied according to the recommendation of the National Soil Service Centre or any other competent source and also considering the crop and soil type to avoid nutrient run-off or leaching. **(Major)**

- ii. Facilities for storage, mixing or loading of fertilizer and soil additives and for composting of organic matter should be located, constructed and maintained to minimize the risk of environmental pollution on and off the site and of pollution of water sources. **(Minor)**
- iii. The equipment used to apply fertilizers and soil additives should be maintained in good condition and annually checked by a technically competent person. **(Minor)**
- iv. The application of fertilizers and soil additives shall be recorded detailing the name of the fertilizer or soil additive, location, date, rate and method of application and the operator's name. **(Major)**

8.5 Water

- i. Irrigation shall be based on crop water requirements, availability of water and soil moisture levels. The irrigation system shall be checked and maintained in good condition to ensure its efficiency during irrigation and to minimize wastage of water. **(Major)**
- ii. Water collection, storage and use shall be managed in accordance with national regulations and a record shall be kept of irrigation use, detailing crop, date, location and volume of water irrigated or duration of irrigation. **(Major)**
- iii. To minimize the risk to the environment, any water discharge or wastewater shall be treated. **(Major)**
- iv. A water management plan to optimize water usage and reduce waste shall be made available. **(Major)**

8.6 Chemicals (Plant protection products and other inputs)

- i. Farmers or workers shall be trained to a level appropriate to their area of responsibility for chemical application. **(Major)**
- ii. Chemicals used for crop protection shall be selected so as to minimize the negative effect on the environment and antagonist organisms of pests and diseases. **(Major)**
- iii. Crop protection measures shall be based on the recommendations of competent authorities or a plant protection organization. **(Major)**
- iv. The use of chemicals shall be minimized by the application of Integrated Pest Management (IPM) and biological control products. **(Major)**
- v. Only chemicals obtained from licensed suppliers and approved by a competent authority for the crop grown shall be used. **(Major)**
- vi. Chemicals shall be applied according to the label directions and guidance from the competent authority. **(Critical)**
- vii. A rotation strategy for chemical application and crop protection measures should be used to avoid pests and diseases resistance. **(Minor)**
- viii. Appropriate volumes of chemicals shall be mixed to minimize the amount of surplus chemical after application. **(Major)**
- ix. Surplus chemical mixes and tank washings shall be disposed of in a manner that minimizes the risk of environmental harm on and off the site. Empty chemical containers shall be collected and disposed of according to national regulations. **(Major)**
- x. Obsolete chemicals shall be identified clearly, kept in secure places and disposed of through official collection systems. **(Critical)**
- xi. The application of chemicals shall be recorded for each crop, detailing the chemicals' names, the reason for application, date of application, location, dosage and method of application and name of operator and, where applicable, a record of chemicals held in storage shall be kept detailing the chemicals' names, date and quantity of purchase and date when completely used or disposed of. **(Major)**

- xii. Chemicals used for post-harvesting and handling produce shall be stored and disposed of according to national regulations, so as to minimize the risk to the environment. **(Major)**

8.7 Waste management

- i. A waste management procedure shall be documented and followed, including identification of waste products generated during production, harvesting and handling produce, using practices to minimize waste generation, to reuse, recycle waste and dispose of waste. **(Major)**

8.8 Energy efficiency

- i. The use of electricity and fuel shall be reviewed to ensure that efficient operation practices are implemented. **(Major)**
- ii. Machines and equipment should be maintained in good condition to ensure the efficiency of operation and to save energy. **(Minor)**

8.9 Biodiversity

- i. The production plan shall comply with national regulations covering protected plant and animal species and to preserve native plant and animal species, including native vegetation areas, wildlife corridors and vegetation areas on or near the banks of waterways. **(Major)**
- ii. Measures should be applied to control/protect feral animals. **(Minor)**

8.10 Air/Noise

If an offensive odour, or smoke, dust or noise is generated from production practices, management action shall be taken to minimize the impact on neighbouring property and surrounding areas. **(Major)**

8.11 Training

Farmers and workers shall be trained to have appropriate knowledge in their areas of responsibility related to GAP and training records shall be kept. **(Major)**

8.12 Documents and records

- i. Records of GAP shall be kept for two years or more in accordance with statutory requirements, if any, or business requirements. **(Major)**
- ii. Obsolete (out-of-date) documents shall be discarded and only current versions shall be in use. **(Major)**

8.13 Review of practices

- i. A review shall be carried out at least once a year to identify any new and emerging hazards resulting from inputs, processes or hazards affecting the environment. **(Major)**
- ii. A record of the review undertaken and the corrective actions taken shall be kept. **(Major)**

OPTIONAL REQUIREMENTS

8.14 Site history and management

- i. Each producer should maintain a management and conservation plan for protecting biodiversity and wildlife impacted as a result of farming activities. The plan should include a baseline audit to understand biodiversity, identify action to avoid damage and deterioration of habitats and detail measures to enhance biodiversity on the farm. **(Minor)**
- ii. The producer should have a policy and should consider improving the environment for the benefit of the local community and flora and fauna. **(Minor)**

8.15 Soil and substrates (Substrate management)

- i. The producer should participate in substrate recycling programmes for substrates where available. **(Minor)**
- ii. There should be written justification for the use of soil fumigants. **(Minor)**
- iii. A pre-planting interval should be identified and it should comply with the requirements of soil fumigation. **(Minor)**

8.16 Criteria/requirements control

The criteria referred to and levels of controls required with respect to each criteria/requirements of the Environmental Management Module (EMM) are given in the table below. The table also contains the verification indicator to verify the criteria that can be used for the self assessment or the assessment by the auditor/inspector. A column is also included for comments. The “Compliance status” column is required to be filled by “Yes” or “No”.

Environmental Management Module (EMM)

Clause No.	Requirement (Category)	Verification indicators	Self/Auditor comments	Compliance status
8.	ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT MODULE (EMM)			
8.1	Site history and management			
i	Sites used for production shall comply with the country’s recommendations to restrict production on steep slopes (Major)	Site assessed with respect to country regulations		
ii	For new sites, the risk of causing environmental harm on and off the site shall be assessed and a record kept of the hazards assessed; the risk assessment shall take into consideration prior use of a site, the potential impact of crop production and post-harvest handling on and off the site, and potential impact of adjacent sites on the new site; if there is a significant risk to the environment identified, the new site shall either not be used for crop production and post-harvest handling or measures to prevent or minimize these potential hazards shall be taken before use (Critical)	Risk assessment conducted and hazards recorded		
iii	Highly degraded areas shall be managed to avoid further degradation (Major)	Management of degraded areas documented		
iv	Management of the site activity shall			

	managed to avoid further degradation (Major)	of degraded areas documented		
iv	Management of the site activity shall conform to the country requirements for environmental conditions covering air, water, noise, soil, biodiversity and other environmental issues (Major)	Records to demonstrate conformity		
v	A farm layout map shall be maintained showing the crop production sites, environmentally sensitive or degraded areas (if any), storage and mixing areas of chemicals, water storage, watercourse and drains, building structures and roads (Major)	Farm layout map with legends/ markings		
8.2	Planting material			
i	Diseases or pest-resistant planting material should be selected to minimize the use of chemicals (Minor)	Selection criteria available		
ii	The planting material should be selected based on compatibility with soil type, soil fertility and so that the use of additional nutrient supplying chemicals is avoided (Minor)	Criteria of planting material recorded/ visual/ interviews		
8.3	Soils and substrate			
i	The production practices selected shall be suitable for the soil type and not increase the risk of environmental degradation (Major)	Verify production practices		
ii	Where possible soil maps should be used to plan for crop rotation, or a fallow period to increase soil fertility should be encouraged (Minor)	Plans based on soil maps		
iii	Production practices to improve and maintain soil structure as well as soil compaction shall be used to avoid erosion (Major)	Visual check		
iv	If chemicals are used to sterilize soils and substrates, a record shall be kept detailing the site name, name of the product or material, name of the chemicals, the date of application, dosage and method of application and operator's name (Critical)	Records		

8.4	Fertilizers and soil additives			
i	Fertilizers and soil additives shall be applied according to the recommendation of competent authorities or any other competent source and also considering the crop and soil type to avoid nutrient run-off or leaching (Major)	Basis of applications and application records		
ii	Facilities for storage, mixing or loading of fertilizer and soil additives and for composting of organic matter should be located, constructed and maintained to minimize the risk of environmental pollution on production related sites and of water sources (Minor)	Visual check		
iii	The equipment used to apply fertilizers and soil additives should be maintained in good condition and annually checked by a technically competent person (Minor)	Equipment maintenance records		
iv	The application of fertilizers and soil additives shall be recorded detailing the name of the fertilizer or soil additive, location, date, rate and method of application and the operator's name (Major)	Fertilizer application records		
8.5	Water			
i.	Irrigation shall be based on crop water requirements, availability of water and soil moisture levels. The irrigation system shall be checked and maintained in good condition to ensure its efficiency during irrigation and to minimize wastage of water (Major)	Irrigation schedule and details Soil moisture may be checked physically		
ii	Water collection, storage and use shall be managed in accordance with country regulations and a record shall be kept of irrigation use, detailing crop, date, location and volume of water irrigated or duration of irrigation (Major)	Irrigation system records		
iii	To minimize the risk to the environment, any water discharge or wastewater shall be treated (Major)	Treatment process and record		
iv	A water management plan to optimize water usage and reduce waste shall be made available (Major)	Water management		

		plan		
8.6	Chemicals (Plant protection products and other inputs)			
i	Farmers or workers shall be trained to a level appropriate to their area of responsibility for chemical application (Major)	Interviews/training records		
ii	Chemicals used for crop protection shall be selected so as to minimize the negative effect on the environment and antagonist organisms of pests and diseases (Major)	Chemical application records		
iii	Crop protection measures shall be based on the recommendations of competent authorities or a plant protection organization (Major)	Recommendation of measures and source of recommendation		
iv	The use of chemicals shall be minimized by the application of Integrated Pest Management (IPM) and biological control products (Major)	IPM effectiveness records		
v	Only chemicals obtained from licensed suppliers and approved by a competent authority for the crop grown shall be used (Major)	Invoice and/or proof of procurement		
vi	Chemicals shall be applied according to the label directions and guidance from the competent authority (Critical)	Application records		
vii	A rotation strategy for chemical application and crop protection measures should be used to avoid pests and diseases resistance (Minor)	Application records		
viii	Appropriate volumes of chemicals shall be mixed to minimize the amount of surplus chemical after application (Major)	Application records		
ix	Surplus chemical mixes and tank washings shall be disposed of in a manner that minimizes the risk of environmental harm on and off the site; empty chemical containers shall be collected and disposed of according to country regulations (Major)	Disposal on-site verification		
x	Obsolete chemicals shall be identified			

	clearly, kept in secure places and disposed of through official collection systems (Critical)	On-site verification		
xi	The application of chemicals shall be recorded for each crop, detailing the chemicals' names, the reason for application, date of application, location, dosage and method of application and name of operator and, where applicable, a record of chemicals held in storage shall be kept detailing the chemicals' names, date and quantity of purchase and date when completely used or disposed of (Major)	Chemical application records		
xii	Chemicals used for post-harvesting and handling produce shall be stored and disposed of according to country regulations (Major)	Visual verification/ interviews		
8.7	Waste management			
	A waste management procedure shall be documented and followed, which includes identification of waste products generated during production, harvesting and handling produce, using practices to minimize waste generation, to reuse, recycle waste and dispose of waste (Major)	Check procedure, visual inspection and records		
8.8	Energy efficiency			
i	The use of electricity and fuel shall be reviewed to ensure that efficient operation practices are implemented (Major)	Electricity and fuel consumption records over time		
ii	Machine and equipment should be maintained in good condition to ensure the efficiency of operation and to save energy (Minor)	Maintenance records/ fuel consumption records		
8.9	Biodiversity			
i	The production plan shall comply with country regulations covering protected plant and animal species and to preserve native plant and animal species, including native vegetation areas, wildlife corridors and vegetation areas on or near the bank of waterways (Major)	Production plan		

ii	Measures should be applied to control/protect feral animals (Minor)	Visual inspection and interview		
8.10	Air/Noise			
i	If an offensive odour, or smoke, dust or noise is generated from production practices, management action shall be taken to minimize the impact on neighbouring property and surrounding areas (Major)	Mitigating action documentation , visual inspection and interview		
8.11	Training			
i	Farmers and workers shall be trained to have appropriate knowledge in their areas of responsibility related to GAP and training records shall be kept (Major)	Training records or Interview		
8.12	Documents and records			
i	Records of good agricultural practices shall be kept for two years or more in accordance with statutory requirements, if any, or business requirements (Major)	Records		
ii	Obsolete (out-of-date) documents shall be discarded and only current versions shall be in use (Major)	Records and current documents in circulation		
8.13	Review of practices			
i	A review shall be carried out at least once a year to identify any new and emerging hazards resulting from inputs, processes or hazards affecting the environment (Major)	Review records		
ii	A record of the review undertaken and the corrective actions taken shall be kept (Major)	Corrective actions records		
	OPTIONAL REQUIREMENTS			
8.14	Site history and management			
i	i. Each producer should maintain a management and conservation plan for protecting biodiversity and wildlife impacted as a result of farming activities and it should include a baseline audit to	Conservation and management plan		

	understand biodiversity, mention action to avoid damage and deterioration of habitats and detail measures to enhance biodiversity on the farm (Minor)			
ii	The producer should have a policy and should consider improving the environment for the benefit of the local community and flora and fauna (Minor)	Policy and implementation		
8.15	Soil and substrates (Substrate management)			
i	The producer should participate in substrate recycling programmes for substrates where available (Minor)	Records		
ii	There should be written justification for the use of soil fumigants (Minor)	Soil fumigation record		
iii	A pre-planting interval should be identified and it should comply with the requirements of soil fumigation (Minor)	Cross check records of soil fumigation and planting		

9. WORKER HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELFARE MODULE (WHSM)

This module addresses the issues of worker health, safety and welfare. The types of hazards encountered by workers include mechanical, chemical, biological, electrical, solar radiation, noise, stress and fatigue and welfare related. The GAP requirements for controlling hazards related to worker health, safety and welfare are grouped into seven elements (8.1 – 8.13). Any person who works on the farm, including adult family members, permanent, temporary/casual/sub-contracted labour is considered to be a worker.

9.1 Chemicals

- i. Chemicals shall be handled and applied by trained workers with appropriate knowledge and skills. **(Critical)**
- ii. Chemicals shall be stored in well lit, sound and secure structures with access permitted to authorized persons only. The storage structures shall be such as to minimize the risk of contaminating workers and they shall be equipped with emergency facilities to deal with any chemical spills. **(Major)**
- iii. Chemicals shall be stored in their original containers with legible labels and instructions from competent authorities. If chemicals are transferred to another container, the new container shall be clearly marked with the brand name, dosage of use, and withholding period. **(Major)**
- iv. Reuse of empty chemical containers for purposes other than containing and transporting identical products shall not be permitted. **(Major)**
- v. The Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS) of all chemicals shall be available. **(Major)**
- vi. Safety instructions shall be provided to workers and displayed in appropriate and readily accessible places. **(Major)**
- vii. First-aid measures shall be available and accessible to treat workers having injuries related to chemicals or other accidents. **(Major)**
- viii. Emergency instructions shall be documented and placed in prominent places within the chemical storage area. **(Major)**
- ix. The workers handling and applying chemicals or entering newly sprayed sites shall be equipped with suitable protective clothing and equipment. Clothes and protective equipment shall be cleaned and stored separately from crop protection chemicals. **(Major)**
- x. People shall not be allowed access to the sites where chemicals are being applied or have just been applied for the appropriate period depending on the type of chemical used, and if chemicals have been applied in public areas or areas to which the public have access, the site shall be marked with warning sign. **(Major)**

9.2 Working conditions

- i. Working conditions shall be suitable for workers but where hazardous conditions cannot be avoided entirely, protective equipment/ clothing shall be provided. **(Major)**
- ii. All farm vehicles, equipment and tools, including electrical and mechanical devices shall be adequately guarded and maintained in good condition to minimize the risk to workers. **(Major)**
- iii. A safety operation manual for operation of equipment, machinery, accessories and their handling practices shall be provided to workers and displayed in prominent places. **(Major)**

9.3 Personal hygiene

- i. Farmers and workers shall be trained on personal hygiene practices for ensuring their own health and well-being. Records of training shall be kept. **(Major)**

- ii. Written instructions on personal hygiene practices shall be provided to workers and displayed in prominent locations. **(Major)**
- iii. Medical check-up of workers should be done at six monthly/ yearly intervals and records kept for five years. **(Minor)**
- iv. Toilets and hand and body washing facilities shall be readily available and maintained in a hygienic condition. **(Major)**
- v. Sewage shall be disposed of in a manner to minimize the risk of contamination to workers. **(Major)**.
- vi. Where employers are to provide health cover to workers, any serious health issue shall be reported to the appropriate authorities. **(Major)**
- vii. Measures shall be applied to minimize the access of domestic and farm animals to production sites and around the handling, packing and storage areas. **(Major)**

9.4 Worker welfare

This is important both for the well being of workers and the productivity of the farm or the processing shed.

- i. Workers shall be treated equally in all respects. **(Major)**
- ii. Workers shall not be exploited because of gender, age or other reasons. **(Major)**
- iii. Living quarters shall be suitable for human habitation and contain basic services and facilities – clean food storage areas, designated eating areas, hand washing facilities and drinking water. **(Major)**
- iv. The minimum working conditions including working hours and minimum wages shall comply with national regulations. **(Critical)**
- v. The workplace shall be secured from dangers of wild animals where these are a hazard. **(Major)**

9.5 Training

- i. Workers shall be informed about the risks with respect to health and safety when working at sites. **(Major)**
- ii. Workers shall be trained in safety requirements (safety drill), accident and emergency response measures, first-aid practices, safe use of chemicals and personal hygiene. **(Major)**
- iii. Workers shall be provided with appropriate training in areas of their responsibility such as vehicles, tools and equipment operation, handling and application of chemicals. **(Major)**
- iv. “Environmental Education and Awareness” programmes and “Human – Animal Coexistence Training” should be organized for all personnel working on the farm. **(Minor)**
- v. The training needs should be reviewed once a year. **(Minor)**

9.6 Documents and records

- i. Records of GAP shall be kept for two years or more in accordance with statutory requirements, if any, or business requirements. **(Major)**
- ii. Obsolete (out-of-date) documents shall be discarded and only current versions shall be in use. **(Major)**

9.7 Review of practices

- i. All practices affecting occupational health and safety of workers shall be reviewed at least once a year to ensure that they are done correctly and actions shall be taken to correct any deficiencies identified. **(Major)**
- ii. A record of the review undertaken and any corrective actions taken should be kept. **(Minor)**

- iii. Actions shall be taken to resolve complaints related to worker health, safety and welfare, and records kept on complaints and action taken. **(Major)**

OPTIONAL REQUIREMENTS

9.8 Worker welfare

- i. A member of management should be identified as responsible for workers' health, safety and welfare. **(Minor)**
- ii. Regular two-way communication meetings should take place between management and workers for which records should be kept and made available. **(Minor)**
- iii. All workers who have contact with plant protection products should be subjected to voluntarily annual health checks. **(Minor)**

9.9 Criteria/requirements control

The criteria referred to and levels of controls required with respect to each criteria/requirements of the Worker Health, Safety and Welfare Module (WSHM) are given in the table below. The table also contains the verification indicator to verify the criteria that can be used for the self assessment and also for the assessment carried out by the auditor/inspector. A column is also included for comments. The column "Compliance status" is required to be filled by "Yes" or "No".

Worker Health, Safety and Welfare Module (WHSM)

Clause No.	Requirement (Category)	Verification indicators	Self/Auditor comments	Compliance status
9.	WORKER HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELFARE MODULE (WHSM)			
9.1	Chemicals			
i	Chemical shall be handled and applied by trained workers with appropriate knowledge and skills (Critical)	Interviews or training records		
ii	Chemicals shall be stored in well lit, sound and secure structures with access permitted to authorized persons only. The storage structures shall be such as to minimize the risk of contaminating workers and they shall be equipped with emergency facilities to deal with cases of a chemical spill (Major)	Visual assessments and Interviews		
iii	Chemicals shall be stored in their original containers with legible labels and instructions from competent authorities. If chemicals are transferred to another container the new container shall be clearly marked with the brand name, dosage of use, and withholding period (Major)	Visual assessments and Interviews		
iv	Reuse of empty chemical containers for purposes other than containing and transporting identical products shall not be permitted (Major)	Visual assessments and interviews		
v	The Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS) of all chemicals shall be available (Major)	MSDS availability		
vi	Safety instructions shall be provided to workers and displayed in appropriate and readily accessible places (Major)	Safety instruction documents and visual inspection		
vii	First-aid measures shall be available and accessible to treat workers having injuries related to chemicals or other accidents (Major)	First-aid kit availability and content		
viii	Emergency instructions shall be documented and placed in prominent places within the chemical storage area (Major)	Emergency instructions and visual assessment		

ix	The workers handling and applying chemicals or entering newly sprayed sites shall be equipped with suitable protective clothing and equipment. Clothes and protective equipment shall be cleaned and stored separately from crop protection chemicals (Major)	Visual assessment and interviews		
x	People shall not be allowed access to the sites where chemicals are being applied or have just been applied for the appropriate period depending on the type of chemical used, and if chemicals have been applied in public areas or areas to which public have access, the site shall be marked with a warning sign (Major)	Warning signs, visual assessment and interviews		
	9.2 Working conditions			
i.	Working conditions shall be suitable for workers but where hazardous conditions cannot be avoided entirely, protective equipment/ clothing shall be provided (Major)	Working conditions and protective clothing visually assessed		
ii	All farm vehicles, equipment and tools, including electrical and mechanical devices shall be adequately guarded and maintained in good condition to minimize the risk to workers (Major)	Visual and maintenance record		
iii	A safety operation manual for operation of equipment, machinery, accessories and handling practices shall be provided to workers and displayed in prominent places (Major)	Safety manual		
9.3	Personal hygiene			
i	Farmers and workers shall be trained on personal hygiene practices for ensuring their own health and well-being. The records of training shall be kept (Major)	Training records or Interviews		
ii	Written instructions on personal hygiene practices shall be provided to workers and displayed in prominent locations (Major)	Written instruction display		
iii	Medical checkup of workers should be carried out at six monthly/ yearly intervals and records kept for five years (Minor)	Records of medical checkup verified		

iv	Toilets and hand and body washing facilities shall be readily available and maintained in a hygienic condition (Major)	Visual assessment		
v	Sewage shall be disposed of in a manner to minimize the risk of contamination to workers (Critical)	Visual assessment and interviews		
vi	Where employers are to provide health cover to workers, any serious health issue shall be reported to the appropriate authorities (Major)	Records		
vii	Measures shall be applied to minimize the access of domestic and farm animals to production sites and around the handling, packing and storage areas (Major)	Visual assessment		
9.4	Worker welfare			
i	Workers shall be treated equally in all respects (Major)	Worker interviews		
ii	Workers shall not be exploited because of gender, age, race or other reasons (Major)	Worker Interviews		
iii	Living quarters shall be suitable for human habitation and contain basic services and facilities – clean food storage areas, designated eating areas, hand washing facilities and drinking water (Major)	Quarters visited		
iv	The minimum working conditions including working hours and minimum wages shall comply with the county's regulations (Critical)	Payment ledger and interviews of workers		
v.	Work place shall be secured from dangers of wild animals where these are a hazard (Major)	Visual inspection and related records		
9.5	Training			
i	Workers shall be informed about the risks associated with health and safety when working at sites (Major)	Workers interview		
ii.	Workers shall be trained in safety requirements (safety drill), accident and emergency response measures, first-aid practices, safe use of chemicals and personal hygiene (Major)	Workers interview and demonstration		
ii	Workers shall be provided appropriate	Training		

	training in areas of their responsibility such as vehicles, tools and equipment operation, handling and application of chemicals (Major)	records or workers interviews		
iii	“Environmental education and awareness” programmes and “Human – Animal Coexistence Training” should be organized for all personnel working on the farm (Minor)	Training records		
iv	The training needs should be reviewed once a year (Minor)	Review records		
9.6	Documents and records			
i	Records of GAP shall be kept for two years or more in accordance with statutory requirements, if any, or business requirements (Major)	Records and documents		
ii	Obsolete (out-of-date) documents shall be discarded and only current versions shall be in use (Major)	Document update register/ Records and documents in circulation		
9.7	Review of practices			
i	All practices affecting occupational health and safety of workers shall be reviewed at least once a year to ensure that they are done correctly and actions shall be taken to correct any deficiencies identified (Major)	Records of review		
ii	A record of the review undertaken and any corrective actions taken should be kept (Minor)			
iii	Actions shall be taken to resolve complaints related to worker health, safety and welfare, and records kept on complaints and action taken (Major)	Action taken report		
	OPTIONAL REQUIREMENTS			
9.8	Worker welfare			
i	A member of management should be identified as responsible for workers health, safety and welfare (Minor)	Written document on the responsibility/ declaration		
ii	Regular two-way communication meetings should take place between management and workers for which records are kept and made available (Minor)	Minutes/attendance of meeting and interviews		
iii	All workers who have contact with plant protection products should be subjected to voluntarily annual health checks (Minor)	Annual health check records		

10. PRODUCE QUALITY MODULE (PQM)

This module focuses on aspects that affect the produce quality. Produce quality relates to characteristics such as external appearance (colour, texture, shape and size), internal quality (total soluble solids, turgidity, water content) and hidden quality (nutritional value, shelf life). The producer needs to design its processes to address good agricultural practices to address produce quality. The practices are grouped into ten elements (10.1 – 10.10)

10.1 Quality plan

A plan shall be maintained on practices that are critical to manage produce quality during the production, harvesting and post-harvesting stages. **(Major)**

10.2 Planting material

Vegetables and fruits planting material (seeds, rootstock, scion) should be obtained from farms or nurseries certified or recognized by the competent authority of the country of origin or other reliable sources to ensure the good quality and freedom from diseases to satisfy market requirements. Records of the planting material should be maintained. **(Minor)**

10.3 Fertilizers and soil additives

The application of fertilizers and soil additives shall be based on the crop grown and recommendations from the competent authority and shall be properly applied to ensure their effectiveness. The facilities used for composting shall be constructed and maintained so as to prevent cross contamination of the crop. Records of the application of fertilizers or soil additives shall be maintained giving details of quantity and date of application, the name of the person who applied the fertilizers and additives, and the provider. **(Major)**

10.4 Water

- i. Irrigation should be based on water requirements of the crop grown, water availability and soil moisture levels. Records detailing the date of irrigation, location, duration and volume of water applied shall be kept. **(Major)**

10.5 Chemicals

- i. Farmers or workers shall be trained to a level appropriate to their responsibility for chemicals application. **(Major)**
- ii. Chemicals shall be obtained from licensed suppliers and applied according to label directions or permit issued by a competent authority for the crop grown. **(Major)**
- iii. A chemical rotation strategy and other crop protection measures shall be practiced to avoid pest resistance to chemicals. **(Major)**
- iv. Equipment used to apply chemicals should be maintained in good condition and be working properly. **(Minor)**
- v. Records shall be maintained, giving the name of chemical applied, reason for application, date and dosage of application, method of application, weather condition and the name of person who applied the chemicals. **(Major)**

10.6 Harvesting and handling produce

These include the following aspects:

Harvesting

- i. A maturity index is used to determine the appropriate time to harvest produce. Harvesting shall be carried out at the coolest time of the day, namely early in the morning. **(Major)**
- ii. The equipment, containers, liners used shall be suitable for harvesting and shall be cleaned before using. The container shall not be overfilled. Liners should be used to cover the rough surfaces or other alternate means used to prevent bruising. Containers should be covered to reduce moisture loss. The containers shall not be stacked on top of each other unless these are specially designed to avoid produce damage when stacked. **(Major)**
- iii. Harvested produce shall be placed in the shade and leave the field as early as possible. **(Major)**.

Handling and packaging produce

- i. Clean water shall be used for handling, washing and treatment of produce and the water changed regularly to avoid spoilage organisms damaging the produce. **(Major)**
- ii. Excessive drops and impacts shall be avoided to minimize mechanical damage to the produce. **(Major)**
- iii. Packing and storing should take place in covered and in cool places. **(Minor)**
- iv. Produce shall not be placed directly on the soil or floor surfaces. **(Major)**
- v. Produce shall be graded and packed according to the customer or market requirements. **(Major)**

Storage and transport

- i. Produce shall be quickly transported to its destination. If there is to be a long wait for transport, produce should be held at the lowest temperature possible. **(Major)**
- ii. Produce shall be covered during transportation and maintained at appropriate temperature to avoid quality loss. **(Major)**
- iii. Checking for cleanliness and removing all sources of contamination should be done. Mixing incompatible produce during transport should be avoided. **(Minor)**

10.7 Traceability and recall system

- i. Produce from different sites shall be identified by name or code, and the same shall be placed on the containers and suitably recorded. **(Major)**
- ii. A record shall be kept of the date of supply, quantity of produce and destination of each consignment. **(Major)**

10.8 Training

Farmers and workers should be trained in the area of their responsibility relevant to GAP and a record of training kept. **(Minor)**

10.9 Documents and records

- i. Records of GAP shall be kept for two years or more in accordance with statutory requirements, if any, or business requirements. **(Major)**
- ii. Obsolete documents shall be discarded and only current versions shall be in use. **(Major)**

10.10 Review of practices

- i. All practices shall be reviewed once a year to ensure that they are done correctly and action shall be taken to correct any deficiencies identified. A record shall be kept to show that all practices have been reviewed and any corrective actions taken documented. **(Major)**

- ii. Action shall be taken to resolve complaints related to produce quality and a record kept of the action taken related to the complaint. **(Major)**

OPTIONAL REQUIREMENTS

10.11 Chemicals

- i. A documented procedure should be available for correct handling and filling as stated on the label when mixing plant protection products. **(Minor)**

10.12 Harvesting and handling produce

- i. When packed produce is stored on farm, temperature and humidity should be recorded. **(Minor)**

10.13 Criteria/requirements control

The criteria referred to and levels of controls required with respect to each criteria/requirements of the Produce Quality Module (PQM) are given in the table below. The table also contains the verification indicator to verify the criteria that can be used for the self assessment and for the assessment by the auditor/inspector. A column is also included for comments. The column “Compliance status” is required to be filled by “Yes” or “No”.

Produce Quality Module (PQM)

Clause No.	Requirement (Category)	Verification statement	Self/Auditor comments	Compliance status
10	PRODUCE QUALITY MODULE (PQM)			
10.1	Quality plan			
i.	A plan shall be maintained on practices that are critical to manage produce quality during the production, harvesting and post-harvesting stages (Major)	Check the plan		
10.2	Planting material			
i.	Vegetables and fruits planting material (seeds, rootstock, scion) should be obtained from farms or nurseries certified or recognized by the Plant Health Office or other reliable sources to ensure the good quality and freedom from diseases to satisfy market requirements. Records of the planting material should be maintained (Minor)	Check Invoices/delivery notes for recognitions/ approvals Check records		
10.3	Fertilizers and soil additives			
i.	Fertilizers and soil additives shall be based on the crop grown and recommendations from the competent authority and shall be properly applied to ensure their effectiveness. The facilities used for composting shall be	Recommendations and application records and visual assessments.		

	constructed and maintained so as to prevent cross contamination of the crop. Records of the application of fertilizers or soil additives shall be maintained giving details of quantity and date of application and the name of the person who applied the fertilizers and additives as well as the provider (Major)			
10.4	Water			
i.	Irrigation should be based on water requirements of the crop grown, water availability and soil moisture levels. Records detailing the date of irrigation, location, duration and volume of water applied shall be kept (Major)	Irrigation records		
10.5	Chemicals			
i	Farmers or workers shall be trained to a level appropriate to their responsibility for chemicals application (Major)	Training records and/or interviews		
ii	Chemicals shall be obtained from licensed suppliers and applied according to label directions or permit issued by a competent authority for the crop grown (Critical)	Invoices/delivery notes		
iii	A chemical rotation strategy and other crop protection measures shall be practiced to avoid pest resistance to chemicals (Major)	Rotation strategy and interviews		
iv	Equipment used to apply chemicals should be maintained in good conditions and should be working properly (Minor)	Equipment maintenance records and visual assessments		
v	Records shall be maintained, giving the name of chemical applied, reason for application, date and dosage of application, method of application, weather condition and the name of person who applied the chemicals (Major)	Chemical application records		
10.6	Harvesting and handling produce			
i	A maturity index is used to determine the appropriate time to harvest produce. Harvesting shall be carried out at the coolest time of the day, namely early in the morning (Major)	Maturity index available and harvesting records		
ii	The equipment, containers, liners used shall be suitable, used appropriately for harvesting and shall be cleaned before using. The container shall not be overfilled. Liners should be used to	Visual assessment		

	cover the rough surfaces or other alternate means used to prevent bruising. Containers should be covered to reduce moisture loss. The containers shall not be stacked on top of each other unless these are specially designed to avoid produce damage when stacked (Major)			
iii	Harvested produce shall be placed in the shade and leave the field as early as possible (Major)	Visual assessment		
Handling and packaging produce				
iv	Clean water shall be used for handling, washing and treatment of produce and the water changed regularly to avoid spoilage organisms damaging the produce (Major)	Visual observation		
v	Excessive drops and impacts shall be avoided to minimize mechanical damage to the produce (Major)	Visual assessment		
vi	Packing and storing should take place in covered and in cool places (Minor)	Visual assessment		
vii	Produce shall not be placed directly on the soil or floor surfaces (Major)			
viii	Produce shall be graded and packed according to the customer or market requirements (Major)	Packing QC records and visual assessment		
Storage and transport				
ix	Produce shall be quickly transported to its destination. If there is to be a long wait for transport, produce should be held at the lowest temperature possible (Major)	Visual assessment/Transport records		
x	Produce shall be covered during transportation and maintained at appropriate temperature to avoid quality loss (Major)	Visual checks/Transport records		
xi	Checking for cleanliness and removing all sources of contamination should be done. Mixing incompatible produce during transportation should be avoided (Minor)	Visual checks/Transport records		
10.7 Traceability and recall system				
i.	Produce from different sites (as applicable) shall be identified by name or code, and the same shall be placed on the containers and suitably recorded (Major)	Records of traceability and drawing sample to check one-step forward and one-step backward		

ii.	A record shall be kept of the date of supply, quantity of produce and destination of each consignment (Major)	Records available		
10.8	Training			
	Farmers and workers should be trained in the area of their responsibility relevant to GAP and a record of training kept (Minor)	Training records and interview		
10.9	Documents and records			
i	Records of GAP shall be kept for two years or more in accordance with statutory requirements, if any, or business requirements (Major)	Records		
ii	Obsolete documents shall be discarded and only current versions shall be in use (Major)	Records and documents		
10.10	Review of practices			
i	All practices shall be reviewed once a year to ensure that they are done correctly and action shall be taken to correct any deficiencies identified. A record shall be kept to show that all practices have been reviewed and any corrective actions taken documented (Major)	Records of review		
ii	Action shall be taken to resolve complaints related to produce quality and a record kept of the action taken related to the complaint (Major)	Action taken reports		
	OPTIONAL REQUIREMENTS			
10.11	Chemicals			
i	A documented procedure should be available for correct handling and filling as stated on the label when mixing plant protection products (Minor)	Check for procedure		
10.12	HARVESTING AND HANDLING PRODUCE			
	When packed produce is stored on farm, temperature and humidity should be recorded. (Minor)	Check records		

11. GENERAL REQUIREMENTS MODULE (GRM)

This module is on general requirements that needs to be met by farms (single or as group) in addition to the four modules. It also contains criteria for internal control system for farms that seek to apply for recognition as a group or group certification.

Section-A (At farm level)

11.1 Legal

The land under certification shall either be owned by the applicant, or an agreement between the legal owner of land and the applicant shall be in place granting authorization to the applicant to carry out the agricultural operation and certification. **(Major)**

11.2 Visitor requirements

Any visitors to the farm or place where operations are being carried out in relation to GAP shall follow the practices applicable to farm workers to ensure the safety of the produce as well their own safety. **(Major)**

11.3 Redressal of complaints

- i. All complaints shall be adequately registered and addressed. A record of action taken shall be maintained.
- ii. Each farm to address complaints effectively and a record of the same shall be available. **(Major)**

11.4 Site details

Each farm and production unit shall be referenced on a farm plan or map. **(Major)**

11.5 Internal inspection

. Internal inspection shall be carried out a minimum of once a year **(Major)**

11.6 Calibration

The producer shall, where applicable, have his equipment calibrated as per the legal requirements of the country. **(Major)**

Note: The requirements under Section A above, may be included by countries under the individual modules that they choose to implement.

Section B (Group requirements)

This section is applicable only if a number of growers organise themselves as a group for carrying out farming operation and wish to apply for recognition or certification as a single legal entity. They would be required to not only implement the requirements of the GAP standard but also to have an internal control system in place. All the requirements stipulated

in this arrangement are required to be written in a formal contract accompanied with policies and procedures for the operation of group. The basic requirements to be implemented are as follows:

11.7 Legal requirements

- i. Documentation shall be available to demonstrate that the producer group is a registered/legal entity. **(Major)**
- ii. Producer group shall have a clearly defined structure to implement GAP and own responsibility for production and management of the produce. **(Major)**
- iii. The administrative/management structure of the producer group shall clearly establish relationships among members of the producer group. **(Major)**.

11.8 Written contract

A written signed contract shall be available between each member of the group and the group (legal entity), which shall cover individual details, farm details, obligations (to abide by the requirements laid by producer group and the GAP standard, sanctions in case of non-compliance with GAP/any other internal requirements. **(Major)**

11.9 Producer register

A register shall be maintained containing details of all members in the group with their current implementation status. This shall include details of producer group, registered planting/production area, crops cultivated, details of internal audit and its findings etc. **(Major)**

11.10 Structure of organization

- i. The organization structure shall demonstrate availability of appropriate resources to carry out operations as per the GAP standard. **(Major)**
- ii. The group shall assess key roles and responsibilities for maintaining requirements of the GAP standard. **(Major)**
- iii. The authority matrix for approval and decision-making shall be defined. **(Major)**

11.11 Competency and training to staff

- i. The group shall assess knowledge and competency of the key personnel managing the group certification such as the trainer, quality manager, internal auditor, group manager etc. **(Major)**
- ii. The group shall ensure that all staff assigned to operate the GAP certification are well trained and competent and capable of functioning according to requirements. **(Major)**
- iii. The group shall determine knowledge and competency, required training and qualification of designated staff, which shall be in line with GAP requirements and the group shall keep a record on qualifications and training of designated staff. **(Major)**
- iv. The group shall ensure that internal inspectors are trained and evaluated to ensure compliance with audit procedures and interpretation of GAP requirements. **(Major)**

11.12 Quality manual

- i. The group shall develop a “quality manual” to include the scope of certification, the management and internal control, policy and working procedures and policy for member registration and designated members. **(Critical)**
- ii. The manual shall be periodically verified and updated to ensure compliance with GAP/ other requirements of the producer group. **(Major)**
- iii. The group shall ensure that the system of updating information and awareness of developments, dissemination and legislative revision (latest version) in relation to GAP compliance is in place so that the manual doesn’t become obsolete. **(Major)**

11.13 Document control

- i. All documents shall be under a document control system. **(Critical)**
- ii. There shall be a master list of all documents as required by the GAP scheme such as the quality manual, working procedures, instructions, record formats and external origin documents. **(Major)**.
- iii. Records shall be available to demonstrate effective document control. **(Major)**
- iv. There shall be a procedure for using external origin documents if used as a part of the operational requirements. **(Major)**

11.14 Complaint handling

- i. A procedure for handling of all complaints regarding GAP shall be available which shall cover complaint receipt, registration, problem identification, analysis of the cause of the complaint, solution and follow-up. **(Major)**
- ii. There shall be a defined timeline for complaint handling. **(Major)**
- iii. Records relating to complaints shall be maintained. **(Major)**
- iv. There shall be provisions to maintain confidentiality, where applicable. **(Major)**

11.15 Internal audit

- i. A system to audit the compliance with GAP of each member and compliance with the requirements of the internal control system of the producer group shall be in place. **(Critical)**
- ii. The competency requirement of the internal auditor shall be defined. **(Major)**
- iii. A procedure documenting the internal audit procedure by an internal auditor, review and action taken on findings of the internal audit shall be available. **(Major)**

11.16 Non-compliance, corrective actions and sanctions

- i. A procedure for identifying and recording corrective actions shall be available and implemented. This shall include root cause analysis of non-compliance, responsibilities and time frame for corrective action. **(Critical)**
- ii. Sanctions and Infringement – Producer group shall have procedures for imposing sanctions on members not complying with requirements. These shall include prompt

notification to certification body of suspension or revocation of its registered member. The provision of sanctions and infringement shall be a part of the contract between each producer and producer group. **(Critical)**

- iii. All information pertaining to non-compliance, corrective action, and sanctions shall be recorded. **(Major)**

11.17 Product traceability and segregation

- i. All GAP certified products shall be traceable to individual registered producers and their farms. Effective systems and procedures shall be in place to reduce the risk of wrong labelling or mixing of GAP with non-GAP products. **(Critical)**
- ii. The harvesting area shall be managed for registered produce so that produce are identifiable and traceable from the purchase order through post-harvest handling, storage and distribution. **(Critical)**

11.18 Withdrawal of certified product

A system for product recall and withdrawal shall be in place and this shall be reviewed annually. **(Critical)**

11.19 Common packhouse

If the group has one or more common packhouse within its farming operation, then every packhouse shall be required to meet the GAP requirements. **(Critical)**

11.20 Agreement with buyer

A written agreement shall be entered into between a group and its buyers cautioning against misuse the of GAP certification claims, as applicable. **(Critical)**

11.21 Subcontracting

In case subcontractors are used, a subcontracting procedure shall be in place **(Critical)** ensuring:

- a. such external services are in compliance with GAP requirements;
- b. assessment of subcontractor competency and records of the assessment are maintained; and
- c. subcontractor operates in compliance with the group's quality system.

11.22 Criteria/requirements control

The criteria referred to and levels of controls required with respect to each criteria/requirements of the Produce Quality Module (PQM) are given in the table below. The table also contains the verification indicator to verify the criteria that can be used for the self assessment and the assessment by the auditor/inspector. A column is also included for comments. The column "Compliance status" is required to be filled by "Yes" or "No".

General Requirements Module (GRM)

Clause No.	Requirement (Category)	Verification indicators	Self/Auditor comments	Compliance status
11. GENERAL REQUIREMENTS MODULE (GRM)				
Section-A (At farm level)				
11.1	Legal The land under certification shall either be owned by the applicant, or an agreement between the legal owner of land and the applicant shall be in place authorizing applicant to carry out the agricultural operation and certification (Major)	Legal documents		
11.2	Visitor requirements Any visitors to the farm or place where operations are being carried out in relation to GAP, shall follow the practices applicable to farm workers to ensure the safety of the produce as well their own safety (Major)	Display of requirements for visitors including instructions		
11.3	Redressal of complaints			
i	All complaints shall be adequately registered and addressed. A record of action taken shall be maintained (Major)	Records of action taken		
ii	An effective complaints handling mechanism shall be available (Major)	Complaint handling mechanism		
11.4	Site details Each farm and production unit shall be referenced on a farm plan or map. (Major)	Farm map		
11.5	Internal inspection Internal inspection shall be carried out a minimum of once a year (Major)	Records		
11.6	Calibration The producers shall, where applicable, have their equipment calibrated as per the legal requirements of the country (Major)	Calibration reports/ certificates		
Section B (Group requirements)				
11.7	Legal requirements			
i	Documentation shall be available to demonstrate that the producer group is a registered/legal entity (Major)	Legal documents		

ii	Producer group shall have a clearly defined structure to implement GAP and own responsibility for production and management of the produce (Major)	Organization structure		
iii	The administrative/management structure of the producer group shall clearly establish a relationship among members of the producer group (Major)	Organization structure showing relationships		
11.8	Written contract A written signed contract shall be available between each member of the group and the group (legal entity), which shall cover individual details, farm details, obligations to abide by the requirements laid down by producer group and the GAP standard, sanctions in case of non-compliance with GAP/any other internal requirements (Major)	Signed contracts		
11.9	Producer register			
	A register shall be maintained containing details of all the members in the group with their current implementation status and this shall include details of producer group, registered planting/production area, crops cultivated details of internal audit and its findings, etc (Major)	Member register		
11.10	Structure of organization			
i	The organization structure shall demonstrate availability of appropriate resources to carry out operations as per the GAP standard (Major)	Co-relation of organization structure with existing manpower		
ii	The group shall assess key roles and responsibilities for maintaining requirements of the GAP standard (Major)	Verification of roles and responsibilities		
iii	The authority matrix for approval and decision-making shall be defined (Major)	Authority matrix defined		
11.11	Competency and training of staff			
i	The group shall assess knowledge and competency requirement of the key personnel managing the group certification such as the trainer, quality manager, internal auditor, group manager (Major)	Records of competency assessment against defined requirements		
ii	The group shall ensure that all staff assigned to operate on GAP certification are well trained and competent and capable of	Interviews and training records		

	functioning according to requirements (Major)			
iii	The group shall determine knowledge and competency, required training and qualification of designated staff in line with GAP requirements and shall keep a record on qualifications and training of designated staff (Major)	Qualification Check records and interviews		
iv	The group shall ensure that internal inspectors are trained and evaluated to ensure compliance with audit procedures and interpretation of GAP requirements of internal and external auditor/inspector (Major)	Witness reports and training records		
11.12	Quality manual			
i	The group shall develop a quality manual to include the scope of certification, the management and internal control, policy and working procedures and policy for member registration and designated members (Critical)	Quality manual availability and completeness		
ii	The quality manual shall be periodically reviewed and updated to ensure compliance with GAP/ other requirements of the producer group (Major)	Check for review and updating of QM		
iii	The group shall ensure that the system of updating information and awareness on developments, dissemination and legislative revision (latest version) in relation to GAP compliance is in place (Major)	Interviews and documents		
	11.13 Document control			
i	All documents are under a document control system (Critical)	Check document identification system and randomly verify documents		
ii	There shall be a master list of all documents as required by the GAP scheme such as the quality manual, working procedures, instructions, record formats and external origin documents (Major)	Master list available for inspection		
iii	Records are available to demonstrate effective document control (Major)	Document control procedure		

iv	There shall be a procedure for using external origin documents if used as a part of their operational requirement (Major)	Procedure for using outside references/documents		
11.14	Complaint handling			
i	A procedure for handling of all complaints regarding GAP shall be available which shall cover complaint receiving, registering, problem identification, analysis of the cause of the complaint, solution and follow up (Major)	Complaint handling procedure		
ii	There shall be a defined timeline for complaint handling (Major)	Complaint handling procedure		
iii	Records relating to complaints shall be maintained (Major)	Records and formats		
iv	There shall be provisions to maintain confidentiality, where applicable (Major)	Verify provisions to ensure confidentiality		
11.15	Internal audit			
i	A system to audit the compliance with GAP of each member and compliance with the requirements of the internal control system of the producer group shall be in place (Critical)	internal inspection checklist and reports		
ii	The competency requirement of the internal auditor shall be defined (Major)	Documents		
iii	A procedure documenting the internal audit procedure by an internal auditor, review and action taken on findings of internal audit shall be available (Major)	Internal audit checklist of internal auditor and statement of corrective and preventive action		
11.16	Non-compliance, corrective actions and sanctions			
i	A procedure for recording of corrective actions shall be available and implemented. This shall include root cause analysis of non-compliance, responsibilities and time frame for corrective action (Critical)	Procedure for handling corrective actions		
ii	Sanctions and Infringement – producer group shall have procedures for imposing sanctions on members not complying with requirements. These shall include prompt	Sanction and infringement mechanism		

	notification to CB of suspension or revocation of its registered member. The provision of the contract between each producer and producer group (Critical)			
iii	All information pertaining to non-compliance, corrective action, and sanctions shall be recorded (Major)	Records available		
11.17	Product traceability and segregation			
i	All GAP certified products shall be traceable to individual registered producers and their farms. Effective systems and procedures shall be in place to reduce the risk of wrong labelling or mixing of GAP with non-GAP products (Critical)	Traceability systems and traceability exercise		
ii	The harvesting area shall be managed for registered produce so that produce are identifiable and traceable from the purchase order through post-harvest handling, storage and distribution (Critical)	Traceability systems		
11.18	Withdrawal of certified products A system for product recall and withdrawal shall be in place and this shall be reviewed annually (Critical)	Product recall and withdrawal mechanism available and reviewed		
11.19	Common packhouse If the group has one or more common packhouse within its farming operation, then every packhouse shall require to meet the GAP requirements (Critical)	Inspect all packhouses		
11.20	Agreement with buyer A written agreement shall be entered into between a group and each of their buyers cautioning against the misuse of GAP certification claims, as applicable (Critical)	Check agreement		
11.21	Subcontracting In case subcontractors are used, a subcontracting procedure shall be in place (Critical)	Subcontracting procedure		

Integration of Modules

Standard requirement	Food Safety FSM	Environmental Management EMM	Workers Health Safety and Welfare WHSM	Produce Quality PQM
Site history and management	X	X		
Soils and substrates (substrate management)		X		
Quality plan				X
Planting material (propagation material)	X	X		X
Genetically modified organisms (GMOs)	X			
Fertilizers and soil additives	X	X		X
Water	X	X		X
Chemicals (plant protection product and other inputs)	X	X	X	X
Harvesting and handling produce	X			X
Traceability and recall system	X			X
Waste management		X		
Energy efficiency		X		
Biodiversity		X		
Air/noise		X		
Working conditions			X	
Personal hygiene			X	
Worker welfare			X	
Training	X	X	X	X
Documents and records	X	X	X	X
Review of practices	X	X	X	X

GLOSSARY

Audit – An audit is a systematic, independent and documented process for obtaining audit evidence (records, statements of fact, documents or other information that is relevant and verifiable) and evaluating it objectively to determine the extent to which the audit criteria (set of policies, procedures or scheme requirements) are fulfilled. In this scheme, audit and inspection terms are used synonymously.

Auditor – A person that is authorized to undertake audits. In this scheme, the terms auditor and inspector are used synonymously.

Composting – A managed process where organic materials are subjected to moisture, heat and micro-organisms for a specified period to produce a product known as compost.

Customer – A business or person who buys or receives produce, for example a packer, marketing group distributor, wholesaler, exporter, processor, retailer or consumer.

Environmental hazard – A source of environmental harm or a situation with the potential to cause harm to the environment.

Fertigation – The application of fertilizers/nutrients through an irrigation system.

Food safety hazard – Any chemical, biological, physical substance or property that can make fruit and/or vegetables unacceptable and may pose a health risk to consumers.

Fumigation – The application of a chemical to control pests in the soil or substrate, such as insects, diseases and weeds in a protected condition.

Hazard – An adverse effect or harm to produce, the environment or workers.

Integrated Pest Management – The careful consideration of all available pest control techniques and the subsequent integration of appropriate measures that discourage the development of pest populations and keep plant protection products and other interventions to levels that are economically justified and reduce or minimize hazards to human health and the environment.

Inspection – An inspection is an organized examination or formal evaluation exercise. The results are usually compared to specified requirements and standards for determining whether the item or activity is in line with the requirements. In this scheme, the terms audit and inspection are used synonymously.

Inspector – Any personnel that carry out an inspection. In this scheme, the terms auditor and inspector are used synonymously.

Intervention – If after the use of IPM techniques, monitoring shows a threshold has been reached then an intervention is needed by way of a chemical approach.

Maximum residue limit (MRL) – The maximum amount of a chemical that is permitted by a competent authority in fruit and vegetables for sale for human consumption.

Monitoring – This is the systematic inspection of crop and its surroundings for pests and diseases including its eggs and larvae so that preventive measures can be taken.

Obsolete chemical – A chemical that is no longer suitable for use. For example, approval for use of the chemical may be withdrawn, the chemical expiry date passed, the container may be damaged and the chemical soiled.

Prevention – This includes the adoption of cultivation techniques and management practices at farm level to prevent or reduce the incidence and/or intensity of pest, diseases and weeds.

Producer – The farmer, company or the person legally responsible for the production at farm level.

Producer group – A group of farmers coming together as a single unit for implementation and/or certification with respect to the requirements stipulated in the GAP standards.

PART II

ESTABLISHING A NATIONAL IMPLEMENTATION STRUCTURE FOR GAP IN A COUNTRY

SECTION 1 OPTIONS AND STRUCTURE FOR IMPLEMENTING GAP IN A COUNTRY

1.1 Purpose

The objective of this section is to give guidance to the countries on the various options for implementing GAP, the structure for implementing GAP and the status and decisions needed by a country to implement GAP. This will assist the Scheme Owner that will own and operate the country GAP scheme for fruits and vegetables (also referred to as “the Scheme”).

1.2 Scope

1.2.1 This section describes the options available for a country to establish and operate the Scheme successfully.

1.2.2 This section draws upon the mechanisms laid down in the World Trade Organization (WTO) agreements and the rules for standards and conformity assessment as laid down in the Technical Barriers to Trade/Sanitary and Phytosanitary (TBT/SPS) Agreements.

1.2.3 This section describes the structure for implementation of GAP in a country.

1.3 Structure for implementation of GAP in a country

The implementation of GAP in a country starts with the identification of a Scheme Owner who is responsible for designing and implementing the Scheme. This is done through the constitution of various committees – multistakeholder committees that cater to the representation of various interests related to the Scheme. In order to make the Scheme globally acceptable the Scheme Owner may either seek the assistance of an accreditation body or itself can approve the certification bodies to carry out audits in order to ensure compliance with the requirements of the Scheme. It is the Scheme Owner’s responsibility to see that the relevance and updating of the Scheme catering to the markets are maintained at all times while fulfilling the regulatory requirements.

A Scheme Owner is an organization or a body, governmental or private or non-governmental organization that can be nominated by the government of the country or can be selected by an industry body. Where the government or a regulatory body is the Scheme Owner, it is also known as the competent authority for the purpose. The Scheme Owner may rely on an accreditation body (AB) for approving a certification body (CB). An AB is an independent body to testify the competence of conformity assessment bodies (CABs) used in the Scheme. The AB needs to comply with ISO 17011. It will function as part of an international system under the aegis of the International Accreditation Forum (IAF).

A CB is a third party assessment body, governmental or private or non-governmental organization, recognized by the Scheme Owner for evaluating the producers against specified requirements of the GAP standard and the GAP scheme. The CB needs to comply with the requirements given in ISO 17065 and get accredited by an AB according to the standard. In the absence of an AB, the Scheme Owner may also approve a CB. At times the Scheme may require the produce to be tested, especially in cases where a complaint has been received with respect to the produce quality. The laboratories carry out the testing activities in support of the GAP certification scheme for requirements of producers, CB or any interested party. There would be a need for laboratory testing for pesticide residues, microbiology, heavy metals content, soil quality, water quality, etc. The laboratory needs to be accredited or comply with ISO 17025 for those specific parameters.

The most important component of a Scheme is the target group that the Scheme intends to aim either for improvement or validation of best practices. In a GAP scheme, the focus is to improve the agricultural practices adopted by producers/producers groups.

The quality infrastructure for implementing a Scheme is in the form of an operational hierarchy comprising the government, Scheme Owner, AB, CB, testing laboratory and the farmers/producers, both individual and group.

1.4 Options for implementation: regulatory and voluntary approaches

The above structure could be established either through a voluntary or regulatory route. The government may lay down standards as part of regulations with implementation mandatory or voluntary. The advantage of a regulatory approach is that implementation can be linked with other government programmes and facilitation measures. The other alternative is to bring about compliance of GAP and other best practices through voluntary standards. Voluntary standards are principally developed in partnership with stakeholders, are consensus standards, and are market driven with an option to the agriculture, industry or trade choosing to implement them or not.

1.5 Status and decisions needed by a country

In order to implement the GAP scheme uniformly in a country for overall development of agriculture and horticulture, the government at the highest level will be required to make a number of policy decisions regarding:

- i) whether the GAP scheme will be implemented on a voluntary or mandatory basis;
- ii) structure to be established for implementing GAP;
- iii) who is to be the Scheme Owner and which department is to be responsible and act as the Secretariat;
- iv) whether the certification body is to be governmental or private, whether there is to be a single CB to be accredited or multiple CBs;
- v) the mechanism for approval of the CB – whether the CB is to be accredited or is it to be simply approved by the Scheme Owner based on the requirements of ISO 17065;
- vi) constitution of the multistakeholder committees which will develop and oversee the operation of the Scheme – *Steering Committee, Technical Committee and Certification Committee or other;*

- vii) finalizing the standards and Scheme documents on GAP – the 4 modules – whether a single module will be implemented or the whole set, and whether implementation will be gradual and progressive – all these will depend on the country/ producer priorities; and
- viii) developing a certification mark or logo.

1.6 Development of a GAP scheme

The GAP scheme needs to be developed by a country and will consist of the following elements:

GAP standard – At the first step, the Scheme Owner through a Technical committee (governmental body/ regulatory body) consisting of subject-matter specialists prepares the GAP standard that covers requirements to be fulfilled by farmers. This is a stand-alone document that can be implemented by the producer with or without certification. The National Standards Body can also prepare the standard.

Conformity criteria – Recognizing that 100 percent compliance with the requirements of the standard may not always be possible, requirements are classified into “critical”, “major” and “minor” alongwith the percentage of deviations that can be accepted in each category.

Governing structure – A formal structure for decision-making and supervision for implementing GAP needs to be set up by the Scheme Owner. This could be at two levels with a Steering Committee at the apex level below that two Committees, a Technical Committee for looking after the standard and related technical aspects and a Certification Committee for looking after certification aspects, including related policy matters.

Certification process – This covers the procedure for evaluation, verification and certification and needs to be documented to ensure that there is uniformity in practices for certification of farmers and the procedure shall be made according to both the requirements of ISO 17065 and the Scheme.

Rules for use of certification mark – As the certification mark is owned by the Scheme Owner, the rules for use and application of this mark need to be clearly documented for correct use by the stakeholders, namely farmers/producers, CBs and AB.

SECTION 2 GUIDANCE FOR ESTABLISHING A SCHEME OWNER

2.1 Purpose

2.1.1 The objective of this section is to give guidance on the requirement of the Scheme Owner that will own and operate the GAP Scheme for Fruits and Vegetables (also referred to as “the Scheme”) in each country where the Scheme is launched.

2.1.2. This guidance document is intended to assist the decision-maker in each SAARC country in identifying potential Scheme Owners.

2.2 Scope

2.2.1 This section describes the requirements for the Scheme Owner, its roles and responsibilities for establishing and operating the Scheme successfully.

2.2.2 This section draws upon the guidance provided in the international standard ISO 17067:2013 “Conformity assessment — fundamentals of product certification and guidelines for product certification schemes”.

2.3 Scheme Owner

2.3.1 The Scheme Owner is an organization or body identified by each of the SAARC countries responsible for setting up and operationalizing the Scheme in their respective country (to be nominated by the government of the country).

2.3.2 The Scheme Owner could be any of the following types/ categories:

- a) A government body – including concerned ministry or regulatory body, or any other body identified by the government that is engaged in activities relating to agriculture especially quality issues in agriculture.
- b) A standards body – in SAARC countries these are generally governmental bodies and responsible for voluntary standards.

Note: In case of b) above, the only constraint would be that most national standards bodies in the countries of the region are engaged in certification, and are too exclusive (i.e. do not allow other CBs to certify against standards issued by them), whereas in the international system, increasingly Scheme Owners and certification activities are separated and certification is undertaken by multiple certification bodies.

- c) An accreditation body (AB) – this is not an ideal option, but in the absence of any other option could be exercised.
- d) Any private, or non-governmental organization, or a trade or an industry association, or a consumer organization – ideally the organization should be a non-profit body.

3.3.3 The identified organization needs to have a mandate for introducing, upgrading and/or internalizing quality in agriculture and/or horticulture.

3.3.4 A new organization could also be formed to undertake the setting up and implementation of the Scheme.

2.4 The Scheme Owner should fulfil the following requirements:

a) The Scheme Owner should be a legal entity.

Note: A governmental Scheme Owner is deemed to be a legal entity on the basis of its governmental status.

b) The Scheme Owner should be able to take on full responsibility for the objectives, the content and the integrity of the Scheme.

c) The Scheme Owner should set up a structure for the operation and management of the Scheme as has been prescribed in the Scheme. The identified Scheme Owner will need to create a governing structure so that the Scheme could be operated effectively by all participating stakeholders. A suggested model is given in Section 3 of the Scheme.

d) The Scheme Owner should maintain the Scheme and provide guidance when required. The Scheme Owner should document the modalities of the Scheme in the manner in which it would propose to execute the Scheme in its country.

e) The Scheme Owner should make arrangements to protect the confidentiality of information provided by the parties involved in the Scheme.

f) The Scheme Owner should evaluate and manage the risks/liabilities arising from its activities. The Scheme Owner should have adequate arrangements (e.g. insurance or reserves) to cover liabilities arising from its activities. Arrangements should be appropriate, e.g. for the range of activities the Scheme undertakes and in the geographic regions in which the Scheme operates.

g) The Scheme Owner should have the financial stability and resources required for it to fulfil its role in the operation of the Scheme.

Note: Ideally, such a Scheme is operated on a self-sustaining basis but given the situation in SAARC countries, it would take considerable time if the Scheme is voluntary for any Scheme Owner to become self-sustaining. Until such time, governments would be expected to provide financial assistance to the Scheme Owners.

2.5 Roles and responsibilities of the Scheme Owner

2.5.1 Before agreeing on the specific contents of the Scheme, and deciding on the extent of adoption of the provisions provided in the GAP scheme already developed, the following fundamental Scheme related issues should be reviewed and agreed on by the stakeholders:

a) confirmation of the entity that would own the Scheme;

- b) confirmation of the governance and decision-making mechanisms – a recommended governing structure is given in Section 3 of this Scheme;
- c) drawing up and confirmation of the underlying sustaining/business/funding model; and
- d) agreeing on a system for monitoring and periodic review of the Scheme.

2.5.2 Once the Scheme is adopted in each of the identified countries, the Scheme Owner should ensure that information about the Scheme is made publicly available to ensure transparency, understanding and acceptance.

2.5.3 The Scheme Owner shall own the “GAP certification mark” (the Mark) and get it duly registered with the appropriate authority in her or his country. The CBs and certified clients shall be required to obtain formal approval from the Scheme Owner for the use of the Mark.

2.5.4 The Scheme Owner shall approve the ABs and the CBs who are authorized to accredit or certify under the Scheme. Normally, such approval shall be based on accreditation bodies being signatory to the IAF Multilateral Recognition Agreement (MLA) for its product certification programme covering the GAP certification scheme and the certification bodies being accredited as per ISO/IEC 17065:2012 covering the GAP certification scheme under its scope of accreditation.

Note: In case there is no AB in the country, external ABs may be used. Alternatively, Scheme Owners may themselves approve the CBs based on norms of approval.

2.5.5 The Scheme Owner shall develop a surveillance plan to exercise supervision over the Scheme and oversight on certified producers, as considered necessary from time to time. The plan may cover CBs and ABs, as considered necessary.

2.6 Handling of complaints by Scheme Owner

2.6.1 The Scheme Owner shall describe the process for handling complaints by stakeholders and a record of complaints and how they were handled shall be made available on the Web site of the Scheme Owner.

2.6.2 A complaint is defined as any expression of dissatisfaction regarding the operation of the GAP certification scheme and also with respect to the quality of produce marked with the GAP Mark. The complaint may be formal (written) or informal (verbal) and from any stakeholder such as a certified organization, a CB, an AB, representatives of government bodies, NGOs, the general public.

2.6.3 The complaints regarding quality of produce marked with the GAP Mark are very important from the point of view of ensuring confidence and credibility of the Scheme and dealing with these shall be accorded utmost care. These shall be referred to the certified producer, the relevant CB/AB against which the complaint is made, at an appropriate stage for ensuring appropriate investigation and actions as applicable and the process of dealing with the complaint by the respective body shall be monitored by the Scheme Owner.

2.6.4 The Scheme Owner shall require that the information regarding complaints received by the certified producer, the CB and the AB is appropriately forwarded to them. This shall be ensured through having appropriate provisions in the contract with the CB/AB.

2.6.5 The process for handling of complaints shall have all the necessary components such as describing responsibility and independence for handling and decision-making, receiving complaints, gathering all necessary information for establishing the validity of complaints, and deciding what actions are required to be taken in response to the complaints. Suitable guidance for establishing a complaints handling system is available in ISO 10002 which provides the process for handling complaints related to products within an organization, including planning, design, operation, maintenance and improvement. The essential components for the same are as follows:

2.6.5.1 The entire activity is focused on principles of visibility, accessibility, responsiveness, objectivity, charges (costs), confidentiality, customer focused approach, accountability and continual improvement as identified in ISO 10002.

2.6.5.2 The decision-makers are responsible and provide evidence of their commitment to the development and implementation of the complaint management system and a complaint handling policy, which is explicitly customer focused and made available to, and known by, all personnel within the organization including those acting on behalf of the organization, for example in an outsourcing environment. This will be made publicly available to customers and other interested parties.

2.6.5.3 The operation of complaints handling processes includes clear communication, recording of complaints, tracking of complaints, receipt of complaints, assessment and investigation of complaints, response to complaints, communication of the decision and closing of the complaint.

2.6.5.4 The organization shall ensure that specific information relating to the identity of the complainant be kept confidential, and where the nature of a complaint is sensitive its contents shall be handled with confidentiality.

2.7 Handling of appeals by Scheme Owner

2.7.1 The Scheme Owner should describe the process for appeals by various stakeholders and the process shall be made available on the Web site of the GAP Scheme Owner as per the details given below.

2.7.2 Appeals can be made by any stakeholder affected by a decision of the Scheme Owner and the Committees under the governing structure.

2.7.3 The CBs and the ABs are expected to maintain appeal mechanisms as per the applicable international standards. Anyone directly aggrieved by their decisions is encouraged to utilize these mechanisms. Information about procedures for handling appeals

are publically available either on request or can be accessed from the Web site of the CB or AB.

2.7.4 However, if dissatisfied, the appeals can be made directly to the Scheme Owner.

2.7.5 In respect of an appeal against the Scheme Owner's decision, an independent appeals panel may be constituted for looking into the appeal and deciding/recommending actions as appropriate. The appeals against decisions of the Technical Committee and Certification Committee or any other committee shall lie with the Steering Committee.

2.7.6 The process for handling appeals shall have all the necessary components, namely:

- a) describing responsibility and independence for handling and decision-making;
- b) receiving of appeals;
- c) gathering all necessary information for establishing the validity of appeals; and
- d) deciding about what actions are required to be taken in response to the appeals.

2.8 Scheme Owner's responsibility towards maintenance and improvement of the Scheme

2.8.1 Review of Scheme operation – The Scheme Owner should define a process for reviewing the operation of the Scheme on a periodic basis in order to confirm its operational validity and to identify aspects requiring improvement, taking into account feedback from stakeholders. The review should include provisions for ensuring that the Scheme requirements are being applied in a consistent manner.

2.8.2 Changes in specified requirements – The Scheme Owner should monitor the development of the standards and other documents that define the specified requirements used in the Scheme. Where changes in these documents occur, the Scheme Owner should have a process for making the necessary changes in the Scheme, and for managing the implementation of the changes (e.g. transition period) by the CBs, certified farmers and, where necessary, other stakeholders.

2.8.3 Other changes to the Scheme – The Scheme Owner should define a process for managing the implementation of other changes to the rules, procedures and management of the Scheme.

2.8.4 GAP certification scheme documentation – The Scheme Owner should create, control and maintain adequate documentation for the operation, maintenance and improvement of the Scheme. The documentation should specify the rules and the operating procedures of the GAP scheme, and in particular the responsibilities for governance of the Scheme.

2.9 Governing structure

2.9.1 The aim of this section is to provide guidance to the Scheme Owner on the establishment of the governing structure which would be required for setting up and operating the GAP certification scheme for fruits and vegetables.

2.9.2 This section describes the governing structure of the Scheme and the roles and responsibilities of various committees and organizations involved in establishing and operating the Scheme. It draws upon the guidance provided in the international standard ISO/IEC 17067:2013 “Conformity assessment — fundamentals of product certification and guidelines for product certification schemes”.

The details of the governing structure and composition of committees are given in Appendix A (below).

Governing Structure and Composition of Committees

A 1. Governing structure

A 1.1 Implementation of the Scheme shall be through a multistakeholder committee – a steering committee at the apex level with the secretariat being held by the Scheme Owner. This may be supported by a Technical Committee and a Certification Committee. The Steering Committee will internalize the scheme in the respective countries and provide operational guidance.

A 1.2 The Technical and the Certification Committees shall be represented by a variety of stakeholders and experts in the related technical areas (agronomy, plant physiology, horticulture, plant entomology, soil nutrition) and having knowledge of conformity assessment.

Note:

1. If deemed appropriate, the Scheme Owner could have a single committee dealing with all the matters.
2. In case of the GAP scheme, since the major work of development of the Scheme has already been achieved and the Scheme in the form of certification criteria, certification process and the certification body (CB) requirements has been documented, the committees will be required mainly to internalize these documents with any modifications needed to meet the requirements or local conditions of the respective countries.

A 2 Composition and terms of reference of committees

A 2.1 General principles – In the appointment of various committees, the following general principles should be followed:

- a) Representation of a balance of interests in the Steering Committee such that no single interest predominates. When nominating representatives for technical/certification committees, it shall be ensured that personnel are predominantly subject experts.
- b) Key interests would include representatives of regulatory bodies or other governmental agencies, standards body, representatives of user associations, producers association, industry associations, accreditation body and certification bodies (subject to availability), test laboratories, academic/research bodies, voluntary consumer organizations and representatives of non-governmental organizations working in related areas.

- c) The technical committee may have additional representation drawn from persons competent in agriculture science viz., areas such as plant entomology, plant pathology, horticulture, agronomy, soil nutrition.
- d) The certification committee needs to have representation from certification bodies, accreditation body and experts that have an understanding of conformity assessment.
- e) Individual experts can be given representation but due care in their selection shall be exercised to avoid any conflict of interest.
- f) It is desirable to invite organizations to nominate principal and alternative members in the interests of higher attendance and continuity.

A 2.2 Steering Committee (SC) – It may comprise government representatives, regulatory bodies, growers/ producers associations, export promotion bodies, research/academic bodies, accreditation bodies (ABs), testing laboratories, CBs, NGOs, voluntary organizations, trade associations, FAO and or any other technical expert(s) as invitees for specific meetings, as identified by the GAP Secretariat. The SC may co-opt any other members.

A 2.2.1 Quorum – The presence in person at a meeting of the SC of at least 30 percent of the members of the SC shall constitute the quorum for a meeting.

A 2.2.2 Terms of reference – The SC is responsible for:

- i) overall development, modification and supervision of the Scheme;
- ii) receiving recommendations of Technical/Certification Committees and deciding on such recommendations; and
- iii) constituting any other committees, as needed.

A 2.2.3 Meetings – The SC shall meet at least once every year.

A 2.3 Technical Committee (TC): It may comprise government representatives, regulatory bodies, growers associations, export promotion bodies, research/academic institutions, standards body, ABs, testing laboratories, CBs, NGOs, voluntary organizations, trade associations, FAO, and or any other technical expert(s) as invitees for specific meetings, as identified by the GAP secretariat. The TC may co-opt any other members.

A 2.3.1 Quorum – The presence in person at a meeting of the TC of at least 30 percent of the members of the TC shall constitute the quorum for a meeting.

A 2.3.2 Terms of reference – The TC is responsible for:

- a) developing and maintaining any standards or technical documents needed by the Scheme Owner;
- b) national interpretation of the clauses, if required;

- c) defining the certification criteria; and
- d) resolving any related issues.

A 2.3.3 Meetings – The TC shall meet at least once every year.

A 2.4 Certification Committee (CC): It may comprise of members as mentioned in the Technical Committee with greater representation to accreditation/ certification bodies having insight into certification processes. The CC may co-opt any other members.

A 2.4.1. Quorum – The presence in person at a meeting of the Certification Committee (CC) of at least 30 percent of members of the CC shall constitute the quorum for a meeting.

A 2.4.2. Terms of reference – The CC is responsible for:

- i. developing, maintaining and revising as appropriate the certification process;
- ii. developing, maintaining and revising as appropriate the requirements for certification bodies for the operation of the Scheme;
- iii. developing guidance document to assist producers to apply for certification;
- iv. designing the certification marks, if any;
- v. developing, maintaining and revising as appropriate the rules for the use of a certification mark or logo; and
- vi. resolving any issue relating to certification.

A 2.4.3. Meetings – The CC shall meet at least once every year.

SECTION 3 – RULES FOR THE USE OF A CERTIFICATION MARK

3.1 Purpose

3.1.1 All producers or producer groups (hereinafter referred as the Producer) that have been certified under the GAP certification scheme (hereinafter referred as the Scheme) by the certification bodies approved by the Scheme Owner of the country are eligible to use the Scheme certification mark.

3.1.2 This section describes the process for approval of the Producer for the use of the certification mark and the rules for use of the Scheme certification mark by the certified Producer fulfilling the above requirements.

3.1.3 The Scheme certification mark, is a protected mark owned by the Scheme Owner in a country. Its use would indicate that the processes of the relevant Producer's farm are in conformity with specified criteria (Certification Criteria for the Scheme) under the Scheme. The certification mark is also commonly known as a logo, however for the sake of aligning it with the international requirements it will henceforth be referred to as the Mark.

3.2 Scope

3.2.1 This section covers the rules for use of the GAP certification mark by the certified producer or producer group and the approved certification bodies (CBs).

3.3 Eligibility for use of the certification mark

3.3.1 Producers or producer groups that have been certified under the Scheme by the CBs approved by the Scheme Owner, are eligible to use the certification mark or apply for permission to use the certification mark.

3.3.2 If the Scheme requires the approval of the Scheme Owner to use the certification mark, the certified producer shall apply for use of the mark to the Scheme Owner through the approved CB that has certified it.

3.3.3 The certified producer shall sign a legally enforceable agreement with the Scheme Owner/ CB whereby it is allowed to use the certification mark after agreeing to all the relevant conditions as described in this section.

3.4 The certification mark and its usage

3.4.1 There may be more than one certification mark depending on whether some or all modules are used as the standard or criteria to certify producers/producer groups.

3.4.2 The mark(s) shall be distinct for each standard/ criteria used by the Scheme Owner for certification of the producers/producer groups.

3.4.3 The certification mark may be used as any photographic reduction or enlargement.

3.4.4 The mark shall be used in such a manner as to imply that the farm produce (fruits and vegetables) has been produced using GAP. It shall not be used to imply that the produce itself is certified, i.e. it shall not be applied on the produce.

Note: 1 In case a country decides to allow use of certification mark/ logo on the produce or package, the same needs to be backed by either a country level National residue and contaminant monitoring programme or the individual farms need to carry out residue and contaminant checks.

Note 2: In order to promote the Scheme and sensitize the consumers, the country may allow usage of a statement implying that the produce is from a GAP certified farm.

3.4.5 The mark shall be used on any document accompanying certified produce along with the address of the certified farm to indicate to the recipient that the produce is GAP certified.

3.4.6 The mark may be used in publicity material, pamphlets, letterheads, other similar stationary, media for exchange of any communication, for promoting the awareness of the Scheme, or the mark, etc.

3.4.7 The certified producer may also use the certificate issued by the CB as part of its publicity material.

3.4.8 When using the above documents, care shall be taken to ensure that the certification mark is used only with respect to the farm(s) certified and it shall not imply that non-certified farms having common ownership are also certified.

3.4.9 The certified producer shall not make any misleading claim with respect to the mark.

3.4.10 The certified producer shall not use the mark in any manner as to bring the Scheme Owner into disrepute.

3.4.11 The certified producer, upon suspension or withdrawal of its certification, shall discontinue use of the certification mark, in any form.

3.4.12 The certified producer, upon suspension or withdrawal of its certification, shall discontinue use of all advertising matter that contains any reference to its certification status.

3.4.13 Depending upon the extent of violation, suitable actions may range from advice for corrective actions to withdrawal of certification in situations of grave or repeated violations. In case the certified producer does not take suitable action against the incorrect use of the certification mark, the CB shall withdraw the certification.

3.4.14 The Scheme Owner may direct the approved certification body to take any of the actions for incorrect use of the mark or take appropriate legal action itself, if deemed necessary.

3.5 Obligations of the approved certification body

3.5.1 The approved CBs shall obtain the agreement for use of the Mark duly signed in duplicate from the producer/producer group found conforming to the criteria for certification and forward it to the Scheme Owner, if required.

3.5.2 The Scheme Owner, after duly signing the agreement, shall send one original copy to the certified producer/producer group with a copy to the concerned CB. One original copy shall be retained by the Scheme Owner.

3.5.3 The CB shall during its surveillance of the producer/producer group monitor the use of the certification mark to assist the Scheme Owner in protecting the integrity of the mark.

3.5.4 In case the certification mark is observed to be used by a certified producer contrary to the conditions specified, the CB shall take suitable action in accordance with the relevant requirements of ISO 17065 and those specified in the documents “GAP certification process” and “GAP requirements for certification bodies”.

3.6 Fee

The certified producer shall pay a fee as prescribed by the Scheme Owner, for the use of the certification mark. This payment may be made to its CB for onward submission to the Scheme Owner or as decided by the Scheme Owner.

PART III

CERTIFICATION AND ACCREDITATION FOR GAP

SECTION 1 CERTIFICATION CRITERIA

1.1 Purpose: This section describes the requirements to be followed by a producer or producer group to be eligible for certification. It covers:

- i) the requirements given in the section on GAP Standards (Part I) with respect to food safety, environment management, workers health and safety and produce quality, depending on what type of certification is being sought; and
- ii) the requirements stipulated by the certification body (CB) in the certification process (including requirements mentioned in Part III section 2 subclauses 2.9.1.2, 2.9.1.4 – 6, 2.9.4.3, 2.12.11, 2.14.2, 2.14.4, 2.15.1, 2.15.6-7, and 2.16.1).

1.2 Criteria

The certification criteria are requirements stipulated in the standard, certification process and requirements for CBs that an individual producer or a group of producers is required to implement.

1.3 Control points

In the certification context, the criteria or requirements are also known as control points.

1.4 Compliance with control points

Based on the importance of the criteria/ requirement, the degree of compliance required to be implemented by a producer is categorized as critical, major and minor. Critical requirements are those requirements that are required to maintain the integrity of the produce and failing to adhere to these requirements may result in serious food safety incidents because of a breach in food safety and product integrity. The requirements that are mandatory and must be followed are classified as major. Certain requirements laid down that are important but not essential depending upon the produce category may be classified as minor. The requirements categorized as critical or major, if not adhered to can result in failing to be certified. A producer needs to take immediate corrective steps to adhere to the requirements.

The levels of compliance needed are as mentioned under 1.5.

1.5 Compliance requirements (see also 2.9.4)

Critical – 100 percent compliance with all applicable critical control points is compulsory.

Major – 90 percent compliance with all of applicable major control points is compulsory.

Minor – 50 percent compliance with all applicable minor control points is compulsory.

These have been classified in the control criteria checklist at the end of each module in the GAP Standard section.

SECTION 2 CERTIFICATION PROCESS

2.1 Purpose – This section describes the process of certification under this GAP scheme (hereinafter referred to as the Scheme) and lays down the requirements to be followed in order to obtain, operate and maintain GAP certification.

2.2 Objective – The objective of this section is to define the certification process so that the certification bodies (CBs) follow the same process to ensure uniform applicability. This would enable the farmers to have an understanding of the certification process.

2.3 Scope – The scope of this section describes the role and responsibilities of various stakeholders involved in the process of certification in a structured manner. This shall define the requirements that needs to be adhered to by the CB and the applicant in order to achieve the certification.

2.4 Certification process – The general requirements to be met by both individuals and producers groups on-farm are described below.

2.4.1 Requirements common for individual and group farms are:

2.4.1.1 The certification process of this Scheme involves an initial approval followed by periodic (annual) surveillance in the farmer's field to check that compliance has been maintained after the first evaluation, based on the specified requirements in the standards and any additional certification criteria. This is applicable both to individual producers and in the case of group certification.

2.4.1.2 This Scheme focuses on farmers adhering to the requirements of the certification criteria; such adherence is validated through periodic visits.

2.4.1.3 The certification criteria are specified in the document "Part III Section 1. Certification criteria" of this document.

2.4.1.4 The certification process requirements are formulated in a manner that compliance with the certification criteria will result in the produce being compliant with the norms of the Scheme.

3.6 Requirements for GAP certification scheme: fruits and vegetables

In addition to the requirements specified in the GAP standards /certification criteria, the following requirements shall apply.

2.6.1 Individual farm certification

The details of the requirements to be met by an individual producer are given in Part 1 Standards for GAP: Fruits and Vegetables of this document. The focus is on the four

modules namely, Food Safety, Environment Management, Workers Healthy and Safety and Produce Quality and some common requirements at farm level given in the General Requirement Module (Module 5).

2.6.2 Group certification

A producer group may be defined as a group of two or more producers with a legal status or a natural group. In the case where the applicant is a producer group, each member of the group needs to implement the requirements as stated in the standard as for an individual farm. However, the group is also required to implement the requirements stated in the General Requirement Module that describes the requirement to be followed when producers come together and form a group.

Note: All producers – individual or group – need to comply with the requirements mentioned in the certification criteria and includes the standard (Part I Clauses 1.9.1 to 1.9.6 at farm level and group requirements as per 1.9.7 – 1.9.21), the certification process (Part III section 2 subclause 2.9.1.2, 2.9.1.4 – 6, 2.9.4.3, 2.12.11, 2.14.2, 2.14.4, 2.15.1, 2.15.6-7 and 2.16.1) and the rules for use of the certification mark (Part III Section 4 – 4.3.2, 4.3.3, 4.4.4-4.4.12 and 4.6).

2.7 Certification agreement – The certification agreement describes the terms and conditions that the producer is required to abide by after being granted certification. The agreed Farm Management Plan (FMP) shall also be part of the certification agreement between the producer and the CB. Since the producer uses the certification mark, he is required to pledge his commitment to implement the agreed FMP for ensuring the conformity of produce and processes to the certification criteria and the Scheme requirements on a continuing basis. The details of the requirements have been covered in Part III Section 3 Requirements for Certification Bodies (including Part III section 2 subclause subclause 2.9.1.2, 2.9.1.4 – 6, 2.9.4.3, 2.12.11, 2.14.2, 2.14.4, 2.15.1, 2.15.6-7 and 2.16.1). This document and the format for the certification agreement are also required to be available on the approved CB's Web site. The certification agreement shall also cover requirements with respect to use of certificates and marks of conformity of the produce by the producer.

2.8 Approval from the Scheme Owner for use of GAP certification mark(s) – A GAP certification mark is owned by the Scheme Owner. The rules for its use are given in Part III Section 4 of the Scheme.

2.9 CERTIFICATION PROCEDURE

2.9.1 Application for certification

2.9.1.1 The CB shall provide the prospective applicant producers with an up-to-date detailed description of the evaluation and certification processes and procedures, and the documents containing the requirements for certification, the applicants' rights and the duties of producers of certified produce (including fees to be paid by applicants and suppliers of

certified produce). These shall be consistent with the Certification Scheme offered by the CB as per its accreditation scope. Rights and obligations will include:

Rights

- right to obtain services from the CB in a timely manner;
- right to appeal against the CB's decision;
- right to apply for both individual and group certification but not for the same produce;
- right to cancel application with the CB or request temporary suspension; and
- right to change a CB provided corrective actions are taken and reply of cancellation received from the previous CB.

Obligations

- shall accept the auditing plan and requirements of the certification body (CB);
- may apply for both individual and group certification but these should not be for the same produce;
- shall treat the CB's decision as confidential;
- shall comply with GAP certification requirements as well as the CB provisions; and
- shall notify the CB of changes to the production status, e.g. name of produce, quantity of produce, inclusion or withdrawal of group member producer for producer group certification.

2.9.1.2 The information to be maintained for each producer shall include: the name, address, and contact details of producer; location of the farm; farm management plan; crops cultivated; crop sowing date; total extent of land and extent covered under produce; internal inspection date; name of the internal inspector; external inspection date; harvested quantity and dates. This information along with the application format shall be made available on the CB's Web site.

2.9.1.3 The CB may design its own application format for the Scheme; however this shall contain at least the following information:

- a. the general features of the package and practices also referred to as the management plan of the producer for cultivating fruits and vegetables, including his name and the address of its physical location; contact details; legal entity status (in case of group certification);
- b. the list of fruits and vegetables the applicant intends to cover under the Scheme, consistent with the requirements given in the certification criteria and the relevant sections of this document – the scope of certification shall be decided by the CB when reviewing the application;
- c. general information about the applicant package and practice, description of raw materials viz., fertilizers and plant protection material used and their suppliers, production processes, facility layout, its human and technical resources, accessibility to external resources – the information required shall be consistent

with the requirements stated in the standard/certification criteria and the certification process requirements; and

- d. the controls exercised by the applicant producer for ensuring produce conformity with the requirements described in the standard/certification criteria, including the farm management plan (FMP).

2.9.1.4 The applicant shall declare (in the form of an undertaking) whether it has been an applicant/certified under this Scheme with or by any other CB, and if yes, then shall provide the previous evaluation reports to the new CB. The CB may verify the information provided by contacting the previous certification body.

2.9.1.5 The applicant shall also declare any proceedings relating to its operations, any proceedings by any regulatory body or suspension/cancellation/withdrawal of any certification/approvals under any regulations or otherwise. Such declaration shall be a part of the undertaking mentioned in 2.1.3.

2.9.1.6 Certification is granted only against the current relevant certification criteria. The CB shall review all applications and ensure compliance with the relevant criteria.

2.9.2 Application review

2.9.2.1 The designated personnel of the CB shall undertake a review of the application received from the producer, as per its documented procedure. The review of the application shall cover the following aspects:

- a) the information about a producer and its facilities and the produce to be certified should be sufficient to enable the application review and the subsequent certification process to be conducted;
- b) any known difference in understanding between the CB and the applicant is resolved, including agreement regarding certification criteria;
- c) the scope of certification sought is clear and defined;
- d) the means are available to perform all evaluation activities;
- e) the certification body has the competence and capability to perform the certification activity; and
- f) the evaluation team, evaluator and the technical reviewer shall be competent for the certification scope applied for by the producer. This shall be done in accordance with the requirements specified in the document "Requirements for Certification Bodies (Part III Section 3)".

2.9.2.2 Based on the review of the application for certification, deficiencies observed, if any, shall be informed to the applicant within a reasonable time. Records of review shall be maintained.

2.9.2.3 In case the information about the applicant and the produce to be certified, as provided by the applicant, is not complete/sufficient for the purpose of conducting an application review then the CB will need to obtain additional information. The information thus received shall be recorded along with other information already received.

2.9.2.4 Only applications found to be complete and supported with all documents required shall be accepted. These shall be registered and, in order of receipt, issued with a unique identification number. Applications shall be acknowledged and records maintained.

2.9.2.5 Applications from producers who have earlier either misused the certification mark or have been implicated / convicted by the court, or whose earlier certificate was cancelled because of violation of terms and conditions/misuse of the GAP certification mark shall not be registered within one year of conviction/strictures by the court/cancellation of the certificate by any CB.

2.9.2.6 Applications from producers found to be misusing the certification mark while their application is being processed for grant of certificate, shall not be processed any further, and rejected after a due notice of 15 days. Fresh applications from the same producers shall be entertained only after a gap of one year and after the applicant provides a guarantee on a stamped paper of not indulging in such practices.

2.9.2.7 Requests for grant of certificates from ex applicants shall be processed like a fresh applicant and the entire procedure for grant of certificate shall be adhered to in accordance with the relevant clauses in the above sections.

2.9.2.8 The CB shall clearly identify the responsibilities and establish internal reasonable timelines for responding to enquiries from prospective producers, application review and feedback to producers as well as for registration of applications.

2.9.3 Evaluation

2.9.3.1 Pre-assessment or pre-evaluation – (optional)

The purpose of the pre-assessment is to see if the producer is ready for initial evaluation or assessment. It would include a review of documentation and verification of implementation of some or all of the GAP requirements – a sample audit.

2.9.3.2 Preparation and planning for evaluation

Prior to undertaking the site visit, the CB, through one or more persons, shall undertake certain off-site activities as part of the preparation and planning stage. These are:

- a. study of all the information received and request for additional information, if required;
- b. study of the farm management plan and the internal control system (ICS) in case of group certification as provided by the producer;

- c. based on the above studies, preparation of a checklist for requirements to be verified and evaluated during the farm evaluation; and
- d. preparation of an evaluation plan for farm evaluation.

2.9.3.3 Farm evaluation – The visit to the farm(s) of the producer applicant where the activities related to the cultivation of fruits and vegetables etc. to be covered under the scope of certification are being carried out is an important component of the evaluation activities. For the sake of uniformity, all site visits will henceforth be referred to as “farm evaluations” and the personnel involved as “inspectors” and “technical experts”. The farm evaluation shall be carried out by competent inspectors (evaluation team, where the competence is built in through use of both an auditor and a technical expert). The evaluator competence related requirement is described in the document “Certification body requirements”.

The basic purpose of this process step is to conduct an evaluation of all the information and to ascertain if all the process steps as described in the certification process leading to grant of certificate have been fulfilled and if the evaluation confirms the ability of the producer to produce in compliance with the requirements described in the relevant standard / certification criteria.

2.9.3.4 The objectives of the on-site evaluation are:

- a) to verify if the information given in the application regarding the information and the practices applied on-farm by the producer is correct;
- b) to verify compliance with the applicable regulatory requirements;
- c) to evaluate the adequacy and implementation of producers’ established systems especially in the case of group certification with respect to process requirements, if any, specified in the certification criteria and the certification process as relevant to the option chosen;
- d) to evaluate whether the controls over the production system as per the FMP in option 1 farms and group management in group certification including inputs used in farming practices along with traceability aspects have been identified and established in both the FMP and the ICS as submitted by the applicant and are appropriate and adequate for ensuring continued conformity with the “GAP Certification Scheme – Certification Criteria” and have been implemented appropriately as applicable; and
- e) to verify adequacy and implementation of the system for complaint redressal and means of communicating the relevant information to consumers in line with the requirements specified in the certification criteria, as applicable.

2.9.3.5 The evaluation shall ensure the following:

- a) the availability of all relevant infrastructure
- b) availability of facilities for complying with the requirements specified in certification criteria;
- c) the competence of producers to abide by the provisions of the applicable FMP;
- d) availability of competent and qualified personnel, as relevant;

- e) availability of adequate system for raw material inputs and other farm operations as per the requirements specified in finalized and agreed FMP and in compliance with the certification criteria;
- f) conformity of the produce and raw/intermediate materials wherever specified, with parameters/requirements of the standards/certification criteria;
- g) necessary documentation for proof of legal entity in case of producer group where certification is being sought;
- h) verification of implementation of corrective actions and closure of all non-conformities (NCs) raised; and
- i) any other requirements prescribed by the certification body.

2.9.3.6 Inspection time and timing

Inspection time

Minimum inspection time shall be as follows:

- for an operation without produce handling or on-farm packing – three hours on-site
- for an operation with on-farm packing – minimum six hours on-site
- for an operation with produce handling – minimum one working day (eight hours) on-site.

The minimum duration for quality management system audit for group certification is eight hours for a group with less than 50 members with one centralized packhouse.

Inspection timings

- The ideal timing for inspecting is during the time the crop is standing in the field and as close to harvest as possible so as to verify all control points at least once in two years based on records/evidence.
- Some control points will not be able to be inspected if the inspection is made before harvest of the registered crop, and as a result either a follow-up visit will be required, or proof can be submitted by the member grower. No certificate will be issued until all control points have been verified and closed. In the case of a registered farmer, if harvest has already taken place at the time of inspection, the farmer shall retain evidence of compliance of control points related to that harvest, otherwise it may not be possible to check some control points and certification is then not possible until the following harvest.

2.9.3.7 Calculation of evaluation time

The evaluation time is calculated as follows:

- For first evaluation – on site evaluation: at least one workday (eight hours).
- Evaluation preparation and report preparation time: at least one workday.

However, depending upon the farm management plan for first evaluation and the complexities in ICS evaluation and time required for their finalization, risk management, etc., additional evaluation time (off-site or on-site) in multiples of 0.5 workdays may be made,

after recording appropriate justification. In case the evaluation team consists of an auditor supported by a technical expert, then the workdays of the technical expert shall not be counted, i.e. the workdays of the technical expert have to be borne by the CB. The workdays for individual producers may be slightly fewer depending upon the requirements as specified in the certification criteria and the components thereof.

2.9.3.8 The CB shall have a plan for the evaluation activities to allow for the necessary arrangements to be managed. Timings and date of first site evaluations shall be fixed in consultation with the applicant ensuring that cultivation practices are on and the produce is in the field for witnessing during the planned evaluations. The duration and the plan for first farm evaluations shall be provided to the applicant.

2.9.3.9 The composition of the auditing team shall also be communicated to the applicant organization for identification of conflict of interest if any. If required by the producer, sufficient background information in respect of the evaluation team members shall be provided for this purpose. Any objections to the team by the applicant shall be examined on merit.

2.9.3.10 The CB shall ensure all necessary information and/or documentation is made available for performing the evaluation tasks.

2.9.4 Non-conformity (NC) – A NC is a deficiency observed with respect to the GAP standards/certification criteria and other Scheme requirements (CB requirements) and any deficiency observed in the FMP during the first evaluation. The applicant shall be informed of NCs in writing so that corrective actions can be taken.

2.9.4.1 Any NC observed during first and subsequent evaluations, shall be classified as critical, major or minor depending on their nature and severity.

- a) **Critical non-conformity** – A non-conformity is classified as critical when a specific control point that is critical to the integrity of the process or product of GAP fails to meet the stated requirement.
- b) **Major non-conformity** – A non-conformity is classified as major when it relates directly to the integrity of the farm produce and the producers inability to produce as per the certification criteria. A number of minor NCs under a particular section/module on the same aspect may be clubbed together and raised as a single major NC.
- c) **Minor non-conformity** – All other gaps and NCs are classified as minor. These shall generally be related to other implementation issues that do not directly affect either the safety of the produce or the producer's capability to produce conforming to the certification criteria.

2.9.4.2 In case of critical, major and minor NCs, the CB shall allow the producers a certain pre-determined time to carry out corrective actions or upgrade their system to a level that meets the Scheme's requirements.

2.9.4.3 In cases of all non-conformities, the producer shall carry out a root cause analysis and inform the CB of these along with correction and corrective actions, within a period of 15 days for critical, one month for major and three months for minor NCs. All NCs are required to be closed before the first certification is given through verification of the adequacy of the corrective actions. A corrective action is an action undertaken by the producer in order to comply with the requirement of the standard. All critical and major NCs, shall invariably require a follow-up on-site evaluation.

2.9.5 Evaluation report – For every evaluation an evaluation report shall be made. This shall provide clear evidence and conclusions about the fulfilment of the evaluation objectives as described above and shall contain sufficient detailed information regarding conformity with all the relevant certification requirements, including the standard and certification criteria. The report shall confirm the compliance of the producer as per the Scheme's requirements. The report shall confirm the final FMP as drawn up through observations made during the first evaluation visit and discussions with the applicant producer. In cases where some issues are observed in respect of the FMP submitted by the applicant then the issues shall be raised as an NC, clearly worded for the applicant to take appropriate actions based on which the final FMP can be prepared. However, it is preferable to finalize and approve the FMP. Once approved the FMP shall form a part of the evaluation report. Otherwise this will need to be done subsequently based on the closure of related NCs. The CB shall develop appropriate report format(s) and report writing guidance documents (please refer to Annex 3) to ensure that the report provides adequate and complete details for ensuring appropriate evaluation, review and decision-making in respect of grant of certification.

Records of evaluation along with all supporting documents and reports shall be retained.

2.9.6 Review

2.9.6.1 An independent review of the evaluation shall be carried out by person(s) having the appropriate competence. The responsibility for the review function, shall however be that of the CB.

2.9.6.2 The criteria for review based on the produce requirements as specified in the standards/ certification criteria and the certification scheme and process requirements shall be documented.

2.9.6.3 Any information on which a review and decision is based that comes from any source other than the evaluation process, for example complaints, information received from regulators, etc. shall be made known to the applicant or certified client (in case of surveillance) along with information on the evaluation process. The applicant or client shall be given the opportunity to comment on it.

2.9.6.4 NCs including those raised subsequent to on-site evaluation, which raise any doubt as to the conformity of the producer to the GAP Scheme must be corrected and corrective actions implemented and verified by the CB (through on-site visit, testing of fresh sample or

other appropriate forms of verification) before certification is granted. The NCs and their resolution shall be documented and made available for the purpose of review.

2.9.6.5 The records of review shall be retained and shall provide adequate confidence that all relevant aspects were examined prior to making recommendations.

2.9.6.6 The recommendations with respect to certification decisions, whether positive or negative, shall be justified and the CB shall document the basis for these decisions.

2.9.7 Certification decision

2.9.7.1 The certification decision shall be the sole responsibility of the CB and the decision shall be taken by the authorized person(s) or committee provided they have not been involved in the process of evaluation of the producer.

2.9.7.2 The CB shall grant certification to the producer after ensuring complete compliance with the standard (including requirements mentioned in Part I Clauses 1.9.1 to 1.9.6 at farm level and group requirements as per 1.9.7 – 1.9.21) and meeting the compliance requirement as indicated in certification criteria clause 1.5 and certification process including requirements mentioned in Part III section 2 subclause 2.9.1.2, 2.9.1.4 – 6, 2.9.4.3, 2.14.2, 2.15.1 and 2.15.6-7, 2.16.1 and 3 and all non-conformances have been closed. There shall be no conditional granting of certification to the producer.

2.9.7.3 Impartiality and absence of conflict of interest shall be ensured before entrusting the task of certification decision-making.

2.9.7.4 If, on the basis of the evaluation, the CB decides, not to grant certification, then it shall notify the producer of the decision not to grant certification, and shall communicate the reasons for the decision. If the producer expresses interest in continuing the certification process, the CB can resume the process for evaluation from the process as described above.

2.9.8 Certification documentation / certificate

2.9.8.1 On granting certification, the CB shall inform the producer and issue a certificate, uniquely identified, which shall include as a minimum the following information:

- a) the name and address of the CB and its accreditation body (if applicable);
- b) the name and address of the producer and the address of the physical location of the certified farm (including building and planting areas);
- c) a unique identification number that also helps in identifying and tracing the producer and producer group;
- d) the effective date (the date on which certification is granted, which shall not precede the date on which the certification decision was completed) and the expiry date of certification (validity is for a maximum of three years); the date of extending or renewing the certification, if applicable, shall also be included;
- e) the expiry date or recertification due date consistent with the recertification cycle;

- f) the scope of certification including produce categories certified and the certification criteria and the certification process (single producer or group certification) against which the certification has been awarded; reference to the certification criteria document shall include issue number and/or revision, used for evaluation of the certified producer; the details of produce categories – either fruits or vegetables or both – shall be included as an annex to the certificate/certification document or any other document intimating grant of certification; if the applicant seeks for group certification, an annex, in addition to the produce categories, shall also include the name of the farmers in the group;
- g) in the event of issuing any revised certification documents, a means to distinguish the revised documents from any prior obsolete documents; and
- h) the formal certification documentation shall include the signature of the individual(s) of the CB assigned such responsibility.

2.9.8.2 Formal certification documentation shall only be issued after, or concurrent with, the following:

- a) the decision to grant or extend the scope of certification (see 2.16) has been made;
- b) the certification requirements have been fulfilled;
- c) the certification agreement has been completed/signed and the contents of the certification agreements have been detailed in the document “Requirements for Certification Bodies (Part III Section 3 of this document) and are also required to be made available on the Web site of the CBs operating this Scheme, as well as in any information set provided by the CB to its prospective clients.

2.9.8.3 The certificate shall be valid for a maximum period of three years from the date of issue of certification subject to annual surveillance.

2.9.8.4 The producer shall be informed of the certification decision by the CB thereby authorizing the producer to use the certification mark. Simultaneously, the Scheme Owner shall be informed of the decision.

2.9.9 Directory of certified producers

2.9.9.1 The CB shall maintain and make publicly available on its Web site, a directory of valid certifications that as a minimum shall show the name, the certification criteria and scope of certification, geographical location and address and validity of certification for each certified producer.

2.9.9.2 The CB shall display suitably on its Web site the names of producers under suspension and those whose certificates have been cancelled.

2.9.9.3 The CB shall also have a provision and system for confirming validity of a certificate on request to any stakeholder.

2.9.5.1 The CB shall have a procedure for updating the information on its Web site.

2.10 Surveillance evaluation

2.10.1 Individual and group certification

The CB shall conduct yearly on-site surveillance evaluations with the last surveillance evaluation during the certification cycle being treated as the renewal evaluation. At the time of the certification audit, the CB shall draw out the dates for surveillance, which shall be conducted at the end of every year from the date of initial certification. The first two surveillance evaluations shall normally be held within the defined period and a delay of a maximum of one month beyond the due date shall only be allowed in exceptional circumstances. Any further failure to conduct surveillance shall result in suspension of the certificate.

The third evaluation (renewal evaluation) shall be planned and conducted well in advance so that the recertification decision is ensured within the validity period of the certificate. Under exceptional circumstances the decision may be overshoot by a maximum period of 15 days from the date of expiry. However, in all such cases, the CB shall ensure that the renewal evaluation visit and closure of any NCs shall take place before the expiry of the validity period of the certificate. Failure to ensure the above stipulations on account of delays from the certified client's side would generally result in non-renewal/expiry of the certificate. However, if because of a valid reason, which the client can justify to the satisfaction of the CB, the certified organization is not in a position to complete the process of implementation of corrective actions and their subsequent verification, then the CB may withhold the renewal of the certification till such time that all actions are completed and observed to be satisfactory. In such cases the renewal shall be affected from back date (namely date of expiry of the previous certificate) with the intervening period being treated as a suspension.

2.10.2 The surveillance/renewal assessments shall be computed based on the farm area. In group certification it shall also take into account the number of farmers in the group and the crops allotted based on risk management.

2.10.3 In addition to the planned surveillance assessments, as stated above, the CB may also carry out unannounced evaluations, for example when there are instances of failure of produce in terms of MRL or there has been a complaint against the certified farm. These shall primarily be carried out for investigating the reasons for failures. The CB may also carry out short notice evaluations for verification of corrective actions in case of customer complaints. The workdays for such evaluations may be decided by the CB and shall generally range between half a workday to one workday.

2.10.4 During the surveillance evaluation, the evaluator shall as a minimum check and report on the following:

- a) compliance with the requirements of the certification criteria and other requirements of the certification process;
- b) compliance with the FMP; the evaluators shall also ascertain the continued adequacy of the FMP in the event of any changes observed; and
- c) actions taken on discrepancies observed during the previous evaluation, failure of processes if any reported and informed to the producer.

2.10.5 If any NCs are observed, these shall be categorized as critical, major or minor as per the description given in clause 6.6.4.1. The NC report shall be provided to the producer in writing, generally on-site, for root cause analysis, correction and corrective action. Details of these shall be reported in the surveillance evaluation report.

2.10.6 In the event of NCs reported these shall be handled in the same fashion as described in clauses 6.6.4.3 above.

2.10.7 If any surveillance evaluation results in an unfruitful visit for any reason, e.g. that there is no crop for evaluation, the CB shall conduct another surveillance evaluation or equivalent sample may be drawn from the market. Such additional evaluations may be charged to the certified unit as decided by the CB.

2.11 Sanctions

2.11.1 The CB can impose sanctions on producers if corrective actions are not taken as indicated. Sanctions may comprise three sequential levels of actions:

- a. Warning – producer not correcting non-compliance on GAP requirements within prescribed period.
- b. Suspension – if producer does not take corrective action as indicated by the CB.
- c. Revocation or cancellation:
 - i. producer cannot correct NC partly or wholly within prescribed period and corrections are not completed within six months; or
 - ii. NC found on production process and it has been proved that production quality cannot be ensured and is certain to affect confidence in the product.

2.11.2 The CB shall issue instructions to the certified producer for suspension of certification for the crops certified when unsatisfactory performance as adjudged during the process of evaluation on account of any one or combination of the aspects stated below:

- i. non implementation of FMP, such as usage of pesticides that are banned by regulations, or implementing of process or practices that create serious doubts regarding quality (and safety) of produce going into the market;
- ii. repeated failure to take action by the producer, when serious gaps/non-compliances are observed in the FMP of the producer; and
- iii. repeated failure to take actions by the producer in respect of critical and major NCs, within the time limit prescribed or minor NCs raised on the same issue in three consecutive on-site evaluations.

2.11.3 The CB shall issue due notice of at least 15 days for suspension of certification to the producer. In case of detected frauds (deliberate attempt to circumvent/disregard the provisions of the Scheme requirements), if any, the notice may not be required.

2.11.4 On receipt of instructions for suspension of certification, the certified producer shall suspend the use of the certification mark under this Scheme on the farm produce grown by them under the provisions of the Scheme, with immediate effect. In case of suspensions because of a failure of samples, the producer shall not use the certification mark on the relevant produce. The producer shall be advised to undertake a root cause analysis and identify the necessary corrective actions for resolving the reasons for failure.

When certification is suspended, the CB shall require that, during the period of suspension, the certified producer makes no misleading claims to the existing and potential purchasers regarding the status of certification, and ceases to use the certification mark on the produce since the date of notification of suspension.

2.11.5 The information about the suspension and withdrawal/cancellation of certifications shall be made publicly available by the CB on its Web site.

2.11.6 The CB shall revoke suspension only when:

- a) corrective actions have been taken and verified by the CB; and
- b) farm confirms compliance with criteria requirements.

2.11.7 Suspension shall not exceed a period of six months. The producer's inability to resolve issues relating to suspension within this period shall normally lead to revocation or cancellation of certification.

2.12 Renewal of certification

2.12.1 The certification shall be renewed at the expiry of the three years validity period. However the renewal process and the renewal of the certification decision shall be done on or before the certificate expiration date. In order to ensure this, the CB shall send the renewal notice to the certified units at least four months prior to expiry of certificate validity period.

2.12.2 The producer shall apply for renewal in the prescribed format along with the fee, if any, prescribed by the CB at least three months before expiry of the certification.

2.12.3 The on-site surveillance evaluation conducted towards the end of third year and before the expiration of the certificate shall be considered as surveillance cum renewal evaluation. The objectives of this evaluation will be a combination of first evaluation and surveillance evaluations.

2.12.4 The CB shall review the performance of the certified unit that has sought renewal of the certification, with respect to compliance with certification criteria during the entire certification cycle, prior to a decision on the renewal of the certificate. The review shall essentially be based on the following:

- a) surveillance and renewal evaluation reports for the evaluations carried out during the certification cycle, the NCs raised and the satisfactory resolution of the issues raised and their effectiveness;

- b) handling and disposal of any non-conforming products;
- c) any suspension of certificate during the previous validity period;
- d) corrective actions taken;
- e) complaints, if any received; and
- f) adverse information from stakeholders and regulators, if any.

2.12.5 The review shall be conducted by competent person(s) designated for the job.

2.12.6 The decision for renewal of certification shall be taken by competent personnel authorized for the same, based on the satisfactory performance of the certified producers as revealed through the review process.

2.12.7 The CB shall not renew certification with conditions for compliance to be verified subsequently. There shall be no conditional renewal of certification.

2.12.8 When performance of the certified producer is not satisfactory, the CB shall withhold the renewal of the certificate clearly stating the reasons and giving time for certified producer to take effective corrective actions. The verification and decision on renewal should be taken within three months of the certification expiry date. In cases where it can be established that the performance is not satisfactory with respect to specific produce, the renewal may be decided for a reduced scope, covering those produce for which the performance can be demonstrated to be satisfactory.

2.12.9 The corrective actions shall be verified generally on-site unless the certification body can verify them off-site prior to considering renewal of the certificate. The justification for off-site review shall be recorded.

2.12.10 The renewal shall be affective from the date of the expiry of the previous certificate and the intervening period shall be treated as a period of suspension and clearly stated on the certificate. The farm unit shall not claim certification or use the certification mark during this period.

2.12.11 In case the certified producer does not complete satisfactory actions within three months, the certificate shall stand expired from the date of expiry of the previous period of validity.

2.12.12 When a certificate is not renewed, it shall expire at the end of the validity period.

2.13 Revocation/Cancellation

2.13.1 The CB shall revoke/ cancel the certificate when:

- a) the certified unit contravenes the terms and conditions of certification and provisions of the Scheme, such as repeated failures of samples, suspension of certificate beyond the stipulated period, inadequate corrective actions, lack of compliance with FMP, misuse of certification mark;

- b) there is repeated NC of certified farm with the certification criteria and corrective actions to ensure compliance are not appropriately taken, or if the proposed plan for corrective actions is likely to take considerable time, e.g. beyond six months for implementation;
- c) the certificate has remained under suspension (see clause 2.11.2 and 2.11.7 of this section) for more than six months; and
- d) Requested by the certified producer, for example if the operation(s) in the certified unit's premises can no longer be carried out because of spillages, run-off, pollution of water or land unit or natural calamities such as flood, fire, earthquake.

2.14 Changes affecting certification

2.14.1 When the GAP certification scheme introduces new or revised requirements both in standards/certification criteria and certification process requirements that affect the certified producer, the CB shall ensure these changes are communicated to all certified producers. The CB shall verify the implementation of the changes by its certified clients and shall take actions required by the Scheme.

2.14.2 The contractual agreement with the certified producer shall have a clearly defined clause that makes it mandatory for the certified client to agree to implement the changes in the processes and produce, necessitated by changes in the above requirements.

2.14.3 Following the decision on and publication of the changed requirements, the CB shall verify that each certified producer makes the necessary adjustments within a reasonable time, unless the Scheme Owner itself has decided the timelines. The verification may involve steps such as a farm visit, testing of samples in an independent laboratory, evaluation, review and decision and issuance of revised formal certification documentation to extend or reduce the scope of certification, etc. In case the changes necessitate changes in the FMP, the certification body shall also review and approve changes and make necessary revision in the certification agreement to reflect the revised FMP. Records shall provide justification for activities chosen for the purpose of verification of changes.

2.14.4 The certified producer shall also be bound by the certification agreement to inform the certification body about changes initiated by the client and which have the potential to affect the produce's compliance with the certification criteria. Based on the nature of the changes informed, the certification body shall decide the verification activities, which may include the activities as stated in the above clauses and all other process steps, as relevant.

2.14.5 The certification agreement between the CB and the producer shall have provision for adhering to the requirements of the certification process and meeting the provisions of the standard as a precursor to awarding certification.

2.15 Change of Location/Ownership/Name

2.15.1 The certified producer shall inform the CB of any change in the location or cultivation practices or any other on-farm processes.

2.15.2 On receipt of such information, the CB shall issue instructions to the certified producer for suspension of certification with immediate effect.

2.15.3 The producer shall be subject to an on-site evaluation and evaluation at the new site similar to an initial evaluation of an applicant.

2.15.4 If the evaluation is satisfactory, the CB shall transfer the certificate to the new location and the producer with its farm at the changed location shall be permitted to affix the certification mark for GAP produced therein.

2.15.5 The CB shall endorse the change of premises on the certificate.

2.15.6 In the event of change of ownership, the organization shall provide necessary documentary evidence. The new management of the organization shall submit its acceptance of the agreement with the CB, FMP and payment of fees. The same process shall be followed as and when an existing applicant undergoes a change in management. Such changes shall not call for a visit to the production site.

2.15.7 In case of group certification, when there is a change of name the producer shall inform the change in the name to the certification body supported with documentary evidence, and if satisfied the CB shall endorse the certificate in the new name.

2.16 Extension and/or reduction of scope – This shall cover the process for inclusion of additional crops/members as described in Part III Section 1 of the certification criteria document.

2.16.1 The certified producer shall be required to make a formal application for the purpose of inclusion of additional producer crops/ or extension or reduction of members as applicable in a group certification scenario. In case of group certification, e.g. if a producer has been certified for 15 farmers and wishes to include additional members under the same farm produce crops of fruits/vegetable or wishes to include additional members in his certification, he shall be required to apply for extension of scope. Along with the application the producer shall send information including a description of produce crops to be included, production processes in the form of a revised FMP in case of single or group certification. Additionally, in group certification, while the same applies for change or extension of crops as single farm certification, the additional provisions apply in case of inclusion of farmer members. The producer needs to provide details of additional members along with the controls exercised by the applicant producer for ensuring produce conformity with the requirements described in the FMP.

2.16.2 The CB shall study the information received and carry out an off-site desk review using a competent evaluator to assess if there are substantial changes in the FMP from the ones already certified. Based on this review, the CB shall decide on any of the following actions:

- a) conduct a visit for evaluation for the process step similar to that for the first assessment and based on the results of the evaluation decide on whether to

include the crops or the members in the case of group certification in the existing certificate of the producer; and

- b) in cases where there are no changes in the FMP and the farm operations, for example when the producer wishes to include an additional crop area, then the CB may make a decision based on the information supplied in the application itself and decide on whether to include the crops. However, the CB shall ensure that a sample from this additional area is visited during the next scheduled farm evaluation. In case the sample is observed to be non-compliant with the standard/ certification criteria in respect of farm operations then all the process steps described in the above clauses shall be carried out.

2.16.3 The CB shall clearly record the reasons and the justification for its decision to choose one of the three options as stated above.

2.16.4 The extension of scope shall be clearly mentioned in the certificate document along with its date of inclusion for avoiding any misrepresentation or misinterpretation. Irrespective of the date of inclusion, the validity of the certificate shall remain unchanged.

2.17 Certification fees

2.17.1 A fee may be charged to the producers for various activities of the certification scheme, without any discrimination between units, geographical location, and size of the unit etc.

2.17.2 The CB'S fee structure shall be publically accessible and shall also be provided on request.

2.17.3 The CB shall notify and obtain consent to the fee proposed to be charged from the applicant producer organizations prior to grant of certification. As and when the fee undergoes a change, the change shall be communicated to all including applicants and the farm units certified under this Scheme of certification for their acceptance.

2.18 Records

2.18.1 The CB shall have a documented policy and procedures in respect of the retention of records to demonstrate that all certification process requirements have been effectively fulfilled.

2.18.2 The certification related records shall be retained for two certification cycles. If the certification scheme involves complete re-evaluation of the produce within a determined cycle, records shall be retained at least for the current and two more cycles.

2.18.3 The CB shall keep records confidential. Records shall be transported, transmitted and transferred in a way that ensures that confidentiality is maintained.

2.18.4 The certification records shall include records for all producers, including all producers that submitted applications, and all producers evaluated, certified, or with

certifications suspended or withdrawn/ cancelled. The records of certification of producers shall include the following:

- a) application information and results of application review and evaluator/team competence records;
- b) evaluation planning and preparation records, evaluation plans and other related records;
- c) records of on-site evaluation reports and related records;
- d) final evaluation records, records of verification of correction and corrective actions;
- e) records of review and certification decisions; committee deliberations and decisions, if applicable;
- f) certification agreement;
- g) certification documentation (certificate etc), including scope of certification;
- h) records of complaints and appeals, and any subsequent correction or corrective actions;
- i) records of all surveillance activities carried out, suspension, withdrawal and consequent actions taken;
- j) related records necessary to establish the credibility of the certification, such as evidence of the competence of evaluators, technical experts, evaluators, review personnel, evaluators and decision-makers, continuation of certification, etc. as relevant; and
- k) any other records as relevant to the certification process, in order to provide confidence that the certification scheme requirements (Part III Section 2) were complied with.

4.19 Complaints and appeals

2.19.1 The CB shall have a documented procedure for handling of complaints and appeals. This shall include complaints from all stakeholders, especially its certified producers as well as customers of its certified/applicant producers. The procedure shall include the process steps for receiving and recording, evaluating and establishing validity of the complaints and appeals, investigating and making decisions on complaints and appeals. The process step shall also include the activities of root cause analysis, correction and corrective actions.

2.19.2 The procedure for handling complaints shall be made available to the public on the CB's Web site and shall be easily accessible.

2.19.3 Upon receipt of a complaint or appeal, the certification body shall confirm whether the complaint or appeal relates to certification activities for which it is responsible and, if so, shall address the complaint or appeal. The CB shall acknowledge receipt of a formal complaint or appeal.

2.19.4 The CB shall be responsible for gathering and verifying all necessary information (as far as possible) to progress the complaint or appeal to a decision.

2.19.5 If the complaint relates to a certified producer and the certified produce supplied by the producer, then the examination and evaluation of the complaints shall take into consideration the effectiveness and implementation of the producer's internal quality systems. The process of establishing validity of the certified produce, should generally involve processes such as conduct of additional surveillance activities – visit to certified producers' premises for special evaluation, testing and evaluation of certified produce including those picked up from the market, against which the complaint had been received, etc. The decisions on the complaint shall then be based on the result of additional surveillance activities.

2.19.6 The CB's complaint handling process shall document the actions to be taken by the CB as well as the certified producer, in case the certified produce against which the complaint was received was observed to be non-compliant with the specified requirements. Some of these actions/conditions shall also be included in the CB's legally enforceable contract with the producer.

2.19.7 The CB shall record and track complaints and appeals, as well as actions undertaken to resolve them.

2.19.8 The decision resolving the complaint or appeal shall be made by, or reviewed and approved by, person(s) not involved in the certification activities related to the complaint or appeal. To ensure that there is no conflict of interest, personnel (including those acting in a managerial capacity) who have provided any service for a producer, or been employed by a producer, shall not be used by the CB to review or approve the resolution of a complaint or appeal for that producer within two years following the end of the consultancy or employment.

2.19.9 Whenever possible, the CB shall give formal notice of the outcome and the end of the complaint process to the complainant.

2.19.10 In respect of appeals, the certification body shall ensure that the individual(s)/committee entrusted with handling the appeal and its resolution decision are independent of the persons involved in certification related recommendations and decisions and their position in the CB shall be such that it shall not be possible to influence their decision with respect to the subject of the appeal.

2.19.11 The procedure shall also have provision for giving a written statement to the appellant, of the appeal findings including the reasons for the decisions reached and also communicating to the appellant about the provision for giving an opportunity to formally present his or her case.

2.19.12 Based on the presentation made, the individual or a committee appointed for hearing the case shall make a final decision on the appeal and a formal notice of the outcome and the end of the appeal process shall be given to the appellant.

2.19.13 The CB shall take any subsequent action needed to resolve the complaint or appeal.

SECTION 3. REQUIREMENTS FOR CERTIFICATION BODIES

3.1 Scope

3.1.1 This document elaborates on the requirements specified in ISO/IEC 17065:2012, as applicable to the certification body operating the GAP certification scheme for agriculture produce and also specifies specific additional requirements that the CB operating this scheme will need to fulfil. It may be noted that there could be one or more certification body in a country.

3.1.2 The additional criteria described in this document shall form the necessary adjunct to the requirements prescribed in ISO 17065:2012 and will also need to be complied with by the certification body, in addition to the generic requirements prescribed in ISO 17065:2012 and the certification process requirements prescribed in Part III Section 2 of this document.

3.1.3 The clause numbers in this document are aligned with the main clause numbers of ISO/IEC 17065:2011 for the purpose of ease of usage. These are given in Appendix B and are adapted for the purpose of GAP implementation.

Additional requirements of certification bodies (CBs)

B 1 General requirements

B 1.1 Legal and contractual matters

B 1.1.1 Legal responsibility

B 1.1.1.1 In addition to the requirements specified in clause 4.1.1 of ISO/IEC 17065:2012 the following requirements shall also apply.

B 1.1.1.2 Certification bodies (CBs) that are part of government, or are government departments, shall be deemed to be legal entities on the basis of their governmental status. Such bodies' status and structure shall be formally documented and the bodies shall comply with all the requirements of this standard.

B 1.1.1.3 The accreditation and recognition shall be granted to a legal entity that can be legally held responsible for its work irrespective of whether the entire organization or a part of it performs the certification functions.

B 1.1.1.4 The CB shall be responsible for and shall retain authority for its decisions relating to certification. This includes the granting, maintaining, renewing, extending, reducing, suspending and withdrawing of certification.

B 1.1.2 Certification agreement

B 1.1.2.1 The CB shall have a legally enforceable agreement for the provision of certification activities to its client who shall be producers of fruits and vegetables either as a single entity or a group entity hereinafter referred as the producer. Certification agreements shall take into account the responsibilities of the certification body and its client.

B 1.1.2.2 The CB shall document clear instructions regarding appropriate use of the certification mark and for providing information about certification status by its clients. It shall also identify the aspects that would be considered as misleading and unauthorized as relevant to the relevant certification scheme. The certification agreement shall make appropriate cross references to the above document, so as to make it legally binding.

B 1.1.3 Use of certificates and marks of conformity

B 1.1.3.1 The following requirements are additional to those stated in clause 4.1.3 of ISO/IEC 17065:2012.

B 1.1.3.2 The CB shall ensure that the certification mark is affixed only to produce covered under the scope of the certificate. It shall also ensure that the size, colour of the certification mark is as prescribed by the GAP scheme. The CB should not allow the accreditation mark to be used on certified produce.

B 1.1.3.3 The CB shall have a documented procedure for dealing with instances of non-compliances with respect to the specified requirements for use and display of the GAP certification mark.

In case the CB operates more than one product certification scheme, then it may have a procedure specifying generic requirements common to all schemes and in line with the requirements of ISO/IEC 17065:2012 and the specific requirements as specified for the GAP scheme for farm produce.

B 1.1.3.4 If a CB incorrectly claims accredited status for certificates issued before appropriate accreditation has been granted, the accreditation body shall require it subsequently to withdraw them and also impose any other sanctions as deemed appropriate.

B 1.2 Management of impartiality: The CB needs to comply with the requirements specified in clause 4.2 of ISO/IEC 17065:2012. The following requirements shall also apply.

B 1.2.1 The top management's commitment to impartiality shall be demonstrated through:

- a) documenting the CB's policy on safeguarding impartiality and ensuring that it is understood at all levels of the organization by implementing good practices such as establishing a code of conduct and requiring internal and external personnel to abide by it;
- b) having a defined institutional structure and impartiality policy and procedures, appropriate implementation of this policy and procedures and operation and conduct of its activities and personnel;
- c) having a system that ensures appropriate management of conflict of interest for ensuring objectivity of its certification functions;
- d) taking action to respond to any threats to its impartiality arising from the actions of other parts of the organization, persons outside of the organization, subcontractors, related bodies or other bodies or organizations;
- e) maintaining a professional environment and culture in the organization that supports behaviour of all personnel that is consistent with impartiality; and
- f) making available to the public through its Web site, its policy on impartiality.

A 1.2.2 The CB shall have a system for disclosure and documentation of the types of activities carried out by its internal and external personnel and subcontractors in general and in particular regarding the designing of relevant product/process/service, consultation, internal evaluation/auditing, training, etc. The above information shall also be used for identification of actual/potential risks to impartiality.

A 1.2.3 When a relationship poses an unacceptable threat to impartiality (such as a wholly owned subsidiary of the CB requesting certification from its parent), then certification shall not be provided.

B 1.3 Liability and financing

B 1.3.1 The CB shall be able to demonstrate that it has evaluated the risks arising from its

certification activities and that it has adequate arrangements (e.g. insurance or reserves) to cover liabilities arising from its operations in each of its fields of activities and the geographic areas in which it operates.

B 1.3.2 The CB shall be able to demonstrate that it has a reasonable expectation of being able to provide and to continue to provide the service in accordance with its contractual obligations. The certification body shall also be able to provide sufficient evidence to demonstrate its viability, e.g. management reports or minutes, annual reports, financial audit reports, financial plans.

B 1.3.3 The means by which the CB obtains financial support shall be such as to allow the certification body to retain its impartiality.

B 1.3.4 In addition to the above, the certification bodies shall also demonstrate to the Impartiality committee, that initially, and on an ongoing basis, commercial, financial or other pressures do not compromise its impartiality.

B 1.4 Non-discriminatory conditions: The CB shall have means of demonstrating compliance to this requirements of ISO 17065:2012 (clause 4.4), through its policies and procedures as well as its actual practice.

B 1.5 Confidentiality: In addition to the requirements specified in ISO 17065:2012 (clause 4.5) the following shall apply:

B 1.5.1 The CB shall have a documented policy and mechanism to safeguard the confidentiality of information obtained or created during the course of certification activities. It shall also be part of the certification agreement.

B 1.5.2 Personnel, including any committee members, contractors, personnel of external bodies or individuals acting on the CB's behalf, shall keep confidential all information obtained or created during the performance of the certification body's activities. There shall be a mechanism such as obtaining signed confidentiality agreements for ensuring confidentiality.

B 1.5.3 The CB shall have available and use equipment and facilities that ensure the secure handling of confidential information (e.g. documents, records).

B 1.5.4 In case of transfer of certificate or application, when the client decides to move from one CB to another CB, the CB to which the client is now moving may ask the previous CB for information on the reasons for such movement or the performance of the client with respect to the certification requirements. Such information shall not be considered as confidential and the CB shall inform its client of this requirement, in advance, through agreements, etc.

B 1.6 Publicly available information

B 1.6.1 Making the information publicly available through the CB's Web site shall be the only means of meeting this requirement. The information provided shall be accurate, non-misleading and, where relevant, detailed enough for the reader to clearly understand.

B 1.6.2 The following information with respect to the GAP scheme shall be made publicly available on the CB's Web site:

- the certification processes, from application stage to the granting of certification including the evaluation processes; the system for maintenance of certification, including processes for surveillance, market sampling, recertification, scope extension and reduction, suspension and withdrawal – the information shall also cover the terms and conditions of certification and the use of certificates of GAP, as contained in the certification agreement;
- the specific rules and conditions for granting, for maintaining, for extending or reducing the scope of certification, for suspending, for withdrawing or for refusing certification;
- requirements of the GAP scheme, including the GAP certification criteria and application form shall be available to the applicant – the CB may also provide any other guidance documents on the certification criteria for the benefit of the applicant, as long as they are not advisory/consultative in nature;
- information about applications registered and certifications granted, suspended or withdrawn;
- on request from any party, the certification body shall provide the means to confirm the validity of a given certification and the provision for providing validity shall be made available on the Web site;
- a directory of valid certifications (please also see additional requirements given in the document “Certification Process (Part III Section 2)”); and
- a description of the rights and duties of applicants and clients, including requirements, restrictions or limitations on the use of the certification body's name and certification mark and on the ways of referring to the certification granted.

B 1.6.3 The CB shall have a procedure for frequent updating of the information on its Web site. The responsibilities for ensuring accuracy of the information made available on the Web site, ensuring frequent updates, etc. shall be documented.

B 1.6.4 The CB shall list out the sources of its finances.

B 1.6.5 The information about fees charged shall clearly provide the basis on which the fees are charged. It may be generic in nature; however it shall give some basic information about the CB's fee structure.

B 1.6.6 The information on the complaints handling process and the CB's procedure shall be directly available to the public, without the public having to go through layers of cross linkages.

B 1.6.7 Information exchange between a certification body and its clients

B 1.6.7.1 Information on the certification activity and requirements – The CB shall provide (and update clients on) the following:

- a) a detailed description of the initial and continuing certification activity, including the application, initial evaluation, surveillance evaluation, and the process for granting, maintaining, reducing, extending, suspending, withdrawing certification and recertification;
- b) the certification criteria for the GAP scheme;

- c) information about the fees for application, initial certification and continuing certification;
- d) the CB's requirements for prospective clients;
- e) documents describing the rights and duties of certified clients as well as obligations of the CB; and
- f) information on procedures for handling complaints (both by the certification body as well by the producer, in respect of complaints against certified produce) and appeals.

B 2 Structural requirements: All the requirements as specified in clause 5 of ISO/IEC 17065: 2012 shall apply and in addition the following requirements shall also apply.

B 2.1.1 The organization structure shall include structure of the parent body (legal entity) if separate from the department/division that offers certification.

B 2.1.2 It shall also include structure of the related departments in relation to the department offering certification services. In addition all requirements specified *vide* clause 5.1.2 of ISO/IEC 17065:2012 shall apply.

B 2.1.3 The CB shall identify and document all related bodies (separate legal entities) as well as other departments of the same legal entity and their activities and functions and their relationships with the CB when describing its organizational structure.

B 2.1.4 An organization chart shall be used for showing the structure, supported by the documented responsibilities and authorities for the functions described in the organization chart.

B 2.1.5 The Impartiality committee and any other committees involved in operation of the CB and the certification process shall also be shown as part of the organizational structure.

B 2.1.6 The identification of responsibilities, however done, shall clearly and unambiguously reflect the responsibilities for activities/functions as described *vide* clause 5.1.3 a) to n) of ISO/IEC 17065:2012.

B 2.1.7 The requirement specified *vide* clause 5.1.4 of ISO/IEC 17065:2012 shall cover the Impartiality committee and any other committees, if established by the CB for certification scheme development, planning for certification evaluation (sampling and determination), certification review and decision-making, appeals process, etc.

B 2.2 Mechanism for safeguarding impartiality

B 2.2.1 An impartiality committee with specific responsibility for safeguarding the CB's impartiality in its certification functions and for ensuring that the policy on safeguarding impartiality and related procedures and other systems are effectively implemented shall be the means of fulfilling this requirement.

B 2.2.2 The impartiality committee shall:

- a) assist the CB in developing the policies relating to impartiality of its certification activities;
- b) counteract any tendency on the part of a CB to allow commercial or other considerations to prevent the consistent objective provision of certification activities;

- c) advise on matters affecting confidence in certification, including openness and public perception;
- d) conduct a review, as least once annually, of the impartiality of the audit, certification and decision-making processes of the CB; and
- e) approve the conflict of interest analysis and the mitigation measures described in clauses 4.2.3 and 4.2.4 of ISO/IEC 17065:2012.

Other tasks or duties may be assigned to the committee provided these additional tasks or duties do not compromise its essential role of ensuring impartiality.

The composition, terms of reference, duties, authorities, competence of members and responsibilities of this committee shall be formally documented and authorized by the top management of the CB.

This committee shall meet regularly, at least once a year, and a complete record of the proceedings of this committee shall be maintained.

B 2.2.3 The mechanism shall be formally documented to ensure the following requirements specified in clause B.5.2.4 of this document.

B 2.2.4 The CB shall ensure that:

- a) the committee for safeguarding impartiality shall be separated from the management of the CB operations and established at the highest level within the organization, independent of its day-to-day operations;
- b) in the composition of the committee, the participation of key interested parties shall be ensured, with a representation of a balance of interests such that no single interest predominates – internal or external personnel of the CB are considered to be a single interest, and shall not predominate; and
- c) its chairman shall be a person independent from and external to the CB.

B 2.2.5 Impartiality committee meetings may be observed by the accreditation body's assessment teams as part of the CB's accreditation process.

B 2.2.6 Although every interest cannot be represented in the mechanism, a CB shall identify and invite significantly interested parties.

Such interests may include clients of the CB, customers of organizations whose management systems are certified, representatives of industry trade associations, representatives of governmental regulatory bodies or other governmental services, or representatives of non-governmental organizations, including consumer organizations.

B 3 Resource requirements

B 3.1 Certification body personnel

B 3.1.1 General

B 3.1.1 The CB shall have as part of its own organization, personnel with sufficient competence for managing the GAP scheme that it operates.

B 3.1.1.1 When determining the sufficiency of resources the CB shall also take into consideration the requirements with respect to technical personnel competent for the

development and establishment of the CB's internal systems in accordance with the GAP scheme requirements and for other operational functions such as application review, evaluation (all stages such as initial, final, surveillance), review and decision-making.

B 3.1.1.2 The CB shall employ, or have access to, a sufficient number of inspectors, including audit team leaders, and technical experts to cover all of its activities and to handle the volume of audit work performed.

B 3.1.1.3 The CB shall determine competency requirements (knowledge and skills required for different functions defined in the CB's structure) and describe the criteria in terms of education, qualification, experience, knowledge and skills, training, etc. These shall cover management as well as functions related to the certification process. These shall include the following:

- a) development and establishment of CB's internal system in accordance with the GAP scheme requirements;
- b) management of the certification activities;
- c) application review;
- d) evaluation (all stages such as initial, final, surveillance);
- e) undertaking audits – these shall cover inspectors, team leaders and technical experts as well as audit teams as a whole; and
- f) review and decision-making.

B 3.1.1.4 The activities as listed at B.3.1.1.4 – a), b), c), d) and f) shall essentially be carried out by the CB's internal resources. Internal resources include the following:

- a) regular employees;
- b) those employed on a long-term (one year or more) contract on a full-time basis; and
- c) those employed on a long-term contract (two years or more) on a part-time basis.

Individuals assigned to perform certification functions as stated above need not necessarily each have all the required competencies, providing the CB can demonstrate that it has the collective competence to perform those functions and that in individual cases an individual or a group of individuals having the required competence has performed the individual function. For example, the certification decision-maker may not have the required competence, but if an independent technical expert has reviewed the report the collective competence may be evident.

B 3.1.1.5 The CB shall also have processes for evaluating if the designated/to be designated persons have the necessary competence as described. Records shall show which personnel are designated as competent and the date of evaluation.

B 3.1.2 Competence of management and personnel

B 3.1.2.1 The CB shall have processes to ensure that personnel have appropriate knowledge of product certification, certification criteria, and relevant regulations and other related regulatory requirements as per the certification criteria including the package of practices and other requirements for the crops for which certification is being offered, food safety and hygiene requirements, produce quality, environment and social responsibility

requirements as per the certification criteria, etc. In short, the CB shall have processes to ensure that personnel have appropriate knowledge relevant to different levels as specified in the “Certification Criteria (Part III Section 1)” and the certification scheme and process related requirements as specified in “Certification Process (Part III Section 2)”.

B 3.1.2.2 The CB shall determine the competence required for each technical area required for the cultivation of fruits and vegetables and for each function in the certification activity as appropriate for the responsibilities handled. It shall also determine the means for the demonstration of competence prior to carrying out specific functions.

B 3.1.2.3 The functions described shall cover at least those listed in clause B.3.1.1.3 of this document.

B 3.1.2.4 The CB shall have access to the necessary technical expertise for advice on matters directly relating to certification for agricultural crops in which the certification body operates. Such advice may be provided externally or by CB personnel.

B 3.1.3 Competence requirements for personnel involved in certification activities

B 3.1.3.1 Application review function – The personnel performing the application review shall be qualified sufficiently for carrying out the application review function effectively in accordance with the certification process requirements. They will require an understanding of the certification criteria as relevant for the level applied for, the certification scheme and process requirements especially the requirements with respect to estimation of producer’s risk classification and of the requirements related to estimations of the number of workdays needed to conduct the audit, and knowledge of regulatory requirements.

B 3.1.3.2 Evaluation function – Competence of personnel assigned the evaluation function shall be the same as for an auditor in the technical area. Furthermore, the evaluator shall have lead assessor (team leader) status.

B 3.1.3.3 Technical review function – The technical review function shall be independent of audit and evaluation functions. The technical review shall consist of an independent and structured assessment to verify if all the GAP scheme related requirements have been fulfilled. The personnel (or group of personnel) making the certification decision shall be qualified for their understanding of the certification criteria, certification scheme and certification process requirements as relevant to the level being certified and the crop, regulatory requirements, and their ability to correctly grant or expand the scope of certification on the basis that the evaluation activities, information and results are a demonstration of fulfilment of requirements of the certification criteria in accordance with the certification scheme.

B 3.1.3.4 Decision-making – This function involves decisions related to granting, maintaining, renewing, extending, reducing, suspending or withdrawing certification and is an essential and authoritative function. The person(s), who take(s) the certification decision shall have a level of knowledge and experience sufficient to evaluate the information obtained from the evaluation process and the review recommendations. The review and the certification decision may be completed concurrently by the same person(s). In that case the reviewer cum decision-maker(s) shall have the combined competence of a technical reviewer and a decision-maker.

B 3.1.3.5 Competence of inspectors – Inspectors involved in audits of the producers shall be qualified on the basis of appropriate education, experience, training and skills to perform an assessment against the relevant GAP certification criteria. The generic requirements with respect to education, experience, training and skills, essential for initial qualification, are given below.

- a) Education – degree and/or post-secondary education in any stream of science relevant to agriculture, horticulture, soil sciences or agroforestry, sufficient to provide knowledge of basic microbiology, agronomy, plant entomology and pathology, and hygienic conditions in the production and processing of horticulture crops as relevant to the crops certified.
- b) Work experience – The auditor shall have at least five years of full-time equivalent post-qualification experience in horticulture or agriculture production or related activities, including at least two years of work experience in quality assurance within farm management, inspection or enforcement, or the equivalent. The number of years of total work experience may be reduced by one year if the auditor has completed appropriate post-graduate education relevant to the horticulture and/or agriculture sector.
- c) Training – successful completion of training in audit techniques based on ISO 17021/19011. Appropriate training in respect of agriculture, horticulture, soil sciences or agroforestry areas, agronomy, plant entomology and pathology, and hygienic conditions in the production and processing of horticulture crops. All qualified inspectors shall undergo all the training relevant to the criteria level they will be auditing in the role of sector (technical area) experts.
- d) Audit experience – experience of conducting audits/inspections in the farm sector. Experience of conducting audits of crop based systems shall also be considered. For initial qualification as an auditor for the GAP scheme at least 12 workdays of audits in the farm sector in at least four different organizations, as an observer/trainee, under the leadership of a qualified auditor, in the last three-year period shall be required. The time spent by the observer/trainee shall not count towards time spent on evaluation. Audit experience as stated in this clause is essential for all inspectors for the purpose of qualification. Additional audit experience of six workdays as trainee team leader, under the supervision of a qualified team leader shall be essential for qualification of an auditor as team leader. In this case the time spent by the trainee team leader as well as the qualified team leader may be counted.

B 3.1.3.6 The CB's system shall also define the qualification criteria for qualification of inspectors for different crops and it shall be based on the risk classification of the crops. The risk based classification system for crops shall ensure an adequate knowledge of products and processes in the technical area of the particular crop.

B 3.1.3.7 For horticulture crops the auditor qualification criteria shall ensure that the auditor acquires the necessary competence to audit a farm and has product and process knowledge through a combination of education and experience of at least five years in the relevant technical area.

B 3.1.3.8 For maintaining the qualification of the auditor, the certification body shall ensure that inspectors have performed a minimum of four audit workdays of farms per year.

B 3.1.3.9 Selection of audit team – The CB shall ensure the competence of the audit team. The audit team shall have appropriate knowledge of the crops and its agronomic practices. The combination of competences may be made up through different inspectors in the team as well as supplemented through the use of technical experts. However, every audit team shall have as a minimum of one auditor qualified for the technical area. The team shall be lead by the auditor having team leader qualifications.

B 3.1.4 Management of personnel involved in the certification process

B 3.1.4.1 The CB shall have defined and documented processes for recruitment selecting, training, formally authorizing personnel for functions such as application review, audits, evaluation and review/decision-making functions. Where applicable, the initial competence evaluation shall include a demonstration of applicable personal attributes and the ability to apply required knowledge and skills during actual performance of the activity, as determined by a competent evaluator observing the conduct of the activity or through a review of records, as relevant and applicable.

B 3.1.4.2 The CB shall have a documented procedure for carrying out an evaluation leading to the formal authorization of personnel for specific functions in the certification process. The evaluation process may include a combination of methods such as review of records, feedback, interviews, observations (of persons performing the task) and examinations. Depending upon the role and functions in the certification process the appropriate combination of methods shall be chosen.

B 3.1.4.3 In respect of audit personnel, the certification body shall have a process to achieve and demonstrate effective auditing, including the use of inspectors and audit team leaders possessing generic auditing skills and knowledge, as well as skills and knowledge appropriate for auditing in specific technical areas.

B 3.1.4.4 The CB shall ensure that inspectors (and, where needed, technical experts) are knowledgeable with respect to its audit processes, certification requirements (including GAP scheme requirements) and other relevant requirements. The CB shall ensure that the inspectors and technical experts have access to an up-to-date set of documented procedures giving audit instructions and all relevant information on the certification activities.

B 3.1.4.5 The CB shall use inspectors and technical experts and evaluators only for those certification activities for which they have the demonstrated competence.

B 3.1.4.6 The CB shall identify training needs and shall offer or provide access to specific training to ensure its inspectors, technical experts and other personnel involved in certification activities are competent for the functions they perform. The CB shall also have a process to achieve and demonstrate effective evaluation of the training process.

B 3.1.4.7 The CB shall ensure the satisfactory performance of all personnel involved in the evaluation and certification activities. There shall be documented procedures and criteria for monitoring and measurement of the performance of all persons involved, based on the frequency of their usage and the level of risk linked to their activities. In particular, the

certification body shall review the competence of its personnel in the light of their performance in order to identify training needs.

B 3.1.4.8 The documented monitoring procedures for evaluators shall include a combination of on-site observation, review of evaluation reports and feedback from clients or from the market.

B 3.1.4.9 The CB shall periodically observe the performance of each evaluator on-site. The frequency of on-site observations shall be based on need determined from all monitoring information available, but shall not be greater than once a year.

B 3.1.4.10 The CB shall make clear to each person concerned their duties, responsibilities and authorities.

B 3.1.4.11 The personnel records shall also include up-to-date information about their affiliations and any relevant consultancy that may have been provided, which may be considered as potential source of conflict of interest when assigning evaluation and other jobs to them. This is most relevant in respect of the external resources.

B 3.1.5 Use of individual external inspectors and external technical experts

B 3.1.5.1 The CB shall require external inspectors and external technical experts to have a written agreement by which they commit themselves to comply with applicable policies and procedures as defined by the CB. The agreement shall address aspects relating to confidentiality and to independence from commercial and other interests, and shall require the external inspectors and external technical experts to notify the certification body of any existing or prior association with any organization they may be assigned to audit.

Note: Use of individual inspectors and technical experts under such agreements does not constitute outsourcing as described under B.6.2.

B 3.1.5.2 The contract shall also require the personnel to declare proactively any affiliations (personal and professional) and other jobs/associations such as consultancy that may constitute a conflict of interest. It shall also include information about any other association that the individual feels has the potential to threaten their impartiality.

B 3.2 Outsourcing/subcontracting

B 3.2.1 The CB operating the GAP certification work shall not outsource any activity other than testing. Sending of samples to the CB's own laboratory shall also be considered to be subcontracting.

B 3.2.2 Test laboratory

B 3.2.2.1 In case it is required, the CB shall test all samples of produce for independent evaluation, in a laboratory accredited to ISO 17025 with relevant scope of accreditation, for ascertaining that they conform with the certification criteria.

B 3.2.2.2 The CB shall maintain a crop-wise/ test-wise directory of laboratories to which it intends to subcontract. It shall have a formal contract with the subcontracted laboratories for provision of competent services and also for ensuring impartiality and confidentiality.

B 3.2.2.3 If the CB uses an in-house laboratory (part of the same legal entity), it shall be ensured that there exists an adequate separation in terms of organization structure and reporting and defined responsibilities. It shall also ensure through the above means and policies and procedures that there is no possibility of compromising the independence of the laboratory personnel by bringing undue pressure on them.

B 3.2.2.4 The certification criteria against which the produce is to be tested shall be clearly identified and communicated to the testing laboratory. The sample(s) shall be so dispatched that they do not get damaged and/or contaminated, undergo deterioration, and the produce integrity is maintained. The CB shall have a documented procedure for drawing samples and their subsequent handling and dispatch to the laboratories. The procedure shall also include receipt of test reports and their evaluation.

B 4 Process requirements

In addition to the requirements specified in clause 7 of ISO/IEC 17065:2012 and the certification process for this Scheme the following requirements shall also apply.

B 4.1 All the Scheme specific certification process requirements as specified in this document shall be applicable.

B 4.2 For the purpose of operationalizing the requirements, the CB shall establish and document internal processes and procedures strictly based on the requirements specified in the document referred to above.

B 4.3 The CB shall also develop and document any additional guidance documents considered essential for uniform application of the certification criteria and certification/Scheme requirements by its personnel and for the purpose of knowledge sharing.

B 5 Management system requirements: The requirements to be met are specified in clause 8 of ISO/IEC 17065:2012.

SECTION 4 – REQUIREMENTS FOR ACCREDITATION BODIES (AB) FOR GAP

4.1 Scope

4.1.1 This document is guidance for the Scheme Owners to assist them in identifying an accreditation body (AB) for accrediting certification bodies operating the GAP certification scheme for agriculture produce in their respective countries and also specifies additional requirements that the accreditation body operating this Scheme shall need to fulfil.

4.1.2 This section explains the concept of accreditation and elaborates on the requirements specified in ISO/IEC 17011:2004, as applicable to the accreditation body that will be accrediting CBs operating the GAP certification scheme for agriculture produce and also specifies specific additional requirements that the AB operating this Scheme shall need to fulfil.

4.2 Need for accreditation and accreditation bodies

Accreditation has been defined in the International Standard for Conformity Assessment – General Requirements for Accreditation Bodies Accrediting Conformity Assessment Bodies, ISO/IEC 17011:2004 as “third-party attestation related to a conformity assessment body conveying formal demonstration of its competence to carry out specific conformity assessment tasks”.

Therefore, “accreditation” is an independent evaluation of conformity assessment bodies (in this case certification bodies) against recognized standards (international standards such as ISO 17065) to ensure their impartiality and competence.

The accreditation of CBs is done by an AB that either may be established in a country or in a region with the primary purpose of ensuring that conformity assessment bodies are subject to oversight by an authoritative body. ABs are evaluated by peers as competent, sign arrangements that enhance the acceptance of products and services across national borders, thereby creating a framework to support international trade through the removal of technical barriers.

4.3 International scenario on certification and accreditation

Conformity assessment procedures and accreditation are universally accepted mechanisms for quality and reliability of products and services. Article 6.1 of the 1994 Agreement on Technical Barriers to Trade *inter alia* states:

“Members shall ensure, whenever possible, that results of conformity assessment procedures in other Members are accepted even when those procedures differ from their own, provided they are satisfied that those procedures offer an assurance of conformity with applicable technical regulations or standards equivalent to their own procedures. It is recognized that prior consultations may be necessary in order to arrive at a mutually satisfactory understanding regarding, in particular:

6.1.1 adequate and enduring technical competence of the relevant conformity assessment bodies in the exporting Member, so that confidence in the continued reliability of their conformity assessment results can exist; in this regard, verified compliance, for instance through accreditation, with relevant guides or

recommendations issued by international standardizing bodies shall be taken into account as an indication of adequate technical competence.”¹

The leverage to the above clause is provided by ISO’s conformity assessment committee (CASCO), which is a policy-making body with the mandate for developing international standards related to conformity assessment. CASCO is also actively involved with the International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC) in developing international standards on conformity assessment. There are several international standards with respect to conformity assessment, certification, testing, accreditation, qualification and criteria of personnel working in the fields of conformity assessment etc. The standards relevant to accreditation bodies, certification bodies and laboratories are as follows:

- ISO/IEC17011 General requirements for accreditation bodies accrediting conformity assessment bodies.
- ISO 17025 Requirements for testing laboratories.
- ISO/IEC 17065 Requirements for bodies certifying products, processes and services.

The International Accreditation Forum (IAF) is the world association of conformity assessment accreditation bodies and other bodies interested in conformity assessment in the fields of management systems, products, services, personnel and other similar programmes of conformity assessment. Its primary function is to develop a single worldwide programme of conformity assessment that reduces risk for businesses and its customers by assuring them that accredited certificates may be relied upon. Accreditation assures users of the competence and impartiality of the body accredited.

The primary purpose of IAF is twofold. First, to ensure that its accreditation body members only accredit bodies that are competent to do the work they undertake and are not subject to conflicts of interest. The second purpose of the IAF is to establish mutual recognition arrangements, known as multilateral recognition arrangements (MLA), between its accreditation body members who reduce risk to businesses and their customers by ensuring that an accredited certificate may be relied upon anywhere in the world.

4.4 Requirements of an accreditation body: The ABs also need to meet the additional criteria described in this section that shall form a necessary adjunct to the requirements prescribed in ISO/IEC 17011:2004.

4.4.1 General requirement

1. The AB shall be in compliance with the requirements of ISO/IEC 17011, the international standard for accreditation bodies and be a signatory of the IAF.

2. The AB shall be a legal entity; it may be governmental or private – however, the increasing trend worldwide is that of a single national AB that is government owned (such as Bangladesh Accreditation Board in Bangladesh) or government sponsored (National Accreditation Board for Certification Bodies in India) or government endorsed (as in many European countries that have non-governmental ABs endorsed by countries as national ABs).

¹ See https://www.wto.org/english/docs_e/legal_e/17-tbt_e.htm#articleVI

3. The AB shall have authority and responsibility for decisions relating to accreditation, including the granting, maintaining, extending, reducing, suspending and withdrawing of accreditation.
4. The AB shall have a documented structure with defined roles and responsibilities for its personnel and committees, if any.
5. The AB shall be impartial. ABs are not expected to engage in consultancy or conformity assessment or any other activity that may have a bearing on their impartiality. They are also expected to be free from any conflict of interest in relation to their related bodies who may be linked to them by common ownership, management etc.
6. The ABs shall have adequate financial resources and provide for any liability that may arise.
7. The ABs shall maintain confidentiality in relation to any information obtained from the conformity assessment bodies they accredit.
8. The AB shall have procedures for internal audit, management review, corrective actions and preventive actions.
9. The AB shall have sufficient competent personnel (internal, external, temporary, or permanent, full/ part-time) having education, training, technical knowledge, skills and experience necessary for handling the type, range and volume of work performed; the AB shall also have a process for defining the competence of its assessors and other personnel involved in accreditation processes. It can use in-house or external personnel or even resort to outsourcing to augment its resources.
10. The AB shall to follow a defined assessment process covering document review, on-site office assessment including branches of the CB, if any, and witnessing of a sample of CB's audits/inspections and auditors/inspectors.
11. The AB shall have a system for handling complaints and appeals.

4.4.2 Additional requirement – criteria for selection of an AB by Scheme Owner

1. The Scheme Owner shall give first preference to the National Accreditation Body (NAB) that is present in the country. In case the AB, though present in the country, does not have any experience on GAP nor has a scheme for accreditation of CBs for GAP, the Scheme Owner may have a discussion with the AB to understand the timelines for creating a programme for GAP certification bodies.
2. However, if the NAB is not signatory to IAF MLA, it may pose a challenge in getting GAP certification accepted across borders and if the national GAP scheme is sought to be benchmarked with international schemes.

3. In case the country does not have an AB or the AB is not in a position to set up a scheme for GAP, then the Scheme Owner may either approve the CB (based on ISO 17065: 2012 and the additional requirements prescribed in Session 14) **OR** recognize an AB from outside the country. Various factors need to be considered before finalizing one or more ABs for accreditation of the CBs.

- i. The AB needs to be a member of the IAF and shall have signed the MLA for product certification as per ISO 17065 with the scope of any of the schemes pertaining to GAP. The reason being that the CB accredited by the AB which is an IAF member and also has signed an MLA on product certification will result in global acceptability of the certificates issued.
- ii. It is desirable that the AB has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with FoodPLUS GmbH for GlobalG.A.P which ensures it is competent in GAP accreditation and meets the above two conditions.
Note: In the event of the Scheme Owner considering benchmarking GAP to the globally accepted GLOBALG.A.P. Scheme, an AB that has signed the MoU shall allow the Scheme Owner to achieve its objective faster.
- iii. It is desirable that the AB has experience of handling CBs that certify GAP schemes. This experience will be handy in understanding the various requirements of the national GAP scheme while assessing the competence of the CB.
- iv. AB meets the technical requirements.
- v. The Scheme Owner may consider an AB based on the fee for accreditation charged by the AB.
- vi. The Scheme Owner may consider an AB based on the geographical proximity to its country.
- vii. The Scheme Owner may consider an AB based on the service delivery of the AB.
- viii. The Scheme Owner may consider an AB if it is felt that AB gives it a competitive advantage to enter an intended overseas market.
- ix. The Scheme Owner may consider an AB based on the duration of validity of accreditation it shall award to the CB.

4.5 The Scheme Owner may maintain a list of ABs that meet the above requirement for the CB to finalize the AB.

4.6 Change of AB – In the event that the CB wishes a change of AB either because the country now has its own AB or if there are service delivery or other issues, then it may switch to another AB with due consultation and as per the stated policy of the AB and IAF system.

ANNEXES

DOCUMENTATION NEEDED UNDER THE GAP SCHEME

Producer and producer group documentation

This list has been brought out under two main categories: First, the documents required to be maintained by the producer. Second, the documents required for a producer group that is desirous of implementing the Scheme. This is followed by formats that the producer needs to maintain.

Producer documentation

Notations	Name
DOCUMENTS	
01	Farm management plan
02	Affidavit (If subcontracted)
03	Land records
04	Farm map
05	General information
06	Crop plans
FORMATS	
01	Crop plan
02	Input purchase and stock record
03	Farm operating diary
04	Soil fertility management
05	Plant protection record
06	Storage areas
07	Produce sale/dispatch record
08	Label formats
REFERENCE DOCUMENTS	
	Regulation of country in relation to pesticide residues, heavy metal limits, any others
	Country standards on GAP
	Importing country regulations

Producer group documentation (In addition to producer documentation)

Notations	Name
DOCUMENTS	
01	Farm management plan
02	Quality manual
03	Affidavit for following GAP standards
04	Proof of land records for all the farmers
05	Farmer's farm diary
06	Agreement with the farmers
07	Overview/complete project map
08	Declaration of management representative
09	Consultant letter, if any
10	GM free declaration
11	List of farmers with area/crop/yield
12	Agreement of group certification service
13	Internal inspection audit checklist
14	Internal inspection report
15	Risk assessment report for each unit
16	Internal inspection audit checklist
17	Internal inspection report
18	Risk assessment report for each unit
19	Complaint log
20	Training records
21	Purchase order register
22	Sales register
23	Storage records
24	Traceability records

Producer group documentation (format)

A. Producer/ Producer groups

1. **Land record**⇒ Ownership documents / records
2. **Farm map**⇒ Showing boundaries, neighbouring plot details, permanent features of the farm, cropping pattern.
3. **General information**⇒ About the project, climate, rainfall, temperature, soil characteristics.
4. **Crop plans**⇒ Plans for the whole farm for one year including rotation crops, green manure crops mixed crops etc. Details shall include

Crop	Area	Variety	Planting material quantity	Planting time	Harvest time	Estimated yield

5. Input purchase & stock record – Shall have the following minimum details

Date of purchase	Particulars of the product	Quantity	Bill no.	Suppliers' addresses	Product date/ information received	Total stock

6. Farm operating diary

Date	Details of the operation	Plot/Field no.	Equipment's / Implements used	Supervisor remarks
	Eg. Sowing			

7. Soil fertility management record

Date	Product applied	Plot/Field no.	Quantity / rate	Supervisor remarks

8. Plant protection record

Date	Pest/ Disease observed	Rate and quantity of pesticide used	Other measures taken	Supervisor remarks

9. Storage areas on the farm for the inputs and products shall be recorded.

Store no.	Product stored / to be stored	Capacity of the store

10. Produce sales / dispatch record

Date	Particulars of the products	Quantity sold/ dispatched	Lot no.	Balance in stock	Mode of dispatch	Consignee

11. Labeling

Labels should be used on documents during transaction amongst legal entities and they shall contain:

- name and address of the producer;
- name of the product including reference to production method;
- lot no./ identification number; and
- stamp or any other marking by certified producer.

Scheme Owner documentation

Notations	Name
DOCUMENTS	
GAP DOC 00	Master list
GAP DOC 01	GAP scheme
GAP DOC 01A	Standard
GAP DOC 02	Governing structure and operational requirement
GAP DOC 03	ToR of various committees
GAP DOC 04	Sustainable business model
PROCEDURE	
GAP PROC 01	Safeguarding confidentiality by Scheme Owner
GAP PROC 02	Complaint and appeal handling procedure
GAP PROC 03	Monitoring and evaluation of Scheme procedure
GAP PROC 04	Approval of accreditation body
GAP PROC 05	Approval of certification body
FORMATS	
GAP FOR 01	Assessment report
GAP FOR 02	Assessment report – NC format
GAP FOR 03	Assessment report – Concern format
GAP FOR 04	Certificate format
CONTRACTS	
GAP CD 01	Logo use agreement
GAP CD 02	Confidentiality and NDA
REFERENCE DOCUMENTS: The country may include it in the listing	
	Country food regulations in relation to limits for heavy metals, pesticide residues, others
	ISO 17067:2013 “Conformity assessment — Fundamentals of product certification and guidelines for product certification schemes”
	ISO 17065 General requirements for bodies operating product certification systems

Certification body documentation

Notations	Name
QUALITY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM MANUAL	
GAP QMS. 01	Quality management system manual
POLICY	
GAP POL 01	Conflict of interest policy
GAP POL 02	Impartiality policy
ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS	
GAP AD 01	Master list of documents
GAP AD 02	Document control – revision status
GAP AD 03	Brief about country GAP programme
GAP AD 04	Opening meeting checklist
GAP AD 05	Closing meeting checklist
GAP AD 06	Responsibility and competency of programme staff
GAP DOC 01	GAP scheme
GAP DOC 01A	Standard with Annex 1
CONTRACTS	
GAP CD 01	Sub contract agreement
GAP CD 02	Observer – conditions
PROCEDURES	
GAP PROC 01	Document control
GAP PROC 02	Internal audit
GAP PROC 03	Management review
GAP PROC 04	Certification decision
GAP PROC 05	Complaints and appeals
GAP PROC 06	Impartiality committee and risk analysis
GAP PROC 07	On-hold, suspension, withdrawal, termination
GAP PROC 08	Process of certification
GAP PROC 09	Risk assessment matrix
GAP PROC 10	Training of personnel

Notations	Name
GAP PROC 11	Non conformance handling procedure
GAP PROC 12	Updating publicly available information
GAP PROC 13	Preventive and corrective action
EXTERNAL DOCUMENTS	
The country may include any external documents in the listing	
WORK INSTRUCTIONS	
GAP WI 01	Certification timelines
GAP WI 02	Group certification
GAP WI 03	Farm documents to be ready before audits
GAP WI 04	Agreement for group certification
GAP WI 05	Documents required for group certification
GAP WI 06	Use of certification mark
GAP WI 07	On-hold, suspension, withdrawal, termination
FORMATS	
GAP FMT 01	Attendance record
GAP FMT 02	Audit plan
GAP FMT 03	Internal audit checklist
GAP FMT 04	CAR form
GAP FMT 05	Internal audit report
GAP FMT 06	Application and proposal for certification
GAP FMT 07	Field specification
GAP FMT 08	GAP management requirement checklist
GAP FMT 09	FSM module checklist
GAP FMT 10	EMM module checklist
GAP FMT 11	WSHM module checklist
GAP FMT 12	PQM module checklist
GAP FMT 13	GR module checklist
GAP FMT 14	GMO
GAP FMT 15	File review
GAP FMT 16	Certification decision
GAP FMT 17	On-hold, suspension, withdrawal, termination
GAP FMT 18	Appeals form
GAP FMT 19	Confidentiality agreement
GAP FMT 20	Standard updating

Notations	Name
GAP FMT 21	Off-farm input permission
GAP FMT 22	Certification committee meeting
GAP FMT 23	Status of conformance
GAP FMT 24	GAP certificate format
GAP FMT 25	Certification agreement
GAP FMT 26	Certification report

Accreditation body documentation

Notations	Name
DOCUMENTS	
01	Quality manual
02	Accreditation criteria for product certification bodies
03	Accreditation procedure for product certification bodies
04	Accreditation procedure for GAP certification scheme
05	Conditions for use of accreditation symbol or logo
06	Complaints procedure
07	Appeals procedure
08	Assessor code of ethics
09	Structure and role of committees (including their terms of reference)
10	Document control procedure
11	Procedure for internal audit
12	Procedure for management review
13	Criteria for assessors, experts and other staff
14	Procedure for maintenance of records
15	Procedure for confidentiality
16	Assessment process
17	Witness assessment process
18	Establishing new schemes
19	Procedure for preventive action
20	Assessment reporting

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