



Sustainability Standard

Sustainable Food Group Sustainability Standard™ Internal Management System Checklist For Group Certification

*Used in conjunction with
Sustainable Food Group
Sustainability Standard v1.5*

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Sustainable Food Group
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Question Number	Question	Minimum requirement of IMS?	Available Answers	Notes
1	LEGALITY, ADMINISTRATION AND STRUCTURE			
1.1	Legality			
1.1.1	Is production currently certified under any other program(s) addressing elements of sustainable agriculture and requiring an on-site audit? (Informational only, answer will not affect score.)		Y/N	
1.1.2	Has the legal entity been granted the legal right to carry out agricultural production and/or trading, and be able to legally contract with and represent the producer members/production sites?		Y/N	
1.1.3	Does the legal entity not operate more than one QMS per crop and per country?	Minimum requirement	Y/N	
1.2	Producers and Production Sites			
1.2.1	Requirements for producer members in producer groups.			
1.2.1.1	Are there written signed contracts between each producer and the (group's) legal entity?		Y/N	
1.2.1.2	Do the contracts include following information:			
1.2.1.2a	Producer group name and legal identification?		Y/N	
1.2.1.2b	Name and/or legal identification of the producer ?		Y/N	
1.2.1.2c	Producer contact address?		Y/N	
1.2.1.2d	Details of the individual production sites, including certified and non-certified products (the contract may refer to the producer group's internal register for this information)?		Y/N	
1.2.1.2e	Details of area (crops) or tonnage (livestock and aquaculture) (the contract may refer to the producer group's internal register for this information)?		Y/N	
1.2.1.2f	Producer commitment to comply with the requirements of the Sustainability Standard?		Y/N	
1.2.1.2g	Producer agreement to comply with the group's documented procedures, policies, and where provided, technical advice?		Y/N	
1.2.1.2h	Sanctions that may be applied in case of Sustainability Standard and any other internal requirements not being met?		Y/N	

1.2.1.2i	Signature of producer and group representatives.			
1.2.1.3	Are the producer group registered members legally responsible for their respective production sites?			
1.3	Producer and Site Internal Register			
1.3.1	Is there a register maintained of all group member producers and/or of all the applicable sites used for production in accordance with the Sustainability Standard?	Minimum requirement		
1.3.2	Requirements for producer groups:			
1.3.2.1	Does the register at least contain the following information for each producer:			
1.3.2.1a	Name of the producer?			
1.3.2.1b	Name of contact person?			
1.3.2.1c	Full address (physical and postal)?			
1.3.2.1d	Contact data (telephone number, e-mail and fax number, if available)?			
1.3.2.1e	Other legal entity ID (VAT Number, ILN, UAID, etc.) where required for the country of production as published in the General Regulations Part I, Annex I.2?			
1.3.2.1f	Products registered?			
1.3.2.1g	Details of the individual production sites and their location, including certified and non-certified products?			
1.3.2.1h	Growing/production area and/or quantity for each registered product?			
1.3.2.1i	Certification body(ies) if a producer makes use of more than one CB?			
1.3.2.1j	Producer status (internal status as a result of the last internal inspection: approved, suspended, etc.)?			
1.3.2.1k	Date of internal inspection?			
1.3.2.2	Are those producers of the legal entity who do not apply to be included in the Sustainability Standard group certification listed separately? NOTE: This list is for management purposes within the producer group, and the disclosure of its contents externally			

	is not required, unless it is needed for clarification of any issues raised for example on the effectiveness of the producer group's quality management system.			
2	MANAGEMENT AND ORGANIZATION			
2.1.1	Is the internal management system (IMS) in place sufficiently robust and does it ensure that the registered producer members comply in a uniform manner with the Sustainability Standard requirements?		Y/N	
2.2	Structure			
2.2.1	Does the structure enable the appropriate implementation of the IMS across all registered producer members and production sites?		Y/N	
2.2.2	Is the organizational structure of the group documented and includes individuals responsible for:			
2.2.2a	Managing the IMS?	Minimum requirement	Y/N	
2.2.2b	The internal second-party audits of each producer member (i.e., internal auditor)?	Minimum requirement	Y/N	
2.2.2c	The internal audit of the IMS, and verifying the second-party audits of producer members? Is there at least one person in the IMS structure who is responsible and able to train the internal auditors and producers?	Minimum requirement	Y/N	
2.2.2d	Technical advice to the group?		Y/N	
2.2.2e	Does the management give internal auditors and inspectors sufficient authority to make independent and technically justified decisions during the internal controls?		Y/N	
2.3	Competency and Training of Staff			
2.3.1	Are there defined and documented qualification requirements and training for key staff managing the IMS?		Y/N	
2.3.2	Does the management ensure that all personnel with responsibility for compliance with the Sustainability Standard are adequately trained and meet the defined qualification requirements?		Y/N	
2.3.3	Is internal auditor competence (as set out in the Auditor Requirements section of the General Regulations checked by the management?		Y/N	
2.3.4	Where the internal auditor does not have the necessary sustainability background and/or training, but only IMS training/experience, does another		Y/N	

	person with these qualifications (and identified in the IMS) form part of the “audit team” to perform the approval of the producers/production sites inspections?			
2.3.5	Are records of qualifications and training maintained for all key staff (managers, auditors, inspectors, etc.) involved in compliance with Sustainability Standard requirements to demonstrate competence?		Y/N	
2.3.6	Do the internal auditor(s) undergo training and evaluation (auditor calibration) to ensure consistency in their approach and interpretation of the standard (e.g. by documented shadow audits)?		Y/N	
2.3.7	Is there a system in place to demonstrate that key staff are informed and aware of developments and legislative changes relevant to the compliance to the Sustainability Standard?		Y/N	
3	DOCUMENT CONTROL			
3.1.1	Does all documentation relevant to the operation of the IMS for the Sustainability exist? Does the documentation include, but is not limited to:	Minimum requirement	Y/N	
3.1.1a	Policies and procedures?	Minimum requirement	Y/N	
3.1.1b	Internal audit procedures and forms?	Minimum requirement	Y/N	
3.1.1c	Relevant external standards, including the current Sustainability Standard normative documents?	Minimum requirement	Y/N	
3.1.2	Are policies and procedures sufficiently detailed to demonstrate compliance of the requirements of the Sustainability Standard?	Minimum requirement	Y/N	
3.1.3	Are policies and procedures available to the relevant staff and producer group registered members?	Minimum requirement	Y/N	
3.1.4	Is the content of the policies and procedures documents reviewed periodically to ensure that it continues to meet the requirements of the Sustainability Standard and those of the applicant?	Minimum requirement	Y/N	
3.1.5	Are relevant modifications of the Sustainability Standard or published guidelines that come into force incorporated into policies and procedures documents within one year?	Minimum requirement	Y/N	
3.2	Document Control Requirements			

3.2.1	Is all documentation reviewed and approved by authorized personnel before issue and distribution?			
3.2.2	Are all controlled documents identified with an issue number, issue date, review date, and appropriately paged?			
3.2.3	Are any changes in these documents reviewed and approved by authorized personnel prior to its distribution? Wherever possible, is the explanation of the reason and nature of the changes given?			
3.2.4	Is a copy of all relevant documentation available at any place where the IMS is being controlled?	Minimum requirement		
3.2.5	Is there a system in place to ensure that documentation is reviewed and that following the issue of new documents, obsolete documents are effectively rescinded?	Minimum requirement		
3.3	Records			
3.3.1	Are records kept for a minimum of 3 years?	Minimum requirement		
3.3.2	Are all records genuine, legible, stored and maintained in suitable conditions, and accessible for inspection as required?	Minimum requirement		
3.3.3	Records that are kept online or electronically: If a signature is required in electronic records, is there a password or electronic signature available that ensures the unique reference and authorization of the person signing? If a written signature of the responsible person is needed, is this present? Are the electronic records available during the CB inspections and are back-ups available at all times?			
4	SECOND-PARTY PRODUCER AND PRODUCTION SITE AUDITS			
4.1.1	Are audits carried out at each registered producer (and corresponding production sites) at least once every three years against all the relevant Sustainability Standard Questions and using the Audit Guidelines?	Minimum requirement		
4.1.2	Are internal auditors independent of the area being inspected, i.e., are not inspecting their own daily work?			
4.1.3	Are new members of the group always internally audited and approved prior to them entering into the internal Sustainability Standard register?	Minimum requirement		
4.1.4	Are the original audit reports and notes maintained and available for the certification body inspection?	Minimum requirement		

4.1.5	<p>Does the audit report contain the following information</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identification of registered producer and production site(s)? • Signature of the registered producer or production site responsible? • Date of the audit? • Auditor name? • Audited products? • Evaluation result against each Sustainability Standard Question? • Details of any non-compliances identified and time period for corrective action? • Audit result with calculation of compliance level? • Duration of the audit? 	Minimum requirement	Y/N	
4.1.6	Does the IMS team make the decision on whether the producer is compliant with the Sustainability Standard requirements, based on the audit reports presented by the auditor?	Minimum requirement	Y/N	
5	NON-COMPLIANCES, CORRECTIVE ACTIONS, AND SANCTIONS			
5.1.1	Are there documented procedures to handle non-compliances and corrective actions which may result from internal or external audits, customer complaints or failures of the IMS?	Minimum requirement	Y/N	
5.1.2	Are the corrective actions following non-compliances evaluated and a timescale defined for action?	Minimum requirement	Y/N	
5.1.3	Does the IMS have the ability to sanction, i.e., suspend or remove, a producer that does not resolve corrective actions within the appropriate timeframe?	Minimum requirement	Y/N	
5.1.4	Does the applicant have mechanisms in place to notify the Sustainability Standard approved certification body immediately of suspensions or cancellations of registered producers or production sites?	Minimum requirement	Y/N	
5.1.5	Are records maintained of all sanctions including evidence of subsequent corrective actions and decision-making processes?	Minimum requirement	Y/N	

5.1.6	Does the IMS include a process to ensure that product does not meet criteria for certification is not labeled as certified?	Minimum requirement	Y/N	
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