IFS Food

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Standard for assessing product and process compliance in relation to food safety and quality

VERSION 7

OCTOBER 2020

ENGLISH

Contact details of the IFS offices

BRASIL | AQUIDAUANA
IFS Office Brasil
Rua Antônio João 800
79200-000 Aquidauana/MS Brazil
Phone: +55 (0)6 79 81 51 45 60
Email: cnowak@ifs-certification.com

CHILE | SANTIAGO CHILE
IFS Office Chile
Av. Apoquindo 4700, Piso 11,
Las Condes, Santiago, Chile
Phone: + 56 27 77 61 53
Email: ifs-chile@ifs-certification.com

CHINA | SHANGHAI
Man Po International Business Center Rm 204,
No. 660, Xinhua Road, Changning District,
Shanghai 200052, China
Phone: +86 1 80 19 98 94 51
Email: china@ifs-certification.com
Email: asia@ifs-certification.com

COLOMBIA | BOGOTA
IFS Colombia
Calle 124 No. 7 – 35 Ofc 701
Edificio 124 Points Bogota, Colombia
Email: ifs-colombia@ifs-certification.com

FRANCE | PARIS
IFS Office Paris
14 rue de Bassano
F-75016 Paris
Phone: +33 (0)1 40 76 17 23
Email: ifs-paris@ifs-certification.com

GERMANY | BERLIN
IFS Management GmbH
Am Weidendamm 1 A
D-10117 Berlin
Phone: +49 (0)30 72 61 053 - 74
Email: info@ifs-certification.com

ITALY | MILAN
IFS Office Milan
Federdistribuzione
Via Albricci 8
I-20122 Milano
Phone: +39 02 89 07 51 50
Fax: +39 02 6 55 11 69
Email: ifs-milano@ifs-certification.com

POLAND | WARSAW
IFS Office Central & Eastern Europe
ul. Serwituty 25
PL-02-233 Warsaw
Phone: +48 6 01 95 77 01
Email: ifs-poland@ifs-certification.com

USA | CANADA
IFS Technical Support
Pius Gasser
Email: gasser@ifs-certification.com

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Members of the IFS Extended Core Group

Alexandra Weber	Hochland Deutschland GmbH, Germany
Almudena Hernandez	AENOR, Spain
Andrea Artoni	Conad Soc. Coop., Italy
Dr. Andrea Niemann-Haberhausen	Hygenius/1st Solutions CTC, Germany
Cristina Diez	Palacios Alimentación, Spain
Fayçal Bellatif	Eurofins certification, France
Dr. Gereon Schulze-Althoff	Tönnies Lebensmittel GmbH & Co KG, Germany
Dr. Jörg Klinkmann	August Storck KG, Germany
Jürgen Eichmann	Kaufland Warenhandel GmbH & Co. KG, Germany
Kathrin Edler	Wirtschaftskammer Österreich, Austria
Massimo Ghezzi	Carrefour Italia – GS SPA, Italy
Sabrina Bianchini	DNV GL Business Assurance Italia S.r.l., Italy
Stephen Thome	Dawn Food Products, USA
Ute Pieper	METRO AG, Germany

Members of the IFS International Technical Committee

Andrea Artoni	Conad Soc. Coop., Italy
Fayçal Bellatif	Eurofins certification, France
Sébastien Bian	Groupe Casino, France
Sabrina Bianchini	DNV GL Business Assurance Italia S.r.l. , Italy
Cristina Diez	Palacios Alimentación, Spain
Andreas Dörr	Coop Genossenschaft, Switzerland
Jürgen Eichmann	Kaufland Warenhandel GmbH & Co. KG, Germany
Dr. Jean Charles Gander	Migros-Genossenschafts-Bund, Switzerland
Marion Giere	TÜV Nord Cert, Germany
Almudena Hernandez	AENOR, Spain
Dr. Horst Lang	Globus SB-Warenhaus Holding GmbH & Co. KG, Germany
Maria Lopez de Montenegro	DIA, Spain
Alberto Peirò	Mercadona, Spain
Ute Pieper	METRO AG, Germany
Christophe Quéré	SILL Entreprises, France
Charlotte Rosendahl	Rewe Group, Germany
Dr. Jürgen Sommer	Freiberger Lebensmittel GmbH & Co. KG, Germany
Giovanni Sorlini	INALCA SPA, Italy
Stephen Thome	Dawn Food Products, USA
Lucia Tortoreto	Coop Italia Società Cooperativa, Italy
Claudio Truzzi	METRO Italia (on behalf of Federdistribuzione), Italy
Bert Urlings	Vion Food Group, Netherlands
Karin Voß	EDEKA ZENTRALE AG & Co. KG, Germany
Michael Zschocke	Rewe Group, Germany

IFS Team

Laura Baasner	Standard Management/Project Manager
Helga Barrios	Head of Academy/Standard Manager
Tina Brune	Director Risk Management
Sybil-Marie Deinhard	Quality Assurance Manager
Chryssa Dimitriadis	Head of Standard Management/Standard Manager
Julia Deroche	Academy Project Manager
Julia Füllenbach	Technical Manager - Risk Management
Pius Gasser	Representative North America
Lea Gauter-Korkis	Team assistance - Auditor Management/Certification Body Management
Anne Kathrin Gönner	Senior IT Project Manager
Lena Hoth	Marketing Manager
Umut Karaduman	Technical Manager - Risk Management
Seon Kim	Shop Manager
Thomas Klose	Senior Quality Assurance Manager
Christin Kluge	Senior Quality Assurance Manager
Carmen Lützenberg	IT Support Manager
Jennifer Mannweiler	Technical Manager - Certification Body Management
Marek Marzec	Representative Central Eastern Europe (CEE)
Britta Müller-Wahl	Director Auditor and Certification Body Management
Thomas Neuhaus	Deputy Director IFS Quality Assurance/Integrity Program
Caroline Nowak	Representative Brazil
Daniela Poblete	Director IFS LATAM and Standard Manager
Lalaina Randriamanantsoa	Senior Quality Assurance and Technical Manager
Irmtraut Rathjens de Suster	Senior Quality Assurance Manager
Benjamin Rosenthal	Technical Manager - Auditor Management
Nevin Rühle	Director Business Development
Stefanie Sattler	Operative Manager Quality Assurance
Nadja Schmidt	Technical Manager - Auditor Management
Ilona Schrecker	Senior Quality Assurance Manager
Joachim Schulz	Director Quality Assurance/Integrity Program
João Ricardo Stein	Standard Manager - Senior Project Manager
Beata Studzinska-Marciniak	Standard Manager
Cheryl Sullivan	Senior Communication Manager
Torben Suerborg	Academy/Junior Technical Manager
Beatriz Torres	Senior Quality Assurance Manager
Stephan Tromp	Managing Director
Esther Tromp-Koppes	Senior Communication Manager
Serena Venturi	Academy/Senior Technical Manager
Nataša Vunduk	Team Assistance - Standard Management
Alexandra Sasha Wagner	Operational Manager Quality Assurance
Michaela Zakorova	IT Support Manager
Nicole Zilat	Team Assistance

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0 Introduction

0.1 History of the International Featured Standards

In 2003, the German retail federation – Handelsverband Deutschland (HDE) – and its French counterpart – Fédération des Entreprises du Commerce et de la Distribution (FCD), drew up a common food safety and quality standard to enable the assessment of food suppliers. The assessment provided a uniform approach towards food suppliers. This was the first variant of the IFS Food Standard, designated to certify suppliers producing private label food products for retail.

IFS Management GmbH stands for International Featured Standards and is a company owned by FCD and HDE. It encompasses a package of global safety and quality standards and programs that provide transparency and comparability along the entire post-farm supply chain. IFS Standards are applicable to a variety of operations and activities in the food and non-food sector. All IFS Standards follow a risk-based approach, which gives users the flexibility to implement the requirements into their business based on the specific risks in regard to the products and processes.

The IFS Food Standard is recognised internationally by the Global Food Safety Initiative (GFSI). It is built upon general aspects of a food safety and quality management system. However, the main emphasis is to instil confidence in the products and processes, meaning that safety, quality, legality and compliance with specified customer requirements are ensured via an on-site evaluation and documentation review and inspection.

The IFS Food Standard version 7 has been revised by the following international working groups: Extended Core Group, National Working Groups, International Technical Committee and the IFS Technical Team Working Group. Representatives of retailers, industry, food services and certification bodies were part of these outstanding working groups that combined input from Europe, North and South America and Asia.

It will be possible to perform IFS Food v7 Assessments from 1st March 2021. From 1st July 2021 IFS Food v7 will be mandatory.

0.2 IFS Objectives, mission and vision

The aim of IFS Food Certification is to assess whether the processing activities of a manufacturer are able to produce products that are safe, legal and in compliance with customer specifications. That is why both product safety and quality are essential components of all IFS Standards. The IFS Assessment is product and process focussed and ensures that the development of high-quality products is assured through correspondingly functioning processes.

IFS Standards are uniform global safety and quality standards that provide transparency and comparability along the entire post-farm supply chain. In this way, IFS strives to meet all the challenges of globalization, in addition to the constantly growing significance of the private labels the retailers are responsible for. An IFS certification enables the reduction of costs of long repetitive audits and additionally supports company management by means of uniform reports and a modern, user-friendly database.

The mission of IFS clearly states that IFS Standards go beyond product safety with the aim to "deliver trusted products", which fulfil the expectations of the buying company. With the objective that an IFS Certificate demonstrates that the company has implemented a functional food safety and quality management system, IFS together with its huge network is continuously increasing and optimising its portfolio of standards, assessment protocols and supporting tools and documents. Therefore, IFS has defined "Providing trusted standards and services to cooperate within the supply chain to improve product integrity" as its goal for today and for the future. Continuous improvement is not only the objective of certified companies; it is also applicable to IFS.

0.3 Coverage of the IFS Food Standard

The IFS Food Standard is applicable to food product manufacturers and can only be used for food processing companies and/or companies that pack loose food products.

For more details on the IFS Assessment scope, see chapter 2.2, Part 1.

For clarification of the scope determination between IFS Food and other IFS Standards, see ANNEX 1.

0.4 Content of the IFS Food Standard

The content of the IFS Food Standard is laid out as follows:

Part 1 – IFS Food Certification protocol

Part 2 – List of IFS Food Assessment requirements

Part 3 – Requirements for accreditation bodies, certification bodies and auditors

Part 4 – Reporting, auditXpressX™ software and IFS Database.

The IFS Food Standard is accompanied by another normative document, the IFS Food Doctrine. The IFS Food Doctrine provides additional rules and clarifications on the interpretation of some IFS Food requirements. Both normative documents shall be implemented following the defined date of implementation after publication. Each IFS Database user will receive notifications via the IFS Database in case of any new publication, review, applicability and/or amendments of current and potential new normative documents.

0.5 Review of the IFS Food Standard

The IFS Technical Team and its working groups need to demonstrate control over the content and quality of the IFS Food Standard and review it annually, to ensure its compliance with their requirements. The working groups are composed of all participants involved in the assessment process: the representatives of retailers, industry, food services and certification bodies. The objective of the working groups is to share experiences, discuss and decide on changes or alignments to the IFS Food Standard, the requirements of the Assessment report and training needs.

PART 1
IFS Food Certification protocol

0 Purpose and content

This part provides a detailed description of procedures to be followed before, during and after an IFS Food Assessment. Moreover, it explains the principles of the IFS Food Certification process, including requirements to be applied by assessed companies and certification bodies.

1 The IFS Food Certification process

Companies are required to prepare well in advance for an IFS Food Certification, which comprises of the different steps that are displayed in ANNEX 2.

The IFS Assessment is a crucial part of the certification process, as the company and its production processes will be challenged against all specified requirements laid down in Part 2, in order to assess whether the products and production processes comply.

As an IFS certification is a product and process certification, an IFS Assessment is always focussed on the following fundamental points:

a) Product and process based approach

IFS Food Certification is always specific to one production site. All products and processes of the relevant production site shall be included in the scope of the IFS Food Assessment.
During the IFS Food Assessment, the auditor shall collect objective evidence to evaluate the compliance of the products and the operating processes with the Assessment requirements (see Part 2), based on risk based chosen product sample(s) by following the assessment trail. This always includes the assessment of compliance with customer related specification(s) and the legal compliance of the products, depending on the country of production and the country of destination.

The IFS Assessment trail: emphasis on collecting evidence to assess product(s) and related operating processes:

- **Risk based product sampling:** the use of relevant product samples (sampled by the auditor on-site at the beginning or in advance of the Assessment) is a vital element and allows the IFS Auditor to follow a uniform path by conducting the on-site evaluation and documentation and record review and inspection, in order to obtain all necessary evidence. In addition, auditors shall perform a traceability test on the sampled product(s) during the Assessment.

  Note: IFS has published Guidelines (e.g. IFS Auditor Guideline, IFS Good Assessment Practices (GAP) Guideline), which provide further information on topics to be checked and/or requested from the assessed company during the IFS Food Assessment.

- **Overall on-site evaluation:** at least 50% of the total IFS Assessment duration shall be allocated to the on-site evaluation (within the production areas of the physical site) in order to allow the auditor sufficient time to comprehensively audit and inspect the products and the processes. For further information, see the IFS Food Doctrine.

  The on-site evaluation of the production site shall include (but may not be limited to) the following areas:

  - Production processes,
  - Receipt, storage and dispatch areas,
  - Good Manufacturing Practices (GMP), including maintenance, hygiene, pest control and cleaning and disinfection activities,
  - Product development,
  - On-site laboratory and/or maintenance facilities,
  - Staff and sanitary facilities,
  - External areas.
- **Operating process evaluation:** whilst observing and following running production lines, the IFS Auditor shall collect information on key process parameters, such as critical control points (CCPs) and control measures as well as their monitoring in order to cross-check them with the HACCP plan information. She/he shall also observe and interview employees, inspect product and technology characteristics, take further samples for cross-checking, review recipes used during the manufacturing process, observe actual finished product dispatch or raw material delivery and assess the implemented food safety and quality management system in practice.
- **Documentation and record review and inspection:** The on-site evaluation is followed by a comprehensive documentation and record/review, including cross-checking of related documents. This part of the Assessment aims at verifying the information collected from the on-site evaluation and the evaluation of further requirements.

The above-mentioned activities are important parts of the assessment trail, in which auditing and inspection techniques are applied alternately by the auditor, in order to evaluate the production site's compliance in depth.

b) Auditor qualification

The IFS Auditor's specific expertise is the crucial basis for the Assessment of the production site. Having IFS Auditors approved for specific product and technology scope(s) is vital to guarantee a high degree of quality and reproducibility of the Assessment findings. For more information, see Part 3.

c) Annual certification cycle

The production site will go through a full IFS Food Certification process including a comprehensive IFS Food Assessment every year. This includes the assessment of the full IFS Food checklist (Part 2) and the verification of corrective actions from the last IFS Assessment, if applicable. For more information about the certification cycle, see chapter 4.3, Part 1.

d) Certification by certification bodies accredited to the ISO/IEC 17065:2012 norm

Reliability of the certification is guaranteed through accredited, internationally recognised, independent, third-party certification bodies. In addition to the accreditation, the certification bodies shall have signed a contract with IFS Management GmbH and shall comply to the specific rules described in Part 3.

e) Surveillance and harmonised rules by the IFS Standard owner

As part of the Quality Assurance activities, IFS has implemented procedures for the surveillance of the performance of IFS approved certification bodies, IFS Auditors and IFS certified companies: the IFS Integrity Program ensures the quality and the integrity of the implementation of IFS Standards. The different measures are undertaken following a risk based approach as well as the management of complaints which have been raised by stakeholders. The company shall be informed by its certification body about the procedures and rules of the IFS Integrity Program. For more information about the Integrity Program, see chapter 5, Part 1.

2 Before the IFS Food Assessment

Before starting the certification process, the company shall read the current versions of the two (2) normative documents: the IFS Food Standard and the IFS Food Doctrine.

In order to prepare the initial Assessment, the company may perform a voluntary pre-Assessment to evaluate its current status and level. The pre-Assessment cannot include any recommendations and a different auditor shall perform the pre-Assessment to the one who performs the subsequent IFS Assessment.

2.1 Making a contract with a certification body

In order to undertake an IFS Food Assessment, the company shall appoint an IFS approved certification body, accredited to the ISO/IEC 17065:2012 norm for the IFS Food Standard. The list of all IFS international certification bodies that have a valid contract with IFS Management GmbH is available by country on the IFS Website (www.ifs-certification.com).

Making a contract with a certification body is an important step, therefore the company shall ensure that the following items are addressed:

a) Contract

A contract shall exist between the company and the certification body, detailing the scope of the Assessment, the duration and the report details. It shall also contain the mandatory notification from the company of changes that may affect their ability to conform to the certification requirements.

The Assessment scope shall be agreed between both parties before the Assessment takes place. For further information regarding determination of the Assessment scope, see chapter 2.2, Part 1 and ANNEX 3.

The contract shall make a clear reference to the IFS Integrity Program and shall also mention that information about the company and its employees is stored in the IFS Database in line with the General Data Protection Regulation. For additional information about the IFS Integrity Program, see chapter 5, Part 1.

b) Communication with the certification body concerning the detailed activities of the production site

To assist the IFS Food Auditor in preparing for the Assessment, the company shall clearly inform the certification body of the following topics:

- All products on-site and related processes covered by the scope of the IFS Food Assessment, including decentralised structures.
- Cases where parts of the production activities or products are outsourced to a third-party on behalf of the IFS Food certified company.
- Overview of the exported products, including the different destination countries where the products are sold to.
- Under exceptional circumstances, any request for exclusion of some product groups. This will be carefully verified by the certification body in order to review if the exclusion is possible.
- Evaluation of the history of certification status of IFS or any other GFSI recognised standards, for example type of certification/scope, last unannounced assessment, if a certificate has been suspended in the past, etc.

For additional information about outsourced processes and exclusions, see chapter 2.2.1, Part 1 and ANNEX 4.

c) Notifications to the certification body

During the certification cycle, the senior management of the company shall ensure that the certification body is informed in due time about any changes that may affect the company's ability to conform to the certification requirements (e.g. recall, alert on products, changes in organisation and management, important modifications on the products and/or the production methods, changes in contact address and production sites, new address of the production site, etc.). The details shall be defined and agreed between both parties. As required in Part 2, requirement 1.2.6: for specific situations (in case of product recall(s), product recall(s) and/or withdrawal(s) by official order concerning food safety and/or food fraud reasons or any visit from health authorities which resulted in notifications and/or penalties issued by authorities), the certification body shall be informed within three (3) working days.

d) Language of the IFS Food Assessment

The IFS Food Assessment shall be carried out in the working language of the production site. If there is a need for translation (for limited defined situations), the certification body shall provide an interpreter not affiliated with the company as explained in the IFS Food Doctrine.

2.2 Scope of the IFS Food Assessment

IFS Food can only be applied when a product is "processed" or where there is a hazard of product contamination coming from primary packaging.

For clarification of the scope determination between IFS Food and other IFS Standards, see ANNEX 1.

Certification is always site-specific in relation to the actual processing activities of the site and cannot be applied to different sites or locations under one certification.

IFS established a unique classification system, based on product scopes and processing steps (technology scopes), which allows various combinations, depending on the products and technologies used by the production site subject to certification.

Product scopes (from 1 to 11) and technology scopes (from A to F) shall be used to determine the Assessment scope. They will be indicated on the IFS Food Certificate and in the IFS Food Assessment report.

The Assessment scope shall indicate the assessed product scopes and technology scopes as laid down in ANNEX 3.

Example: for a company producing ice cream, the Assessment scope shall make reference to product scope 4 (dairy) and technology scopes B (pasteurization), D (freezing/cooling) and F (mixing/packaging). Further technology scopes may be added or deleted, depending on the detailed process(es) of the company.

A table with examples of products and their allocation to the relevant product scopes is available on the IFS Website ("IFS product examples chart" document).

The scope of the Assessment shall include the full activities of the company, including all production lines and products manufactured by the production site. The agreed scope shall be mentioned by the auditor and agreed upon during the opening meeting of the IFS Food Assessment.

The description of the process(es)/product(s) in the scope of the Assessment report and on the certificate shall be clear and unambiguous. General explanations e. g. production of "meat products" are not allowed, as this does not provide sufficient information. In such cases, further information is necessary, for example:

- The different types of products (e.g. production of "fermented sausage, brewed sausage, cooked sausage, cooked and raw cured ham"),
- The type of packaging materials (e.g. "packaged in foil (vacuum or modified atmosphere)").

Reference to product certifications or labels that are under specific regulations (e.g. Protected Designation of Origin (PDO), Protected Geographical Indication (PGI), Organic, etc.) shall not appear in the scope on the IFS Food Certificate, in order to avoid confusion on the scope of the IFS Food Assessment and certification. If the production site asks for the visibility of such status, a reference can only be made in the report. For further information and examples about the Assessment scope, see the IFS Food Doctrine.

The Assessment shall be specific to the production site where all the processing of the product(s) is undertaken. Where decentralised structures exist and the Assessment of a certain location is insufficient for gaining a full overview of the company's processes, then all other relevant facilities shall also be included in the Assessment. Full details shall be documented within the Assessment report. For more information about different types of production sites and information to be provided in the Assessment report and certificate, see chapter 2.2.2, Part 1.

The exclusion of production process(es), including storage and transport, is not allowed.

Exclusion of product(s) is in general not allowed, but may be accepted under the following specific conditions:

- Products are not customer branded products.
- The certification body shall fill in the questionnaire provided by IFS (see ANNEX 4) and confirm whether an exclusion is possible.
- The auditor shall check if defined exclusions are relevant and in line with the questionnaire during the Assessment.
- This shall be justified and documented, in both the Assessment scope of the report and the certificate.

2.2.1 Outsourced processes and IFS Food Assessment scope

A partly outsourced process is defined in the IFS Food Standard as a production step or part of a production process (including primary packaging and labelling) that is carried out off-site by a third-party on behalf of the IFS Food certified production site. This also includes processes which are partly outsourced by a sister company within the same company group.

When the assessed site has outsourced part(s) of the production process, control over such processes shall be ensured in order not to compromise food safety and product quality. The auditor shall evaluate whether these are controlled.

The following requirements shall apply for the management of partly outsourced process(es) also described in Part 2 (requirements 4.4.6, 4.4.7 and 4.4.8):

- A written contract shall be in place, covering the partly outsourced processes, describing any arrangements including in-process controls, sampling and analyses.
- If the supplier(s) of these partly outsourced processes is/are neither certified to IFS Food nor other GFSI recognised food safety certification standard, a documented supplier audit shall be performed by an experienced and competent person and shall cover at least the requirements related to food safety, product quality and authenticity.
- In the Assessment report of the assessed site (assessment overview): a detailed description of the partly outsourced processes and related certification status of the appointed third-party shall be provided. If the appointed third-party is IFS Food certified, their COID (IFS identification code number) shall also be mentioned.
- On the certificate of the assessed site the following sentence shall be added to the Assessment scope, beneath the description of products and processes: "Besides own production, the company has partly outsourced processes."
- Storage and/or transport activities carried out by a third-party are not considered as partly outsourced processes and shall be evaluated according to the relevant chapters of the IFS Food checklist (4.14 and 4.15), especially to the requirements 4.14.6 and 4.15.7.
- If the partly outsourced processes concern freezing and/or thawing activities only, an IFS Logistics certification or any other equivalent GFSI recognised food safety certification of a third-party can also be accepted.
- Rules regarding partly outsourced processes apply to both customer branded products and the company's own branded products.
- If the requirements for partly outsourced processes are not fulfilled, this may lead to a deviation or a non-conformity for the IFS Food assessed production site.

A fully outsourced product is a product manufactured, packaged and labelled under the own company brand or customer brand by a different company than the assessed one.

A traded product is a product manufactured, packaged and labelled by and under a different company name to the company being IFS Food certified.

Fully outsourced products and traded products are not covered by the IFS Food Certification but shall be described in the certificate (Broker certification status by writing the sentence: "The company has own broker activities which are/are not IFS Broker/other GFSI recognised standard certified") and in the company profile section of the Assessment report.

It is recommended that these activities are certified to IFS Broker or any equivalent GFSI recognised food safety certification standard based on the ISO/IEC 17065:2012 norm (e.g. a combined IFS Food/IFS Broker Assessment may be performed, see ANNEX 1).

2.2.2 Realisation of the IFS Food Assessment in the case of different types of production sites

The IFS Assessment is production site specific: one production site is subject to one Assessment and one certificate.

IFS has defined the following four (4) types of production sites:

1) Single production site

2) Multi-location production sites

3) Multi-legal entity production site

4) Production site with decentralised structure(s).

1) Single production site:
A single production site is a site which is not centrally managed by a head office/central management, has only one legal entity and no decentralised structure(s). Such site shall have one Assessment, one COID and one certificate.

2) Multi-location production sites:
Multi-location production sites refer to a company with multiple production sites at different locations, which may have a head office/central management. Following rules apply in these two (2) cases:

a) Company with head office/central management

a[1]) A company with a head office/central management and additional processing activities shall be assessed and subjected to an own IFS Food Certificate and Assessment report.
If the head office/central management does not have processing activities but is assessed, it cannot be subjected to an own IFS Food Certificate and Assessment report. In both cases the following rules apply:

- The Assessment of the head office/central management shall always take place before the Assessment of each production site.
- The centrally managed processes, as well as the outcome of the Assessment from the head office/central management, shall be described in the Assessment report of each production site.
- Each site shall be assessed separately, within a maximum period of twelve (12) months from the head office/central management Assessment. All Assessments shall be performed under the responsibility of one certification body. Each site shall get an individual certificate and report.
- All KO requirements shall be assessed at all production sites, even if some of them are (partly) managed at the head office/central management.
- In the Assessment overview of the Assessment report from each production site, both Assessment dates of the respective production site and head office/central management shall be provided.
- All COIDs of the production sites linked to the head office/central management shall be mentioned in each Assessment report. If a non-conformity has been raised during the Assessment of the head office/central management, all assessed production sites are also affected and the certificates of these production sites shall be suspended.

After a positive follow-up Assessment of the head office/central management, suspension of certificates of the production sites can be lifted. Depending on the type of non-conformity which has been issued in the head office/central management, a new Assessment of the production sites may also be necessary.

a[2]) If the head office/central management does not have processing activities and is not assessed, the company shall ensure that all necessary information and responsible personnel are available from the head office/central management (when necessary), to ensure that the auditor can assess centrally managed processes properly during the Assessment of each production site (e.g. a representative from the head office/central management attends the Assessment of the production sites, head office/central management documents are available on-site at production sites, etc.). This shall be defined by the certification body based on information provided by the company, before the Assessment takes place.

b) Company without head office/central management

If a company has several independent production sites at different physical locations, without any head office/central management, each production site shall have one Assessment, one report and one certificate.

Note: A multi-location production site can individually choose to be certified as part of multi-location production sites, as a single production site or not to be certified.

3) Multi-legal entity production site:

a) If a production site has multiple legal entities at one physical location with the same scope, one Assessment shall be conducted. Each legal entity shall have their own COID and the certificate and report shall be duplicated for each legal entity. The COIDs of each legal entity shall be linked in the IFS Database.

b) If a production site has multiple legal entities with different scopes at one physical location, each legal entity shall have their own COID, report and certificate. If a contractual relationship exists, the COIDs of each legal entity shall be linked in the IFS Database. All Assessments shall be performed by one certification body. If the certificate of one legal entity is suspended, the certificates of all legal entities shall also be suspended, unless the certification body can demonstrate that the other legal entities are not affected. The Assessment duration shall be calculated separately for each COID. A head office/central management can be appointed, which may allow a reduction of Assessment duration by maximum 0,5 days (as for multi-location approach), see the IFS Food Doctrine.

4) Production site with decentralised structure(s):

A decentralised structure is a facility (for example a workshop or a warehouse) owned by the company where part(s) of the processes and operations of the production site take place. When the Assessment of the production site is insufficient for gaining a full view of the company's processes, then all other relevant facilities shall also be included in the Assessment. Scope and full details shall be documented in the Assessment overview of the Assessment report.

If the decentralised structure is a warehouse with logistics activities situated at the same physical location as the production site, the company has the option to either include it in the IFS Food Assessment scope or to perform a combined IFS Food/IFS Logistics Assessment. For further information about the scope determination between IFS Food and IFS Logistics, see ANNEX 1.

2.3 Type of IFS Food Assessments

Different types of Assessments shall be conducted, depending on the certification status of the company.

2.3.1 Initial Assessment

The initial Assessment is a full and thorough Assessment of a production site, ideally resulting in the issue of a certificate. During the Assessment, all IFS Food requirements shall be assessed by the auditor.

An initial Assessment can be:

- a production site's first IFS Food Assessment or
- the Assessment performed after an interruption in the certification cycle (see chapter 4.3, Part 1) or
- the Assessment performed after a failed recertification Assessment due to a D evaluation of a KO requirement (Knock Out non-conformity) or
- the Assessment performed after a failed recertification Assessment due to a total scoring < 75 %.

Note: If an initial IFS Food Assessment is failed due to a D evaluation of a KO requirement and/or more than one Major non-conformity, the IFS Food Assessment report shall be uploaded in the IFS Database and this Assessment cannot be considered as a pre-Assessment.

2.3.2 Recertification Assessment

A recertification Assessment is the Assessment performed to renew the existing IFS Food Certification. The period in which a recertification Assessment shall be performed is shown on the certificate.
A recertification Assessment is a full and thorough Assessment of a production site, ideally resulting in the issue of a new certificate. During the Assessment, all IFS Food requirements shall be assessed by the auditor. Particular attention shall be paid to the deviations and non-conformities identified during the previous Assessment, as well as to the effectiveness and implementation of corrections and corrective actions laid out in the company's action plan.

Assessed companies shall always inform their certification body if they have already been IFS certified in the past. The auditor shall read the Assessment report and verify the action plan of the previous Assessment, even if another certification body issued the report or if the previous Assessment took place more than one year ago.
If C and/or D scorings of requirement(s) are still present from one Assessment to the next, or if the scorings deteriorate, the auditor shall assess the situation in accordance with chapter 5.11 of the Assessment checklist, Part 2.
The link between two (2) consecutive Assessments ensures a continuous improvement process.

A recertification Assessment can be performed either announced or unannounced. The unannounced option is mandatory at least once every third IFS certification Assessment.

Production sites are responsible for maintaining their certification. All IFS Food certified companies will receive a reminder from the IFS Database three (3) months before certification expiration.

Certification bodies shall contact their customers in advance to set a date for an announced Assessment or to register them for an unannounced Assessment.
If the Assessment is not an initial Assessment and if the company changes the certification body, the company shall inform their new certification body so that the auditor can check the action plan from the previous Assessment.

2.3.3 Follow-up Assessment

A follow-up Assessment is required in a specific situation where the results of the Assessment (initial or recertification) did not allow a certificate to be issued due to one Major non-conformity and a total scoring ≥ 75 %.
During the follow-up Assessment, the auditor shall focus on the implementation of actions taken to correct the Major non-conformity determined in the previous Assessment.

The closure of the Major non-conformity shall always be verified by an on-site evaluation by the auditor. The follow-up Assessment shall generally be performed by the same auditor who performed the Assessment where the Major non-conformity was identified.
The follow-up Assessment shall be performed no earlier than six (6) weeks, and no later than six (6) months, after the previous Assessment.
If a follow-up Assessment is not performed within six (6) months of the date of the previous Assessment, a full new initial Assessment shall be performed.
If the company decides not to perform a follow-up Assessment but to start again with a full new Assessment, the new Assessment shall be scheduled no earlier than six (6) weeks after the Assessment where the Major non-conformity was issued (for further information, see chapter 4.2.1.1, Part 1).

If the follow-up Assessment is failed, a full new Assessment will be necessary and shall be scheduled no earlier than six (6) weeks after the follow-up Assessment. The report of the failed follow-up Assessment shall be uploaded to the IFS Database.

If the follow-up Assessment is successful, certification shall be issued at foundation level only. The different steps are explained in ANNEX 5.

2.3.4 Extension Assessment

If new processes or products different to those included in the scope of the current IFS Assessment are implemented between two (2) certification Assessments (e.g. seasonal products), the certified company shall immediately inform its certification body, who shall perform a risk assessment to decide whether and when an extension Assessment should be performed or not. The results of this risk assessment, based on hygiene and safety risks, shall be documented.
If the certification body decides that an extension Assessment is needed, it is not necessary to perform a full new Assessment but an on-site extension Assessment during the validity period of the existing certificate (on-going certification cycle).

An extension Assessment shall always be performed as long as products and/or technology scopes and the HACCP plan (and especially the CCPs) are different from the one(s) assessed during the "main" Assessment (this rule also applies in case of production lines which were not working during the "main" Assessment) and/or if a significant change to the production process and/or its environment has been made.

The certification body is responsible for determining the relevant requirements to be assessed and the relevant Assessment duration necessary to assess these requirements thoroughly.

The extension Assessment report is generated as a single report and shall be provided as an annex to the current Assessment report. The uploading of an extension Assessment is free of charge.
Conditions for passing the extension Assessment are the same as for initial or recertification Assessments, but they will only be focused on specific requirements that have been assessed. The original Assessment score does not change.

If the extension Assessment demonstrates compliance, the certificate shall be updated with the new scope and uploaded to the IFS Database together with the extension Assessment report. The updated certificate shall keep the same expiry date as the current certificate.
When an extension Assessment has been performed, the recertification Assessment shall include the activity assessed during the extension Assessment (all in one certificate).
In the event of a Major non-conformity, a D evaluation of a KO requirement or a total scoring < 75 % after an extension Assessment, the full Assessment (including the main one) is failed and the current certificate shall be suspended.

Concerning seasonal products, an extension Assessment shall be performed to assess products which could not be assessed while operating during the main Assessment. The certificate shall then specify all the assessed products and processes. During the following year, there will be one recertification and one extension Assessment, in order to cover all products and processes.
For further information about extension Assessments, see the IFS Food Doctrine.

2.4 IFS Food Assessment Options

Before scheduling and performing the IFS Food Assessment, the company shall decide whether the Assessment is conducted on an announced or unannounced basis, ensuring that at least one IFS Food Assessment is performed unannounced every three (3) years.

2.4.1 Announced Assessment option

The announced Assessment is conducted at a time and date agreed between the company and the selected certification body and shall be performed on consecutive days. The recertification Assessment shall be scheduled at earliest eight (8) weeks before the assessment due date and at latest two (2) weeks after the Assessment due date (anniversary date of the initial Assessment).

2.4.2 Unannounced Assessment option

This option is preferably aimed at recertification Assessments, but may also apply to initial Assessments if the company prefers starting directly with an unannounced Assessment. This option only applies to initial and recertification and not to extension and follow-up Assessments. The option "unannounced" shall be mandatory at least once every third IFS certification Assessment.

Based on this rule, in case the certification cycle is interrupted where an unannounced Assessment was due, the next certification Assessment (=initial Assessment) has to be conducted unannounced.

It is the certification body's responsibility to make sure this rule is fulfilled, also in the case that the company (COID) changes its certification body. The certification body shall discuss audit/assessment options with the sites, and notify them which year an unannounced audit/assessment will take place. If the company was formally certified to any other GFSI recognised standard, the certification body will need to be aware of the audit/assessment history in order to maintain the unannounced certification frequency. In the case of different IFS Standards, the unannounced certification frequency counts separately.

The unannounced Assessment is performed within a time window of [–16 weeks before Assessment due date; + two (2) weeks after Assessment due date] and shall take place without prior notification of the date to the company, to ensure the unannounced character of the Assessment. The Assessment shall be performed on consecutive days.

The following rules apply when the unannounced option is chosen:

- The company shall provide the certification body with the name(s) of the on-site person(s) to be contacted on the production site.
- For multi-location production sites with a head office/central management:
  - Head office/central management shall either be assessed through an announced or unannounced Assessment.
  - The Assessment of the head office/central management shall always take place before the Assessment of each production site and shall be performed before the start of the unannounced Assessment time window of the production site(s).
  - An unannounced Assessment shall be performed in the production sites.
  - When the head office/central management is assessed through an announced Assessment: the announced Assessment of the head office/central management and unannounced Assessment of the production site shall not be performed on consecutive days (e.g. if the head office/central management is located within one of the production sites, there shall be two (2) different Assessments: an announced Assessment for the centrally organised processes and an unannounced Assessment for the production site).
  - When the head office/central management is assessed through an unannounced Assessment: unannounced Assessments of the head office/central management and the production site can be organised to take place on the same day (e.g. if the head office/central management is located within one of the production sites, there can be one Assessment: an unannounced Assessment for centrally organised processes and for the production site. This Assessment shall start with the production processes.).
  - All Assessments, including that of the head office/central management, shall be performed within a maximum time frame of 12 months.

If a company denies the auditor access (apart from "force majeure"), the currently valid IFS Certificate shall be suspended by the certification body within a maximum of two (2) working days of the Assessment date. All users with access to the IFS Database and with the respective company in their favourites list will receive an e-mail notification from the IFS Database, informing them that the current certificate has been suspended. This information will be visible in the company's history in the IFS Database. The company shall be invoiced by the certification body for the total cost of the Assessment. Furthermore, the next Assessment can only be scheduled as announced.

2.5 Planning an IFS Food Assessment

Before being assessed, the company shall review all requirements of the IFS Food Standard and the IFS Food Doctrine.

- For an announced Assessment, the first Assessment day shall be entered by the certification body into the IFS Database via the diary function at least two (2) weeks (14 calendar days) before the first day of the Assessment.
- For an unannounced Assessment, the certification body shall be notified by the company of the registration for this Assessment at latest four (4) weeks before the start of the Assessment time window, in order to register it in the IFS Database.
- For the unannounced option, there is a possibility to select a blackout period where the company has the opportunity to identify a maximum of ten (10) operational days when the production site is not available for Assessment, as well as non-operating periods. The ten (10) operational days can be split into a maximum of three (3) periods. These, together with the non-operating periods, shall be notified to the certification body at latest four (4) weeks before the start of the unannounced Assessment time window and cannot be changed at a later stage. The certification body has to decide if the unannounced aspect of the Assessment is fulfilled. Reasons shall be provided and may be challenged by the certification body or by the auditor during the Assessment. If a company produces seasonal products and has registered for the unannounced Assessment option, the expected seasonal production dates shall be notified to the certification body and the time window [–16 weeks, + two (2) weeks] does not apply. These companies are not permitted to provide a blackout period to the certification body. The unannounced Assessment shall take place at any time during this seasonal production period. The company still has to follow the registration process for the unannounced Assessment and the date of the Assessment shall be within the Assessment time window.

For further information about the registration process for unannounced Assessments, see the IFS Food Doctrine.

2.5.1 Drawing up an Assessment time schedule

The certification body shall provide the company with the Assessment time schedule, where the Assessment duration shall be indicated.

The Assessment time schedule shall:

- Include appropriate details concerning the scope covered and the complexity of the Assessment.
- Be sufficiently flexible to respond to any unexpected event which may arise during the on-site evaluation part of the Assessment.
- Take the review of the Assessment report and action plan from the previous Assessment into consideration.
- Specify the company's products or product ranges that are to be assessed.
- Clearly indicate which auditor performs which part of the Assessment if performed by an Assessment team. Information about the Assessment date and time for each auditor shall be provided in the IFS Database.
- Clearly indicate when and which part of each standard has been assessed if the IFS Assessment is performed in combination with another standard/norm.

If the announced option has been chosen, the time schedule shall be sent to the site before the Assessment, to ensure the availability of responsible persons on the day of the Assessment.
If the unannounced option has been chosen, it shall be shared during the opening meeting. It might also be modified or adapted due to the availability of the participants to be assessed and the current processing times.

3 IFS Food Assessment realisation

The realisation of the IFS Food Assessment shall always take into account the following elements:

- The Assessment shall take place at a time when the products included in the Assessment scope are being processed.
- The production lines shall be operational during the IFS Assessment.

If production lines are not operating during the IFS Assessment, they shall not be included in the scope of the Assessment unless they have the same HACCP plan and they involve the same products and technology scopes as the ones included in the Assessment scope.

If the non-operating production lines involve a different HACCP plan and different product and/or technology scopes, two (2) options are possible:

- The production line(s) can run later during the Assessment and are included in the scope of the "main" Assessment.
- The production line(s) cannot run later during the Assessment and an extension Assessment shall be performed. For further information on extension Assessment, see chapter 2.3.4, Part 1.

3.1 Assessment duration

IFS has implemented a mandatory tool, which is available on the IFS Website, to calculate the minimum Assessment duration to be performed on the physical site for IFS Food initial and recertification Assessments, based on the following criteria:

- total number of employees (including part time workers, shift workers, temporary staff, administrative people, etc.), considering the total maximum number of employees over a year
- number of product scopes
- number of processing steps ("P" steps).

The determination of the final Assessment duration is the responsibility of the certification body and the defined duration may be higher than the calculated minimum duration (depending on the specific structure of the company and the complexity of the processes). If the IFS Food Assessment is combined with (an) other standard(s)/norm(s), this shall increase the Assessment duration.

The minimum IFS Food Assessment duration is two (2) days (16 hours). One Assessment day is equivalent to eight (8) hours (without lunch break) and shall never exceed ten (10) hours.

If, under exceptional circumstances, the certification body comes to the educated decision that the calculated Assessment duration is of an unacceptably high value and needs to be decreased, the maximum possible reduction is 0,5 days and this reduction shall be justified in the company profile of the Assessment report. For further information, see the IFS Food Doctrine.

For an Assessment team, a minimum of two (2) hours shall be added to the time calculated by the tool. This additional time shall be allocated to the team and not to an individual auditor for common tasks (e.g. opening and closing meeting, discussion about Assessment findings, etc.).

The calculated Assessment duration does not include the time for Assessment preparation and reporting, which shall take, at a minimum:

- two (2) hours for Assessment preparation
- 0,5 days (four (4) hours) for Assessment report writing.

3.2 Assessment performance

The Assessment shall be scheduled based on the following steps:

- Opening meeting
- Evaluation of existing food safety and quality management system, achieved by checking documentation (HACCP plans, quality management documentation, etc.)
- On-site evaluation: detailed observation of all on-site production areas, production lines and production processes, which includes interviews with the working personnel and the gathering of information on key process parameters, such as monitoring of critical control points (CCPs) and control measures to be cross checked with the HACCP plan information.
- Documentation and record review and inspection: evaluation of documents and procedures, cross checking of documents and records based on investigations and findings from the on-site evaluation.
- Final conclusions drawn from the Assessment
- Closing meeting.

The company shall assist and cooperate with the auditor during the Assessment. As part of the Assessment, personnel from different levels of management and operative levels shall be interviewed. The most senior manager on the date of the Assessment shall be present at the opening and closing meetings so that any deviations and non-conformities can be discussed.

During the closing meeting at the end of the Assessment, the auditor (or lead auditor for an Assessment team) shall present all findings and discuss all deviations and non-conformities (Major and/or D evaluation of a KO requirement) which have been identified during the Assessment.

Note: During the Assessment, the IFS Auditor shall make detailed notes regarding all evaluations against the IFS Food Standard which will be used as the basis for the assessment report.

IFS requires certification bodies/auditors to provide a mandatory document which confirms the actual presence of the auditor(s) and assessed company representative(s) during the Assessment. This document:

- shall be signed by a representative of the assessed production site at the end of each Assessment day

- shall be signed by the auditor(s) (and if applicable, the trainee, auditor in progress, auditor under observation or observer for witness audit) at the end of each day
- shall state the start and end time of each day.

This document shall be part of the Assessment documentation and shall be available upon request at the office of the certification body.

3.2.1 IFS Scoring System

In order to determine whether compliance with an IFS Food requirement has been met, the auditor has to evaluate all requirements of the checklist (Part 2), which are classified either as regular or as KO requirements.
The IFS scoring system covers a scoring range based on the level of compliance of the requirement, from full compliance to a deviation and/or non-conformity.

In the IFS Food Standard, there are six (6) scoring possibilities. Points are awarded for each requirement according to the following chart (chart 1):

Chart 1: IFS Scoring System

Result	Explanation	Points
A	Full compliance.	20 points
B (point of attention)	Point of attention as it may lead to a future deviation.	15 points
C (deviation)	Part of the requirement is not implemented.	5 points
D (deviation)	The requirement is not implemented.	–20 points
Major (non-conformity)	A Major non-conformity can be given to any regular requirement (which is not defined as a KO requirement). Reasons for Major rating are: • There is a substantial failure to meet the requirements of the standard, which includes but is not limited to food safety and/or the legal requirements of the production and/or destination countries. • A process is out of control which might have an impact on food safety.	Major non-conformity will subtract 15 % of the possible total amount; the certificate cannot be issued.
KO requirement scored with a D (non-conformity)	The requirement is not implemented.	KO non-conformity will subtract 50 % of the possible total amount; the certificate cannot be issued.

The auditor shall provide explanations in the Assessment report:

- for requirements defined as compulsory fields, even if the requirements are scored with A,
- for all requirements scored with B, C, D,
- for Major non-conformity/ies,
- for KO requirements, even if the requirements are scored with A.

If the auditor raises a Major and/or a KO non-conformity, the certificate cannot be issued.

KO requirements
There are specific requirements in the IFS Food Standard which are named KO requirements. These requirements are essential and address key topics to be ensured by the production site to reach compliance. If the auditor identifies that the company does not fulfil at least one of these requirements during the Assessment, this results in a non-certification.

In the IFS Food Standard, the following ten (10) requirements are defined as KO requirements:

1) 1.2.1 Governance and commitment
2) 2.2.3.8.1 Monitoring system of each CCP
3) 3.2.2 Personal hygiene
4) 4.2.1.3 Raw materials specification
5) 4.2.2.1 Product and recipe compliance
6) 4.12.2 Foreign material risk mitigation
7) 4.18.1 Traceability
8) 5.1.1 Internal audits
9) 5.9.2 Procedures of withdrawals and recalls
10) 5.11.2 Corrective actions

Scoring of KO requirements is explained in the following chart (chart 2).

Chart 2: Scoring of a KO requirement

Result	Explanation	Points
A	Full compliance.	20 points
B (point of attention)	**Point of attention as it may lead to a future deviation.**	**No "B" scoring is possible**
C (deviation)	Part of the requirement is not implemented.	5 points
D (= KO non-conformity)	The requirement is not implemented.	KO non-conformity will subtract 50 % of the possible total amount, the certificate cannot be issued.

Important note:
A "B" scoring is not possible for KO requirements: only A, C or D (= KO non-conformity) scorings are possible.

If a KO non-conformity is rated during an IFS Food Assessment, the Assessment is failed and the next one can only be performed announced. For more information, see ANNEX 6.

Not applicable (N/A)
When the auditor decides that a requirement is not applicable for a production site, the auditor has to evaluate it as N/A (not applicable) and shall provide an explanation in the Assessment report.

It is not possible to evaluate a KO requirement as N/A, except for KO requirements on monitoring system of each CCP (KO N°2) and product and recipe compliance (KO N° 5).

Requirements evaluated as N/A shall not be included in the action plan.

If there is a significant number of requirements which are deemed as not applicable, using a total number of points for the Assessment may be misleading. Therefore, the IFS Scoring System is based on a percentage of the total available score and this is ultimately used to decide the certification status of the production site, i.e. foundation or higher level.

4 Post IFS Food Assessment actions

4.1 Action plan

The auditor and/or certification body shall issue a provisional Assessment report and a provisional action plan with the findings adressed to the company. This plan shall be used as a basis for drawing up corrections and corrective actions by the company for the determined deviations and non-conformities, see ANNEX 7.

4.1.1 Company's completion of the action plan

The company shall provide the following in the action plan:

- proposed corrections and corrective actions for all deviations (C, D), KO requirements scored with a C and for non-conformities (Major or D evaluation of a KO requirement) listed by the auditor
- responsibilities and implementation deadlines for both corrections and corrective actions (see chart 3).

Chart 3: Timescale for corrections and corrective actions

TIMESCALE	
Corrections	**Corrective actions**
As soon as possible. Evidence of implementation shall be provided to the certification body within a maximum of four (4) weeks after the receipt of the provisional Assessment report and the provisional action plan for completion.	Relevant for a sustainable and successful implementation (may take longer than the deadline for issuing the certificate, need to be reasonably justified by the company). Implemented before the recertification Assessment at the latest.

The company shall forward the action plan to the certification body within maximum four (4) weeks of having received the provisional report of the Assessment and the provisional action plan. If this deadline is not adhered to, the company shall undergo a full initial or recertification Assessment.

An IFS Certificate shall not be issued, unless all corrections are implemented. Corrections and corrective action(s) shall be translated into English.

In the case of one Major non-conformity and a total scoring < 75 % or several Major and/or KO non-conformity/ies, the certificate will not be issued, the report shall be uploaded in the IFS Database (see ANNEX 8) and a new Assessment shall be organised.
The action plan shall be validated by the auditor and the technical reviewer during the certification decision process.

4.1.2 Validation of the action plan

The auditor or a representative of the certification body shall validate the relevance of the corrections, the corrective actions and their dates of implementation in the allocated column of the action plan, before preparing the final Assessment report. If the evidence of the corrections and/or corrective actions are not valid or inadequate, and/or if the dates of implementation are not relevant, the auditor/certification body shall return the action plan to the company for completion in due time. If the action plan is not released in due time, certification may not be issued. The evidence shall be stored by the certification body for a period of three (3) years.

4.1.3 Technical review

A technical review of the report shall be conducted by a nominated reviewer from the certification body (see glossary). In the case of unclarity or doubts about the findings and the related scorings, these need to be clarified between the auditor of the IFS Assessment and the reviewer.

Based on the result of the technical review, the nominated reviewer recommends the issuance of an IFS Food Certificate or not.

4.2 Issuing the IFS Certificate

Based on the result of the technical review the certification body is responsible for making the final decision whether to issue the IFS Food Certificate or not. The decision is made by (a) person(s) other than those who have carried out the Assessment.

4.2.1 Scoring and conditions for issuing the IFS Assessment report and IFS Certificate

Chart 4: Scoring and issue of certificate

Assessment result	Status	Action company	Report form	Certificate
Total score is ≥ 95 %	Passed at IFS Food higher level following the receipt of the action plan	Send completed action plan within four (4) weeks of receiving the provisonal report.	Report including action plan provides status	Yes, certificate at higher level, 12-month validity. The certificate shall only be issued when the corrections are closed.
Total score is ≥ 75 % and < 95 %	Passed at IFS Food foundation level after receipt of the action plan	Send completed action plan within four (4) weeks of receiving the provisional report.	Report including action plan provides status	Yes, certificate at foundation level, 12-month validity. The certificate shall only be issued when the corrections are closed.
Total score is < 75 %	Not passed	Actions and new initial Assessment to be agreed upon (no earlier than six (6) weeks after the Assessment where the final score was < 75 %).	Report provides status	No
Maximum one Major and total score is ≥ 75 %	Not passed unless further actions taken and validated after follow-up Assessment	Send completed action plan within four (4) weeks of receiving the provisional report. Follow-up Assessment maximum six (6) months after the Assessment date.	Report including action plan provides status	Certificate at foundation level, if the Major non-conformity is finally solved during the follow-up Assessment. The certificate shall only be issued when the corrections are closed.
> one Major and/or total score is < 75 %	Not passed	Actions and new initial Assessment to be agreed upon	Report provides status	No
At least one KO requirement scored with D	Not passed	Actions and new initial Assessment to be agreed upon	Report provides status	No

Note:
Total number of points
= (total number of IFS Food requirements (points) – requirements evaluated as N/A (points)) × twenty (20)

Final score (in %)
= number of points awarded/total number of points.

4.2.1.1 Specific management of the Assessment process if one or several Major non-conformity/ies has/have been issued or if one or several KO requirement(s) has/have been scored with D during the Assessment.

If one or several Major non-conformity/ies has/have been issued and/or one or several KO requirement(s) is/are scored with D during the Assessment, the following rules apply:

- The current IFS Certificate shall be suspended in the IFS Database by the certification body as soon as possible, and at latest two (2) working days after the last day of the recertification Assessment.
- The report shall be uploaded to the IFS Database.
- In the IFS Database, the certification body shall provide explanations in English about the reasons for suspending the current certificate. The explanations about the identified non-conformity/ies shall specify the number of requirements involved and shall provide the same details as those described in the action plan.

Note: All IFS Database users with the respective company in their favourites list will receive an e-mail notification (with explanations about the identified non-conformity/ies) from the IFS Database, informing them that the current certificate has been suspended.

If more than one Major non-conformity has been identified with a total score < 75 %, the following rules apply:

- The Assessment report where one Major non-conformity with a result < 75 % or several Major non-conformity(ies) has/have been identified shall always be uploaded in the IFS Database after receiving the action plan (only for administrative purpose, but will not be visible) (ANNEX 8).
- A full new Assessment shall be performed no earlier than six (6) weeks after the Assessment where the Major non-conformities were issued.

If one Major non-conformity has been identified and the total score is ≥ 75 %, a follow-up Assessment shall be performed and the following rules apply:

- The follow up Assessment shall be performed at least six (6) weeks after the previous Assessment and no later than six (6) months after the previous Assessment.
- If during the follow-up Assessment, the Assessment result is deemed positive, the certification body shall mention the following details in the updated Assessment report:
  - in the "date" section: specify the date of the follow up Assessment in addition to the Assessment date when the Major non-conformity was identified,
  - in the "final result of Assessment" section: specify that a follow up Assessment has taken place and that the Major non-conformity has been solved,
  - in the "observations regarding KO and Major non-conformities" section: explain for which requirement the Major non-conformity has been solved.

- The company cannot be certified at higher level even if the final total score is ≥ 95 %.
- The same validity date of the certificate remains in the certification cycle, as described in 4.3 (the longest certificate valid due date is calculated from the last day of the initial Assessment date + eight (8) weeks – 1 day + 1 year).
- The report (first with the Major non-conformity and then updated with the results of the follow-up Assessment) shall be uploaded to the IFS Database after performing the follow-up Assessment with the condition that the Major non-conformity is finally solved (ANNEX 5).

Note: When an unannounced Assessment is failed, a full new announced Assessment is required. If only one Major non-conformity is evaluated during an unannounced Assessment, the follow-up Assessment shall be announced.

If one or several KO requirement(s) has/have been scored with D, the following rules apply:

- The Assessment shall be completed and all requirements shall be evaluated in order to give the company a full overview about its situation.
- The action plan should be completed (recommended) for improvement purposes.
- The Assessment report where one or several KO requirement(s) has/have been scored with D shall always be uploaded in the IFS Database (only for administrative purpose, but will not be visible).
- After this situation, a full new Assessment shall be performed, no earlier than six (6) weeks after the Assessment where a/some KO requirement(s) was/were scored with D (ANNEX 6).

4.2.1.2 Deadlines for issuing the IFS Certificate

If the Assessment is not performed in due time, all IFS Database users with access to the IFS Database and with the respective company in their favourites list, will receive an e-mail notification.

The time between the date of the Assessment and the issue of the certificate is determined by the certification body. A maximum of two (2) weeks shall be allocated for the auditor to send the provisional report and provisional action plan for completion to the company. A maximum of four (4) weeks shall be allocated for the company to provide evidence that corrections have been implemented and respond to the deviations and non-conformities (i.e. draw up the action plan).

If the auditor and the nominated technical reviewer recommend the IFS Food Certification after positive validation of the evidence of implemention of corrections, the certification body can take the decision to issue the certificate. The Assessment report, the action plan and the certificate shall then be uploaded in the IFS Database.

The timeline is six (6) weeks (as a target time) or eight (8) weeks (as a maximum time) between the date of Assessment and the upload of the Assessment report in the IFS Database/issue of the certificate. For more information, see ANNEX 2.

4.3 Certification cycle

The certification shall be valid from the date of issue stated on the certificate.

For an **announced** Assessment, the validity of the IFS Food Certificate is defined as follows:

- it starts from the date of issue of the certificate,
- it ends on the last day of the initial Assessment date + eight (8) weeks –1 day + 1 year.

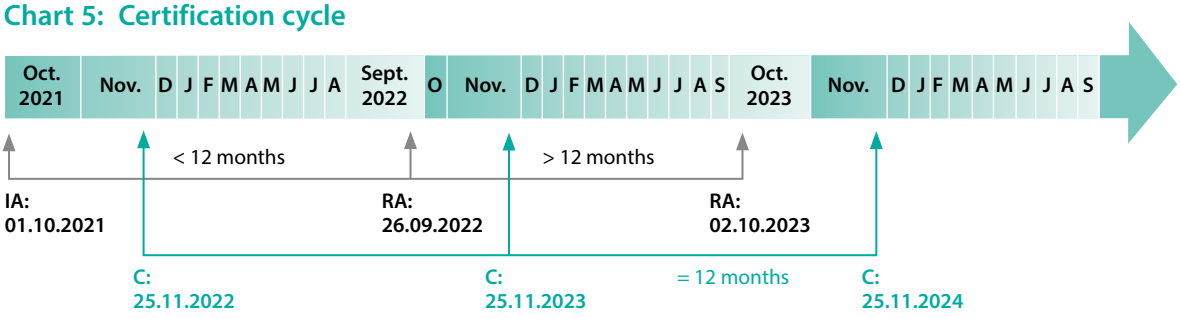
The time window to schedule the announced recertification Assessment is calculated as follows: [– eight (8) weeks; + two (2) weeks] from the last day of initial Assessment. Companies are responsible for maintaining their certification.

Example listed in the following chart (chart 5):

- Initial Assessment date: 1st of October, 2021
- Date of issue of certificate: 26th of November, 2021
- Certificate valid until: 25th of November, 2022
- Recertification Assessment date: 26th of September, 2022
- Certificate valid until: 25th of November, 2023 (independently from the recertification Assessment date)

- Time window to schedule the recertification for an **announced** Assessment: [6th of August–15th of October].
- Time window to schedule the recertification for an **unannounced** Assessment: [11th of June–15th of October].

Chart 5: Certification cycle



IA: Initial Assessment
RA: Recertification Assessment
C: Issue a certificate valid until

The validity of the IFS Certificate remains the same each year and is determined by the date of the initial Assessment.
The time window to schedule the recertification of an unannounced Assessment is calculated as follows: [–16 weeks before Assessment due date; + two (2) weeks after Assessment due date].
If the announced recertification Assessment is not scheduled on time, or if the steps of the certification process were not completed in time, this will lead to a break in certification and only a new initial certificate can be issued.

The date of the recertification Assessment shall be calculated from the initial Assessment date and not from the date of issue of the certificate. In this way, even if the recertification Assessment date changes every year and does not completely correspond to the anniversary date, the certificate validity date remains the same each year and gaps are avoided between two (2) consecutive certificates. If the Assessment is scheduled earlier (but still within the Assessment time frame), the company does not lose some weeks of its certificate validity.

The certificate shall always be issued on the basis of a certification decision and after several steps of certification decision according to ISO/IEC 17065:2012 norm (ANNEX 2).

The previous Assessment report remains visible in the IFS Database for a further three (3) months (after the end of the certificate validity). If the recertification Assessment takes place later than the above-mentioned time window, the certification of the company will not be visible anymore. If the company has no further active certificates, the COID will be automatically set to an inactive status in the IFS Database.

4.3.1 Information about the conditions of withdrawal/suspension of a certificate

Withdrawal of a certificate by the certification body is only permitted in case of any information indicating that the products/processes may no longer comply with the requirements of the certification system. The only exception to this rule may be related to the non-payment for the current Assessment by the certified company. The contract between the certification body and the assessed company shall take the certification cycle into account.

If certification is reinstated after suspension, the certification body shall make all necessary modifications to formal certification documents, public information, authorisations for use of brands, etc. in order to ensure all appropriate indications exist and that the products/processes continue to be certified.
If a decision to reduce the scope of certification is made as a condition of reinstatement, the certification body shall make all necessary modifications to formal certification documents, public information, authorisations for use of brands, etc., in order to ensure the reduced scope of certification is clearly communicated to the client.

4.4 Distribution and storage of the Assessment report

Assessment reports shall remain the property of the company and shall not be released, in whole or part, to a third-party without the company's prior consent (except where required by law, accreditation bodies and GFSI Integrity Program). The consent for the distribution of the IFS Food Assessment report shall be made in writing and can be granted by the company vis-à-vis the certification body and/or vis-à-vis the relevant user. The certification body shall keep a copy of the IFS Food Assessment report. The Assessment report and associated documentation including the auditor's notes shall be stored safely and securely for a period of five (5) years. The fully detailed access conditions to information about the Assessment reports are available in Part 4.

Supplementary action
The decision about the level of supplementary actions required on the basis of the certificate shall be made at the discretion of the individual buying organisation.

5 IFS Integrity Program

The IFS Integrity Program, launched in early 2010, includes different measures to assure the quality of the IFS Standards by reviewing IFS Assessment Reports of certified companies and also by using several measures to analyse and improve the performance of certification bodies and auditors. The IFS Integrity Program strengthens the reliability of the IFS Standards by surveilling their implementation in practice.

The main procedures of the IFS Integrity Program are described in Annex 4 of the IFS Framework Agreement on the IFS Assessment and certification between IFS Management GmbH and the certification body. These procedures have been developed through regular meetings of the IFS Quality Assurance Working Group, which is composed of international members. Annex 4 of the IFS Framework Agreement shall be signed by all certification bodies that have concluded a contract with IFS Management GmbH. Auditors performing IFS Assessments shall accept the IFS Integrity Program procedures to assure a qualitative performance of IFS Assessments. Certification bodies are obliged to inform their customers applying for an IFS Assessment certificate about the content of the current version of Annex 4 of the IFS Framework Agreement. The IFS Integrity Program is mainly involved in the following activities:

5.1 IFS complaint management

Retailers or any other interested parties have the right to forward any possible complaint or issue to IFS for investigation as part of the Integrity Program. The respective information can be forwarded by e-mail via complaintmanagement@ifs-certification.com or via a complaint form on the IFS Website.
The IFS Integrity Program will gather all necessary information in order to investigate the cause of the complaint and to establish if there are deficiencies in meeting IFS requirements by certified companies, accredited certification bodies or IFS Auditors. Appropriate steps will be taken to fully investigate a complaint, which may include requesting a certification body to carry out internal investigations and to provide a statement on the outcome of the investigations to IFS.
Finally, the IFS Quality Assurance Management department will decide which approach would be best to assess and solve the complaint. This might also be to plan an Integrity on-site check at the IFS certified company to investigate the case on-site or to organise an Integrity witness audit for an IFS Auditor involved in the complaint case (in this case, an Integrity auditor assesses an IFS Auditor during one of her/his next regular IFS Assessments).
Based on the complaint, the Integrity on-site check will mainly be performed on an unannounced basis (announcement 30 minutes before the start of the Integrity on-site check). In some special cases, the Integrity on-site check might also be performed on an announced basis (generally announced about 48 hours before).

5.2 Risk based approach and monitoring of IFS Quality Assurance

The Quality Assurance activities of the IFS Integrity Program monitor the entire IFS system by using different tools:

In order to care for the correct implementation of all procedures described in IFS Standards and respective regulatory documents, the IFS Integrity Program carries out regular office audits at certification bodies (Integrity certification body office audits). During these office audits, work

performance of IFS Auditors and certification bodies are checked by means of examples of several reports and by database analysis. If special topics have to be clarified during these Integrity certification body office audits, this could also lead to Integrity witness audits of IFS auditors or to Integrity on-site checks at companies certified by the respective certification body.

Additionally—taking the risk based approach into account—reports of certified companies are analysed and read by IFS Quality Assurance Management staff. The IFS Quality Assurance Working Group has defined different criteria for the risk based approach. These analyses are an ongoing monitoring procedure of the IFS Quality Assurance Management, taking into account both economic criteria (e.g. number of issued certificates in certain countries) and quality criteria (e.g. Assessment results, Assessment times etc.). As previously described, Integrity on-site checks will mainly be performed on an unannounced basis and might be performed on an announced basis in some special cases. Integrity witness audits of IFS Auditors may also be performed using this risk based analysis approach of IFS Quality Assurance Management.

Additional information about above-mentioned chapters 5.1 and 5.2:
Companies with a valid IFS Certificate have to accept an unannounced/announced Integrity on-site check and have to give access and support to the commissioned Integrity auditor. The acceptance of the IFS Integrity Program is part of the regulations of all IFS Standards.
Witnessing IFS Auditors from certification bodies commissioned by Integrity auditors during regular IFS Assessments also have to be accepted.

Integrity on-site checks, Integrity witness audits and Integrity certification body office audits carried out as part of the Integrity Program are conducted by Integrity auditors employed or commissioned by IFS Management GmbH. Integrity auditors are completely independent from the assessed companies and the IFS certification bodies.

5.3 Sanctions

If the cause of a deficiency has been found to be the fault of a certification body and/or an auditor, following a complaint or following the risk based approach/monitoring quality assurance actions, IFS will forward all necessary information anonymously to an independent sanction committee. The sanction committee, which is composed of a lawyer and participants from industry, retailers and certification bodies, shall make a decision on whether a breach exists and on its severity.

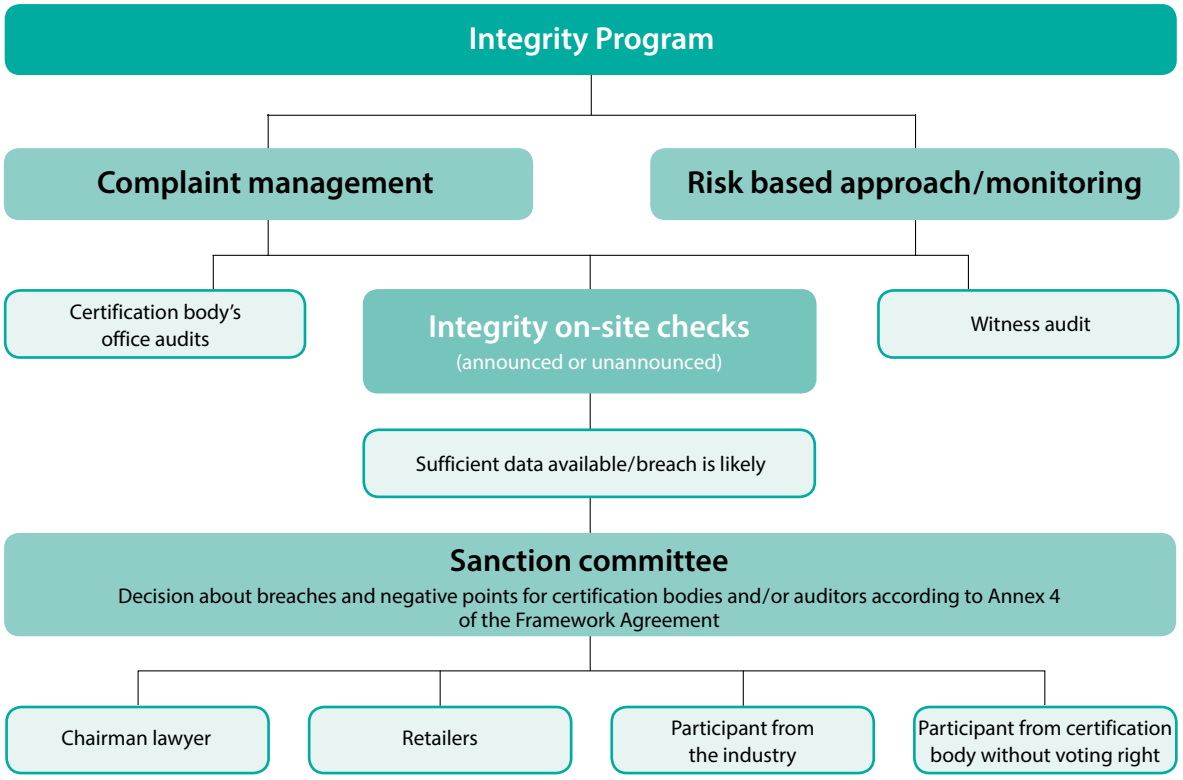
Topics concerning administrative faults of certification bodies based on database investigations can be directly assessed by the IFS Quality Assurance Management but have to be confirmed by the chairman (lawyer) of the sanction committee.

Sanctions and/or penalties will be issued to the certification body and/or its auditors if the sanction committee concludes that a breach has been committed. The type of sanction and/or penalty depends on the severity of the breach. For each final breach ruling, a certification body and/or an auditor may get a certain amount of “negative points”. These “negative points” are accumulated, but the period of limitation is two (2) years (rolling system). Only in very severe cases, certification bodies or auditors might be suspended for a certain time frame or contracts might be cancelled. In general, the target of the IFS Integrity Program activities is to improve the performance of certification bodies and/or auditors by requesting corrective actions, for example attending further training in the case of a decided breach.

IFS Management GmbH will inform the appropriate accreditation body if a breach has been decided for a certification body and/or for an auditor.

All these procedures concerning breaches, penalties and "negative points" are laid down in Annex 4 of the IFS Framework Agreement between IFS and each certification body (chart 6).

Chart 6: Summary of IFS Integrity Program activities



6 IFS Logos

The copyright of IFS Food and the registered trademark is fully owned by IFS Management GmbH. The IFS Logos shall be downloaded via the secured section of the IFS Database.
Furthermore, the terms and conditions below shall be communicated to the assessed company by the certification body and checked by the auditor during the Assessment. The results of this check shall be described in the company profile of the Assessment report as a compulsory field. If the auditor identifies that the company does not fulfil those terms and conditions, IFS shall be informed accordingly.

Terms and conditions for using the IFS Logos and communication about the IFS Food certification/application
These terms and conditions apply for all IFS Logos.

Form, design and colour of the IFS Logos
Only the latest version of the IFS Logos shall be used. When used, the IFS Logo(s) shall comply with the form and colour of the scale drawing. If used in documents, black and white print is

also permitted. Companies shall only use the logo of the standard(s) they are certified for.
The general IFS Logo can only be used to express that the certification body or the IFS consultant supports IFS certified companies, or that the certification body offers certification for more than one IFS Standard. All other forms of use shall be agreed with IFS.
The IFS Food Logo can be used in print, electronic form and in films, as long as the form and format are fulfilled. The same conditions apply to the use of the logo as a stamp.

Restriction of comments and interpretations
When an IFS Food certified production site, an IFS Food supporting company or an IFS Food certification body publishes documents bearing the IFS Logo(s), comments and interpretations referring to IFS shall be clearly identifiable as such.

Use of the IFS Food Logo in promotional material
The IFS Food Logo shall not be displayed on the product itself, primary packaging of the product, or any kind of advertising document likely to reach the end-consumer (e.g. intercompany sales packaging, public exhibitions for end consumers, product specific brochures for end consumers, etc.). The logo can only appear on a website section related to quality management or to quality and safety in general. It shall not be used for any kind of business-to-consumer marketing. It shall be clear that all information concerning certification clearly refers to IFS.
The IFS Logos shall not be used in presentations that have no clear connection to IFS.

An IFS Food certified production site, which accepts IFS certificates from its suppliers or service providers (brokers, logistics service providers or wholesalers) or an IFS certification body may use the general IFS Logo for promotional reasons and publish information about IFS Certification. If they have no certification of their own, it shall be clearly stated that the company supports or works with IFS certified companies. Any kind of use that gives the impression that the company itself is certified is not accepted.

Further restriction on the use of the IFS Food Logo
The IFS Food Logo shall not be used in any way that may imply that IFS Management GmbH is responsible for the certification decision. In case of suspension or withdrawal of the IFS Food Certificate, the assessed production site and company have to immediately stop including the IFS Logos on their documents and/or website. In case of exclusion regarding the Assessment scope, the details about exclusions shall be available upon request. The IFS Food Logo can be used, but the following claim shall be written at the bottom: "some products are excluded from the scope of the IFS Food Assessment and exclusion details can be provided upon request".

Communication of the IFS Food Certification
All the above-mentioned rules apply to any communication regarding IFS Food. This also means that the use of the wordmarks "IFS", "International Featured Standards", or "IFS Food" or similar is not allowed to be communicated on finished products which are available to the end consumer.

PART 2
List of IFS Food Assessment requirements

Requirements with a "*" require compulsory information for the IFS Food report summary.

1 Governance and commitment

1.1 Policy

1.1.1* The senior management shall develop, implement and maintain a corporate policy, which shall include, at a minimum:

- food safety and product quality
- customer focus
- food safety culture.

This corporate policy shall be communicated to all employees and shall be broken down into specific objectives for the relevant departments.

1.1.2 All relevant information related to food safety, product quality and authenticity shall be communicated effectively and in a timely manner to the relevant personnel.

1.2 Corporate structure

1.2.1 KO n° 1: The senior management shall ensure that employees are aware of their responsibilities related to food safety and product quality and that mechanisms are in place to monitor the effectiveness of their operation. Such mechanisms shall be clearly identified and documented.

1.2.2 The senior management shall provide sufficient and relevant resources to meet the product and process requirements.

1.2.3* The department responsible for food safety and quality management shall have a direct reporting relationship to the senior management. An organisational chart shall be available, showing the structure of the company.

1.2.4 The senior management shall ensure that all processes (documented and undocumented) are known by the relevant personnel and are applied consistently.

1.2.5* The senior management shall have a system in place to ensure that the company is kept informed of all relevant legislation, scientific and technical developments, industry codes of practice, food safety and product quality issues, and that they are aware of factors that can influence food defence and food fraud risks.

1.2.6* The senior management shall ensure that the certification body is informed of any changes that may affect the company's ability to conform to the certification requirements. This shall include, at a minimum:

- any legal entity name change
- any production site location change.

For the following specific situations:

- any product recall
- any product recall and/or withdrawal by official order for food safety and/or food fraud reasons
- any visit from health authorities which results in notifications and/or penalties issued by authorities

the certification body shall be informed within three (3) working days.

1.3 Customer focus

1.3.1 A process shall be in place to identify fundamental needs and expectations of customers. The feedback from this process shall be used as input for the company's continuous improvement.

1.4 Management review

1.4.1* The senior management shall ensure that the food safety and quality management system is reviewed at least annually, or more frequently if significant changes occur.
Such reviews shall include, at a minimum:

- a review of objectives and policies including elements of food safety culture
- results of audits and site inspections
- positive and negative customer feedback
- process compliance
- authenticity and conformity issues
- status of corrections and corrective actions
- notifications from authorities.

1.4.2 Actions from the management review shall be clearly aimed at supporting improvement. The management review shall assess follow-up actions from previous management reviews and any change that could affect the food safety and quality management system. The management review shall be fully documented.

1.4.3 The senior management shall identify and regularly review (e.g. by internal audits or on-site verification) the infrastructure and work environment needed to conform to product requirements. This shall include, at a minimum:

- buildings
- supply systems
- machines and equipment

- transport
- staff facilities
- environmental conditions
- hygienic conditions
- workplace design
- external influences (e.g. noise, vibration).

The results of the review shall be considered, with due consideration to risks, for investment planning.

2 Food safety and quality management system

2.1 Quality management

2.1.1 Document management

2.1.1.1 The food safety and quality management system shall be documented and implemented, and shall be kept in one location (food safety and quality manual or electronic documented system).

2.1.1.2 All documents shall be clearly legible, unambiguous and comprehensive. They shall be available to the relevant personnel at all times.

2.1.1.3* A documented procedure shall exist for the control of documents and their amendments. All documents which are necessary for compliance with the product requirements shall be available in their latest version. The reason for any amendments to documents, critical to the product requirements, shall be recorded.

2.1.2 Records and documented information

2.1.2.1 Records and documented information shall be legible and genuine. They shall be maintained in a way that subsequent revision or amendment is prohibited. If records are documented electronically, a system shall be in place to ensure that only authorised personnel have access to create or amend those records (e.g. password protection).

2.1.2.2* All records and documented information shall be kept in accordance with legal and customer requirements. If no such requirements exist, records and documented information shall be kept for a minimum of one year after the specified shelf life. For products which have no shelf life, the duration of record and documented information keeping shall be justified and this justification shall be documented.

2.1.2.3 Records and documented information shall be securely stored and easily accessible.

2.2 Food safety management

2.2.1 HACCP plan

2.2.1.1 The basis of the company's food safety management system shall be a fully implemented, systematic and comprehensive HACCP based plan, following the Codex Alimentarius principles and any legal requirements of the production and destination countries which may go beyond such principles. The HACCP plan shall be specific and implemented at the production site.

2.2.1.2 The HACCP plan shall cover all raw materials, packaging materials, products or product groups, as well as every process from incoming goods up to the dispatch of finished products, including product development.

2.2.1.3 The company shall ensure that the HACCP plan is based upon scientific literature or expert advice obtained from other sources, which may include: trade and industry associations, independent experts and regulatory authorities.
This information shall be maintained in line with any new technical process development.

2.2.1.4 The company shall ensure that in the event of changes to raw materials, packaging materials, processing methods, infrastructure and/or equipment, the HACCP plan is reviewed to assure that product safety requirements are complied with.

2.2.2 HACCP team

2.2.2.1 **Assemble HACCP team:**
The HACCP team shall have the appropriate specific knowledge and expertise and be a multidisciplinary team which includes operational staff.

2.2.2.2 Those responsible for the development and maintenance of the HACCP plan shall have an internal team leader and shall have received adequate training in the application of the HACCP principles and specific knowledge of the products and processes.

2.2.3 HACCP analysis

2.2.3.1 **Describe product:**
A full description of the product including all relevant information on product safety shall exist, such as:

- composition
- physical, organoleptic, chemical and microbiological characteristics
- legal requirements for the food safety of the product
- methods of treatment, packaging, durability (shelf life)
- conditions for storage, method of transport and distribution.

2.2.3.2 **Identify intended use:**
The intended use of the product shall be described in relation to the expected use of the product by the end consumer, taking vulnerable groups of consumers into account.

2.2.3.3 **Construct flow diagram:**
A flow diagram shall exist for each product, or product group, and for all variations of the processes and sub-processes (including rework and reprocessing). The flow diagram shall be dated, and after the determination of control measures, clearly identify each CCP and other control measures. In the event of any changes, the flow diagram shall be updated.

2.2.3.4 **On-site confirmation of the flow diagram:**
Representatives of the HACCP team shall verify the flow diagram, by on-site verifications, at all operation stages and shifts. Where appropriate, amendments to the diagram shall be made.

2.2.3.5 **Conduct a hazard analysis for each step:**
A hazard analysis shall be conducted for all possible and reasonably expected physical, chemical (including radiological and allergens) and biological hazards. The analysis shall also include hazards linked to materials in contact with food, packaging materials and hazards related to the work environment. The hazard analysis shall consider the likely occurrence of hazards and the severity of their adverse health effects. Consideration shall be given to the specific control measures that shall be applied to control each hazard.

2.2.3.6 **Determine critical control points and other control measures:**
The determination of relevant CCPs and other control measures shall be facilitated by the application of a decision tree or other tool(s), which demonstrates a logical reasoned approach.

2.2.3.7* **Establish critical limits for each CCP:**
For each CCP, the appropriate critical limits shall be defined and validated to clearly identify when a process is out of control.

2.2.3.8 Establish a monitoring system for each CCP

2.2.3.8.1*KO N° 2: Specific monitoring procedures in terms of method, frequency of measurement or observation and recording of results, shall be established for each CCP to detect any loss of control at that CCP. Each defined CCP shall be under control. Monitoring and control of each CCP shall be demonstrated by records.

2.2.3.8.2 Records of CCP monitoring shall be verified by a responsible person within the company and maintained for a relevant period.

2.2.3.8.3 The operative personnel in charge of the monitoring of CCPs and other control measures shall have received specific training/instruction.

2.2.3.8.4 Control measures, other than CCPs, shall be monitored, recorded and controlled by measurable or observable criteria.

2.2.3.9 **Establish corrective actions:**
In the event that the monitoring indicates that a particular CCP or control measure other than CCP is not under control, adequate corrective actions shall be taken and documented. Such corrective actions shall also take into account any action taken relating to non-conforming products and identify the root cause for the loss of control of CCPs.

2.2.3.10* **Establish verification procedures:**
Procedures of verification shall be established to confirm that the HACCP plan is working correctly. Verification of the HACCP plan shall be performed at least once a year. Examples of verification activities include:

- internal audits
- analyses
- sampling
- deviations
- complaints.

The results of this verification shall be incorporated into the HACCP plan.

2.2.3.11 **Establish documentation and record keeping**
Documentation related to the HACCP plan shall be in place.
Examples of documentation include:

- hazard analysis
- determination of CCPs and other control measures
- determination of critical limits
- processes, procedures

Examples of records include:

- outcome of CCPs and other control measure monitoring activities
- observed deviations and implemented corrective actions.

3 Resource management

3.1 Human resources

3.1.1 All personnel performing work that affects product safety, quality and legality shall have the required competence, appropriate to their role, as a result of education, work experience and/or training.

3.1.2 The responsibilities, competencies and job descriptions for all job titles with an impact on food safety and product quality shall be clearly defined, documented and in place. Assignment of key roles shall be defined.

3.2 Personal hygiene

3.2.1* Documented requirements relating to personal hygiene shall be in place and shall include, at a minimum, the following areas:

- hair and beards
- protective clothing (including their conditions of use in staff facilities)
- hand washing, disinfection and hygiene
- eating, drinking and smoking
- actions to be taken in case of cuts or skin abrasions
- fingernails, jewellery and personal belongings (including medicines)
- notification of infectious diseases and conditions impacting food safety via a medical screening procedure.

The requirements shall be based on hazard analysis and assessment of associated risks.

3.2.2 KO N° 3: The requirements for personal hygiene shall be in place and applied by all relevant personnel, contractors and visitors.

3.2.3 Compliance with personal hygiene requirements shall be checked regularly.

3.2.4 Visible jewellery (including piercing) and watches shall not be worn. Any exceptions shall have been comprehensively evaluated by hazard analysis and assessment of associated risks and shall be effectively managed.

3.2.5 Cuts and skin abrasions shall be covered with a coloured plaster/bandage different from the product colour. Where appropriate:

- plasters/bandages shall include a metal strip
- single use gloves shall be worn.

3.2.6 In work areas where wearing headgear and/or beard snood (coverings) is required, the hair shall be covered completely to prevent product contamination.

3.2.7 Clearly defined usage rules shall exist for work areas/activities where it is required to wear gloves (coloured differently from the product colour).

3.2.8* Suitable protective clothing shall be available and in sufficient quantity for each employee.

3.2.9 All protective clothing shall be thoroughly and regularly laundered in-house, by approved contractors or by employees. This decision shall be justified by risk assessment. Defined requirements shall ensure, at a minimum:

- sufficient segregation between dirty and clean clothing at all times
- defined laundering conditions on water temperature and detergent dosage
- avoidance of contamination until use.

The effectiveness of the laundering shall be appropriately monitored.

3.2.10 In case of any health issue or infectious disease that may have an impact on food safety, actions shall be taken to minimise contamination risks.

3.3 Training and instruction

3.3.1* The company shall implement documented training and/or instruction programs with respect to the product and process requirements and the training needs of the employees, based on their job, and shall include:

- training contents
- training frequency
- employee's task
- languages
- qualified trainer/tutor.

3.3.2* The documented training and/or instruction programs shall apply to all personnel, including seasonal and temporary workers and employees from external companies, employed in the respective work area. Upon employment, and before commencing work, they shall be trained/instructed in accordance with the documented training/instruction programs.

3.3.3 Records of all training/instruction events shall be available, stating:

- list of participants (including their signature)
- date
- duration
- contents of training
- name of trainer/tutor.

A procedure or program shall be in place to prove the effectiveness of the training and/or instruction programs.

3.3.4 The contents of training and/or instruction shall be regularly reviewed and updated when necessary. Special consideration shall be given, at a minimum, to these specific issues:

- food safety
- food fraud
- product quality
- food defence
- food related legal requirements
- product/process modifications
- feedback from the previous documented training/instruction programs.

3.4 Staff facilities

3.4.1* The company shall provide suitable staff facilities, which shall be proportional in size, equipped for the number of personnel, designed and controlled to minimise food safety risks. Such facilities shall be kept in a clean and good condition.

3.4.2 Product contamination risks by food and drink and/or foreign materials shall be minimised. Consideration shall be given to food and drink from vending machines, canteen and/or brought to work by personnel.

3.4.3 Changing rooms shall be located to allow direct access to the areas where food products are handled. If this is not possible, preventive measures shall be in place to minimise product contamination risks. Where necessary, outdoor clothing and protective clothing shall be stored separately.

3.4.4 Toilets shall neither have direct access nor pose contamination risks to areas where food products are handled. Toilets shall be equipped with adequate hand washing facilities. Sanitary facilities shall have adequate natural or mechanical ventilation. Mechanical airflow from a contaminated area to a clean area shall be avoided.

3.4.5 * Hand hygiene facilities shall be provided and shall address, at a minimum:

- adequate number of wash basins
- suitably located at access points to and/or within production areas
- sole use for cleaning hands only.

The necessity of similar equipment in further areas (e.g. packing area) shall be based on hazard analysis and assessment of associated risks.

3.4.6 Hand hygiene facilities shall provide:

- running potable water at an appropriate temperature
- appropriate cleaning and disinfection equipment
- appropriate means for hand drying.

3.4.7 Where the processes require a higher standard of hygiene, the hand washing equipment shall provide in addition:

- hand contact-free fittings
- hand disinfection
- waste container with hand contact-free opening.

3.4.8 Based on hazard analysis and assessment of associated risks, a program shall be in place to control effectiveness of hand hygiene.

3.4.9 Where it is justified by risk assessment, cleaning and disinfection facilities shall be available and used for boots, shoes and further protective clothing.

4 Operational processes

4.1 Contract agreement

4.1.1 All requirements related to food safety and product quality, within the defined agreement with customers, and any revision of these clauses, shall be communicated to and implemented by each relevant department.

4.1.2 In accordance with customer requirements, the senior management shall inform their affected customers, as soon as possible, of any issue related to product safety or legality, including non-conformity/ies identified by competent authorities.

4.2 Specifications and formulas

4.2.1 Specifications

4.2.1.1* Specifications shall be available and in place for all finished products. They shall be up to date, unambiguous and in compliance with legal and customer requirements.

4.2.1.2 A procedure to control the creation, approval and amendment of specifications shall be in place and shall include, where required, the acceptance of the customer(s). Where required by customers, product specifications shall be formally agreed.

This procedure shall include the update of finished product specifications in case of any modification related to:

- raw materials
- formulas/recipes

- processes which impact the finished products
- packaging materials which impact the finished products.

4.2.1.3 * KO N° 4: Specifications shall be available and in place for all raw materials (ingredients, additives, packaging materials, rework). Specifications shall be up to date, unambiguous and be in compliance with legal requirements and, if existing, with customer requirements.

4.2.1.4 Specifications and/or their contents shall be available on site for all relevant personnel.

4.2.1.5 * Where customers specifically require that products are "free from" certain substances or ingredients (e.g. gluten, pork, etc.), or that certain methods of treatment or production are excluded (e.g. GMOs), verifiable procedures shall be in place.

4.2.2 Formulas/Recipes

4.2.2.1 * KO N° 5: Where there are customer agreements related to:

- **product recipe (including raw materials characteristics)**
- **process**
- **technological requirements**
- **packaging**
- **labelling**

these shall be complied with.

4.3 Product development/Product modification/Modification of production processes

4.3.1 For each new development or modification of products, a hazard analysis and assessment of associated risks shall be conducted.

4.3.2* The product development/modification process shall result in specifications about formulation, packaging requirements, manufacturing processes and process parameters related to the fulfilment of product requirements. This includes factory trials and product testing. The progress and results of product development/modification shall be recorded.

4.3.3 Shelf life tests or adequate validation through microbiological, chemical and organoleptic evaluation shall be carried out and consideration shall be given to product formulation, packaging, manufacturing and declared conditions. In accordance with this evaluation, the shelf life shall be established.

4.3.4* A procedure shall be in place to ensure that labelling complies with current legislation of the destination country/ies and customer requirements.

4.3.5 Recommendations for preparation and/or use of food product instructions shall be established, where appropriate.

4.3.6 The company shall demonstrate through studies and/or perform relevant tests to validate nutritional information or claims which are declared on labelling, throughout the shelf life of the products.

4.3.7 In the event of changes to process characteristics or product formulation, including rework and/or packaging materials, the company shall ensure that the food safety and product quality requirements are complied with. Labelling shall be reviewed and adapted when necessary.

4.4 Purchasing

4.4.1* The company shall control purchasing processes to ensure that all externally sourced raw materials, semi-finished products, packaging materials and services, which have an impact on food safety and product quality, conform to defined requirements.

4.4.2* A procedure for the approval and monitoring of suppliers (internal and external) shall be in place. The approval and monitoring procedure shall contain clear assessment criteria, such as:

- audits performed by an experienced and competent person
- certificates of analyses
- supplier reliability
- complaints
- required performance standards.

4.4.3* The results from the supplier assessments shall be reviewed regularly and this review shall be justified by risk assessment. Records of the reviews and the consequential actions of the assessment shall be documented.

4.4.4 The purchased raw materials, semi-finished products and packaging materials shall be checked in accordance with the existing specifications and justified by risk assessment for their authenticity. The schedule of these checks shall take into account, at a minimum, defined food safety and product quality risks.
The frequency and/or scope of sampling shall be based on:

- the impact of the raw materials, semi-finished products and packaging materials on the finished products
- the supplier's status.

4.4.5* The purchased services shall be checked in accordance with the existing specifications. The schedule of these checks shall take into account, at a minimum:

- the defined service requirements
- the supplier's status (according to its assessment)
- the impact of the service on the finished products.

4.4.6 Where a company outsources a part of the product processing and/or primary packaging and/or labelling, the company shall have it documented in the food safety and quality management system and ensure control over such processes to guarantee that food safety and product quality are not compromised. Control of such outsourced processes shall be identified and documented. When required by the customer, there shall be evidence that he has been informed and has agreed to such outsourced process.

4.4.7 A written agreement shall be in place, covering the outsourced processes and describing any arrangements made in connection with it, including in-process controls, sampling and analyses.

4.4.8 The company shall approve the supplier of the outsourced processes through:

- certification against IFS Food or other GFSI recognised food safety certification standard or
- documented supplier audit, performed by an experienced and competent person, which shall include, at a minimum, requirements for food safety, product quality, legality and authenticity.

4.5 Product packaging

4.5.1 * Based on hazard analysis, assessment of associated risks and intended use, the company shall define the key parameters for the packaging materials in detailed specifications complying with the current relevant legislation and other relevant hazards or risks.
The company shall check and verify the suitability and existence of functional barrier(s) of the consumer unit packaging material for each relevant product test/analysis, such as:

- organoleptic tests
- storage tests
- chemical analyses
- migration test results.

4.5.2 For all packaging materials which could have an impact on products, certificates of conformity shall exist which attest compliance with legal requirements. In the event that no specific legal requirements are applicable, evidence shall be available to demonstrate that packaging materials are suitable for use. This applies for packaging materials which could have an influence on raw materials, semi-finished and finished products.

4.5.3 The company shall ensure that the used packaging and labelling correspond to the product being packaged and comply with agreed customer product specifications. This shall be regularly checked and documented.

4.6 Factory location

4.6.1* The company shall investigate the extent to which the factory environment (e.g. ground, air) may have an adverse impact on food safety and product quality. Where it is established that product safety and/or quality is at risk of being compromised, appropriate control measures shall be implemented. The effectiveness of the implemented measures shall be periodically reviewed (e.g. extremely dusty air, strong smells).

4.7 Factory exterior

4.7.1 All external areas of the factory shall be clean, tidy and maintained in good condition. Where natural drainage is inadequate, a suitable drainage system shall be installed.

4.7.2 Outdoor storage shall be kept to a minimum. Where goods are stored outside, it shall be justified by risk assessment to ensure that there are no contamination risks or adverse effects on food safety and quality.

4.8 Plant layout and process flow

4.8.1 A site map covering all buildings of the facility shall be available. Plans shall be in place that clearly describe the process flow of:

- finished products
- packaging materials
- raw materials
- personnel
- waste
- water.

4.8.2* The process flow, from receipt of goods to dispatch, shall be established, reviewed and where necessary, modified to ensure that the microbiological, chemical and physical contamination risks of raw materials, packaging materials, semi-finished and finished products are avoided. The cross-contamination risks shall be minimised through effective measures.

4.8.3 In the case of areas sensitive to microbiological, chemical and physical risk(s) which is/are justified by risk assessment, they shall be designed and operated to ensure product safety is not compromised.

4.8.4 Laboratory facilities and in-process controls shall not affect product safety.

4.9 Production and storage premises

4.9.1 Constructional requirements

4.9.1.1* Premises where food products are prepared, treated, processed and stored shall be designed and constructed to ensure food safety.

4.9.2 Walls

4.9.2.1 Walls shall be designed and constructed to prevent the accumulation of dirt, reduce condensation and mould growth and facilitate cleaning.

4.9.2.2 The surfaces of walls shall be in good condition and easy to clean; they shall be impervious and wear-resistant to minimise product contamination risks.

4.9.2.3 The junctions between walls, floors and ceilings shall be designed to facilitate cleaning.

4.9.3 Floors

4.9.3.1 Floor covering shall be designed to meet production requirements and shall be in good condition and easy to clean. Surfaces shall be impervious and wear-resistant.

4.9.3.2* The hygienic disposal of water and other liquids shall be ensured. Drainage systems shall be easy to clean and designed to minimise product contamination risks (e.g. entry of pests, areas sensitive to transmission of odour or contaminants).

4.9.3.3 Water and other liquids shall reach drainage using appropriate measures without difficulty. Puddles shall be avoided.

4.9.3.4 In food handling areas, machinery and piping shall be arranged to allow waste water, if possible, to flow directly into a drain.

4.9.4 Ceilings/Overheads

4.9.4.1 Ceilings (or, where no ceilings exist, the inside of roofs) and overhead fixtures (including piping, cableway, lamps, etc.) shall be constructed to minimise the accumulation of dirt and condensation and shall not pose any physical and/or microbiological contamination risks.

4.9.4.2 Where false ceilings are used, access to the vacant area shall be provided to facilitate cleaning, maintenance and inspection for pest control.

4.9.5 Windows and other openings

4.9.5.1 Windows and other openings shall be designed and constructed to avoid the accumulation of dirt and shall be maintained in good condition.

4.9.5.2 Where there are contamination risks, windows and roof glazing shall remain closed and fixed during production.

4.9.5.3 Where windows and roof glazing are designed to be opened for ventilation purposes, they shall be fitted with easily removable, good condition pest screens or other measures to avoid any contamination.

4.9.5.4 In areas where unpackaged products are handled, windows shall be protected against breakage.

4.9.6 Doors and gates

4.9.6.1 Doors and gates shall be in good condition and easy to clean. They shall be constructed of non-absorbent materials to avoid:

- splintering parts
- flaking paint
- corrosion.

4.9.6.2 External doors and gates shall be constructed to prevent the access of pests; they shall be self-closing, unless non-essentiality is justified by risk assessment.

4.9.6.3 Plastic strip curtains separating the internal areas shall be in good condition and easy to clean.

4.9.7 Lighting

4.9.7.1 All production, storage, receipt and dispatch areas shall have adequate levels of light.

4.9.8 Air conditioning/Ventilation

4.9.8.1 Adequate natural and/or artificial ventilation shall be in place in all areas.

4.9.8.2 If ventilation equipment is installed, filters and other components shall be easily accessible and checked, cleaned or replaced as necessary.

4.9.8.3 Air conditioning equipment and artificially generated airflow shall not compromise product safety and quality.

4.9.8.4 Dust extraction equipment shall be installed in areas where considerable amounts of dust are generated.

4.9.9 Water

4.9.9.1* Water which is used as an ingredient in the production process or for cleaning shall be of potable quality at the point of use and supplied in sufficient quantity; this also applies to steam and ice used within the production area.

4.9.9.2 Recycled water, which is used in the process, shall not pose contamination risks.

4.9.9.3 The quality of water (including recycled water), steam or ice shall be monitored following a sampling plan based on hazard analysis and assessment of associated risks.

4.9.9.4 Non-potable water shall be transported in separate, properly marked piping. Such piping shall neither be connected to the drinking water system nor allow the possibility of reflux, to avoid contamination of potable water sources or factory environment.

4.9.10 Compressed air and gases

4.9.10.1* The quality of compressed air that comes in direct contact with food or primary packaging materials shall be monitored based on hazard analysis and assessment of associated risks. If gases are used, they shall demonstrate adequate safety and quality through a declaration of compliance and shall be suitable for the intended use.

4.9.10.2 Compressed air shall not pose contamination risks.

4.10 Cleaning and disinfection

4.10.1* Based on hazard analysis and assessment of associated risks, cleaning and disinfection schedules shall be available and implemented. These shall specify:

- objectives
- responsibilities
- the products used and their instructions for use
- dosage of cleaning and disinfection chemicals
- the areas to be cleaned and/or disinfected

- cleaning and disinfection frequency
- documentation requirements
- hazard symbols (if necessary).

4.10.2 Cleaning and disinfection shall result in effectively cleaned premises, facilities and equipment. Defined methods shall be adequately implemented, documented and monitored.

4.10.3 Monitoring records for cleaning and disinfection shall be available.

4.10.4 Only qualified personnel shall be allowed to undertake cleaning and disinfection. The personnel shall be trained and retrained to carry out the cleaning and disinfection schedules.

4.10.5 The effectiveness of the cleaning and disinfection measures shall be verified and justified by risk assessment. The verification shall be based on an appropriate sampling schedule and shall consider:

- visual inspection
- rapid testing
- analytical testing methods.

Resultant corrective actions shall be documented.

4.10.6 Cleaning and disinfection schedules shall be reviewed and modified, in the event that changes occur to products, processes or cleaning and disinfection equipment, if necessary.

4.10.7 The intended use of cleaning and disinfection utensils shall be clearly identified. Cleaning and disinfection utensils shall be used in a way that avoids contamination.

4.10.8* Safety Data Sheets and instructions for use shall be available for chemicals and cleaning and disinfection agents. Personnel responsible for cleaning and disinfection shall be able to demonstrate their knowledge of such instructions, which shall always be available on site.

4.10.9* Cleaning and disinfection chemicals shall be clearly labelled, used and stored appropriately, to avoid contamination.

4.10.10 Cleaning and disinfection activities shall be carried out in periods of non-production. If this is not possible, these operations shall be controlled in order not to affect the products.

4.10.11* Where a company hires a third-party service provider for cleaning and disinfection activities, all requirements specified above shall be clearly defined in the service contract.

4.11 Waste management

4.11.1* A waste management procedure shall be in place to avoid cross contamination.

4.11.2 All local legal requirements for waste disposal shall be met.

4.11.3 Food waste and other waste shall be removed as quickly as possible from areas where food is handled. The accumulation of waste shall be avoided.

4.11.4 Waste collection containers shall be clearly marked, suitably designed, in a good state of repair, easy to clean, and where necessary, disinfected.

4.11.5 If a company decides to separate food waste and to reintroduce them into the feed supply chain, adequate measures or procedures shall be implemented to prevent a contamination or deterioration of this material.

4.11.6 Waste shall be collected in separate containers in accordance with the intended means of disposal. Such waste shall be disposed by authorised third-parties only. Records of waste disposal shall be kept by the company.

4.12 Foreign material risk mitigation

4.12.1 The products being processed shall be protected against physical contamination, which includes but is not limited to:

- environmental contaminants
- oils or dripping liquids from machinery
- dust spills.

Special consideration shall also be given to product contamination risks caused by:

- equipment and utensils
- pipes
- walkways
- platforms
- ladders.

If, for technological characteristics and/or needs, it is not possible to protect the products, appropriate control measures shall be defined and applied.

4.12.2* KO N° 6: Based on hazard analysis and assessment of associated risks, procedures shall be in place to avoid contamination with foreign materials. Contaminated products shall be treated as non-conforming products.

4.12.3 Where metal and/or other foreign material detectors are required, they shall be installed to ensure maximum efficiency of detection to avoid subsequent contamination. Detectors shall be subjected to regular maintenance to avoid malfunction.

4.12.4 The adequate accuracy of all equipment and methods designed to detect and/or eliminate foreign materials shall be specified. Functionality checks of such equipment and methods shall be carried out regularly. In case of malfunction or failure, corrective actions shall be defined, implemented and documented.

4.12.5 Potentially contaminated products shall be isolated. Access and actions for the further handling or checking of these isolated products shall only be carried out by authorised personnel according to defined procedures. After this check, contaminated products shall be treated as non-conforming products.

4.12.6 In areas where raw materials, semi-finished and finished products are handled, the use of glass and/or brittle materials shall be excluded; however where the presence of glass and/or brittle materials cannot be avoided, the risks shall be controlled and the glass and/or brittle materials shall be clean and pose no risks to product safety.

4.12.7 Based on hazard analysis and assessment of associated risks, preventive measures shall be in place for the handling of glass packaging, glass containers or other kinds of containers in the production process (turn over, blow, rinse, etc.). After this process step, there shall be no further contamination risks.

4.12.8 Procedures shall be in place describing the measures to be taken in case of glass breakage and/or brittle materials. Such measures shall include identifying the scope of goods to be isolated, specifying authorised personnel, cleaning the production environment and releasing the production line for continued production.

4.12.9 Breakages of glass and brittle materials shall be recorded. Exceptions shall be justified and documented.

4.12.10* Where visual inspection is used to detect foreign materials, the employees shall be trained and operative changes shall be performed at an appropriate frequency to maximise the effectiveness of the process.

4.12.11 In areas where raw materials, semi-finished and finished products are handled, the use of wood shall be excluded; however, where the presence of wood cannot be avoided, the risks shall be controlled and the wood shall be clean and pose no risks to product safety.

4.13 Pest monitoring and control

4.13.1 Site infrastructure and operations shall be designed and built to prevent pest infestation.

4.13.2* The company shall have adequate pest control measures in place which shall be in compliance with local legal requirements and shall take into account, at a minimum:

- factory environment (potential pests)
- type of raw material/finished products
- site plan with area for application (bait map)
- constructional designs susceptible for pest activity, such as ceilings, cellars, pipes, corners
- identification of the baits on site
- responsibilities, in-house/external
- agents used and their instructions for use and safety
- frequency of inspections
- rented storage if applicable.

The pest control measures shall be based on hazard analysis and assessment of associated risks.

4.13.3 Where a company hires a third-party service provider for pest control, all requirements specified above shall be clearly defined in the service contract. A person at the company shall be appointed and trained to monitor the pest control measures. Even if the pest control service is outsourced, responsibilities for the necessary actions (including ongoing supervision of pest control activities) shall remain within the company.

4.13.4 Pest control inspections and resulting actions shall be documented. Implementation of actions shall be monitored and recorded. Any infestation shall be documented and control measures taken.

4.13.5 Baits, traps and insect exterminators shall be fully functioning, sufficient in number, designed for purpose, placed in appropriate positions and used in a way that avoids any contamination risks.

4.13.6 Incoming deliveries shall be inspected on arrival for the presence of pests. Any findings shall be recorded.

4.13.7 The effectiveness of the pest control measures shall be monitored, including trend analysis, to allow timely appropriate actions. Records of this monitoring shall be available.

4.14 Receipt and storage of goods

4.14.1* All incoming goods, including packaging materials and labels, shall be checked for conformity against specifications and a determined inspection plan. The inspection plan shall be justified by risk assessment. Records of those inspections shall be available.

4.14.2* The storage conditions of raw materials, semi-finished, finished products and packaging materials shall correspond to product specifications and shall not have any negative impact on other products. This shall be defined in an implemented and maintained system.

4.14.3 Raw materials, packaging materials, semi-finished and finished products shall be stored to minimise contamination risks or any other negative impact.

4.14.4 Appropriate storage facilities shall be available for the management and storage of working materials, process aids and additives. The personnel responsible for the management of storage facilities shall be trained.

4.14.5* All products shall be clearly identified. Use of products shall be undertaken in accordance with the principles of First In/First Out and/or First Expired/First Out.

4.14.6 Where a company hires a third-party storage service provider, the service provider shall be certified for IFS Logistics or any other GFSI recognised certification standard covering the respective scope of activity. If not, all relevant requirements equivalent to the company's own storage practices shall be fulfilled and this shall be clearly defined in the respective contract.

4.15 Transport

4.15.1* The conditions inside the vehicles, such as:

- absence of strange smells
- high dust load
- adverse humidity
- pests
- mould

shall be checked before loading and be documented to ensure compliance with the specified conditions.

4.15.2 Where goods are transported at certain temperatures, the temperature inside the vehicles shall be checked and documented before loading.

4.15.3 Procedures to prevent contamination during transport, including loading and unloading, shall be in place. Different categories of goods (food/non-food) shall be taken into consideration, if applicable.

4.15.4 Where goods are transported at certain temperatures, maintaining the adequate range of temperatures during transport shall be ensured and documented.

4.15.5 Adequate hygiene requirements for all transport vehicles and equipment used for loading/unloading (e.g. hoses of silo installations) shall exist. Measures taken shall be recorded.

4.15.6 The loading/unloading areas shall be appropriate for their intended use. They shall be constructed in a way that:

- the risks of pest intake are mitigated
- products are protected from adverse weather conditions
- accumulation of waste is avoided
- condensation and growth of mould are prevented
- cleaning can be easily undertaken.

4.15.7 Where a company hires a third-party transport service provider, the service provider shall be certified for IFS Logistics or any other GFSI recognised certification standard covering the respective scope of activity. If not, all relevant requirements equivalent to the company's own transport practices shall be fulfilled and this shall be clearly defined in the respective contract.

4.16 Maintenance and repair

4.16.1* An adequate maintenance plan shall be in place, maintained and documented, that covers all critical equipment (including transport) for compliance with product requirements. This applies both to internal maintenance activities and service providers. The plan shall include responsibilities, priorities and due dates.

4.16.2 Product requirements and prevention of contamination shall be ensured during and after maintenance and repair work. Records of maintenance and repair work shall be kept.

4.16.3 All materials used for maintenance and repair shall be fit for the intended use and shall not pose contamination risks.

4.16.4 Failures and malfunctions of plant and equipment (including transport) that are essential for food safety and quality, shall be identified, documented and reviewed to enable prompt actions and to improve the maintenance plan.

4.16.5 Temporary repairs shall be carried out not to compromise food safety and product quality. Such work shall be documented and a short-term deadline set for eliminating the issue.

4.16.6 Where a company hires a third-party maintenance and repair service provider, all the company specified requirements regarding material, equipment and operational rules shall be clearly defined, documented and maintained in the service contract, to prevent any product contamination.

4.17 Equipment

4.17.1* Equipment shall be suitably designed and specified for the intended use. Before commissioning, it shall be verified that the product requirements are complied with.

4.17.2 For all equipment and utensils with direct food contact, a certificate of conformity shall be in place, which confirms compliance with legal requirements.
In case no specific legal requirements are in place, evidence shall be available, such as:

- certificate of conformity
- technical specifications
- manufacturer's self-declaration

to demonstrate that they are suitable for the intended use.

4.17.3 Equipment shall be located to allow effective cleaning and maintenance operations.

4.17.4 The company shall ensure that all product equipment is in a condition that does not compromise food safety and product quality.

4.17.5 The company shall ensure that in the event of changes to equipment, the process characteristics are reviewed to assure that the product requirements, as agreed with customers, are complied with.

4.18 Traceability

4.18.1* KO N° 7: A traceability system shall be in place that enables the identification of product lots and their relation to batches of raw materials and primary packaging materials. The traceability system shall incorporate all relevant records of:

- **receipt**
- **processing**
- **use of rework**
- **distribution.**

Traceability shall be ensured and documented until delivery to the customer.

4.18.2* The traceability system shall be tested on a periodic basis, at least annually and each time the traceability system changes. The test samples shall represent the complexity of the company's product range. The test records shall verify upstream and downstream traceability (from delivered products to raw materials, and vice versa). The traceability of the finished products shall be performed within four (4) hours maximum.

4.18.3 Test results, including the timeframe for obtaining the information, shall be recorded and where necessary appropriate actions shall be taken. Timeframe objectives shall be defined and be in compliance with customer requirements.

4.18.4 The traceability system shall identify the relationship between batches of finished products and their labels.

4.18.5 Traceability shall be ensured at all stages, including work in progress, post treatment and rework.

4.18.6 Labelling of semi-finished or finished product lots shall be made at the time when the goods are directly packed to ensure clear traceability of goods. Where goods are labelled at a later time, the temporarily stored goods shall have a specific lot labelling. Shelf life (e.g. best before date) of labelled goods shall be established using the original production batch.

4.18.7 If required by the customer, identified representative samples of the manufacturing lot or batch number shall be stored appropriately and kept until expiration of the "Use by" or "Best before" date of the finished products and, if necessary, for a determined period beyond this date.

4.19 Allergen risk mitigation

4.19.1 Raw material specifications that identify allergens requiring declarations relevant to the country of sale of the finished products shall be available. The company shall maintain a continuously up to date listing of all raw materials containing allergens used on the premises. This shall also identify all blends and formulas to which such raw materials containing allergens are added.

4.19.2* Based on hazard analysis and assessment of associated risks, preventive and control measures shall be in place from receipt to dispatch, to ensure that potential cross contamination of products by allergens is minimised. The potential cross contamination risks related to:

- environment
- transport
- storage
- raw materials

shall be considered.
Control measures shall be verified.

4.19.3 Finished products containing allergens that require declaration shall be declared in accordance with legal requirements. Accidental or technically unavoidable cross-contaminations of legally declared allergens and traces shall be labelled. The decision shall be based on a hazard analysis and assessment of associated risks. The potential cross-contamination with allergens from raw materials processed in the company shall also be taken into account on the product label.

4.20 Food fraud

4.20.1 The responsibilities for a food fraud vulnerability assessment and mitigation plan shall be clearly defined. The responsible person(s) shall have the appropriate specific knowledge and full commitment from the senior management.

4.20.2* A documented food fraud vulnerability assessment shall be undertaken on all raw materials, ingredients, packaging materials and outsourced processes, to determine the risks of fraudulent activity in relation to substitution, mislabelling, adulteration or counterfeiting. The criteria considered within the vulnerability assessment shall be defined.

4.20.3* A documented food fraud mitigation plan shall be developed, with reference to the vulnerability assessment, and implemented to control any identified risks. The methods of control and monitoring shall be defined and implemented.

4.20.4* The food fraud vulnerability assessment shall be regularly reviewed, at least annually, and/or in the event of increased risks. If necessary, the food fraud mitigation plan shall be revised/updated accordingly.

5 Measurements, analyses, improvements

5.1 Internal audits

5.1.1* KO N° 8: The company shall have an effective internal audit program in place which shall cover at least all the requirements of the IFS Standard.
Scope and frequency of internal audits shall be determined and justified by risk assessment. The internal audit program shall also apply to off-site storage locations owned or rented by the company.

5.1.2* Internal audits of activities, which are critical to food safety and product quality, shall be carried out at least once a year.

5.1.3 The auditors shall be competent and independent from the audited department.

5.1.4 Internal audit results shall be communicated to the senior management and to persons responsible for the concerned activities. Necessary corrective actions and a schedule for implementation shall be determined, documented and communicated to the relevant persons. All corrective actions resulting from the internal audits shall be verified.

5.2 Site factory inspections

5.2.1* Site and factory inspections shall be planned and carried out for topics, such as:

- constructional status of production and storage premises
- external areas
- product control during processing
- hygiene during processing and within the infrastructure
- foreign material hazards
- personal hygiene.

The frequency of inspections shall be justified by risk assessment and be based on the history of previous experience.

5.3 Process and working environment validation and control

5.3.1* The criteria for process and working environment validation and control shall be clearly defined. Where the control of process and working environment parameters (temperature, time, pressure, chemical properties, etc.) are essential to ensure the food safety and product quality requirements, such parameters shall be monitored and recorded continuously and/or at appropriate intervals.

5.3.2* All rework operations shall be validated, monitored and documented. These operations shall not affect the food safety and product quality requirements.

5.3.3 Procedures shall be in place for prompt notification, recording and monitoring of equipment malfunction and process deviations.

5.3.4 Process and working environment validation shall be performed using the collected data that is relevant for food safety and the processes. If substantial modifications occur, a re-validation shall be carried out.

5.4 Calibration, adjustment and checking of measuring and monitoring devices

5.4.1* The company shall identify and record the measuring and monitoring devices required to ensure compliance with food safety and product quality requirements. Their calibration status shall be recorded. Measuring and monitoring devices shall be legally approved, if required by legislation.

5.4.2* All measuring devices shall be checked, adjusted and calibrated at specified intervals, with a monitoring system. This system shall be in accordance with defined, recognised standard/methods and within relevant limits of the process parameter values. The results of the checks, adjustments and calibrations shall be documented.

5.4.3 All measuring devices shall be used exclusively for their defined purpose. Where the results of measurements or the status of the device indicate a malfunction, the device in question shall be immediately repaired or replaced. Where necessary, corrections and corrective actions on processes and products shall be carried out.

5.5 Quantity control monitoring

5.5.1* The company shall define compliance criteria to control lot quantity. A frequent and methodological approach for quantity control shall be in place to meet legal requirements of the destination country/ies and customer specifications.

5.5.2 Checks shall be implemented and recorded, according to a sampling plan which ensures a proper representation of the manufacturing lot. Results of these checks shall be compliant with defined criteria for all products ready to be delivered.

5.6 Product and process analyses

5.6.1* Testing plans for internal and external analyses shall be justified by risk assessment to ensure that product safety, quality, legal and specific customer requirements are met. The plans shall cover topics, such as:

- raw materials
- semi-finished products
- finished products
- packaging materials
- contact surfaces of processing equipment
- relevant parameters for environmental monitoring.

All test results shall be recorded.

5.6.2* Analyses which are relevant for food safety, shall preferably be performed by laboratories with appropriate accredited programs/methods (ISO/IEC 17025). If the analyses are performed internally or by a laboratory without the appropriate accredited programs/methods, the results shall be verified on a regular basis by laboratories accredited to these programs/methods (ISO/IEC 17025).

5.6.3 Procedures shall exist which ensure the reliability of the internal analyses results, based on officially, recognised analysis methods. This shall be demonstrated by ring tests or other proficiency tests.

5.6.4 Results of analyses shall be evaluated promptly by competent personnel. Appropriate corrective actions shall be undertaken for any unsatisfactory results. The analytical results shall be reviewed regularly in order to identify trends and, when necessary, corrective actions shall be taken.

5.6.5 Where internal analyses or controls are undertaken, these shall be carried out in accordance with defined procedures, by trained and approved personnel, in defined areas or laboratories, using appropriate equipment.

5.6.6 For verification of the quality of the finished product, internal organoleptic tests shall be carried out regularly. These tests shall be in accordance with specifications and related to the impact on respective parameters of product characteristics. The results of these tests shall be documented.

5.6.7 The testing plan shall be regularly reviewed and updated, based on results, changes to legislation or issues that may have an impact on product safety, quality or legality.

5.7 Product release

5.7.1* A procedure for quarantine (blocking/hold) shall be in place that is justified by risk assessment. The procedure shall ensure that only raw materials, semi-finished and finished products, and packaging materials conforming to product requirements, are processed and dispatched.

5.8 Management of complaints from authorities and customers

5.8.1* A procedure shall be in place for the management of product complaints and of any written notification from the competent authorities—within the framework of official controls—, any ordering action or measure to be taken when non-compliance is identified.

5.8.2* All complaints shall be registered, readily available and assessed by competent staff. Where it is justified, appropriate actions shall be taken immediately.

5.8.3 Complaints shall be analysed with a view to implementing appropriate actions to avoid the recurrence of the non-conformity.

5.8.4 The results of complaint data analysis shall be made available to the relevant responsible persons.

5.9 Management of incidents, product withdrawal, product recall

5.9.1* A procedure shall be implemented and maintained for the management of incidents and potential emergency situations with an impact on food safety, quality and legality. It shall include, at a minimum:

- the decision-making process
- the nomination of a person, authorised by the company and permanently available, to initiate the incident management process in a timely manner
- the nomination and training of an incident management team
- an up to date alert contact list including customer information, sources of legal advice, contacts availability
- a communication plan including authorities.

5.9.2* KO N° 9: An effective procedure for the withdrawal and/or the recall of all products shall be in place. This procedure shall include a clear assignment of responsibilities and a comprehensive information policy for customers and consumers.

5.9.3 The procedures for management of incidents and product withdrawal/recall shall be subject to regular internal testing, at least once a year. This test shall be carried out to ensure the effective implementation and operation of the full procedure and shall include the verification of the updated contact data.

5.10 Management of non-conformities and non-conforming products

5.10.1* A procedure shall be in place for the management of all non-conforming raw materials, semi-finished products, finished products, processing equipment and packaging materials. This shall include, at a minimum:

- defined responsibilities
- isolation/quarantine procedures
- risk assessment
- identification including labelling
- decision about the further usage like release, rework/post treatment, blocking, quarantine, rejection/disposal.

5.10.2 The procedure for the management of non-conforming products shall be understood and applied by all relevant employees.

5.10.3 Where non-conformities are identified, immediate actions shall be taken to ensure that food safety and product quality requirements are complied with.

5.10.4 Finished products (including packaging) that are out of specification shall not be placed on the market under the corresponding label, unless a written approval of the brand owner is available.

5.11 Corrective actions

5.11.1* A procedure shall be in place for the recording and analysis of non-conformities and non-conforming products, with the objective to avoid recurrences by preventive and/or corrective actions. This may include a root cause analysis.

5.11.2 KO N° 10: Corrective actions shall be clearly formulated, documented and undertaken as soon as possible to avoid the further occurrence of non-conformities. The responsibilities and the timescales for corrective actions shall be clearly defined.

5.11.3 The effectiveness of the implemented corrective actions shall be assessed and the results of the assessment documented.

6 Food defence plan

6.1 The responsibilities for the food defence plan shall be clearly defined. Those responsible shall have the appropriate specific knowledge and training, and have full commitment from the senior management.

6.2* A food defence plan and procedure shall be developed based on probability and be implemented in relation to assessed threats. This shall include:

- legal requirements
- identification of critical areas and/or practices and policy of access by employees
- visitors and contractors
- any other appropriate control measure.

The food defence plan shall be reviewed at least annually, and updated when appropriate.

6.3 The test on the effectiveness of the food defence plan and the related control measures shall be included in the internal audit and the inspection plan.

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

PART 3
Requirements for accreditation bodies, certification bodies and auditors
IFS Accreditation and Certification process

0 Introduction

IFS Certification is a product and process certification. All bodies involved shall comply with the international rules and IFS specific requirements described in this document. This part of the IFS Standard mainly deals with requirements applicable to accreditation bodies, certification bodies and auditors.

1 Requirements for the accreditation bodies

1.1 General requirements

The accreditation bodies shall fulfil the requirements of the ISO/IEC 17011 norm *"Conformity assessment—General requirements for accreditation bodies accrediting conformity assessment bodies",* and shall have signed the MLA (Multilateral Agreement) for product certification of the IAF (International Accreditation Forum).

In order to ensure interactive communication, accreditation bodies shall appoint an IFS contact person within their organisation.

1.2 The training of the accreditation committee (or competent person)

In general, relevant accreditation body personnel engaged in concerned IFS Accreditation activities shall have sufficient knowledge of the IFS Food Standard, the related normative documents and the food industry.

Accreditation decisions can only be made following the recommendation of a competent person or an accreditation committee. The person in charge, or at least one member of the accreditation committee, shall have taken part in an IFS training session ("Train the Trainer" course (TTT course))—organised by IFS or shall be able to demonstrate an equivalent level of knowledge. In the case of a committee, the trained person shall provide the other members of the accreditation committee with the necessary information. This information is based on the main points of the "Train the Trainer" course with the main emphasis on Part 1 (IFS Food Certification protocol), Part 3 (requirements for accreditation bodies, certification bodies and auditors), Part 4 (Assessment report, certificate) of the IFS Food Standard, the IFS Food Doctrine and the IFS Auditors' examinations process.

1.3 Competencies of the assessor(s) of the accreditation body

The assessor(s) of the accreditation bodies is/are responsible for the following:

- Accompanying IFS Food Auditors during registered IFS Food Assessments (accreditation witness assessment)
- Assessing the head office of the certification body (head office assessment)

according to ISO/IEC 17065:2012 norm and IFS specific requirements.

In general, the assessor(s) shall have working knowledge of the ISO/IEC 17065:2012 norm and the IFS normative documents (IFS Food Standard and Doctrine). The person at the accreditation body responsible for IFS Standards can participate in IFS official trainings/certification body conferences/accreditation body meetings to train assessors internally.

Witness assessors shall, at a minimum:

- Be able to demonstrate a working knowledge of IFS (e.g. by taking part in the yearly IFS certification body conference, IFS Calibration Training, IFS Train the Trainer course; or by being trained internally by an accreditation body leader who has taken part in the IFS training(s)/certification body conference)
- Have taken part in an HACCP course
- Have a minimum of two (2) years' experience in the food industry sector.

Head office assessors shall, at a minimum:

- Have detailed knowledge of the current versions of IFS normative documents.

1.4 Frequency of the assessments of certification bodies

A head office assessment (with review of at least one full IFS Food Certification process) and at least one accreditation witness assessment shall be performed during an initial assessment.
The certification body is allowed to perform a maximum of ten (10) IFS Food Assessments and to operate for a maximum of one year before achieving the accreditation for IFS Food. In this case, at least one of the IFS Assessments shall be assessed by the accreditation body (accreditation witness assessment) and all IFS Assessments (including at least one full certification process) shall be reviewed by the accreditation body during the initial head office assessment.
For recertification assessment, a head office assessment (with review of at least one full certification process) and one accreditation witness assessment shall be performed.

During the surveillance of the accreditation cycle, the following number of assessments shall be performed:

- A minimum of one head office assessment per year
- A minimum of one accreditation witness assessment every two (2) years. Different IFS Product Scopes shall be considered within the accreditation witness assessments.

Note: A flexibility of maximum three (3) months can be permitted for the interval between two (2) assessments, according to the accreditation body rules.

During head office assessments, the following documentation shall be sampled and assessed, at a minimum:

- For certification bodies with up to 200 certificates: at least three (3) IFS Food Certification site files
- For certification bodies with up to 400 certificates: at least five (5) IFS Food Certification site files

For each additional up to 200 certificates at least one additional IFS Food Certification site file.

- For certification bodies with up to 10 auditors: at least three (3) auditor files
- For certification bodies with up 20 auditors: at least five (5) auditor files.

For each additional up to 20 auditors at least one additional auditor file.

The use of non-exclusive auditors shall be adequately addressed in the sample of auditor files. For consecutive accreditation witness assessments, the accreditation body shall, wherever possible, select two (2) different IFS Food Auditors of the certification body in order to cover different scopes.

1.5 Accreditation of an internationally active certification body

The head office assessments and the accreditation witness assessments shall cover the typical activities (including international activities and critical locations) of the certification body. If the accreditation body subcontracts an assessment, the subcontracted accreditation body shall be a signatory to the IAF MLA for ISO/IEC 17065:2012 norm. The IAF MD 12:2016 Accreditation assessment of conformity assessment bodies with activities in multiple countries shall apply.

1.6 Conditions for recovering accreditation after withdrawal or suspension

If the accreditation body decides to withdraw or suspend accreditation, certification bodies shall stop performing IFS Assessments and issuing IFS Certificates. To recover accreditation after withdrawal, the same conditions as for initial assessment apply. In case of accreditation suspension, IFS reserves the right to conduct further own activities connected to a lift of accreditation suspension for a certification body.

2 Requirements for the certification bodies

Certification bodies intending to perform IFS Food Assessments shall comply with the following rules.

2.1 Contract with the IFS Management GmbH

The certification body shall have signed the IFS Framework Agreement before it is authorised to perform any IFS Assessment (including the first assessment(s) during the accreditation process). The certification body shall demonstrate that they are actively applying for accreditation to the ISO/IEC 17065:2012 norm for IFS Food. As part of the IFS Framework Agreement, the certification

body is obliged to send at least one participant to the annual IFS certification body conference. This person shall either be the IFS Standard manager, the approved IFS Trainer, or one of their officially assigned deputies, and shall be fluent in English.

2.2 ISO/IEC 17065:2012 norm accreditation process for IFS

The certification body shall be accredited to the ISO/IEC 17065:2012 norm for IFS Food by an IAF recognised accreditation body. Certification bodies in the process of accreditation may organise a maximum of ten (10) Assessments including the accreditation witness assessment before having achieved accreditation status. All Assessments (including at least one full certification process) shall be reviewed by the accreditation body during the initial head office assessment.

Note: In case of withdrawal or suspension of accreditation against ISO/IEC 17065:2012 norm for IFS, the whole certification process shall be stopped and the certification body is no longer allowed to issue any IFS Certificate. The certification body cannot issue IFS Certificates from the date of withdrawal or suspension, even for Assessments which have been already performed but which are still in the certification process (report review, certification decision, etc.).

2.3 Complaints and appeals procedure

The certification body shall have documented procedures for the consideration and resolution of appeals against the results of an IFS Assessment. These procedures shall be independent of the individual auditor and shall be considered by the senior management of the certification body. Appeals shall be finalised within 20 working days of receiving information from the assessed site.

The certification body shall have documented procedures for handling complaints received from the companies and/or other relevant parties. A letter confirming receipt of the complaint shall be issued within a maximum of five (5) working days. An initial response shall be given within ten (10) working days of receiving the complaint. A full written response shall be given after the completion of a full and thorough investigation into the complaint.

For the handling of complaints received by the IFS Offices, the basis for complaint management is described in the IFS Framework Agreement with certification bodies:

- If the complaint relates to the quality of IFS Assessments or the content of IFS Assessment reports, the IFS Offices require the certification body to provide a statement on the cause and the measures identified to rectify the problem within two (2) weeks.
- If the complaint relates to administrative errors, e.g. in IFS Assessment reports, IFS Certificates or in the IFS Database, the IFS Offices ask the certification body to provide a statement and rectify the problem within one week. The statement shall be issued in writing, by e-mail or post.

2.4 Certification decision

The decision concerning certification can only be made following the recommendation of a competent person or a certification committee (chart 7). Furthermore, the decision can only be made by a different person than the one who performed the Assessment.

Chart 7: Functions and requirements related to certification decision process

Function	Profile/requirements	Further requirements
Technical report review and the recommendation for a certification decision	by one nominated person from the certification body who is approved as IFS Food Auditor or IFS Food pure Reviewer	This shall not be the person who performed the Assessment. The review shall be documented.
Certification decision	by the certification body (the certification body shall retain authority for its decisions relating to certification)	The certification decision is made following recommendation by a competent person. The decision shall be made by the certification body, either a nominated person or a committee and there will be no involvement of the person who performed the Assessment.

2.5 Transfer of certification

In case one certification body decides to transfer its certification activities to another one, the new certification body shall verify all current IFS Certificates, in order to decide if further actions (e.g. withdrawal of recent certificates or additional IFS recertification Assessments) will be necessary.

2.6 Certification body responsibilities for IFS Auditors, Reviewers, Trainers and Witness Auditors

The certification body shall ensure compliance with ISO/IEC 17065:2012 norm and the IFS Framework Agreement.

It is the responsibility of the certification body to ensure that processes are in place to monitor and maintain the competencies of all auditors to the level required by the IFS Standard. Therefore, certification bodies have the following responsibilities:

- To manage witness audits (by accreditation bodies, Integrity Program, and certification body through the monitoring program and sign-off audits).
- To ensure that auditors or Assessment teams are qualified for the full scope of the Assessment and are able to apply relevant laws, regulations, IFS requirements and the certification body's own rules.

- To maintain auditor competencies (by continuous supervision by the certification body) and monitor Assessment performance of every auditor by an on-site witness audit at least once every two (2) years (see more details in chapter 3.1.1.5, Part 3).
- To witness auditors who are already IFS Auditors but new to the certification body when starting to perform IFS Food Assessment for them (this witness audit can count as the regular monitoring Assessment so that the next regular monitoring Assessment will be performed in the second year).
- To ensure that auditors act impartially (e.g. not acting against IFS rules, not having acted as a consultant or having had involvement with or acted on behalf of the companies being assessed during the previous two (2) years).
- To ensure that no auditor shall perform more than three (3) consecutive IFS Food Assessments at the same production site (this only applies for full Assessments, irrespective of the time between them; this does not apply for follow-up Assessments, extension Assessments, Assessments that have been observed as a trainee, including auditor in progress (AIP) Assessments 1 to 9).
- To ensure that all auditors have a valid contract with them.
- To obtain a signed agreement from the auditors for each Assessment, which includes the statement:
  - of compliance with all rules defined by the certification body, including confidentiality and independence from commercial and other interests
  - of absence of conflict of interest, including a declaration in case of any association to the company being assessed, currently or within the last two (2) years.
- To ensure that at least one member of the certification body staff is responsible for certification body in-house IFS trainings. This approved IFS Trainer shall have taken part in the TTT course organised by IFS.

  Note: For a certification body which is starting IFS activities, the in-house training can be organised by IFS, on request.
- To organise 16 hours of in-house training for IFS Auditors and Reviewers per year, for the purpose of sharing experience, calibration and updating knowledge of relevant legal requirements, etc. The content shall cover elements of the IFS GAP Guideline. The IFS Trainer is responsible for the content of the training and shall lead at least part of the training. Topics such as legislation, assessment practices, food safety updates can be the same as for other GFSI recognised food safety certification standards. The 16 hours of training shall include at least one day of face-to-face meeting. The other eight (8) hours of training can either take place via face-to-face meeting or via online session(s), as long as it is dedicated to IFS. The signature list and the agenda of the training shall be available upon request.
- To be fully cognisant of the examination regulations provided by IFS and available on the IFS Website.
- To ensure the Assessment report and associated documentation including auditor's notes are stored safely and surely for a period of five (5) years.

The certification body is responsible for appointing an auditor or an Assessment team with the corresponding product and technology scope(s), language, competency/ies, etc. for each IFS Assessment.

Every certification body shall have a minimum of one contracted auditor, one contracted reviewer, one approved IFS Trainer and an IFS responsible person (contact person for IFS). In case of any changes, the certification body shall inform the IFS Offices.

3 Requirements for IFS Food Auditors, Reviewers, Trainers and Witness Auditors

3.1 Specific roles and functions of certification body staff

3.1.1 Requirements for IFS Food Auditors

IFS Auditors can work on an exclusive basis with only one certification body or on a non-exclusive basis for one or more certification bodies.

An exclusive auditor shall have submitted all relevant information about her/his competencies to the certification body and the certification body shall have assessed and confirmed her/his competencies before they register him/her as a new exclusive auditor in the IFS Database.

A non-exclusive auditor is fully responsible for her/his own application as IFS Auditor and shall register him-/herself as a new non-exclusive auditor in the IFS Database. The competencies of a new non-exclusive auditor are assessed directly by IFS Auditor Management via their online CV.

3.1.1.1 Auditor approval process

In general, the auditor shall meet the requirements of chapters 7.2.2 and 7.2.3 of ISO/IEC 19011.

For an exclusive auditor, the contract, which includes the requirements described under section 2.6, shall be signed with the certification body (see ISO/IEC 17065:2012 norm) before applying for IFS Examinations.

For a non-exclusive auditor, the contract with one (or more) certification bodies can be signed after the IFS Examinations.

All auditors shall have signed the "General terms and licensing conditions of IFS Management GmbH for IFS Auditors" and the "Integrity Program rules for Auditors ".

3.1.1.2 General requirements for auditors when applying for IFS Examinations

Candidates applying to qualify as IFS Auditors shall meet the following minimum requirements and provide evidence with the application documents. The CV has to be submitted via the IFS Database.

a) Education

A food-related or bioscience degree (minimum a bachelor's degree or equivalent) or at least a successfully completed food-related professional higher education.

b) Work experience

A minimum of three (3) years full-time professional experience related to the food industry including the following functions: functions related to food production activities (e.g. quality assurance, food safety, R&D) in the food industry or in retail; food safety auditing and/or food safety inspection or enforcement.

Experience from consultancy in relation to food production activities may be recognised as a maximum of one year towards the work experience, if it can be proven by customer contracts, invoices, orders or confirmations.

c) Qualifications

The candidate shall have:

- Taken part in the IFS Lead Auditor course or a recognised lead auditor course (e.g. IRCA) with a duration of at least 40 hours.
- Taken part in a Food hygiene and HACCP course, with a duration of at least two (2) days/ 16 hours.

d) General audit experience

A minimum of eight (8) full food safety audits (GFSI recognised food safety certification audits and/or recognised second party audits) shall have been performed by the auditor in the food processing industry during the previous five (5) years (according to the "Positive list of recognisable audit experience for IFS Food" which is available in the certification body log in area of the IFS Database).

In addition, the candidate shall have participated in two (2) full IFS certification Assessments as a trainee during the last two (2) years.

The audits shall have been carried out at different production sites.

e) Specific and practical knowledge per product scope and technology scope

The candidates shall have specific and practical knowledge per product and technology scope (see ANNEX 3 for product and technology scopes).

For product scopes:

- At least two (2) years professional experience in the food industry in relation to food processing activities for each applied product scope. Experience from consultancy related to food processing activities may be recognised as a maximum of one year towards work experience, if it can be proven by customer contracts, invoices, orders or confirmations.

Or

- At least ten (10) audits per scope, belonging to the following categories:
  - GFSI recognised food safety certification audits (of which trainee audits are also accepted if evidence of attendance is available)
  - IFS Global Markets Food assessments (Intermediate Level or at least eight (8) hours assessment duration)
  - Second party audits including food safety and quality aspects with confirmed evidence (according to the "Positive list of recognisable audit experience for IFS Food" which is available in the certification body login area of the IFS Database).

  The candidate shall have participated in all steps of the audits (on-site audit, assessment and auditor's on-site decision-making processes). Audits shall have been preferably carried out at different production sites, with a maximum of three (3) audits at the same production site.

If professional work experience or audit experience individually do not fulfil the requirements to apply for a product scope, a combination of both can be accepted (e.g. one year of work experience plus five (5) audits or equivalent combinations).

Note: Approval of scopes 7 (combined products) and 11 (pet food) are connected to other scopes. Further explanations are provided in ANNEX 3.

For technology scopes:

- At least two (2) years professional experience in the food industry in relation to food processing activities for each applied technology scope. Experience from consultancy may be recognised as a maximum of one year towards work experience, if it can be proven by customer contracts, invoices, orders or confirmations.

Or

- At least five (5) audits per scope, belonging to the following categories:
  - GFSI recognised food safety certification audits (of which trainee audits are also accepted if evidence of attendance is available)
  - IFS Global Markets Food assessments (intermediate level and at least eight (8) hours assessment duration)
  - Second party audits including food safety and quality aspects with confirmed evidence (according to the "Positive list of recognisable audit experience for IFS Food").

  The auditor shall have participated in all steps of the audits (on-site audit, assessment and auditor's on-site decision-making processes). Audits shall have been preferably carried out in different production sites with a maximum of two (2) audits at the same production site.

If professional work experience or audit experience do not fulfil the requirements to apply for a technology scope individually, a combination of both can be accepted (e.g. 1 year of work experience plus three (3) audits or equivalent combinations).

f) Language
If the auditor wishes to perform Assessments in language(s) different to her/his mother tongue, she/he shall be able to provide evidence of fluency in this/these other language(s). For further rules applicable to language approval(s), see the IFS Food Doctrine.

g) Initial IFS In-house training (two (2) days/16 hours)
The candidate shall have taken part in an initial IFS in-house training organised by the certification body (based on the material provided by IFS (e.g. TTT material and IFS GAP Guideline), led by an approved trainer and covering food safety, food-related legislation, assessment practices, etc.) or in an initial training organised by IFS. The initial in-house training shall not have taken place more than one year prior to the date of initial application for the IFS Examinations. The intention of this course is to prepare the candidates for the IFS Examination.

h) Online course provided by IFS (modular approach)
IFS Training on product/process approach.

If the auditor's CV does not meet the above-mentioned requirements, IFS may reject the auditor's examination application.

For exclusive auditors, the auditor's CV shall be confirmed by a person from the certification body. Non-exclusive auditors have to confirm the correctness and completeness of the data provided in their CV themselves.

Note: IFS Offices have the possibility to withdraw an IFS Auditor approval or not to accept them for the examination if the information provided in the CV is false.

3.1.1.3 IFS Examinations process

Auditors who comply with the requirements mentioned in chapters 3.1.1.2, Part 3 can then take part in the written IFS Examination, and if successful, in the oral IFS Examination.

Note: Detailed regulations for IFS Examinations ("IFS Examination Regulation" document) and international IFS Examination schedules are provided by IFS and are available on the IFS Website.

Upon successful completion of written and oral IFS Examinations, the auditor shall be signed off during her/his first IFS Food Assessment (see also glossary for sign-off audit definition).

Once the evidence of the performed sign-off audit has been approved by IFS, the auditor will be activated as an IFS Food Auditor in the IFS Database and a personal IFS Auditor Certificate will be issued for the activated Auditor. The IFS Auditor Certificate mentions the duration of validity, the product and technology scopes the auditor is approved for and the auditor's languages.

Starting from the day of activation, the auditor is allowed to perform IFS Food Assessments for the product and technology scopes she/he has been approved for by IFS Offices. The certificate validity starts from the date of the passed oral IFS Examination and stops at the end of the second calendar year, irrespective of the date of activation as an IFS Auditor.

Example: If an auditor passes the oral IFS Examination on 20.10.2020, the auditor certificate will be valid until 31.12.2022.

3.1.1.4 Specific training program for "auditors in progress" ("AIP")

If a candidate has no auditing experience yet but fulfils all other requirements of 3.1.1.2 except "d) General audit experience", she/he can take part in the IFS training program for "auditors in progress". All other rules for auditors in the Standard are not affected and shall be fulfilled.
In the framework of the AIP program, the candidate shall pass the IFS Examinations before participating in an adjusted program for gaining audit experience. This program is only possible for exclusive auditors. However, an auditor can initially apply as a non-exclusive auditor, but after having passed the IFS Examinations, she/he has to switch to the exclusive status to be able to gain audit experience and complete the AIP program under the responsibility of one certification body.

Step 1: CV and further qualification
A full CV shall be filled in online via the IFS Database. Information regarding all requirements of 3.1.1.2 shall be provided, except for "d) General audit experience".

Step 2: IFS Examinations
Passing the written and oral IFS Examinations is mandatory, after which the candidate becomes an "IFS Auditor in progress".

Step 3: Auditing/assessing experience 1–9
The "auditor in progress" shall participate in six (6) audits of any GFSI recognised food safety certification standard or IFS Global Markets Food assessments (intermediate level or at least eight (8) hours assessment duration). The following three (3) assessments shall be IFS Assessments.

Those audits/Assessments shall be performed in the order described in the following chart (chart 8):

Chart 8: Auditor in progress auditing/assessing experience 1–9

N° of audit/ Assessment	Tasks	Possible audit/ Assessment types
1–3	Shadow observer	GFSI recognized food safety certification standards or IFS Global Markets – Food (intermediate level or at least eight (8) hours duration). If the "auditor in progress" has already performed some of the above mentioned audit types or second party audits in the past two (2) years, these performed audits/assessments can replace those three (3) audits/ assessments as shadow observer.
4–6	Active participation in the audits/ Assessments under supervision and responsibility of an experienced lead auditor	GFSI recognized food safety certification standard or IFS Global Markets – Food Program (intermediate level or at least eight (8) hours duration).
7–9	Active participation in the IFS Assessments under the supervision and responsibility of an IFS approved auditor	Any IFS Food Assessment

Important additional information:

- The Assessment team shall never separate during the audits/Assessments.
- Audits/Assessments 1–9 are accepted for scope extensions and can be performed in any product and technology scope.
- Audits/Assessments 1–3 can be attended before the written and oral IFS Examinations have been passed.
- Only one "auditor in progress" shall take part in these training audits/Assessments.

Step 4: Sign-off witness audit (10th Assessment) in the applied product and technology scopes of the "auditor in progress"

The "auditor in progress" shall perform the 10th Assessment under their own responsibility as a sign-off audit. This sign-off audit, which is performed during an IFS Food Assessment, shall be:

- performed in a company where the Assessment scope matches the product and technology scopes the "auditor in progress" is applying for
- witnessed by an IFS Witness Auditor who is approved for all product and technology scopes of the Assessment.

The report of the sign-off audit shall be documented in a template provided by IFS.
The auditing/assessing experience, including the sign-off audit, shall be completed within a period of two (2) years after passing the IFS Examinations.

Step 5: Release of the "auditor in progress"
If the sign-off audit has been performed successfully, the certification body will officially release the auditor and inform IFS. The "auditor in progress" performance reports for the audits/Assessments 4 to 9 and the report for the sign-off audit shall be provided to IFS. If all requirements are fulfilled, the auditor will be activated as an IFS Food Auditor in the IFS Database.

3.1.1.5 Maintenance of auditor's approval

The auditor's approval shall be reassessed before the end of validity of her/his auditor's certificate.
To maintain her/his approval, the exclusive auditor shall fulfil the following requirements:

- Every year: to have taken part in a two (2) day/16 hours yearly in-house training by the certification body (see specifications on this training in 2.6).
- Every year: to have performed a minimum of five (5) IFS Food Assessments as a lead or co-auditor. This is applicable from the first full year following the approval as an IFS Food Auditor.
- Every two (2) years: to be assessed by the certification body during a full IFS Food Assessment (on-site witness audit), in order to evaluate her/his competencies. This Assessment can be performed at any time during the second calendar year following the year when the last witness audit took place. This can be replaced every second time (every four (4) years), by a full on-site witness audit performed during another GFSI recognised food safety post-farm processing certification standard audit accredited to ISO/IEC 17065:2012 norm. The witness auditor shall not be part of the Assessment (as a team member). For the on-site witness audit performed during an IFS Food Assessment, the witness auditor shall be an approved IFS Food Auditor and shall fulfil the requirements to act as an IFS Witness Auditor, as defined in chapter 3.2. The certification body shall specify the name of the witness auditor in the IFS Assessment report. The witness audits should over time reflect the scopes an auditor is approved for.

A non-exclusive auditor is responsible for maintaining her/his own IFS approval.
To maintain her/his approval, the non-exclusive auditor shall fulfil almost the same requirements as for exclusive auditors, with the following variants (in bold):

- Every year: to have taken part in a two (2) day/16 hour in-house training with **each certification body** the non-exclusive auditor is linked to in the IFS Database.
- Every year: to have performed a minimum of five (5) IFS Food Assessments as a lead or co-auditor. This is applicable from the first full year following approval as an IFS Food Auditor.
- Every two (2) years: to be assessed by **each certification body** during a full IFS Food Assessment (on-site witness audit).

Note 1: If the witness audit is performed during another GFSI recognised food safety certification standard, the witness auditor shall witness the auditor during the full calculated audit duration.

Note 2: Successfully completed witness assessments from accreditation bodies or witness audits from the IFS Integrity Program during IFS Food Assessments can replace the witness audits from the certification body.

Note 3: For an Assessment team, the lead auditor can only be witnessed if the Assessment team did not split during the Assessment.

For exclusive and non-exclusive auditors

- Every two (2) calendar years: to have attended and successfully completed a two (2) day IFS Calibration Training, organised by IFS. Subsequent to passing the initial IFS Examinations, the first mandatory IFS Calibration Training shall be completed in the second calendar year following the date when the oral IFS Examination was passed.

Evidence of the above-mentioned requirements shall be uploaded in the IFS Database, where required by IFS, before the end of the validity of the auditor's certificate.

IFS manages auditor re-approval every two (2) years:

- If all requirements are fulfilled, IFS reissues a new auditor certificate which is valid for two (2) more years.
- If not all of them are fulfilled, the auditor shall participate in the IFS initial examinations again.

Example of situation where all requirements are fulfilled:

Date of passed oral IFS Examination: 25th May 2019

Date of end of validity for IFS Auditor Certificate (initial approval): 31st December 2021

The auditor shall participate in an IFS Calibration Training between 1st January and 31st December 2021.

The auditor is authorised to perform IFS Assessments from the day of activation in the IFS Database until 31st December 2021.

In 2021, if the auditor has:

- performed five (5) IFS Food Assessments per year and
- taken part in the IFS Calibration Training (e.g. on 8th and 9th September 2021) and
- fulfilled all other rules mentioned in 3.1.1.5

The new end of validity date for IFS Auditor Certificate (re-approval) is: 31st December 2023.

3.1.1.6 Specific situation of temporarily inactive auditor

If an auditor needs to take a timeout (i.e. a break from her/his activity as an IFS Auditor for at least six (6) months and no longer than three (3) years), due to e.g. maternity/paternity leave or illness, the auditor's certification body shall inform IFS Auditor Management of both the start and end date of the timeout period as soon as possible. Non-exclusive auditors shall provide IFS Auditor Management with the above requested information.
If, due to the timeout, the requirements mentioned in to maintain auditor approval in 3.1.1.5 are not fulfilled (in-house training every year, witness audit every second year and IFS Calibration Training every second year), the auditor shall fulfil them within a one-year period following the timeout and before she/he can resume her/his activity as an IFS Auditor. If not, the auditor will lose her/his IFS Food approval and shall participate in the IFS initial examinations again.

3.1.1.7 Scope extension for approved IFS Auditors

Auditors may, during the validity of their IFS Auditor Certificate, extend their approval for product and technology scope(s), based on new or extended experience gained after their initial application as an IFS Food Auditor.

For **extension of product and technology scope(s),** the auditor shall provide the same evidence as for the initial approval process (see 3.1.1.2 e), based on new experience different to that provided for initial application.

For **extension of technology scope(s),** the auditor shall additionally pass a written IFS Examination (per technology scope) organised by IFS Offices.

Note: IFS Food Assessments which were performed under the supervision of a witness auditor, can count for the witness auditor to apply for a product or technology scope extension.

Alternative path for extension on product scopes 3, 7 and 11
When applying for a scope extension for one of these product scopes (3, 7 or 11), the auditor shall either fulfil the above-mentioned requirements (general approach) or fulfil all of the four (4) requirements defined in chart 9.

Chart 9: Four (4) requirements for scope extension of product scopes (3, 7 or 11)

Requirement	Product scope 3 (egg & egg products)	Product scope 7 (combined products)	Product scope 11 (pet food)
Approval for other product scope(s) as a prerequisite	One product scope from scopes 1, 2 or 4 (animal scopes)	One product scope from scopes 1 to 4 (animal scopes) + 1 product scope from scopes 1 to 6	One product scope from scopes 1 to 4 (animal scopes) + 1 product scope from scopes 1 to 6
Assessment experience	Ten (10) full IFS Food Assessments in any product scope(s) (performed as lead or co-auditor)		
Training	Participation in a product scope specific certification body in-house training (face-to-face training)		
Witness audit	Witnessing by certification body during the first Assessment for the new product scope; the witness auditor shall be approved for the product scope the auditor is witnessed for (this can be used as the mandatory monitoring witness audit)		

Evidence of the successful participation in the training shall be made available to IFS on request.
The auditor shall only perform IFS Assessments in line with product scope(s) which were approved by IFS.

3.1.1.8 Further rules and explanations concerning the non-exclusive approach
Each auditor can switch her/his status between exclusive/non-exclusive (and vice versa). The concerned certification bodies will be notified automatically by IFS for every switch between the approaches.
A non-exclusive auditor shall not take over any position of responsibility regarding IFS in a certification body (e.g. she/he cannot be an IFS Trainer, an IFS responsible nor a contact person for IFS).
For further rules applicable for non-exclusive auditors, see the IFS Food Doctrine.

3.1.1.9 General rules about Assessment teams
All members of the Assessment team shall be approved IFS Auditors.

In case of assessing in teams, the following requirements apply:

- An IFS Assessment team consists of IFS Food Auditors whose combined profile (product and technology scope(s)) complies with the scope of the assessed production site.
- A lead auditor shall always be appointed.
- Lead and co-auditor(s) shall always be approved for at least one product scope and one technology scope of the Assessment scope.
- A minimum of two (2) hours shall be added to the calculated Assessment duration. This additional time shall be allocated to the team for common tasks (e.g. opening and closing meetings, discussion about Assessment findings, etc.) and not to an individual auditor.
- The remaining time can be split, as long as the auditor competencies for product scope and technology scopes are always covered during the Assessment. No "crossing over" is allowed: if the lead or co-auditor(s) do not individually have all product and technology scopes necessary for the Assessment, they have to remain together during all parts of the Assessment where the competencies of both auditors are necessary. Only an auditor with all relevant product and technology scopes is allowed to perform the respective parts of the Assessment separately.

The Assessment time schedule shall clearly indicate which auditor performed which part of the Assessment.

3.1.2 Requirements for IFS Reviewers

An IFS Reviewer shall either be an IFS Food Auditor or an IFS pure Reviewer (if not an IFS Food Auditor). The following section details the requirements for being approved as a pure Reviewer.

3.1.2.1 General requirements for pure Reviewers

Candidates applying to qualify as an IFS pure Reviewer shall meet the following minimum requirements and provide evidence with the application documents.

a) Education

A food-related or bioscience degree (minimum a bachelor's degree or equivalent) or at least a successfully completed food-related professional higher education.

b) Work experience

A minimum of three (3) years full-time professional experience related to the food industry including the following functions: functions related to food production activities (e.g. quality assurance, food safety, R&D) in the food industry or in retail; food safety auditing and/or food safety inspection or enforcement.

A maximum of one year of consultancy experience in relation to food production activities may be recognised towards the experience, if it can be proven by customer contracts, invoices, orders or confirmations.

c) Qualifications

The candidate shall have taken part in a food hygiene and HACCP course, with a duration of at least two (2) days/16 hours.

d) General audit experience

The candidate shall have attended two (2) IFS Food Assessments (as observer) plus three (3)

food safety audits (as observer or auditor, during GFSI recognised food safety certification audits and/or recognised second party audits) during the previous two (2) years.

e) Language
If the candidate wishes to review Assessment reports in language(s) different from her/his mother tongue, she/he shall be fluent in this/these language(s). The decision if a reviewer's language skills are sufficient to carry out a technical review in a proper way, in the respective language, is the responsibility of the certification body.

f) IFS In-house training and IFS Scoring course
The candidate shall have taken part in the following trainings:

- a one-day task related in-house training organised by the certification body

and

- a one-day Scoring course provided by IFS.

g) Online modular course provided by IFS ("IFS Training on product/process approach")

Once the reviewer has fulfilled the above-mentioned requirements and this has been approved by IFS, she/he will be activated as an IFS Food pure Reviewer in the IFS Database and a personal IFS Reviewer Certificate will be issued. Starting from the day of activation, the Reviewer is allowed to perform technical reviews of IFS Food assessment reports. The certificate validity period starts from the date of activation in the IFS Database and stops at the end of the second calendar year, irrespective of the actual activation date.

3.1.2.2 Maintenance of IFS Food pure Reviewer's qualification

The pure Reviewer's approval shall be reassessed before the end of validity of her/his reviewer's certificate.
To maintain her/his approval, the reviewer shall fulfil the following requirements:

- Every year: to have taken part in a two (2) day/16 hour yearly in-house training by the certification body (see specifications on the training in 2.6).
- Every two (2) years: to have taken part (as observer) at one IFS Food Assessment.
- Every two (2) calendar years: to have attended and successfully completed a two (2) day IFS Calibration Training, organised by IFS. The IFS Calibration Training shall be completed in the second calendar year following the date of the initial approval.

3.1.3 Requirements for IFS Trainers

3.1.3.1 General requirements for IFS Trainers

Candidates applying to qualify as an IFS Trainer shall meet the following minimum requirements and provide evidence with the application documents.

a) Education and work experience
Same professional education and work experience as requested for IFS Auditors.

b) General audit experience
Same general audit experience as requested for IFS Auditors

c) Qualifications

The candidate shall have:

- Taken part in a lead auditor course and HACCP course, as requested for IFS Auditors
- Taken part in the "Train the Trainer" course organised by IFS

d) Language

The IFS Trainers shall be fluent in English and in the language(s) used when conducting their trainings.

e) Online modular course provided by IFS ("IFS Training on product/process approach")

3.1.3.2 Maintenance of IFS Trainer's qualification

To maintain her/his approval, the IFS Trainer shall fulfil the following requirements:

- Every year: to carry out or have taken part in a two (2) day/16 hour in-house training by the certification body.
- Continuously: to stay informed about any new information on IFS Food Standard (provided by IFS to their certification body).
- When a new version of the Standard is published: to have taken part in the new "Train the Trainer" course organised by IFS and to carry out an in-house training of all approved IFS Auditors and Reviewers, before they perform Assessments and technical reviews based on the new version. The duration of this IFS in-house training shall be one day plus one day online IFS Training on product/process approach (modular course) which is mandatory for all IFS Auditors, Reviewers and Trainers and shall be performed in addition to the annual in-house training.
- When a new IFS Doctrine is published: to train all approved IFS Auditors and IFS Reviewers before they perform any new Assessment or technical review (this training can be done face-to-face, online or by webinar).

3.1.4 Requirements for IFS Witness Auditors

A person qualifying as a witness auditor shall fulfil the following requirements:

- To be an experienced IFS Food Auditor or an IFS Trainer who is also an IFS pure Reviewer
- To have already performed at least ten (10) full IFS Food Assessments as a lead auditor
- To have taken part in the IFS witness auditor online course (provided by IFS)
- To be appointed as a witness auditor in the IFS Database
- To be approved for the language(s) in which the Assessment is performed.

It is the responsibility of the certification body to ensure that the witness auditor has the required skills, both on interpersonal and professional levels, to be able to witness other auditors in a constructive manner.

The witness auditor shall provide comprehensive witness audit reports, which shall be made available to IFS on request.

3.2 Overview about requirements for initial and maintenance of approval and the tasks of each IFS role in a certification body

The following chart (chart 10) gives an overview about requirements for initial and maintenance of approval, as well as for the tasks of the specific IFS roles in a certification body.

Chart 10: Overview about requirements for initial and maintenance of approval and for tasks of the specific IFS roles in a certification body

Function/ role in certification body	Profile/requirements for initial approval	Requirements for maintenance of approval	Tasks
IFS Auditor (see chapter 3.1.1)	• Professional education • Work experience • Qualifications • Audit experience (general and per scopes) • Two (2) day initial in-house training by certification body • Passed IFS Examinations (written and oral) • Sign-off audit • Online modular course provided by IFS ("IFS Training on product/process approach")	• Every year: two (2) day in-house training by certification body • Every year: five (5) IFS Food Assessments • Every two (2) years: one IFS Food witness audit (every second time, i.e. every four (4) years, it can be replaced by an onsite witness audit during another GFSI recognised Food safety certification standard audit accredited against ISO/IEC 17065:2012 norm) • Every two (2) years: Calibration Training organised by IFS	• Perform IFS Assessments • Review IFS Assessment reports (if not performed the Assessment her-/himself)

Function/ role in certification body	Profile/requirements for initial approval	Requirements for maintenance of approval	Tasks
IFS Reviewer (see chapter 3.1.2)	IFS Food Auditor or IFS pure Reviewer: • Professional education • Work experience • Qualifications • Audit experience (as observer or performed her-/himself) • One-day task related in-house training by certification body • Scoring course organised by IFS • Online modular course provided by IFS ("IFS Training on product/process approach")	• Every year: two (2) day in-house training by certification body • Every two (2) years: one IFS Food Assessment as observer • Every two (2) years: Calibration Training organised by IFS	Review IFS Food Assessment reports
IFS Trainer (see chapter 3.1.3)	• Professional education • Work experience • Qualifications • Audit experience • TTT course organised by IFS • Fluency in English language • Online modular course provided by IFS ("IFS Training on product/process approach")	• Every year: two (2) day in-house training (attend or conduct) • Continuously: check and communicate the IFS updated information provided by IFS • In case of publication of a new IFS Food Standard version: TTT course organised by IFS	• Train auditors and Reviewers • Organise the training program for all IFS Auditors and Reviewers of the certification body
IFS Witness Auditor (see chapter 3.1.4)	• Experienced IFS Auditor (at least 10 performed IFS Food Assessments) or an IFS Trainer who is also an IFS pure Reviewer • Witness Auditor course provided by IFS	Linked to the maintenance of approval as IFS Food Auditor/ IFS pure Reviewer	Witness Auditors

PART 4
Reporting, auditXpressX™ software and IFS Database

1 Introduction

After performance of an IFS Food Assessment, a detailed and well-structured Assessment report shall be completed. The language of the report shall be the working language of the company. In special cases defined by the certification bodies, where the native language of the retailers or purchasers is different to the working language of the company, an English version of the report could also be prepared. If the report is written in a different language to English, the company profile, the overall summary of compulsory information tables and the Assessment scope shall be translated in English.

Note: For any combined Assessment (IFS Food/IFS Broker or IFS Food/IFS Logistics), two (2) separate reports shall be written and two (2) separate certificates shall be issued and uploaded in the IFS Database.

The IFS Food Assessment report shall be prepared according to the following format:

- the Assessment overview (chapter 2.1)
- the main content (chapter 2.2).

2 Reporting

2.1 IFS Assessment report: Assessment overview (ANNEX 9)

Cover page
The cover page of the IFS Assessment report shall include:

- certification body logo
- IFS Food logo
- name of the assessed site, packing code and sanitary legal authorisation number, if applicable
- GS1 GLN(s) (Global Location Numbers) related to the site(s) that has/ve been covered during the Assessment. This number is mandatory for sites located within the European Economic Area (EEA) as well as the United Kingdom if it leaves the EEA on 01.01.2021.
- date(s) of the Assessment
- name and address of the certification body
- certification body's accreditation details.

Assessment overview
The Assessment overview shall include the following mandatory information:

- **Assessment details**
  - name of the lead auditor, reviewer (person in charge of the technical report review), co-auditor, trainee and witness auditor, if applicable
  - Assessment date(s) (in case of a follow-up Assessment, the date of the follow-up Assessment shall additionally be specified)
  - duration of the Assessment (start and end time for each Assessment day)
  - previous Assessment dates (start and end time for each Assessment day)
  - name of the certification body and the auditor who performed the previous Assessment
  - name and address of the assessed site
  - name and address of the company (or head office/central management)
  - COID (IFS identification code number) as defined in the IFS Database
  - details of the contact person in case of emergency (e.g. recall): name, e-mail and phone number at a minimum
  - version of the standard.
- **Assessment scope**
  - detailed description of processes and products
  - codes/numbers of product scopes and technology scopes.
- **Additional information**
  - description of exclusions, if applicable
  - description of partly outsourced processes (explanations, number of subcontractors, description including name, address and certification status, COID(s)), if applicable
  - description of decentralised structure(s), if applicable, and off-site warehouse(s) (name the location):
    - if certified for IFS Logistics, provide the COID
    - if not, mention if it has been covered during the IFS Food Assessment
    - if not, describe the company's control measures.
  - description of multi-location production sites, if applicable, see chapter 2.2.2, Part 1.
- **Final Assessment result**
  - final Assessment result with level and percentage (in case of a follow-up Assessment, specify that a follow-up Assessment has taken place and that the Major non-conformity has been solved)
  - timeframe in which the recertification Assessment shall be performed or if it will be unannounced.
- **Observations regarding non-conformities (D evaluation of KO requirement(s) and Majors)**
  In case of a follow-up Assessment, additional explanations shall be provided on requirement for which the Major non-conformity has been solved.
- **Comments concerning follow-up of corrections and corrective actions**
  Description of corrections and corrective actions from the previous Assessment (both that have been sustainably and efficiently implemented or not).

- **Company profile**
  The company profile requires compulsory information on the company's structure and activities and is divided into two (2) standardised sections: company data and Assessment data. This allows readers to have a clear understanding of the company's structure, organisation, production, processes etc. In addition to the required compulsory information, further information can be added by the auditor for each section.
  The company profile, which includes compulsory information, shall be translated into English.

2.2 IFS Assessment report: main content (ANNEX 10)

The main content of the IFS Assessment report is structured as follows:

- General summary in a tabular format for all chapters, listing the number of assessed requirements per scoring for each chapter and the result (in percentage) per chapter.
- Overall summary: table of compulsory fields for specific IFS Food Assessment requirements. For those specific requirements, the auditor shall provide additional justifications and/or further background information, even in case of an A scoring. This leads to a more significant and descriptive report, even if the assessed site almost fulfils all IFS Food requirements, and adds value for every user/reader. The overall summary table, which includes compulsory information, shall be translated in English.
- List of all identified deviations and non-conformities for each requirement per chapter.
- Summary of points of attention (requirements scored with a B).
- List (including explanations) of all requirements evaluated as N/A (not applicable).
- Detailed Assessment report (checklist).
- Annex of the Assessment report, including:
  - Assessment participants' list: list of key personnel present during the Assessment.
  - Reminder of IFS rules: tables on product and technology scopes, explanations of processing steps, IFS Scoring System and conditions for issuing of certificate.

2.3 Action plan (ANNEX 7)

For each assessment requirement, the IFS Auditor shall describe and explain all identified deviations and non-conformities (D evaluation of KO requirement(s), Majors) in the action plan, which has a specified format. For additional information, see also chapter 4, Part 1.

2.4 Minimum requirements for the IFS Certificate (ANNEX 11)

After successful completion of the IFS Food Assessment process, the certification body shall issue a certificate. For the purpose of international recognition and overall consistency, IFS Food Certificates issued by the certification body shall include, at a minimum:

- name and address of the certification body, including its logo
- accreditation body logo (used in conformity with accreditation body's rules) or its name and registration number
- name and address of the assessed site

- COID (IFS identification number) as defined in the IFS Database
- packing code and sanitary legal authorisation number, if applicable
- GS1 GLN(s) related to the site(s) that has/ve been covered during the Assessment (including off-site warehouse(s), if applicable)
- in case of multi-location production sites: name of the site's head office/central management, if applicable
- description of the Assessment scope, which shall always be translated in English
- description of processes/products
- name and number of product and technology scope(s)
- in case of partly outsourced processes, addition of the following sentence: "Besides own production, the company has partly outsourced processes"
- description of product exclusions, if applicable
- in case of additional broker or logistics activities: Certification status by writing the sentence: "The company has own broker/logistics activities which are/are not IFS Broker and/or IFS Logistics/other GFSI recognised standard certified". (for further information, see chapter 2.2.1, Part 1 and ANNEX 1)
- level achieved
- Assessment score in percentage
- Last unannounced Assessment date (last day of the Assessment). If an unannounced IFS Food Assessment has not yet been conducted for the respective COID, the certificate shall indicate the following: "Last Assessment conducted unannounced: N/A".
- Assessment date(s) and time
- follow-up Assessment date, if relevant
- next Assessment time period (recertification Assessment), specify if unannounced
- certificate issue date
- expiry date of the certificate (certificate validity shall remain the same each year, as described in Part 1)
- name and signature of the responsible person at the certification body
- place and date of signature
- current IFS Food logo
- QR-code with the information about COID, standard and issue date of certificate (QR-code will be automatically generated when the new IFS Food report is uploaded.).

Note: The auditXpressX™ software includes a certificate format with the minimum required content, but each ISO/IEC 17065:2012 norm-accredited certification body for IFS may use its own layout, providing that it includes this mandatory information.

2.4.1 QR-code on the IFS Certificate

QR-code on the certificate via auditXpressX™
The QR-code is implemented automatically when exporting the certificate via auditXpressX™.
The QR-code embodies a public link to the IFS Database which verifies the authenticity of the certificate.
Scanning the QR-code allows the certification status of the COID to be checked.
The colour of the QR-code is, by default, the colour of the respective standard if the contrast is sufficient for the QR-code to be recognised when scanned. Users may change the colour and position of the QR-code by using the template.

QR-code for creating a certificate for non auditXpressX™ users
For certification bodies that generate certificates and do not use auditXpressX™, there is an area in the IFS Database ("My customers") where a QR-code for the respective COID can be downloaded.

The QR-code can be created via the "My Clients" function, by providing the following information:

- COID
- name of IFS Standard (e.g. IFS Food)
- issue date of the certificate (important for the correlation in the IFS Database)
- colour: the colour of the IFS Food Standard is shown as a suggestion; the contrast shall be sufficient to make the QR code scan recognisable. The QR-code can alternatively be uploaded in black and white.

Position on the IFS Food Certificate
The QR-code shall either be in the top right corner or on the bottom of the IFS Food Certificate and shall be of a suitable size to be scanned.

Verification of the certificate through the QR-code
A security mechanism has been added to the QR-code verification, so that a limited number of QR-codes can be verified in a certain lapse of time from the same IP-address.

QR-code data
The QR-code displays the following data:

- certificate in the IFS Database: yes/no
- COID
- company name
- certification body name
- Standard
- issue date of the certificate
- end of validity date of the certificate
- certificate validity (valid or locked).

3 AuditXpressX™ software

In order to increase the standardisation of IFS reporting, auditXpressX™ software has been developed. It offers the following advantages:

- easy collection of Assessment data through a user-friendly interface
- creation of quick and error-free IFS Assessment reports
- automatic evaluation of the Assessment results by dynamic computation of all relevant items
- automatic generation of a standardised Assessment report
- temporary storage of interim Assessment data for later completion
- secure export of completed Assessment reports in the IFS Database
- exchange of Assessment files between auditors and their certification body
- an updated option provides constant access to the most recent version of the IFS Standard.
- accessible offline, i.e. no continuous Internet connection is required

Additional information can be found by the certification body in the login area of the IFS Database.

4 The IFS Database (www.ifs-certification.com)

Every IFS Assessment shall be uploaded in the IFS Database by the certification body (uploading of the report, action plan and certificate).

There are six (6) IFS Database user groups who can have access to the IFS Database:

- Auditors
- Certification bodies
- Certified companies/suppliers
- Retailers
- Verified authorities
- Consultants (special access).

The different groups' access rights are as follows:

Auditors

- Manage their own data
- Download their own auditor profile, which includes all information about their approval: standards and scopes
- Oversee performed Assessments
- Register for the courses
- Receive account notifications and IFS Newsletters.

Note: Non-exclusive auditors can also administer the certification body/ies they're working with.

Certification bodies

- Manage their certified companies (generate login data, upload IFS Assessment reports, action plans and certificates, update contact information, create head office/central management account)
- Suspend/unlock certificates in specific situations
- Manage all IFS Assessment dates via the diary function, enabling retailers and companies to have an overview of the scheduled Assessments. All Assessment dates for announced Assessments shall be inserted in the diary function of the IFS Database: for an initial Assessment or before the date of a recertification Assessment, the date shall be inserted at latest two (2) weeks before the Assessment date. For unannounced Assessments, they shall be registered at least four (4) weeks before the start of the Assessment time window.
- Manage their sub-accounts
- Manage their auditors via the IFS Database
- Download the IFS logo(s)
- Receive important notifications and IFS Newsletters.

Certified companies/suppliers

- Access to their own data
- Compare two (2) consecutive Assessment reports and action plans, for improvement purposes
- Download the IFS logo(s)
- Manage their certification body
- Manage company personnel access (create sub-accounts) to the Assessment data
- Search for other certified companies
- Manage suppliers using a "favourites" option via "Supplier management"
- Manage all their certified sites through a single access point via head office/central management (access created by the certification body).
- Register for IFS Food Safety Checks
- Receive important notifications (possibility to define notification preferences) and IFS Newsletters.

Retailers

- Search for certified companies
- Manage their certified companies using a "favourites" option via "Supplier management"
- See the upcoming Assessment date of a supplier
- Compare two (2) consecutive Assessment reports and action plans (if access was authorised)
- Download a list of all suppliers with suspended certificates
- Receive important notifications and relevant lists that can be set individually
- Receive IFS exclusive Newsletters translated in different languages.

Verified authorities

- Search for certified companies
- Manage their certified companies using a "favourites" option via "Supplier management"

- Receive a list of Assessments where further information is unlocked by the suppliers
- See the upcoming Assessment date of a supplier
- Compare two (2) consecutive Assessment reports and action plans (if access was authorised)
- Download a list of all suppliers with suspended certificates
- Receive important notifications and IFS Newsletters.

Special access for IFS Consultants

- Manage own data about Standards, scopes, languages
- Get access to special consultant trainings
- Visible on the public IFS Website – including reviews from customers
- Download own individualised IFS logo
- Receive important notifications and IFS Newsletters.

Security of the IFS Database
The security system used for the IFS Database is based on an internationally recognised and commonly used security system.

Data protection
Data protection is an important issue for IFS Management GmbH. IFS fulfils all data protection regulations that are applicable to the company. The data policy of IFS Management GmbH is available on the IFS Website www.ifs-certification.com.

The access to IFS Database provides general information about all certified companies. If no further authorisation is granted by the certified companies, the user groups are able to see the following information only:

- the company's name, address and GPS data
- the certification body's name and address
- the auditor's name
- the scope of the Assessment
- the date and duration of the Assessment
- the level and percentage achieved at the Assessment
- the IFS Certificate's date of issue, its validity duration and the time frame for the realisation of the recertification Assessment
- the IFS Certificate itself
- if available: information if FSMA requirements have been assessed.

By accessing their secure login, the certified companies can themselves authorise access to the following detailed information:

- Assessment report and action plan.

The IFS Database user groups automatically receive access to the unlocked data by the certified company after the data has been unlocked. Communication to retailers and other IFS Database user groups is made via a secure Web process which guarantees that only authorised retailers and other users/certified companies can view specific data of the certified companies/suppliers. For further information, see the IFS Website.

Tool "Supplier management"
The tool "Supplier management" enables retailers, authorities and suppliers to select their favourites from all certified companies that are listed in the IFS Database and to store them in a separate list.

For each certified site listed as a favourite under "Supplier management" the user can pre-set the following e-mail notifications:

- Reminder three (3) months before the expiration date of the certificate.
- The certificate is expired and no valid certificate exists.
- A surveillance Assessment is recorded.
- The certificate is withdrawn by the certification body before the expiry date.
- A certificate has been issued.
- A new Assessment has not been entered yet. The current certificate expired three (3) months ago.
- Monthly e-mail of all new registered Assessments in the current month.
- A certificate or letter of confirmation has been registered
- A certificate has been prematurely withdrawn or temporarily suspended
- A certificate or the related Assessment documents have been edited
- A certificate or Assessment letter expires in three (3) months and no new date has been registered
- A certificate expires and no new certificate for this standard has been issued

Note: Please check directly with your favourites if no Assessments have been performed or if the Assessment has not been passed.

- There has been no valid certificate for an IFS Standard for at least three (3) months and no new date for this standard has been entered.
- A new Assessment date has been created or a registration for an IFS Food Safety Check or an unannounced Assessment has been made.
- An existing Assessment date or registration has been removed or changed.
- A change of certification body has been made

IFS Food

ANNEXES

ANNEX 1: Scope of application of the different IFS Standards and IFS Program

IFS Food

Standard for assessing food product processors/manufacturers.

IFS Food shall be used when a product is processed or where there is a risk of product contamination coming from primary packaging.

IFS Broker

Standard for assessing persons and/or companies who may or may not own the products but who typically do not take physical possession of the products (e.g. who do not have warehouses, packaging stations or truck fleets, but are legal entities with mailboxes, offices, etc.).

The Standard applies to food, household and personal care/products as well as to packaging materials.

IFS HPC

Standard for assessing companies that manufacture household and personal care products, or companies that pack loose household and personal care products. IFS HPC can only be used when a product is "processed" or when there is a hazard for product contamination during the primary packing.

IFS Logistics

Standard for companies whose activities are logistics services for food and non-food products, such as transport, storage, loading/unloading, etc. It applies to all types of transport: delivery by road, rail, ship, plane, etc. and to all types of products: frozen, refrigerated, ambient stable, etc.

The product IFS Standards under the specific subchapter about transport and/or storage already cover a production company's own logistics activities. Therefore, it is not necessary to perform a combined Assessment for IFS Food, IFS HPC or IFS PACsecure in combination with IFS Logistics.

IFS PACsecure

Standard for assessing food and non-food packaging material manufacturers concerning the production, processing and/or conversion of packaging components and/or packaging materials.

IFS Wholesale/Cash & Carry

Standard for assessing companies who have wholesaling activities of food, house-hold and personal care products and/or packaging materials. Furthermore certain treatment and/or processing activities are covered by this Standard. This Standard also covers packing companies for fruit, vegetables and/or eggs.

IFS Global Markets

The IFS Global Markets-Program are standardised product safety and quality development and assessment program for the relevant application scopes as IFS Food, IFS Logistics and IFS HPC. It is meant to support "small and/or less developed businesses" in the gradual development of their product safety and quality management processes within a defined period of time. Through the stepwise approach of the IFS Global Markets, the implementation of relevant IFS Standards will be facilitated.

Scope determination between IFS Food and other IFS Standards

IFS Food and IFS Broker:

If a food processing company additionally carries out trading activities and would like to certify these activities, a combined Assessment IFS Food/IFS Broker shall be performed. For a combined Assessment, the company shall obtain two (2) reports and two (2) certificates.

IFS Food and IFS Logistics:

Clarifications/examples of scope application between IFS Food and IFS Logistics:

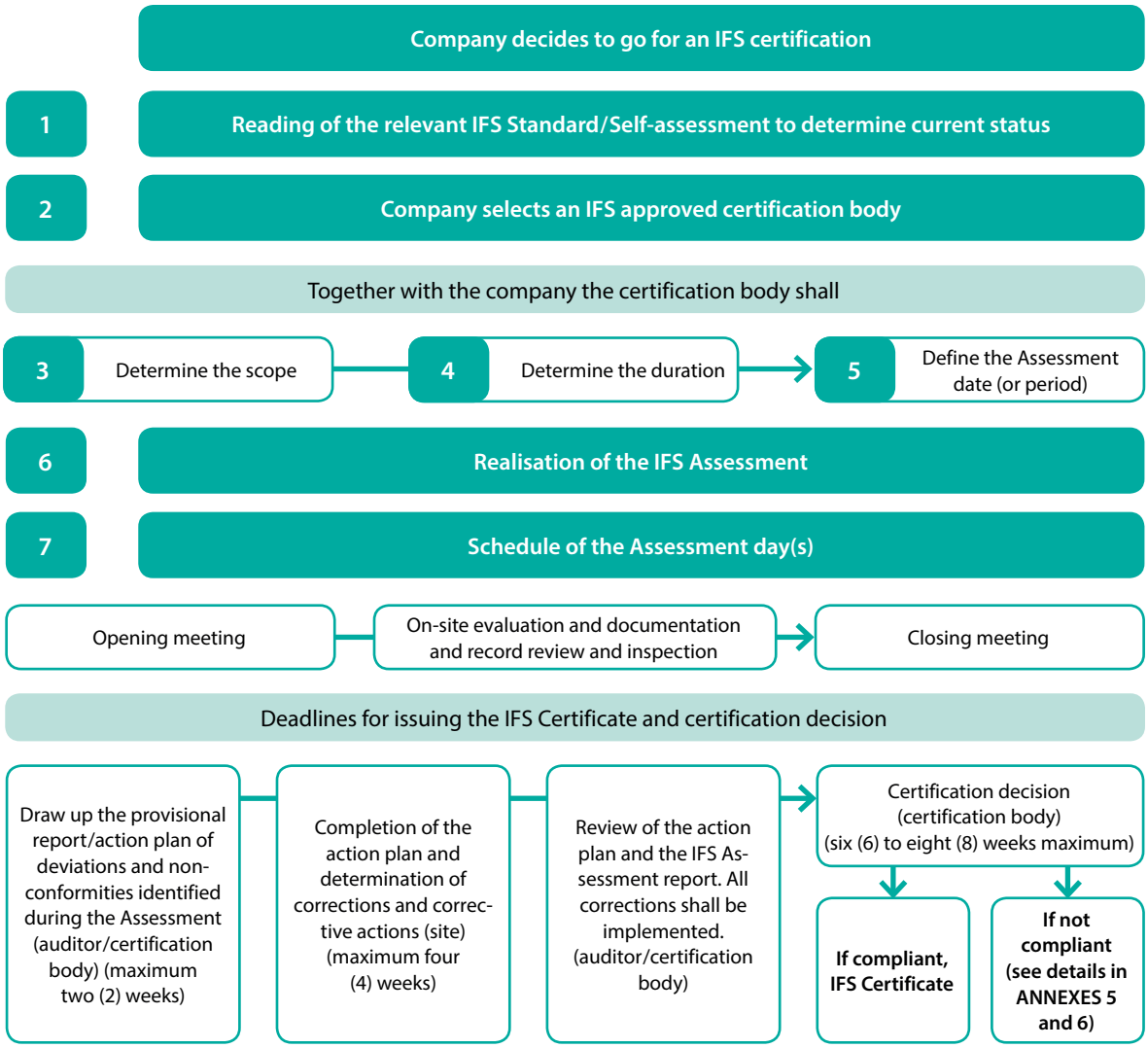
- IFS Logistics only concerns logistics activities where companies have a physical contact with already primary packed products (transport, packing of pre-packed food products, storage and/or distribution, transport and storage of pallets, bags in box). It also applies for specific unpacked goods, such as meat carcasses or bulk/tanker transport (glucose syrup, milk, grain, etc.).

- For any kind of processing activities, meaning that the characteristics of the products are modified (or primary packaging is carried out), IFS Logistics is not applicable, except for freezing/thawing processes, under specific conditions (as a service, extra requirements in the IFS Logistics Standard to be assessed).
- When a processing company conducts own logistics and/or transport activities (storage and distribution), it is included in the IFS Food under the specific sub-chapter about transport or storage.

Note:

- If the logistics activities owned by the food processing company **are situated at the same physical location** as the company and if the company or the customer wishes to have this operation certified for IFS Logistics, an IFS Logistics Assessment shall be performed. In this case, the following requirements shall be fulfilled:
  - the logistics activities are only carried out for pre-packed products
  - in case of two (2) certificates (IFS Food and IFS Logistics), the respective scope of each Assessment and certificate shall be clearly defined
  - the requirements of IFS Food concerning transport and storage shall be evaluated during the IFS Food Assessment in any case
  - an IFS Food Assessment of the food processing company shall be performed; IFS Logistics is an additional certification (but can be combined).
- If the logistics activities owned by the food processing company **are situated off-site,** the company has the following three possibilities:
  - include it under IFS Food scope and clearly mention its decentralised structure in the company profile of the IFS Food Assessment report
  - not assess it but clearly state in the company profile that this site is not IFS Logistics certified
  - gain an IFS Logistics certification.

ANNEX 2: Certification process



ANNEX 3: Product and technology scopes

In IFS Food, all activities of the company are an association of product scope(s) and technology scope(s).

Product scopes

IFS Food product scopes	
1.	Red and white meat, poultry and meat products
2.	Fish and fish products
3.	Egg and egg products
4.	Dairy products
5.	Fruit and vegetables
6.	Grain products, cereals, industrial bakery and pastry, confectionary, snacks
7.	Combined products
8.	Beverages
9.	Oils and fats
10.	Dry goods, other ingredients and supplements
11.	Pet food

To get the approval for scope "combined products", the auditor shall:

- have a two (2) years work experience with the scope or ten (10) food safety GFSI recognised audits and / or second party audits including quality and food safety investigations with traceable origin and confirmed by the retailer or by the industry

AND

- be approved for a minimum of one scope from number 1 to 4

AND

- additionally be approved for one scope from number 1 to 6.

To get the approval for scope "pet food", the auditor shall:

- have a two (2) years work experience with the scope or five (5) food safety GFSI recognised audits and / or second party audits including quality and food safety investigations with traceable origin and confirmed by the retailer or by the industry

AND

- shall be approved for product scope 1 or 2

AND

- shall have been trained on specific legislation.

Technology scopes

IFS technology scope	IFS processing step – including processing/treating/manipulation/ storing		Technology oriented classification which also takes product risks into consideration
A	**P1**	Sterilisation (e.g. cans)	**Sterilisation (in final packaging) with the purpose to destroy pathogens** Sterilised (e.g. autoclaved) products in final packaging
B	**P2**	Thermal pasteurisation, UHT/aseptic filling, hot filling Other pasteurisation techniques e.g. high pressure pasteurisation, microwave	**Pasteurisation with the purpose to reduce food safety hazards (and UHT process)**
C	**P3**	Irradiation of food	**Processed products: treatment with purpose to modify products and/or extend the shelf life and/or reduce food safety hazards by preservation techniques and other processing techniques** Note—exception: Irradiation is attributed to this category although aimed for the destruction of microorganisms
	P4	Preserving: salting, marinating, sugaring, acidifying/pickling, curing, smoking, etc. Fermentation, acidification	
	P5	Evaporation/dehydration, vacuum filtration, freeze drying, microfiltration (less than 10 µ mesh size)	
D	**P6**	Freezing (at least –18 °C/0 °F) including storage quick freezing, cooling, chilling processes and respective cool storing	**Systems, treatments to maintain product integrity and/or safety** Treatment with purpose to maintain the quality and/or integrity of the products including treatments to remove contamination and/or prevent contamination
	P7	Antimicrobial dipping/spraying, fumigation	

IFS technology scope	IFS processing step – including processing/treating/manipulation/ storing		Technology oriented classification which also takes product risks into consideration
E	**P8**	Packing MAP, packing under vacuum	**Systems, treatments to <u>prevent</u> product contamination** P9 is applicable in any case when there are at least 2 procedures/methods implemented in a company to guarantee product safety/product hygiene e.g.: • disinfection of equipment + chilled room temperature (e.g. dissection of meat) • disinfection + special hygiene equipment for employees (e.g. hygiene sluice) • room with over-pressure + special hygiene equipment for employees (e.g. hygiene sluice), • air filtration + room with over-pressure
	P9	Processes to prevent product contamination esp. microbiological contamination, by means of high hygiene control and specific infrastructure during handling, treatment and/or processing e.g. clean room technology, "white room", controlled working room temperature for food safety purpose, disinfection after cleaning, positive air pressure systems (e.g. filtration below 10 µ)	
	P10	Specific separation techniques: e.g. filtration like reverse osmoses, use of active charcoal	
F	**P11**	Cooking, baking, bottling, brewing, fermentation (e.g. wine), drying, frying, roasting, extrusion, churning	**Any other manipulation, treatment, processing not being listed in A, B, C, D, E and not contolled as a CCP or as a control measure.**
	P12	Coating, breading, battering, cutting, slicing, dicing, dismembering, mixing/ blending, stuffing, slaughtering, sorting, manipulation, packing, storing under controlled conditions (atmosphere) except temperature, labelling	
	P13	Distillation, purification, steaming, damping, hydrogenating, milling	

Note: Technology scopes (from A to F) are used for IFS auditor competencies and IFS Food Assessment scope, whereas processing steps (from P1 to P13) are used to calculate Assessment duration.

ANNEX 4: Exclusion tree

By definition, all food processes that are managed at the same location shall be included in the scope of an IFS Food Assessment (e. g. slaughtering, deboning, meat cutting, meat processing, etc.).

All processing steps (P) shall be assessed as the exclusion is related to the finished product(s). The key concept is the evaluation of the product risk analysis which may confirm whether an exceptional product exclusion is possible (with no impact on food safety and quality).

Only in those exceptional situations where the IFS Food assessed company would like to exclude product(s) from the IFS Food Assessment scope, shall the following questionnaire be filled in by the certification body.

Exclusions, when defined and validated by the certification body (after submission of this questionnaire):

- shall always be explained in the company profile of the IFS Assessment report
- shall be clearly specified in the Assessment scope of the IFS Assessment report and certificate.
- shall always have to be re-considered and reviewed each year by the certification body to ensure that the product exclusion is still valid and that the Assessment scope is still up to date.

Moreover, in case the company processes new products/private labels during the IFS certification cycle, the company shall contact its certification body to ensure that defined exclusions are still valid and that no further actions are necessary.

The auditor shall always check on-site if the defined exclusions are relevant and in line with the questionnaire, by assessing the risks that may arise from excluded product(s) (e.g. contaminants, allergens).

Any exclusion which has not been justified in advance and is noticed by the auditor during the Assessment, shall be assessed either directly during the Assessment (with a necessary review of the Assessment scope and the Assessment duration) or in the case of a non exclusion, through an extension Assessment at a later point in time.

In any case (if some exclusions are defined or not), the number of employees to be taken into consideration to calculate Assessment duration shall always be the total number of employees (and not only the number of employees involved in the activity which is not excluded).

Note 1: The only exception to this rule is for seasonal process(es), which can be excluded, as long as the scope of the certification is unambiguous and only takes into account the processes/products assessed in functioning.

Note 2: By definition, all by-products from the processing (feed grade/tech. grade) which are not specified in Annex 3 are excluded from the scope of the IFS Food Assessment. Those products shall not be specified on the IFS Certificate as exclusions and shall only be described in the company profile of the IFS Assessment report.

Note 3: The identification of exclusions shall only be an exceptional situation and can be related to product exclusions only.

IFS Food questionnaire for certification bodies, to define, under exceptional circumstances, product exclusions in the Assessment scope

If, under exceptional circumstances, the company decides to exclude specific product ranges from the scope of the IFS Food Assessment, the following questionnaire has to be filled in by the certification body to check if any exclusions are allowed. The filled in questionnaire shall be part of the Assessment time schedule.

Company name: _____ COID: _____

Planned Assessment scope
(product scope and description): _____ Planned Assessment date: _____

Date of questionnaire validation: _____

Product/group or product(s) excluded: _____

Name of the certification body employee
who filled in the questionnaire: _____

Name of the company employee
who requested the exclusion: _____

Name of the certification body employee
who approved the requested exclusion: _____

1) Is the product to be excluded a private label (retail/wholesale branded) product?

☐ No ☐ Yes → **Exclusion is NOT possible**

2) Is the product seasonal/ sporadic?

☐ No

☐ Yes

Are the product and/or technology scopes and HACCP plan (including allergens, contaminants, etc.) identical for seasonal/sporadic products and regular products?

☐ No ☐ Yes → Product can be included with a documentary on-site evaluation or can be excluded

3) Is the product clearly differentiable from the product(s) which is/are included in the Assessment scope?

☐ Yes ☐ No → **Exclusion is NOT possible**

4) Is/are the initial step(s) of production of the product to be excluded common with the one of the included product(s)?

☐ Yes ☐ No → Exclusion is possible (e.g. where area/processing line is fully independent since the beginning, without any contamination risk)

5) Does the product to be excluded go to a different area than the one related to the product included in the Assessment scope?

☐ Yes ☐ No → **Exclusion is NOT possible**

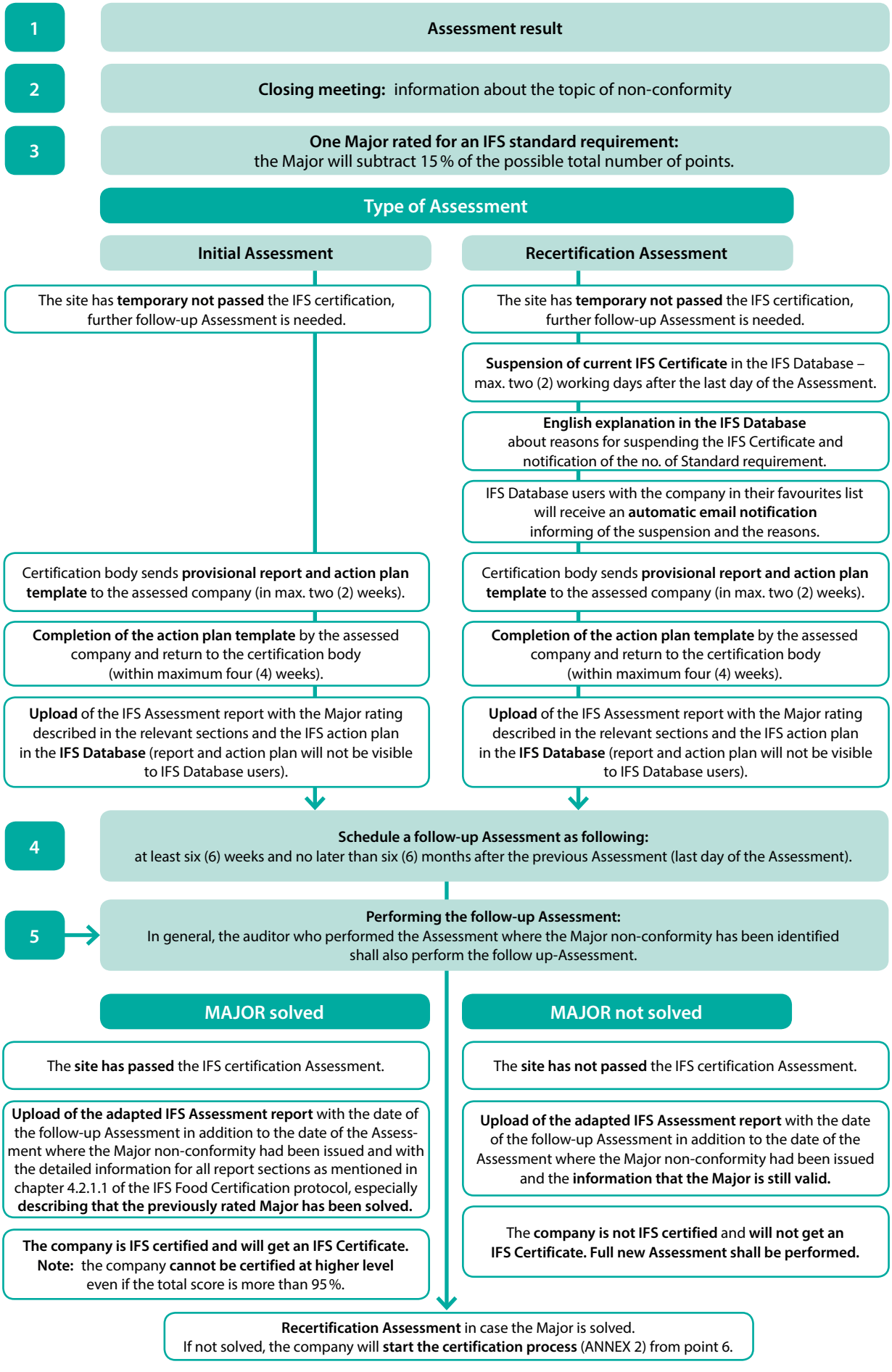
6) Is the contamination risk controlled between included and excluded products?
(The manufacturer shall demonstrate the control of contamination risks between excluded and included products (allergens, chemical, physical, microbiological hazards, also at the level of storage and warehouse). Process flow chart related to the product to be excluded shall be sent to the certification body.)

☐ No ☐ Yes → Exclusion is possible

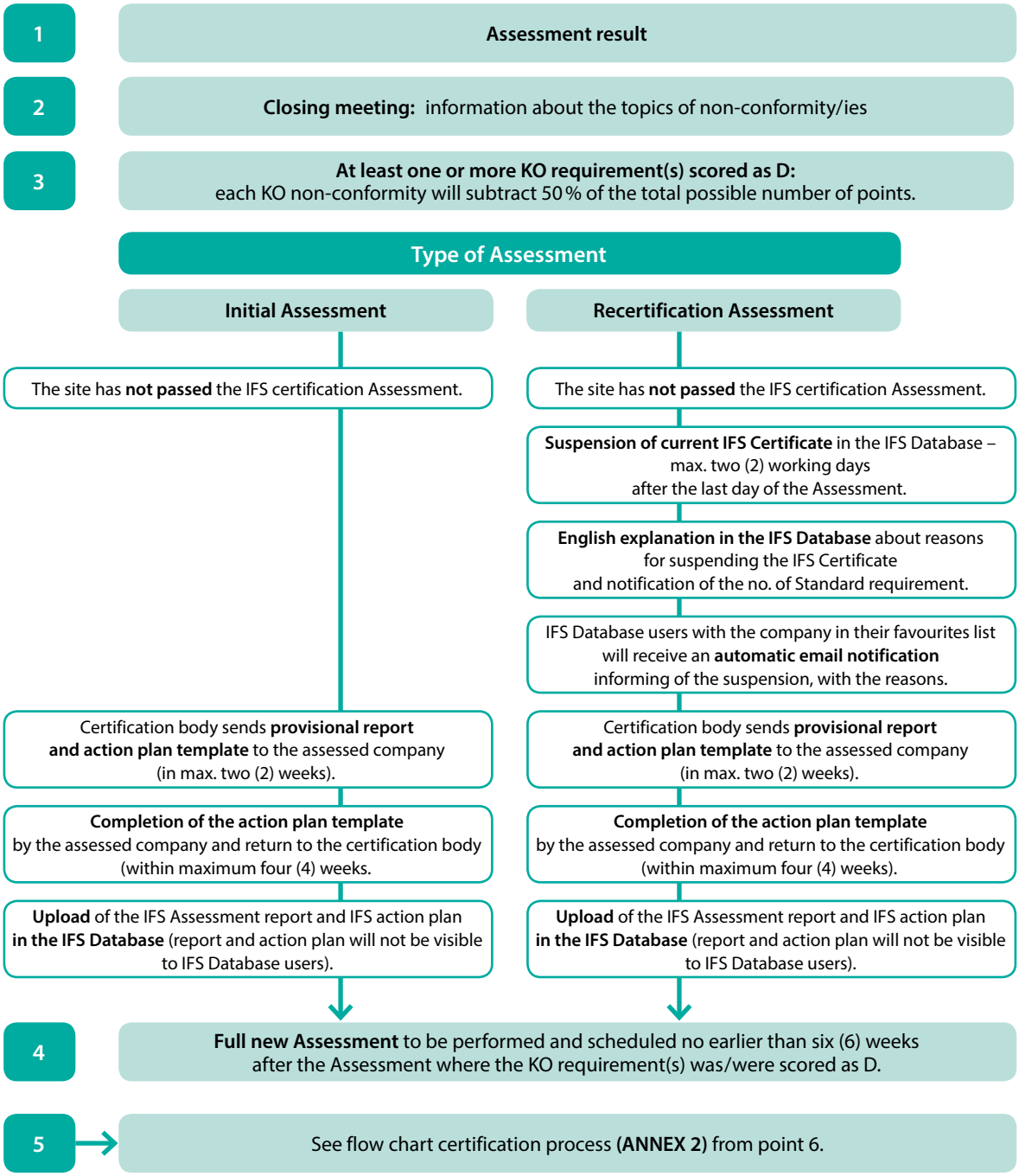
Exclusion is NOT possible

Note: The auditor shall always check on-site if defined exclusions are relevant and in line with the questionnaire, by assessing the risks which may arise from excluded products (e.g. contaminants, allergens).

ANNEX 5: Flow chart for management of one Major non-conformity and total score ≥ 75%



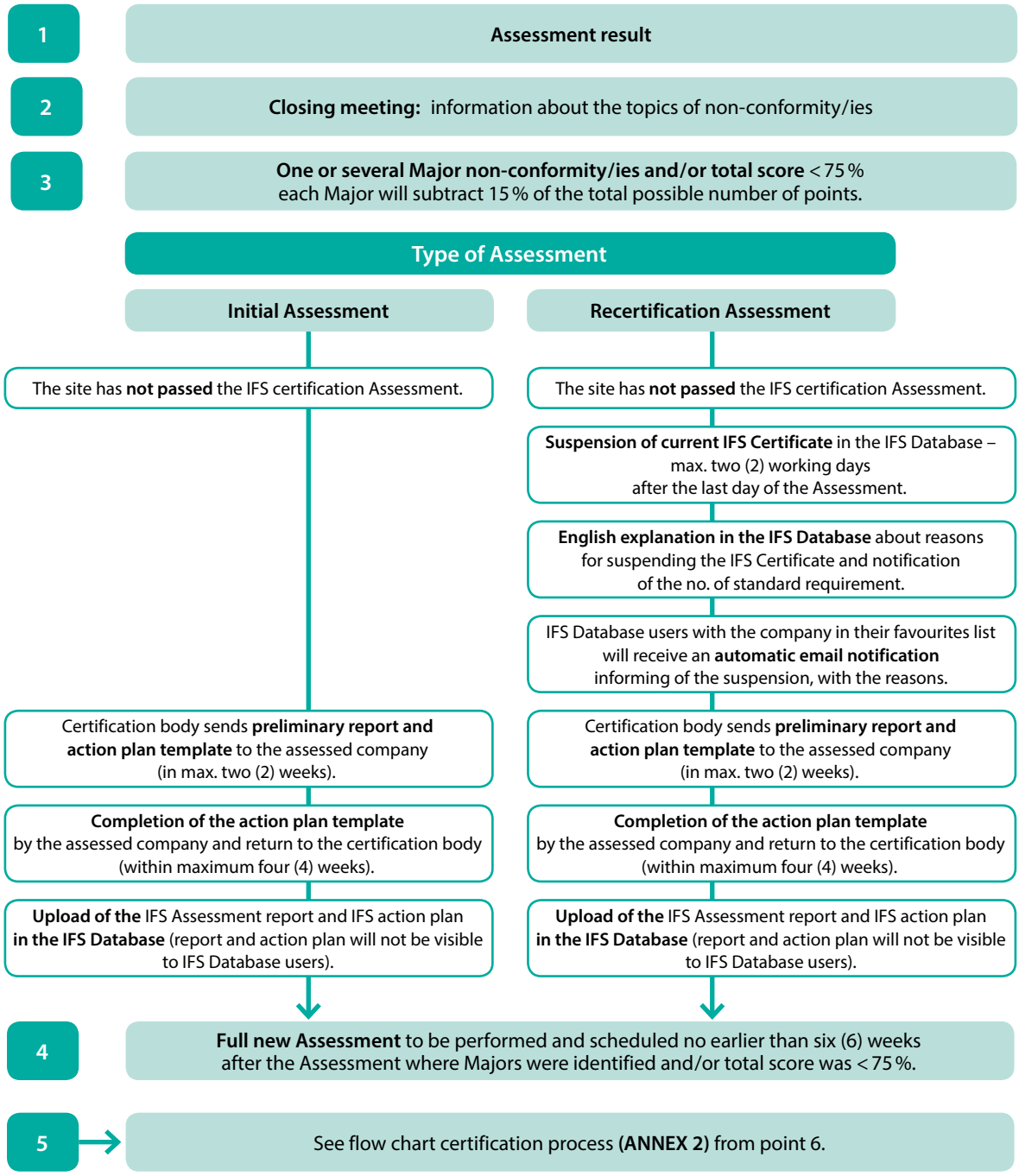
ANNEX 6: Flow chart for management of KO requirement scored with "D"



ANNEX 7: Action plan

N° of the requirement	IFS requirement	Evaluation	Explanation (by the auditor)	Correction (by the company)	Responsibility Date and status of implementation (by the company)	Type of evidence(s) and name of the document(s)	Corrective action (by the company)	Responsibility Date and status of implementation (by the company)	Release (by the auditor)
1.1.2	**All relevant information related to food safety …**	C							
1.2.1	**KO n°1: The senior management shall ensure that employees …**	KO/C							
1.2.2	**The senior management shall provide sufficient …**	D							
1.2.3	**The department responsible for quality …**	Major							
2.2.3.8.1	**KO n°2: Specific monitoring procedures in terms of method …**	KO/D							

ANNEX 8: Flow chart for management of one or several Major non-conformity/ies and/or total score < 75%



ANNEX 9: IFS Assessment report: Assessment overview

Cover page

Logo of the certification body

IFS Food Version 7
OCTOBER 2020

Final IFS Assessment Report

Assessed company: "Fruits and Vegetables GmbH"
[GS1 GLN(s) and where applicable, packing code and legal authorisation number]

Date of Assessment: 02.03./03.03.2021

Name and address of certification body

Accreditation number of the certification body

Assessment Overview
IFS Food Version 7, OCTOBER 2020

Assessment details

Lead auditor: Max Mustermann date/time: ***Co-auditor:*** date/time: ***Trainee:*** ***Witness auditor:*** ***Reviewer:*** ***Interpreter:*** ***Technical expert:***	***Date/time of current Assessment:*** 02.03.2021 (09:00–18:00) 03.03.2021 (08:30–17:30)	***Date/time of previous Assessment:*** 09.03.2020 (09:00–18:00) 10.03.2020 (08:30–12:30) ***Certification body and auditor of previous Assessment:*** TEST GmbH/Frank Test

Name and address of the company (or head office): Fruits and Vegetables AG Example street 12345 Witzenhausen Germany		***Name and address of the assessed site:*** Fruits and Vegetables GmbH Musterstraße 12346 Berlin Germany	
		COID:	
		Contact person in case of emergency (e.g. recall): [Name, e-mail and phone number at a minimum]:	
Phone: 0 12 34 56	Fax: 01 23 45 67 89	Phone: 0 12 34 57	Fax: 01 23 45 67 88
Website: www.fruitsandvegetables.com	E-mail: info@fruitsandvegetables.com	Website: www.fruitsandvegetables.com	E-mail: info@fruitsandvegetables.de

Scope of the Assessment

Production of frozen strawberries in PET bags and raspberry puree in UHT pouches.
(Mandatory translation of the Assessment scope into English)

Product scope(s): 5
Technology scope(s): B, D, F

Additional information

Exclusions: [yes/no] and [description]
Partly outsourced processes: [yes/no] and [description]
Decentralised structure(s): [yes/no] and [description]
Multi-location production sites: [yes/no] and [description]

Final result of the Assessment

As a result of the Assessment performed on 02.03. and 03.03. 2021, "xyz" found that the processing activities of **Fruits and Vegetables GmbH** for the above-mentioned scope of Assessment comply with the requirements set out in the IFS Food Standard, Version 7, at **Foundation level,** with a score of XX %.	Recertification Assessment between XX.XX and XX.XX in case of announced Assessment and between XX.XX and XX.XX in case of unannounced Assessment.

Observations regarding non-conformities (D evaluation of KO requirements and Majors):

Description of follow-up on corrections and corrective actions from previous Assessment

Company profile
Company data
Year of construction of the assessed site(s):
If the site was fully reconstructed, enter the year:
Area of the production site:
Number and description of buildings, floors and production lines (including decentralised structure(s), if applicable):
Maximum number of employees at peak season within a calendar year and explanation:
Detailed description of product groups and products per scope produced in the company. Full view of the company's on-site processes: from raw materials receipt to finished products.
Does the assessed site have seasonal production? If "yes", provide description.
If there are seasonal breaks in the production process for more than one week, specify the timeframe and provide explanation.
Does the assessed site have fully outsourced products in addition to the main processes/products? If "yes": specify these products, if the site is certified for IFS Broker and/or describe the certification status and COID if applicable or describe the certification status of the subcontractors and COID, if applicable.
Does the assessed site have traded products in addition to main processes/products? If "yes": specify these products, if the site is certified for IFS Broker and/or describe the certification status and COID if applicable or describe the certification status of the subcontractors and COID, if applicable.
Description about key investments made by the company related to the production and product safety and quality in the last 12 months (construction changes, machinery, etc.)
Does the company fulfil the requirements about the use of the IFS (Food) Logo, as defined in the IFS Food Certification protocol (Part 1)? [yes / no] If "no": [explanation]
Working language of the site and language in which the food safety and quality management system is written:
If the site is certified for other standards, specify the name(s) of the standard(s): [description]
Additional information:
Assessment data
Language in which the IFS Food Assessment was conducted:
Assessment duration (only for IFS Food Assessment):
In case of reduction/extension of Assessment duration, justify:
Which products were produced and which processes have been running during the on-site evaluation?
Additional information:

ANNEX 10: IFS Assessment report: Main content

IFS FOOD
Version 7, OCTOBER 2020

IFS Assessment report

Summary table of all chapters and result (in percentage) per chapter

	Chapter 1	Chapter 2	Chapter 3	Chapter 4	Chapter 5	Chapter 6
	Governance & commitment	Food safety and quality management system	Resource management	Operational processes	Measurements, analyses, improvements	Food defence plan
KO non-conformities	0	0	0	0	0	0
Major non-conformities	0	0	0	0	0	0
A	0	0	0	0	0	0
B	0	0	0	0	0	0
C	0	0	0	0	0	0
D	0	0	0	0	0	0
N/A	0	0	0	0	0	0
Result per chapter (%)						

Overall summary: Table of compulsory fields for specific defined IFS Food Assessment requirements and key elements

Part of the IFS Assessment report	N° of IFS Food v7 require-ment	Compulsory information to be added
Policy	1.1.1	• Date of the corporate policy approval and date(s) of the specific objectives.
Corporate structure	1.2.3	• Version and date of last issue of the organisational chart.
	1.2.5	• Description of how the company ensures that all relevant information is made available for all responsible staff.
	1.2.6	• Name of the authorities. • Date and time of last visit (even when more than 12 months ago)
Management review	1.4.1	• Date of the last review of the food safety and quality management system.
Document management	2.1.1.3	• Date and version of the procedure.
Records and documented information	2.1.2.2	• Date and version of the documented information (procedure).
HACCP analysis	2.2.3.7	• List CCP type(s).
	KO N° 2: 2.2.3.8.1	• Description of the monitoring procedure for each CCP which includes at a minimum: process step, control method, critical limit, control frequency. • Description of the sample(s) checked during the IFS Assessment. • In case of N/A evaluation, provide explanations.
	2.2.3.10	• Date of last HACCP plan verification.
Personal hygiene	3.2.1	• Date and version of the document related to personal hygiene.
	3.2.8	• Description of the protective clothing.
Training and instruction	3.3.1	• Date and version of the training and/or the instruction program.
	3.3.2	• Number of trainings and monitoring records checked during the IFS Assessment.
Staff facilities	3.4.1	• Comment on the suitability of staff facilities in line with the type of production.
	3.4.5	• Description of hand hygiene facilities.
Specifications/ finished products	4.2.1.1	• Description of finished product specifications which were checked during the Assessment. • If necessary (retail brands), have the finished product specifications been agreed upon with the customers?

Part of the IFS Assessment report	N° of IFS Food v7 requirement	Compulsory information to be added
Specifications/ raw materials	KO N° 4: 4.2.1.3	• Description of specifications (e.g. for raw materials, ingredients, additives, packaging materials, rework) which were checked during the Assessment. • Description of how the company ensures that the specifications are up to date.
Special claims	4.2.1.5	• Description of all special claims or procedures to be guaranteed. • Is the company working with products/raw materials consisting of GMOs, containing GMOs or produced from GMOs? • If yes, describe.
Recipes/ Formulas	KO N° 5: 4.2.2.1	• Description of customer agreements which were checked during the IFS Assessment, specifying the topics of the customer agreement which were checked in detail. Note: In case no customer agreements have been agreed, N/A evaluation is possible.
Product development	4.3.2	• Description of the sample(s) checked during the IFS Assessment.
	4.3.4	• Description of the label(s) checked during the IFS Assessment.
Purchasing	4.4.1	• Mention the process documentation checked during the IFS Assessment.
	4.4.2	• Date and version of the procedure for purchasing (including exceptional situations).
	4.4.3	• Date of last supplier's assessment.
	4.4.5	• Description of the sample(s) of the purchased service checked during the IFS Assessment.
Packaging materials	4.5.1	• Description of the kind of packaging materials used for finished products. • Are the suppliers certified for IFS PACsecure or for any other GFSI recognised standard for the same scope? If yes, which one?
Factory location	4.6.1	• Description of the location of the site and the conditions of the external areas.
Plant layout and process flows	4.8.2	• Comment on the suitability of the layout and the process flows to minimise food safety risks.
Constructional requirements	4.9.1.1	• Comment on the suitability of the site's premises.
Water supply	4.9.9.1	• Description of the type of source(s) of the potable water/used water. • Description of how the potable water/used water is checked, stating particularly whether the water is checked by the company's own laboratory or via an external laboratory. • Which analyses are performed? (with parameters)

Part of the IFS Assessment report	N° of IFS Food v7 require-ment	Compulsory information to be added
Compressed air and gases	4.9.10.1	• Date and version of the hazard analysis and assessment of associated risks. • If gases are used, provide the name of declaration of compliance checked during the IFS Assessment.
Cleaning and disinfection procedures	4.10.1	• Description of the applied cleaning and disinfection procedures (e.g. CIP, manual cleaning of rooms and equipment, cleaning by own personnel or third-party service provider, etc.). • Date and version of the cleaning and disinfection schedule checked during the IFS Assessment.
	4.10.8	• Name and date of the Safety Data Sheet checked during the IFS Assessment.
	4.10.9	• Description of the site's storing conditions.
Third-party cleaning and disinfection service provider	4.10.11	• Name of areas cleaned and disinfected by a third-party, where applicable.
Waste management	4.11.1	• Date and version of the waste management procedure.
Risks of foreign materials	KO N° 6: 4.12.2	• Description of the equipment and methods used to detect foreign materials (e.g. filters, sieves, X-ray, metal detection) and where they are placed in the process. • If foreign material detectors are not defined as CCP, description of the test pieces and sizes. • If no foreign material detection equipment is available, descriptions of the used preventive measures (e.g. visual detection methods).
Visual inspection	4.12.10	• Description of visual detection method, changing frequency for personnel and last training for personnel, where applicable.
Pest monitoring/ pest control	4.13.2	• Are the pest control services managed by in-house staff or by an external provider used? • Frequency and kind of checks. • In case of identification of pest activity, what were the corrective actions?
Receipt and storage of goods	4.14.1	• Date and version of the inspection plan.
	4.14.2	• Description of the system.
	4.14.5	• Description of the sample checked during the IFS Assessment.
Transport	4.15.1	• Description of the sample checked during the IFS Assessment.
Maintenance and repair	4.16.1	• Date and version of the maintenance plan.
Equipment	4.17.1	• Description of the sample checked during the IFS Assessment.

Part of the IFS Assessment report	N° of IFS Food v7 requirement	Compulsory information to be added
Traceability	KO N° 7: 4.18.1	• Description of the traceability system and documentation for traceability in the company. • Description of product(s) used for the traceability test during the IFS Assessment, including details concerning used raw materials, ingredients, additives, rework, packaging materials for the finished product/mass balance/results of the traceability tests backwards and forwards. **Note:** The traceability test(s) shall always be based on a sample purchased from a retail outlet or at least chosen by the auditor (e.g. if the "product" is not sold to the end consumer but to other businesses, e.g. Business to Business activities).
	4.18.2	• Date and product(s) of last traceability test.
Allergens and cross contamination	4.19.2	• What kind of preventive measures and control measures are in place to ensure that cross contamination is minimised? • Are allergens present? If yes, which ones? • Date of the risk assessment and last verification.
Food fraud	4.20.2	• Was a vulnerability assessment performed? • If yes, which raw material groups/product groups were identified in the vulnerability assessment? • Description why the identified raw material is vulnerable to food fraud. • Explain which criteria were selected in the vulnerability assessment. • Provide details of the vulnerability assessment (dates, responsibilities, points of discussion, etc.).
	4.20.3	• Date of the mitigation plan and date of the last review.
	4.20.4	• Date of the last food fraud vulnerability assessment review.
Internal audits	5.1.1	• Description of the samples checked during the IFS Assessment.
	5.1.2	• Which activities has the company identified as critical to food safety and to product quality?
Site factory inspections	5.2.1	• Description of the samples of the site and factory inspection checked during the IFS Assessment. • Mention the frequency of inspections.
Process and work environment validation and control	5.3.1	• Description of identified criteria for process and work environment validation. • Last process and work environment validation conducted (date, result). • Description of the environmental monitoring parameters and their limits defined by the company based on a risk assessment.
	5.3.2	• Description of the sample of use of rework checked during the IFS Assessment.

Part of the IFS Assessment report	N° of IFS Food v7 require-ment	Compulsory information to be added
Measuring and monitoring devices	5.4.1	• Description of the records/list of measuring and monitoring devices checked during the IFS Assessment.
	5.4.2	• Description of samples of measuring and monitoring devices checked during the IFS Assessment.
Quantity checking	5.5.1	• Description of the frequency and methodology of quantity checking. • Specify if the company uses "℮" mark on packaging.
Product analyses/ Laboratory	5.6.1	• Which analyses are performed by own laboratory and how frequently? • Which analyses are performed by an external laboratory and how frequently?
	5.6.2	• Mention the accreditation number of the laboratory.
Product release	5.7.1	• Date and version of the procedure.
Complaints management	5.8.1	• Range or indicator of complaints raised by consumers, retailers and authorities separately. • Range or indicator about complaints relating to foreign materials found in the finished products, specifying the kind of foreign materials.
	5.8.2	• Description of the samples checked during the IFS Assessment.
Withdrawal/ recall	5.9.1	• Date and version of the procedure.
	KO N° 9: 5.9.2	• How many withdrawals have been performed since the last Assessment? • How many recalls have been performed since the last Assessment? • Description of the cause of withdrawals. • Description of the food safety issue in the case of recalls. • Date of the last test.
Management of non-conformities and non-conforming products	5.10.1	• Date and version of the procedure.
Corrective actions	5.11.1	• Date and version of the procedure. • Description of the follow-up in the Assessment report overview and in the action plan.

Food defence plan	6.2	• Description of the food defence plan:
		  ◦ Version and date of the procedure and date of the plan.
		  ◦ Date of the annual review and last test.

Part of the IFS Assessment report	N° of IFS Food v7 require-ment	Compulsory information to be added
If applicable, additional information		
Note: additional information can also be given for requirements not listed as a compulsory field or any other auditor remark.		

Summary of all deviations and non-conformities found for each chapter and requirement:

N°	Reference	IFS requirement	Evaluation	Explanation
1.	1.1.1			
2.	1.1.2			

Summary of points of attention:

N°	Reference	IFS requirement	Evaluation	Explanation
1.	1.1.1			
2.	1.1.2			

Detailed IFS Assessment report:

N°	Reference	IFS requirement	Evaluation	Explanation
1.	1.1.1			
2.	1.1.2			

ANNEX to the IFS Assessment report

List of key participants:

Assessment participants					
Name	**Position**	**Opening meeting**	**On-site evaluation**	**Documen-tation review**	**Closing meeting**
Mr. Quality	Quality Manager	X	X	X	X
Mr. Manager	General Manager	X			X
Mr. Interpreter	Interpreter	X	X	X	X

Product and technology scopes (based on ANNEX 3)

IFS Scoring System (based on chart 1, Part 1)

Scoring and issue of certificate (based on chart 4, Part 1)

ANNEX 11: IFS Certificate

Certificate

IFS Food

Herewith the certification body

Name of the certification body

being an ISO/IEC 17065 accredited certification body for IFS certification and having signed an agreement with IFS Management GmbH, confirms that the processing activities of

Name of the assessed company

Address

(GS1 GLN(s) and where applicable, packing code and sanitary legal authorisation number)
COID, (head office, if applicable)

for the Assessment scope:
(detailed descriptions of process(es)/product(s)),

additional information:

If there are partly outsourced processes, the following sentence shall be added:
"Besides own production, the company has partly outsourced processes",

description of product exclusions, if applicable,

if the company performs additional broker or logistics activities, provide the certification status by writing the sentence:
"The company has own broker/logistics activities which are/are not IFS Broker and/or IFS Logistics/other GFSI recognised standard certified".

Number and name of the product scope(s), number of the technology scope(s)

meet the requirements set out in the

IFS Food Version 7, OCTOBER 2020

at Foundation level/Higher level
and other associated normative documents

with a score of XX %

Certificate-Register number:
Date of the last unannounced Assessment (last day of the Assessment).
If no unannounced IFS Food Assessment has been conducted for the respective COID yet, the certificate shall indicate the following:
"Last Assessment conducted unannounced: N/A"

Assessment date (if relevant: plus date of the follow-up Assessment):

Certificate issue date:

Date of expiration of the certificate (the certificate validity shall remain the same each year as described in the IFS Food Certification protocol, Part 1):

Next Assessment to be performed within the time period:
(Recertification Assessment between XX.XX and XX.XX in case of announced Assessment and between XX.XX and XX.XX in case of unannounced Assessment)

Date and place:

Name and signature of the responsible person at the certification body:

Address of the certification body:

Logo of the accreditation body or its name and registration number

ANNEX 12: Glossary

Allergen (EU)	Food causing an adverse reaction that is mediated by an immunological response. Defined allergens are: • Cereals containing gluten (i.e. wheat, rye, barley, oats, spelt, kamut or their hybridised strains) and products thereof • Crustaceans and products thereof • Eggs and products thereof • Fish and products thereof • Peanuts and products thereof • Soybeans and products thereof • Milk and products thereof (including lactose) • Nuts i.e. Almond (Amygdalus communis L.), Hazelnut • (Corylus avellana), Walnut (Juglans regia), Cashew (Anacardium occidentale), Pecan nut (Carya illinoiesis (Wangenh.) K. Koch), Brazil nut (Bertholletia excelsa), Pistachio nut (Pistacia vera), Macadamia nut and Queensland nut (Macadamia ternifolia) and products thereof • Celery and products thereof • Lupin and products thereof • Molluscs and products thereof • Mustard and products thereof • Sesame seeds and products thereof • Sulphur dioxide and sulphites at concentrations of more than 10 mg/kg or 10 mg/liter expressed as SO_2. Regulation (EU) N° 1169/2011 of the European Parliament and of the Council.
Allergen (US)	There are 8 major allergens recognised in the United States according to the 2009 U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) Model Food Code, Definitions section, page 12. (1) "Major food allergen"means: (a) Milk, egg, fish (such as bass, flounder, cod, and including crustacean shellfish such as crab, lobster, or shrimp), tree nuts (such as almonds, pecans, or walnuts), wheat, peanuts, and soybeans (b) A Food ingredient that contains protein derived from a food, as specified in subparagraph (1) (a) of this definition. (2) "Major food allergen" does not include: (a) Any highly refined oil derived from a food specified in subparagraph (a) of this definition and any ingredient derived from such highly refined oil; or (b) Any ingredient that is exempt under the petition or notification process specified in the Food Allergen Labelling and Consumer Protection Act of 2004 (Public Law 108–282).

Assessment (IFS)	Determination process which includes evaluation methods such as auditing and inspection, to determine to what extent a production site and its related processing activities comply with the specified requirements (laid down in Part 2). The IFS Assessment is conducted by following an assessment trail, including an on-site evaluation and a documentation and record review and inspection in which auditing and inspection techniques are applied alternately.
Assessment time window (unannounced Assessment)	Time period during which the unannounced Assessment may be performed. The date of reference for this time window is the Assessment due date (the date of first certification Assessment) in an Assessment cycle. Within the IFS Food Certification protocol (Part 1), the time window is [–16 weeks; + 2 weeks] of the Assessment due date.
Assessor (for accreditation bodies)	Person assigned by an accreditation body to perform, alone or as part of an assessment team, an assessment of a conformity assessment body. **Note:** In IFS Standards, conformity assessment body is named certification body.
Audit	Systematic, independent, documented process for obtaining records, statements of fact or other relevant information and assessing them objectively to determine the extent to which specified requirements are fulfilled. In the IFS Assessment, auditing is limited to the examination of management processes which lead to a compliant process/product.
Auditor in progress (AIP)	Candidate who is in the process of gaining auditing/assessing experience and has to pass the IFS Examinations to become an IFS Food Auditor. For further information, see chapter 3.1.1.4, Part 3 of the Standard.
Batch number	Designation that is printed on a label that allows the history of production to be traced.
Blackout period	Period of time that can be notified by the company to its certification body in which the unannounced Assessment cannot take place. This includes a maximum of ten (10) operational days when the production site is not available for Assessment (e.g. staff holidays, maintenance days, etc.) as well as non-operating periods. **Note:** The ten (10) operational days can be split into a maximum of three (3) periods. These, together with the non-operating periods, shall be notified to the certification body when registering for the unannounced Assessment. The certification body will decide if the unannounced character of the Assessment is fulfilled.
Calibration	Set of operations that establish, under specified conditions, the relationship between values of quantities indicated by a measuring instrument or measuring system, or values represented by a material measure or a reference material and the corresponding values realised by standards.
CCP	Critical control point: a step at which control can be applied and is essential to prevent or eliminate a food safety hazard or reduce it to an acceptable level.
Characteristics	A designated feature or property of a product.

Company	Any establishment in which any stage of production and distribution of food is carried out. The company can have one or several legal entities registered and/or approved by the relevant authority on behalf of the food business operator.
Consumer unit	Unit of the product intended to be sold to final users or consumers, which is available on the market, at the point of purchase.
Contamination	Introduction or occurrence of a contaminant in food or food environment. A contaminant can be any biological, chemical agent, physical foreign material, or any other substances that may compromise food safety or suitability. Contamination can also mean correlation of packages among themselves.
Contractor	A company or person who is contracted by the company to carry out work for the site.
Control measure (former CP)	Identified by the hazard analysis and risk assessment in order to control the likelihood of introducing or proliferation of a safety hazard in the product and/or the environment. However, the loss of control at this point may not lead to a health problem.
Correction	Action to eliminate a detected deviation and/or non-conformity. It shall be implemented, at latest, before a certificate is issued.
Corrective action	Action to eliminate the cause of a detected deviation and/or non-conformity. It shall be implemented, at latest, before the recertification Assessment.
Customer	A customer is a business company or person to whom products are sold either as a finished product or as a semi-finished part of the finished product.
Customer agreement	A negotiated and usually legally enforceable understanding between a customer and the company.
Customer branded product	A product which is manufactured by the production site and sold under the brand name of its customer (e.g. private label).
Decentralised structure	Facility (for example a workshop or a warehouse) owned by the company where part(s) of the processes and operations of the production site take place.
Deviation	Non-compliance with a requirement, without any impact on food safety related to products and processes. In the IFS Standard, deviations are requirements scored with a C, D and KO requirements scored with a C.
End consumer	The ultimate consumer of a foodstuff who will not use the food as part of any food business operation or activity.
Equipment	Machines, instruments, apparatus, utensils or appliances used or intended to be used in or in connection with food handling and includes equipment used or intended to be used to clean and disinfect food premises or equipment.

Factory Inspection (versus internal audit)	Factory inspection covers specific subjects and can be carried out by any appropriate person. That means regular visits to any areas, for any purposes, to check the conformity (hygiene, pest control, product control, fabrication, foreign material hazards, surrounding control, etc.).
Flow diagram	A systematic representation of the sequence of steps or operations used in the processing or manufacture of a particular food item.
Food	Any substance or product, whether processed, partially processed or unprocessed, intended to be, or reasonably expected to be, ingested by humans. 'Food' includes drink, chewing gum and any substance, including water, intentionally incorporated into the food during its manufacture, preparation or treatment, and live animals which are offered to the customer or consumer and intended for preparation and consumption by the consumer.
Food authenticity	The characteristic of a food in relation to its origin, and/or process of production and/or its inherent properties (e.g. organoleptic or chemical).
Food defence	Procedures implemented to assure the protection of food and their supply chain from malicious and ideologically motivated threats.
Food fraud	The intentional substitution, mislabelling, adulteration or counterfeiting of food, raw materials or packaging materials placed upon the market for economic gain. This definition also applies to outsourced processes.
Food fraud mitigation plan	A process that defines the requirements on when, where and how to mitigate fraudulent activities, identified by a food fraud vulnerability assessment. The resulting plan will define the measures and checks that are required to be in place to effectively mitigate the identified risks. The control measures required to be put into place may vary according to the nature of: • the food fraud (substitution, mislabelling, adulteration or counterfeiting) • detection methodology • type of surveillance (inspection, audit, analytical, product certification) • source of the raw materials and packaging materials.

Food fraud vulnerability assessment	A systematic documented form of risk assessment to identify the risks of possible food fraud activity within the supply chain (including all raw materials, food, packaging materials and outsourced processes). The method of risk assessment may vary from company to company, however the systematic methodology for food fraud vulnerability assessment shall include, at a minimum: • The identification of potential food fraud activities, using known and reliable data sources. • The evaluation of the level of risk, both product and supply source. • The evaluation for the need for additional control measures. • The development and implementation of the food fraud mitigation plan, using the results of the vulnerability assessment. • An annual review, or more often if there is increased risk identified by change to defined risk criteria. The criteria used to evaluate the level of risk should be as follows: • History of food fraud incidents • Economic factors • Ease of fraudulent activity • Supply chain complexity • Current control measures • Supplier confidence.
Food handling areas	Areas where personnel handle food or handle surfaces likely to come into contact with food. These are areas where food is prepared, manufactured, produced, collected, extracted, processed, stored, transported and delivered.
Food safety culture	Shared values, beliefs and norms that affect mindset and behaviour toward food safety in, across and throughout an organisation. Elements of food safety culture are those elements of the food safety management which the senior management of a company may use to drive the food safety culture within the company. These shall include at a minimum: • Communication about food safety policies and responsibilities • Training • Employee feedback on food safety related issues • Performance measurement.
Formula	Exhaustive description of quantity and quality of raw materials to be used to process the products, as required in customer specifications. Formula can also include technological parameters and specific "know-how" on the process.
Fully outsourced products	Products that are manufactured, packaged and labelled under the own brand or customer brand by a different company than the assessed one.
Global Location Number of GS1 (GLN)	The GLN is required to clearly identify the IFS certified site in the electronic communications in the supply chain. It is mandatory for sites located within the European Economic Area (EEA), as well as for sites located within the United Kingdom if it leaves the EEA on 01.01.2021. GLNs are requested in the IFS Assessment report, on the IFS Certificate and in the IFS Database for each certified site(s).

GMO	Genetically modified organism: an organism, with the exception of human beings, in which the genetic material has been modified otherwise than natural multiplication or natural recombination.
HACCP	Hazard analysis and critical control points: a system which identifies, evaluates and controls hazards which are significant for food safety.
Hazard	A biological, chemical or physical agent in, or condition of, food with the potential to cause an adverse health effect.
Hazard analysis	The process of collecting and evaluating information on hazards and conditions leading to their presence to decide which are significant for food safety and therefore shall be addressed in the HACCP plan.
Head office assessment (for accreditation bodies)	Assessment of the conformity assessment body head office. **Note:** In IFS Standards, conformity assessment body is named certification body.
Incident	A situation within the supply chain where there are possible and/or confirmed risks associated with product integrity; or any force majeure event (e.g. critical resources/services disruption, natural disasters, loss, emergency situations, crisis, etc.) with a direct impact on delivering trusted products.
Ingredient	Any substance, including food additives, used in the manufacturing or preparation of a food which remains in the finished product, even in the modified form.
Inspection	Examination of a process/product, product design or installation and determination of its conformity with specific requirements or, on the basis of professional judgement, with general requirements. Inspection of a process includes inspection of product characteristics, customer requirements, persons, facilities, technology and methodology.
Instruction program	A defined program designed to provide clear and concise instructions to personnel to meet food safety and quality objectives.
Integrity Program	Program implemented by IFS in order to: • Monitor, as preventive actions, performance of auditors and certification bodies as well as assessed companies, • Manage, as corrective actions, any complaints addressed to IFS.
Internal audit	General process of audit, for all activities in a company. Conducted by or on behalf of the company for internal purposes. An internal audit is an independent and objective assurance and consulting activity that is designed to add value and improve the operations of an organisation. It helps an organisation accomplish its objectives by bringing a systematic, disciplined approach to evaluate and improve the effectiveness of risk management, control, and governance processes.
Key roles	Personnel who have significant responsibilities and accountability for the development and maintenance of product integrity.
Legal authorisation number	Official authorisation number of the site. In some countries, this number is equivalent to the veterinary number.

Legal entity	A legal entity is the registered office of the food business where, according to agreement, the food business operator has its administrative center. It generally identifies the place where the administrative organisation of the company is located.
Location	One physical address where the production site(s) is/are situated.
Lot number	Combination of numerical digits that are given to a group of products manufactured in the same batch/production unit.
Monitoring	The act of conducting a planned sequence of observations or measurements of control parameters to assess whether CCPs and other control measures are under control. See also Codex Alimentarius.
Non-conformity	Non-fulfilment of a specified requirement. Non-conformity can be given in case of: • non-respect of legislation, • food safety issues, • internal dysfunctions, and • customer issues. In the IFS Standard, defined non-conformities are Majors and D evaluations of a KO requirement.
Non-operating periods	Periods when the production lines are not operating at all, e.g. planned maintenance work, bank holiday, planned company shutdown for holidays, etc.
On-site evaluation	Inspection and audit of the production area of the physical site, which includes the following areas: • Production processes, • Receipt, storage and dispatch areas, • Good Manufacturing Practices (GMP), including maintenance, hygiene, pest control and cleaning and disinfection activities, • Product development, • On-site laboratory and / or maintenance facilities, • Staff and sanitary facilities, • External areas.
Packaging material	Any material used to: • Contain the product, which depends on the product's physical form and nature • Protect and prevent the product from mechanical damage due to the hazards of distribution • Preserve the product, to prevent or inhibit chemical changes, biochemical changes and/or microbiological spoilage • Inform and communicate about the product, e.g.: legal requirements, product ingredients, usage, brand communication, etc. • Extend the shelf life or to maintain or improve the condition of the product (active food contact materials) • Monitor the condition of the packaged product or the environment surrounding the product (intelligent food contact materials) • Handling, delivery and presentation of products.

Partly outsourced process	Production step(s) or part(s) of production process carried out off-site by a third-party on behalf of the IFS certified production site. In the IFS Standard, primary packaging and labelling are also considered as production steps: if carried out outsourced, these shall be considered as partly outsourced processes.
Pasteurisation	Heat treatment designed to reduce the number of pathogenic and spoilage microorganisms which is consistent with minimal chemical, physical and organoleptic changes in the product (e.g. UHT process, high pressure pasteurisation). It is used in combination with other factors to make food safe over a designated shelf life (pH, Aw, chilled storage).
PDO	Protected designation of origin defined under regulation (EU) N° 1151/2012.
PGI	Protected geographical indication defined under regulation (EU) N° 1151/2012.
Potable water	Water fit for human or animal consumption (e.g. drinking, cooking and food preparation) that in principle must be free from microorganisms and other contaminants that may endanger public health.
Primary packaging material	The primary packaging material fulfils one or more of the following conditions: • it is in contact and/or intended to be in contact with food • it can transfer their constituents to the food, and, if removed, the quality, safety and legality of its content is affected • it is part of the consumer unit.
Procedure	Specified way to carry out an activity or process. Procedures shall be implemented and the elaboration of procedures shall be laid out in documents or process descriptions (e.g. flowchart).
Product	Result of a process or activities for transforming inputs into outputs. A food product comprises packaging.
Product development	The creation of products with new or different characteristics that offer new or additional benefits to the customer. Product development may involve modification of an existing product or its presentation, or formulation of an entirely new product that satisfies a newly defined customer who wants a market niche. In the IFS Standard, the requirements for chapter product development apply even if there is just a product modification, use of new packaging materials or modifications of production processes.
Product integrity	The product safety, quality and other properties or criteria that are defined by the company or customer.
Product recall	Any measure aimed at achieving the return of a dangerous product that has already been supplied or made available to consumers by the producer or distributor.
Product requirements	Product requirements include: product safety, product quality, product legality, process and specification.

Product withdrawal	Any measure aimed at preventing the distribution, display and offer of an out-of-specification product and/or of a product that may be dangerous to the consumer.
Production area	Part of the production site which includes: production processes, receipt, storage and dispatch areas, Good Manufacturing Practices (GMP), including maintenance, hygiene, pest control and cleaning and disinfection activities, product development, on-site laboratory and / or maintenance facilities, staff and sanitary facilities, external areas.
Production site	An establishment in a specific physical location where the IFS Food Assessment is conducted in which any stage of production and distribution of food can be carried out. It can also include facilities (for example workshop or warehouse) owned by the company where part(s) of the processes and operations take place.
Protective clothing	Clothing provided by the company (which includes footwear and gloves) which are worn by employees, contractors and visitors to protect the food from contamination.
Raw materials	A base material used for the manufacture of a product (ingredients, additives, packaging materials, rework).
Resources	A stock or supply of money, materials, staff, and other assets that can be drawn on by the company in order to function effectively and continuously achieve objectives.
Reviewer	An IFS Reviewer is either an IFS Food Auditor or an IFS pure Reviewer. Person of the certification body in charge of assessing the IFS Assessment reports before a certification decision is made. The tasks of the IFS Reviewer are, at a minimum: • To check the overall consistency of the IFS Assessment reports. • To check if the IFS Assessment reports are properly completed (e.g. compulsory fields, etc.). • To check if the findings are well described and if the justifications are relevant. • To check if the corrections and corrective actions as well as the deadlines for implementation proposed by the assessed company have been validated by the auditor (or by a representative of the certification body) and are relevant. The review shall be documented.
Rework	The process of re-utilisation of food, ingredients, raw materials or packaging materials.
Risk	A function of the probability of an adverse health effect and the severity of that effect, consequential to (a) hazard(s) in food.
Risk assessment	The documented information of the process of risk identification, risk analysis and risk evaluation to determine control measures.
Root cause analysis	Process or procedure that helps to understand the initiating causes of a problem. The goal of this process or procedure is to determine the missing or inadequately applied controls that will prevent a recurrence.

Safety Data Sheets (SDS)	Safety data sheets (SDS) are safety instructions for handling dangerous substances, they are principally intended for use by professional users and must enable them to take the necessary measures in regards to the protection of health, safety and the environment at the place of work. The safety data sheet may be supplied on paper or electronically, provided that the addressee has the necessary means of receiving it.
Seasonal products	Products which are processed at a specific time in the year, or processes which are used at a specific time in the year, for getting new/different products than those processed all year long.
Securely	To retain in a safe location, which is not open to unauthorised personnel or persons.
Senior management	Executive management.
Service	An organisation that provides a network, storage or processing service. E.g. transport, storage, order picking or other outsourced services (e.g. pest control, cleaning and disinfection).
Shifts	Scheduled working time after which employees change or rotate.
Sign-off audit	First witness audit of an auditor after having passed the IFS Examinations for the purpose of confirmation of competencies for final approval as an IFS Food Auditor. The sign-off audit shall be performed during a full IFS Food Certification Assessment.
Staff facilities	Areas within a site, other than food handling areas, that are used by personnel, e.g. cloakrooms, toilets, canteens and rest rooms.
Sterilisation	Heat treatment applied to a product in final packaging, designed to destroy pathogens and produce commercially sterile products with an extended (long) shelf life under ambient temperature (e.g. autoclave for products canned). The main concern is inactivation of the most heat resistant pathogenic spore, namely C. botulinum.
System	Set of interrelated or interacting elements. A system is a planned, sustainable structured course of action. Depending on the complexity, documentation is recommended. A system includes: documentation, procedure description, control/monitoring, corrective action, site plan.
Traceability	Ability to trace and follow a food, feed, food-producing animal or substance intended to be, or expected to be incorporated into a food or feed, through all stages of production and distribution.
Traded products	Products manufactured, packaged and labelled by and under a different company name to the company being IFS Food certified and which are not customer branded products.
Validation	Obtaining evidence that a control measure or combination of control measures is capable of controlling the hazard to a specified outcome.
Verification	The application of methods, procedures, tests and other evaluations, in addition to monitoring, to determine whether a control measure is or has been operating as intended.

Witness assessment (by accreditation bodies)	Assessment of the conformity assessment body when it is carrying out conformity assessment services within its scope of accreditation. **Note:** In IFS Standard, conformity assessment body is named certification body.
Witness audit to be performed every two (2) years, for approved IFS Food Auditors	Every IFS Food Auditor shall be assessed during a full IFS Food on-site witness audit every two (2) years by the certification body, in order to evaluate her/his competencies. This audit can be performed at any time during the second calendar year after the year in which last witness audit has taken place. The witness auditor: • shall not be part of the Assessment (as a team member). • shall be an experienced IFS Auditor (see requirements under 3.2, Part 3). • may not be qualified for all product and technology scope(s) of the Assessment. The certification body shall specify the name of the witness auditor in the participants' list of the IFS Assessment report and shall be able to provide, on request, a witness audit report of this witness audit. Every second time (every four (4) years) it can be replaced by a full on-site witness audit during another GFSI recognised food safety post-farm processing certification standard audit accredited against ISO/IEC 17065:2012 norm. **Note 1:** In case of an Assessment team in which the team can split during the Assessment (as both auditors have company's product and technology scopes), it is not possible to perform a witness audit by a witness auditor, as the auditor who is witnessed doesn't perform a full IFS Assessment. But if the team does not split, it is possible to perform a witness audit by an observer for the lead auditor, as it will be possible to witness the auditor during a full IFS Assessment. **Note 2:** Accreditation witness assessments performed by accreditation bodies are accepted as a replacement of a witness audit performed by an observer from the certification body. **Note 3:** Witness audits performed by IFS Integrity Program during a full IFS Food Assessments can also be accepted.

The IFS publishes information, opinions and bulletins to its best knowledge, but cannot take any responsibility for any mistakes, omissions or possibly misleading information in its publications, especially in this document.

The Standard owner of the present document is:

IFS Management GmbH
Am Weidendamm 1 A
10117 Berlin
Germany

Managing Director: Stephan Tromp
AG Charlottenburg
HRB 136333 B
VAT-N°: DE278799213

Bank: Berliner Sparkasse
IBAN number: DE96 1005 0000 0190 0297 65
BIC-/Swift-Code: BE LA DE BE

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The IFS Food Standard is available online via:
www.ifs-certification.com

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