

**ISSUE 1
PLANT-BASED
GLOBAL STANDARD**



ISSUE 1
PLANT-BASED
GLOBAL STANDARD

January 2020

Liability

BRCGS¹ publishes information and expresses opinions in good faith, but accepts no liability for any error or omission in any such information or opinion, including any information or opinion contained in this publication.

While the developers of this document have made every effort to ensure that the information contained herein is accurate and complete at the time of issuance, BRCGS and others who were involved in the development cannot be held liable for errors or omissions. Application of these documents is at the user's discretion only. It is suggested that potential users confirm, in advance, the applicability of these documents to their specific needs. Nothing in this issue of the Plant-Based Global Standard is intended to supersede or replace any regulations or policies that are under the mandate of any local, regional, or national competent authority.

Copyright

© BRC Trading Ltd 2020

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be transmitted or reproduced in any form (including photocopying or storage in any medium by electronic means) without the written permission of the copyright owner. Application for permission should be addressed to the Operations Director of Global Standards at BRC Trading Ltd (contact details below). Full acknowledgement of the author and source must be given.

The contents of this publication cannot be reproduced for the purposes of training or any other commercial activity.

No part of this publication may be translated without the written permission of the copyright owner.

Warning: Any unauthorized act in relation to a copyright work may result in both a civil claim for damages and criminal prosecution.

For more information about BRCGS, contact:

BRC Trading Ltd
Second Floor
7 Harp Lane
London EC3R 6DP

Tel: +44 (0) 20 3931 8150
Email: enquiries@brcgs.com
Website: www.brcgs.com

¹ BRCGS is a trading name of BRC Trading Ltd.

Contents

Part I – The plant-based management system

Part II – Requirements

1	Senior management commitment	10
2	The food safety plan – HACCP	10
3	PBMS maintenance and reassessment	11
4	Documentation and records	11
5	Internal audits	12
6	Supplier and ingredients/inputs approval and performance monitoring	12
7	Ingredient and input receipt and acceptance	13
8	Suppliers of services	14
9	Specifications	14
10	Traceability	14
11	Complaint handling	15
12	Product recall and withdrawal	15
13	Product development	15
14	Approval and control of labels	16
15	Product authenticity, claims, and chain of custody	16
16	Marketing claims	17
17	Cross-contamination control	17
18	Control of recipes and formulations	18
19	Segregation and disposal of obsolete and waste material	18
20	Plant-based awareness training	18

Part III – Certification process and audit protocol

Part IV – Management and governance

Appendices

Appendix 1	Other Global Standards produced by BRCGS	36
Appendix 2	Qualifications, training, and experience requirements for auditors	37
Appendix 3	Certificate template	39
Appendix 4	Common materials of animal origin	40
Appendix 5	Glossary	42
Appendix 6	Abbreviations	45
Appendix 7	Acknowledgements	46

Part I

The plant-based management system

Scope of the Standard	6
Benefits of a plant-based management system	6
Responsibilities of BRCGS	6
Senior management commitment	7
A management system approach	7
Certification process	7
Guidance and training	7
Acknowledgements: a “thank you” from BRCGS	7



Part I

The plant-based management system

Welcome to the first edition of the Plant-Based Global Standard (hereafter referred to as the Standard).

The Standard has been developed in response to a shift in consumer purchasing behavior resulting in the rapidly growing demand for plant-based products. The industry has been challenged with meeting consumer demands while also protecting brand reputation and mitigating risk. The Standard provides certainty for industry and consumers alike.

The Standard is based on a comprehensive management system approach and provides a framework for manufacturers to assist them in the production of plant-based food. It includes operational criteria required to be in place to ensure that plant-based products are free of material of animal origin.

Even the most informed consumer may unknowingly consume animal products or ingredients due to the challenge of correctly identifying animal-containing ingredients based on product labeling information alone. The plant-based on-pack trademark will empower consumers to make informed choices quickly and easily. The trademark will allow brands and products to differentiate themselves.

The Standard provides confidence to consumers and industry alike.

Scope of the Standard

The Standard applies only to the control of animal inputs in plant-based products, in the manufacture, processing and packing of:

- processed foods, both own brand and customer branded
- ingredients for use by food service companies, catering companies, and food manufacturers
- pet foods (GFSI benchmarked schemes only)
- natural health products.

Benefits of a plant-based management system

The long-term outcome of the Standard is to promote a systems approach to prevent failures that could harm brand reputation. Correctly applied, a site's plant-based management system (PBMS) will provide a very strong level of protection from failure, and if failure does occur, it will enable the rapid identification and management of risks and deviations. Increasing the availability of plant-based products will enable market expansion. Consumers will benefit by having increased confidence in their purchases, wider availability, and variety of choice.

Responsibilities of BRCGS

- Develop and maintain a Standard in consultation with consumers, industry, and government stakeholders. Where possible, harmonize with the best approaches that have been developed and successfully implemented.
- Recognize the systems that conform to the requirements of the Standard.
- Verify the implementation, effectiveness, and maintenance of the PBMS that manufacturers and distributors have in place.
- Ensure competencies for the recognition and verification of the PBMS developed and implemented by sites.
- Ensure consistency of the evaluation and audit processes and of the verification of conformity.
- Provide the resources to enable the timely evaluation and administration of the Standard.

- Consider any information presented in the conduct of the Standard, such as copies of the PBMS documentation that are obtained by a BRCGS officer or auditor, to be private and confidential, and protect the information to the extent of the law. BRCGS will request only information that is relevant to the administration of the Standard.

Senior management commitment

Within a food business, claim management and integrity must be seen as a cross-functional responsibility that includes activities that draw on many departments, using different skills and levels of management expertise across the organization. Effective plant-based management extends beyond technical departments and must involve commitment from the research and development, production operations, engineering, distribution management, procurement, brand management, and marketing departments, as well as customer feedback and human resources activity such as training.

The starting point for an effective PBMS is the commitment of senior management to the development of an all-encompassing policy to guide the activities that collectively assure the integrity of the plant-based claim. The Standard places a high priority on clear evidence of senior leadership commitment.

A management system approach

The program promotes the use of a management system approach, to systematically prevent failures. Once in place, a product manufacturer conforming to the Standard will be subject to periodic audits by an independent third party approved by BRCGS. The audit will evaluate the site's achievement, and any deficiencies, in the application and use of general best practices within its PBMS, with the expectation that conformity can consistently be met.

Certification process

Producers and manufacturers will be evaluated and audited by a third party, a certification body recognized by BRCGS. The audit will evaluate the achievement, and any deficiencies, in the application and use of general best practices within the site's PBMS, with the expectation that conformity can consistently be met. Upon recognition, sites and their distributors will be licensed to use and apply the Standard's trademark, knowing that products bearing the Standard's trademark must be sourced from a certified site in good standing.

Guidance and training

BRCGS produces a range of guidance documents, training courses, and a self-assessment tool designed to assist sites with the application of the Standard and understanding of core skills such as risk assessment.

Further information about training courses can be found at www.brcgs.com.

Acknowledgements: a "thank you" from BRCGS

BRCGS would like to thank all the producers, manufacturers, distributors, retailers, health professionals, and product specialists who participated in the development of this issue of the Standard. This Standard draws heavily from materials and processes used by competent authorities, recognized worldwide, that promote the use of HACCP principles or the equivalent.

Part II Requirements

1	Senior management commitment	10	13	Product development	15
2	The food safety plan – HACCP	10	14	Approval and control of labels	16
3	PBMS maintenance and reassessment	11	15	Product authenticity, claims, and chain of custody	16
4	Documentation and records	11	16	Marketing claims	17
5	Internal audits	12	17	Cross-contamination control	17
6	Supplier and ingredients/inputs approval and performance monitoring	12	18	Control of recipes and formulations	18
7	Ingredient and input receipt and acceptance	13	19	Segregation and disposal of obsolete and waste material	18
8	Suppliers of services	14	20	Plant-based awareness training	18
9	Specifications	14			
10	Traceability	14			
11	Complaint handling	15			
12	Product recall and withdrawal	15			



Part II

Requirements

All sites shall establish and maintain the environmental and operational programs (prerequisite programs) necessary to create an environment suitable for producing safe and legal food products. In addition, all sites shall conduct a complete hazard analysis, based on Codex HACCP principles, for all of their processes and products in order to identify and control all hazards effectively. Those sites that are not certified in a Global Food Safety Initiative (GFSI) benchmarked scheme must be certified in the BRCGS *START!* program (intermediate level) or an equivalent global markets program offered by a GFSI benchmarked standard owner. Certification to a GFSI benchmarked scheme or BRCGS *START!* program may be concurrent with certification to the Plant-Based Global Standard.

1 Senior management commitment

Clause	Requirements
1.1	The site shall have a current copy of the Standard available.
1.2	The site must have a current Schedule A, which lists all plant-based products that will be recognized under the Standard, that has been approved by BRCGS and is less than 1 year old.
1.3	<p>The site's senior management shall demonstrate their commitment to meeting the requirements of the Standard by ensuring that the site's overall food safety and/or quality management system addresses the elements of the PBMS. This may include, but is not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• ensuring that the letter of commitment or policy addresses the production of plant-based products that conform to the Standard requirements• ensuring that management responsibility policies, organization structures, etc., include responsibilities related to the PBMS• designating a qualified individual with appropriate knowledge and training to oversee the PBMS• ensuring that the management review process includes the PBMS• ensuring that resource management policies accommodate the PBMS.

2 The food safety plan – HACCP

Clause	Requirements
2.1	The site shall have a fully implemented and effective food safety plan incorporating the Codex Alimentarius HACCP principles. The food safety plan must include an assessment of plant-based products and potential contamination with materials of animal origin.

3 PBMS maintenance and reassessment

Clause	Requirements
3.1	<p>The PBMS shall be reviewed at least annually and prior to any changes that may impact the integrity of the plant-based product and claim. These changes may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • change in ingredients or inputs intended for use in plant-based products • change in supplier of ingredients or inputs intended for plant-based products • change in ingredients/recipe • change in processing conditions, process flow, or equipment • change in packaging, storage, or distribution conditions • emergence of a new risk (e.g., known adulteration of an ingredient or other relevant, published information, e.g., a recall of a similar product) • changes required following a recall or withdrawal • new developments in scientific and/or regulatory information associated with ingredients, process, or product • nonconformities identified during monitoring and verification activities • consumer/client complaints • nonconformities identified during audits or surveys done by government agencies such as the national regulatory competent authority • change in production volume that impacts the product flow, sanitation schedule, employee training, etc. <p>Appropriate changes resulting from the review shall be incorporated into the PBMS, communicated appropriately through training, and fully documented, and the validation recorded.</p>

4 Documentation and records

Clause	Requirements
4.1	<p>The site's document control policies and procedures shall include the management of documents that form part of the PBMS. This system shall include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a list of all controlled documents, indicating the latest version number • the method for identifying and authorizing controlled documents • a record of the reason for any changes or amendments to documents • the system for replacing existing documents when these are updated. <p>Where documents are stored in electronic form, these shall also be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • stored securely (e.g., authorized access, control of amendments, password protected) • backed up to prevent loss.
4.2	<p>Record-keeping policies and procedures shall include the management of PBMS records to demonstrate the effective application of the Standard and to facilitate official verifications by the BRCGS approved auditor or other competent authority.</p>

5 Internal audits

Clause	Requirements
5.1	The PBMS and the procedures and activities implemented to achieve the requirements of the Standard shall be included in the site's scheduled program of internal audits. The frequency at which each activity is audited within the scheduled program shall be established in relation to the risks associated with the activity and previous audit performance; all activities shall be covered at least once each year.

6 Supplier and ingredients/inputs approval and performance monitoring

Clause	Requirements
6.1	<p>Procedures and/or policies related to purchasing of all ingredients and inputs shall be developed and implemented to ensure control and identification of ingredients and inputs containing materials of animal origin.</p> <p>The site shall undertake a documented risk assessment of all ingredients and inputs, to identify potential materials of animal origin (including hidden sources of materials of animal origin). The risk assessment shall form the basis for acceptance of ingredients and inputs intended for use in plant-based products, as well as for any testing procedures and processes adopted for supplier approval and monitoring.</p> <p>The risk assessment must be current and shall be updated:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • when there is a change in ingredients or inputs intended for use in plant-based products, in the processing of ingredients or inputs intended for use in plant-based products, or in the supplier of ingredients or inputs intended for use in plant-based products • when a new risk emerges of contamination with material of animal origin • when there is a product recall or withdrawal in which a specific ingredient or input intended for use in plant-based products is implicated • at least every 3 years.
6.2	<p>The site's supplier approval procedure shall ensure that all suppliers and emergency suppliers of ingredients or inputs intended for plant-based products effectively manage risks of contamination with material of animal origin and are operating effective traceability processes. The approval procedure shall include, at a minimum:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a valid certificate to show that the site conforms to the Standard, and the ingredient or input intended for use in plant-based products listed on the supplier's current Schedule A <p>or all of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a supplier questionnaire, with a scope that includes control of materials of animal origin, and status of each applicable ingredient or input, that has been reviewed and verified by a qualified individual or their designate • the specification for each applicable input, ingredient, ingredient blend, and component of ingredient blends (as applicable), that has been reviewed and agreed on by a demonstrably competent person • documentation (e.g., letter of guarantee) indicating that the supplier shall meet the site's specifications and notify the site when a change is made to the applicable ingredient blend formula, and confirmation that such changes will not be made without prior approval from the site.

Clause	Requirements
6.3	The site's supplier performance review procedures shall include criteria for evaluating suppliers of ingredients or inputs intended for plant-based products on their ongoing ability to provide ingredients that conform to the requirements of the Standard (e.g., free from material of animal origin).
6.4	The approved supplier list (or equivalent) shall include identification of suppliers of ingredients or inputs intended for plant-based products. The information shall be readily available to relevant staff (e.g., at receipt of goods).
6.5	Co-manufacturers shall each hold a valid certificate to show that the site conforms to the Standard. The product co-manufactured must be listed on the supplier's current Schedule A.

7 Ingredient and input receipt and acceptance

Clause	Requirements
7.1	<p>The site shall have a procedure for accepting ingredients or inputs intended for plant-based products as they are received. This procedure shall be based upon the risk assessment, and must consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • sampling and testing • visual inspection on receipt • certificates of analysis for relevant testing (specific to each consignment) from an accredited laboratory • any other means necessary to satisfy the risk assessment. <p>There shall be a list of incoming ingredients or inputs intended for plant-based products and inputs and the requirements to be met for their acceptance. The parameters for acceptance and the frequency of testing shall be clearly defined, implemented, and reviewed.</p>
7.2	Procedures shall be in place to ensure that approved changes to ingredients or inputs intended for plant-based products and inputs, or of suppliers, are communicated to personnel in charge of goods receipt and to ensure that only the correct version of each plant-based ingredient and input is accepted (for example, when labels or printed packaging have been amended). Only the correct version shall be released into production.
7.3	Procedures shall be in place to confirm that externally printed labels meet the specifications agreed on between the supplier and the site and that there is a documented physical comparison of received labels to approved labels.
7.4	Where applicable, procedures and/or policies concerning labels shall be developed and implemented to ensure that the labels of approved ingredients received match the site's finished product list of ingredients and components of ingredients.

8 Suppliers of services

Clause	Requirements
8.1	<p>The site's approval and monitoring process shall take into consideration potential risks to plant-based products (e.g., cross-contamination).</p> <p>Services that should be assessed shall include, as appropriate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • pest control • laundry services • contracted cleaning • contracted servicing and maintenance of equipment • transport and distribution • off-site storage of ingredients, packaging, or products • laboratory testing • waste management.
8.2	<p>Contracts or formal agreements with the suppliers of services shall ensure that potential risks to plant-based products associated with any services have been addressed.</p>

9 Specifications

Clause	Requirements
9.1	<p>Specifications for ingredients and inputs intended for use in a plant-based product shall be adequate and accurate and shall demonstrate that the ingredient or input is free from ingredients of animal origin.</p>
9.2	<p>Accurate and up-to-date specifications shall be available for all plant-based finished products and must demonstrate that the product is free from ingredients of animal origin. These specifications may either be in the form of a printed or electronic document or part of an online specification system.</p>
9.3	<p>Specification review shall be sufficiently frequent to ensure that data is current (and take place at a minimum of every 3 years), taking into account product changes, suppliers, regulations, and other risks.</p>

10 Traceability

Clause	Requirements
10.1	<p>At least annually, the site shall test the traceability system on a plant-based product to ensure that traceability can be determined from the supplier of ingredients and inputs intended for use in plant-based products to the finished product and vice versa, including quantity check / mass balance.</p> <p>The site shall maintain purchasing records, traceability of ingredient or input usage and final product packing records to substantiate the plant-based claim.</p>

11 Complaint handling

Clause	Requirements
11.1	All complaints related to plant-based products shall be recorded. Substantiated complaints shall be investigated, and a root cause analysis performed. Results of that investigation shall be recorded. Preventive and corrective actions appropriate to the seriousness and frequency of the problems identified shall be carried out promptly and effectively by appropriately trained staff.

12 Product recall and withdrawal

Clause	Requirements
12.1	In the event of a recall or withdrawal of a plant-based product, resulting from the contamination of a plant-based product with material(s) of animal origin, the site shall notify the certification body that issued the current certificate for the site against the Standard, within 24 hours of the date of release of the official recall or withdrawal notice.

13 Product development

Clause	Requirements
13.1	The site shall provide clear guidelines on the restriction of materials of animal origin in new plant-based product development (see Appendix 4, Common materials of animal origin).
13.2	All new plant-based products and changes to plant-based product formulation, packaging or methods of processing shall be formally approved by the HACCP team and by the qualified individual for the Standard. This shall ensure that hazards have been assessed and suitable controls, identified through the HACCP system, are implemented. This approval shall be granted before products are introduced into the factory environment.

14 Approval and control of labels

Clause	Requirements
14.1	Procedures and/or policies shall be developed and implemented to ensure proper control of new or modified plant-based product labels. As a minimum, this must include a label approval process that includes steps to be followed in the case of reapproval of product labels following modifications to existing product formulations.
14.2	<p>Where applicable, procedures related to labeling of finished products shall be developed and implemented to ensure that the information on the finished product label accurately represents the product name and the composition of the product on which the label is affixed.</p> <p>Where the label information is the responsibility of a customer or a nominated third party the company shall provide:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • information to enable the label to be accurately created • updates whenever a change occurs that may affect the label information.

15 Product authenticity, claims, and chain of custody

Clause	Requirements
15.1	<p>The company shall have processes in place to access information on historical and developing threats to the supply chain which may present a risk of adulteration or substitution of ingredients or inputs (e.g., fraudulent raw materials). Such information may, for example, come from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • trade associations • government sources • private resource centers.
15.2	<p>A documented vulnerability assessment shall be carried out on all ingredients and inputs intended for use in plant-based products, or groups of ingredients and inputs intended for use in plant-based products, to assess the potential risk of adulteration or substitution with materials of animal origin. This assessment shall take into account:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • historical evidence of substitution or adulteration • economic factors which may make adulteration or substitution more attractive • ease of access to ingredients and inputs intended for use in plant-based products through the supply chain • sophistication of routine testing to identify adulterants • nature of the ingredients and inputs. <p>The output from this assessment shall be a documented vulnerability assessment plan.</p> <p>This plan shall be kept under review to reflect changing economic circumstances and market intelligence which may alter the potential risks. It shall be formally reviewed annually.</p>
15.3	Where ingredients and/or inputs are identified as being at particular risk of adulteration or substitution, the vulnerability assessment plan shall include appropriate assurance and/or testing processes to mitigate the identified risk(s).

16 Marketing claims

Clause	Requirements
16.1	<p>Any reference to the Standard and/or trademark(s), including statements on labels, advertising, marketing, and communication material (whether in print and/or digital/online or other media) must be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • approved by BRCGS • in compliance with the Plant-Based Global Standard Trademark Usage Guide and/or the requirements of the owner of the trademark or statement • in compliance with the legislation of the country where the product will be sold.
16.2	<p>Where certification to this Standard is used as part of the verification process for an “animal/meat free” claim other than the BRCGS plant-based symbol, the site shall have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a written definition for the claim and labeling rules • an agreed contract for the use of any externally managed marks • approval for the use of externally managed marks on each product to which they are applied.

17 Cross-contamination control

Clause	Requirements
17.1	<p>Where applicable, and based on risk, the procedures and/or policies shall be developed and implemented to control cross-contamination of material of animal origin into plant-based products. At a minimum, consideration shall be given to the following procedures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • production scheduling if dedicated lines for plant-based products are not available • employee traffic patterns • traffic flow and handling during receiving, ingredient and finished product storage, processing, and packaging • dedicated uniforms and personal protective equipment • dedicated or segregated storage • the identification and sanitation of bulk containers • dedicated utensils, equipment, and areas • the handling and storage of rework product(s) • the use of equipment, tools, and utensils with sound sanitary design • the cleaning of equipment and of product contact surfaces/areas during operations if dedicated lines/equipment/areas for plant-based production are not available • dedicated maintenance and engineering tools • appropriate airflow • where there is potential for cross-contamination, ingredients that are used in both plant-based and non-plant-based formulas must be controlled and separated.

18 Control of recipes and formulations

Clause	Requirements
18.1	Procedures associated with weighing/blending/mixing/formulation shall be developed and implemented to ensure that the correct ingredient is added to the correct product as indicated in the formula.
18.2	Where applicable, procedures and/or policies related to the use of rework shall be developed and implemented to prevent the introduction of materials of animal origin into a plant-based product (e.g., control and labeling).
18.3	Procedures and/or policies shall be developed and implemented to ensure the correct identification and labeling of ingredients and work in progress.

19 Segregation and disposal of obsolete and waste material

Clause	Requirements
19.1	<p>The procedures and/or policies for the segregation and safe disposal of obsolete materials shall be developed and implemented to prevent their inadvertent use (e.g., Plant-Based Global Standard trademark) or risk of cross-contamination with materials of animal origin. Obsolete materials may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• labels (refers to any preprinted packaging that bears a list of ingredients)• ingredients and work in progress• finished products.

20 Plant-based awareness training

Clause	Requirements
20.1	<p>The site's documented training program must include plant-based awareness training.</p> <p>All relevant personnel, including engineers/maintenance, temporary staff, and contractors, shall have received general plant-based awareness training.</p> <p>Training shall be conducted at an appropriate predetermined frequency, at least annually, and must include, where appropriate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• ingredients, components of ingredients, and processing aids that contain materials of animal origin• traffic patterns of people, equipment, and waste• the controls to prevent cross-contamination, such as dedicated plant-based production areas, equipment, and tools• separation and segregation of product and processes• dedicated uniforms and personal protective equipment, as required• job rotation practices• management of contractors, visitors, and temporary employees.

Part III

Certification process and audit protocol

1	Schedule A	20	11	Audit reporting	25
2	Selection of an audit option	20	12	Certification	25
3	Self-assessment of compliance	20	13	Audit frequency and recertification	25
4	Selection of a certification body	22	14	Certificate expiry extensions – justifiable circumstances	26
5	Company/certification body contractual arrangements	22	15	Audits undertaken prior to due dates	26
6	Scope of the audit	23	16	Suspension of a certified site	26
7	Selection of auditors	23	17	Withdrawal of certification	27
8	Duration of the audit	23			
9	The on-site audit	23			
10	Procedures for handling nonconformities and corrective actions	24			



Part III

Certification process and audit protocol

This section details the process for the certification of sites and for licensing under the Plant-Based Global Standard. The program has been designed to accommodate any product from a site of any size.

Figure 1 provides an overview of the steps to gain certification.

1 Schedule A

Download the Standard and associated documents. Sites must complete and submit a Schedule A and/or an equivalent approved BRCGS process. The Schedule A and/or agreed equivalent BRCGS process must capture all the plant-based products that will be recognized under the Standard. The Schedule A and/or agreed equivalent BRCGS process may require updating from time to time.

2 Selection of an audit option

Audits must be scheduled with the certification body for dates and times when plant-based production is scheduled. There are three options and processes available for sites to demonstrate their commitment to the Standard:

- **Standalone audit** The focus of a standalone audit is only on the Standard requirements. Standalone audits are only available to sites that are already certified to a GFSI benchmarked standard or the BRCGS *START!* program (intermediate level).
- **Combined audit** The focus of a combined audit is on the Standard requirements in conjunction with any GFSI benchmarked standard or the BRCGS *START!* program (intermediate level) requirements.
- **Unannounced combined audit** A combined audit may be conducted in the case where the food safety system audit is unannounced and there is no plant-based production at the time of the audit, providing that the auditor can walk through the process and understand the controls that operate during plant-based production and that records from previous plant-based production runs are available. In this case, the next audit must be conducted while plant-based production is taking place. This walk-through option is not permitted for the first Plant-Based Global Standard audit.

3 Self-assessment of compliance

It is essential that the site is assessed against the current issue of the Standard; this can be checked on the BRCGS website (www.brcgs.com). The Standard should be read and understood, and a preliminary self-assessment should be conducted by the site against the Standard to prepare for the audit. Any areas of nonconformity should be addressed by the site.

Further information, guidance, and training to ensure compliance with the Standard, including a downloadable self-assessment tool, is available at www.brcgs.com. BRCGS also has a full range of further guidelines and supporting materials available through the BRCGS website and via BRCGS Participate at www.brcgsparticipate.com. An optional on-site preassessment may be carried out by the selected certification body in preparation for the audit to provide guidance to the site on the process of certification. It should be noted, however, that under the rules for accredited certification, this preassessment must not include any consultancy by the certification body that will later undertake the certification audit.

Learn	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visit the BRCGS website • Download the Standard and associated documents • Contact BRCGS for more information
Schedule A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submit a Schedule A and/or equivalent approved process to BRCGS
Prepare for audit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Select an audit option (standalone or combined) • Perform a self-assessment to determine compliance with the Standard • Select a certification body • Provide information to certification body for audit preparation • Define audit date
On-site audit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opening meeting • Site inspection • Document review • Traceability challenge • Label review • Final review of findings by auditor • Closing meeting
Nonconformities and corrective actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corrective actions provided for any nonconformities identified within 28 days • Certification body reviews evidence within 14 days • If corrective actions deemed satisfactory, certificate and audit report issued
Post audit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing maintenance of the Standard and continual improvement • Use of the Plant-Based Certification Program logo • Ongoing communication with certification body • Schedule reaudit date before reaudit due date

Figure 1 Audit protocol – how to gain certification

Sites that are newly built or commissioned must ensure that systems and procedures in place are compliant before an initial audit is undertaken. It is at the discretion of the site when they wish to invite a certification body to carry out an audit; however, it is unlikely that full compliance can be satisfactorily demonstrated at an audit undertaken less than 3 months after commencement of operation.

4 Selection of a certification body

Audits against a Global Standard are only recognized if these are undertaken by certification bodies that are recognized and approved by BRCGS. The team at BRCGS cannot advise on the selection of a specific certification body; however, they have a comprehensive program of measurement of certification body performance around specified key performance indicators (KPIs), the results of which are converted to a 5-star rating and published with the listing of all approved certification bodies on www.brcgsdirectory.com. The site should ensure that its selected certification body is accepted by its customers (e.g., some customers may accept only 4- or 5-star-rated certification bodies).

5 Company/certification body contractual arrangements

A contract shall exist between the company and the certification body in accordance with the requirements of ISO/IEC 17065, detailing the scope of the audit and the reporting requirements. The contract shall also contain clauses which allow the effective management of the scheme by BRCGS and accreditation of the certification body by the BRCGS accreditation body. These clauses are essential to ensure confidence in the way in which the scheme is managed and consistency is achieved, which benefits all certified sites. In particular, it is a condition of certification to the scheme that:

- A copy of the audit report and any subsequent certificate or audit result shall be supplied to BRCGS and may be supplied to the accreditation body in the agreed format for the Standard used. As a GFSI benchmarked standard, records may be viewed in conjunction with any GFSI compliance audit. Other documents in relation to the audit shall be made available to BRCGS upon request. All documents submitted to BRCGS shall be copies of original documents. Documents provided will be treated as confidential.
- Where agreements are in place, BRCGS may make audit reports and certificates available to customers of sites or the authorities for earned recognition purposes. Sharing can be removed by the site at any time through the BRCGS Directory mechanism.
- The auditor(s) may be accompanied by other personnel for training, assessment, or calibration purposes. This activity may include:
 - training of new auditors by the certification body
 - routine certification-body shadow-audit programs
 - witness audits by accreditation bodies
 - witness audits by BRCGS.

BRCGS reserves the right to conduct its own audit or visit to a site after certification in response to complaints or as part of routine compliance activity to ensure the integrity of the scheme. Such visits may be announced or unannounced.

BRCGS may contact the site directly in relation to its certification status or for feedback on certification body performance, or to investigate reported issues.

This publication sets out the requirements for sites that want to be audited against the Standard and for sites issued with a certificate. Contracts between the certification body and the site shall include a clause acknowledging these obligations. This contract will be formulated by the certification body.

Noncompliance with any of these contractual obligations may affect the status of certification of the site.

6 Scope of the audit

The scope of the audit shall be agreed in advance with the certification body and shall include all applicable requirements within the Standard and all plant-based production processes undertaken for the products listed on the site's Schedule A.

The product scope category of the audit shall reflect the product scope category of the scheme (GFSI or *START!* program) with which the Standard is being combined. In the case of a standalone audit, the product scope category will be based on that of the scheme (GFSI or *START!* program) to which the site's certification pertains. The product scope category shall be agreed between the site and the certification body in advance of the audit to ensure the allocation of auditor(s) with the correct product knowledge.

7 Selection of auditors

It is the responsibility of the site to ensure that adequate and accurate information is given to the certification body, detailing the products it manufactures and the process technologies it uses, to enable the certification body to select an appropriate audit team with the required skills to undertake the audit.

The certification body and auditors must be aware of the need to avoid conflicts of interest when arranging for an auditor or auditors to visit the site. The site may decline the services of a particular auditor offered by the certification body. No auditor may undertake audits on more than three consecutive occasions at the same site.

Where the audit is not being carried out by the auditor(s) in the native language of the site, an appropriate translator, who has knowledge of the technical terms used during the audit, shall be provided.

8 Duration of the audit

Before the audit takes place, the certification body shall indicate its approximate duration. The typical duration for a standalone audit is 1 day at the site. When a Plant-Based Global Standard audit is being combined with another food safety management audit, it will take approximately an extra 0.5 days.

9 The on-site audit

A typical on-site audit consists of the following stages:

- **Opening meeting** To confirm the scope and process of the audit.
- **Document review** A review of the documented PBMS, HACCP and/or food safety plan.
- **Production site inspection** To review practical implementation of the systems, including observation of product changeover procedures and interviews with personnel.
- **Traceability challenge** Including a review of all relevant records of production (e.g., ingredients intake, production records, finished product checks, and specifications).
- **Label review** Including a review of a sample of plant-based product labels to check against specification and legislation.
- **Final review of findings by the auditor(s)** Preparation for the closing meeting.
- **Closing meeting** To review audit findings with the site. A draft of the nonconformity report will be left with the site. (Note that nonconformities are subject to subsequent technical review by the certification body management.)

The site shall fully assist the auditor(s) at all times.

The audit process gives emphasis to the practical implementation of the PBMS procedures and general good manufacturing practices. It is expected that the auditor will spend an appropriate amount of time auditing production, interviewing staff, observing processes, and reviewing documentation in production areas with the relevant staff.

During the audit, detailed notes shall be made regarding the site's conformities and nonconformities against the Standard, and these will be used as the basis for the audit report. The auditor(s) shall document all nonconformities and discuss them with the attending site representative at the time.

At the closing meeting, the auditor(s) shall present their findings and reconfirm all nonconformities that have been identified during the audit. The auditor(s) must give the site information on the process and timescales for the site to provide evidence to the auditor(s) of the corrective action to close nonconformities. A draft summary of the nonconformities discussed at the closing meeting will be left with the site.

The decision to award certification will be determined independently by the certification body management, following a technical review of the audit report and the closing of nonconformities within the appropriate timeframe. The site will be informed of the certification decision following this review.

10 Procedures for handling nonconformities and corrective actions

Following identification of any nonconformities during the audit, the site must undertake both corrective action to remedy the immediate issue(s) and an analysis of the underlying cause of each nonconformity, which can then be used in preventive action. The action plan produced shall include timelines and shall be provided to the certification body. Close-out of nonconformities can be achieved either by the site submitting objective evidence to the certification body (either at the time of the audit or subsequent to it), which may include updated procedures, records, photographs, or invoices for work undertaken, or by the certification body undertaking a further on-site visit, as appropriate.

If satisfactory evidence is not provided within the 28-calendar day period allowed for submission following the audit, certification will not be granted. The site may be required to have a further full audit in order to be considered for certification. No certificate shall be issued until the site can demonstrate that all nonconformities have been addressed. Nonconformities from the audit shall be checked during the next audit to verify effective close-out.

The certification body will conduct a technical review of both the evidence and the completion of any corrective action(s) prior to awarding a certificate.

In some circumstances the number or severity of nonconformities raised at the audit prevents the site from being certified following that audit.

Nonconformities will be reviewed by the independent certification process of the certification body as soon as possible after the audit. Where the review confirms that a certificate cannot be awarded, the site will be required to undertake another full audit before an assessment for certification can take place.

Occasionally, the nature and number of nonconformities make it unlikely that they can be addressed, and fully effective improvements implemented and established, within a 28-day period. Therefore, the reaudit shall not take place any earlier than 28 days from the audit date.

Where this occurs at a certified site, the certification must be immediately withdrawn.

Certification will not be granted to sites that fail to become certified to the chosen GFSI benchmarked scheme or *START!* program (intermediate level).

Some customers require notification when their suppliers have a critical nonconformity identified or fail to gain certification. In such circumstances the company shall immediately inform its customers and make them fully aware of the circumstances.

11 Audit reporting

Following each audit, a full written report shall be prepared in the agreed format. The report shall be produced in English or in another language, dependent upon user needs. Where the report is produced in a language other than English, the audit summary sections shall, in addition, always be reported in English.

The audit report shall be provided to the site in a timely manner. The report shall accurately reflect the findings of the auditor during the audit. Reports shall be prepared and issued to the site within 42 calendar days of the last day of the audit, with a copy being sent to BRCGS.

The certification body shall store the audit report and associated documentation, including auditor's notes, safely and securely for a minimum period of 5 years.

12 Certification

The designated technical reviewer shall review the audit report and documentary evidence provided in relation to the nonconformities identified and make a decision about certification. The certificate, if granted, shall be issued by the certification body within 42 calendar days of the last day of the audit. It shall include the required information found in Appendix 3. Trademarks owned or managed by BRCGS that are used on certificates of recognition shall comply with the Plant-Based Global Standard brand standards.

While the certificate is issued to the site, it remains the property of the certification body, and that body controls its ownership, use, and display. The certification body shall inform BRCGS of its issuance and provide a copy.

All sites that achieve a certificate shall be entered into the list of certified sites.

All fees relating directly to the site must be paid in full to BRCGS prior to issuance of the certificate. Neither certification, nor the audit report, shall be valid until all fees have been received, irrespective of the outcome of the certification process.

13 Audit frequency and recertification

The frequency of announced audits will be once every 12 months. The due date of the subsequent audit shall be calculated from the date of the initial audit.

The subsequent announced audit shall be scheduled to occur within a 28-day time period ending on the next audit due date. This allows sufficient time for corrective action to take place in the event of any nonconformities being raised, without jeopardizing continued certification.

Certificate expiry dates will be calculated from the first day of the audit plus 75 days.

Where combined with a GFSI audit, the reaudit due date shall conform to the protocol of the relevant GFSI scheme.

14 Certificate expiry extensions – justifiable circumstances

There will be some circumstances where the certificate cannot be renewed on the 12-month basis due to the inability of the certification body to conduct an audit. These justifiable circumstances can include that the site is:

- situated in a specific country or an area within a specific country where there is government advice not to visit and there is no suitable local auditor
- within a statutory exclusion zone that could compromise food safety or animal welfare
- in an area that has suffered a natural or unnatural disaster, rendering the site unable to produce or the auditor unable to visit
- affected by conditions that prevent access to the site or restrict travel (e.g., inclement weather)
- producing seasonal products where production is delayed by a late start to the seasons (e.g., due to weather or product availability).

It is expected that the audit will be scheduled to ensure the availability of personnel and full production of plant-based products. Deviations from this may be considered by BRCGS on a case-by-case basis.

15 Audits undertaken prior to due dates

In some circumstances it is possible to undertake the audit earlier than these due dates, for example to reset the audit dates to allow combined audits with another food safety system audit. These deviations are allowed on a case-by-case basis.

16 Suspension of a certified site

A site's certificate may be suspended if:

- the certified site does not comply with the requirements of the Standard and of any other act or regulation that may impact on the plant-based products being sold; or
- the operator fails to comply with the requirements of the Standard, the PBMS, and/or any other act or regulation that may impact on the plant-based products being sold; or
- BRCGS and the certification body believe that public health will be endangered or the reputation of BRCGS, as well as the plant-based status of products produced in the certified site, will be affected if the site is allowed to continue operating as a certified site; or
- the site is subject to a receivership or makes an assignment in bankruptcy.

If a certified site is in jeopardy of suspension, it will be notified of the existence of grounds for suspension and given evidence of any deviation from the requirements of the Standard. The certification body will specify corrective measures and dates for completion. If the site has failed or is unable to take corrective measures by the specified date, a notice of suspension will be delivered to the site.

The suspension of a site's certification shall remain in effect until the required corrective measures have been taken and verified as completed to the satisfaction of the certification body or BRCGS.

If an operator fails to pay any fee specified by BRCGS in accordance with the conditions of payment prescribed by it, the certification of a site to the Standard shall also be suspended until all outstanding fees are paid.

Note: BRCGS reserves the right to inform the brand owner (if different from the site) if certification is suspended. In the event of suspension of certification, the site must cease use of all associated logos and/or trademarks.

17 Withdrawal of certification

The certification body or BRCGS reserves the right to withdraw the certification of a site if:

- the site has not implemented the required corrective measures within an agreed timeframe; or
- the site has provided false or misleading information; or
- the site gives up certification by voluntarily withdrawing from the BRCGS Plant-Based Certification Program.

Note: BRCGS reserves the right to inform the brand owner (if different from the site) if certification is withdrawn. In the event of withdrawal of certification, the site must cease use of all associated logos and/or trademarks.

Part IV

Management and governance

Requirements for certification bodies	30
Technical governance of the Standard	30
International advisory boards	30
Technical advisory committee	30
The certification body co-operation groups	32
Achieving consistency – compliance	32
Calibrating auditors	33
Feedback	33
Use of the trademarks	33



Part IV

Management and governance

Requirements for certification bodies

The Standard is a management system certification standard. In this Standard, sites are certified upon completion of a satisfactory audit by an approved auditor employed by an independent third party – the certification body. The certification body in turn shall have been assessed and judged as competent by a national accreditation body, under ISO/IEC 17065, to perform food safety audits or specifically Plant-Based Global Standard audit services. The process of certification and accreditation for certification bodies is outlined in Figure 2.

BRCGS recognizes that, in certain circumstances, such as when new certification bodies wish to commence auditing against the Standard, the ISO/IEC 17065 scope of these bodies may not yet include the Plant-Based Global Standard. This is because the accreditation process requires the certification body to have completed some audits, which are then reviewed as part of the accreditation audit of the certification body. Such audits by unaccredited certification bodies will be permitted where the organization can demonstrate the following:

- current ISO/IEC 17065 accreditation for a GFSI or equivalent food safety scheme
- an active application, with an approved national accreditation body, to extend their ISO/IEC 17065 accreditation scope to include the Standard
- that accreditation for the Standard will be achieved within 12 months of the date of application and that the experience and qualifications of the auditors are consistent with those specified by BRCGS
- that a license is in place with BRCGS and that all other license requirements have been met.

Technical governance of the Standard

The Standard and associated scheme is managed by BRCGS with governance and technical advice provided through a number of committees (see Figure 3), each of which works to a set of defined terms of reference.

International advisory boards

The technical management and operation of the Standard is governed by the BRCGS international advisory boards. These consist of senior technical representatives of international retail and food manufacturing businesses in Europe, America and Asia.

The functions of the advisory boards are to provide strategic advice on the development and management of the Global Standards and the activities to ensure the effective management of the certification bodies and audit process.

Technical advisory committee

Each Global Standard is supported by at least one technical advisory committee (TAC), which meets regularly to discuss technical, operational and interpretational issues related to the Standard. BRCGS provides the technical secretariat for these groups.

The TAC for the Plant-Based Standard is made up of senior technical managers representing the users of the Standard and includes representatives of retailers, food manufacturers, trade associations for each sector, certification bodies and independent technical experts.

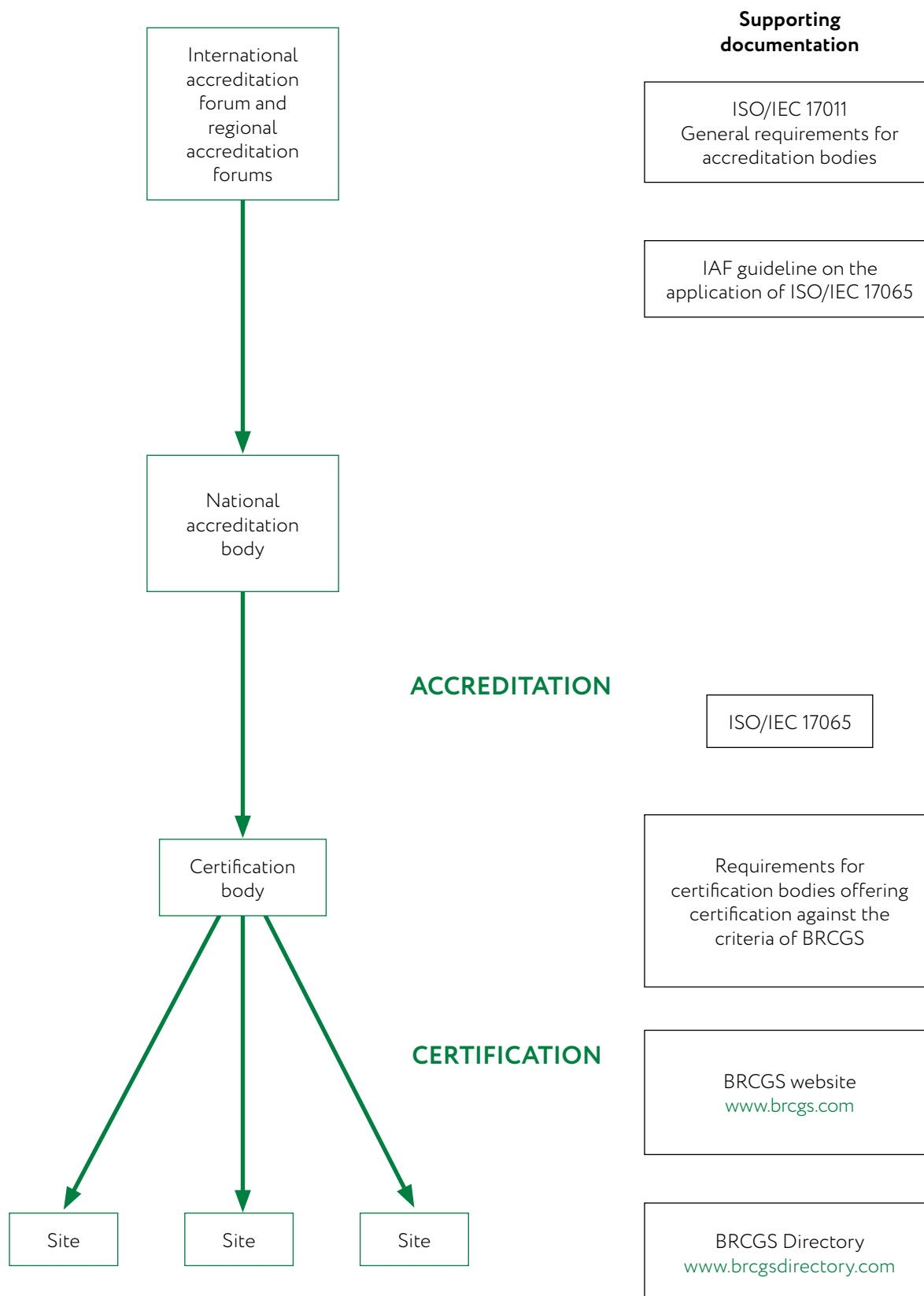


Figure 2 Process for the accreditation of certification bodies

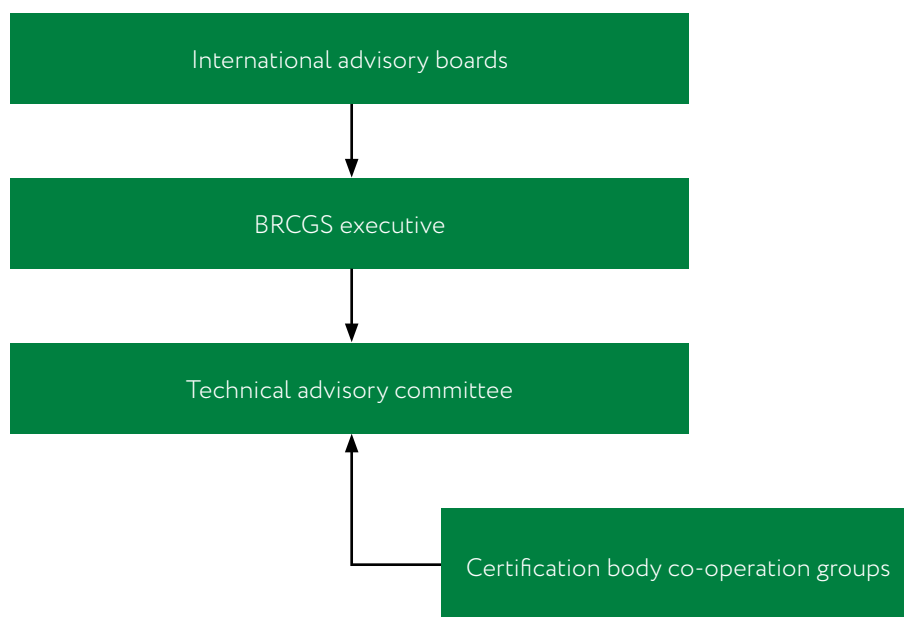


Figure 3 Governance of the BRCGS schemes

The Standard is reviewed every 3 years to assess the need for updating or production of a new issue. This work is undertaken by the TAC, which is expanded for the purpose to include other available expertise. The TAC also reviews auditor competence requirements, proposed training materials, and supplementary technical documents supporting the Standard.

The certification body co-operation groups

BRCGS encourages and facilitates meetings of the certification bodies participating in the scheme (co-operation groups) to discuss matters arising from the implementation of the Standard and issues of interpretation. These groups report regularly to BRCGS on operational issues, implementation, and suggested improvements. Representatives from the co-operation groups attend the TAC meetings.

Achieving consistency – compliance

The maintenance of a high and consistent standard of audit and certification, and the ability of the certified sites to maintain the standards achieved at the audit, are essential for confidence in the scheme and for the value of certification. BRCGS therefore has an active compliance program to provide oversight of the work of accreditation bodies and ensure that high standards are maintained.

Sites may only be certified to the Standard by certification bodies licensed and approved by BRCGS and accredited by an accreditation body recognized by the same. All auditors undertaking audits against the Standard must meet the auditor competency requirements and be approved by BRCGS. The qualifications, training, and experience requirements for auditors who conduct audits against the Standard are comprehensive (see Appendix 2). All audits undertaken against the Standard shall be submitted to BRCGS.

BRCGS operates a compliance monitoring program that reviews the performance of the certification bodies, samples the quality of audit reports, assesses levels of understanding of the scheme requirements, and investigates any issues or complaints. As part of this program, feedback on the performance is provided to each certification body through a key performance indicator (KPI) program.

As part of the compliance program, BRCGS may audit the offices of certification bodies and accompany auditors on audits at sites to observe their performance.

Calibrating auditors

A key component of the Standard is the calibration of the auditors to ensure a consistent understanding and application of the requirements. All certification bodies are required to have processes to calibrate their own auditors. An essential element of this training and calibration is the witnessed audit program, in which auditors are observed during an audit and provided with feedback on their performance. In order to ensure consistency between certification bodies, and for the purposes of accreditation, an audit may be witnessed by a representative from BRCGS or an accreditation body auditor. Guidelines apply to these activities to ensure that sites are not disadvantaged by the presence of two auditors. This process forms an essential part of the scheme and sites are obliged to permit witnessed audits as part of the conditions for certification. Auditors will be required to participate in training activities delivered through the certification body or BRCGS as part of refresher training as and when required.

Feedback

Sites being audited against the Standard may wish to provide feedback to the certification body or BRCGS on the performance of the auditor. Such feedback, when and if sent to BRCGS, will be considered in confidence. Feedback provides a valuable input to the BRCGS monitoring program for certification body performance. All audited sites are invited to provide feedback to tellus@brcgs.com at any time.

Use of the trademarks

Certified sites that intend to use the plant-based owned or managed trademarks must meet all requirements outlined in the Plant-Based Trademark Usage Guide.

Appendices

Appendix 1

Other Global Standards produced by BRCGS 36

Appendix 2

Qualifications, training, and experience requirements for auditors 37

Appendix 3

Certificate template 39

Appendix 4

Common materials of animal origin 40

Appendix 5

Glossary 42

Appendix 6

Abbreviations 45

Appendix 7

Acknowledgements 46



Appendix 1

Other Global Standards produced by BRCGS

BRCGS has developed a range of Global Standards which set out the requirements for the manufacture of food and consumer products; the packaging used to protect the products; the storage, distribution and procurement of these products; and the retail environment in which they are sold. The other Global Standards complement the Plant-Based Global Standard and provide a resource for the auditing and certification of suppliers.

The **Global Standard for Food Safety** is an auditing standard that sets out the requirements for the manufacture of processed foods and the preparation of primary products supplied as retailer-branded products, branded food products, and food or ingredients for use by food service companies, catering companies, and food manufacturers.

The **Global Standard for Packaging and Packaging Materials** is a GFSI-benchmarked certification standard that lays down the requirements for the manufacture of packaging materials used for food and consumer products. Food and consumer products businesses may request their packaging suppliers to be certificated to this standard.

The **Global Standard for Storage and Distribution** is a GFSI-benchmarked certification standard that sets out the requirements for the storage and distribution of packaged and unpackaged food products, packaging materials, and consumer goods, plus the requirements for wholesaling and contracted services. The Standard is not applicable to storage facilities under the direct control of the production facility management, which is covered by the relevant manufacturing standard (e.g. the Global Standard for Food Safety).

The **Global Standard for Consumer Products** is a certification standard applicable to the manufacture and assembly of consumer products. The Standard specifically excludes food-associated products such as vitamins, minerals, and herbal supplements, which fall within the scope of the Global Standard for Food Safety. To reflect the needs of the market, the Global Standard for Consumer Products is composed of two separate standards: personal care and household, and general merchandise. Each standard sets out the requirements for the manufacture of relevant non-food consumer products, including the manufacture of raw materials and components as well as the finished products. There are two levels of certification to the Global Standard for Consumer Products: foundation and higher.

The **Global Standard for Agents and Brokers** is a certification standard applicable to companies that buy and sell products or facilitate the trade of products but do not manufacture, process, pack, or store the traded products in their own facilities or on their own sites (although such activities may be offered to their customers via subcontracted service providers).

The **Global Standard for Retail** is a certification standard that sets out the requirements to manage product safety, quality, and legality for businesses in the food retail industry. The scope of certification covers applicable operations both at the retailer's head office and at their respective retail stores.

The **Gluten-Free Certification Program** is a certification standard that sets out the requirements for the manufacture, processing, and packing of gluten-free processed foods, ingredients, pet foods, natural health products, and drugs. Certification to the Standard includes the option to apply a globally recognized trademark to product packaging.

Appendix 2

Qualifications, training, and experience requirements for auditors

Auditors must meet the requirements of the applicable GFSI benchmarked scheme or the BRCGS *START!* program (intermediate level). Which one applies will depend on what scheme the site is or will be certified to. The minimum requirements are as follows:

Education

The auditor shall have a degree in a food-related or bioscience discipline.

Work experience

The auditor shall have a minimum of 2 years' post-qualification experience related to the food industry. This shall involve work in quality assurance or food safety functions within manufacturing, retailing, inspection, or enforcement, and the auditor shall be able to demonstrate an understanding and knowledge of specific product fields for which they are approved. The verification of the auditor's ability to carry out work within specific product fields is the responsibility of the certification body.

Qualifications

The auditor must have:

- passed a registered Management System Lead Assessor Course (e.g., IRCA) or the BRCGS Third Party Auditor course delivered by a BRCGS-approved trainer
- completed a training course in HACCP (as evidenced by examination), based on the principles of Codex Alimentarius, of at least 2 days' duration, and be able to demonstrate competence in the understanding and application of HACCP principles. It is essential that the HACCP course is recognized by the industry (and its stakeholders) as being appropriate and relevant.

Audit training

Certification bodies shall develop a tailored training program depending on the auditor's background. It is expected that trainee auditors will demonstrate a significant number of relevant audits (>10 audits which include HACCP, quality management systems, and good manufacturing practices, in the previous 2 years).

Certification bodies must be able to demonstrate that every auditor has appropriate training and experience for the particular field for which they are considered competent.

Certification bodies must establish training programs for each auditor that incorporate:

- successful completion of the auditor course for the current version of the Standard
- a period of initial training covering product safety, HACCP and prerequisite programs, and access to relevant laws and regulations
- a period of supervised training to cover quality management systems, audit techniques, and specific field knowledge
- assessment of knowledge and skills for each field
- documented sign-off after the satisfactory completion of the training program.

Each auditor's training program shall be managed and approved by a technically competent person within the certification body who can demonstrate technical competence in the fields for which training is given.

The individual's full detailed training records shall be maintained by the certification body throughout the term of employment with the certification body, and retained for a minimum period of 5 years after that term.

Exceptions

Where a certification body employs an auditor who does not fully meet the specific criteria but has been assessed as competent, there shall be a fully documented justification in place to support the employment of the auditor, and BRCGS shall agree with this justification.

Responsibility of the certification body

It is the responsibility of the certification body to ensure that processes are in place to monitor and maintain the competence of the auditor to the level required by the Standard.

Appendix 3

Certificate template

The certificate shall conform to the format shown below. Logos used on the certificate (e.g., plant-based, BRCGS, and accreditation body logos) shall comply with the respective rules of use.

While the certificate is issued to the company, it remains the property of the certification body, which controls its ownership, use, and display.

Auditor number(s)	CERTIFICATION BODY NAME OR LOGO
<p>Certification body name (accredited certification body no.x) certifies that, having conducted an audit</p> <p>For the scope of activities</p> <p style="text-align: center;">At the COMPANY NAME</p> <p style="text-align: center;">SITE CODE</p> <p style="text-align: center;">AUDIT SITE ADDRESS</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Meets the requirements set out in</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Plant-Based Global Standard, Issue 1</p> <p>Date(s) of initial audit:</p> <p>Certificate issue date:</p> <p>Reaudit due date: from to</p> <p>Certificate expiry date:</p>	
<p>_____</p> <p>Authorized by</p>	<p>_____</p> <p>Authorized by</p>
<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 10px; width: 100px; margin: 0 auto;"> Accreditation body logo </div>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 10px; width: 100px; margin: 0 auto;"> BRCGS Logo </div>

Name and full address of certification body

Certificate traceability reference

This certificate remains the property of [name of certification body]

If you would like to feedback comments on the Standard or the audit process
directly to BRCGS, please contact TellUs@brcgs.com

To verify certificate validity, please visit www.brcgsdirectory.com

Appendix 4

Common materials of animal origin

Animal-derived additives

Calcium mesoinositol hexaphosphate
E120 cochineal
E542 edible bone phosphate
E631 disodium inosinate
E901 beeswax
E904 shellac
Lactose
Sperm oil
Spermaceti

Animal fibers

Animal milks and animal milk derivatives

Casein
Caseinates
Lactose

Bee products

Bee pollen
Bee venom
Beeswax
Honey
Propolis
Royal jelly

Dairy products and by-products

Butter
Cheese
Whey
Yogurt

Eggs

Duck
Hen
Ostrich
Quail

Human-derived substances

Keratin
Placenta

Items direct from the slaughter of animals

Fish
Game and derivatives
Meat
Poultry

Marine animal products

Ambergris
Capiz
Caviar(e)
Chitin
Coral
Fish scales
Fishmeal
Isinglass

Marine oils and extracts (fish oils, shark oil (squalene or squalane), seal oil, whale oil)

Pearl roe
Seal meat
Shellfish
Sperm oil
Spermaceti wax
Whale meat

Processing aids and/or release agents of animal origin

Shellac
Silk
Snake venom
Some vitamins (D₃)
Urea
Vellum

Slaughter by-products

Amino acids
 Amniotic fluids
 Animal fats (dripping, lard, suet, tallow)
 Aspic
 Bone
 Bone charcoal
 Bonemeal
 Carmine/carminic acid
 Catgut
 Chamois
 Cochineal
 Collagen
 Crushed snails and/or insects
 Dried blood
 Fatty acid derivatives
 Fixatives (musk, civet, castoreum)
 Gelatin(e)
 Glycerin(e)/glycerol
 Hoof and horn meal
 Hormones (estrogen, progesterone, testosterone)
 Ivory
 Lanolin(e)
 Oil of mink
 Oleic acid and/or oil
 Oleostearin
 Pepsin
 Protein (elastin, keratin, reticulin)
 Rennet
 Skins
 Stearates
 Stearic acid
 Stearine

Appendix 5

Glossary

accreditation	An independent competence assessment of a certification body, performed by an accreditation body and whereby the management system assessed is based upon globally accepted international standards.
advertise	To make a representation by any means for the purpose of promoting, directly or indirectly, the sale or disposal of a plant-based product.
allergen	A known component of food which causes physiological reactions due to an immunological response (e.g., nuts and others identified in legislation relevant to the country of production or sale).
approved auditor	A person who has met the criteria of BRCGS and is approved to be an authorized auditor for the Standard.
audit	In respect of a process includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the verification or monitoring of the process, and • the examination of the other information that may be necessary to verify conformance with the requirements of the Standard.
certificate	The official recognition given to a site that conforms to the Standard.
certification body	A licensed entity which is authorized by BRCGS to provide and manage auditing services.
certified	Referring to a site, recognized as having its overall PBMS assessed as conforming to the Standard's requirements.
component	An individual unit of a substance that is combined with one or more other individual units to form an ingredient.
critical control point	A point in a process at which control must be applied in order to prevent or eliminate a hazard or reduce a hazard to an acceptable level.
critical limit	The minimum or maximum value to which a hazard must be controlled at a critical control point or equivalent to prevent or eliminate the hazard or reduce it to an acceptable level as may be determined by the national regulatory competent authority.
food	Has the same meaning as defined by the national regulatory competent authority where the product is sold.
food additive	Has the same meaning as defined by the national regulatory competent authority where the product is sold.
HACCP	Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point, a science-based risk management system with the objective of identifying and preventing, reducing, or eliminating food safety hazards.
hazard	A biological, chemical, or physical agent or factor that has the potential to cause a product to be unsafe for human consumption or to cause a failure to conform to the Standard if it is not controlled.

ingredient	An individual unit of a product that is combined with one or more other individual units of a product to form a final or finished product.
input	A material that is not an ingredient but is required to complete the manufacture of the product (e.g., processing aids, packaging, cleaning materials) and may contribute to contamination of the product by material of animal origin.
internal audit	A conformity assessment conducted by the site as a requirement of the PBMS.
label	Any tag, brand, mark, or pictorial or other descriptive matter, written, printed, stenciled, marked, embossed, or impressed on, or attached to, a container of food.
list of certified sites	The list of companies deemed to be in conformance with the Standard, which is maintained by BRCGS.
material of animal origin	Any ingredient, component of an ingredient, or processing aid that is derived from or produced by an animal. See Appendix 4 for a list of common materials of animal origin.
natural health products	<p>Naturally occurring substances that are used to restore or maintain good health. Examples include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • vitamins and minerals • herbal remedies • homeopathic medicines • traditional medicines such as traditional Chinese and Ayurvedic (East Indian) medicines • probiotics • amino acids and essential fatty acids.
plant-based management system (PBMS)	A framework of policies, processes, and procedures used by a site to ensure that it can fulfill all the tasks required to achieve the production of plant-based food products that comply with the Standard.
plant-based product	A product that does not intentionally contain materials of animal origin, and has not intentionally used ingredients (including additives, carriers, flavorings, and enzymes), processing aids, or any other substances that are of animal origin, at any stage during production and processing.
prerequisite programs	<p>Written programs developed for a recognized site as applicable in accordance with BRCGS to ensure compliance with the Standard. Such programs relate to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the premises, including its outside property, buildings, and sanitary facilities • the quality of the water, ice, and steam • the storage and transportation of products, including temperature control and the vehicles for transporting products • the storage of material (e.g., incoming material, non-food chemicals, and finished products), including temperature control • the equipment, including its general design, installation, maintenance, and calibration • the training, hygiene, and health of personnel • sanitation and pest control • recall procedures and distribution records.
processing aid	A substance that is used for a technical effect during food processing or manufacture but the use of which, unlike food additives, does not affect the intrinsic characteristics of the food and results in no or negligible residues of the substance or its by-products in or on the finished food.

qualified individual	An individual who has an in-depth knowledge of HACCP Codex principles (or equivalent), has successfully completed the Plant-Based Global Standard Site Training Course, and is a member of the HACCP team.
Schedule A	A control and tracking document, listing all plant-based products produced at a site that are intended to display any of the Plant-Based Global Standard permitted trademarks.
validation	The process of obtaining evidence that a control measure, if properly implemented, is capable of controlling a particular hazard to the specified level (in accordance with the Codex Alimentarius).
verification	The application of methods, procedures, tests, and evaluations to determine whether a control measure is or has been operating as intended (in accordance with the Codex Alimentarius).

Appendix 6

Abbreviations

GFSI	Global Food Safety Initiative
HACCP	Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point
ISO	International Organization for Standardization
KPI	key performance indicator
PBMS	plant-based management system

Appendix 7

Acknowledgements

BRCGS is grateful to the members of the working group who helped to develop the Plant-Based Global Standard. Their names are listed alphabetically below.

Richa Bedi-Navik	BRCGS
Daniele Bertrand	Dufflet Patis
Travis Borchardt	Nature's Way
Brian Borchert	Tyson Foods
David Brackston	BRCGS
Jessica Burke	BRCGS
Maria Campos	Sobeys
Jeremy Chamberlain	SGS
Jennifer Daubney	Kerry
Michael Durst	Unilever
Jessica Feather	Woolworth
Mark FeDuke	ARDO VLM
Norma Fennemore	Bradgate Bakery
Robin Forgey	Costco
Tiina Henkusens	McCormick & Company Inc.
Ryan Hinnenkamp	General Mills
Sabina Jones	Billington Foodservice
Jason Knights	METRO
John Kukoly	BRCGS
Tammy Malley	Loblaw Companies Ltd
Frank Massong	BRCGS
Barry Meikle	BRCGS
Renee Mellican	TreeHouse Foods
Dennis Moy	Enjoy Life Foods
Steven Newmaster	TRU-ID
Jennifer Pardoe	Plant-Based & Co (PB&Co)

Kal Rai	Samworth Brothers
Jac Ross	Retail Business Service, a company of Ahold Delhaize USA
Elizabeth Santos	Maple Leaf Foods
John Shabo	Blue Diamond Growers
Julia Stafford	Greggs
Cheryl Stevens	Lloyds Register
Tom Thornton	Asda
Kevin Tickle	Quorn
Andreea Tolea	Givaudan
Jonathan Troth	Lloyds Register
Fereshteh Ulam	Molinaro's Fine Italian Foods Ltd
Paul Valder	BRCGS
Richard Werran	BSI

BRCGS
Floor 2
7 Harp Lane
London EC3R 6DP

T: +44 (0)20 3931 8150
E: enquiries@brcgs.com

To learn more about the BRCGS certification programme please visit [brcgs.com](https://www.brcgs.com)

To learn more about the BRCGS online subscription service please visit [brcgsparticipate.com](https://www.brcgsparticipate.com)

To purchase printed copies or PDFs from its full range of BRCGS publications please visit [brcgsbookshop.com](https://www.brcgsbookshop.com)

