



CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF
FOOD & AGRICULTURE

CDFA Harmonized Audit Information

1. The applicant agrees that with respect to:

- a. **Laws, Regulation, Statutes** - To conform with all applicable Federal, State, and local government laws, regulations, or statutes.
- b. **Audit Request** - To contact and schedule the audit with the appropriate CDFA inspection office (using Form 006).
- c. **Records** - To abide by all requirements of the selected scheme or standard. To maintain all records and or documents required by the specific scheme or standard, but not limited to, quality manual, food safety manual, water test results, employee training records, manure use records, laboratory testing results and other records as required by the quality manual, food safety manual or specific audit program requirements. The applicant shall make these records available to CDFA auditors for the initial audit and any surveillance audits as may be required.
- d. **Access to Facilities, Equipment, Locations, Areas, Personnel and Subcontractors** - To grant permission for CDFA authorized personnel to enter any and all farms and/or facilities covered by the specific audit program for the purposes of conducting the audit and to grant access to relevant equipment, area(s), personnel and applicants subcontractors. This includes the initial audit and any surveillance audits as may be required by the program.
- e. **Payment** - To pay by check, draft, or money order drawn to the order of "Cashier, Department of Food & Agriculture" for the services covered herein on or before the due date specified on the billing statement. Charges for audits include, but are not limited to, the audit fee as listed in the fee schedule and travel expenses for the initial audit and any surveillance audits as may be required by the program.
- f. **Certification Claims** – Only make claims regarding certification to the scope of certification granted and indicate products are certified as being in conformity with specified standards.
- g. **Certification Documents** – To provide, if needed to others, reproduced copies of the certification documents in their entirety or as specified in the certification scheme.
- h. **Product Certification, Communication Media** – Does not use its product certification in such a manner as to bring the certification body (CDFA) into disrepute or make any misleading or unauthorized statements. If making reference to its product certification in communication media such as documents, brochure or advertising, to comply with the requirements of CDFA or as specified by the scheme or standard.
- i. **Maintaining Certification**– To continue to satisfy the requirements of the selected scheme or standard and implement any necessary changes communicated by the certification body (CDFA). If production of the product is ongoing, the farm or facility continues to maintain its conformance with the requirements of the scheme or standard.
- j. **Suspended, Withdrawal or Termination of Certification** – To accept that surveillance or recertification audits will be conducted at the required frequencies and that resources to meet the requirements of the certified system are in effect. To ensure that required actions against the changes of the certification system or requirements have been met during the specified period and that effective corrective actions in response to the nonconformities observed during the surveillance/reassessment are in place. To ensure payment of fees, avow that there is no willful misuse of the certificate of CDFA or accreditation board and that the certificate or certification is not being used or applied out of its initial scope. To guarantee that the information and or materials provided during assessment are not misleading and to comply with notification of customer's change and assessment for confirming change of the contract. To comply with the

agreements(s) and or contract(s) concluded with CDFA and with obligations of being a certified customer or other conditions deemed appropriate by CDFA management. Suspension and or withdrawal can be voluntary requested. To correct suspension within the time established by CDFA (one month for nonpayment of dues and three to six months for delay in surveillance and other reasons) to ensure that certification is not withdrawn by the certification body (CDFA). Certification will be terminated if no longer identified because of dismantlement or if certification is more than 3 times during the term of validity of its certification. If or when certification is suspended or cancelled, all advertising matter that contains references to certification will be discontinued and all documentation required by the certification body (CDFA) will be returned. Re-applying for initial certification will be accepted, when all the reasons for the withdrawal or termination of certification have been removed and communicated to the certification body (CDFA).

- k. Certificate** – Endeavors to ensure no certificate is used in a misleading manner.
- l. Significant Changes** – To notify the certification body (CDFA) prior to or without delay of any significant changes affecting but not limited to the following: ownership, structure and or management, intended modifications to the food safety quality system or equipment or any other information indicating that the product may no longer comply with the requirements of the selected scheme or standard.
- m. Complaints** – To investigate complaints and to retain a record of all complaints made known to it relating to compliance with certification requirements and to make these records available to CDFA when requested, takes appropriate action with respect to such complaints and any deficiencies found that affect compliance with the requirements for certification and documents the actions taken.

2. CDFA agrees that with respect to:

- a. Perform Audit** – To provide objective third-party verification of the applicant's specific scheme or standard using internationally recognized audit principles.
- b. Opening & Exit Interviews** - To discuss the audit prior to and report the results and observations with the applicant after each audit and provide a copy of the completed audit report or checklist.
- c. Reports** - To issue to the applicant reports of all audits and evaluations of the applicant's specific scheme or standard and provide written notification of any deficiencies found, if any.
- d. Confidentiality** - To consider and treat any trade secrets or confidential information as proprietary and confidential. To consider any records and related information provided to CDFA as information that is voluntarily submitted to CDFA because of their participation in the specific audit program.
- e. Issuance of Certificate, Posting and Sharing Audit Results** - To issue a certificate to the applicant and to post audit results to the CDFA website, only when the applicant receives at least the minimum passing score for each scope being audited. To provide the specific applicant checklist and results of individual questions to other parties only at the written request of the applicant.
- f. Changes Affecting Certification** – To ensure that any new or revised requirements that are introduced by the certification scheme are communicated to applicants that may be affected. The actions to implement changes affecting certification shall include, if required, but not limited; to evaluation, review, decision, issuance of revised formal certification documentation to extend or reduce the scope of certification and issuance of certification documentation of revised surveillance activities (if surveillance is part of the certification scheme). Records will be maintained and shall include the rationale for excluding any of the aforementioned activities.
- g. Re-evaluation** – To re-evaluate the audit, in the event of changes in the standards to which compliance of the product is certified, to ensure that the product complies with the requirements of the selected scheme or standard. CDFA shall determine whether the announced changes require further investigations. If such is the case, the applicant shall not be allowed to release certified products resulting from such changes until the certification body (CDFA) has notified the applicant accordingly.
- h. Investigation of Complaints** – Complaints brought before CDFA by applicants shall be subject to the procedures of CDFA. A record will be kept of all complaints and remedial actions relative to certification. CDFA will take appropriate subsequent action, documenting the action taken and its effectiveness.

3. It is mutually agreed that with respect to:

- a. Length of Service** - That the audit results for audits and certification are valid for a maximum of one year from the date of the initial audit, (certification validation may be less than one year depending on length of growing or packing season) provided that at least the minimum score is achieved on both the initial audit and any surveillance audits that may be required by the program. This agreement shall remain in effect for the length of time the auditee remains a participant in the specific audit program.
- b. Maintaining Certification** - The company's information will only remain on the CDFA website if any and all surveillance audits show satisfactory adherence to the program. If the minimum passing score is not achieved, the company's information will be removed from the website until a follow-up audit is conducted by CDFA verifying that effective corrective actions have been taken and the company attains the minimum score on all appropriate scopes of the audit. Should CDFA personnel be at a facility for other purposes and notice issues that would jeopardize the company's standing on the specific audit program, CDFA has the obligation to bring this to the attention of the company representative and, depending on the severity, withdraw certification.

Additional Resources

The following links provide access to the most current Harmonized scheme or standards.

Pre Harvest Standard - <http://www.unitedfresh.org/content/uploads/2014/07/Harmonized-Standard-pre-farm-gate.pdf>

Post-Harvest Standard - <http://www.unitedfresh.org/content/uploads/2014/07/Post-harvest-Operations-Harmonized-Standard.pdf>

If you have additional questions regarding preparing for a Harmonized audit, requesting an audit or the certification process please contact the CDFA Shipping Point Inspection, Dinuba District Office, at (559) 595-8000 or email us at Foodsafety@agsupport.org.



CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF FOOD AND AGRICULTURE

GENERAL REGULATIONS

CDFA HARMONIZED AUDIT SCHEME

Inspection and Compliance Branch

Shipping Point Inspection

GENERAL REGULATIONS
CDFA HARMONIZED AUDIT SCHEME

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1. Introduction

- a. CDFA Harmonized Audit scheme establishes voluntary requirements for the certification of agricultural products.
- b. This General Regulation, explains the CDFA Harmonized Audit and the process to obtain certification.
- c. The General Regulation explains the roles of CDFA as the scheme owner, and the steps to be taken by the applicant, obligations of both CDFA and the applicant, and the mechanisms to grant certification.

2. Standard

- a. The Standard utilized in completion of the CDFA Harmonized Audit is the “United Fresh Post-harvest Operations Harmonized Food Safety Standard”.
- b. CDFA can issue additional normative documents as needed.
- c. The normative documents will be reviewed internally every year and if needed, changes will be made.
- d. The review of the scheme will occur as needed and will utilize feedback from all applicants and auditors, as well as any updated information related to good agricultural practices and good handling practices.
- e. Changes to the Standard will be reviewed by the CDFA Certification Committee and a determination will be made prior to accepting or rejecting the changes.
- f. The review shall be part of an annual program review by the Certification Committee.

3. Certification Bodies

- a. CDFA’s Harmonized Audit scheme is not available to other Certification Bodies for use.

4. Audit Duration and Frequency

- a. The audit duration will be estimated based on the number of locations, operation types, and number of commodities included in the certification.
- b. Estimated audit duration comprises the entire audit process, from the opening meeting to the closing meeting with the applicant where non-conformances are indicated.
- c. There shall be evidence in the audit report of the time taken for the audit process.
- d. The due date for the subsequent audit will not exceed 12 months from the date of certificate issuance.

5. Surveillance

- a. Surveillance audits will be conducted at least once during the certification period.
- b. Surveillance audits are performed using the standards and assess adequacy of the food safety program as well as the completeness, accuracy and validity of associated records and documents.

6. Auditor Requirements

- a. CDFA is responsible for ensuring that auditors performing the inspections are in conformance with the Quality Manual and have met the minimum training and education requirements.

7. Conflicts of Interest

- a. CDFA staff and any subcontractor they employ that is involved in the certification process must annually sign the “Confidentiality, Conflict of Interest and Assignment Restriction Policy”.
- b. Avoid any conflict of interest in the certification activities and with any applicant.
- c. Declare any potential conflicts of interest when assigned duties related to an applicant in the program.
- d. Maintain the confidentiality of all client specific information except as required by this standard or by law.

8. Certification Process

- a. Application
 - i. Applicant must submit a completed Request for Certification Application.
 - ii. Application will need to specify which scopes and commodities they wish to be covered by certification.
- b. Scope of audit
 - i. Field and Harvest
 - 1. Commodities to be certified must be present at the time of audit.
 - 2. For harvest activities to be included in the audit the commodities being harvested must be present and part of the scope of certification.
 - ii. Packing House
 - 1. Commodities must be present at the time of the audit.
 - 2. Records for commodities stored at the facility for the prior 12 months may be reviewed.
- c. Audit
 - i. Audit will be performed using the current scheme documents.
 - 1. Auditor will conduct an opening and exit interview to discuss the audit prior to and report the results and observations with the applicant after each audit and provide a copy of the completed audit report or checklist.
 - 2. Auditor will review all relevant records and or documents including but not limited to, quality manual, food safety manual, water test results, employee training records, manure use records, laboratory testing results and other records as required by the quality manual, food safety manual or specific audit program requirements.

9. Special Circumstances

- a. All CDFA and sub-contracted auditors are mandated reporters of threats to the public’s health. In the event that an imminent threat to human safety is observed, the audit will stop and the auditor will notify the California Department of Public Health of the threat.

10. Certification Decision

- a. CDFA will make the certification decision no more than 20 working days from the audit date.
- b. The audit report shall be reviewed by the Certification Committee to make the decision of whether or not certification is granted.

11. Evaluation of scores

- a. Based on the outcome of the final audit report, the scores should be calculated and analyzed to determine if they comply with the minimum score for certification.

12. Issuing certification

- a. Certification will be issued individually to each operation that complies with the minimum scoring criteria. In case of having more than one Field and/or more than one Facility operation of any type from the same application, the calculations should be made separately for each operation and one certificate should be issued to each operation that complies with the scoring requirements.
- b. The CDFA Harmonized Certification is valid for maximum of 12 months from the initial audit date.

13. Complaints and Appeals

- a. CDFA will follow the Quality Manual regarding all complaints and appeals.

14. Use of Logo and Trademark

- a. Use of a logo or Trademark are not permitted under this scheme.



Companies that meet CDFA Harmonized Acceptance Criteria

The following table shows companies that have been audited by CDFA's Inspection and Compliance Program for the audit standard, audit scopes, and commodities listed below and have successfully demonstrated an acceptable level of adherence to the audit standard being audited. The audit results are valid for one (1) year from the date shown, and are validated through the use of surveillance audit(s) throughout the growing/packing season.

No:	Company:	Address:	Standard and Scope(s)	Commodities:	Location/Sites:	Certificate No:	Date Certified:	Exp. Date:
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