

# ASIAGAP

(ASIA Good Agricultural Practice)

## General Regulations

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## Introduction

ASIAGAP has been developed and managed by the Japan GAP Foundation (hereinafter referred to as "the Foundation"). The Foundation aims to contribute to the healthy development of the agricultural and food industry of Japan and Asia through the fair and transparent development and management of ASIAGAP, based on the following principles:

### Principles of ASIAGAP

ASIAGAP aims to establish agricultural production that is consistent and sustainable for human beings, the earth, and the economy, and to build trust among producers, distributors, and consumers.

ASIAGAP was developed as a tool to achieve the safety of agricultural produce, sustainability of agricultural production, workers' safety, human rights protection, and well-organized sales management of agricultural produce, in the farms in Japan and Asia. By implementing ASIAGAP, producers can simultaneously achieve sustainable farm management and gain the trust of consumers and food industry stakeholders.

ASIAGAP is based on the Japanese agricultural context and in alignment with the GFSI Benchmarking Requirements, and has been developed through collaboration among agricultural producers and wholesalers, food manufacturers, and retailers. It is important to establish the agricultural production management that is realistic and easy for agricultural producers to implement in the long run, and, at the same time, that assures to meet the expectations of consumers and food industry stakeholders.

ASIAGAP should be voluntarily implemented by producers, and its stage of implementation should be recognized among society through the system of certification. It should work as a standard that stands for the credibility of agricultural producers.

ASIAGAP's ultimate goals are to simultaneously protect consumers by assuring safe agricultural products, conserve the earth's environment, and achieve sustainable farm management.

Note 1: The Foundation shall not publish any certification for the conformity of ASIAGAP and conduct certification activity.

Note 2: The Foundation shall not perform as a consultant for ASIAGAP certification.

Note 3: The ASIAGAP certification program shall never require the obtaining of certification under other Certification programs managed by the Foundation as a requirement for obtaining ASIAGAP certification.

# **1. Scope**

## **1.1 General scope**

This document specifies all areas of the operation of ASIAGAP. The Foundation as the key administrator of ASIAGAP, as well as all entities that are defined in this document, including farms/groups, certification bodies, accreditation bodies, and training organizations, are required to abide by the regulations in this document. The audit and certification system of the ASIAGAP program is based on ISO/IEC 17065 and in alignment to the GFSI Benchmarking Requirements.

## **1.2 Scope of application**

The certification scope of the ASIAGAP program is in accordance with the requirements of ISO/IEC 17065. The ASIAGAP certification program applies to agricultural produce (products) and their production processes. (Refer to Chapter 6 “Scope of ASIAGAP certification” for details.)

# **2. References**

- (1) ISO/IEC 17067:2013 (Conformity Assessment - Fundamentals of product certification and Notices for product certification schemes)
- (2) ISO/IEC 17011:2018 (Conformity Assessment - General requirements for accreditation bodies accrediting conformity assessment bodies)
- (3) ISO/IEC 17065:2012 (Conformity Assessment - Requirements for bodies certifying products, processes, and services)
- (4) ISO 19011:2018 (Notices for auditing management systems)
- (5) IAF Mandatory Document for the Audit and Certification of a Management System Operated by a Multi-Site Organization – Issue2 (IAF MD1:2018)
- (6) IAF Mandatory Document for the Collection of Data to Provide Indicators of Management System Certification Bodies’ Performance – Issue 1 (IAF MD15:2014)
- (7) GFSI Benchmarking Requirements V2020.1
- (8) IAF MD 4:2018 IAF Mandatory Document for the Use of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) for Auditing/Assessment Purposes

# **3. Terms and definitions**

## **(1) GAP**

GAP is an abbreviation for Good Agricultural Practices, and refers to the standard that a producer shall comply with during agricultural production and its implementation. There are various translations in Japanese. According to the FAO (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations), “Good Agricultural Practices are practices that address environmental, economic, and social sustainability for on-farm processes, and result in safe and quality food and non-food agricultural products.”

## **(2) ASIAGAP**

ASIAGAP is a GAP certification program owned by the Foundation, and contains good practices for farm management, food safety, environmental conservation, workers’ safety, and human rights protection and welfare. It is a scheme of product certification, and is based on ISO/IEC 17067.

**(3) Certification Program**

Certification program refers to a system and procedures as well as regulations applied for operating a standard, including its development, training, operation, audit and certification, and accreditation. The Foundation is the certification program owner of ASIAGAP, ultimately responsible for its operation.

**(4) ASIAGAP documents**

Documents that are required for ASIAGAP operation and indicated in 5.1 of the General Regulations.

**(5) ASIAGAP standard**

Among the ASIAGAP documents, the following are the ASIAGAP standards for ASIAGAP audit and certification:

- ASIAGAP General Regulations
- ASIAGAP Control Points and Compliance Criteria for Farms
- ASIAGAP Control Points and Compliance Criteria for Group Administration
- Guideline for the ASIAGAP standard

**(6) Farm**

A farm is a management body that conducts the production of agricultural produce, has legal ownership of the agricultural produce, and has a unitary management system. A unitary management system means that a farm is operated under the same capital and management structure. A Farm could be a single site or multiple sites.

**(7) Site**

“The site” is a unit that is referred to as the single management system can organize (Unit for the audit) This unit requires the management system to comply with the CPCC. “The site” could be applied to the farm, the cooperate adjustment workplace, the cooperate produce selection site, country elevator, and the crude tea factory. Multiple sites mean multiple management systems manage their own sites due to the long distances.

**(8) Certified farm**

A farm that has been audited and certified under ASIAGAP. A farm that belongs to a certified group is also a certified farm, but it shall acknowledge that the ASIAGAP certification is provided through the group (ref. (21) Produce of certified farm).

**(9) Field**

Land that is used for crop cultivation, or an infrastructure for crop cultivation such as a greenhouse; the minimum unit of cultivation management. Sites shall be distinguished with different names in the following cases:

- a) Different agricultural produce or items under production (except for the cases of crop rotation or second crops, and cases when the items are not defined during cultivation, such as tea).
- b) Different varieties with identification required at the point of sale.
- c) Different records of agrochemical application (when an application was not finished in one day and the dates of application become different for each site; when each site has different agrochemicals applied, etc.).
- d) When the sites are so distant from each other that their risks are not the same.
- e) When there can be farm management risks, such as issues of traceability, if the sites are not distinguished and are managed under the same name.

**(10) Facility**

All buildings, infrastructure, and equipment that are used for farm operation. Facilities include storage, produce handling facilities, utilities (electricity, fuel, gas, water including sewage, compressed air, etc.), resting/eating/smoking places for workers, and toilets.

**(11) Storage**

Buildings where agrochemicals, fertilizers, fuel, agricultural machinery and other inputs and equipment are stored.

**(12) Produce handling facility**

Facilities where produce is handled, such as workstations, pack houses, grain elevators, and unrefined tea factories.

**(13) Group**

An organization that consists of multiple sites that are operated under the policy specified by the group, and has a representative and group administration. If one organization owns multiple sites and that has a group administration office and it organizes the sites, we shall define it as a group.

**(14) Certified group**

A group that has been audited and certified under ASIAGAP.

**(15) Group administration**

An administration that is set up within a group to govern the organization based on the ASIAGAP requirements. In principle group administration needs to be a legal entity, but agricultural cooperatives that do not have a legal entity can also be accepted if they have a representative, address, and contact numbers.

**(16) Crop**

Plants that are under cultivation in the field. It does not refer to agricultural produce that has been harvested.

**(17) Agricultural produce**

Once crops are harvested from the farm, the harvested products are no longer called "crops" but are called "agricultural produce." Agricultural produce can be food, animal feed, ingredients for medical and quasi-drug products, and propagation materials such as seeds, and nursery. Under the ASIAGAP program, agricultural produce is categorized as "Fruits and Vegetables," "Grains," and "Tea."

**(18) Item**

Item refers to items that are on the "JGF standard item list".

**(19) Product**

Agricultural produce that is ready to be sent to a buyer from a farm or group

**(20) Food**

Under the ASIAGAP scheme, food refers to all edible and drinkable items.

**(21) Produce of certified farm**

Agricultural produce that meets all the following criteria:

- a) Shipped from individually certified farms or groups while the certificate is valid,
- b) An item that is listed on the ASIAGAP certificate, and
- c) Handled in a produce handling facility that is listed on the ASIAGAP certificate when there is a produce handling facility on the farm.

**(22) Production process**

A series of production activities including cultivation process, harvesting process, and produce handling process. These production processes are divided into the following sectors.

BI : Cultivation and Harvesting Processes for Fruits and Vegetables and Tea.

BII : Cultivation and Harvesting Processes for Grains

B III: Produce Handling Processes for Fruits and Vegetables, Tea and Grains.

**(23) Cultivation process**

Production activities in the field except for harvesting, such as sowing, nursery, transplanting, fertilizer application, agrochemical application and pruning.

**(24) Harvesting process**

Harvesting of crops. In the case of tea, it refers to plucking. Activities include harvesting, trimming/ packaging/ temporary storage of harvested agricultural produce on site, and shipping including loading/ transportation/ delivery of harvested agricultural produce from the site to the produce handling facility. Activities after this point are considered part of the produce handling process.

**(25) Produce handling process**

Refers to the process that includes receiving of agricultural produce into the handling facility, storage, washing, sorting, trimming, simple processing such as cutting and drying without changing product characteristics, processing, packaging, and shipment from the facility (loading, transportation, and delivery).

**(26) Outsourcing**

Subcontracting activities that are directly related to agricultural production to external entities. Such activities include sowing, planting, agrochemical application, fertilizer application, pruning, harvesting, plucking, and produce handling. Agrochemical residue analysis, equipment maintenance, infrastructure development, accounting, etc. are not included as they are not part of the agricultural production process. In the case of group certificate, supporting activities among the group members are not considered outsourcing.

**(27) Parallel production**

Producing certified produce and non-certified produce of the same item on the same farm at the same time. When a farm/group handles certified produce and non-certified produce of the same item at the same time, it is called “parallel handling.”

**(28) Internal audit (Individual certification)**

A producer checks and verifies the status of farm management based on the “ASIAGAP Control Points and Compliance Criteria for Farms.” ASIAGAP requires to conduct at least one self-assessment per year.

**(29) Internal audit (Group certification)**

As part of the group administration, a producer group’s internal auditor and internal auditor assistant check and verify the status of group members’ farm management, based on the group/farm management manual that conforms to the “ASIAGAP Control Points and Compliance Criteria for Farms” and “ASIAGAP Control Points and Compliance Criteria for Group Administration.” The results of the internal audits are reported to the group administrator and the group representative. ASIAGAP requires to conduct at least one internal audit per year.

**(30) Group/farm management manual**

A manual that is indispensable for managing a producer group and has the following contents:

- a) Procedures for group administration that meet the “ASIAGAP Control Points and Compliance Criteria for Group Administration,”
- b) Procedures for site management under the responsibility of the group administration that meet the “ASIAGAP Control Points and Compliance Criteria for Farms,”
- c) Common procedures for site management under the responsibility of the group members, which meet the “ASIAGAP Control Points and Compliance Criteria for Farms.”



**(31) Certification**

Third-party verification whereby a certification body assesses the ASIAGAP operational status and the produced agricultural produce of the farm/group according to the “ASIAGAP Control Points and Compliance Criteria for Farms” and “ASIAGAP Control Points and Compliance Criteria for Group Administration” and officially declares the conformance to these criteria.

Note: The ASIAGAP audit and certification includes both the process of agricultural production and the agricultural products that come out of the process.

**(32) Certification decision**

Refers to "7.6 Certification decision" of ISO/IEC 17065. Clause 7.6 means a final decision made by a certification body on granting, continuing, recertifying, suspending, and withdrawing the ASIAGAP certification based on "7.5 Review of evaluation results" (referred to as "Review of audit results" in ASIAGAP) of ISO/IEC 17065.

**(33) Accreditation**

Third-party attestation related to a certification body, conveying formal demonstration of its competence to carry out a conformity assessment for a farm/group and the farm/group's agricultural produce under ASIAGAP operations based on ASIAGAP General Regulations and ISO/IEC 17065.

**(34) Board**

In this document, the Board refers to the Board of Directors of the Foundation.

**(35) Technical Committee**

In this document, the Technical Committee refers to the Technical Committee of the Foundation. This Committee is in charge of the development of “General Regulations,” “ASIAGAP Control Points and Compliance Criteria for Farms,” and “ASIAGAP Control Points and Compliance Criteria for Group Administration” and “Notices.” Its chairperson is responsible for overseeing the whole committee. The Technical Committee consists of each committee of fruits and vegetables, grain, tea, livestock, and certification, and specialized councils. Technical Committee members are selected from stakeholders based on the expertise of each production process categories. Further details are stipulated in the "Japan GAP Foundation: Technical Committee Regulations."

**(36) Japan GAP Foundation Office**

The office in charge of administrative work related to ASIAGAP. The Secretary-General oversees the administrative management of ASIAGAP.

**(37) Violation of regulations by a farm/group**

Status of a farm/group violating the regulations that were defined in accordance with the “ASIAGAP Control Points and Compliance Criteria for Farms” or “ASIAGAP Control Points and Compliance Criteria for Group Administration” or the “General Regulations.”

## 4. Operational structure of ASIAGAP

The following table shows the division of functions among the Foundation, farms/groups, certification bodies, accreditation bodies, and training organizations:

Table of operational functions				
Japan GAP Foundation (Certification program owner)	Farm/group	Certification bodies	Accreditation bodies	Training organizations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Development and management of ASIAGAP (including general oversight and improvements)</li> <li>▪ Issuing of farm/group registration numbers</li> <li>▪ Disclosing the database of registered farms/groups</li> <li>▪ Issuing ASIAGAP labels</li> <li>▪ Development of training tools</li> <li>▪ Approval of training organizations</li> <li>▪ Registration of ASIAGAP trainers</li> <li>▪ Registration of ASIAGAP auditors</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Implementation of ASIAGAP</li> <li>▪ Self-assessment</li> <li>▪ Internal audit</li> <li>▪ Application for audits</li> <li>▪ Corrective action report</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Training of auditors</li> <li>▪ Processing of application for audits</li> <li>▪ Audit planning and conduct</li> <li>▪ Corrective action report acceptance</li> <li>▪ Certification decision making</li> <li>▪ Issuing certificates</li> <li>▪ Reporting certification information to the Foundation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Accreditation of certification bodies</li> <li>▪ Issuing of accreditation certificates</li> <li>▪ Reporting of accreditation information to the Foundation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Organizing training events</li> <li>▪ Training of auditors</li> <li>▪ Training of internal auditors</li> <li>▪ Training of trainers</li> </ul>

## **5. Development of ASIAGAP documents and their management**

### **5.1. ASIAGAP documents**

ASIAGAP is a certification program that is subject to accreditation by an accreditation body. The copyright of ASIAGAP belongs to the Foundation, and these documents can be used by any stakeholder that is engaged in agricultural production, distribution, and certification. When any entity intends to produce a secondary document that is derived from the ASIAGAP documents, the entity shall obtain authorization from the Foundation in advance.

The following are the documents that are related to ASIAGAP development, operation, audit, and certification, the details of which are included in the “List of ASIAGAP documents:”

(1) **ASIAGAP General Regulations**

Refers to this document, and defines the procedures of ASIAGAP audit and certification, use of ASIAGAP labels, and other general regulations related to ASIAGAP.

(2) **ASIAGAP Control Points and Compliance Criteria for Farms**

A standard ASIAGAP document that describes the control points and objective conformance criteria regarding farm management, food safety, environmental conservation, workers’ safety, human rights protection, and welfare. There are documents provided for “Fruits and vegetables,” “Grains,” and “Tea.”

Note: "A document on the differences between ASIAGAP and other certification program" (see Chapter 15) can be used as a normative document for audits in the same way as the "ASIAGAP Control Points and Compliance Criteria for Farms."

(3) **ASIAGAP Control Points and Compliance Criteria for Group Administration**

A standard ASIAGAP document that describes the objective control points and compliance criteria for group administration to achieve good group management.

(4) **The Guideline for ASIAGAP standard**

Supplements ASIAGAP standards (1) to (3) above. This Guideline is equivalent to an ASIAGAP standard document and must be complied with. Technical letters Information that explains (1) through (4) above. Through its website, the Foundation releases technical letters on an irregular basis for issues about which it has received many inquiries from certification bodies and farms/groups, and on which it is require additional explanations.

(5) **Regulations, detailed rules**

Detailed rule documentations on ASIAGAP

(6) **JGF standard item list**

A document that lists the items that can be on certificates.

## 5.2 ASIAGAP documents which require Board's approval

Document	Development	Approval	Identification of versions	Frequency of revision
ASIAGAP General Regulations	Technical Committee	Board	Version No.	Once a year
ASIAGAP Control Points and Compliance Criteria for Farms	Technical Committee	Board	Version No.	Once in 4 years
ASIAGAP Control Points and Compliance Criteria for Group Administration	Technical Committee	Board	Version No.	Once in 4 years
The Guideline for ASIAGAP standard	Technical Committee	Board	Issue date	When necessary

The documents related to ASIAGAP are subject to an official internal review once a year, regardless of their periodic revisions, and are revised as necessary (including when the GFSI Benchmarking Requirements are revised or significantly changed). An extraordinary review of these documents may be carried out when requested by the Secretary General with the acknowledgment of the chair of the Technical Committee.

## 5.3 Management of old versions when an ASIAGAP standard document is issued or revised

### 5.3.1 Transitional measures

When a new ASIAGAP standard document is issued, the Foundation issue the document regarding the transition considering the following elements.

- Definition of the certification scope
- Conditions for the transition period between the old version and the new version
- The timeline of the transition
- Comparative information between the old and new version for the ASIAGAP standard
- Timeline for certification bodies to share revision information with all auditors and certified farms/organizations

### 5.3.2 The launching date for the implementation

When the Foundation approving a new ASIAGAP standard document, decides the effective date, considering the period necessary for stakeholders to understand and adapt to the new document.

When the Foundation approving ASIAGAP standard shall determine decides the effective date, taking into consideration of the period necessary for stakeholders to understand and adapt to the new document. The effective date for an “ASIAGAP Control Points and Compliance Criteria for Farms” means the date on which an application for an audit based on the new document can be accepted. For other documents, the effective date is the date when the new document becomes applicable.

### 5.3.3 “ASIAGAP General Regulations”, provisions, bylaws, and the rules

When a new version of the standard is implemented old version “ASIAGAP General Regulations” and provision, bylaws and the rules” lose their validity. However, non-conformities, identified during the validity of the old version, corrective actions shall be taken based on the requirements of the old version, even if the new version is implemented during the period of corrective actions. As for certification, the date of audit shall be taken as the starting point of application of the new version.

#### 5.3.4 Transition of “ASIAGAP Control Points and Compliance Criteria for Farms “and “ASIAGAP Control Points and Compliance Criteria for Group Administration”

When new versions of the “ASIAGAP Control Points and Compliance Criteria for Farms “and “ASIAGAP Control Points and Compliance Criteria for Group Administration” are implemented, an application for the initial audit or recertification audit based on the old version shall be accepted only when it is within one year of the implementation for the new version, and an audit based on the old version shall be conducted within 90 days after the application deadline. When a farm/group is audited based on the old version for the initial audit or for a recertification audit, the subsequent surveillance audit shall also be conducted based on the old version. The farm/group can request a surveillance audit based on the new version, but in that case, the certificate shall be reissued.

### 5.4 Management of translated documents

The Japanese versions of the ASIAGAP standard documents are the original. When the ASIAGAP standard documents are translated into other languages, they shall be approved by the Technical Committee of the Foundation. Once approved, the audit and the certification of ASIAGAP can be conducted using the translated documents.

### 5.5 Communication regarding new versions

- (1) The Foundation widely collects and considers public comments for revision of the ASIAGAP General Regulations and the ASIAGAP Control Points and Compliance Criteria.
- (2) Publication and the effective use of new versions are conducted through the Foundation’s website. As necessary, the Foundation notifies stakeholders, such as certification bodies.
- (3) The Foundation submits the revised English version to the GFSI Secretariat.

## 6. Scope of ASIAGAP certification

### 6.1 Products that can be certified

- (1) Products within the certification scope
  - a) Products corresponding to items listed in the "JGF Standard Item List" shall be considered within the scope.
  - b) A farm/group to be certified shall be audited against all the products it produces and sells, but it is allowed to limit the products to be audited. When the form of shipment is described in the "JGF Standard Item List," the form of shipment subject to audit and certification must be identified
- (2) Parallel production

Parallel production is allowed only in the produce handling process. It is not allowed for the production process or harvesting process.

### 6.2 Processes that can be certified

- (1) General principle

The scope of ASIAGAP certification shall be all the production processes of a farm/group. Depending on the product, the scope of application shall be identified with the combination of production, harvesting and produce handling processes. However, a cultivation process can never be not applicable. For example, it is not possible to certify only the produce handling process, while excluding the cultivation

and harvesting processes.

(2) Produce handling process

- a) For the work related to shipping (loading, transportation, and delivery), the certification scope shall cover the process up to the point at which the ownership of the agricultural product is transferred to the buyer, or when the management responsibility for the product is transferred to the shipping destination. (A shipping destination including a subcontractor for sales).
- b) For the scope of simple processing, such as trimming, simple cutting, and drying, that does not alter the properties of the agricultural product, specific instructions for when special precautions are necessary are written in the "JGF Standard Item List."

(3) Processes within the ASIAGAP certification scope depending on the product

The applicable production process scope for each produce process, which shall be indicated in the certificates, is shown in the following table:

Production process		Sector (GFSI scope of recognition)		
		Fruits and Vegetables	Tea	Grains
<b>Cultivation process</b>	From sowing/planting up to harvesting	B I (Cultivation)		B II (Cultivation)
<b>Harvesting process</b>	Harvesting, trimming/ packing/ temporary storage on a farm, loading/ transportation/ delivery to a produce handling facility	B I (Harvesting)		B II (Harvesting)
<b>Produce handling process</b>	Reception of agricultural products at a produce handling facility, storage, washing, sorting, trimming, simple cutting and drying that do not alter the properties of the agricultural product (including unrefined tea processing), packaging, and shipment from the produce handling facility (loading, transportation, and delivery)	B III (Produce handling)		

(4) Production process that is outsourced

When a farm/group outsources a part of a production process, the outsourced process shall conform to the ASIAGAP standard. Therefore, the outsourced process shall also be included in the certification scope.

## 7. Principles of ASIAGAP certification

### 7.1 ASIAGAP certification

(1) Options for certification

The following options exist for the ASIAGAP certification:

- a) Individual certification: Conformity to the “ASIAGAP Control Points and Compliance Criteria for Farms” (latest version) shall be audited for certification.
- b) Group certification: Conformity to the “ASIAGAP Control Points and Compliance Criteria for Group Administration” (latest version) and the “ASIAGAP Control Points and Compliance Criteria for Farms” (latest version) shall be audited for certification.

(2) An individually certified farm can join a certified group. In this case, the individual certification continues to be valid until its expiry.

(3) Audit time

- a) The typical audit time is one day. The criteria to calculate audit time is defined separately in Annex 2.
- b) In calculating audit time, a certification body shall take into consideration such factors as the farm/group’s audit history, the number of workers, items, produce handling facilities, the complexity of production process, the locations and size of sites and/or facilities, outsourcing and management system. In case where there is any deviation from the typical audit time defined in 7.1 (3) a), the certification body shall record evidences to justify the audit time and provide necessary documents concerning the justification to the Foundation. When problems are detected on the audit time, the Foundation warns and instructs the certification body.

### 7.2 Required compliance level for ASIAGAP certification

(1) All the control points in the “ASIAGAP Control Points and Compliance Criteria for Farms” and the “ASIAGAP Control Points and Compliance Criteria for Group Administration” need to be audited annually, and the result for each control point is defined as “Not-applicable,” “Conformity,” or “Nonconformity.” A control point result of “Not-applicable” shall be justified. When a conformance criterion includes a measure, a producer can choose an alternative measure that equally controls the risks, as long as the alternative measure is justified through a risk assessment. In a surveillance audit, the control points defined as nonconformity in the previous audit can be focused.

(2) There are three levels for the control points in the “ASIAGAP Control Points and Compliance Criteria for Farms” as follows:

- a) Major Must: Criteria that are critical and the most important from the perspective of legal compliance.
- b) Minor Must: Criteria for which conformance is strongly required.
- c) Recommendation: Criteria that do not affect the result of an audit but are important to achieve more ideal farm management.

(3) Certification shall be granted after technical review based on the result of corrective actions when the following level of conformity is verified:

[For individual farm certification]

- 100 % conformity to the applicable Major Must control points of the “ASIAGAP Control Points and Compliance Criteria for Farms.”
- 85 % conformity to the applicable Minor Must control points of the “ASIAGAP Control Points and Compliance Criteria for Farms.”

A farm that has been granted a certificate can be called an “ASIAGAP certified farm.”

[For group certification]

- 100 % conformity to the applicable control points of the “ASIAGAP Control Points and Compliance Criteria for Group Administration.”
- 100 % conformity to the applicable Major Must control points of the “ASIAGAP Control Points and Compliance Criteria for Farms.”
- 85% conformity to the applicable Minor Must control points of the “ASIAGAP Control Points and Compliance Criteria for Farms.”

A group that has been granted a certificate can be called an “ASIAGAP certified group.”

### **7.3 Timing and conditions of audits**

The cycle of audits continues as the initial audit, surveillance, recertification audit, surveillance, recertification audit...and so on. All elements of farm/group concerning the scope shall be audited at least once a year by certification bodies. To decide the frequency and timing of audit, audit history, seasonality of product, significant capacity increase, structural change, changes in product technology or change in product type shall be considered. The details are as per the “Timing of audits” (Annex4). Other conditions of audits are defined below:

#### **(1) Initial audit**

Initial audit shall take place for the first time when a farm/group is to apply the ASIAGAP certification. The initial audit verifies whether the farm/group conforms to the criteria in the standard and has an operational system to sustain conformance. A certificate shall be valid for two years from the date of certification. During the initial audit, at least one item that is on the audit application form shall be physically present (\*Note) on the farm. When a farm/group decides to change its certification body while the certificate is valid, the subsequent audit shall be treated as a recertification audit.

\*Note: “Physically present” means that the product is in the process of cultivation, harvesting, or produce handling on the farm during the audit.

#### **(2) Surveillance**

Surveillance is an audit to verify that a certified farm/group is maintaining conformity to the standard between the initial audit or the previous recertification audit and the next recertification audit.

During surveillance, at least one item that is on the audit application form shall be physically present in the farm. However, when a process has high food safety risk or when the certification body considers the process to be of high importance for the farm or group, such a process shall be verified on site.

#### **(3) Recertification audit**

Recertification audit shall verify that a certified farm/group has continued to conform to the standard between the previous surveillance and the current recertification audit, and evaluate in general the farm/group’s performance during the validity period of certification. At least one item specified in the audit application form shall be physically present on the farm during the recertification audit.

A recertification audit is allowed to be conducted from three (3) months before the expiration of its certification. To determine the timing of a recertification audit, a certification body shall consider the time frame for a certified farm/group to take correction and/or corrective actions to nonconformities identified in the recertification audit.

After the recertification audit completes and the recertification decision is made, a new certificate will be issued by the certification body and the certificate validity is renewed for two more years from the next day after the expiration.



#### (4) **Additional conditions**

- a) At the initial audit, surveillance, or recertification audit, the produce handling process of at least one item that is on the certificate shall be audited.
- b) All the items that are listed on the certificate shall be audited while the certification is valid. However, if it is not possible, the certification body shall determine the number of items to be audited for attaining the conviction. For example, in case of fruits and vegetables, a certification body determines the items and the number of items to be audited based on the type of vegetables (leafy vegetables, root vegetables, or fruit vegetables) and cultivation methods (hydroponic cultivation or soil cultivation, outdoor cultivation or indoor cultivation).
- c) When there are multiple items on a certificate, the items that have not been audited in the previous audits shall be given priority for audit.
- d) When there are multiple sites and facilities, the sites and facilities that have not been audited in the previous audits shall be given priority for audit.
- e) When the corrective actions for nonconformities identified during a surveillance are not conducted within the period defined in 8.3 (7) of this document, a certification may be suspended or withdrawn, even within the certificate validity period (Ref. 9.3 of this document).
- f) When recertification audits are repeated based on 7.3 (3) of this document, the month and date of expiry of the validity period shall be the same each time. When a farm/group wishes to change the date of expiry, it can apply to the certification body to shorten the certification validity period, and conduct a recertification audit prior to the date. However, extension of the validity period is not allowed.
- g) When the initial audit or a recertification audit has been conducted based on an old version of the “ASIAGAP Control Points and Compliance Criteria for Farms” and “ASIAGAP Control Points and Compliance Criteria for Group Administration,” surveillance shall be conducted using the same version of these documents. The farm/group can choose to have surveillance conducted using a new version, with the certificate to be reissued.

#### **7.4 Certification date, validity period, and items described on a certificate**

A certificate is a document that demonstrates that a farm/group is granted the ASIAGAP certification by a certification body. In the case of group certification, a certificate will be issued to the group, and no certificate will be issued to the member sites.

- (1) The certification date is the date a certification body makes the decision on certification. In the case of the initial audit, it is referred to as the initial certification date, and in the case of a recertification audit, it is referred to as the recertification date.
- (2) A certificate shall be valid for two years from the certification date.
- (3) The design of a certificate can be decided by a certification body referring to the template provided by the Foundation. A certificate shall describe the following:
  - a) Basic information
    - 1) ASIAGAP logo mark.
    - 2) Name of the certification body, its logo mark, and the name of the responsible person.
    - 3) In the case of an individual farm certification:  
Farm name and its location
    - 4) In the case of a group certification:  
The group name and location of that group administration’s office
    - 5) The registration number as required in 8.1 (6); a certification body can also include its own identification number for the farm.

- b) Certification scope
  - 1) Certification standard
 

The version number of the “ASIAGAP Control Points and Compliance Criteria for Farms” and the “ASIAGAP Control Points and Compliance Criteria for Group Administration” used in the audit.
  - 2) Audit standard
 

If the certification standard and the audit standard are the same, this can be omitted. If they are different as below, the audit standard shall be specified.

    - ASIAGAP certification using documents of differences between ASIAGAP and other schemes (Ref. Chapter 15 of this document).
  - 3) Produce category of the certified produce (Fruits and Vegetables, Grains, or Tea).
  - 4) Product item: In the case of a group certification, product item names shall be documented for each site. The names shall be, in principle, those on the “JGF Standard Item List.” When the form of shipment is defined, the corresponding form shall be specified. (For example: Shiitake (Raw Shiitake), Green tea (Fresh leaves, Unrefined tea)).
  - 5) A description that clarifies the certified production processes sector (Ref. 6.2 (3) of this document).
  - 6) In the case of the individual certification, if there are multiple sites, the name of those sites and their location.
  - 7) In the case of the group certification, the name of those sites and those location.
  - 8) In the case that the product handling facility is outsourced, the name of that outsource contractor and its location
  - 9) An unannounced audit or not.
- c) Dates
  - 1) Initial certification date in the case of initial certification or recertification date in the case of recertification.
  - 2) Expiry date.
  - 3) Issue date.
  - 4) In case of changes in the description on the certificate, the date of issue of the revised certificate.

## 8. ASIAGAP certification and management of post-certification

### 8.1 Application for an audit contract, and the audit date arrangements

A farm/group opting for ASIAGAP certification shall apply to a certification body for an audit. Certification bodies are the entities that are accredited based on the regulations in this document. Any ASIAGAP certification conducted by entities that are not accredited is not approved by the Foundation.

A farm/group shall apply for an audit by completing the form prepared by a certification body. The form shall contain the information indicated below. In the case of multiple sites, the items below from (1) f) down to n) shall be completed for each site. When the farm/group has not agreed to the terms of agreement on the form, or when the certification body discovers that the farm/group belongs to antisocial forces, the certification body has a right to decline an application.

- (1) Information required for applications
  - a) Option of certification
 

Individual farm certification or Group certification
  - b) Timing of audit
 

Initial audit, Surveillance, and Recertification audit

- c) Requested period of audit  
Refer to 7.3 of this document. Certification bodies have the duty to clearly explain 7.3 of this document to the farm/group.
- d) Name of the farm instructor
- e) Standards used to verify conformance
  - 1) The version of the applicable “ASIAGAP Control Points and Compliance Criteria for Farms” and the agricultural produce category (Fruits and Vegetables, Grains, or Tea).
  - 2) The version of the applicable “ASIAGAP Control Points and Compliance Criteria for Group Administration.”

Note: In case of ASIAGAP certification using the document of the differences between ASIAGAP and other GAP schemes (Ref. 15 of this document), the name and version of the applicable document shall be specified in addition to 1) and 2) above. A copy of the certificate of the other GAP scheme shall be attached.

- f) Items to be certified (on the “JGF Standard Item List”) and the form of shipment, when applicable.
- g) Basic information on the farm/group to be certified  
The name of the farm or group, name of the farm or group representative, address, name of the top management of the farm or group, contact information, and total area of the sites (are/hectare). In case of a group, whether the member site is new and the previous surveillance or recertification audit, name of the administration’s management body, address, the group administration’s top management, and contact information.
- h) Information about the sites  
The name of the site, items growing in each site and their state during the audit (absent/ present (under cultivation/ under harvest/ under storage)), and the area for each site.  
In case of group, the above information shall be provided for each member site (farm).
- i) Information about the produce handling facility  
The management entity of the facility, name, manager, responsible person, address, contact information, whether the facility belongs to a subcontractor or not, and activities conducted in the facility.
- j) Basic information about workers  
Presence/absence of worker, number of workers, mode of employment (permanent or temporary), presence/absence of foreign workers, presence/absence of disabled workers, presence/absence of worker housing (such as a dormitory).
- k) Information about the conditions for the auditor’s entry to the farm  
Information to be communicated to the auditor prior to entry into the product handling facilities and other facilities, information to be obtained about the auditor (whether he/she carries any personal belongings prohibited to bring in, his/her size of body and feet to provide him/her with protective clothing and shoes, etc.)
- l) Information about subcontractors  
Processes that are outsourced; name, address, and contact information of the subcontractors; and the state of third-party certification of the subcontractors (Ref. 8.2 (4) d) of this document).
- m) Verification of corrective actions after a self-assessment (in the case of an individual farm certification) or after an internal audit (in the case of a group certification).
- n) Organizational chart (of the group administration for a group).
- o) Document that stipulates the roles and responsibilities between the group administration and member sites.

- (2) The certification body shall accept the audit application form only after close investigation.

- (3) The certification body and the farm/group shall sign a legally binding agreement regarding the audit and certification. In case of group certification, the group's administration must sign a contract with the certification body. The content of the agreement shall be based on ISO/IEC 17065 and includes the following additional contents:
  - a) The farm/group shall report to the certification body any nonconformities, product recalls or court cases which have serious impact on food safety.
  - b) The farm/group shall agree to report the above to the Foundation through the certification body.
  - c) If nonconformity is found that causes doubts with regard to conformity for group certification, the group shall agree to the addition of more farms for sampling partway through the audit.
  - d) It shall be agreed that the documents to JGF and GFSI when it is required.
- (4) A certification body shall decide the audit duration (Ref. 7.1 (3) of this document) considering the information submitted on the form and sets the audit date with the applicant farm/group (including the subcontractors, if any that need to be audited).
- (5) The certification body shall select an auditor that is registered under the Foundation. When selecting an auditor, 11.1.9 of this document shall be taken into consideration.
- (6) In the case of the initial audit, the certification body shall provide the farm/group's name location and representative's name to the Foundation after the audit (during the period between the audit and determination of the result). The Foundation shall provide the farm/group's registration number to the certification body.

## 8.2 Planning an audit and sampling

- (1) A certification body shall assign an auditor that meets the criteria in this document. To ensure fairness, the certification body must establish regulations regarding the assignment and rotation of auditors so that the same auditor does not audit the same farm/group for four consecutive years. When it is not possible to find an auditor that has enough knowledge of the agricultural product to be audited, the certification body can arrange for a technical expert with adequate knowledge to accompany the auditor. (\*Note 1) Even in the case of only one auditor, we call that an auditor team. (\*Note 2) The certification body shall not charge the farm/group for the accompaniment of the technical expert. The technical expert can only advise the auditor and is not allowed to conduct an audit.
- (2) A certification body shall develop an audit plan to agree with the farm/group. The means of transportation and arrangements for accommodations and lunch shall also be coordinated with the farm/group.
- (3) The farms and the produce handling facility, etc. in the application form shall be audited. When the organization of a group or management structure is complicated, and a certification body finds it difficult to develop an audit plan, it can request additional information such as a group management manual.
- (4) In case of an individual farm certification
  - a) The farm that sends the application form shall be audited. In the case of multiple sites, each site shall be audited.
  - b) When there are multiple sites on the farm, samples of sites that reflect the management conditions of the farm can be selected.
  - c) The produce handling facility that sends the application form shall be audited. In the case of multiple produce handling facilities, each produce handling facility shall be audited. However, it is also possible for the certification body to create a sampling plan according to 8.2 (5) b) and carry out the audit.
  - d) When a production process that is important for food safety is outsourced, and the subcontractor is not certified by ASIAGAP or other third-party certification schemes recognized by the Foundation, as a general rule, the auditor must audit the subcontractor. If there are multiple subcontractors, in principle,

the examination will be conducted for each subcontractor. However, it is also possible for the certification body to create a sampling plan according to 8.2 (5) b) and carry out the audit.

(5) In case of a group certification

In the case of group certification, the certification body must carry out the audit in compliance with the general rules provided for under the latest edition of IAF MD1. Groups wishing to obtain group certification must issue a request for sampling audits of member farms in the audit application form.

a) Audit of group administration

The certification body must conduct an audit of the group's administration prior to conducting audits of farms and facilities handling produce. However, if necessary, it is possible for the certification body to audit a small number of the sampling sites before the group administration audit.

b) Audit of member sites

1) Sampling plan for the site

The certification body shall audit a sample of the group's member farms based on the following for the audit of the member sites in compliance with the supplemental document regarding ASIAGAP GR Ver. 2.3 8.2 (5) b) (Guideline).

- i. Based on the latest IAF MD1.
- ii. The certification body must create groupings, and select the number of samplings above the square root (decimal point advance) for each group.
- iii. The certification body must create groupings, taking in to consideration the group's size and an organizational structure, the roles and responsibilities of the group administration. And the CB could increase the sampling number, if it is necessary.
- iv. In case of the member farms judged to be at high risk (considering the results of the risk assessments), certification body must audit all member farms.
- v. The certification body shall ensure that at least 25% of the samples of all member farms are random samples.
- vi. Make a decision the duration which all sites will be audited and make a circuit of the audit flow.
- vii. At least 20% of the sampling numbers shall be unannounced audits, which will be conducted according to the risk assessment.
- viii. The site to be selected is determined by the results of the internal audit of the organization and the risk analysis of the site.

2) The notification of the selected sites as samplings

The certification body shall notify the group administration of the sampled member farms at most 7 days prior to the start of the first farm audit (\*Note 1 -3).

3) The increase of the sampling numbers

The certification body shall increase the sampling numbers in the case of nonconformity finding will be clarified which suspect the conformity for the group certification.

4) Attendance by the all auditors for the group administrative audit

If plural number of auditors form the audit team, it is desirable that all members of auditors participate in the auditing of a group administration shall be informed to the auditor(s) who cannot participate in the group administration audit.

5) Duration of the audit (Initial audit, renewal audit)

In the case of initial and recertification audit, auditing of the farm, in principle, shall finish in one month from the end of audit for the group administration.

(\*Note 1) A certification body shall determine the duration of the audit for the group administration and the member sites, and the number of member sites to be sampled, based on the group's "organizational structure" or "roles and responsibilities of the group administration and "information of the member sites which consists of group" that are submitted in the application. For example, when the group administration plays a bigger role and takes most of the responsibilities, the audit of the group administration requires more time, and the farm audit can be shorter.

(\*Note 2) For unexpected situations, it is desirable to reserve extra sample sites.

(\*Note 3) The sample for the unannounced audit shall not be informed that you will be audited in advance.

c) Audit of subcontractors

An audit of subcontractors in a group audit shall be conducted in the same manner as an audit of an individual farm (Ref. 8.2. (4)d) of this document).

### **8.3 Conducting an audit and receiving a corrective action report**

- (1) A certification body shall conduct an audit based on the "ASIAGAP Control Points and Compliance Criteria for Farms" and "ASIAGAP Control Points and Compliance Criteria for Group Administration." For an audit to be valid, it shall comply with the following:
  - a) All applicable requirements of the standard shall be fully covered, using any supporting notes made during the audit by a suitably qualified auditor.
  - b) The scope of the report shall cover the scope of application of the farm/group, and the report shall provide satisfactory evidence that all areas of the scope have been fully audited.
  - c) All areas of nonconformities shall be identified and effective corrective actions taken to resolve nonconformities.
- (2) If an inadequate handling of products other than the products to be audited or inputs and machinery related to those products are posing food safety risks to the products to be audited, or are posing environmental risks or risks to workers' safety, human rights, or welfare, the auditor may report as nonconformities.
- (3) The auditor shall record the audit results in a checklist (\*1) and prepare the list of nonconformities and the audit report (\*2). The auditor shall submit the list of nonconformities at the end of the audit. The auditor shall also submit the audit report within 10 working days of the completion of the audit. The list of nonconformities shall contain a clear and accurate description of the nonconformities.
- (4) The Certification Body shall develop a procedure for the preparation of the audit report, including the possibility of translating the other languages of the certificate.
- (5) (\*1) A checklist is a record of judgments and objective evidence of conformity or nonconformity to indicate the management focus points in "Management and Conformity Criteria".
- (6) (\*2) The audit report shall contain the items described in the template, prepared by the Foundation.
- (7) The certification body shall make judgements on group certification based on 7.2(3) of this document, provided, however, If the whole group organization, group office, and/or any member site(s) fails to meet the essential certification program requirements, then the whole organization, including all sites, will fail to gain certification before closing these non-conformance request(s). Where certification has previously been in place, this shall initiate the Certification Body's process to suspend or withdraw its certification.

In the case of a group audit, the audit team leader shall report the audit result to the group representative, after all the audits is completed. When a group audit is conducted by multiple auditors, the team leader shall verify all of the nonconformities identified by the auditors prior to the closing meeting with the group representative, and report the findings on behalf of the team.

The certification body must validate nonconformities discovered in the group audit, and apply rectifying

measures laterally to other parts of the group where necessary. Where nonconformities impact the entire group or some sites or facilities that handle produce, etc., the group administration must validate the content of rectifying measures; and the certification body must validate rectifying measures implemented, including those validated by the group.

- (8) The farm/group administration can ask questions to the auditor regarding the audit result. Without a permission of the auditor, observers of the audit are not allowed to speak during the audit.
- (9) After the audit, the farm/group shall conduct corrective actions against the nonconformities found through the audit and shall submit the corrective action plan and report to the certification body. The certification body shall verify the corrective action plan and the result of corrective action. The verification can be conducted in various ways, including the submission of documents, photographs and the use of ICT, but they should be reviewed by the person who conducted the audit in the appropriate and valid way. In case of the following, the corrective action report shall be verified by the auditor on site:
  - a) The auditor has defined that the nonconformity shall be verified on site, and the certification body confirms the need.
  - b) The result of the audit shows less than 70% conformity to the Major Musts.In the case of the verification for the corrective action with using ICT, you should follow “the guideline for ICT utilization for ASIAGAP audit process”
- (10) A corrective action report shall be submitted within 4 weeks after the audit date. When it is necessary to verify the corrective actions on site, the visit shall be conducted within 8 weeks after the audit date.
- (11) The evaluation result for the audit must be recorded in the audit report. The audit report shall contain all necessary information on audit, including evidence to prove that all control points of the ASIAGAP standard were verified in the audit. This information shall be available upon request of the Foundation or GFSI.

**a) Customer Information**

- 1) Register Number
- 2) Name of the organization/farm
- 3) Identification of the Individual or Group, and number of farms for the Group
- 4) Name of the responsible person
- 5) Telephone number
- 6) Facsimile number
- 7) Email address
- 8) Location

**b) Audit Information**

- 1) Date of audit
- 2) Duration of audit
- 3) Type of Audit (Initial or Surveillance or Recertification)
- 4) Unannounced audit or not
- 5) Name of auditor
- 6) Name of certification program
- 7) Sector
- 8) Name of product(s) to be audited
- 9) Name of product(s) existing
- 10) Name and location of agricultural produce handling facility
- 11) Outsourcing process, name and location, if any

**c) Audit Results**

- 1) Numbers of nonconformity control points

- 2) Numbers of not applicable control points
- 3) Score (%)
- 4) Final date for the submission of corrective action report
- 5) General remarks
- 6) Signature of auditor
- 7) Signature of a person auditee

#### **8.4 Review of audit results, certification decision and issuance of the certificate**

- (1) The certification body shall review the audit result and judge the audit result. The audit result should be evaluated correctively to validate enough evidence for the conformity of the ASIAGAP.

Those who have conflict of independence and impartiality, including those who have audited the farm/group, shall not review the audit results nor make a certification decision. In addition, those who review the audit result and make an audit decision shall not perform any activity that affects the person's independence and impartiality. In particular, they cannot conduct consulting (\*Note) nor sales activities, such as selling goods to the audited farm/group, within three years before and after the date of review and certification decision. The technical reviewer (those who review the audit report) and the person who makes certification decisions shall not be the same person who conducted the audit.

\*Note: Consulting refers to giving specific advice, instructions, or solutions to a farm/group on implementing ASIAGAP. Providing training on general information that is freely available to anyone is not considered consulting.

- (1) The certification body can issue a certificate as result of the certification decision, or if the certification decision cannot be reached, it can request further corrective actions and/or an additional audit.
- (2) The certification body shall make a certification decision by the following timeframes in principle:
  - a) In case where there is no nonconformity requiring corrective action,
 

within three weeks after the audit finished
  - b) In case where there is any nonconformity requiring corrective action,
 

within three weeks after the auditor confirms and accepts a corrective action plan submitted by a firm/group

In case where the certification decision is made after the time specified in a) or b) above by any particular reason, the certification body shall record evidences to justify.

- (3) The certificate (\*) shall be issued by the certification body that conducted the audit

\*Refer to the certificate template (Annex 3)

#### **8.5. Registration and disclosure of information**

The certification body, using the format required by the Foundation shall immediately report the registration and other related information of ASIAGAP certified farms/groups to the Foundation. The Foundation manages the registration information of ASIAGAP certified farms/groups using a database system. The data to be incorporated into this database system shall include the number of auditors, the number of certificates issued, the number of farms those certifications has been withdrawn, and other information related to the GFSI Benchmarking Requirements. The Foundation publishes the names of the certified farms/groups and certified agricultural products on its website.

#### **8.6 Cost associated with an ASIAGAP audit and certification**

- (1) Cost of audit and certification

A certification body shall set a fee and request payment from the farm/group.



(2) **Registration fee for ASIAGAP certified farm/group**

A farm/group that has been granted an ASIAGAP certification shall pay a registration fee to the Foundation, through the certification body, as an ASIAGAP certified farm/group.

The registration fee as a certified farm/group shall be paid when a new certificate is issued after the initial audit, when a certificate is renewed after a recertification certification, or when a new member is added to a group after the group has been certified. Even if a certificate is withdrawn or if a member leaves the group, the registration fee is not returned.

**8.7 Process after ASIAGAP certification**

In case the information on the certificate is necessary to be changed, the farm/group shall request the certification body to change the description on the certificate. The certification body shall follow the following procedure according to the request. In addition, if a certificate is withdrawn or withdrawn, or if there is any change in the description on the certificate due to a reduction in certification scope, the certification body shall promptly request the farm/group to return the certificate. The certification body shall immediately report the changes in the certificate to the Foundation. The Foundation immediately registers and discloses the changes in the certificate.

**8.7.1 Adding a new item after certification**

- (1) When a farm/group wishes to add a new product item on the certificate, it shall apply to its certification body for the addition.
- (2) The certification body shall verify that the production process for the item to be added meets the criteria of the standard, and shall make the decision to accept the addition. For verification, an on-site audit may be conducted.
- (3) After the verification, if the addition is granted, the certificate shall be reissued, and the newly added item can be treated as a certified produce.

**8.7.2 Adding a new site after certification**

A certified group/farm can verify whether the site to be added to the certification conforms to the “ASIAGAP Control Points and Compliance Criteria for Farms,” and if the conformity can be verified, the new site can be added. The agricultural produce coming from the newly added site can be treated as ASIAGAP certified produce. It is not required to report adding a new site to the certification body.

**8.7.3 Adding a new produce handling facility after certification**

- (1) When a certified group/farm wishes to add a new produce handling facility to the certificate to treat the produce handled in the facility as certified produce, it shall apply to the certification body for the addition of the facility.
- (2) The certification body shall verify that the new produce handling facility meets the criteria of the standard, and makes the decision to accept the addition. For verification, an on-site audit may be conducted.
- (3) After verification, if the addition is granted, the certificate shall be reissued. The produce handled in the newly added facility can be treated as certified produce.

**8.7.4 Adding a new farm to the group after certification**

- (1) When a certified group wishes to add a new member to the certification before the next maintenance or recertification audit, it shall apply to the certification body for the addition, provided that it meets the “ASIAGAP Control Points and Compliance Criteria for Group Administration.”

- (2) The certification body shall calculate the square root of the new total number of member farms of the group, including the new members. Then it shall subtract the previous square root (rounding up the decimal) from the new square root (rounding up the decimal), and shall conduct on-site audits on the number of farms corresponding to the difference.
- (3) After the audit, when the addition is granted, a new certificate shall be issued, and newly added members can be treated as ASIAGAP certified farms.

#### 8.7.5 Other changes in the description on the certificate

- (1) In case the description on the certificate is necessary to be changed for reasons other than 8.7.1 to 8.7.4 in this document, the farm/group shall request the certification body to change the description on the certificate.
- (2) If the certification body considers that the change could potentially impact the safety of the agricultural product, it shall take actions to confirm that the farm/group's management meets the standard. The actions of confirmation may include an on-site verification.

### 8.8 Changing certification bodies

- (1) When a farm/group wishes to change certification bodies
  - a) When a certified farm/group changes its certification body, the following audit shall be treated as a recertification audit. The farm/group shall notify the previous certification body that it is not going to continue the certification with that certification body before applying to a new certification body. The farm/group shall submit to the new certification body a copy of the current certificate and a copy of the audit report that includes the list of nonconformities provided by the current certification body. The remaining period of the current certificate becomes invalid, and the new certificate issued by the new certification body becomes valid.
  - b) When any certified farm/group make the transition to ASIAGAP certification from GFSI recognized certification programs, the CBs shall conduct an audit taking into account at least the audit history of the certified farm/group and the assessment of the previous unannounced audit.
- (2) When a certification body wishes to hand over certified farms/groups
 

When a certification body loses its accreditation status or downsizes the scope of accreditation, and is necessary to hand over its certified farm/group to another certification body, the certificates shall continue to be valid until their expiration dates. When a farm has not yet received surveillance, the new audit and certification body shall conduct an audit for transfer so that the certification can be maintained. The previous certification body shall submit copies of the current certificates and copies of the audit reports, including the lists of nonconformities and things to be verified in subsequent audits, to the Foundation. The new certification body shall receive the above documents from the Foundation to conduct audits for transfer. In case an accreditation of a certification body is withdrawn, the farms/groups that have been certified by the certification body shall follow the instructions of the Foundation.

### 8.9 Extraordinary audit

- (1) When a certification body receives a complaint or information regarding nonconformity to ASIAGAP standards on its certified farm/group, it can conduct an extraordinary audit of the farm/group. An extraordinary audit shall be conducted on site.
- (2) A certification body cannot give more than 48 hours (two business days) prior notice to the farm/group. The farm/group can refuse an extraordinary audit only when there are justifiable reasons, such as health issues. When an extraordinary audit is refused, the certification body shall immediately set a new audit date.

- (3) An extraordinary audit shall focus on the control points that are related to the ASIAGAP nonconformity as reported in (1). When it is necessary to verify any on-going activity, the timing of the audit can be considered. The audit report shall stipulate clearly that it was an extraordinary audit, and it shall be submitted to the accreditation body and to the Foundation. Other matters shall be conducted the same as in a normal audit and certification. The cost of an extraordinary audit shall be borne by the farm/group.

#### **8.10 Unannounced audit**

- (1) An unannounced audit is useful to verify a certified farm/group to conform with the ASIAGAP requirements. The certification body shall execute the unannounced audits at least 10% of farms/groups which are certified by those organizations in one year. The certification body selects the farms/groups to conduct the unannounced audit at least for once in 8 years.
- (2) A certification body shall explain about the unannounced audit to the certified farm/group after every recertification and surveillance audits. When the farm/group chooses the unannounced audit, the certification body shall make a written content with the farm/group.
- (3) In case of an announced audit, the audit application is not required. The certification body shall consider the outcome of the previous audit to make the audit plan. The audit plan shall not be disclosed to the farm/group.
- (4) The certification body shall report the implementation of unannounced audit to the Foundation once a year.

### **9. Rights and duties of farms/groups and withdrawal of certificate**

#### **9.1 Rights of farms/groups**

- (1) A farm/group can submit a complaint or appeal to the certification body. When the certification body does not respond properly to the complaint, the certified farm/group can submit the complaint to the accreditation body or to the Foundation (Ref. 16. “Complaint management, scheme improvement and public review by stakeholders” of this document).
- (2) The Foundation, accreditation bodies, and certification bodies shall treat all reports and other documents regarding the production process and audit results of the farm/group as confidential. The right of the ownership of an audit report belongs to a farm/group which also has the right of the decision for disclosure details and of the permission for access.

According to 8.5, the name of the certified farm/group and the certified produce can be published on the Foundation’s website as a means for buyers and consumers to verify the ASIAGAP certification status of producers.

#### **9.2 Duties of ASIAGAP certified producers**

- (1) A certified farm/group is responsible for conforming to the applicable control points of the “ASIAGAP Control Points and Compliance Criteria for Farms” and “ASIAGAP Control Points and Compliance Criteria for Group Administration” that are written on the certificate. In the case of group certification, a group administration shall implement “ASIAGAP Control Points and Compliance Criteria for Group Administration”.
- (2) A farm/group shall not be audited and certified by more than one certification body at the same time.
- (3) A certified farm/group is responsible for updating its certification body about changes in the products, produce handling facilities, list of members, and the data that are written on the certificate.

- (4) If a certified farm/group decides to outsource part of the production process to a subcontractor, it shall ensure that the subcontractor complies with the ASIAGAP standard.
- (5) A certified farm/group shall accept an extraordinary audit (Ref. 8.9 of this document) when requested.
- (6) When a certification body requests a farm/group to return its certificate due to withdrawal or withdrawal of the certificate or reduction of the certified scope, the farm/group shall promptly follow the request.
- (7) When a farm/group provides a copy of its certificate to others, it shall provide the complete information, including all the attachments to the certificate.

### **9.3. Suspension and withdrawal of a certification**

- (1) A certification body shall request a certified farm/group to take any corrective action within a reasonable period (four (4) weeks in principle) in writing in case of each of the following conditions:
  - a) Regardless of the farm/group violating the regulations and having been warned it has no intention to take any corrective action or has not taken any action for more than three (3) months.
  - b) When nonconformities have been detected on a member farm as a result of an internal audits, but the group administration and/or the member are not willing to undertake corrective actions, the group administration is not willing to remove the member from the group, or the group administration and/or the member have not taken any action for more than three (3) months.
  - c) When a farm/group does not pay the required fees related to audit and certification.
  - d) When a farm/group took an inappropriate action as certified farm/group of ASIAGAP.
- (2) The certification may be withdrawn from the certified farm/group without a suspended time in case of each of the following conditions:
  - a) When the farm/group declares bankruptcy, corporate reorganization, or civil rehabilitation, or when a farm/group is going through dishonor of bills, attachment for delinquent tax and public dues, execution of foreclosure, or other equivalent situations.
  - b) When there is an inappropriate relationship between the farm/group and the auditor such as the conflict of interest and the audit result of the audit is incredible.
  - c) When a certified farm/group does not apply for a subsequent audit, despite the certification body prompting the farm to apply for an audit, and the subsequent audit cannot be conducted within the time limit stipulated in 7.3 of this document (\*Note) (except when the certification of the farm/group has been transferred to another certification body).
 

\*Note: A certification body can decide to conduct an extraordinary audit before the certificate expires. When the certificate has already expired, the certification shall be withdrawn.
  - d) When a certified farm/group continues to refuse an extraordinary audit (Ref. 8.9 of this document).
- (3) To decide the suspension or withdrawal of the certification, the certification body may conduct an extraordinary audit (Ref. 8.9 of this document).
- (4) The certification shall be temporarily suspended during the period of (1) above. The use of the ASIAGAP logo marks shall also be prohibited during the warning.
- (5) The certification body shall report the suspension or withdrawal of a certification immediately to the Foundation.

The Foundation constantly updates the certification status of all registered farms/groups. A farm/group whose certification has been withdrawn cannot apply for a new audit and certification for five years from the date of withdrawal. When the reason for withdrawal is malicious, and could threaten the credibility of the certification, it may be announced on the Foundation's website as such, and the Foundation may take legal actions against the farm/group.

## 10. Labeling regarding ASIAGAP certification

There are two types of logo marks: ASIAGAP certification program logo mark and ASIAGAP Certified Farm logo mark.

The ASIAGAP logo marks are not a consumer-facing agricultural brand but are a means to communicate management method of the farm/group that has produced the product.

The ASIAGAP certification program logo marks shall not be used as any label to imply that certified products meet any specific food safety criteria.

### 10.1 The ASIAGAP certification program logo mark

The ASIAGAP logo mark is a scheme logo mark that copyright belongs to the Foundation. They represent farms/groups that take care of food safety, environmental conservation, workers' safety, human rights and welfare, and agricultural produce that have been produced by farms and groups under such farm management.

### 10.2 ASIAGAP Certified Farm logo mark

It is a logo mark that represents a certified farm/group or ASIAGAP certified produce, and only certified farms/groups can receive permission from the Foundation to use the logo mark. An ASIAGAP Certified Farm logo mark contains a registration number, provided in 8.1 (6) of this document.

An ASIAGAP Certified Farm logo mark is as follows:



### 10.3 Rights and duties of ASIAGAP logo mark users

ASIAGAP Certified Farm logo mark users can obtain the right to use the ASIAGAP Certified Farm logo mark by following the procedure described in this document and *the Detailed rules on the ASIAGAP logo mark use* with the approval from the Foundation to use the logo marks. Once an approval is obtained an ASIAGAP Certified Farm logo mark user can use the logo mark according to the rules of this document. The users shall abide by the relevant Japanese laws, such as the Trademark law, the Unfair Competition Prevention law, and the Act against Unjustifiable Premiums and Misleading Representations, while always respecting the regulations in this document. In case a misuse of the ASIAGAP Certified Farm logo mark is discovered, the Foundation may take legal actions, such as a demand for an injunction, claim for damages, and criminal complaint. The following entities are not allowed to use the ASIAGAP Certified Farm logo mark:

- (1) Farms/groups not ASIAGAP certified.
- (2) Farms/groups whose certificate has been expired.
- (3) Farms/groups who have misused the ASIAGAP logo marks, and whose act of misuse has been detected in an audit by the Foundation.
- (4) Farms/groups whose approval for use of the ASIAGAP logos has been withdrawn in the past 5 years.
- (5) Farms/groups who have a record of violation of laws, and who the Foundation has determined to be unsatisfactory to become ASIAGAP logo marks users.

### 10.4 Details on the use of the ASIAGAP Certified Farm logo mark

The ASIAGAP Certified Farm logo mark shall be used in the form that is provided by the Foundation. Any modification of shape or texts is not allowed. The user can decide the size of the logo mark. The user shall follow the other detailed instructions that are in the “Detailed rules on the ASIAGAP logo mark use.”

## **10.5 Appropriate use of the logo mark**

Certification body, during auditing, shall inform farm/group that there is a rules and regulations to use logo mark.

# **11. ASIAGAP Auditors and Technical Reviewers**

## **11.1 ASIAGAP auditors**

### **11.1.1 Class of ASIAGAP auditors**

The Class of ASIAGAP auditors who can conduct ASIAGAP certification are listed below. An auditor is allowed to audit only the sector that the auditor is registered for (Ref. 6.2 (3) of this document).

(1) **ASIAGAP senior auditors**

ASIAGAP senior auditors can conduct individual farm certification, and audits of both group administration and member farms for a group certification.

(2) **ASIAGAP auditors**

ASIAGAP auditors can conduct individual farm certification and member farm certification for a group certification. When an auditor meets the conditions of 11.1.3 (3) of this document, the auditor can conduct an audit of group administration under the supervision of an ASIAGAP senior auditor or a person who the Foundation has recognized to be the equivalent of an ASIAGAP senior auditor.

(3) **ASIAGAP auditor candidates**

ASIAGAP auditor candidates can receive the on-site training at the individual farm certification and member farm certification for a group certification under the supervision of an ASIAGAP senior auditor or an ASIAGAP auditor.

### **11.1.2 Registration requirements for an ASIAGAP senior auditor**

A certification body shall verify that a person meets the following criteria, in addition to the criteria for an ASIAGAP auditor, to register the person with the Foundation:

(1) Has successfully passed either of the following courses

- a) Quality management system or food safety management system auditor course that is recognized by IRCA, JRCA, or RAB (at least 40 hours) or
- b) Quality management system or food safety management system auditor course that is recognized by the Foundation (at least 40 hours).

(2) The person must have at least two group administration audits where the person was assessed (and recognized as performing well) by an attending ASIAGAP senior auditor, or a person whom the Foundation has recognized to be the equivalent of an ASIAGAP senior auditor, and audit records for a total of at least fifteen (15) farm audits (at least two in each registered sector).

### **11.1.3 Registration requirements for an ASIAGAP auditor**

A certification body shall verify that a person meets the following criteria, in addition to the registration requirements for an ASIAGAP auditor candidate, to register the person with the Foundation:

(1) Has successfully passed a Codex HACCP training course (minimum of two days)

(2) The person must have audit records for at least three individual farm audits in the sector for which he or she is applying for registration. These audits shall be carried out based on the standard audit plan. The record must be kept that the person has been assessed by assessor, who is the responsible auditor in charge till the completion of auditor registration, for three audits attended and assessed by auditor or senior auditor and

recognized as performing well. (\*) An audit out of three may be substituted by two or more site audits for different group certification.

#### **11.1.4 Registration requirements for an ASIAGAP auditor candidate**

A certification body shall verify that a person meets the following criteria, and register the person with the Foundation for each corresponding production process category:

- (1) Conformity to the “Qualification requirements for ASIAGAP auditors” (Ref. Annex 1)
- (2) Has successfully passed a recognized ASIAGAP for farm standard introduction course
- (3) Has successfully passed a recognized ASIAGAP for group standard introduction course
- (4) Has successfully passed a recognized ASIAGAP auditor training course

#### **11.1.5 Registration recertification of ASIAGAP senior auditors and ASIAGAP auditors**

To maintain registration as an ASIAGAP senior auditor or an ASIAGAP auditor, the person shall submit an application for recertification to the Foundation once a year with the following information:

- (1) Participation in at least one ASIAGAP auditor course organized by a certification body
- (2) At least 5 ASIAGAP audits at 5 different farms/groups for each sector per year; an additional two audits of group administration per year (for an ASIAGAP senior auditor).
- (3) Participation in a training course designated by the Foundation.

(\* Note) When (2) above cannot be met, the requirement can be alternatively conformed to by conducting at least one farm audit with ASIAGAP and at least five farm audits of a GFSI recognized certification program other than ASIAGAP at five different farms/groups per year.

#### **11.1.6 Registration recertification of ASIAGAP auditor candidates**

To maintain registration as an ASIAGAP auditor candidate, the person shall submit an application by which the following is confirmed once a year for recertification.

- (1) Attendance at a course designated by Japan GAP Foundation.

#### **11.1.7 Adding sector to the registration of ASIAGAP senior auditors, ASIAGAP auditors, and ASIAGAP auditor candidates**

- (1) When an ASIAGAP senior auditor or an ASIAGAP auditor wishes to add a sector to their registration, the certification body must owe the following program and keep the record. He or she takes the program and submit an application for adding sectors to JGF.
  - a) Education for new sector(s)
  - b) The unified record of a positive evaluation of the witness audit held at least once by an instructor, who is registered in the sector(s) and has same or superior auditor qualification.
  - c) Verification of compatibility to “Qualification required for ASIAGAP auditors” (ANNEX 1)
- (2) When an ASIAGAP auditor candidate wishes to add a new sector to their registration, the certification body shall verify that he or she meets the “ASIAGAP auditor qualification requirements” (Ref. Annex 1) and submit the results of the verification to the Foundation.

#### **11.1.8 Registration fee for ASIAGAP senior auditors, ASIAGAP auditors, and ASIAGAP auditor candidates**

- (1) ASIAGAP senior auditors, ASIAGAP auditors, and ASIAGAP auditor candidates shall pay an annual registration fee to the Foundation upon registering for the first time or renewing their registration.

- (2) The Foundation provides information regarding ASIAGAP to the registered ASIAGAP senior auditors, ASIAGAP auditors, and ASIAGAP auditor candidates.

#### **11.1.9 Independence, fairness, and confidentiality of ASIAGAP auditors**

- (1) ASIAGAP auditors shall not conduct any activity that infringes upon the independence and fairness of their work as auditors. Auditors shall not conduct any consultancy work (\* Note) or commercial activities, such as sales of products, for the farm that they audit, within three years before the audit or three years after the audit.

(\* Note 11) Consultancy work refers to activities that provide advice and instructions regarding ASIAGAP that are customized for the farm or group. Providing general training on information that is freely available to anyone is not considered to be consultancy work.

- (2) ASIAGAP senior auditors, ASIAGAP auditors, and ASIAGAP auditor candidates shall respect the procedures defined by the certification bodies to protect the confidentiality of information and records regarding audits.

#### **11.1.10 Withdrawal of registrations**

Registration of an ASIAGAP senior auditor, ASIAGAP auditor, or ASIAGAP auditor candidate can be withdrawn in the following cases. The Foundation makes the decision regarding withdrawal.

- (1) In case an inappropriate relationship between an auditor and the farm/group audited has been discovered, or an inappropriate relationship has been discovered, and the Foundation considers that the audit result cannot be trusted.
- (2) In case an auditor damages the credibility of ASIAGAP or the Foundation.
- (3) In case an auditor has not paid the registration, fee defined in 11.1.8 of this document.

### **11.2 Management and reporting of auditor registers**

A certification body shall maintain the latest registers of auditors and be able to submit them promptly upon request of the accreditation body, the Foundation, or the GFSI Secretariat. The content of the registers shall include the type of auditors, scope of audits, academic background, work experience, and audit history.

### **11.3 Other regulations**

Other regulations regarding ASIAGAP auditors are defined in the “ASIAGAP Auditor Regulations.”

### **11.4 Technical Reviewer**

The technical reviewer is a person who reviews audit results and has a competence to understand ASIAGAP standard documents, audit report, requirements on completion of check list, and evaluate the contents of the audit report fairly and accurately. The technical reviewer shall not be the same person who conducted the audit.

## **12. ASIAGAP internal auditors and ASIAGAP trainers**

### **12.1 ASIAGAP internal auditors**

#### **12.1.1 Class of ASIAGAP internal auditors**

- (1) ASIAGAP internal auditors

ASIAGAP internal auditors can conduct both an internal audit of group administration and internal audits of member farms.



(2) ASIAGAP internal auditor assistants

ASIAGAP internal auditor assistants can conduct internal audits of member farms under the supervision of an ASIAGAP internal auditor. The ASIAGAP internal auditor supervising the assistants shall be ultimately responsible for the internal audits conducted by the assistant. The ASIAGAP internal auditor shall be able to demonstrate that the assistants have been sufficiently trained by the internal auditor, and that their internal audit reports have been validated by the internal auditor.

12.1.2 Requirements for an ASIAGAP internal auditor

(1) An ASIAGAP internal auditor shall meet the following criteria. An ASIAGAP internal auditor shall demonstrate the following qualifications with written documents:

1) **Knowledge of internal audit**

- a) Latest knowledge of GAP, including food safety and hygiene.
- b) Knowledge of risk assessment based on hazard analysis.
- c) Basic knowledge of agrochemicals, fertilizers, workers' safety, and environmental conservation.
- d) Basic knowledge of human rights, welfare, and labor management (\*Note 1).
- e) Knowledge of management systems (group administration).
- f) Knowledge of internal audits and ability to conduct internal audits (\*Note 2).

(\* Note 1) Regarding a) to d), an internal auditor shall also have knowledge of the version of the "ASIAGAP Control Points and Compliance Criteria for Farms" that the group has implemented.

(\* Note 2) Regarding e) and f), an internal auditor shall also have knowledge of the version of the "ASIAGAP Control Points and Compliance Criteria for Group Administration" that the group has implemented.

2) **Registered requirement for ASIAGAP auditor** and similar or equal education, training, professional career. (Ref: 11.1.3, 11.1.4, ANNEX 1)

The following are recommended methods of demonstrating conformity with a) to f):

a) to d): Successfully passing an ASIAGAP trainer basic course that is recognized by the Foundation, and maintaining the qualifications of an ASIAGAP trainer.

e) and f): Successfully passing an ASIAGAP internal auditor course (GAP local leader training course) that is recognized by the Foundation.

The above courses are the only ones that are recognized by ASIAGAP to verify the qualifications of internal auditors. For any other course, an auditor shall verify the details of the course, such as curriculum, duration, qualification of instructors, and textbooks, during an audit of a group administration to verify whether it meets the requirements of a) to f) or not.

(2) An ASIAGAP internal auditor shall meet at least one of the following criteria:

- Agricultural extension officer.
- Agricultural engineer.
- Grade 2 or above in the Japan agricultural technology test by the National Chamber of Agriculture.
- Associate agricultural engineer with practical experience in agriculture.
- Graduate from an agricultural university or college with practical experience in agriculture.
- At least three years of experience in agriculture.
- At least three years of experience in agricultural extension.
- Experience successfully leading at least three farms to ASIAGAP certification.
- Experience successfully leading a group to ASIAGAP certification.
- Experience as a group administrator of an ASIAGAP certified group.

### 12.1.3 Requirements of an ASIAGAP internal auditor assistant

An ASIAGAP internal auditor assistant shall meet the same requirements as an ASIAGAP internal auditor, but any missing qualifications can be supplemented by an ASIAGAP internal auditor.

## 12.2 ASIAGAP trainers

### 12.2.1 Class of ASIAGAP trainers

- (1) ASIAGAP trainers shall have sufficient knowledge to provide training, advice, and support to farms so that they can achieve good and efficient farm management and obtain and maintain ASIAGAP certification.
- (2) ASIAGAP senior trainers shall have sufficient knowledge to provide training, advice, and support to farms/groups so that they can achieve good and efficient farm management and obtain and maintain ASIAGAP certification.
- (3) ASIAGAP trainers and ASIAGAP senior trainers shall have knowledge of the versions of the “ASIAGAP Control Points and Compliance Criteria for Farms” and the “ASIAGAP Control Points and Compliance Criteria for Group Administration” that the farm/group wishes to implement.

### 12.2.2 Registration requirements for ASIAGAP trainers

#### (1) ASIAGAP trainers

Have successfully passed an ASIAGAP trainer basic course that is recognized by the Foundation and maintained qualifications as an ASIAGAP trainer.

#### (2) ASIAGAP senior trainers

In addition to the requirements for ASIAGAP trainers, ASIAGAP senior trainers shall meet either a) or b) of the following criteria:

##### a) Meet the following two conditions:

- 1) Successfully passing an ASIAGAP internal auditor course (GAP local leader training course) that is recognized by the Foundation, and
- 2) Experience leading at least 10 farms successfully to ASIAGAP certification.

##### b) Meet the following three conditions:

- 1) Successfully passing an ASIAGAP auditor course that is recognized by the Foundation,
- 2) Successfully passing an ASIAGAP group certification course that is recognized by the Foundation, and
- 3) Experience leading at least 10 farms successfully to ASIAGAP certification.

### 12.2.3 Registration recertification of ASIAGAP trainers

The status as an ASIAGAP trainer or an ASIAGAP senior trainer is valid for two years. To renew the registration status, the person shall take the training course designated by the Foundation to obtain the latest knowledge on ASIAGAP before the expiration of the status.

### 12.2.4 Other regulations

Other regulations regarding ASIAGAP trainers are defined in the “ASIAGAP Auditor Regulations.”

## **13. Accreditation bodies and certification bodies**

### **13.1 Requirements for an accreditation body and accreditation work**

- (1) JGF and accreditation body shall establish the periodical opinion exchange and communication. Such include the agreement to make sure that certification body comply with ISO/IEC 17065. Communication shall be implemented based on “ASIAGAP regulation on communication without side organizations”. JGF shall make sure that it’s all activities concerning ASIAGAP operation shall be implemented by accreditation body which belongs to IAF and signs MLA.
- (2) Accreditation work on ASIAGAP shall be conducted based on ISO17011 and the contract signed by the Foundation
- (3) Accreditation bodies shall set up a procedure for accreditation work, and let the certification bodies know what the procedure is. After a certification body has been accredited, the accreditation body shall issue an accreditation certificate. The accreditation scope described in the certificate shall correspond to the sector of ASIAGAP, including the revised version number or its publication date.
- (4) A contracted accreditation body shall discuss with the Foundation in advance the acquisition, suspension, and withdrawal of accreditation, regarding accreditation activities, and shall report its latest information to the Foundation.

### **13.2 Requirements for certification bodies**

- (1) When a certification body wishes to conduct certification activities of ASIAGAP, it shall first approach the Foundation. The Foundation explains the scheme, and conducts an initial review of the certification body to evaluate its basic suitability as an ASIAGAP certification body.
- (2) A certification body shall sign a contract with the accreditation body and the Foundation regarding certification activities. The certification body shall comply with the following:
  - a) The certification body shall employ personnel with sufficient competence to fulfill all functions within the organization, such as management, operations, expertise, and auditing.
  - b) Regardless of the scope of accreditation, the certification body shall establish systems and procedures to ensure that the auditors have the competencies described in ISO/IEC 17065.
- (3) Accreditation bodies shall indiscriminately receive applications for accreditation, and accredit certification bodies based on the following criteria. They shall respect the detailed procedures of accreditation defined by each accreditation body.
  - a) The certification body shall have a system for ASIAGAP audit and certification that is in line with ISO/IEC 17065 and the ASIAGAP General Regulations. The certification body shall operate an effective and fully implemented quality system. The quality system shall be fully documented and used by all relevant certification body staff. Within the certification body there shall be a designated member of staff responsible for the quality system’s development, implementation, and maintenance. This designated staff member shall have a reporting role to the organization’s executive for the purposes of management review and subsequent system improvement, and shall also have responsibility for reporting on the performance of the quality system.
  - b) The above system of the certification body shall be accredited by an accreditation body that has signed a contract with the Foundation, as in 13.1 of this document.
  - c) The certification body shall be fair and independent.
  - d) Its audit and certification fee shall be appropriate, and it maintains financial soundness.
  - e) The certification body shall possess human resources for the personnel who have enough competence to review the audit result as a technical reviewer, one or more than one person. The personnel who have

enough competence to review the audit result means the personnel who have the competence of an ASIAGAP senior auditor. Please refer to the GR11.4.

- f) There shall be a technical manager who has the competence of an auditor. The technical manager shall be responsible for training the certification body personnel on new versions of ASIAGAP, technical communication with the Foundation, and arrangement of auditors.
- (4) A certification body shall obtain accreditation within one year from the date of application to the accreditation body. If accreditation is not granted within one year, the contract between the Foundation and the certification body shall be cancelled. In case there is any delay in accreditation, the certification body shall provide a plan to the Foundation to seek approval for pursuing accreditation. However, if the cause of the delay is with the accreditation body, such as cancellation of the accreditation program, the Foundation verifies the situation.
- (5) A certification body shall confirm that the auditors meet the registration requirements of 11.1.2-11.1.4 of this document.
- (6) The auditors contracted by a certification body shall be able to demonstrate competence in the corresponding scope of the required auditor background.
- (7) The certification body shall have a documented auditor competence evaluation program for the auditor's initial registration by referring to the GR11.1. This program shall also correspond to the GR11.1.3(2).
- (8) A certification body shall have a structure in place that assures that the auditor shall keep up to date with industry sector best practices, food safety, and technological developments, and have access to and be able to apply relevant laws and regulations, as well as maintain written records of all relevant training undertaken.
- (9) The certification body shall maintain a system to carry out the witness audit and evaluate the auditors at least once in five years to ensure that the contracted auditors conduct themselves in a professional manner. This system shall require a record of positive points and points that need to be improved by the auditor from the viewpoint of evaluating their comprehension of ASIAGAP and the following personal attributes and behaviors. Regarding the points that need to be improved by the auditor, sufficient education or training shall be undertaken;
  - a) Ethical; i.e., fair, truthful, sincere, honest and discreet.
  - b) Open minded; i.e., willing to consider alternative ideas or points of view.
  - c) Diplomatic; i.e., dealing with people in good manner to achieve goals.
  - d) Observant; i.e., positively conscious on physical surroundings and activities.
  - e) Perceptive; i.e., instinctive, aware of and able to understand situations.
  - f) Versatile; i.e., adjusts readily to different situations.
  - g) Tenacious; i.e., persistent, focused on achieving objectives.
  - h) Decisive; i.e., timely conclusions based on logical reasoning.
  - i) Self-reliant; i.e., acts independently while interacting effectively with others.
  - j) Integrity; i.e., aware of need for confidentiality and observes professional code of conduct.
- (10) When a certification body applies for expansion of the accreditation scope, it shall have a currently valid accreditation for ISO/IEC 17065. In addition, it shall submit a written notice to the Foundation and have it approved.

### **13.3 Rights and duties of certification bodies and withdrawal of accreditation**

#### **13.3.1 Rights of certification bodies**

Certification bodies can conduct audits according to this document of farms/groups that wish to be ASIAGAP certified, and provide them with ASIAGAP certificates.

Certification bodies can conduct audits of other certifications that include requirements in addition to ASIAGAP

certification. In such case, an audit and other certification shall be conducted upon issuing an ASIAGAP certificate, to make it clear that the other certification is based on the ASIAGAP certification. Certification bodies shall ensure that the other certification has not affected the validity period or audit timing of the ASIAGAP certificate.

### 13.3.2 Duties of certification bodies

- (1) A certification body shall at all times make the following information available to the Foundation:
  - a) Authority under which the organization operates.
  - b) A statement in relation to its certification system, including information on rules and procedures for granting, maintaining, extending, suspending and withdrawing certification of its clients.
  - c) Evaluation procedures and certification processes in relation to the certification scheme.
  - d) Financial report and means of acquiring fee charged to customers.
  - e) Details of the rights and requirements of applicants and clients, such as the use of logo marks, and the way a client can use information in relation to certification.
  - f) Details of complaints, appeals, and dispute procedures.
  - g) A comprehensive list of all certified clients.
- (2) A certification body shall receive an accreditation audit conducted by an accreditation body. The audit for maintenance or recertification of accreditation is to verify the continuous implementation of the accreditation requirements in 13.2 of this document. In cases the ASIAGAP transition occurs, certification bodies shall follow the accreditation procedure publicized on website of the accreditation bodies. Notice on transition will be publicized on the website of the Foundation. In case where the accreditation body determines that circumstances that affect the accreditation status have occurred, it may conduct an extraordinary audit of the certification body.
- (3) A certification body shall pay the certification body registration fee to the Foundation.
- (4) A certification body shall oblige all staff involved in the certification process to sign contracts or agreements to bind their commitment to
  - a) Conformity to organizational regulations that specifically address confidentiality obligations and independence from commercial or personal interests, and
  - b) Declaration of any problem regarding conflicts of interest of individuals.
- (5) A certification body shall participate in workshops and meetings as requested by an accreditation body and the Foundation.
- (6) A certification body shall clearly document all the requirements of ISO/IEC 17065 and IAF MD4 related to the staff concerning certification process, and inform the staff of these requirements. Such requirements include the system and procedure which make sure that auditor's capability meets the requirements mentioned thereby.
- (7) A certification body shall obtain and maintain records of the qualifications, training and experience of all staff involved in the certification process. Every record shall be dated and at least include the following:
  - a) Name and address,
  - b) Relationship with certification body and position held,
  - c) Educational qualification and professional status,
  - d) Experience and training in the relevant fields of competence in relation to the ASIAGAP requirements,
  - e) Details of performance appraisals.
- (8) A certification body shall announce the scope of accreditation, so that it is clearly distinguished from services outside the scope of accreditation. When the scope of the service offered for ASIAGAP is out of the accredited range, CB shall make it clear, non-contradictory and distinctive.

- (9) A certification body shall hold training for ASIAGAP auditors at least once a year. In addition, it shall have a mechanism for managing the competence of personnel involved in certification activities, including contracted ASIAGAP auditors, and shall work towards improving the competence and calibration of the personnel.
- (10) If a certification body changes its ownership, management team, management structure, or articles of incorporation, it shall report the changes in a timely manner to the Foundation.
- (11) A certification body shall apply ASIAGAP wholly for GFSI recognized scope.

#### 13.3.3 Withdrawal or withdrawal of accreditation

When a certification body does not meet the accreditation requirements, or when it neglects the duties stipulated in this document, or when its accreditation body decides that it should no longer be accredited, the accreditation status can be withdrawn. Certification body shall inform Japan GAP Foundation about revocation or suspension of accreditation.

### 13.4 Role of Japan GAP Foundation for accreditation

#### 13.4.1 Communication with accreditation body

Japan GAP Foundation shall inform accreditation body of ASIAGAP related information and development.

#### 13.4.2 Disclosure of accredited certification body

Japan GAP Foundation shall make information of accredited body open to the public

#### 13.4.3 Communication with certification body

Japan GAP Foundation shall inform certification body about ASIAGAP related information and development including alteration of certification program.

## 14. ASIAGAP training courses and approval of ASIAGAP training institutes

### 14.1 Training courses of ASIAGAP

The Foundation develops the following training courses regarding ASIAGAP, and owns the copyright of the training materials for the courses.

- (1) ASIAGAP trainer training basic course
- (2) ASIAGAP internal auditor training course (GAP local leader training course)
- (3) ASIAGAP trainer in-field training course
- (4) ASIAGAP auditor training course
- (5) ASIAGAP special training course
- (6) ASIAGAP regular online training course

### 14.2 Approval of ASIAGAP training institutes

The Foundation approves training institutes that are allowed to conduct the training courses listed in 14.1 (hereafter called ASIAGAP training institutes). The approval is conducted for each of the training courses of (1) - (6) listed in 14.1.

### 14.3 Rights and duties of ASIAGAP training institutes and withdrawal of approval

#### 14.3.1 Rights of ASIAGAP training institutes

ASIAGAP training institutes can issue certificates for course completion or passing final evaluations to the participants that are training to become ASIAGAP auditors as defined in 11 of this document, or ASIAGAP internal auditors or trainers as defined in 12 of this document.

#### 14.3.2 Duties of ASIAGAP training institutes

- (1) ASIAGAP training institutes shall be evaluated for approval by the Foundation. When the Foundation perceives any incidence that can negatively affect the approval status, it can conduct an extraordinary assessment of the ASIAGAP training institute.
- (2) ASIAGAP training institutes shall pay the approval fee that is defined in a separate document.
- (3) ASIAGAP training institutes shall keep records of all the claims, complaints, and disputes of the training course participants and other stakeholders regarding approved training activities, and submit the records to the Foundation upon request.
- (4) ASIAGAP training institutes shall participate in the workshops and meetings as requested by the Foundation.

#### 14.3.3 Withdrawal of approval

When a training institute neglects the above duties, or when the Foundation decides that it should no longer be approved, the approved status can be withdrawn. Prior to withdrawal, the Foundation sends a written warning to the ASIAGAP training institute. Depending on the situation, the Foundation can immediately withdraw the approved status.

## **15. ASIAGAP certification using documents of the differences between ASIAGAP and other schemes**

### **15.1 General principles**

When a farm/group is already certified under other schemes, or when a farm/group wishes to conduct an audit and certification of other schemes simultaneously with an ASIAGAP audit and certification, it can use the “documents of the differences between ASIAGAP and other schemes (for farms and group administration)” in order to avoid duplication of audits on the control points that ASIAGAP and other schemes overlap, and to achieve a more efficient audit and certification.

### **15.2 Conditions**

- (1) The other scheme shall be a scheme that has been recognized by GFSI.
- (2) The certification body of the other scheme shall be the same as that of ASIAGAP, and it shall be a certification body that has been accredited (or is under the accreditation process) by an accreditation body that is an IAF member and a signatory to the MLA.
- (3) The control points where the other scheme and ASIAGAP overlap can be audited using the standard document of the other scheme. The control points that exist only in ASIAGAP shall be additionally audited using the “document of the differences between ASIAGAP and the other scheme” (for farms and group administration), which has been approved by the Foundation.
- (4) The ASIAGAP certificate that is issued shall include the name of the other scheme that has been audited, and the name and version number of the “document of the differences between ASIAGAP and the other scheme” (for farms and group administration) (Ref. 7.4 (3) b) 1) of this document).
- (5) Regarding the expiration date, if the validity period of the other scheme expires, the ASIAGAP certification shall also lose its validity. If the certification validity of the other scheme expires within two years from

the date of certification, the expiration date of the other scheme shall become the expiration date of the ASIAGAP certification (Ref. 7.4 (3) c) 2) of this document).

(6) For other aspects, the audit and certification shall respect the ASIAGAP General Regulations.

## **16. Complaint management, scheme improvement and public review by stakeholders**

### **16.1 Complaint management by certification bodies**

Certification bodies shall follow established procedures for complaint management to deal with complaints and appeals from farms/groups, and to inform farms/groups about the responses.

### **16.2 Complaint management by accreditation bodies**

Accreditation bodies need to follow established procedures for complaint management to deal with complaints and appeals from certification bodies, and to inform the certification body about the responses.

### **16.3 Complaint management by the Foundation**

The Foundation receives complaints on any of the following issues from any stakeholder, and it is responsible for responding appropriately to the complaints.

- (1) Complaints regarding accreditation bodies.
- (2) Complaints regarding certification bodies or auditors.
- (3) Complaints regarding training institutes and training instructors.
- (4) Complaints regarding ASIAGAP trainers.
- (5) Complaints regarding ASIAGAP certified farm/groups.
- (6) Complaints regarding the Foundation or the ASIAGAP Scheme.

### **16.4 Integrity program**

Following the Procedure of Integrity Program, the Foundation monitors, evaluates, and continually improves the whole scheme to verify whether ASIAGAP is effectively and efficiently operated in light of the "ASIAGAP Philosophy," responds to the confidence of buyers, and contributes as an effective tool for improvements in the management of farms/groups.

- (1) To protect the credibility of the ASIAGAP scheme, the Foundation establishes and maintains the quality control system of the organizational management.

- (2) Consultations with accreditation bodies.

The Foundation holds regular meetings with accreditation bodies and receives reports on the latest accreditation status. If necessary, the Foundation attends an accreditation audit conducted by an accreditation body of a certification body.

- (3) Consultation with certification bodies

Following *the Procedure for Implementation of Integrity Program on ASIAGAP operation (A\_45-D02)*, the Foundation receives necessary information from the certification bodies and analyzes the accuracy of their certification activities.

- (4) Consultation with certified farms/groups

If a certification body reports a malicious farm/group that cannot be handled by the certification body, the Foundation directly verifies the situation with the farm/group (including a visit). Depending on the situation, the Foundation instructs the certification body to discuss the potential suspension and



withdrawal of the certification. (For example, when a farm/group frequently changes its certification body and does not want to receive surveillance.)

When the Foundation finds complaints regarding farms/groups, serious nonconformities related to food safety (including violation of laws), product recalls, court cases, and measures taken in the reports from a certification body, and decide that the farm/group can threaten the credibility of ASIAGAP, it provides the necessary measures to the farm/group either through the certification body or directly.

(5) Consultation with other stakeholders

the Foundation investigates and consolidates opinions on the credibility of ASIAGAP with stakeholders such as auditors, trainers, and buyers of agricultural products (including consumers). Collection of opinions and surveys can be conducted through various means, including symposiums, conferences for auditors and trainers, questionnaires, and unannounced visits.

(6) Responses to opinions collected

The results of the collection of opinions and surveys can be used for the following activities after conducting a risk-based assessment.

a) Review of the scheme, including revision of the ASIAGAP standard.

b) Guidance for the accreditation bodies, certification bodies, auditors, trainers, farms, and groups.

c) Improvement of the ASIAGAP training course.

(7) If any finding of the above (5) or changes in social situations generate concerns or trends that could negatively affect the credibility of ASIAGAP or GFSI, the Foundation verifies with the relevant stakeholders (including accreditation bodies, certification bodies, and certified farms/groups), takes the necessary measures, and notifies GFSI.

(8) The Foundation establishes a database system for effective management and operation of the ASIAGAP program.

### **16.5 Disclaimer**

The Foundation, ASIAGAP accreditation bodies, and ASIAGAP certification bodies are not legally held responsible for the agricultural produce sold by the certified farms/groups.

## Annex 1: Qualification requirements for ASIAGAP auditors

An ASIAGAP auditor is allowed to inspect only the sector that the auditor is registered for (Ref. 6.2 (3) of this document). An auditor needs to meet the following qualification requirements to be registered for each sector.

Sector	Academic qualification requirements	Professional qualification requirements	Examples of sector specific work experience in relation to product categories
B I (Cultivation and harvesting process of fruits, vegetables and tea. Grains and beans excluded)	Education in an agricultural/crop-based discipline or as a minimum, has successfully completed a food related or bioscience higher education course or equivalent.	At least two full time years of experience in the agriculture, food or associated industry such as quality assurance or food safety sections in food production or processing or retailing or inspection or auditing or instructing or or the equivalent.	Experience in farming in... Fruits, Vegetables, Herbs and Tea, Spices, Mushrooms, Grasses (Sugar), Sprouts etc.
B II (Cultivation and harvesting process of grains)			Experience in farming in Grains and Cereals, Nuts, Pulses and Legumes
B III (Produce handling of fruits, vegetables, tea, and grains)			Experience in food safety or quality assurance in produce handling of fruits and vegetables (sorting, trimming, etc.), produce handling of grains (up to brown rice) or unrefined tea processing  Experience in agricultural extension, agricultural research and development, experience in audits, experience in GAP training

## **Annex 2: Criteria for audit time calculation**

### **1. Individual audit**

#### **(1) Typical audit time**

##### **1) Cultivation and harvesting process (B I, B II)**

In conducting the on-site farm audit, a certification body shall calculate the typical audit time as 1 person-day (8 hours) for each scope.

##### **2) Produce handling process (B III)**

In conducting the on-site farm audit, a certification body shall calculate the typical audit time for the produce handling facility as 0.5 person-day (4 hours). The audit for B III cannot be conducted alone, but with the scope as B I + B III or B II + B III.

[Example]

Basic conditions of a typical audit time are as below:

a) Employment: Yes

b) Number of Items

- In the case of fruits and vegetables: 5 items

- In the case of tea: 1 item

- In the case of grains: 2 items

c) Number of produce handling facilities: None

d) Outsourcing: None

e) Necessity of interpreter: None

(Sample on-site audit timetable)

Opening meeting: 15 minutes

Document review: 3 hours

Farm review (hearings from workers included): 3 hours

Reconfirmation: 1 hour

Report preparation: 30 minutes

Closing meeting: 15 minutes

#### **(2) Perspective of audit time calculation**

Certification bodies shall calculate the audit time concerning the conditions of audited farms. In calculating audit time, the following factors shall be taken into consideration:

1) Size of sites

2) Presence of employment

3) Cultivation method (soil, hydroponic or house cultivation etc.)

4) Presence of compost manufacture

5) Presence of produce handling facilities

6) Number of product processes

7) Other factors which have influence on audit time

## 2. Group audit

### (1) Group administration

#### 1) Typical audit time

In auditing the on-site group administration audit, a certification body shall calculate the typical audit time as 1 person-day (8 hours).

[Example]

Basic conditions of a typical audit time for group administration are as below:

- 1) Number of groups consisting sites: 30
- 2) The group administration is in charge of the annual use plan of pesticides and fertilizers: Yes
- 3) Outsourcing: None
- 4) Necessity of interpreter: None

(Sample on-site group administration audit timetable)

Opening meeting: 15 minutes

Document review (Control Points and Compliance Criteria for Group Administration): 4 hours 30 minutes

Document review (Control Points and Compliance Criteria for Farms): 2 hours 30 minutes

Report preparation: 30 minutes

Closing meeting: 15 minutes

#### 2) Audit time calculation

Certification bodies shall take the conditions of audited group into consideration in calculating audit time.  
The decrease of audit time shall be less than 50% from the typical audit time.

### (2) Sites (farms/produces handling facilities)

#### 1) Typical audit time

The typical audit time for individual farms (B I, B II) shall be 0.5 person-day. The typical audit time for produce handling facilities attached to the farm (B III) shall be 0.25 person-day. The typical audit time for produce handling facilities separated from the farm (joint fruit sorting site, rice center, unrefined tea factory etc.) shall be 0.5 person-day.

#### 2) Audit time calculation

Certification bodies shall take the conditions of audited sites (individual farms and produce handling facilities) into consideration in calculating audit time. In case the group administration operates most of the part regarding Control Points and Compliance Criteria for Farms, the audit time for individual farms and/or produce handling facilities can be reduced. However, the minimum audit time shall be more than 0.25 person-day.

The total audit time for the group administration audit shall be calculated as below:

Audit time for group administration + Number of sampling sites x Audit time for sites

### Annex 3: Template of Certificate



## Certificate of Registration

This is to certify that

**Taro Yamada (Yamada Farm)**

(address: ○○ ○○○○○○-○○○○)

Produce handling facilities: Packing House

Address: 125 ○○Cho ○○ ○○. ○○○-○○○○,Japan.

*has been found to conform to*

Standard : ASIAGAP Fruit and Vegetable Ver.2.3

*This certificate is valid for the following scope:*

Type: Individual farm Certification

*Unannounced Audit*

Product items : Tomato、Cabbage

Product Sector : BI、 BIII

Registration No. : A123456789

Certificate No. : abc12345

Initial certification date : 1 September, 2017

Recertification date : 17 August, 2019

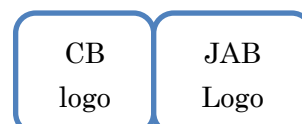
Expiry date : 31 August ,2021

Issue date : 18 August,2019

Certification Body : ABC Certification Center Inc.

Address : 7-8-9 ○○Cho ○○City Tokyo Japan. ○○○-○○

Director of the Center : ○○○○ signature



## Annex 4

### Timing of Audits

This is a supplement to 7.3 Timing and conditions of audits.

1. Possible time period for surveillance
  - A 9~12months after the day of initial certification(shown as ② in the chart), and
  - B 12~15months after the day of initial certification(shown as ③ in the chart)
    - a) If surveillance are to be divided, the first one should be done in the period shown as ① and the second one should be done in the period ② or ③.
    - b) Surveillance should not be done in the period ④ and 6 months interval is required.
    - c) The same principle applies for the second certification onward.
2. Possible time period for recertification audit

It is in between 19 months after the initial certification and 5 months before the expiry of certificate (shown as ⑤ in the chart)

  - a) If recertification audits are to be divided, the first one should be done in the period shown as ④ and the second one should be done in the period ⑤.
  - b) 6months interval is required between the first one and the second one.
  - c) The same principle applies for the second certification onward.
3. In case audit cannot be done during the period mentioned above,
  - a) CB and Farm/Group are able to decide the audit timing even after 15 months from the audit(shown as ④ and ⑨ in the chart) , however the reason for the delay, together with new date has to be reported to JGF and monthly update of situation should follow.
4. The deadline for the surveillance.
  - a) In the case of situation of GR9.3 = Suspension and withdrawal of a certification (2)c), the deadline for the surveillance timing is within 15 months after the day of initial certification or recertification (shown as ③ or ⑧ in the chart)

Figure 1(Initial Certification)

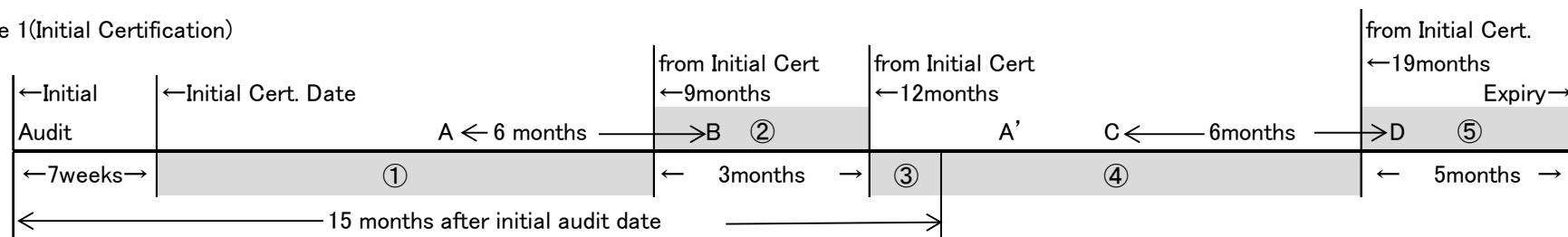
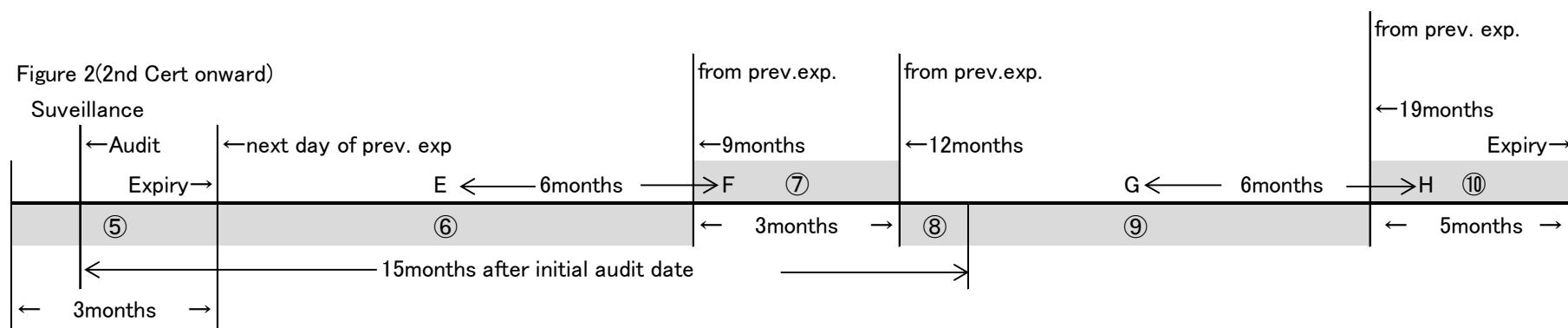


Figure 2(2nd Cert onward)





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