Dear GLOBALG.A.P. scheme manager,

In this issue you will read about:

1. TECHNICAL COMMUNICATION

This technical communication is uploaded to the GLOBALG.A.P. document center and the CB extranet. It is also sent to the scheme managers of each approved and provisionally approved certification body (CB), to the technical committees, to the hosts of the national technical working groups, to the GLOBALG.A.P. Board, the GLOBALG.A.P. accreditation bodies, and to all benchmarked scheme and benchmarked checklist owners. You can ask us to add selected persons to the mailing list or to send these technical news releases to all of your registered staff by sending your request to Valentin Pazachev at: pazachev@globalgap.org.

Several of the chapters included have been previously communicated to you and have been added with little or no changes. These are marked with*: Previously communicated: xx-xx 2020.* Chapters with new information have been marked with (NEW) next to the title.

2. INTEGRATED FARM ASSURANCE (IFA)

2.1. GLOBALG.A.P. REMOTE

2.1.1. NEW VERSION OF GLOBALG.A.P. REMOTE – V1.3

Previously communicated: 31 March 2021

As communicated several times in the past, the GLOBALG.A.P. Remote procedure is a work in progress and will receive regular updates as appropriate.

Unfortunately, the COVID-19 crisis and related travel and gathering restrictions have continued far beyond anyone's expectation, thus GLOBALG.A.P. needed to update the procedure to the current circumstances. The new update (v1.3) has been finalized and published on the GLOBALG.A.P. website and came into effect on 1 April 2021.

Version 1.3 includes the following changes:

- Rules for recertification using GLOBALG.A.P. Remote of producers already certified to GLOBALG.A.P. Remote in the previous cycle
- Additional rules for the GRASP risk classification when adding GRASP to an already ongoing IFA or equivalent scheme cycle
- Observing inspections for inspectors in training now possible
- Witnessing inspectors in training using GLOBALG.A.P. Remote now also possible
- CBL Chain of Custody v3 standard and Sustainable Meat Initiative for Dutch CBL V1.0 Modules 1, 2, and 3 add-on now included
- Added clarification for minimal requirement of follow-up on-site inspections for producers classified as medium risk
- Added clarification for extensions of certificates for producers classified as high risk
- Updated checklist upload requirements in the Audit Online Hub (AOH) for Nurture Module assessments conducted using GLOBALG.A.P. Remote
- Included applicability of GRASP general rules, Annex VI

We remain open to additional feedback and will continue to update GLOBALG.A.P. Remote as necessary.

2.2. NEWLY PUBLISHED IFA NATIONAL INTERPRETATION GUIDELINES (NEW)

In 2021 we have published IFA national interpretation guidelines (NIGs) for the following countries so far:

- IFA v5.2 Fruit and Vegetables (FV): Turkey
- IFA v5.2 FV: Tajikistan

For any questions regarding IFA NIGs, please contact ntwg@globalgap.org.

2.3. THE IFA STANDARD IS AN ACCEPTED THIRD-PARTY CERTIFICATION FOR THE NEW WALMART U.S. POLLINATOR HEALTH COMMITMENTS (NEW)

Walmart U.S. announced a commitment to source fresh produce and floral for in-store produce from suppliers that adopt integrated pest management (IPM) practices, as verified by a third-party, *by 2025*. GLOBALG.A.P. is pleased to have achieved acceptance of the IFA standard into Walmart's biodiversity benchmark.

Standards and versions that meet this requirement:

- IFA FV versions 5.3-GFS and above (v5.4-GFS, version 6)
- IFA Flowers and Ornamentals version 5.2 and above (version 6)

The benchmark, conducted in early 2021, includes requirements for IPM prevention, scouting, monitoring, pest identification, economic (action) threshold use, pesticide resistance mitigation, and recordkeeping to evaluate results.

See the press release for more information.

2.4. CLARIFICATIONS FOR IFA V5.3-GFS AND IFA V5.4-GFS (NEW)

Last year GLOBALG.A.P. launched IFA v5.3-GFS and IFA v5.4-GFS to maintain recognition against GFSI benchmarking requirements. Since then, CBs have raised many questions for these IFA-GFS versions. Here we answer most of them to offer clarifications:

- **What is the transition period between IFA v5.3-GFS and IFA v5.4-GFS?**

  IFA v5.4-GFS is planned to reach full GFSI benchmark recognition by November 2021 as long as CBs support GLOBALG.A.P. in collecting the 10 certificates for FV, an Option 2 FV certificate, and 10 Aquaculture certificates for IFA v5.4-GFS. During that time, IFA v5.3-GFS remains GFSI recognized, and CBs can continue to offer IFA v5.3-GFS. There will be a transition period (most likely 3 to 6 months) from IFA v5.3-GFS to IFA v5.4-GFS after the benchmarking process has been completed and v5.4-GFS is fully recognized.

- **IFA v5.4-GFS general regulations part I, section 5.2 d) stipulates that at least 20% of inspections of all registered producer group members/production sites to producers with multisites and groups with high-risk products shall be unannounced. Is this applicable with only one visit?**

  For all producer groups and for Option 1 multisite producers with a quality management system (QMS), the notification period of which producer group members will be inspected/sampled by the CB shall not exceed 48 hours, as in previous versions.

In Option 1 multisite producers with QMS or in Option 2, and when all producer group members/production sites are high risk, 20% of the member/site inspections shall be done completely unannounced (no notification).

The 20% completely unannounced rule cannot apply when the CB conducts only one visit annually. If the CB splits visits into first and second visits annually, at least 20% of the inspections on an annual basis need to be completely unannounced. For example, the first visit could include QMS audit + total number of product handling units (PHUs) + maximum 80% of number of producer group members/production sites. The second visit would be completely unannounced (no notification) to at least the remaining 20% of producer group members/production sites.

- **IFA v5.4-GFS general regulations part II, section 2.1 d): The QMS manager must be independent from sites and producers. Is this possible in a small producer group?**

  Yes, this is possible. The QMS manager is responsible for implementing GLOBALG.A.P. and the QMS for the legal entity. This person cannot be a producer group member or owner of production sites and cannot do internal QMS audits. This person can conduct internal inspections but shall be employed/contracted by the QMS legal entity and not by the producer. A producer can be an internal inspector/auditor as long as they fulfill respective requirements and do not inspect/audit their own work.

- **IFA v5.4-GFS general regulations part III, section 3.2 a) (v): The scheme manager is responsible for reporting on the performance of the CB's QMS for the purposes of management review and subsequent system improvement of the CB.**

  In every CB, the CB's quality manager is responsible for the CB's quality system development, implementation, and maintenance according to ISO/IEC 17065. The scheme manager must report to the management and/or to the quality manager about the performance of the CB's quality system related to GLOBALG.A.P. certification (after Certification Integrity Program or accreditation body's assessments, etc.). CB's management and/or quality manager considers this report for management review and improvements in CB's quality system.

- **IFA v5.4-GFS general regulations part III, section 6.3 d): Verification of the corrective action plan and the implementation of the corrective actions shall be carried out by a person qualified for the respective sub-scope/standard/add-on. Is this person different from the auditor/inspector?**

  This may be the same or a different person provided that they comply with the respective qualification requirements. This person is responsible for reviewing corrective action plans and corrective actions and deciding if nonconformances are closed or not. After this stage, the Certification Body Committee/person making the certification decision is responsible for approving the auditor's/inspector's review and issuing a certificate or applying a sanction.

- **Does IFA v5.3-GFS/IFA v5.4-GFS require the CB to conduct surveillance evaluation in a producer group with only high-risk products?**

  No, there is no such a requirement for producer groups with high-risk products. CBs may split inspection of 100% of producer group members with high-risk products into one, two, or more visits. CBs may choose to assess 100% of members of a producer group with high-risk products with only one annual visit. CBs shall always inspect 100% of members of a producer group with high-risk products before first certification and shall inspect 100% of members with high-risk products annually during the certification cycle (for subsequent evaluations).

  If the CB decides to conduct a surveillance audit, there is no specific number of producers that shall be inspected. The CB is allowed to decide on the number of producers that will be inspected during first surveillance (x producers). In the subsequent inspection, the CB can then inspect 100% of producers with high-risk products minus the number of producers inspected during the previous surveillance inspection (if any).

  Example: A producer group has 25 members, all with only high-risk products (e.g., lettuce). Twenty-five producers were inspected during the initial audit, before the certification. During the certification cycle, the CB is not required to do any surveillance inspections at all. If the CB decides to inspect 5 producers during surveillance, then the CB may reduce the number of producers inspected in a subsequent recertification audit to 20.

- **When a producer changes from IFA v5.2 to IFA v5.3-GFS/IFA v5.4-GFS, is this an initial or subsequent inspection?**

  This shall be handled as a subsequent inspection. However, in this case, CBs shall always inspect 100% members of a producer group with high-risk products before issuing the certificate for **IFA v5.3-GFS or IFA v5.4-GFS**.

- **The changes in IFA 5.4-GFS seem significant. Is a new inspector/auditor witness assessment required?**

  No, there is no requirement for a new witness for any IFA version 5–qualified inspector/auditor. All inspectors and auditors are required to take the IFA v5.4-GFS online training exam prior to conducting inspections/audits.

- **For the auditor sign-off consisting of 3 audits (IFA v5.3-GFS and v5.4-GFS general regulations part III, Annex III.2, section 3.4 d), do these audits count toward the 10 days in management systems required under Annex III.2, 3.1 a)?**

  Yes, as long as the audits conducted are witness assessments of the auditor-in-training. Audits conducted as a document review do not count toward management system auditing days.

- **What is the requirement in IFA v5.4-GFS, 6.1 o) for sending completed checklists and reports to producers?**

    When the producer requests the audit report, the CB shall provide the full CB report and the fully completed inspection/audit checklist, when final, within five business days. Whenever possible, the CB shall use the automatically generated report (including the checklist) from the GLOBALG.A.P. AOH.

2.5. RULES FOR MANAGING EXTENDED CERTIFICATES NOT INSPECTED/AUDITED/ASSESSED AFTER EXTENSION EXPIRED (NEW)

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, there are many cases of certificates extended up to 6 months beyond the valid-to date, never inspected/audited/assessed for the current cycle, although their extension already expired. Please note that in such cases the following rules apply:

1. Extended certificate, extended validity expired and not inspected/audited/assessed or suspended, the CB is asking for a new cycle: this is not allowed as the certificate validity would be too long.
2. Extended certificate, not inspected/audited/assessed or suspended after the extension has expired, the CB is asking for a change of CB: this is not allowed.
3. Extended certificate, not inspected/audited/assessed or suspended after the extension has expired: the producer may be inspected/audited/assessed before the current cycle expires to get a shorter certificate, and the producer will have to be inspected/audited/assessed again for the next cycle. In this case, the CB made a mistake, and the CB will be sanctioned according to the CB sanction catalogue.
4. Extended certificates, not inspected/audited/assessed or suspended, the 12-month cycle left to expire and where the CB started a new cycle: the producer does not have a valid certificate until the next certification decision. In this case the CB made a mistake and will be sanctioned according to the CB sanction catalogue.
5. Extended certificates, not inspected/audited/assessed but suspended after the extension has expired: the producer needs an audit to lift the suspension. If and when this audit is done before the current 12-month cycle expires, the producer will get a certificate with a shorter validity and will have to be audited again for the next cycle. In this case the CB did not make a mistake and will not be sanctioned.

3. CB SANCTIONS CATALOGUE

Previously communicated: 11 May 2021

In consultation with the Certification Body Committee, GLOBALG.A.P. has developed a new normative document: the CB sanctions catalogue. This document includes those non-conformances that are not detected during Certification Integrity Program assessments, but during CB administration processes, customer support questions, CB approvals, etc. This catalogue applies to all GLOBALG.A.P. standards, add-ons, and to approved modified checklist (AMC) benchmarked schemes but does not apply to equivalent benchmarked schemes, unless the equivalent certification scheme owner authorizes GLOBALG.A.P. to apply this catalogue. The CB sanctions catalogue is available on the GLOBALG.A.P. website here and is obligatory since **15 May 2021**.

4. PRODUCE HANDLING ASSURANCE V1.2 ACHIEVES GFSI RECOGNITION (NEW)

GLOBALG.A.P. has successfully achieved recognition against GFSI's Benchmarking Requirements version 2020.1 for the Produce Handling Assurance (PHA) standard. See the press release for more information.

The PHA certification program is a stand-alone food safety certification of post-harvest activities such as cooling, packing, repacking, handling, and storage of crops for human consumption. The PHA standard may be used in conjunction with the GLOBALG.A.P. IFA standard for Fruit and Vegetables, Combinable Crops, and Hop, or with the Harmonized Produce Safety Standard. The PHA standard does *not* cover processing activities that significantly transform crops from the original whole state, such as cooking, slicing, or juicing. The PHA standard is available for open-shed operations globally and closed-shed operations globally with the exception of geographical Europe and Russia.

Frequently asked questions are available here.

CBs may apply for the standard scope addition to begin offering the PHA standard by sending the application form available in the CB Extranet to terheggen@globalgap.org or pazachev@globalgap.org. CBs already approved for PHA v1.2 do not need to reapply.

5. HARMONIZED PRODUCE SAFETY STANDARD V1.2 CONTINUES GFSI RECOGNITION (NEW)

The Harmonized Produce Safety Standard (HPSS) continues to maintain GFSI recognition after successful benchmarking against GFSI's Benchmarking Requirements version 2020.1. HPSS includes verbatim the Produce GAP Harmonization Initiative's Harmonized Standards, offered by GLOBALG.A.P. as a streamlined, food safety–only, Food Safety Modernization Act Produce Safety Rule–aligned, good agriculture practices standard.

HPSS v1.2 is already mandatory. CBs and producers do not need to take further action.

See the press release for more information.

6. ADD-ON-RELATED UPDATES

6.1. COOP ITALIA PESTICIDE TRANSPARENCY ADD-ON V1.0

6.1.1. COOP ITALIA PESTICIDE TRANSPARENCY ADD-ON V1.0 PUBLICATION

Previously communicated: 1 April 2021

On 1 April, GLOBALG.A.P. published the Coop Italia Pesticide Transparency add-on.
Coop Italia has developed this add-on in order to monitor the absence of use of active ingredients eliminated in 2019 from the Coop Italia supply chain in a more efficient manner. This add-on will now be assessed together with GRASP and GLOBALG.A.P. IFA or an equivalent scheme.

Coop Italia Pesticide Transparency add-on is applicable to all producers participating in the Coop supply chain with products supplied under the Coop brand.

Further information about the add-on including the normative documents and a list of approved CBs is available at GLOBALG.A.P. website.

CBs interested in being authorized for the assessment of Coop Italia Pesticide Transparency add-on shall apply for a scope extension to GLOBALG.A.P. CB Administration team at radoslavov@globalgap.org.

Validity:
Coop Italia Pesticide Transparency add-on v1.0 is **obligatory for Coop Italia suppliers from 15 April 2021**. CBs may begin conducting Coop Italia Pesticide Transparency add-on assessments after approval.

Documents:
The Coop Italia Pesticide Transparency add-on general rules specifications, checklist, and Pesticide Transparency List are available in the document center as well as with direct access through Quicklinks on the add-on page on GLOBALG.A.P. website.
Documents are available in English and Italian.

Main characteristics of Coop Italia Pesticide Transparency add-on general rules specifications:

- Coop Italia Pesticide Transparency add-on v1.0 is only applicable to fruit and vegetables.

- CBs need to be approved for GRASP and IFA or an equivalent scheme to be eligible carry out assessment to the Coop Italia Pesticide Transparency add-on.

- Producers shall be registered in the GLOBALG.A.P. database using scheme ID 208468.

- There is no additional training required for auditors, inspectors, or in-house trainers.

- It is required to upload fully completed assessment checklists with justifications to the GLOBALG.A.P. database. Use of the AOH will become mandatory when available.

- The add-on visibility in the GLOBALG.A.P. database is limited to the GLOBALG.A.P. Secretariat, Coop Italia add-on Observers and the respective CB.

- Producer fees for this add-on will be charged in addition to the normal registration and certificate license fees for the IFA standard (see general GLOBALG.A.P. fee table) and GRASP.
    - Add-on annual fees for producers:
        - Option 1 – €30
        - Option 2 – €130 per group + €10 per producer group member.

    Producer groups shall pay fees only for the first 500 members, i.e., a maximum of €5130 unless they add new producer group members mid-cycle. Producer groups (including those with more than 500 members) who enter new producer group members in the letter of conformance after it has been issued and before the renewal – i.e., during the validity of their current letter of conformance – will be invoiced at €10 for each producer group member added.

Application process for CBs to carry out assessments to the Coop Italia Pesticide Transparency add-on:

1. Send a signed letter of intent to apply for the Coop Italia Pesticide Transparency add-on to Valentin Radoslavov (radoslavov@globalgap.org) to begin the onboarding process.

2. A Coop Italia Pesticide Transparency add-on assessment decision follows the principles of the GLOBALG.A.P. general regulations, i.e., assessment reports shall be reviewed by a person independent from the assessor and with inspector/auditor qualification. This defines the minimum number of qualified staff members needed by the CB.

3. CB shall pay the scope add-on scope extension fee: €500, see GLOBALG.A.P. general fee table.

4. Once the application is approved and the fee is paid, the GLOBALG.A.P. Secretariat and the CB will sign an agreement on extension to include the Coop Italia Pesticide Transparency add-on v1.0. Afterwards, GLOBALG.A.P. will grant access to the database and the CB may assign its auditors/inspectors to the add-on.

Please send questions to standard_support@globalgap.org.

6.1.2. CHANGES TO THE COOP ITALIA PESTICIDE TRANSPARENCY ADD-ON CHECKLIST

Previously communicated: 28 April 2021

Hereby we would like to inform you about two changes made to the Coop Italia Pesticide Transparency add-on checklist.

These changes relate to two control points:
1. CIPT 4 is changed from Major Must to Minor Must
2. CIPT 5 has now a reference value for maximum residue traces (<0.01mg/kg)

The new edition of the Coop Italia Pesticide Transparency add-on checklist including these changes is available in the GLOBALG.A.P. document center and on the add-on page on the GLOBALG.A.P. website. Please make sure to use the latest edition of the checklist during the assessments.

The change in CIPT 4 has been a mistake in the control point compliance level and in case the CBs have conducted any assessments, we kindly ask that you update the report to display the correct compliance level. We apologize for any inconvenience caused.

Both changes apply retroactively from **15 April 2021**.

6.2. Q&A ON THE NURTURE MODULE V11.2-2 UPDATE

Previously communicated: 12 April 2021

We have received several clarification requests on the recent update of the Nurture Module, which we decided to summarize in a communication.

1. **Does the Producer Confirmation Form (PCF) remain a valid method to confirm Nurture producers?**
    Yes, primary suppliers (PS) may choose to continue using the PCF also after 1 April 2021 to confirm Nurture Module producers. Additionally, all PCFs issued before 1 April 2021 still remain valid and can be accepted by CBs.

2. **What form should the producer confirmation in v11.2-2 take?**
    PS may continue using the old PCF or may inform the CB by e-mail. The confirmation shall always be in written form and cannot be given verbally. Any file types for the confirmation are accepted (Excel, Word, PDF, etc.) as long as the confirmation is received directly by the CB from the PS.

3. **Do I (the CB) have to upload the confirmations for v11.2-2 certificates in the database?**
    No, for certificates issued according to the Nurture Module v11.2-2, the upload of the confirmation in the database is no longer mandatory.

4. **What to do if the confirmation from the PS does not arrive on time?**
    Because Nurture Module assessments and IFA audits/inspections have to be done simultaneously and by the same assessor and CB, there are two possibilities:
    a) CB may postpone the IFA + Nurture Module assessment until the producer is confirmed
    b) Or CB may conduct only the IFA inspection/audit. In this case, the IFA + Nurture Module assessment shall be repeated when the producer is eventually confirmed, to also add the Nurture Module certificate.

5. **Should the CB contact the PS directly for the confirmation?**
    No, under the new Nurture producer confirmation process, it is not the responsibility of CBs to request the lists with confirmed producers, either in part or in full, from Tesco primary suppliers. Tesco expects that, at the start of a growing season, Tesco primary suppliers will actively share lists of producers with the relevant individual CB, where the producers are to be certified by that CB.

6. **What does the "start of growing season" mean?**
    PS have own planning phases and will usually send the producer confirmation list to the CBs at once during this planning phase. For CBs "start of growing season" simply refers that confirmation shall be received prior to (re-)certification assessment.

7. **Should the sanction form be sent for non-Nurture crops to Tesco and the PS?**

Sending sanction forms for detected Major Must and QMS non-conformances at Nurture Module producers remain obligatory in Nurture Module v11.2-2 (ref. Nurture Module scheme rules 9.2). In case the non-conformance is raised only against a non-Nurture crop *and* the CB determines that the non-conformance is an incidence and not a systematic failure that could not affect the Nurture crops, the CB does not have to send the sanction form.

8. **Is there a new online exam for Nurture Module assessors for 11.2-2?**

Nurture Module assessors that already passed the exam for any update of Nurture Module v11, *do not* need to pass it again. However, assessors that switch CBs and new assessors approved for the first time still have to pass the online exam before their witness assessment. The online exam has undergone a minor revision to address the changed requirements in Nurture Module v11.2-2.

9. **What happens to other Nurture Module in-house trainers from the same CB that did not participate in the Nurture Module v11.2-2 update training?**

Due to limited seats, the participation at the training was limited to 1 person per CB. Additional Nurture Module in-house trainers (IHTs) from each CB that could not participate need to be trained internally on the Nurture Module v11.2-2 update by the IHT that participated to maintain their IHT qualification. For this GLOBALG.A.P. has recorded one of the update trainings, which can be viewed here.

10. **How do primary suppliers identify the CB that will assess the producer?**

The producer shall inform the primary supplier which is the CB chosen amongst those approved by Tesco. CB contact details may be found on the GLOBALG.A.P. website or be provided by the producer.

11. **Can I (the CB) accept a confirmation when it is provided by the producer (e.g., the producer shows an e-mail from the PS)?**

No, the confirmation shall be received directly by the CB from the PS. Accepting the confirmation via the producer is against the Nurture Module rules.

12. **Which checklists shall I (the CB) upload for Nurture Module v11.2-2?**

In v11.2-2 the requirement to upload the checklist with the results as observed on the day of the assessment *no longer applies*. Instead, CBs shall upload the checklists as per the current AOH rules. The CB shall upload checklists for all (re-) certification, unannounced, and surveillance assessments to the AOH. We would like to remind that the Nurture Module checklist consists of the relevant IFA checklists and of the additional Nurture Module control points and compliance criteria.

6.3. AH-DLL GROW ADD-ON V3.0: UPDATE OF ANNEX DOCUMENTS (NEW)

Additional clarifications:

- The following companies have been added to the list of service providers: Agarica and Banken.
- Parallel production/Parallel ownership is not specifically addressed in the AH-DLL GROW checklist but is checked under IFA. Therefore, the AH-DLL GROW add-on assessment shall always be carried out with the IFA inspection/audit and never on its own.
- According to the AH-DLL GROW checklist v3.0 (clauses 2.4 and 2.5), the producer shall have evidence of at least one microbiological analysis per crop. The analysis may have been conducted during the previous season as long as the results of the analysis are not more than 12 months old.

Previously communicated: 15 April 2021

Kindly note that an update has been done to the AH-DLL GROW add-on annex documentation (where the risk classification per crop per module is indicated) and shall be used with immediate effect.

Where to find the updated AH-DLL GROW annex documents:
These updated documents are available in the document center on the GLOBALG.A.P. website: Click here to get to the latest uploaded documents.

Valid version:
The updated annexes still apply to AH-DLL GROW v3.0, but with the validity date 13 April 2021.

Changes:
The risk classification of potatoes (for the module on residue monitoring) was changed to "low-risk" for NL/BE and for the EU.

Applicable Languages:
English, Dutch, Spanish, French

6.4. GRASP

6.4.1. GENERAL RULES EDITION UPDATE 1.2

Previously communicated: 29 April 2021

After having detected some mistakes in the last GRASP general rules version we made some minor corrections:

- 2.2 Supporting documents: Implementation guideline deleted (not available anymore)
- 5.2 e) Document for the protection of personal data deleted (not available anymore)
- Annex V, 5.5: One example deleted (was confusing for assessors)
- Across the document: Option 3 and Option 4 added

As of today, all twelve translations (en, de, es, it, fr, nl, vi, pl, pt, tr, el, ru, ja) have been uploaded in the document center as edition 1.2. The GRASP upload sheet is going to be updated for all these languages as well.

Further corrections and clarifications (for example about the scope of subcontractors' assessment) will be issued at another point in time.

For further questions, please, do not hesitate to contact us at:
standard_support@globalgap.org.

6.4.2.   CLARIFICATION ON THE DEFINITION OF SUBCONTRACTORS (NEW)

Definition of subcontractor in GRASP:
Subcontractor: The entity furnishing labor, equipment, and/or materials to perform specific farm operation(s) under contract with the producer (e.g., harvesting produce, spraying and picking fruit).

Types of subcontractors under the scope of GRASP:
Any subcontractor that provides farm labor (including farm labor and equipment, farm labor and material, farm labor, material, and equipment) for the *main farming activities* of agricultural production in the premises of the farm or product handling unit will be subject to GRASP. "Main farming activity'' refers to those activities directly related to the production of the product (e.g., including pruning of the fruit trees, but excluding farm barn building).

Types of subcontractors outside the scope of GRASP:
Any subcontractor related to the agricultural production but that does not provide (labor) to the main farming activities of agricultural production.

Obligation of producer with subcontractors outside the scope of GRASP:
When the subcontractor is not in the scope of GRASP but the subcontracted activities or provided product/service requires the presence of staff of the subcontractor in the premises of the farm, the producer shall provide an "awareness" to the subcontractor that the producer does not tolerate force labor, child labor, harassment, and no compliance with local laws to any commercial partner and that any non-compliance on these topics will be a cause to end the commercial relationship immediately.

Awareness means notice, warning, or information.

Evidence of awareness: The GRASP assessor shall check documented evidence (e.g., document given to the subcontractor, contract clause included) of notice at the entrance of the farm and in the visitor's entrance.

Possible decision tree process for GRASP assessors defining subcontractors for GRASP assessment:
Is the subcontracted activity/service providing "farm labor" (farm labor + equipment, farm labor + material, farm labor + material + equipment)?

> **NO => excluded from GRASP but subject to awareness** (e.g., IT services, electricity repair services)
> **YES => may be included in GRASP** (goes to next question)

Is the activity/service provided by the subcontractor directly related to the main farming activities of agricultural production in the premises of the farm or PHU?

> **NO => excluded from GRASP but subject to awareness** (e.g., staff of security company fixing buildings at the farm)
>
> **YES => may be included in GRASP** (goes to next question)

Is there additional farm labor involved besides the subcontractor signing the contract (i.e., additional workers other than the one performing subcontracted activity)?

> **NO => excluded from GRASP but subject to awareness** (e.g., transportation subcontractor drives the truck and loads the boxes on the truck)
>
> **YES => included in GRASP** (e.g., transportation subcontractor hired drivers and a crew to load the boxes on the truck)

6.4.3.   NEWLY PUBLISHED GRASP NIGS (NEW)

In 2021, we have published GRASP NIGs for the following countries so far:

GRASP 1.3.1-i: Thailand, Sao Tomé and Principe

GRASP 1.3-1-i updated NIGs: Austria, Belgium, Brazil, Bulgaria, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, Faroe Islands, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Guinea Bissau, Hungary, India, Italy, Ivory Coast, Kenya, Kosovo, Mexico, Moldova, Morocco, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Peru, Portugal, Russia, Serbia, Slovenia, Switzerland, Turkey, UK, Ukraine, USA, Uruguay, Vietnam, Zimbabwe

For any questions regarding GRASP NIGs, please contact Anita Britt via graspnig@globalgap.org.

6.4.4.   CHANGES TO THE GRASP DATA ACCESS RIGHTS (DAR)

Previously communicated: 11 May 2021

GLOBALG.A.P. has modified the data access rules for some GRASP-related data. **Users in the data access group "Public"** (meaning any user of the GLOBALG.A.P. database without a personalized account) **will have access to basic details of the GRASP assessment and the GRASP assessed producer.**

The data becoming visible to the public:
- Standard version: Currently GRASP v1.3-1-i
- CB conducting the GRASP assessment
- GRASP assessment number (generated through the GLOBALG.A.P. database)
- Assessment status: GRASP assessed
- Assessment option: 1, 2, 3, 4
- For producer groups:
  - Product: In Option 2 and 4, the products of the producer group members included in the GRASP assessment
  - Number of GRASP internally assessed producers
- Assessment conducted remotely: Yes/No
- Product handling: Yes/No

This change of data access rights will enter into force on 16 August 2021 and the GLOBALG.A.P. IT systems will be adjusted accordingly. Producers who do not agree with that change may cancel their contract according to the sublicense and certification agreement (section 13, "Parts and Alterations/Amendments of this Agreement"). However, in order to obtain and to maintain their GRASP proof of assessment, producers need to agree to this change. Please inform your clients about the update in the data access rights within a period of 4 weeks at the latest.

The access rights of the two other access groups "GRASP observer" and "GRASP status observer" remain unchanged. The data access rules document is published on the GLOBALG.A.P. website.

For further questions, please, feel free to contact customer_support@globalgap.org.

6.5.   CHANGED LINK TO THE GLOBALG.A.P. PLUS ADD-ON ONLINE TRAINING

Previously communicated: 11 May 2021

The online training courses that GLOBALG.A.P. PLUS add-on inspectors and auditors are required to take for their approval are hosted on the separate eLearning system Diversey, not owned or managed by GLOBALG.A.P.

Following some technical challenges over the last week, the eLearning system was not working, and CBs have been unable to access the platform. The IT team at the platform have identified the issue and fixed it.

To resolve this issue, the team at Diversey created a new URL and SSL certificate. As a result, the URL to access the course is now changed.

Please access your learning via this updated URL
https://elearning.sqmsv.com/learn/mycourses (all other login steps remain the same)
All your previous user registrations and data is still fully intact and hosted on this new URL.

We have uploaded the updated registration guide for the eLearning system to the CB Extranet, where it can be found attached to the GLOBALG.A.P. PLUS add-on:

Please remember to send completion certificates for the online training to Valentin Pazachev pazachev@globalgap.org for validation.

6.6. MONTHLY REPORT TO CBS PARTICIPATING IN THE IMPACT-DRIVEN APPROACH TO SUSTAINABILITY ADD-ON AND MODULE FOR FLOWERS AND ORNAMENTALS (NEW)

As of May 2021, GLOBALG.A.P. sends a monthly report informing CBs participating in the Impact-Driven Approach to Sustainability (IDA) add-on and module of which producers are actively sending the complete set of IDA datapoints every month. This is one element of compliance (general rules specifications, section 5.2.1 (a) for the IDA add-on and section 5 for the IDA module):

> *The assessment includes checking for a) reliability of digitally registered data against farm conditions, including records kept at farm level and ways in which data is collected and recorded, b) compliance of the control points of the IDA module, and c) a confirmation that the producer digitally registered the data through the FMS for GLOBALG.A.P. on a monthly basis, as required in the control points.*

With this information it will be possible for the CBs to keep updated status of the producers and to act in a timely manner in case a producer does not meet the requirements (section 6.2, "Sanctions" in both the IDA module and add-on general rules specifications):

> *If data has not been shared for a month via the FMS with GLOBALG.A.P., the CB/VB shall send a warning notification to the producer during the following month. If data has not been sent for two consecutive months, at the beginning of the third month the CB/VB shall send another warning notification to the producer. If data has not been sent by the end of the third month, the producer is not compliant and shall receive the status "Product Suspended."*

6.7. IMPACT-DRIVEN APPROACH TO SUSTAINABILITY ADD-ON AND MODULE FOR FLOWERS AND ORNAMENTALS INCLUDED IN GLOBALG.A.P. REMOTE

Previously communicated: 11 May 2021

After consultation with the relevant stakeholders, GLOBALG.A.P. has decided to include the IDA add-on and module in the list of standards/add-ons that may be audited fully remotely using the GLOBALG.A.P. Remote procedure. We hope that this measure helps safeguard the health and well-being of producers, their workers, and CB inspectors and auditors alike.

The CBs may begin carrying out assessments to the IDA add-on and module immediately – from *3 May 2021* after receipt of this communication. The IDA add-on and module will be added to the text of the GLOBALG.A.P. Remote procedure with its next update.

GLOBALG.A.P. Remote applies only when official travel or gathering restrictions are in place in the country or region (where the inspection shall take place) or there is a company policy of the CB or of the producer that is based on an official or reputable source (e.g., the company restricts travel to/from regions identified as high-risk by the national ministry of foreign affairs or the World Health Organization or governmental "requests for citizen cooperation") due to COVID-19. The CB shall keep evidence of the emergency status to justify the use of this procedure.

The current version of GLOBALG.A.P. Remote may be found here.

7. UPDATE ON THE AOH UPLOAD RULES

Previously communicated: 11 May 2021

GLOBALG.A.P. and the Certification Body Committee (CBC) discussed the progress of the AOH and jointly decided to extend the introduction period by 3 additional months, from 15 May 2021 to 15 August 2021. Additionally, GLOBALG.A.P. and the CBC agreed to not increase the percent of audit checklists required to be uploaded during this period. AOH use will continue to not be considered in the CB key performance indicator scoring, and no sanctions for unintentional operational mistakes will be issued during the extended introduction period. However, the content of the checklists (e.g., insufficient or wrong comments, incorrect interpretation of CPCCs) remains subject to the Certification Integrity Program.

Furthermore, from 15 May 2021, GLOBALG.A.P. has begun to strictly enforce that the required percentage of audit checklists be uploaded to the AOH. The following sanctions will apply for CBs that do not meet this obligation:

1. If the number of audit checklists not uploaded per month to the AOH exceeds 10 audit checklists or 5% of total audit checklists required for the month (whichever is lower), 1st Warning shall be issued to the CB. The CB has by the end of the following month to upload the missing audit checklists.

2. If in the consecutive month 10 audit checklists or 5% of total audit checklists required for the month (whichever is lower) are missing, or if the previous missing audit checklists are not uploaded within the deadline, the 1st Warning shall be escalated to a 2nd Warning. The CB has by the end of the following month to upload the missing audit checklists.

3. If for the third month in a row 10 audit checklists or 5% of total audit checklists required for the month (whichever is lower) are missing, or if the previous missing audit checklists are not uploaded within the deadline, the 2nd Warning shall be escalated to a Yellow Card. The CB has by the end of the following month to upload the missing audit checklists.

4. If for the fourth month in a row 10 audit checklists or 5% of total audit checklists required for the month (whichever is lower) are missing, or if the previous missing audit checklists are not uploaded within the deadline, the Yellow Card shall be escalated to a Red Card. The CB has by the end of the following month to upload the missing audit checklists.

The full AOH upload rules have been published by GLOBALG.A.P. as a separate normative document here.

8. GLOBALG.A.P. DATABASE UPDATES

8.1. RULES FOR REPEATING ONLINE EXAMS (NEW)

Many of the standards and add-ons owned or managed by GLOBALG.A.P. include an online exam for assessors/auditors/inspectors. In case an assessor/auditor/inspector fails an exam, different rules for the exam retake apply per standard and add-on. For your convenience we have summarized the current rules for each standard/add-on with an online exam in the table below:

Standard/ Add-on	Included attempts	Additional attempts
IFA	2 attempts	Third attempt under GLOBALG.A.P.'s supervision, fourth attempt after attending an IHT training
CoC	2 attempts	See IFA
PHA	2 attempts	See IFA
GRASP	3 attempts	Fourth attempt under GLOBALG.A.P.'s supervision, fifth attempt after attending an IHT training
Nurture Module	2 attempts	See IFA
AH-DLL GROW	2 attempts	See IFA
SPRING	1 attempt	Additional attempts granted on request
FSMA	2 attempts	Third attempt under GLOBALG.A.P.'s supervision, fourth attempt after retaking the FSMA PSR IHT web training
NON-GM	2 attempts	see IFA
TR4	2 attempts	additional attempts under GLOBALG.A.P.'s supervision

In case the assessors/auditors/inspectors do not have access to the online exams but are sent back to the Masterdata section of the database, they need to activate the relevant pop-up window in their browser.

8.2. OPTION 2 PRODUCER GROUP WITH OWN PRODUCTION

This article addresses the situation when the Option 2 certificate holder (legal entity) has its own production area in the group, i.e., it is also a member. We have made some amendments to the GLOBALG.A.P. database enabling to reflect:

- **Quantities** registered for the producer group as own fields
- **Total number of producers**, counting the producer group also as a producer

For a producer group with own fields, the information will be visible on the online certificate in the annex and in the public search. CBs can update the data via:

- **Web interface:** The new "own field" checkbox is available for each product of the producer groups under *Manage Products > Affiliation*. When the CB *activates this checkbox* by ticking it, it means that the producer group *has own fields and the quantities entered will be displayed* as own field in the certificate and in the search.
- **Product upload sheet**: The following two new attributes will be available in the product upload sheet soon:

Attribute	Value
own_fields_box	0 = no own fields 1 = with own fields
own_fields_box_next	0 = no own fields 1 = with own fields
The values can be updated at any time.	

- **SOAP/API**: The following two new attributes will be available in the API:

Attribute	Value
own_fields	0 = no own fields 1 = with own fields
own_fields_next	0 = no own fields 1 = with own fields
The values can be updated at any time	

The new features are planned to be deployed on 17 June 2021.

The CBs shall update the information where necessary (select the information "own fields" and enter the quantity of the producer group's own cultivation) in the database by 17 August 2021.

9. ADDITIONAL UPDATES

9.1. GLOBALG.A.P. PRODUCT LIST UPDATE (NEW)

There have been some updates to the GLOBALG.A.P. product list.

The latest version of the GLOBALG.A.P. product list (v5.11, February 2021) is available on the GLOBALG.A.P. website: GLOBALG.A.P. product list.

- **The Crops Base scope is defined more clearly by adding the following under clause 1.1:**
  Also, GLOBALG.A.P. certification is not possible for crops used solely for their therapeutic, medicinal, or recreational purposes.

Medicinal purposes are defined as follows: Any plant used with the specific intent of treating a specific physical illness, disease, and/or mental distress, including recreational use.

Additionally, products for recreational use (e.g., tobacco, betel, opium poppy, marijuana, etc.) are not covered under the GLOBALG.A.P. scope.

- **Section 1.1.1 – Note 5**: Update current note to clarify that the sprouting process (no matter the age of the plants) is not covered under the GLOBALG.A.P. scope.

- **Table 1:** Physalis/Cape Gooseberries [ID 93 (FV) and ID 573 (PPM)] is no longer classified as a high-risk crop.

- **Section 4 – Improve wording for better clarification of applicable products covered under the Crops for Processing (CfP) scope:**

  Crops for Processing include all those crops listed in the product list under the sub-scopes Fruit and Vegetables, Combinable Crops, and Green Coffee, grown in a controlled production process, but that will be further processed (with a kill-step applied by the processor) and not consumed fresh. For example:
  - *Fruit and vegetable plants that will be canned, cooked, frozen, juiced*
  - *Combinable crops used for human food or for feed*
  - *Green coffee (ID 172) (only up to harvest, no processing)*

Table I – Sub-scope Plant Propagation Material: The following new products in Table I are already active in the GLOBALG.A.P. database and can be used with immediate effect.

New Product	Identification Number (ID)
Safflower	100909

Table II – Sub-scope Combinable Crops: The following new products in Table II are already active in the GLOBALG.A.P. database and can be used with immediate effect.

New Product	Identification Number (ID)
Tequila Plants	100905
Safflower	100909

9.2. INSPECTOR/AUDITOR TRAINING ON USE OF INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY– SPANISH VERSION

Previously communicated: 12 March 2021

On 8 February 2021 we informed you that GLOBALG.A.P. has developed a 30-minute recorded training that is mandatory for *all* inspectors/auditors approved for the IFA v5.3-GFS, IFA v5.4-GFS, PHA v1.2, HPSS v1.2 standards as well for those that plan to conduct IFA v5.2 inspections/audits using the GLOBALG.A.P. Remote procedure. We have now translated this training into Spanish. For further details on the training, please refer to the communication from 8 February 2021.

The recording can be watched here.

9.3. LAUNCH OF THE GLOBALG.A.P. AUDITOR IDENTIFICATION NUMBER AND UPDATES TO THE GLOBALG.A.P. CERTIFICATION BODY ADMINISTRATION TOOL

Previously communicated: 31 March 2021

With a communication on 4. January 2021, which was repeated in the Technical News issue 1/2021, section 6, we informed you that GLOBALG.A.P. is developing a unique identification number for each approved GLOBALG.A.P. inspector and auditor – GAIN – that would soon be launched in the Certification Body Administration Tool (CB-AT). The GAIN and several other changes to the CB-AT have been deployed on 31 March 2021.

The further changes that will be implemented are:
- (Re-)Approval of inspectors/auditors by GLOBALG.A.P. (more details in Technical News issue 1/2021 – chapter 6).
- Fixes to various issues experienced by CB-AT users (more details in Technical News issue 1/2021 – chapter 7.4).

Due to the changes, the CB-AT user's guide has been updated. Please make sure to review it here. The rules for the use of the GAIN are defined in the Technical News issue 1/2021, section 6, and will be included in the updated user's guide.

For all questions regarding CB-AT, please use the "Contact Us" function in the system.

9.4. NEW E-MAIL ADDRESS FOR CB TRAINING–RELATED QUESTIONS AND INQUIRIES (NEW)

Please note that we have created a new e-mail address for CB training related organization matters: cbtraining@globalgap.org. You can also use this e-mail to send requests for CB trainings as well as any question/issues related.

9.5. LICENSED FARM ASSURERS WISHING TO BECOME VERIFICATION BODIES (NEW)

- The process by which licensed farm assurers may become approved verification bodies (VBs) is described in the localg.a.p. Primary Farm Assurance (PFA) general rules version 5 October 2019, section 8.2. However, for the sake of maintaining a clear list of active VBs, we will request the applicant VB to additionally supply documented proof (e.g., confirmation letter) that there is a demand/market (e.g., retailer/buyer) that accepts localg.a.p. PFA in the particular country.
- This additional requirement shall become obligatory with this Technical News and will apply to the clause from the localg.a.p. PFA general rules below:

Copied clause 8.2: Licensed Farm Assurers (Verification Bodies):

a) *Licensed Farm Assurers may also conduct PFA assessments only if they are successfully approved by the GLOBALG.A.P. Secretariat as VBs and if the applicable market accepts assessments being done by the VB.*

b) *To become a VB, applicants must first follow the Farm Assurer application process, be successfully approved by the GLOBALG.A.P. Secretariat, and pay the relevant Farm Assurer fees as per latest "GLOBALG.A.P. Fee Table."*

c) *The licensed Farm Assurer then applies to be approved as a VB whereby the next steps are required:*

   (i) *Submit a localg.a.p. PFA letter of intent to the GLOBALG.A.P. Secretariat (see Annex 6)*

   (ii) *Follow a GLOBALG.A.P. database training for producer registration and checklist uploading*

   (iii) *Register in the GLOBALG.A.P. database the names of the Farm Assurers that will conduct the PFA assessments*

   (iv) *Scope extension fee for VBs is included in annual Farm Assurer license fee*

   (v) *The VB shall also take into consideration the clause on liability of the latest GLOBALG.A.P. license and certification agreement (LCA) and provide sufficient evidence, where applicable.*

d) *In all cases, the CB or the VB shall assign a contact person for the localg.a.p. PFA program. If an in-house trainer is assigned to train new inspectors (assessors) or VBs against the PFA standard, this shall be communicated to the GLOBALG.A.P. Secretariat.*

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Sincerely,

GLOBALG.A.P. Certification Body Administration, Benchmarking, and Compliance Team