Nepal Good Agriculture Practices (GAP) Scheme: Fruits and Vegetables
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THE NEPAL GAP SCHEME ON GOOD AGRICULTURE PRACTICES (GAP) FOR FRUITS AND VEGETABLES

INTRODUCTION

Food safety has gained increasing importance over the years due to its significance both from health and economic perspectives. Production of safe food is essential for protecting consumers from the hazards of food borne illnesses and is important both in the domestic food business as well as for increasing competitiveness in export markets. Hazards may occur at different stages of the food chain starting right from the primary production such as residues above permitted levels, microbial contaminants, heavy metals and others. It therefore becomes important to address food safety right from food production at farm level. Implementing Good Agriculture Practices during on-farm production and post-production processes resulting in safe agricultural products is of immense importance for assuring a safe food supply.

Good Agricultural Practices (GAP), as defined by FAO, are a “Collection of principles to apply for on-farm production and post-production processes, resulting in safe and healthy food and non-food agricultural products, while taking into account economic, social and environmental sustainability”.

Many importing countries as well as domestic buyers especially organized retail are requiring producers to implement GAP as a pre-requisite for procurement to ensure quality and safety of their produce. In addition, implementing GAP also helps promote sustainable agriculture and contributes to meeting national and international environment and social development objectives. It has been documented that implementation of GAP encourages promotion of optimum use of resources such as pesticides, fertilizers, and water, and eco-friendly agriculture. Its social dimension would be to protect the agricultural workers’ health from improper use of chemicals and pesticides.

In SAARC, many of the countries have not adopted GAP and do not even have an institutional infrastructure for supporting the same in terms of standards as well as their implementation, certification and accreditation. Most of the food safety standards are focused towards end products. It is therefore important to support the countries of the Region in development of standards on GAP as well as a certification and accreditation mechanisms to enable the implementation and verification of GAP. It is a particularly opportune time to promote GAP when second generation of reforms in agriculture in the region is focused on both by the government and the agro-processing industry of countries. With a common standard as a basis for SAARC Region, it will also help to promote regional trade.

With the above background, FAO, on request of some countries of SAARC, is implementing a regional project on “Development of Standards and Scheme for Good Agriculture Practice (GAP) Implementation and Certification in countries of SAARC” under which it has developed a common standard SAARC GAP for the horticulture sector as a basis for GAP
in the region along with criteria for certification based on international requirements. This SAARC GAP Scheme which has been developed as a regional scheme can then be adopted as such or adapted by countries to suit their needs. NEPAL adapted this and the scheme is called Nepal GAP.

It is hoped that this will encourage not only increased safety of produce in domestic markets but also increased regional and global trade.

For implementing GAP, it is important to define the standards, identify the MoAD who would be responsible for ensuring implementation of the GAP in the country, and develop the certification system to be followed. It is also important that the certification system takes into account the international requirements for certification bodies as per ISO 17065.

The NEPAL GAP standard has been adapted in relation to food safety, quality, environmental management and workers health, safety and welfare modules which can be implemented individually or in various combinations.

This NEPAL GAP scheme comprises three important areas or parts; Standards for GAP, the structure for implementation in the country and the Certification aspects. These are three parts and it may be noted that the GAP standards can be implemented by the producer without necessarily getting certification. However, in case the producer requires getting his farm certified, Part 3 provides information on the same. Part 2 deals with the role of the government in establishing the structure for GAP implementation and certification in the country. In addition, an Annex covers the list of documents required under the scheme developed. The structure of the documents is as follows:

Part I – The GAP standards or requirements in relation to food safety, quality, environmental management and workers health, safety and welfare

Part II Structure for implementing GAP in a country
   Section 1 – A MoAD
   Section 2 – Governing Structure

Part III Certification of GAP
   Section 1– Certification Criteria (detailing the requirements for on-farm production of fruits and vegetable based on the standards as well as certification body requirements)
   Section 2– Certification Process
   Section 3–Requirements for Certification Bodies
   Section 4 - Rules for Use of Certification Mark

Annex - List of documents needed under the NEPALGAP Scheme

In order to align the scheme to other national and international requirements, various national and international standards such as ASEAN GAP, GLOBALG.A.P., other country GAPS (like IndGAP, PhilGAP), and best practices, prevalent industry standards and related ISO standards and guides have been referred to by FAO while making the SAARC GAP the reference document for the NEPAL GAP.
PART1 GAP STANDARDS

1. OBJECTIVE

The fundamental objective of laying down this standard is to strengthen Good Agriculture Practices (GAP) on fruits and vegetables in Nepal. The challenges currently being faced by Nepal include the absence of standards for good practices in the farming sector. Most of the food safety standards are focused towards end products, whether it is the mandatory technical standards or voluntary standards.

2. PURPOSE

The purpose of this document is to lay down Good Agriculture Practices to be implemented by fruits and vegetables producers to improve the safety and quality of produce while at the same time protecting the environment and safeguarding health and safety of the worker.

3. SCOPE

This standard specifies the requirements of Good Agriculture Practices (GAP) with respect to all types of fresh fruits and vegetables covering activities such as production, harvesting and post-harvest handling of farm produce and pack house operations for produce in case it is packed for sale either for direct human consumption or for further processing for human consumption by food industry.

The standard may be used for all types of production systems, namely conventional production systems where produce are grown in the soil, and hydroponic systems where produce are grown in inert media. Production may occur in the open or in a protected environment.

High-risk products such as sprouts and minimally processed produce such as cut fruits and vegetables are not covered by this standard. The standard also does not provide any basis for certification of either organic products or GMO status (GMO free products) but these products could also be certified as GAP compliant in case GAP requirements were implemented. As a part of the countries regulatory policy growing of GMO is not permitted by this standard.

This standard further categorizes the criteria/requirements, based on their importance, into ‘critical’, ‘major’ or ‘minor’ which are given against each requirement.
4. REFERENCES

Many standards, guidelines and certified systems for GAP from around the world have been used as references to prepare this standard. The main sources of information were:

- ASEAN Secretariat 2006. Good Agriculture Practices (GAP) for production of fresh fruits and vegetables in the ASEAN Region.
- FAO Training Manual, Implementing ASEANGAP in the Fruit and Vegetable Sector: Its Accreditation and Certification (FAOP Publication 2014/02)
- GLOBALG.A.P. - Control Points and Compliance Criteria, Fruit and Vegetables

5. STRUCTURE OF THE STANDARD

5.1 This standard specifies the requirements to be met with respect to good agriculture practices in the farms for production of fruits and vegetables in the form of five modules. The first four are standalone modules and may be implemented depending upon the objective to be met namely food safety, environmental management; produce quality, worker health safety and welfare. A fifth module is on general requirements which are common requirements applicable to each of the four sections and are covered in a separate section so as not to repeat these. Each of the four modules can be used alone or in combination with other modules. This enables progressive implementation of GAP module by module based on individual country/ producer priorities. A comparison of the requirements in each module is given in Annex 2.

As a policy of the country all modules has to implemented and certified together, stand alone module certification is not permitted in NepalGAP

5.2 Each module is designed as a complete section enumerating criteria/requirements and their levels of control that should be implemented in a farm, whether a single unit or a group of farms coming under a common group with internal management.

5.3 The criteria/requirements have been categorized, based on their importance, into ‘critical’, ‘major’ or ‘minor’.'Critical' requirements are those requirements which are required to maintain the integrity of the produce and failing to adhere to the same may result in a serious food safety incidence due to breach in food safety and product integrity. The requirements which are mandatory and must be followed are classified as ‘Major’. Certain requirements lay down which are important but not essential depending upon the produce category may be classified as ‘Minor’.

Compliance criteria

Critical – 100% compliance shall be compulsory.
Major – 90% compliance shall be compulsory.
Minor – 50% compliance shall be compulsory.

5.4 Annex 2 of this section gives a checklist indicating the requirement and how the same can be verified by either the producer or the auditor. It also has a column where the auditor can make comments and a final column on the compliance status.

6. GLOSSARY

A glossary defining various terms is given at Annex 3.

7. FOOD SAFETY MODULE (FSM)

The purpose of this Module is to minimize harmful effects of production and post-production practices on the safety of the produce. The good agricultural practices for controlling food safety hazards are grouped into ten elements.

7.1 Site history and management

i. Site history shall be assessed to identify the risk of contamination to crops grown from the previous use of chemical and/or biological hazards on the site or on adjoining sites and the same shall be documented. (Major)

ii. Where significant risks are identified, the site shall not be used for production of fresh produce without first taking some action to manage the risk. (Critical)

iii. If remedial action is required to manage any risk, a monitoring programme shall be in place to make sure that contamination to the produce does not occur and records of the same shall be maintained. (Critical)

7.2 Planting material (Propagation Material)

i. If planting material is produced on the farm, a record shall be kept of any fertilizers and/or chemicals used and the reason for usage. The records shall cover the treatments with date, trade name, active ingredient, name of operator, method of application, dosages and reason for its use. (Major)
ii. A document that guarantees seed quality (free from injurious pests, diseases, virus, etc.) shall be in the farm. A record/certificate of seed quality shall be kept stating variety purity, variety name, batch number and seed vendor. (Major)

iii. The planting material shall be free of visible signs of pest and disease. Quality root stock and scion material should be used for in-house propagation or propagation material to be sourced from certified nursery (Government / private nurseries / agricultural institutions / accredited tissue culture laboratories). (Major)

iv. If seeds are treated with additives/pesticides (fungicides, insecticides, biocides and/or others), these shall be approved ones and as per recommended technologies; (Major)

v. If planting material is obtained from another farm or nursery, the name of the farm and date of supply shall be recorded; (Major)

vi. No varieties known to be toxic to humans shall be grown (Major).

7.3 Genetically Modified Organisms (GMO):

i. GMO’s shall not be grown by the Producer. (Critical)

7.4 Fertilizers and soil additives (Plant Nutrient Management and Fertilizer Use).

i. Assessment of the chemical and biological risks related to fertilizers and soil additives used for each crop grown shall be carried out and records of any significant hazards identified maintained (Major);

ii. If any significant hazards are identified, measures shall be taken to minimize the risk of contamination to produce (Critical);

iii. Application of fertilizers and soil additives shall be based upon soil analysis and/or recommendations of technically competent personnel/institutions/authorities or based on own experience (Minor);

iv. Fertilizers and soil additives shall be selected and applied so as to minimize the risk of heavy metal contamination to produce; (Minor)

v. Untreated organic materials shall not be applied where significant risk of contaminating produce is identified. If organic materials are treated on farm, the method of application, date and duration of treatment shall be recorded. If organic material is obtained from outside the farm and there is a significant risk identified, documents shall be available from the supplier to show that the material has been treated to minimize the risk of contamination to produce. (Major)

vi. Untreated human sewage shall not be used for production of fresh produce. (Critical)
vii. The facilities for storage, mixing and loading of fertilizer/soil additives and for composting of organic material shall be located, constructed and maintained in a manner to minimize the risk of contamination to production sites and water sources. (Major)

viii. Records shall be maintained for fertilizers and soil additives detailing the source, product name, date and quantity obtained and also for the application detailing the date, name of product, rate and method of application and name of the operators. (Major)

ix. The inorganic and organic fertilizers shall be stored separate from harvested farm produce (Major).

7.5 Water (Irrigation/Fertigation).

i. The water used for irrigation/fertigation should be free from harmful contaminants. (Major)

ii. Assessment of the source of water used for irrigation, application of chemicals or handling, washing, treating the produce or cleaning and sanitation shall be done at least annually to minimize the risks of chemical and biological contamination and records shall be kept. (Minor)

iii. Where water testing is required to assess the risk of contamination, tests shall be conducted at a frequency appropriate to the conditions impacting on the water supply and records shall be maintained. (Critical)

iv. Where a significant risk is identified, either a safe alternate water source shall be used or the water treated before use. (Major)

v. Untreated or treated sewage water shall not be used during production or for post-harvest handling. (Critical)

vi. The farmer shall maintain irrigation equipment as per manufacturer guidelines /manual. (Minor);

vii. The farmer shall employ adequate measures to prevent flow of water into the fields from undesirable sources like municipal landfill areas, hospital & industry waste dump areas, etc. (Major)

7.6 Chemicals (Plant protection products or other agro and non-agrochemicals)

Chemicals used on the farm can be categorized into agrochemicals that are applied on the farm or produce such as fertilizers, pesticides, seed treatment material, plant growth regulators and additives, and non-agrochemicals such as grease, fuels and oils that are required for other purposes. The requirements for chemicals are as given below:

i. Only pesticides as permitted under country’s regulation shall be used. (Critical)
ii. Chemicals shall be purchased only from registered/licensed suppliers. (Major)

iii. Mixing of two or more chemicals shall not be done, unless recommended by technically competent personnel/institutions/authorities. (Minor)

iv. The dosage as recommended by competent authorities shall be applied and excess chemicals shall not be used. (Major)

v. Surplus chemicals shall be disposed in a manner to avoid contamination to the produce. (Major)

vi. Withholding periods for the interval between chemical application and harvest shall be maintained as per the pre harvest interval mentioned on the label. (Major)

vii. Equipment for applying chemicals shall be maintained in working condition and checked for effective operation by a technically competent person. (Major)

viii. Equipment shall be washed properly after every use and washing water shall be disposed in a manner to avoid contamination to produce. (Major)

ix. Chemicals shall be stored in a well-lit sound and secure structure, which is located and constructed to minimize the risk of contaminating produce and equipped with notices and emergency facilities in the event of a chemical spill. (Minor)

x. Liquid chemicals shall not be stored on shelves above powders. (Major)

xi. Chemicals shall be stored in the original container with a legible label and according to label directions; if chemicals are transferred to another container, the same shall be clearly marked with the name of the chemicals, the dosage to be used and the withholding period. (Major)

xii. Empty chemical containers shall not be reused and shall be collected in a secure place and properly disposed of according to the country’s regulations and in a manner to avoid contamination of produce and the environment. (Major)

xiii. Obsolete or expired chemicals shall be clearly identified and kept in a secure place till disposal. These shall be disposed of through official collection channels or in legal off-site areas. (Major)

xiv. A record of chemicals obtained, detailing the chemicals used, name of the supplier, date and quantity obtained, date of manufacture and expiry. (Minor)

xv. A record of application for each crop shall be maintained giving details of chemical, reason for application, treatment location, dosage, method, date of application and name of operator. (Major)

xvi. A record of chemicals held in storage shall be maintained, detailing chemical name, date and quantities procured and date of complete use or disposal. (Major)

xvii. If chemical residues in excess of MRL are detected, in the market where the product is traded or exported, the marketing of the product shall cease and the cause of contamination
shall be investigated. Corrective actions shall be taken to prevent recurrence and a record kept of the incident and the actions taken. (Major)

xviii. Non-agrochemicals shall be handled, stored and disposed in a manner to avoid any risks to food safety. (Major)

xix. Integrated Pest Management (IPM) if implemented, shall require careful consideration of available pest control techniques and the subsequent integration of appropriate measures to discourage the development of pest population while keeping the use of plant protection chemicals at minimal level. (Major).

xx. Only commercial organic plant protection products that are registered in the country of production shall be used. (Major).

7.7 Harvesting and handling produce

i. Harvested produce should not be placed directly on the soil, or on the floor of the handling, packing or storage areas. (Major)

Equipment, containers and materials:

ii. Equipment, containers and materials that come in contact with produce shall be made of material that will not contaminate the produce and is easy to clean. (Major)

iii. The containers used for storage of chemicals, waste, and other dangerous substances shall be clearly identified and not be used to hold or store produce. (Major).

iv. Equipment and containers shall be regularly maintained to minimize contamination of produce and shall be kept in areas separate from chemicals, fertilizers and soil additives to avoid cross contamination. (Major)

v. Equipment, containers and material shall be checked for soundness and cleanliness before use and cleaned, repaired and discarded as required. (Major)

vi. The producer shall have his measuring devices calibrated at least once per year or as per the legal requirements of the country. (Major)

Buildings and structures:

vii. Building and structures used for growing, packing, handling and storage of produce shall be constructed and maintained to minimize the risk of contaminating produce. (Major)

viii. Grease, oil, fuel and farm machinery shall be segregated from handling, packing and storage areas to prevent contamination of produce (Minor).
ix. Sewage, waste disposal and drainage systems shall be constructed so as to minimize the risk of contaminating the production site and the water supply. (Major)

x. Lights in the packing house or store shall be shatter proof or protected with a shatter proof cover. (Minor)

xi. Where equipment and tools that may be sources of physical hazards are located in the same building as handling, packing and storage areas, these shall be isolated by a physical barrier or not used during the handling and packing of produce. (Minor)

Cleaning and sanitation:

xii. Equipment, tools, containers and materials that may be sources of contamination to produce shall be identified and regularly cleaned and sanitized. (Minor)

xiii. Appropriate cleaning and sanitation chemicals shall be selected to minimize the risk of these chemicals contaminating produce. (Minor)

Animal and pest control:

xiv. House and farm animals shall be kept out of the production site (especially where crops are grown in or close to the ground. and around handling, packing and storage areas. (Minor)

xv. Measures shall be taken to prevent the presence of pests in and around handling, packing and storage areas. (Major)

xvi. Baits and traps used for pest control shall be located and maintained to minimize the risk of contaminating produce. The location of bait traps shall be recorded. (Major)

Personal hygiene:

xvii. Workers shall be trained in personal hygiene practices and training records kept. (Major)

xviii. Written instructions on personal hygiene shall be provided to workers and displayed in prominent locations. (Minor)

xix. Toilets and hand washing facilities shall be available to workers and maintained in a hygienic condition. (Major)

xx. Sewage shall be disposed of in a manner that minimizes of direct or indirect contamination to produce. (Major)
Produce treatment:

xxi. The quality of the water applied to the edible parts of produce shall be equivalent to that of drinking water. (Major)

xxii. Chemicals applied for post-harvest and waxes shall follow the same practices as under the chemical section and shall comply with instructions and recommendations from competent authorities. (Critical)

xxiii. Specific test on produce shall be included if required by importing country. (Minor)

Storage and transport:

xxiv. Produce shall be stored and transported separately from goods that are potential sources of chemical, biological or physical contamination. (Major)

xxv. Produce shall be stored in cool places and overloading should be avoided. Produce should be covered to reduce moisture loss during transportation. (Minor)

xxvi. Containers filled with produce shall not be placed in direct contact with soil, where there is a significant risk of contaminating produce from soil. Pallets, if used, shall be checked for cleanliness, chemical spills, foreign objects and pest infestation and rejected if there is any risk of contaminating produce. (Major)

xxvii. Vehicles used for transporting produce shall be kept clean and maintained in good condition. These shall be checked before loading for cleanliness, chemical spills, foreign objects and pest infestation. (Major)

7.8 Traceability and recall

i. Production sites shall be identified by a name or code and recorded on a site map. (Major)

ii. Packed produce shall be clearly marked with name and identification to enable traceability of the produce to the farm or site where produce is grown. (Major)

iii. A record detailing the date of delivery and destination of each produce consignment shall be maintained. (Minor)

iv. Where produce is identified as contaminated or potentially contaminated, it shall be isolated, but if such identification is made after the produce is sold the buyers or consumers shall be notified immediately. (Critical)

v. The cause of contamination shall be investigated and corrective action taken to prevent its recurrence and a record kept of the incident and the action taken. (Major)
7.9 Training

i. The farmers and workers shall be given sufficient training in the areas of responsibility relevant to good agricultural practices and records of training shall be kept. Some of the aspects that need to be included in any training are:

   a. The proper purchase, handling, storage and use of chemicals, including labeling requirements, selection of chemicals or bio-pesticides, which are approved and recommended by the competent authorities for the crops grown. (Major)

   b. The application of suitable Integrated Pest Management and avoidance of use of inorganic chemicals. (Major)

   c. Information and updates on the National MRLs where the produce is to be traded. (Minor)

   d. The need to test produce for chemical residues at a frequency required by customers or the market. (Major)

ii. The training needs shall be reviewed once a year.

7.10 Documents and records

i. Records of all practices shall be kept for a minimum period of two years or longer, if required by country legislation or customer. (Major)

ii. Out-of-date documents should be discarded and only current versions should be used. (Major)

7.11 Review of practices

i. A review to be carried out at least once a year to identify new or emerging risk related to food safety and actions to correct any deficiencies identified and corrective actions taken. (Major)

ii. A record of the review undertaken and corrective action taken shall be kept. (Major)

OPTIONAL REQUIREMENTS

7.12 Fertilizers and soil additives (Plant nutrient management and fertilizer use)
i. Documents should be made available to demonstrate that application of fertilizers / nutrients (organic or inorganic) is done by a competent/ trained person. (Minor)

ii. A record indicating competence of producers should be maintained to demonstrate their competence and knowledge in determining types and doses of fertilizers in case advisers are absent. (Minor)

iii. Records should be made available to demonstrate that the types and dosages of fertilizers/ nutrients are in tune with the soil test – crop response studies and or recommendations of the State Agriculture Universities (SAU) / National Research Centre (NRC)/other approved organizations, recommendations for the crop. (Minor)

iv. The recommendations on the type and quantity of fertilizers/nutrients being used should be done by a competent qualified advisor. (Major)

7.13 Chemicals (Plant protection products or other agro and non- agrochemicals)

i. It shall be ensured that chemicals are applied correctly by testing produce (in an accredited laboratory) for chemical residues at a predetermined frequency in line with the competent authority requirement of the country where produce is traded. (Minor)

ii. Records for technical authorization of all chemicals applied along with their quantities should be maintained. (Minor)

iii. A documented procedure should be available for correct handling and filling as stated on the label while mixing plant protection chemicals. (Minor)

iv. The application of such formulations should be a manner that usage of chemical that they are economically justified and have minimal adverse impact to the environment. (Minor)

8. ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT MODULE (EMM)

This section deals with good agricultural practices to be implemented in order to minimize harmful effects of production and production practices on the environment. While addressing these, consideration should be given to National Environmental Policy. These practices are grouped into 13 elements.

8.1 Site history and management

i. Sites used for production shall comply with the country regulations that restrict production at high altitudes or steep slope. (Major)

ii. For new sites, the risk of causing environmental harm on and off the site shall be assessed and a record kept of the hazards assessed.
The risk assessment shall take into consideration prior use of a site, the potential impact of crop production and post-harvest handling on and off the site, and potential impact of adjacent sites on the new site. If there is a significant risk to the environment identified, the new site should either not be used for crop production and post-harvest handling or measures to prevent/ minimize these potential hazards shall be taken before use. (Critical)

iii. Highly degraded areas shall be managed to avoid further degradation (Major)

iv. Management of the site activity shall conform to the country requirements for environmental conditions covering air, water, noise, soil, biodiversity and other environmental. (Major)

v. A farm layout map shall be maintained showing the crop production sites, environmentally sensitive or degraded areas (if any), storage and mixing areas of chemicals, water storage, water-course and drains, building structures and roads. (Major)

8.2 Planting material

i. Diseases or pest-resistant planting material shall be selected to minimize the use of chemicals. (Minor)

ii. The planting material shall also be selected based on compatibility with soil type, soil fertility and so that the use of additional nutrient supplying chemicals is avoided. (Minor)

8.3 Soil and substrates (Substrate Management)

i. The production practices selected shall be suitable for the soil type and not increase the risk of environmental degradation. (Major)

ii. Where possible soil maps should be used to plan for crop rotation, or a fallow period to increase soil fertility should be encouraged. (Minor)

iii. Production practices to improve and maintain soil structure as well as soil compaction shall be used to avoid erosion. (Major)

iv. Chemicals used to sterilize soils and substrates may be used and a record shall be kept detailing the site name, name of the product or material, name of the chemicals, the date of application, dosage and method of application and operator’s name. (Critical)

8.4 Fertilizers and soil additives

i. Fertilizers and soil additives shall be applied according to the recommendation of competent authorities or any other competent source and also considering the crop and soil type to avoid the nutrient run-off or leaching. (Major)
ii Facilities for storage, mixing or loading of fertilizer and soil additives and for composting of organic matter shall be located, constructed and maintained to minimize the risk of environmental pollution on and off the site and of water sources. *(Minor)*

iii The equipment used to apply fertilizers and soil additives shall be maintained in good condition and annually checked by a technically competent person. *(Minor).*

iv The application of fertilizers and soil additive shall be recorded detailing the name of the fertilizer or soil additive, location, date, rate and method of application and the operator’s name. *(Major)*

8.5 Water

i. Irrigation shall be based on crop water requirements, availability of water and soil moisture levels. The irrigation system shall be checked and maintained in good condition to ensure its efficiency during irrigation and to minimize wastage of water. *(Major)*

ii. Water collection, storage and use shall be managed in accordance with country regulations if any and a record shall be kept of irrigation use, detailing crop, date, location and volume of water irrigated or duration of irrigation. *(Major)*

iii. To minimize the risk to the environment, any water discharge or wastewater shall be treated. *(Major)*

iv. A water management plan to optimize water usage and reduce waste shall be made available. *(Major)*

8.6 Chemicals (Plant Protection Products and Other Inputs)

i. Farmers or workers need to be trained to a level appropriate to their area of responsibility for chemical application. *(Major)*

ii. Chemicals used for crop protection shall be selected so as to minimize the negative effect on the environment and antagonist organisms of pests and diseases. *(Major)*

iii. Crop protection measures shall be based on the recommendations of competent authorities or a plant protection organization. *(Major)*

iv. The use of chemicals should be minimized by the application of Integrated Pest Management (IPM) and biological control products. *(Major)*

v. Only chemicals obtained from licensed suppliers and approved by a competent authority for the crop grown shall be used. *(Major)*

vi. Chemicals shall be applied according to the label directions and guidance from the competent authority. *(Critical)*
vii. A rotation strategy for chemical application and crop protection measures shall be used to avoid pests and diseases resistance based on information available in the country (Minor)

viii. Appropriate volumes of chemicals shall be mixed to minimize the amount of surplus chemical after application. (Major)

ix. Surplus chemical mixes and tank washings shall be disposed of in a manner that minimizes the risk of environmental harm on and off the site. Empty chemical containers shall be collected and disposed of according to country regulations. (Major)

x. Obsolete chemicals shall be identified clearly, kept in secure places and disposed of through official collection systems. (Critical)

xi. The application of chemicals shall be recorded for each crop, detailing the chemicals’ names, the reason for application, date of application, location, dosage and method of application and name of operator and, where applicable, a record of chemicals held in storage shall be kept detailing the chemicals’ names, date and quantity of purchase and date when completely used or disposed of. (Major)

xii. Chemicals used for post-harvesting and handling produce should be stored and disposed of according to country regulations so as to minimize the risk to environment. (Major)

8.7 Waste Management

i. A waste management procedure shall be documented and followed, which includes identification of waste products generated during production, harvesting and handling produce, using practices to minimize waste generation, to reuse, recycle waste and dispose of waste. (Major)

8.8 Energy Efficiency

i. The use of electricity and fuel should be reviewed to ensure that efficient operation practices are implemented. (Major)

ii. Machine and equipment shall be maintained in good condition to ensure the efficiency of operation and to save energy. (Minor)

8.9 Biodiversity

i. The production plan shall comply with country regulations covering protected plant and animal species and to preserve native plant and animal species, including native vegetation areas, wildlife corridors and vegetation areas on or near the bank of waterways. (Major)

ii. Measures shall be applied to control/protect feral animals. (Minor)
8.10 Air/Noise

i. If an offensive odour, or smoke, dust or noises are generated from production practices, management action shall be taken to minimize the impact on neighboring property and surrounding areas. (Major)

8.11 Training

i. Farmers and workers shall be trained to have appropriate knowledge in their areas of responsibility related to good agricultural practices and training records shall be kept. (Major)

8.12 Documents and records

i. Records of good agricultural practices shall be kept for two years or more in accordance with the country regulations or customer requirements, if any. (Major)

ii. Obsolete documents should be discarded and only the current versions of documents relevant to good agriculture practices shall be in use. (Major)

8.13 Review of practices

i. A review to be carried out at least once a year to identify any new and emerging hazards due to inputs, processes or hazards affecting the environment. (Major)

ii. A record of the review undertaken and the corrective actions taken shall be kept. (Major)

OPTIONAL REQUIREMENTS

8.14 Site history and management

i. Each producer should maintain a management and conservation plan for protecting biodiversity and wildlife impacted due to farming activities which should include baseline audit to understand biodiversity, mention action to avoid damage and deterioration of habitats and details measure to enhance biodiversity on the farm. (Minor)

ii. The producer should have policy and consider improving the environment for the benefit of the local community and flora and fauna. (Minor)

8.15 Soil and substrates (Substrate Management)

i. The producer should participate in substrate recycling programme for substrates where available. (Minor)

ii. There should be written justification available for the use of soil fumigants. (Minor)

iii. A pre-planting interval should be identified and complied with soil fumigation. (Minor)
9. WORKER HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELFARE MODULE (WHSM)

This module addresses the issue of worker health, safety and welfare requirement. The types of hazards encountered by workers include mechanical, chemical, biological, electrical, solar radiation, noise, stress and fatigue and welfare related. The good agricultural practices requirements for controlling hazards to worker health, safety and welfare are grouped into six elements. Any person who works in the farm including, adult family members, permanent, temporary/causal/sub-contracted labour is a worker.

9.1 Chemicals

i. Chemical should be handled and applied by trained workers with appropriate knowledge and skills. (Critical)

ii. Chemicals shall be stored in well lit, sound and secure structures with access permitted to authorize persons only. The storage structures should be such as to minimize the risk of contaminating workers and it be equipped with emergency facilities to deal with cases of a chemical spill. (Major)

iii. Chemicals should be stored in their original containers with legible labels and instructions from competent authorities. If chemicals are transferred to another container the new container shall be clearly marked with the brand name, dosage of use, and withholding period; (Major)

iv. Reuse of empty chemical containers for purposes other than containing and transporting identical products shall not be permitted. (Major)

v. Where there is a significant risk of chemical contamination to workers, material safety data sheets (MSDS) should be available. (Major)

vi. Safety instructions shall be provided to workers and displayed in appropriate and readily accessible places. (Major)

vii. A facility along with first aid measures shall be available and accessible to treat workers contaminated with chemicals and accident. (Major)

viii. Emergency instructions shall be documented and placed in prominent places within the chemical storage area. (Major)

ix. The workers that are handling and applying chemicals or entering newly sprayed sites shall be equipped with suitable protective clothing and equipment. Clothes and protective equipment shall be cleaned and stored separately from crop protection chemicals. (Major)

x. People shall not be allowed access to the sites where chemical are being applied or have just been applied for the appropriate period depending on the type of chemical used and if chemicals have been applied in public areas of public access, the site should be marked with warning sign. (Major)
9.2 Working conditions

i. Working conditions shall be suitable for workers but where hazardous conditions cannot be avoided entirely, protective equipment/ clothing should be provided. (Major)

ii. All farm vehicles, equipment and tools, including electrical and mechanical devices shall be adequately guarded and maintained in good condition to minimize the risk to workers. (Major)

iii. A safety operation manual for operation of equipment, machinery, accessories and handling practices shall be provided to workers and displayed in prominent places. (Major)

9.3 Personal hygiene:

i. Farmers and workers should be trained on personal hygiene practices for ensuring his own health and well-being. The records of training shall be kept. (Major)

ii. Written instructions on personal hygiene practices should be provided to workers and displayed in prominent locations. (Major)

iii. Medical checkup of workers at six monthly intervals shall be done and records kept for 5 years. (Minor)

iv. Toilets and hand and body washing facilities should be readily available and maintained in a hygienic condition. (Major)

v. Sewage shall be disposed of in a manner to minimize the risk of contamination to workers. (Major)

vi. Where employers are to provide health cover to workers, any serious health issue is to be reported to the appropriate authorities. (Major)

vii. Measures should be applied to minimize the access of domestic and farm animals to production sites and around the handling, packing and storage areas. (Major)

9.4 Worker welfare

This is important both for the wellbeing of workers and the productivity of the farm or the processing shed.

i. Workers shall be treated equally in all aspects. (Major)

ii. Workers shall not be exploited because of gender, age, race or other reasons. (Major)

iii. Where possible, living quarters should be suitable for human habitation and contain basic services and facilities including clean food storage areas, designated eating areas, hand washing facilities and drinking water. (Major)
iv. The minimum working age, working hours and minimum wages shall comply with country regulations. Child labour shall not be used (**Critical**)

### 9.5 Training

i. Workers should be informed about the risks associated with health and safety when working at sites. (**Major**)

ii. Workers shall be trained and have appropriate knowledge in areas of their responsibility such as vehicles, tools and equipment operation, accident and emergency response, safe use of chemicals and personal hygiene. (**Major**)

iii. The training needs shall be reviewed once a year. (**Minor**)

### 9.6 Documents and records

i. Records of all practices shall be kept for a minimum period of two years or longer, if required by country legislation or customer. (**Major**)

ii. Out-of-date documents should be discarded and only current versions should be used. (**Major**)

### 9.7 Review of practices

i. All practices affecting health and safety of workers shall be reviewed at least once a year to ensure that they are done correctly and actions should be taken to correct any deficiencies identified. A record of the review undertaken and any corrective actions taken shall be kept. (**Major**)

ii. Actions should be taken to resolve complaints related to worker health, safety and welfare, and records kept on complaints and action taken. (**Major**)

### OPTIONAL REQUIREMENTS

#### 9.8 Worker welfare

i. A member of management should be identified as responsible for workers health, safety and welfare. (**Minor**)

ii. Regular two-way communication meetings should take place between management and workers for which records shall be kept and made available. (**Minor**)

iii. All workers who have contact with plant protection products should be subjected to voluntarily annual health checks. (**Minor**)
10. PRODUCE QUALITY MODULE (PQM)

This module focuses on aspects that affect the produce quality. Produce quality relates to characteristics such as external appearance (colour, texture, shape), internal quality (brix, Total Soluble Solids, turgidity) and hidden quality (nutritional value, shelf life, etc). The producer needs to design its processes to address good agricultural practices to address produce quality. These can be grouped under the following 10 heads:

10.1 Quality plan

A plan shall be maintained on practices that are critical to manage produce quality during the production, harvesting and post-harvesting stages. (Major)

10.2 Planting material

Vegetables and fruits planting material (seeds, rootstock, and scion) shall be obtained from farms or nurseries certified or recognized by the Plant Health Office or other reliable sources to ensure the good quality and freedom from diseases to satisfy market requirement. Records of the same shall be maintained. (Minor)

10.3 Fertilizers and soil additives

Fertilizers and soil additives applications shall be based on the crop grown and recommendations from the competent authority and shall be properly applied to ensure their effectiveness. The facilities used for composting shall be constructed and maintained so as to prevent cross contamination of the crop. Records of application of fertilizers or soil additives shall be maintained giving details of quantity and date of application and the name of person who applied the fertilizers and additives as well as the provider. (Major)

10.4 Water

Irrigation should be based on water requirements of the crop grown, water availability and soil moisture levels. Records detailing the date of irrigation, location, duration and volume of water applied shall be kept. (Major)

10.5 Chemicals

i. Farmers or workers shall be trained to a level appropriate to their responsibility for chemical application. (Major)

ii. Chemicals shall be obtained from licensed suppliers and applied according to label directions or permit issued by a competent authority for the crop grown. (Critical)

iii. Equipment used to apply chemicals should be maintained in good conditions and should be working properly. (Major)
iv. Records shall be maintained, giving the name of chemical, reason for application, date and dosage of application, method of application, weather condition and the name of person who applied the chemicals. (Major)

10.6 Harvesting and handling produce

These include the following aspects:

Harvesting

i. A maturity index is used to determine the appropriate time to harvest produce. Harvesting shall be carried out at the coolest time of the day, namely early in the morning. (Major)

ii. The equipment, containers, liners used shall be suitable, used appropriately for harvesting and shall be cleaned before using. The container shall not be overfilled. Liners should be used to cover the rough surfaces. Containers should be covered to reduce moisture loss. The containers should not be stacked on top of each other unless these are designed to avoid produce damage when stacked. (Major).

iii. Produce shall be placed in the shade and should leave the field as early as possible. (Major)

Handling and packaging produce

iv. Clean water should be used for handling, washing and treatment of produce and the water should be changed regularly to avoid spoilage organisms damaging the produce. (Major)

v. Excessive drops and impacts shall be avoided to minimize mechanical damage to produce. (Major)

vi. Packing and storing shall be under roofs and in cool places. Produce shall not be placed directly on the soil or floor surfaces. (Major)

vii. Produce shall be graded and packed according to the customer or market requirements. (Major)

Storage and transport:

viii. Produce shall be quickly transported to its destination. If there is to be a long wait for transport, produce should be held at the lowest temperature possible. (Major)

ix. Produce shall be covered during transportation and maintained at appropriate temperature to avoid quality loss. (Major)

x. Checking for cleanliness and removing all sources of contamination shall be done. Mixing incompatible produce during transportation shall be avoided. (Minor)
10.7 Traceability and recall system

Produce from different sites (as applicable) should be identified by name or code, and the same should be placed on the containers and suitably recorded.

A record shall be kept of the date of supply, quantity of produce and destination of each consignment. (Major)

10.8 Training

Farmers and workers shall be trained in the area of their responsibility relevant to GAP and a record of training kept. (Minor)

10.9 Documents and records

i. All records of GAP shall be kept for at least two years or longer depending on the countries' legal requirements. (Major)

ii. Out-of-date documents should be discarded and only current versions should be used. (Minor)

10.10 Review of practices

i. All practices shall be reviewed once a year to ensure that they are done correctly and action should be taken to correct any deficiencies identified. A record shall be kept to show that all practices have been reviewed and any corrective actions taken documented. (Major)

ii. Action shall be taken to resolve complaints related to produce quality and a record kept of the action taken related to the complaint. (Major)

OPTIONAL REQUIREMENTS

10.11 Chemicals

i. A documented procedure should be available for correct handling and filling as stated on the label while mixing plant protection products. (Minor)

10.12 Harvesting and handling produce

i. When packed produce are stored on farm, temperature and humidity should be recorded. (Minor)
11. GENERAL REQUIREMENTS MODULE (GRM)

This module contains certain common criteria applicable to the four modules. It also contains criteria for farms that seek to apply for certification.

Section-A (At Farm Level)

11.1 Legal
The land under certification shall either be owned by the applicant, or an agreement between the legal owner of land and the applicant shall be in place granting authorization to applicant to carry out the agricultural operation and certification. (Major)

11.2 Visitor Requirements
Any visitors to the farm or place where operations are being carried out in relation to GAP, shall follow the practices applicable to farm workers to ensure the safety of the produce as well their own safety. (Major)

11.3 Redressal of Complaints
i. All complaints shall be adequately registered and addressed. A record of action taken shall be maintained

ii. Effective complaints handing mechanism shall be available. (Major)

11.4 Site Details
Each farm and production unit shall be referenced on a farm plan or map. (Major)

11.5 Record Keeping and Internal Inspection
All records pertaining to GAP shall be retained for a minimum period of two years, unless required by legislation. (Major)

11.6 Calibration
The producer shall, where applicable, have his equipment calibrated as per the legal requirements of the country. (Major)
Section B (Group Requirements)

This module is applicable only if the growers form a group as a single legal entity to adopt the standard as a group. They would require to not only implement the GAP Standard’s requirements but also shall need to have an internal control system in place. All the requirements stipulated in this arrangement are required to be written in a formal contract accompanied with policies and procedure for the operation of group. The basic requirements to be implemented are as follows:

11.7 Legal requirements

i. Documentation shall be available to demonstrate that the producer group is a registered entity (Major)

ii. Producer group shall have a clearly defined structure to implement GAP and own responsibility for production and management of the produce (Major)

iii. The administrative/management structure of the producer group shall clearly establish relationship among members of the producer group. (Major)

11.8 Written Contract

i. A written signed contract shall be available between each member of the group and the group (legal entity), which shall cover individual details, farm details, obligations (to abide by the requirements laid by producer group and the GAP standard, sanctions in case of non-compliance with GAP/any other internal requirements. (Major)

11.9 Producer Register

i. A register shall be maintained containing details of all the members in the group with their current implementation status which shall include details of producer group, registered planting/production area, crops cultivated details of internal audit and its findings, etc. (Major)

11.10 Structure of Organization

i. The organization structure shall demonstrate availability of appropriate resources to carry out operations as per the GAP Standard. (Major)
ii. The group shall assess key roles and responsibilities for maintaining requirements of the GAP standard. (Major)

iii. The authority matrix for approval and decision making shall be defined. (Major)

11.11 Competency and training to staff

i. The group shall assess knowledge and competency requirement of the key personnel managing the group certification such as the trainer, quality manager, internal auditor, group manager etc. (Major)

ii. The group shall ensure that all staff assigned to operate on GAP certification is well trained and competent and capable of functioning according to requirements. (Major)

iii. The group shall determine knowledge and competency, required training and qualification of designated staff, which shall be well written in line with GAP requirements; shall keep a record on qualifications and training of designated staff. (Major)

iv. The group shall ensure that internal inspectors are trained and evaluated to ensure compliance with audit procedures and interpretation of GAP requirements of internal and surveillance auditor. (Major)

11.12 Quality Manual

i. The group shall develop a Quality Manual to include the scope of certification, the management and internal control, policy and working procedures and policy for member registration and designated members. (Critical)

ii. The Quality Manual shall be periodically reviewed and updated to ensure compliance with GAP/ other requirements of the producer group. (Major)

iii. The group shall ensure that the system of updating information and awareness on developments, dissemination and legislative revision (latest version) in relation to GAP compliance is in place. (Major)

11.13 Document Control

i. 1 All documents are under document control system. (Critical)
ii. There shall be a master list of all documents as required by the GAP Scheme such as the quality manual, working procedures, instructions, record formats and external origin documents. (Major)

iii. Records shall be available to demonstrate effective document control. (Major)

iv. There shall be a procedure for using external origin documents if used as a part of their operational requirement. (Major)

11.14 Complaint Handling

i. A procedure for handling of all complaints regarding GAP shall be available which shall cover complaint receiving, registering, problem identification, causative analysis, solution and follow up (Major)

ii. There shall be a defined timeline for complaint handling. (Major)

iii. Records relating to complaints shall be maintained. (Major)

iv. There shall be provisions to maintain confidentiality, where applicable. (Minor)

11.15 Internal Audit

i. A system to audit the compliance to GAP of each member and compliance to the requirements of the internal control system of the producer group shall be in place. (Critical)

ii. The competency requirement of the internal auditor shall be defined. (Major)

iii. A procedure documenting the internal audit procedure by an internal auditor, review and action taken on finding of internal audit shall be available. (Major)

11.16 Non-Compliances, Corrective Actions and Sanctions

i. A procedure for identifying and recording of corrective actions shall be available and implemented. This shall include root cause analysis of non-compliance, responsibilities and time frame for corrective action. (Critical)

ii. Sanctions and Infringement - Producer group shall have procedures for imposing sanctions on members not complying with requirements. These shall include prompt notification to CB
of suspension or revocation of its registered member. The provision of sanctions and infringement shall be a part of the contract between each producer and producer group. *(Critical)*

iii. All information pertaining to non-compliance, corrective action, and sanctions shall be recorded. *(Major)*

11.17 Product Traceability and Segregation

i. All GAP certified products shall be traceable to each individual registered producer and their farm. Effective systems and procedures shall be in place to reduce the risk of wrong labeling or mixing of GAP with non-GAP product. *(Critical)*

ii. The harvesting area shall be managed for registered produce so that produce are identifiable and traceable from the purchase order through post-harvest handling, storage and distribution. *(Critical)*

11.18 Withdrawal of Certified Product

A system for product recall and withdrawal shall be in place which is annually reviewed. *(Critical)*

11.19 Common Pack house

If the group has one or more common pack house within their farming operation, then every pack house shall require meeting the GAP requirements. *(Critical)*

11.20 Agreement with Buyer

A written agreement shall be entered into between a group and each of their buyers cautioning misuse of GAP certification claim, as applicable. *(Critical)*

11.21 Subcontracting

In case subcontractors are used, a subcontracting procedure shall be in place. *(Critical)*

i. such external services to be in compliance with GAP requirements

ii. Assessment of subcontractor competency and records of the same to be maintained

iii. Subcontractor to operate in compliance with the group’s quality system.
### FOOD SAFETY MODULE

#### 7.1 Site History and Management

**i.** Site history shall be assessed to identify the risk of contamination to crops grown from the previous use of chemical and/or biological hazards on the site or on adjoining sites and the same shall be documented. (Major)

- **Verification Statement:** Site history assessment record

**ii.** Where significant risks are identified, the site shall not be used for production of fresh produce without first taking some action to manage the risk. (Critical)

- **Verification Statement:** Records and visual evidence

**iii.** If remedial action is required to manage any risk, a monitoring programme shall be in place to make sure that contamination to the produce does not occur and records of the same shall be maintained. (Critical)

- **Verification Statement:** Monitoring programme and applicable records

#### 7.2 Planting Material

**i.** If planting material is produced on the farm, a record shall be kept of any fertilizers and/or chemicals used and the reason for usage. The records shall cover the treatments with date, trade name, active ingredient, name of operator, method of application, dosages and reason for its use. (Major)

- **Verification Statement:** Records of on farm planting material treatment

**ii.** A document that guarantees seed quality (free from injurious pests, diseases, virus, etc.) shall be in the farm. A record/certificate of seed quality shall be kept stating variety purity, variety name, batch number and seed vendor. (Major)

- **Verification Statement:** Visual confirmation of planting material

**iii.** The planting material shall be free of visible signs of pest and disease. Quality root stock and scion material should be used for in-house propagation or

- **Verification Statement:** Visual check and certificates
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<tr>
<td>v</td>
<td>If planting material is obtained from another farm or nursery, the name of the farm and date of supply shall be recorded;  (Major)</td>
<td>Traceability records of procured planting material</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vi</td>
<td>No varieties known to be toxic to humans shall be grown (Major).</td>
<td>Varieties identified and records</td>
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### 7.3 Genetically Modified Organisms

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<tr>
<td>i</td>
<td>GMO’s Shall not be grown by the Producer.  (Critical)</td>
<td>Confirmation that no GMO’s grown</td>
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### 7.4 Fertilizers and soil additives (Plant Nutrient Management and Fertilizer Use)

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<td>i</td>
<td>Assessment of the chemical and biological risks related to fertilizers and soil additives used for each crop grown shall be carried out and records of any significant hazards identified maintained (Major);</td>
<td>Risk assessment documentation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ii</td>
<td>If any significant hazards are identified, measures shall be taken to minimize the risk of contamination to produce (Critical);</td>
<td>Measures taken and visual assessment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iii</td>
<td>Application of fertilizers and soil additives shall be based upon soil analysis and/or recommendations of technically competent personnel/institutions/authorities or based on own experience (Minor);</td>
<td>Application records and recommendation</td>
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Fertilizers and soil additives shall be selected and applied so as to minimize the risk of heavy metal contamination to produce (Minor).

Untreated organic materials shall not be applied where significant risk of contaminating produce is identified. If organic materials are treated on farm, the method of application, date and duration of treatment shall be recorded. If organic material is obtained from outside the farm and there is a significant risk identified, documents shall be available from the supplier to show that the material has been treated to minimize the risk of contamination to produce. (Major).

Untreated human sewage shall not be used for production of fresh produce. (Critical).

The facilities for storage, mixing and loading of fertilizer/soil additives and for composting of organic material shall be located, constructed (eg: compost pits) and maintained in a manner to minimize the risk of contamination to production sites and water sources. (Major).

Records shall be maintained for fertilizers and soil additives detailing the source, product name, date and quantity obtained and also for the application detailing the date, name of product, rate and method of application and name of the operators. (Major).

The inorganic and organic fertilizers shall be stored separate from harvested farm produce (Major).

The water used for irrigation/fertigation should be free verify.

| iv | Fertilizers and soil additives shall be selected and applied so as to minimize the risk of heavy metal contamination to produce (Minor) | Application records |
| v | Untreated organic materials shall not be applied where significant risk of contaminating produce is identified. If organic materials are treated on farm, the method of application, date and duration of treatment shall be recorded. If organic material is obtained from outside the farm and there is a significant risk identified, documents shall be available from the supplier to show that the material has been treated to minimize the risk of contamination to produce. (Major) | Documentary evidence of compliance |
| vi | Untreated human sewage shall not be used for production of fresh produce. (Critical) | Visual inspection |
| vii | The facilities for storage, mixing and loading of fertilizer/soil additives and for composting of organic material shall be located, constructed (eg: compost pits) and maintained in a manner to minimize the risk of contamination to production sites and water sources. (Major) | Visual inspection |
| viii | Records shall be maintained for fertilizers and soil additives detailing the source, product name, date and quantity obtained and also for the application detailing the date, name of product, rate and method of application and name of the operators. (Major) | Farm dairy/records verified |
| xi | The inorganic and organic fertilizers shall be stored separate from harvested farm produce (Major). | Visual verification |

7.5 Water (Irrigation/Fertigation)

The water used for irrigation/fertigation should be free verify.
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<td>from harmful contaminants. (Major)</td>
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<tr>
<td>i</td>
<td>Assessment of the source of water used for irrigation, application of chemicals or handling, washing, treating the produce or cleaning and sanitation shall be done at least annually to minimize the risks of chemical and biological contamination and records shall be kept. (Minor)</td>
<td>Annual assessment records</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ii</td>
<td>Where water testing is required to assess the risk of contamination, tests shall be conducted at a frequency appropriate to the conditions impacting on the water supply and records shall be maintained. (Critical)</td>
<td>Test reports</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iii</td>
<td>Where a significant risk is identified, either a safe alternate water source shall be used or the water treated before use. (Major)</td>
<td>Check for safe alternate/water treatment Records</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iv</td>
<td>Untreated or treated sewage water shall not be used during production or for post-harvest handling. (Critical)</td>
<td>Visually/Water quality test reports</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>v</td>
<td>The farmer shall maintain irrigation equipment as per manufacturer guidelines/manual. (Minor);</td>
<td>Maintenance schedule</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vi</td>
<td>The farmer shall employ adequate measures to prevent flow of water into the fields from undesirable sources like municipal landfill areas, hospital &amp; industry waste dump areas, etc. (Major)</td>
<td>Physical structure present</td>
</tr>
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<td>7.6</td>
<td>(Plant protection products or other agro and non-agrochemicals)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>i</td>
<td>Only pesticides as permitted under country’s regulation shall be used. (Critical)</td>
<td>List of permitted pesticides and application records</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ii</td>
<td>Chemicals shall be purchased only from registered/licensed suppliers. (Major)</td>
<td>Invoices and/or proof of purchase</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iii</td>
<td>Mixing of two or more chemicals shall not be done, unless recommended by technically competent personnel/institutions/authorities. <em>(Minor)</em></td>
<td>Guidance from competent authority</td>
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<tr>
<td>iv</td>
<td>The dosage as recommended by competent authorities shall be applied and excess chemicals shall not be used. <em>(Major)</em></td>
<td>Recommendations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>v</td>
<td>Surplus chemicals shall be disposed in a manner to avoid contamination to the produce. <em>(Major)</em></td>
<td>Disposal records</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vi</td>
<td>Withholding periods for the interval between chemical application and harvest shall be maintained as per the pre harvest interval mentioned on the label. <em>(Major)</em></td>
<td>Application and harvesting records</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vii</td>
<td>Equipment for applying chemicals shall be maintained in working condition and checked for effective operation by a technically competent person. <em>(Major)</em></td>
<td>Physical verification of equipments and maintenance records</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>viii</td>
<td>Equipment shall be washed properly after every use and washing water shall be disposed in a manner to avoid contamination to produce. <em>(Major)</em></td>
<td>Cleaning records</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ix</td>
<td>Chemicals shall be stored in a well-lit sound and secure structure, which is located and constructed to minimize the risk of contaminating produce and equipped with notices and emergency facilities in the event of a chemical spill. <em>(Minor)</em></td>
<td>Visual inspection on construction, notices and emergency services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>x</td>
<td>Liquid chemicals shall not be stored on shelves above powders. <em>(Major)</em></td>
<td>Physical verification</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>xi</td>
<td>Chemicals shall be stored in the original container with a legible label and according to label directions; If chemicals are transferred to another container, the same shall be clearly marked with the name of the</td>
<td>Physical verification</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>xii</strong></td>
<td>Empty chemical containers shall not be reused and shall be collected in a secure place and properly disposed of according to the country’s regulations and in a manner to avoid contamination of produce and the environment. (Major)</td>
<td>SOP, on-site check and interviews</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>xiii</strong></td>
<td>Obsolete or expired chemicals shall be clearly identified and kept in a secure place till disposal. These shall be disposed of through official collection channels or in legal off-site areas. (Major)</td>
<td>MoA with service providers and SOP carried out by farms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>xiv</strong></td>
<td>A record of chemicals obtained, detailing the chemicals used, name of the supplier, date and quantity obtained, date of manufacture and expiry. (Minor)</td>
<td>Farm diary and proof of purchase</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>xv</strong></td>
<td>A record of application for each crop shall be maintained giving details of chemical, reason for application, treatment location, dosage, method, date of application and name of operator. (Major)</td>
<td>Application records</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>xvi</strong></td>
<td>A record of chemicals held in storage shall be maintained, detailing chemical name, date and quantities procured and date of complete use or disposal. (Major)</td>
<td>Storage Records</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>xvii</strong></td>
<td>If chemical residues in excess of MRL are detected, in the market where the product is traded or exported, the marketing of the product shall cease and the cause of contamination shall be investigated. Corrective actions shall be taken to prevent recurrence and a record kept of the incident and the actions taken. (Major)</td>
<td>Check for any such case and corrective and preventive action record</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>xviii</strong></td>
<td>Non-agrochemicals shall be handled, stored and</td>
<td>SOP and onsite verification</td>
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### Harvesting and Handling Produce

Harvested produce should not be placed directly on the soil, or on the floor of the handling, packing or storage areas. **(Major)**

#### Equipment, containers and materials:

- **Equipment, containers and materials**
  - **(Major)**
    - Equipment, containers and materials that come in contact with produce shall be made of material that will not contaminate the produce and is easy to clean.
  - **(Major)**
    - The containers used for storage of chemicals, waste, and other dangerous substances shall be clearly identified and not be used to hold or store produce.
  - **(Major)**
    - Equipment and containers shall be regularly maintained to minimize contamination of produce and shall be kept in areas separate from chemicals, fertilizers and soil additives to avoid cross contamination.

---

**Major**

- Integrated Pest Management (IPM) if implemented, shall require careful consideration of available pest control techniques and the subsequent integration of appropriate measures to discourage the development of pest population while keeping the use of plant protection chemicals at minimal level. **(Major).**

- Only commercial organic plant protection products that are registered in the country of production shall be used. **(Major).**

- IPM policy and records

- Invoice and registration details

- Physical verification of practices

- Visual inspection

- Containers present and labelled.

- Maintenance schedule or visually maintained.
contamination. (Major)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Requirement</th>
<th>Compliance Method</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>V</td>
<td>Equipment, containers and material shall be checked for soundness and cleanliness before use and cleaned, repaired and discarded as required.  (Major)</td>
<td>Visual check</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vi</td>
<td>The producer shall have his measuring devices calibrated at least once per year or as per the legal requirements of the country.  (Major)</td>
<td>Calibration report</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vii</td>
<td><strong>Buildings and structures:</strong> Building and structures used for growing, packing, handling and storage of produce shall be constructed and maintained to minimize the risk of contaminating produce.  (Major)</td>
<td>Verification of building and structure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>viii</td>
<td>Grease, oil, fuel and farm machinery shall be segregated from handling, packing and storage areas to prevent contamination of produce  (Minor).</td>
<td>Visual check of Segregation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>xi</td>
<td>Sewage, waste disposal and drainage systems shall be constructed so as to minimize the risk of contaminating the production site and the water supply.  (Major)</td>
<td>Visual verification of drainage systems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>x</td>
<td>Lights in the packing house or store shall be shatter proof or protected with a shatter proof cover.  (Minor).</td>
<td>Shatter proof material</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>xi</td>
<td>Where equipment and tools that may be sources of physical hazards are located in the same building as handling, packing and storage areas, these shall be isolated by a physical barrier or not used during the handling and packing of produce  (Minor).</td>
<td>Isolation of physical hazards</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Cleaning and sanitation:**

xii Equipment, tools, containers and materials that may be sources of contamination to produce shall be identified | Cleaning/sanitization records and |
and regularly cleaned and sanitized. *(Minor)* visual check

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Control Method</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>xiii</td>
<td>Appropriate cleaning and sanitation chemicals shall be selected to minimize the risk of these chemicals contaminating produce. <em>(Minor)</em></td>
<td>List of chemicals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>xiv</td>
<td>House and farm animals shall be kept out of the production site (especially where crops are grown in or close to the ground, and around handling, packing and storage areas) <em>(Minor)</em></td>
<td>On site verification</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>xv</td>
<td>Measures shall be taken to prevent the presence of pests in and around handling, packing and storage areas. <em>(Major)</em></td>
<td>Pest control records</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>xvi</td>
<td>Baits and traps used for pest control shall be located and maintained to minimize the risk of contaminating produce. The location of bait traps shall be recorded. <em>(Major)</em></td>
<td>Visual check and records</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>xvii</td>
<td>Workers shall be trained in personal hygiene practices and training records kept. <em>(Major)</em></td>
<td>Training records</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>xviii</td>
<td>Written instructions on personal hygiene shall be provided to workers and displayed in prominent locations. <em>(Minor)</em></td>
<td>Written instructions displayed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>xix</td>
<td>Toilets and hand washing facilities shall be available to workers and maintained in a hygienic condition. <em>(Major)</em></td>
<td>Availability of facilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>xx</td>
<td>Sewage shall be disposed of in a manner that minimizes of direct or indirect contamination to produce. <em>(Major)</em></td>
<td>Manner of disposal of sewage</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Produce treatment:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>xxii.</th>
<th>The quality of the water applied to the edible parts of produce shall be equivalent to that of drinking water.</th>
<th>Test reports</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>xxii</td>
<td>Chemicals applied for post-harvest and waxes shall follow the same practices as under the chemical section and shall comply with instructions and recommendations from competent authorities.</td>
<td>Chemical list</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>xxiii</td>
<td>Specific test on produce shall be included if required by importing country.</td>
<td>Test report</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Storage and transport:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>xxiv</th>
<th>Produce shall be stored and transported separately from goods that are potential sources of chemical, biological or physical contamination.</th>
<th>On-site segregation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>xxv</td>
<td>Produce shall be stored in cool places and overloading should be avoided. Produce should be covered to reduce moisture loss during transportation.</td>
<td>Visual check</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>xxvi</td>
<td>Containers filled with produce shall not be placed in direct contact with soil, where there is a significant risk of contaminating produce from soil. Pallets, if used, shall be checked for cleanliness, chemical spills, foreign objects and pest infestation and rejected if there is any risk of contaminating produce.</td>
<td>SOP and visual check</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>xxvii</td>
<td>Vehicles used for transporting produce shall be kept clean and maintained in good condition. These shall be checked before loading for cleanliness, chemical spills, foreign objects and pest infestation.</td>
<td>Maintenance and cleaning records</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### 7.8 Traceability and recall

| i | Production sites shall be identified by a name or code and recorded on a site map. **(Major)** | Code and site map |
| ii | Packed produce shall be clearly marked with name and identification to enable traceability of the produce to the farm or site where produce is grown **(Major)**; | Visual check for Markings |
| iii | A record detailing the date of delivery and destination of each produce consignment shall be maintained. **(Minor)** | Records |
| iv | Where produce is identified as contaminated or potentially contaminated, it shall be isolated, but if such identification is made after the produce is sold the buyers or consumers shall be notified immediately. **(Critical)** | SOP and mock drills |
| v | The cause of contamination shall be investigated and corrective action taken to prevent its recurrence and a record kept of the incident and the action taken. **(Major)** | Root cause analysis and corrective action records |

### 7.9 Training

<p>| Ia | The proper purchase, handling, storage and use of chemicals, including labeling requirements, selection of chemicals or bio-pesticides, which are approved and recommended by the competent authorities for the crops grown. <strong>(Major)</strong> | Records and recommendations |
| Ib | The application of suitable Integrated Pest Management and avoidance of use of inorganic chemicals. <strong>(Major)</strong> | Pest management documented verified |
| Ic | Information and updates on the National MRLs and... | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>MRLs of the countries where the produce is to be traded. (Minor)</th>
<th>List of permitted MRLs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Id</td>
<td>The need to test produce for chemical residues at a frequency required by customers or the market. (Major)</td>
<td>Test produce frequency with reports</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ii</td>
<td>The training needs shall be reviewed once a year.</td>
<td>Review report</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7.10 **Documents and records**

|   | Records of all practices shall be kept for a minimum period of two years or longer, if required by country legislation or customer. (Major) | Records retention policy, visual check of records |
| li | Out-of-date documents should be discarded and only current versions should be used. (Major) | Visual check |

7.11 **Review of practices**

| i. | A review to be carried out at least once a year to identify new or emerging risk related to food safety and actions to correct any deficiencies identified and corrective actions taken. (Major) | Review records |
| ii. | ii. A record of the review undertaken and corrective action taken shall be kept. (Major) | Review and Corrective action records |

**OPTIONAL REQUIREMENTS**

7.12 **Fertilizers and soil additives (Plant nutrient management and fertilizer use)**

| i | Documents should be made available to demonstrate that application of fertilizers / nutrients (organic or inorganic) is done by a competent/ trained person. (Minor) | Competence records |
|   | A record indicating competence of producers should be maintained to demonstrate their competence and knowledge in determining types and doses of fertilizers in case advisers are absent. (Minor) | Records and knowledge assessed by interviews |
|   | Records should be made available to demonstrate that the types and dosages of fertilizers/nutrients are in tune with the soil test – crop response studies and or recommendations of the State Agriculture Universities (SAU) / National Research Centre (NRC)/other approved organizations, recommendations for the crop. (Minor) | Records of type and dosage of inputs |
|   | The recommendations on the type and quantity of fertilizers/nutrients being used should be done by a competent qualified advisor. (Major) | Record of type and quantities prescribed by advisor |

### 7.13 Chemicals (Plant protection products or other agro and non-agrochemicals)

|   | It shall be ensured that chemicals are applied correctly by testing produce (in an accredited laboratory) for chemical residues at a predetermined frequency in line with the competent authority requirement of the country where produce is traded. (Minor) | Chemical application dosage records along with test reports. |
|   | Records for technical authorization of all chemicals applied along with their quantities should be maintained. (Minor) | Authorization records |
|   | A documented procedure should be available for correct handling and filling as stated on the label while mixing plant protection chemicals. (Minor) | Procedure |
|   | The application of such formulations should be a manner that usage of chemical that they are | Formulation and application records |
8. **ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT MODULE (EMM)**

8.1 **Site History and Management**

| i | Sites used for production shall comply with the country regulations that restrict production at high altitudes or steep slope. | Site assessed w.r.t. country regulation |
| ii | For new sites, the risk of causing environmental harm on and off the site shall be assessed and a record kept of the hazards assessed. | Risk assessment conducted and hazards recorded |
| iii | Highly degraded areas shall be managed to avoid further degradation. | Management of degraded areas documented |
| iv | Management of the site activity shall conform to the country requirements for environmental conditions covering air, water, noise, soil, biodiversity and other environmental. | Records to demonstrate conformance |
| v | A farm layout map shall be maintained showing the crop production sites, environmentally sensitive or degraded areas (if any), storage and mixing areas of chemicals, water storage, water-course and drains, building structures and roads. | Farm layout map with legends/markings |

8.2 **Planting Material**

| i | Diseases or pest-resistant planting material shall be selected to minimize the use of chemicals. | Selection criteria available |
### 8.3 Soils and Substrate

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>The planting material shall also be selected based on compatibility with soil type, soil fertility and so that the use of additional nutrient supplying chemicals is avoided. <em>(Minor)</em></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Criteria of planting material recorded/ visual/ interviews</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 8.3.3 Fertilizers and Soil Additives

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Fertilizers and soil additives shall be applied according to the recommendation of competent authorities or any other competent source and also considering the crop and soil type to avoid the nutrient run-off or leaching. <em>(Major)</em></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Facilities for storage, mixing or loading of fertilizer and soil additives and for composting of organic matter</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

|   | Visual check |
|---|---|---|
|   | Records |
|   | Basis of applications and application records |
|   | Visual check |
shall be located, constructed and maintained to minimize the risk of environmental pollution on production related sites and of water sources (Minor)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>The equipment used to apply fertilizers and soil additives shall be maintained in good condition and annually checked by a competent person (Minor).</th>
<th>Equipment maintenance records</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The application of fertilizers and soil additive shall be recorded detailing the name of the fertilizer or soil additive, location, date, rate and method of application and the operator’s name. (Major)</td>
<td>Fertilizer application records</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.5</td>
<td>Water</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| I | Irrigation shall be based on crop water requirements, availability of water and soil moisture levels. The irrigation system shall be checked and maintained in good condition to ensure its efficiency during irrigation and to minimize wastage of water. (Major) | Irrigation schedule and details  
Soil moisture may be checked physically |
<p>| ii | Water collection, storage and use shall be managed in accordance with country regulations and a record shall be kept of irrigation use, detailing crop, date, location and volume of water irrigated or duration of irrigation. (Major) | Irrigation system records |
| iii | To minimize the risk to the environment, any water discharge or wastewater shall be treated. (Major) | Treatment process and record |
| iv | A water management plan to optimize water usage and reduce waste shall be made available. (Major) | Water management plan |
| 8.6 | Chemicals (Plant Protection Products and Other Inputs) | |
| i | Farmers or workers need to be trained to a level appropriate to their area of responsibility for chemical application. (Major) | Interviews/Training records |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Verification/Record</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ii</td>
<td>Chemicals used for crop protection shall be selected so as to minimize the negative effect on the environment and antagonist organisms of pests and diseases. <em>(Major)</em></td>
<td>Chemical application records</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iii</td>
<td>Crop protection measures shall be based on the recommendations of competent authorities or a plant protection organization. <em>(Major)</em></td>
<td>Recommendation of measures and its source</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iv</td>
<td>The use of chemicals should be minimized by the application of Integrated Pest Management (IPM) and biological control products. <em>(Major)</em></td>
<td>IPM effectiveness records</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>v</td>
<td>Only chemicals obtained from licensed suppliers and approved by a competent authority for the crop grown shall be used. <em>(Major)</em></td>
<td>Invoice and/or proof of procurement</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vi</td>
<td>Chemicals shall be applied according to the label directions and guidance from the competent authority. <em>(Critical)</em></td>
<td>Application records</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vii</td>
<td>A rotation strategy for chemical application and crop protection measures shall be used to avoid pests and diseases resistance <em>(Minor)</em></td>
<td>Application records</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>viii</td>
<td>Appropriate volumes of chemicals shall be mixed to minimize the amount of surplus chemical after application. <em>(Major)</em></td>
<td>Application records</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ix</td>
<td>Surplus chemical mixes and tank washings shall be disposed of in a manner that minimizes the risk of environmental harm on and off the site. Empty chemical containers shall be collected and disposed of according to country regulations. <em>(Major)</em></td>
<td>Disposal on-site verification</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>x</td>
<td>Obsolete chemicals shall be identified clearly, kept in On-site verification</td>
<td>On-site verification</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>xi</td>
<td>The application of chemicals shall be recorded for each crop, detailing the chemicals' names, the reason for application, date of application, location, dosage and method of application and name of operator and, where applicable, a record of chemicals held in storage shall be kept detailing the chemicals' names, date and quantity of purchase and date when completely used or disposed of. (Major)</td>
<td>Chemical application records</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>xii</td>
<td>Chemicals used for post-harvesting and handling produce should be stored and disposed of according to country regulations. (Major)</td>
<td>Visual verification/interviews</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 8.7 Waste Management

A waste management procedure shall be documented and followed, which includes identification of waste products generated during production, harvesting and handling produce, using practices to minimize waste generation, to reuse, recycle waste and dispose of waste. (Major)

### 8.8 Energy Efficiency

The use of electricity and fuel should be reviewed to ensure that efficient operation practices are implemented (Major)

<p>| i | | Electricity and fuel consumption records over time |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>8.9 Biodiversity</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i</td>
<td>The production plan shall comply with <strong>country regulations</strong> covering protected plant and animal species and to preserve native plant and animal species, including native vegetation areas, wildlife corridors and vegetation areas on or near the bank of waterways. <strong>(Major)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ii</td>
<td>Measures shall be applied to control/protect feral animals. <strong>(Minor)</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**8.10 Air/Noise**

| i | If an offensive odour, or smoke, dust or noise are generated from production practices, management action shall be taken to minimize the impact on neighboring property and surrounding areas. **(Major)** |
|  | Mitigating action documentation, visual & interview |

**8.11 Training**

| i | Farmers and workers shall be trained to have appropriate knowledge in their areas of responsibility related to good agricultural practices. **(Major).** |
|  | Training records or Interview |

**8.12 Documents and records**

<p>| i | Records of good agricultural practices shall be kept for two years or more in accordance with the country regulations or customer requirements, if any. <strong>(Major)</strong> |
|  | Records |
| ii | Obsolete documents should be discarded and only the |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8.13</td>
<td><strong>Review of practices</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>A review to be carried out at least once a year to identify any new and emerging hazards due to inputs, processes or hazards affecting the environment. <em>(Major)</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II</td>
<td>A record of the review undertaken and the corrective actions taken shall be kept. <em>(Major)</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**OPTIONAL REQUIREMENTS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8.14</td>
<td><strong>Site history and management</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>i. Each producer should maintain a management and conservation plan for protecting biodiversity and wildlife impacted due to farming activities which should include baseline audit to understand biodiversity, mention action to avoid damage and deterioration of habitats and details measure to enhance biodiversity on the farm. <em>(Minor)</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II</td>
<td>The producer should have policy and consider improving the environment for the benefit of the local community and flora and fauna. <em>(Minor)</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8.15</td>
<td><strong>Soil and substrates (Substrate Management)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>The producer should participate in substrate recycling programmes for substrates where available. <em>(Minor)</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II</td>
<td>There should be written justification available for the use of soil fumigants. <em>(Minor)</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III</td>
<td>A pre-planting interval should be identified and cross check with soil fumigation</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>WORKER HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELFARE MODULE (WHSM)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.1</td>
<td>Chemicals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i</td>
<td>Chemical should be handled and applied by trained workers with appropriate knowledge and skills.  <em>(Critical)</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ii</td>
<td>Chemicals shall be stored in well lit, sound and secure structures with access permitted to authorize persons only. The storage structures should be such as to minimize the risk of contaminating workers and it be equipped with emergency facilities to deal with cases of a chemical spill.  <em>(Major)</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iii</td>
<td>Chemicals should be stored in their original containers with legible labels and instructions from competent authorities. If chemicals are transferred to another container the new container shall be clearly marked with the brand name, dosage of use, and withholding period  <em>(Major)</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iv</td>
<td>Reuse of empty chemical containers for purposes other than containing and transporting identical products shall not be permitted.  <em>(Major)</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>v</td>
<td>Where there is a significant risk of chemical contamination to workers, material safety data sheets (MSDS) should be available.  <em>(Major)</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vi</td>
<td>Safety instructions shall be provided to workers and displayed in appropriate and readily accessible places.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Major)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vii</td>
<td>A facility along with first aid measures shall be available and accessible to treat workers contaminated with chemicals and accident. (Major) First aid Kit availability and content</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>viii</td>
<td>Emergency instructions shall be documented and placed in prominent places within the chemical storage area. (Major) Emergency instructions &amp; visual assessment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ix</td>
<td>The workers that are handling and applying chemicals or entering newly sprayed sites shall be equipped with suitable protective clothing and equipment. Clothes and protective equipment shall be cleaned and stored separately from crop protection chemicals. (Major) visual assessment and interviews</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>x</td>
<td>People shall not be allowed access to the sites where chemical are being applied or have just been applied for the appropriate period depending on the type of chemical used and if chemicals have been applied in public areas of public access, the site should be marked with warning sign. (Major) Warning signs, visual assessment and interviews</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 9.2 Working conditions

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>i.</td>
<td>Working conditions shall be suitable for workers but where hazardous conditions cannot be avoided entirely, protective equipment/clothing should be provided. (Major) Protecting clothing visual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ii</td>
<td>All farm vehicles, equipment and tools, including electrical and mechanical devices shall be adequately guarded and maintained in good condition to minimize the risk to workers. (Major) Visual and maintenance record</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iii</td>
<td>A safety operation manual for operation of equipment, machinery, accessories and handling practices shall Safety manual</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
be provided to workers and displayed in prominent places. (*Major*)

### 9.3 Personal hygiene:

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>I</strong></td>
<td>Farmers and workers should be trained on personal hygiene practices for ensuring own health and well-being. (<em>Major</em>)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>II</strong></td>
<td>Written instructions on personal hygiene practices should be provided to workers and displayed in prominent locations. (<em>Major</em>)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>III</strong></td>
<td>Medical checkup of workers at six monthly intervals shall be done and records kept for 5 years. (<em>Minor</em>)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>IV</strong></td>
<td>Toilets and hand and body washing facilities should be readily available and maintained in a hygienic condition (<em>Major</em>)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>V</strong></td>
<td>Sewage shall be disposed of in a manner to minimize the risk of contamination to workers. (<em>Critical</em>)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>VI</strong></td>
<td>Where employers are to provide health cover to workers, any serious health issue is to be reported to the appropriate authorities. (<em>Major</em>)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>VII</strong></td>
<td>Measures should be applied to minimize the access of domestic and farm animals to production sites and around the handling, packing and storage areas. (<em>Major</em>)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 9.4 Worker welfare:

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<thead>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>I</strong></td>
<td>Workers treated equally in all aspects. (<em>Major</em>)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>II</strong></td>
<td>Workers shall not be exploited because of gender, (<em>Major</em>)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>---</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>age, race or other reasons. <em>(Major)</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Where possible, living quarters should be suitable for human habitation and contain basic services and facilities including clean food storage areas, designated eating areas, hand washing facilities and drinking water. <em>(Major)</em></td>
<td>Quarters visited</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The minimum working age, working hours and minimum wages shall comply with country regulations. Child labour shall not be used <em>(Critical)</em></td>
<td>Payment Ledger &amp; interviews of workers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>9.5</strong> Training</td>
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<td>I</td>
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<tr>
<td>Workers should be informed about the risks associated with health and safety when working at sites. <em>(Major)</em></td>
<td>Workers interview</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>li</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workers shall be trained and have appropriate knowledge in areas of their responsibility such as vehicles, tools and equipment operation, accident and emergency response, safe use of chemicals and personal hygiene. <em>(Major)</em></td>
<td>Training records or workers interviews</td>
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<tr>
<td>lii</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The training needs shall be reviewed once a year. <em>(Minor)</em></td>
<td>Review records</td>
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<td><strong>9.6</strong> Documents and records</td>
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<td>I</td>
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<tr>
<td>Records of all practices shall be kept for a minimum period of two years or longer, if required by country legislation or customer. <em>(Major)</em></td>
<td>Records and documents</td>
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<td>li</td>
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<tr>
<td>Out-of-date documents should be discarded and only current versions should be used. <em>(Major)</em></td>
<td>Document update register/ Records and documents in circulation</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>9.7</strong> Review of practices</td>
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</table>
### Optional Requirements

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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>All practices affecting health and safety of workers shall be reviewed at least once a year to ensure that they are done correctly and actions should be taken to correct any deficiencies identified. A record of the review undertaken and any corrective actions taken shall be kept. (Major)</th>
<th>Records of review</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ii</td>
<td>Actions should be taken to resolve complaints related to worker health, safety and welfare, and records kept on complaints and action taken. (Major)</td>
<td>Action taken report</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### 9.8 Worker welfare

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>A member of management should be identified as responsible for workers health, safety and welfare. (Minor)</th>
<th>Written document on the responsibility/ Declaration</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>li</td>
<td>Regular two-way communication meetings should take place between management and workers for which records are kept and made available. (Minor)</td>
<td>Minutes/attendance of meeting &amp; interviews</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lii</td>
<td>All workers who have contact with plant protection products should be subjected to voluntarily annual health checks. (Minor)</td>
<td>Annual health check records</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 10 Produce Quality Module (PQM)

#### 10.1 Quality plan

|   | A plan shall be maintained on practices that are critical to manage produce quality during the production, harvesting and post-harvesting stages. (Major) | Check the plan |

#### 10.2 Planting material
### Vegetables and fruits planting material

Vegetables and fruits planting material (seeds, rootstock, and scion) shall be obtained from farms or nurseries certified or recognized by the Plant Health Office or other reliable sources to ensure the good quality and freedom from diseases to satisfy market requirement. Records of the same shall be maintained. 

*(Minor)*

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<tr>
<th>10.3</th>
<th><strong>Fertilizers and soil additives</strong></th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fertilizers and soil additives applications shall be based on the crop grown and recommendations from the competent authority and shall be properly applied to ensure their effectiveness. The facilities used for composting shall be constructed and maintained so as to prevent cross contamination of the crop. Records of application of fertilizers or soil additives shall be maintained giving details of quantity and date of application and the name of person who applied the fertilizers and additives as well as the provider. <em>(Major)</em></td>
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<th>10.4</th>
<th><strong>Water</strong></th>
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<td></td>
<td>Irrigation should be based on water requirements of the crop grown, water availability and soil moisture levels. Records detailing the date of irrigation, location, duration and volume of water applied shall be kept. <em>(Major)</em></td>
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<tr>
<th>10.5</th>
<th><strong>Chemicals</strong></th>
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<tr>
<td>i</td>
<td>Farmers or workers shall be trained to a level appropriate to their responsibility for chemical application. <em>(Major)</em></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Training records and/or interviews</td>
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<tr>
<td>ii</td>
<td>Chemicals shall be obtained from licensed suppliers</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Invoices/delivery notes</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
and applied according to label directions or permit issued by a competent authority for the crop grown. (Critical)

### iii

A chemical rotation strategy and other crop protection measures shall be practiced to avoid pest resistance to chemicals based on information available in the country. (Major)

### iv

Equipment used to apply chemicals should be maintained in good conditions and should be working properly. (Major)

### v

Records shall be maintained, giving the name of chemical, reason for application, date and dosage of application, method of application, weather condition and the name of person who applied the chemicals. (Major)

#### 10.6 Harvesting and handling produce

### i

A maturity index is used to determine the appropriate time to harvest produce. Harvesting shall be carried out at the coolest time of the day, namely early in the morning. (Major)

### ii

The equipment, containers, liners used shall be suitable, used appropriately for harvesting and shall be cleaned before using. The container shall not be overfilled. Liners should be used to cover the rough surfaces. Containers should be covered to reduce moisture loss. The containers should not be stacked on top of each other unless these are designed to avoid produce damage when stacked. (Major).

### iii

Produce should be placed in the shade and leave the
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Handling and packaging produce</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>iv</strong></td>
<td>Clean water should be used for handling, washing and treatment of produce and the water should be changed regularly to avoid spoilage organisms damaging the produce. (Major)</td>
<td>Visual observation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>v</strong></td>
<td>Excessive drops and impacts shall be avoided to minimize mechanical damage to produce. (Major)</td>
<td>Visual assessment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>vi</strong></td>
<td>Packing and storing shall be under roofs and in cool places. Produce shall not be placed directly on the soil or floor surfaces. (Major)</td>
<td>Visual assessment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>vii</strong></td>
<td>Produce shall be graded and packed according to the customer or market requirements. (Major)</td>
<td>Packing QC records &amp; visual assessment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Storage and transport:</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>viii</strong></td>
<td>Produce shall be quickly transported to its destination. If there is to be a long wait for transport, produce should be held at the lowest temperature possible. (Major)</td>
<td>Visual/Transport records</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ix</strong></td>
<td>Produce shall be covered during transportation and maintained at appropriate temperature to avoid quality loss. (Major)</td>
<td>Visual checks/Transport records</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>x</strong></td>
<td>Checking for cleanliness and removing all sources of contamination shall be done. Mixing incompatible produce during transportation shall be avoided. (Minor)</td>
<td>Visual checks/Transport records</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**10.7 Traceability and recall system**

Produce from different sites (as applicable) should be... Records of traceability and drawing
identified by name or code, and the same should be placed on the containers and suitably recorded. A record shall be kept of the date of supply, quantity of produce and destination of each consignment. *(Major)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>10.8 Training</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Farmers and workers shall be trained in the area of their responsibility relevant to GAP and a record of training kept. <em>(Minor)</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>10.9 Documents and records</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>i All records of GAP shall be kept for at least two years or longer depending on the countries’ legal requirements. <em>(Major)</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ii Out-of-date documents should be discarded and only current versions should be used. <em>(Minor)</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>10.10 Review of practices</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>i All practices shall be reviewed once a year to ensure that they are done correctly and action should be taken to correct any deficiencies identified. A record shall be kept to show that all practices have been reviewed and any corrective actions taken documented. <em>(Major)</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ii Action shall be taken to resolve complaints related to produce quality and a record kept of the action taken related to the complaint. <em>(Major)</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**OPTIONAL REQUIREMENTS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>10.11 Chemicals</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A documented procedure should be available for Check for procedure</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
correct handling and filling as stated on the label while mixing plant protection products. *(Minor)*

### 10.12 HARVESTING AND HANDLING PRODUCE

When packed produce are stored on farm, temperature and humidity should be recorded. Check records

### 11. GENERAL REQUIREMENTS MODULE (GRM)

#### Section-A (At Farm Level)

#### 11.1 Legal

The land under certification shall either be owned by the applicant, or an agreement between the legal owner of land and the applicant shall be in place granting authorization to applicant to carry out the agricultural operation and certification. *(Major)*

Legal documents

#### 11.2 Visitor Requirements

Any visitors to the farm or place where operations are being carried out in relation to GAP, shall follow the practices applicable to farm workers to ensure the safety of the produce as well their own safety. *(Major)*

Visitors instruction display

#### 11.3 Redressal of Complaints

i All complaints shall be adequately registered and addressed. A record of action taken shall be maintained *(Major)*

Action taken records

ii Effective complaints handing mechanism shall be available. *(Major)*

Complaint handling mechanism

#### 11.4 Site Details

Each farm and production unit shall be referenced on a farm plan or map. *(Major)*

Farm map

#### 11.5 Record Keeping and Internal Inspection
All records pertaining to GAP shall be retained for a minimum period of two years, unless required by legislation. *(Major)*  

**11.6 Calibration**  
The producer shall, where applicable, have his equipment calibrated as per the legal requirements of the country. *(Major)*

**Section B (Group Requirements)**

**11.7 Legal requirements**

i. Documentation shall be available to demonstrate that the producer group is a registered entity *(Major)*

ii. Producer group shall have a clearly defined structure to implement GAP and own responsibility for production and management of the produce *(Major)*

iii. The administrative/management structure of the producer group shall clearly establish relationship among members of the producer group. *(Major)*

**11.8 Written Contract**

i. A written signed contract shall be available between each member of the group and the group (legal entity), which shall cover individual details, farm details, obligations (to abide by the requirements laid by producer group and the GAP standard, sanctions in case of non-compliance with GAP/any other internal requirements. *(Major)*

**11.9 Producer Register**

A register shall be maintained containing details of all the members in the group with their current implementation status which shall include details of producer group, registered planting/production area, crops cultivated details of internal audit and its findings, etc. *(Major)*
11.10  Structure of Organization

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>The organization structure shall demonstrate availability of appropriate resources to carry out operations as per the GAP Standard. (Major)</th>
<th>Co-relation of org structure with availability of appropriate resources to carry out operations (Major)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>i</td>
<td>The group shall assess key roles and responsibilities for maintaining requirements of the GAP standard. (Major)</td>
<td>Verification of roles and responsibilities (Major)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ii</td>
<td>The group shall determine knowledge and competency, required training and qualification of designated staff, which shall be well written in line with GAP requirements; shall keep a record on qualifications and training of designated staff. (Major)</td>
<td>Qualification check records and interviews (Major)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iii</td>
<td>The group shall ensure that all members are trained on the general rules to be followed by the group members (Major)</td>
<td>Records of training (Major)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

11.11  Competency and training to staff and members

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>The group shall assess knowledge and competency requirement of the key personnel managing the group certification such as the trainer, quality manager, internal auditor, group manager etc. (Major)</th>
<th>Records of Competency assessment against defined requirements (Major)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>i</td>
<td>The group shall ensure that all staff assigned to operate on GAP certification are well trained and competent and capable of functioning according to requirements; (Major)</td>
<td>Interviews and training records (Major)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ii</td>
<td>The group shall determine knowledge and competency, required training and qualification of designated staff, which shall be well written in line with GAP requirements; shall keep a record on qualifications and training of designated staff. (Major)</td>
<td>Qualification check records and interviews (Major)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iii</td>
<td>The group shall ensure that internal inspectors are trained and evaluated to ensure compliance with audit procedures and interpretation of GAP requirements of internal and surveillance auditor. (Major)</td>
<td>Witness reports and training records (Major)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iv</td>
<td>The group shall ensure that all members are trained on the general rules to be followed by the group members (Major)</td>
<td>Records of training (Major)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>v</td>
<td>The group shall ensure that all members are trained on the general rules to be followed by the group members (Major)</td>
<td>Records of training (Major)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

11.12  Quality Manual
### 11.13 Document Control

| i | The group shall develop a Quality Manual to include the scope of certification, the management and internal control, policy and working procedures and policy for member registration and designated members (Major) | Quality manual availability and completeness |
| ii | The Quality Manual shall be periodically reviewed and updated to ensure compliance with GAP/other requirements of the producer group (Major) | Check for review and updation of QM |
| iii | The group shall ensure that the system of updating information and awareness on developments, dissemination and legislative revision (latest version) in relation to GAP compliance is in place. (Major) | Interviews and documents |

#### 11.14 Complaint Handling

<p>| i | A procedure for handling of all complaints regarding GAP shall be available which shall cover complaint receiving, registering, problem identification, causative analysis, solution and follow up (Major) | Complaint handling Procedure |
| ii | There shall be a defined timeline for complaint handling (Major) | Complaint handling Procedure |
| iii | Records relating to complaints shall be maintained (Major) | Records and formats |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Requirement</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11.15 Internal Audit</td>
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</table>
| i | A system to audit the compliance to GAP of each member, compliance to the requirements of the internal control system of the producer group shall be in place. (Critical)  
| ii | The competency requirement of the internal auditor shall be defined. (Major)  
| iii | A procedure documenting the internal audit procedure by an internal auditor, review and action taken on finding of internal audit shall be available. (Major)  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Requirement</th>
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<tr>
<td>11.16 Non-Compliances, Corrective Actions and Sanctions</td>
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</table>
| i | A procedure for recording of corrective actions shall be available and implemented. This shall include root cause analysis of non-compliance, responsibilities and time frame for corrective action. (Critical)  
| ii | Sanctions and Infringement - Producer group shall have procedures for imposing sanctions on members not complying with requirements. These shall include prompt notification to CB of suspension or revocation of its registered member. The provision of sanctions and infringement shall be a part of the contract between each producer and producer group. (Critical)  
| iii | All information pertaining to non-compliance, corrective action, and sanctions shall be recorded. (Major)  

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Requirement</th>
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<tr>
<td>11.17 Product Traceability and Segregation</td>
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</table>
| i | All GAP certified products shall be traceable to each individual registered producer and their farm. Effective systems and procedures shall be in place to reduce the risk of wrong labelling or mixing of GAP with non-
### GAP product (Critical)

| ii | ii. The harvesting area shall be managed for registered produce so that produce are identifiable and traceable from the purchase order through post-harvest handling, storage and distribution. (Critical) | Traceability systems |

11.18 **Withdrawal Of Certified Product**

A system for product recall and withdrawal shall be in place which is annually reviewed. (Critical) | Product recall and withdrawal mechanism available and reviewed |

11.19 **Common Pack house**

If the group has one or more common pack house within their farming operation, then every pack house shall require to meet the GAP requirements. (Critical) | inspect all pack houses |

11.20 **Agreement with Buyer**

A written agreement shall be entered into between a group and each of their buyer cautioning misuse of GAP certification claim, as applicable. (Critical) | Check Agreement |

11.21 **Subcontracting**

In case subcontractors are used, a subcontracting procedure shall be in place. (Critical). | Subcontracting procedure |
## Integration of Modules

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<tr>
<th>Standard requirement</th>
<th>Food Safety FSM</th>
<th>Environmental Management EMM</th>
<th>Workers Health Safety and Welfare WHSM</th>
<th>Produce Quality PQM</th>
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<td>Site history and management</td>
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<td>X</td>
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<td>Planting material</td>
<td>X</td>
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<td>Genetically Modified Organisms</td>
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<td><strong>Soils and Substrate</strong></td>
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<td>Fertilizer and Soil Additives</td>
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<td>Water</td>
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<td>Chemicals</td>
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<td><strong>Working conditions</strong></td>
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<td>Personal hygiene:</td>
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<td>Worker welfare</td>
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<td>Harvesting and handling produce</td>
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<td><strong>Quality plan</strong></td>
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<td>Documents and Records</td>
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<td>Review of Practices</td>
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<td>Sub Contracted Operations</td>
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<td>Traceability and Recall</td>
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GLOSSARY

Composting - A managed process where organic materials are subjected to moisture, heat and microorganisms for a specified period to produce a product known as compost.

Customer - A business or person who buys or receives produce. For example, a packer, marketing group distributor, wholesaler, exporter, processor, retailer or consumer

Environmental hazard - A source of environmental harm or a situation with a potential to cause harm to the environment.

Fertigation - The application of fertilizers/nutrients through an irrigation system

Food safety hazard - Any chemical, biological, physical substance or property that can make fruit and/or vegetables unacceptable and may cause health risk to consumers.

Fumigation - The application of a chemical to control pests in the soil or substrate, such as insects, diseases and weeds in a protected condition.

Hazard - An adverse effect or harm to produce the environment or workers.

Integrated pest management - The careful consideration of all available pest control techniques and the subsequent integration of appropriate measures that discourage the development of pest populations, and keeps plant protection products and other interventions to levels that are economically justified and reduce or minimize hazards to human health and the environment.

Intervention - After the use of IPM techniques if monitoring shows threshold is reached then intervention is needed by way of chemical approach.

Maximum Residue Limit (MRL) - The maximum amount of a chemical that is permitted by a competent authority in fruit and vegetables for sale for human consumption.

Monitoring – It is the systematic inspection of crop and its surrounding for pests, diseases including its eggs larvae etc. so that the preventive measures can be taken

Obsolete chemical - A chemical that is no longer suitable for use. For example approval for use of the chemical may be withdrawn, the chemical expiry date over, the container may be damaged and the chemical soiled.

Prevention – This includes the adoption of cultivation techniques and management practices at farm level to prevent reduce the incidence and or intensity of pest, diseases and weeds.
**Producer** – The farmer, company or the person legally responsible for the production at farm level

**Producer Group** – A group of farmers coming together as a single unit for implementation
PART II STRUCTURE FOR IMPLEMENTING GAP IN A COUNTRY

SECTION 1. ESTABLISHING OF SCHEME OWNER (MOAD)

1.1 Objective

1.1.1 The objective of this section is to explain how the requirement of the MoAD that will own and operate the Nepal Good Agriculture Practices (GAP) Scheme for Fruits and Vegetables (also referred to as 'the Scheme') in NEPAL the member country of the SAARC, where the Scheme is launched.

1.1.2 This document describes the specific requirements met by the MoAD. In Nepal Ministry of Agricultural Development (MoAD) is the scheme owner of NEPAL GAP

1.2 Scope

1.2.1 This section describes the Operation for the MoAD as scheme owner, its roles and responsibilities for establishing and operation of the Scheme.

1.2.2 This section draws upon the guidance provided in the international standard ISO 17067:2013 “Conformity assessment — Fundamentals of Product Certification and guidelines for product certification Schemes”.

1.3 MoAD

1.3.1 The MoAD is scheme owner identified by Government of Nepal for setting up and operationalizing the Scheme in Nepal.

1.3.2 MoAD belongs to the following types/ categories:

   a) Government body – Ministry of Agricultural Development

3.3.3 The MoAD have a mandate for introducing, upgrading and/or internalizing quality in agriculture and or horticulture.

1.4 The MoAD fulfills the following requirements:

   a) The MoAD is a legal entity by virtue of its governmental status.
   b) The MoAD takes full responsibility for the objectives, the content and the integrity of the Scheme.
c) The MoAD had set up a structure for the operation and management of the Scheme as has been prescribed in the Scheme. The governing structures are so made that the Scheme could be operated effectively by all participating stakeholders.

d) The MoAD maintain the Scheme and provide guidance as and when required. The MoAD document the modalities of the Scheme in the manner in which it would propose to execute the Scheme in Nepal.

e) The MoAD has arrangements to protect the confidentiality of information provided by the parties involved in the Scheme.

f) The MoAD evaluate and manage the risks/liabilities arising from its activities. The MoAD have adequate arrangements to cover liabilities arising from its activities. Arrangements should be appropriate e.g. for the range of activities and Schemes undertaken and in the geographic regions in which the Scheme operates by virtue of its governmental status.

g) The MoAD have the financial stability and resources required for it to fulfill its role in the operation of the Scheme.

1.5 Roles and Responsibilities of MoAD

1.5.1 Before agreeing on the specific contents of the Scheme, and deciding on the extent of adoption of the provisions provided in the SAARC GAP Scheme already developed, following fundamental Scheme related issues are reviewed and agreed to among the stakeholders:

   a) Confirmation of the entity which would own the Scheme as MoAD
   b) Confirmation of the governance and decision making mechanisms
   c) Deciding on a system for monitoring and periodic review of the Scheme as described in the procedure

1.5.2 MoAD should ensure that information about the Scheme is made publicly available to ensure transparency, understanding and acceptance.

1.5.3 The MoAD shall own “NEPAL GAP Certification Mark” (the Mark) get it duly registered with the appropriate authority in his country. The certification bodies and certified clients shall be required to obtain formal approval from the MoAD for the use of the Mark. It can be through a sub-license agreement with the certification Body

1.5.4 The MoAD shall approve the accreditation bodies and the certification bodies who are authorized to accredit or certify under the Scheme. Normally, such approval shall be based on accreditation bodies being signatory to the IAF Multilateral Recognition Agreement (MLA) for its product certification program covering GAP Certification Scheme and the Certification Bodies being accredited as per ISO/IEC 17065:2012 covering the GAP Certification Scheme under its scope of accreditation.

   Note: In case there is no accreditation body in the country, external accreditation bodies may be used. Alternatively the scheme holder may itself approve the certification body based on norms of approval. For the time being the MoAD will approve the Certification Body.

1.5.5 The MoAD had developed the surveillance plan to exercise supervision over the Scheme and oversight on certified producers, as considered necessary from time to time. The plan cover certification bodies and accreditation bodies, as considered necessary.

1.6 Handling of Complaints by MoAD
1.6.1 The MoAD describe the process for handling complaints by stakeholders and the same shall be made available on the website of the MoAD.

1.6.2 Complaint is defined as any expression of dissatisfaction regarding the operation of the GAP Certification Scheme and also with respect to the quality of produce marked with GAP Mark. The complaint may be formal (written) or informal (verbal) and from any stakeholder like organization certified, certification body, accreditation body, representatives of government bodies, NGOs, general public, etc.

1.6.3 The complaints regarding quality of produce marked with GAP Mark are very important from the point of view of ensuring confidence and credibility of the Scheme and shall be accorded utmost care in handling. These shall be referred to the certified producer, the relevant certification body/accreditation body against which the complaint is made, at an appropriate stage for ensuring appropriate investigation and actions as applicable and the process of handling complaint by the respective body shall be monitored by the MoAD.

1.6.4 The MoAD shall require that the information regarding complaints received by the certified producer, the certification body and the accreditation body is appropriately forwarded to them. This shall be ensured through having appropriate provisions in the contract with the certification body/accreditation body.

1.6.5 The process for handling of complaints have all the necessary components like describing responsibility and independence for handling and decision making; receiving of complaints; gathering all necessary information for establishing validity of complaints; and deciding about what actions are required to be taken in response to the same. Suitable guidance for establishing a complaints handling system is available in ISO 10002 which provides the process of complaints handling related to products within an organization, including planning, design, operation, maintenance and improvement. The essential components for the same are as follows:

1.6.5.1 The entire activity is focused on principles of visibility, accessibility, responsiveness, objectivity, charges (costs), confidentiality, customer focused approach, accountability and continual improvement as identified in ISO 10002.

1.6.5.2 The decision makers are responsible and provide evidence of the commitment to the development and implementation of complaint management system a complaint handling policy which is explicitly customer focused and made available to, and known by, all personnel within the organization including those acting on behalf of the organization, for example in an outsourcing environment. This will be made publicly available to customers and other interested parties.

1.6.5.3 The operation of complaints handling processes include clear communication, recording of complaints, tracking of complaint, receipt of complaint, assessment and investigation of complaints, response to complaints, communication of the decision and closing of the complaint.

1.6.5.4 The organization shall ensure that specific information relating to the identity of the complainant, and where the nature of complaint is sensitive, its contents shall be handled with confidentiality.
1.6 Handling of Appeals by MoAD

1.7.1 The MoAD had described the process for complaints by stakeholders and the same shall be made available on the website of the GAP MoAD as per the details given below.

1.7.2 Appeals can be made by any stakeholder against any decision of the MoAD and the Committees under the governing structure.

1.7.3 The certification bodies and the accreditation bodies are expected to maintain appeal mechanisms as per the applicable international standards. Anyone directly aggrieved by their decisions is encouraged to utilize these mechanisms. Information about procedures for handling appeals are publicly available either on request or can be accessed from the website of the CB or AB.

1.7.4 However, if dissatisfied, the appeals can be escalated to the MoAD.

1.7.5 In respect of appeal against the MoAD’s decision, an independent appeals panel may be constituted for looking into the appeal and deciding/recommending actions as appropriate. The appeals against decisions of the Technical and Certification or any other committee shall lie with the Steering Committee.

1.7.6 The process for handling of appeals shall have all the necessary components namely
   a) describing responsibility and independence for handling and decision making;
   b) receiving of appeals;
   c) gathering all necessary information for establishing validity of appeals; and
   d) deciding about what actions are required to be taken in response to the same.

1.7 MoAD’s responsibility towards maintenance and improvement of Scheme

1.8.1 Review of Scheme operation - The MoAD had defined the process for reviewing the operation of the Scheme on a periodic basis in order to confirm its operational validity and to identify aspects requiring improvement, taking into account feedback from stakeholders. The review includes provisions for ensuring that the Scheme requirements are being applied in a consistent manner.

1.8.2 Changes in specified requirements - The MoAD will monitor the development of the standards and other documents which define the specified requirements used in the Scheme. Where changes in these documents occur, the MoAD have process for making the necessary changes in the Scheme, and for managing the implementation of the changes (e.g. transition period) by the certification bodies, certified farmers and, where necessary, other stakeholders.

1.8.3 Other changes to the Scheme - The MoAD had defined the process for managing the implementation of other changes to the rules, procedures and management of the Scheme.

1.8.4 GAP Certification Scheme documentation - The MoAD had control and maintain adequate documentation for the operation, maintenance and improvement of the Scheme. The documentation specifies the rules and the operating procedures of the GAP Scheme and in particular the responsibilities for governance of the Scheme.

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SECTION 2. GOVERNING STRUCTURE

2.1 OBJECTIVE

2.1.1 The objective of this section is to provide confidence in MoAD on the establishment of the governing structure which would be required for setting up and operating the Good Agriculture Practices (GAP) Certification Scheme – Fruits and Vegetables (also referred to as ‘the Scheme’) in different SAARC countries.

2.2 SCOPE

2.2.1 This document describes the governing structure of the Scheme and the roles and responsibilities of various committees and organizations involved in establishing and operating the Scheme.

2.2.2 This document draws upon the guidance provided in the international standard ISO/IEC 17067:2013 “Conformity assessment — Fundamentals of Product Certification and guidelines for product certification schemes”.

2.3 GOVERNING STRUCTURE

2.3.1 Implementation of the Scheme is through a multi-stakeholder committee – a Steering Committee at the apex level with the secretariat being held by the MoAD. This may be supported by a joint Technical and Certification Committee. The Steering Committee has internalized the scheme in NEPAL and provides operational guidance.

2.3.2 The Technical and Certification committee is represented by a variety of stakeholders and experts in the related technical (agronomy, plant physiology, horticulture, plant entomology, soil nutrition) areas and having knowledge of conformity assessment.

2.4 Composition and Terms Of Reference of Committees

2.4.1 General Principles: In the appointment of various committees, the following general principles should be followed:

   a) Representation of a balance of interests in the Steering Committee such that no single interest predominates, the representatives for technical/certification committee, predominantly personnel from subject experts are ensured.

   b) Key interests would include representatives of regulatory bodies or other governmental agencies, standards body, representatives of user associations, producers association, industry associations, accreditation body and certification
bodies (subject to availability), test laboratories, academic/research bodies, voluntary consumer organizations and representatives of non-governmental organizations working in the related areas.

c) The technical and certification committee may have additional representations from persons competent in agriculture science viz., areas like plant entomology, plant pathology, horticulture, agronomy, soil nutrition, certification bodies, accreditation body and experts that have understanding of conformity assessment etc.

d) Representation to individual experts should be given exercising due care in their selection to avoid any conflict of interest.

e) It is desirable to invite organizations to nominate Principal and Alternate members in the interest of higher attendance and continuity.

2.4.2 Steering Committee: Comprise of Governments, regulatory bodies, growers/producers associations, export promotion bodies, research/academic bodies, accreditation bodies, testing laboratories, certification bodies, NGOs, voluntary organizations, trade associations, FAO and or any other technical expert(s) as invitees for specific meetings, as identified by the GAP Secretariat. SC may co-opt any other members.

2.4.2.1 Quorum - The presence in person, at a meeting of the Steering Committee (SC) of the member representatives of at least more than 50% members of the SC shall constitute the quorum for a meeting.

2.4.2.2 Terms of reference - The SC is responsible for:
   a) Overall development, modification and supervision of the Scheme
   b) Receiving recommendations of Technical/Certification Committees and deciding on the same
   c) Constituting any other committees, as needed

2.4.2.3 Meetings - The SC shall meet at least once every year.

2.4.3 Technical and Certification Committee (TCC): It may comprise of government representatives, regulatory bodies, growers associations, export promotion bodies, research/academic institutions, standards body, accreditation bodies, testing laboratories, certification bodies, NGOs, voluntary organizations, trade associations, members from certification and accreditation bodies, FAO, and or any other Technical expert(s) as invitees for specific meetings, as identified by the SAARC GAP Secretariat. TCC may co-opt any other members.

2.4.3.1 Quorum - The presence in person, at a meeting of the Technical and Certification Committee (TCC) of the member representatives of at least more than 50% members of the TCC shall constitute the quorum for a meeting.

2.4.3.2 Terms of reference - The TC is responsible for;
a) developing and maintaining any standards or technical documents needed by MoAD
b) national Interpretation of the clauses, if required
c) defining the certification criteria,
d) developing, maintaining and revising as appropriate the certification process
e) developing, maintaining and revising as appropriate the requirements for Certification bodies for the operation of the Scheme
f) Developing guidance document to assist producers to apply for Certification
g) Designing the Certification Marks, if any
h) Developing, maintaining and revising as appropriate the rules for the use of Certification mark or logo and
i) Resolving any related issues

2.4.3.3 Meetings - The TCC shall meet at least once every year.
PART III CERTIFICATION OF GAP

SECTION 1. CERTIFICATION CRITERIA

1.1 Purpose: This section describes the requirements to be followed by a producer or producer group to be eligible for certification. It covers:

i) The requirements given in the section on GAP Standards (Part I) with respect to food safety, environment management, workers health and safety and produce quality, depending on what type of certification is being sought;

ii) The requirements stipulated by the Certification Body in the Certification Process (including requirements mentioned in Part III section 2 sub clause 2.9.1.2, 2.9.1.4 – 6, 2.9.4.3, 2.12.11, 2.14.2, 2.14.4, 2.15.1 and 2.15.6-7, 2.16.1).

1.2 Criteria

The Certification Criteria are requirements stipulated in the Standard, Certification Process and Requirements for Certification Bodies that a producer either individually or a group is required to implement.

1.3 Control points:

In the certification context, the criteria or requirements are also known as control points.

1.4 Compliance to control points:

Based on the importance of the criteria/ requirement, the degree of compliance required to be implemented by a producer is categorized as Critical, Major and Minor. Critical requirements are those requirements which are required to maintain the integrity of the produce and failing to adhere to the same may result in a serious food safety incidence due to breach in food safety and product integrity. The requirements which are mandatory and must be followed are classified as Major. Certain requirements laid down which are important but not essential depending upon the produce category may be classified as minor. The requirements categorised as Critical and Major if not adhered can result in failing to be certified. A producer needs to take immediate corrective steps to adhere to the requirements.

The levels of compliance needed are as mentioned under 1.5.

1.5 Compliance Requirements (see also 2.9.4)

Critical – 100% Compliance of all applicable Critical control points is compulsory
Major – 90% Compliance of all of applicable Major control points is compulsory
Minor – 50% Compliance of all applicable Minor control points is compulsory

These have been classified in Control Criteria checklist at Annex 1 of the GAP Standard (previous section).

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SECTION 2. CERTIFICATION PROCESS

2.1 Purpose - This section describes the process of certification under the Nepal Good Agriculture Practices (Nepal GAP) Scheme (hereinafter referred to as Scheme) and lays down the requirements that shall be followed in order to obtain, operate and maintain the Certification.

2.2 Objective - The objective of this section is to define the certification process in line with international accreditation requirements and promote uniformity in its operation and the interaction between the Certification Bodies (CBs), the producers seeking certification and the Scheme owner MoAD of Nepal.

2.3 Scope - The scope of this section describes the role and responsibilities of various stakeholders involved in the process of certification in a structure manner. This shall define the requirements that need to be adhered by the certification body and the applicant in order to achieve the certification.

2.4 Certification Process – The general requirements to be met by both individuals and producer group member’s on-farm are described below:

2.4.1 Requirements common for individual and group member farms is:

2.4.1.1 The certification process of this Scheme involves an initial approval followed by periodically (annual) surveillance in the farmer’s field to check that compliance has been maintained post first evaluation, based on the specified requirements in the standards and any additional certification criteria. This is applicable both to individual producers and in the case of group certification.

2.4.1.2 This Scheme focuses on farmer adhering to requirements of the Certification Criteria which is validated through periodical visits.

2.4.1.3 The Certification Criteria is specified in the document Part III Section 1 “Certification Criteria” of this document.

2.4.1.4 The Certification Process requirements are formulated in a manner that compliance to the Certification Criteria will result in the produce being compliant to norms of the Scheme.

2.5 Requirements for Nepal GAP Certification Scheme: Fruits & Vegetables

In addition to the requirements specified in the GAP standards/Certification Criteria, the following requirements shall apply.

2.6.1 Individual Farm Certification

The details of the requirements to be met by an individual producer are given in the Part 1 Nepal GAP Standard of this document. The focus is on the four modules namely, Food Safety, Environment management, Workers Healthy and Safety and Produce Quality and some common requirements of farm level given in the General Requirement Module (Module 5).
2.6.2 Group Certification

A producer group may be defined as a group of two or more producers with a legal status or a natural group. In the case where the applicant is a producer group, they need to implement the requirements as stated in the Standard as for an individual farm however they are required to also implement the requirements stated in the General Requirement module that describes the requirement to be followed when producers come together and form a group.

Note: All producers – individual or group need to comply with the requirements mentioned in the Certification Criteria which includes the Standard (Part I Clauses 1.9.1 to 1.9.6 at farm level and group requirements as per 1.9.7 – 1.9.21), Certification Process (Part III section 2 sub clause 2.9.1.2, 2.9.1.4 – 6, 2.9.4.3, 2.12.11, 2.14.2, 2.14.4, 2.15.1, 2.15.6-7 and 2.16.1) and Rules for Use of Certification Mark (Part III Section 4 – 4.3.2, 4.3.3, 4.4.4-4.4.12 and 4.6).

2.7 Certification Agreement – The certification agreement describes the terms and conditions which the producer is required to abide by after he is granted certification. Since the producer uses certification mark, he is required to pledge his commitment to implement the requirements of these standards for ensuring conformity of produce and processes to the Certification Criteria and the Scheme requirements on a continuing basis. The details of the requirements have been covered in the Part III Section 3 “Requirements for Certification Bodies” ( including Part III section 2 sub clause sub clause2.9.1.2, 2.9.1.4 – 6, 2.9.4.3, 2.12.11, 2.14.2, 2.14.4, 2.15.1, 2.15.6-7 and 2.16.1 ). This document and the format for the certification agreement are also required to be available on the approved Certification Body’s website. The Certification Agreement shall also cover requirements with respect to use of certificates and marks of conformity on the produces by the producer.

2.8 Approval from the MoAD for use of Nepal GAP Certification Mark(s) - The Nepal GAP Certification Mark(s) is/ are owned by the Scheme owner MoAD. The Rules for its use are given in Part III Section 4 of the Scheme.

2.9 CERTIFICATION PROCEDURE

2.9.1 Application for certification

2.9.1.1 The certification body shall provide the prospective applicant producers with an up-to-date detailed description of the evaluation and certification processes and procedures, and the documents containing the requirements for certification, the applicants’ rights and the duties of producers of certified produces (including fees to be paid by applicants and suppliers of certified produces). These shall be consistent with the certification scheme(s) offered by the certification body as per their accreditation scope. Rights and obligations will include:

“Rights”

- right to obtain services from the CB in a timely manner;
- right to appeal against the CB’s decision;
- right to apply for both individual and group certification but not for the same produce;
- right to cancel application with the CB or request temporary suspension; and
right to change a CB provided corrective actions are taken and reply of cancellation received from the previous CB.

“Obligations”

- to accept auditing plan and requirements of the certification body (CB);
- can apply for both individual and group certification but obligation that it is not for the same produce;
- to treat the CB’s decision as confidential;
- responsible for compliance with GAP certification requirements as well as CB provisions; and
- to notify the CB of changes to the production status e.g. name of produce, quantity of produce, inclusion or withdrawal of group member producer for producer group certification, etc.
- the whole farm producing the crop under certification has to be brought under certification, Part farm certification is not allowed

2.9.1.2 The information to be maintained for each producer should include the name, address, and contact details of producer; location of the farm; farm manage; crop cultivated; crop sowing date; total extent of land and extent covered under produce, internal inspection date, name of the internal inspector, external inspection date, harvested quantity and dates. This information along with the application format shall be made available on the certification body’s website.

2.9.1.3 The certification body may design its own application format for the Scheme; however this shall contain at least the following information:

a. The general features of the package and practices also referred as management plan of the producer for cultivating fruits and vegetables, including his name and the address of its physical location; contact details; legal entity status (in case of group certification).

b. The list of fruits and vegetables the applicant intends to cover under the certification Scheme, consistent with the requirements given in the certification criteria and the relevant sections of this document. The scope of certification shall be decided by the Certification Body while reviewing the application.

c. General information about the applicant package and practice, description of raw materials viz., fertilizers and plant protection material used and their suppliers, production processes, facility layout, its human and technical resources, accessibility to external resources. The information required shall be consistent with the requirements stated in the standard/Certification Criteria and the Certification Process requirements.

d. The controls exercised by the applicant producer for ensuring produce conformity to the requirements described in the standard/Certification Criteria.

2.9.1.4 The applicant shall declare (in the form of an undertaking) whether it has been an applicant / certified under this Scheme with or by any other certification body, and if yes, then shall provide the previous evaluation reports to the new certification body. The certification body may verify the information provided by contacting the previous certification body.

2.9.1.5 The applicant shall also declare any proceedings relating to its operations, any proceedings by any regulatory body or suspension / cancellation / withdrawal of any
certification / approvals under any Regulations or otherwise. Such declaration shall be a part of the undertaking mentioned in 2.1.3.

2.9.1.6 Certification is granted only against the current relevant certification criteria. The certification body shall review all applications for the above and ensure compliance to the same.

2.9.2 Application Review

2.9.2.1 The designated personnel of the certification body shall undertake a review of the application received from the producer, as per its documented procedure. The review of application shall cover the following aspects:

a) the information about the producer and his facilities and the produce to be certified and the information is sufficient for the conduct of the application review and the subsequent Certification Process;

b) any known difference in understanding between the certification body and the applicant is resolved, including agreement regarding certification criteria;

c) the scope of certification sought is clear and defined;

d) the means are available to perform all evaluation activities;

e) the certification body has the competence and capability to perform the certification activity;

f) the determination and nomination of an evaluation team, evaluator and the technical reviewer competent for the certification scope applied for. This shall be done in accordance with the requirements specified in the document “Requirements for Certification Bodies (Part III Section 3)”.

2.9.2.2 Based on the review of application for certification, deficiencies observed, if any, shall be informed to the applicant within a reasonable time. Records of review shall be maintained.

2.9.2.3 In case the information about the applicant and the produce to be certified, as provided by the applicant, is not complete/sufficient for the purpose of conducting an application review then the CB will need to obtain additional information. The information thus received shall be recorded along with other information already received.

2.9.2.4 Only applications found to be complete and supported with all documents sought shall be accepted. These shall be registered and in order of receipt issued with a unique identification number. Applications shall be acknowledged and records maintained.

2.9.2.5 Applications from producers who have earlier either misused the Certification Mark or have been implicated / convicted by the court, or whose earlier certificate was cancelled because of violation of terms & conditions/misuse of the GAP Certification Mark shall not be registered within 1 year of conviction/strictures by the court/cancellation of the certificate by any CB.

2.9.2.6 Applications from producer found to be misusing the Certification Mark, while their application is being processed for grant of certificate, shall not be processed any further, and rejected after a due notice of 15 days. Fresh applications from them shall be entertained only after a gap of 1 year and after the applicant provides a guarantee on a stamp paper for not indulging in such practices.
2.9.2.7 Requests for grant of certificates from ex applicants shall be processed like a fresh applicant and the entire procedure for grant of certificate shall be adhered to subject to adherence to the relevant clauses in the above sections.

2.9.2.8 The certification body shall clearly identify the responsibilities and establish internal reasonable time lines for responding to enquiries from prospective producers, application review and feedback to producers as well as for registration of applications.

2.9.3 Evaluation

2.9.3.1 Pre-assessment or Pre-evaluation - (optional).

The purpose of the pre-assessment is to see if the producer is ready for initial evaluation or assessment. It would include a review of documentation and verification of implementation of some or all of the GAP requirements – a sample audit.

2.9.3.2 Preparation and Planning for Evaluation

Prior to undertaking the site visit, the certification body, through one or more persons, shall undertake certain offsite activities as part of preparation and planning stage. These are:

a. Study of all the information received and request for additional information, if required.

b. Prepare an evaluation plan for farm evaluation and the ICS Evaluation

2.9.3.3 Farm Evaluation – The visit to the farm(s) of the producer applicant, where the activities related to the cultivation of fruits and vegetables etc. to be covered under the scope of certification are being carried out, is an important component of the evaluation activities. For the sake of uniformity, all site visits will henceforth be referred to as “Farm Evaluations” and the personnel involved as ‘Inspectors’ and ‘Technical experts’. The farm evaluation shall be carried out by competent inspectors (evaluation team, where the competence is built in through use of both an auditor and a technical expert). The evaluator competence related requirements are described in the document “Certification Body Requirements”.

The basic purpose of this process step is to conduct an evaluation of all the information and to ascertain if all the process steps as described in the Certification Process leading to grant of certificate have been fulfilled and if the evaluation confirms the ability of the producer, to produce in compliance with the requirements described in the relevant standard / certification criteria.

For Group the Sampling of farms is the square root of the total number of producers rounded off to next integer, which must cover all crops cultivated with proportionate representative sample of crops under certification. The Sample size can be increased based on the risk perceived by the auditor for medium risk 1.5 times and high risk 2 times. The client has the right to complaint the decision to increase sample size.

2.9.3.4 The objectives of the onsite evaluation are:

a) To verify if the information given in the application regarding the information and the practices applied on-farm by the producer is correct.

b) To verify compliance to the applicable regulatory requirements. To evaluate the adequacy and implementation of producers established systems especially in the
case of group certification with respect to process requirements, if any, specified in the certification criteria and the certification process as relevant to the Option chosen.

c) To evaluate whether the controls over production system as per farm management plan in option 1 farms and group management in Group Certification including inputs used in farming practices along with traceability aspects have been identified, established and the ICS as submitted by the applicant and are appropriate and adequate for ensuring continued conformity with the Nepal GAP Certification Scheme—Certification Criteria and have been implemented appropriately as applicable.

d) To verify adequacy and implementation of system for Complaint redressal and means of communicating the relevant information to consumers in line with the requirements specified in the certification criteria, as applicable.

2.9.3.5 **The evaluation shall ensure the following:**

a) The availability of all relevant infrastructure and facilities for complying with the requirements specified in certification criteria.

b) Availability of competent and qualified personnel, as relevant.

c) Availability of adequate system

d) Conformity of the produce and raw/intermediate materials wherever specified, with parameters/requirements of the standards/certification criteria.

e) Necessary documentation for proof of legal entity in case of producer group where certification is being sought.

f) Verification of implementation of corrective actions and closure of all NC’s raised.

g) Any other requirements prescribed by the certification Body within the scheme, ISO17065 or regulatory.

2.9.3.6 **Inspection Time and Timing**

**Inspection Time**

Minimum inspection time shall be as follows:

- for an operation without produce handling or on farm packing – 3 hours onsite
- for an operation with on farm packing - minimum 6 hrs
- for an operation with produce handling - minimum one day (8 Hrs).

The minimum duration for QMS audit for group certification is 8 hrs for a group with members less than 50 with one centralized pack house.

**Note:** In case of evaluation with a QMS in place the QMS has to be audited before the producer member farms are inspected.

**Inspection timings**

- The ideal timing for inspecting is during the time the crop is standing in field and as close to harvest as possible, preferably during harvest so as to verify all control points at least once in two years based on records / evidence.
- Some control points will not be able to be inspected, if the inspection is made before harvest of the registered crop, and as a result either a follow-up visit will be required, or proof can be submitted by the member grower. No certificate will be issued until all control points have been verified and closed. In the case of a registered farmer, if harvest has already taken place at the time of inspection, the farmer shall retain evidence of compliance of control points related to that
harvest, otherwise it may not be possible to check some control points and certification is then not possible until the following harvest.

2.9.3.7 Calculation of evaluation time

The evaluation time is calculated as follows:

- For first evaluation – on site evaluation: at least one man-day (8 hrs.)
- Evaluation preparation and report preparation time: at least one man-day.

However for first evaluation and the complexities in ICS evaluation and time required for their finalization, risk management, etc., addition in evaluation time (offsite or onsite) in multiples of 0.5 man days may be made, after recording appropriate justification. In case the evaluation team consists of an auditor supported by a technical expert, then the man days of the technical expert shall not be counted i.e. the man days of the technical expert has to be borne by the CB. The man days for individual producer may be slightly lesser depending upon the requirements as specified in Certification Criteria and the components thereof.

2.9.3.8 The certification body shall have a plan for the evaluation activities to allow for the necessary arrangements to be managed. Timings and date of first site evaluations shall be fixed in consultation with the applicant ensuring that cultivation practices are on and the produce is in the field for witnessing during the planned evaluations. The duration and the plan for first farm evaluations shall be provided to the applicant.

2.9.3.9 The composition of the auditing team shall also be communicated to the applicant organization for identification of conflict of interest if any. If required by the producer, sufficient background information in respect of the evaluation team members shall be provided for this purpose. Any objections to the team by the applicant shall be examined on merit.

2.9.3.10 The certification body shall ensure all necessary information and/or documentation is made available for performing the evaluation tasks.

2.9.4 Non Conformities (NCs)–NCs are deficiencies observed with respect to the GAP standards/certification criteria and other Scheme requirements (CB requirements) during the evaluation. These shall be informed in writing to the applicant in form of NC report for taking corrective actions.

2.9.4.1 Any non-conformity (NC) observed during first and subsequent evaluations shall be classified as Critical, Major or Minor depending on their nature and severity. If the clause specify it then it is taken as such

a) **Critical Non Conformity** – A critical non-conformity is classified when a specific control point that is critical to the integrity of process or product of GAP fails to meet the stated requirement. (all clauses having critical mentioned in it)

b) **Major Non conformity** – Non-conformity is classified as Major when it relates directly to the integrity of the farm produce and the producers inability to produce as per the certification criteria. (all clauses having major mentioned in it)

c) **Minor Non conformity** – All other gaps and non-conformities are classified as Minor. These shall generally be related to other implementation issues which do not directly affect either the safety of the produce or the producer’s capability to produce a
produce conforming to the certification criteria. (all clauses having minor mentioned in it)

d) **Non Conformance** - If there is any critical non conformity or more than 10% major non conformity or more than 50% minor nonconformity or any contractual non conformity, then the non conformity is called non conformance.

2.9.4.2 In case of Critical, Major and Minor NCs, the certification body shall allow the producers certain pre-determined time to carry out corrective actions or upgrade their system to a level to meet the Scheme requirement.

2.9.4.3 In cases of all non-conformities, the producer or the producer group shall take corrective and preventive action and inform the same along with correction and corrective actions, within a period of 30 days for critical, major and minor non-conformities. In case of initial inspection audit this period will be 3 months. Any non-conformance is required to be closed before the certification is granted. This will be done through verification of adequacy of the corrective actions. A corrective action is an action undertaken by the producer in order to comply with the requirement of the standard. If there are non conformances and are not closed within the stipulated time period then the producer / producer group will be suspended until the non-conformances are closed out in case of certified clients and will have to undergo a full inspection in case of initial inspection.

2.9.5 **Evaluation report** – For every evaluation the check list shall be completed and all critical clauses, all no and all not applicable clauses shall be justified. The client has to be provided with a NC report detailing the date, duration of evaluation NC observed clause reference, justification and the time period for providing corrective actions.

Records of evaluation along with all supporting documents and reports shall be retained for 2 years by the Certification body.

2.9.6 **Review**

2.9.6.1 An independent review of the evaluation shall be carried out by person(s) having the appropriate competence. The responsibility for review function shall however be that of the certification body.

2.9.6.2 The Criteria for review based on the produce requirements as specified in the Standards/ Certification Criteria and the certification Scheme and process requirements shall be documented.

2.9.6.3 Any information on which a review and decision is based which comes from any source other than the evaluation process, for example complaints, information received from regulators, etc. should be made known to the applicant or certified client (in case of surveillance) along with information on the evaluation process. The applicant or client should be given the opportunity to comment on it.

2.9.6.4 Nonconformities including those raised subsequent to onsite evaluation, which raise any doubt as to the conformity of the producer to the GAP must be corrected and corrective actions implemented and verified by the certification body (through onsite visit, testing of fresh sample or other appropriate forms of verification) before certification is granted. The nonconformities and their resolution shall be documented and made available for the purpose of review.
2.9.6.5 The records of review shall be retained and shall provide adequate confidence that all relevant aspects were examined prior to making recommendations.

2.9.6.6 The recommendation for certification decisions, whether positive or negative, shall be justified and the certification body shall document the basis for the same.

2.9.7 Certification Decision

2.9.7.1 The certification decision shall be the sole responsibility of the certification body and the decision shall be taken by the authorized person(s) or committee provided they have not been involved in the process of evaluation of the producer. The review and certification decision can be concurrently taken by a single person.

2.9.7.2 The Certification Body shall grant certification to the producer after ensuring complete compliance to the Standard (including requirements mentioned in Part I Clauses 1.9.1 to 1.9.6 at farm level and group requirements as per 1.9.7 – 1.9.21) and meeting the compliance requirement as indicated in Certification Criteria Clause 1.5 and Certification Process including requirements mentioned in Part III section 2 sub clause 2.9.1.2, 2.9.1.4 – 6, 2.9.4.3, 2.14.2, 2.15.1 and 2.15.6-7, 2.16.1 & 3). and all non-conformances have been closed. There shall be no conditional grant of certification to the producer.

2.9.7.3 Impartiality and absence of conflict of interest shall be ensured before entrusting the task of certification decision making.

2.9.7.4 In case, based on the evaluation, the Certification Body decides, not to grant certification, then it shall notify the producer of the decision not to grant certification, and shall communicate the reasons for the decision. If the producer expresses interest in continuing the Certification Process, the certification body can resume the process for evaluation from the process as described above.

2.9.8 Certification Documentation / Certificate

2.9.8.1 On grant of certification, the Certification body shall inform the producer and issue a Certificate, uniquely identified, which shall include as a minimum the following information:
   a) the name and address of the certification body and its accreditation body (if applicable).
   b) the name and address of the producer and the address of the physical location of the certified farm (including building and planting areas).
   c) Unique identification number which also helps in identification and traceability of producer and producer group
   d) the effective date (the date on which certification is granted, which shall not precede the date on which the certification decision was completed) and the expiry date of certification (validity maximum 1 years). The date of extending or renewing the certification, if applicable, shall also be included.
   e) the expiry date or recertification due date consistent with the recertification cycle.
   f) the scope of certification including produce categories certified and the Certification Criteria and the Certification Process (single producer or group certification) against which the certification has been awarded. Reference to the certification criteria document shall include issue number and/or revision, used for evaluation of the certified producer.

The details of produce categories either fruits or vegetables or both shall be included as an annex to the Certificate/certification document or any other document intimating grant of certification. In case the applicant seeks for group certification an
annex in addition to the produce categories shall also include the name of farmers in the group.
g) In the event of issuing any revised certification documents, a means to distinguish the revised documents from any prior obsolete documents.
h) The formal certification documentation shall include the signature of the individual(s) of the certification body assigned such responsibility.

2.9.8.2 Formal certification documentation shall only be issued after, or concurrent with, the following:
   a) the decision to grant or extend the scope of certification (see 2.16) has been made;
   b) the certification requirements have been fulfilled;
   c) the certification agreement has been completed/signed. The contents of the Certification agreements have been detailed in the Document “Requirements for Certification Bodies (Part III Section 3 of this document) and are also required to be made available on the website of the Certification Bodies operating this Scheme, as well as in any information set provided by the Certification body to its prospective clients.

2.9.8.3 The certificate shall be valid for a maximum period of 3 years from the date of issue of certification subject to annual surveillance.

2.9.8.4 The certification decision shall be intimated to the producer by the certification body thereby authorizing him to use the certification mark. Simultaneously intimation of the same shall be sent to the MoAD.

2.9.9 Directory of certified Producers

2.9.9.1 The certification body shall maintain and make publicly available on its website, a directory of valid certifications that as a minimum shall show the name, the certification criteria and scope of certification, geographical location and address and validity of certification for each certified producer.

2.9.9.2 The certification body shall display suitably on its website the names of producer under suspension and those whose certificates have been cancelled.

2.9.9.3 The certification body shall also have a provision and system for confirming validity of a certificate on request to any stakeholder.

1.9.9.4 The certification body shall have a procedure for updating of the information on its website.

2.10 Surveillance Evaluation

2.10.1 Individual and Group Certification

The certification body shall conduct yearly onsite surveillance evaluations with the last surveillance evaluation during the certification cycle being treated as the renewal evaluation. At the time of certification audit, the certification body shall draw out the dates for surveillance which shall be conducted at the end of every year from the date of initial certification. The first two surveillance evaluations shall normally be held within the defined period and a delay of maximum one month beyond the due date shall only be allowed in exceptional circumstances. Any further failure to conduct surveillance shall result in suspension of the certificate.
The third evaluation (renewal evaluation) shall be planned and conducted well in advance so that the recertification decision is ensured within the validity period of the certificate. Under exceptional circumstances the decision may be overshot by a maximum period of 15 days from the date of expiry. However, in all such cases, the certification body shall ensure that the renewal evaluation visit and closure of any NCs shall take place before the expiry of validity period of the certificate. Failure in ensuring the above stipulations on account of delays from the certified client’s side would generally result in non-renewal/expiry of the certificate. However, if due to some valid reasons, which the client can justify to the satisfaction of the certification body, the certified organization is not in a position to complete the process of implementation of corrective actions and their subsequent verification, then the certification body may withhold the renewal of the certification till such time that all actions are completed and observed to be satisfactory. In such cases the renewal shall be affected from back date (date of expiry of the previous certificate) with intervening period being treated as suspension.

2.10.2 The surveillance/renewal assessments shall be computed based on the farm area. In group certification it shall also take into account the no. of farmers in the group and the crops allotted based on risk management.

2.10.3 In addition to the planned surveillance assessments, as stated above, the certification body may also carry out unannounced evaluations, for example when there are instances of failure of produce in MRL or there is been a complaint against the certified farm. These shall primarily be carried out for investigating the reasons for failures. The certification body may also carry out short notice evaluations for verification of corrective actions in case of customer complaints. The man days for such evaluations may be decided by the certification body and shall generally range between half to one man day.

2.10.4 During the surveillance evaluation, the evaluator shall as a minimum check and report on the following;
   a) Compliance to the requirements of the certification criteria and other requirements of Certification Process.
   b) Actions taken on discrepancies observed during the previous evaluation, failure of processes if any reported and informed to the producer;

2.10.5 If any non-conformities are observed, the same shall be categorized as critical, major or minor as per the description given in clause 6.6.4.1. The non-conformity report shall be provided to the producer in writing, generally on site, for root cause analysis, correction and corrective action. Details of the same shall be reported in the Surveillance evaluation report.

2.10.6 In the event of non-conformities reported the same shall be handled in the same fashion as described in clauses 6.6.4.3. above.

2.10.7 If any surveillance evaluation results in an in-fructuous visit due to any reason, that there is no crop for evaluation, the CB shall conduct another surveillance evaluation or equivalent sample may be drawn from market. Such additional evaluations may be charged to the certified unit as decided by the Certification Body.

2.11 Sanctions

2.11.1 The CB can impose sanctions on producers if corrective actions are not taken as indicated. Sanctions may be given in three sequential levels of actions:
a. Warning – producer not correcting non-compliance on GAP requirements within prescribed period.
b. Suspension – if producer does not take corrective action as indicated by CB.
c. Revocation or cancellation
   i. producer cannot correct non-compliance partly or wholly within prescribed period and corrections are not completed within six months, or
   ii. Non-compliance found on production process and proved that production quality cannot be ensured and is certain to affect confidence in the product.

2.11.2 The certification body shall issue instructions to the certified producer for suspension of certification for the crops certified when unsatisfactory performance as adjudged during the process of evaluation on account of any one or combination of the aspects stated below:
   i. Usage of pesticides that are banned by regulations, or implementing of process or practices which create serious doubts regarding quality (and safety) of produce going in to the market.
   ii. Repeated failure to take actions by the producer, when serious gaps/non compliances are observed in the scheme requirements.
   iii. Repeated failure to take actions by the producer in respect of Critical and Major NCs, within the time limit prescribed or Minor NCs raised on the same issue in consecutive (3) onsite evaluations.

2.11.3 The certification body shall issue due notice of at least 15 days for suspension of certification to the producer. In case of detected frauds (deliberate attempt to circumvent/disregard the provisions of the Scheme requirements), if any, the notice may not be required.

2.11.4 On receipt of instructions for suspension of certification, the certified producer shall suspend the use certification mark under this Scheme on the farm produce grown by them under the provisions of the Scheme, with immediate effect. In case of suspensions due to failure of samples, the producer shall not use the certification mark on the relevant produce. The producer shall be advised to undertake a root cause analysis and identify the necessary corrective actions for resolving the same.

When certification is suspended, the certification body shall require that, during the period of suspension, the certified producer makes no misleading claims and advises the existing and potential purchasers regarding the status of certification, and ceases to use the certification mark on the produce since the date of notification of suspension.

2.11.5 The information about the suspension and withdrawal/cancellation of certifications shall be made publicly available by the Certification Body on its website.

2.11.6 The certification body shall revoke suspension only when;
   a) Corrective actions have been taken and verified by the certification body.
   b) Farm confirms compliance to Criteria requirements.

2.11.7 Suspension shall not exceed a period of six months. The producer’s inability to resolve issues relating to suspension within this period shall normally lead to revocation or cancellation of certification.

2.12 Renewal of certification
2.12.1 The certification shall be renewed before the expiry of certificate. However the renewal process and the renewal of certification decision shall be taken on or before the certificate expiration date. Exception as mentioned in the extension of certification. In order to achieve the same, the certification body shall send the Renewal notice to the certified units at least four months prior to expiry of certificate validity period.

2.12.2 The producer shall apply for renewal in the prescribed format along with fee, if any prescribed by the certification body at least 3 months before expiry of the certification.

2.12.3 The onsite surveillance evaluation conducted towards the end of third year and before the expiration of the certificate shall be considered as surveillance cum renewal evaluation. The objectives of this evaluation will be a combination of first evaluation and surveillance evaluations.

2.12.4 The certification body shall review the performance of the certified unit who has sought renewal of the certification, with respect to compliance to certification criteria during the entire certification cycle, prior to a decision on the renewal of the certificate. The review shall essentially be based on the following:
   a) Surveillance and renewal evaluation reports for the evaluations carried out during the certification cycle. The NCs raised and the satisfactory resolution of the issues raised and their effectiveness.
   b) Handling and disposal of any non-conforming products
   c) Any suspension of certificate during the previous validity period;
   d) corrective actions taken
   e) complaints, if any received,
   f) Adverse information from stakeholders and regulators, if any.

2.12.5 The review shall be conducted by competent person(s) designated for the job.

2.12.6 The decision for renewal of certification shall be taken by competent personnel authorized for the same, based on the satisfactory performance of the certified producers as revealed through the review process.

2.12.7 The certification body shall not renew certification with conditions for compliance to be verified subsequently. There shall be no conditional renewal of certification.

2.12.8 When performance of the certified producer is not satisfactory, the certification body shall withhold the renewal of the certificate to the certified producer clearly stating the reasons and give time for effecting corrective actions. The verification and decision on renewal should be taken within 3 months of the certification expiry date. In cases where it can be established that the performance is not satisfactory with respect to specific produce, the renewal may be decided for reduced scope, covering those produce, where the performance can be demonstrated to be satisfactory.

2.12.9 The corrective actions shall be verified generally on site unless the certification body can verify the same off site prior to considering for renewal of certificate. The justification for onsite review shall be recorded.

2.12.10 The renewal shall be affected from the date of the expiry of the previous certificate and the intervening period shall be treated as period of suspension and clearly stated on the Certificate. The farm unit shall not claim certification or use the Certification Mark during this period.
2.12.11 In case the certified producer does not complete satisfactorily actions within three months, the certificate shall stand expired from the date of expiry of previous validity.

2.12.12 When a certificate is not renewed, it shall expire at the end of validity period.

2.13 Extension of Certificate

2.13.1 In exception situation where the evaluation is not carried out before the expiry of certificate the certificate can be extended for a maximum period of 4 months. The CB has to issue an extended certificate and shall mention this on the certificate. The conditions for the same are as follows:-

   a) The client has applied for the renewal with CB before the expiry date and the fees paid.
   b) The CB has some logistical issues or other which can be harvest not ready other like natural calamities or similar.
   c) The client not ready due to medical reasons.

For extension first condition shall be fulfilled. The CB shall conduct the evaluation at the earliest but not later than 3 months so that the certification process can be completed before 4 months. It is mandatory to conduct evaluation within 3 months in case of extended certificate.

2.14 Revocation / Cancellation

2.14.1 The certification body shall revoke/ cancel the certificate when;

   a) The certified unit contravenes the terms and conditions of certification and provisions of the Scheme, like repeated failures of samples, suspension of certificate beyond the stipulated period, inadequate corrective actions, lack of compliance to standard requirement, misuse of Certification Mark, etc.
   b) repeated non-compliance of certified farm to the certification criteria and the inability of the corrective actions taken to ensure compliance, or if the proposed plan for corrective actions is likely to take considerable time, beyond 6 months for implementation.
   c) the certificate has remained under suspension (see clause 2.11.2 and 2.11.7 of this section) for more than six months.
   d) Requested by the certified producer, if the operation(s) in the certified units premises can no longer be carried due to reasons of spillages, run-off, pollution of water or land unit or natural calamities such as flood, fire, earthquake etc.

2.15 Changes affecting certification

2.15.1 When the GAP certification Scheme introduces new or revised requirements both in standards/ Certification criteria and Certification Process requirements that affect the certified producer, the certification body shall ensure these changes are communicated to all certified producers. The certification body shall verify the implementation of the changes by its certified clients and shall take actions required by the Scheme.

2.15.2 The contractual agreement with the certified producer shall have clearly defined clause which makes it mandatory for the certified client to agree to implement the changes in his processes and produce, necessitated by changes in above requirements.
2.15.3 Following decision and publication of the changed requirements, the certification body shall verify that each certified producer makes necessary adjustments within a reasonable time, unless the MoAD itself has decided the time lines. The verification may involve steps like farm visit, testing of samples in an independent laboratory, evaluation, review and decision and issuance of revised formal certification documentation to extend or reduce the scope of certification, etc. In case the changes necessitate changes in requirements, then the certification body shall also review and approve changes and make necessary revision in the Certification agreement to reflect the revised requirements. Records shall provide justification for activities chosen for the purpose verification of changes.

2.15.4 The certified producer shall also be bound by the certification agreement to inform the Certification Body about changes initiated by the client which have the potential to affect the Produce compliance to the certification criteria. Based on the nature of changes informed, the certification body shall decide the verification activities, which may include the activities as stated in above clauses and all other process steps, as relevant.

2.15.5 The certification agreement between the certification body and the producer shall have provision for adhering to the requirements of the certification process and meeting the provisions of the Standard as a precursor for awarding certification.

2.16 Change of Location/Ownership/Name

2.16.1 The certified producer shall inform the certification body of any change in the location or cultivation practices or any other on-farm processes.

2.16.2 On receipt of such information, the certification body shall issue instructions to the certified producer for suspension of certification with immediate effect.

2.16.3 The producer shall be subject to an onsite evaluation and evaluation at the new site like an Initial Evaluation of an applicant.

2.16.4 If the evaluation is satisfactory, the certification body shall transfer the Certificate to the new location and the producer with its farm at the changed location shall be permitted to affix the Certification Mark for NEPALGAP produced therein.

2.16.5 The certification body shall endorse the change of premises on the Certificate.

2.16.6 In the event of change of ownership, the organization shall provide necessary documentary evidence. The new management of the organization shall submit its acceptance to the agreement with the certification body and payment of fees. The same process shall be followed as and when an existing applicant undergoes a change in management. Such changes shall not call for a visit to the production site.

2.16.7 In case of Group Certification in case of change of Name, the producer shall inform the change in the name to the certification body supported with documentary evidence, and if satisfied the certification body shall endorse the Certificate in the new name.

2.17 Extension and/or Reduction of scope – This shall cover process for inclusion of additional crops/members as described in Part III Section 1 of the Certification Criteria document.
2.17.1 The certified producer shall be required to make a formal application for the purpose of inclusion of additional producer crops/ or extension or reduction of members as applicable in a group certification scenario. In case of group certification e.g., if a producer has been certified for 15 farmers and wishes to include additional members under the same farm produce crops of fruits/vegetable or wishes to include additional members in his certification, he shall require to apply for extension of scope. Along with the application the producer shall send information about description of produce crops to be included, production processes in the form of revised application in case of single or group certification. Additionally, in group certification, while the same applies for change or extension of crops as single farm certification, the additional provisions apply in case of inclusion of farmer members. The producer needs to provide details of additional members along with the controls exercised by the applicant producer for ensuring produce conformity to the requirements. A maximum of 10% area or 10% producer members can be added to existing certificate without an additional onsite evaluation. Additional crop may require additional onsite sample inspection particularly if the crop added is having different cultural practices.

2.17.2 The certification body shall study the information received and carry out an offsite desk review using a competent evaluator to assess if there are substantial changes in the operation from the ones already certified. Based on this review, the certification body shall decide any of the following actions:
   a) Conduct a visit for evaluation for the process step same as that for first assessment. Based on the results of evaluation decide about inclusion of the crops or the members in case of group certification in the existing certificate of the producer.
   b) In cases where there no changes in QMS and the farm operations, for example when the producer wishes to include additional crop area, then the certification body may take a decision based on the information supplied in the application itself and decide about the inclusion of the crops. However the certification body shall ensure that a sample from this additional area is visited during the next scheduled farm evaluation. In case the sample is observed to be non-compliant to the standard/ Certification criteria in respect of farm operations then all the process steps described in above clauses shall be carried out.
   c)

2.17.3 The certification body clearly records the reasons and the justification for its decision on choice of one of the three options as stated above

2.17.4 The extension of scope shall be clearly mentioned in the certificate document along with its date of inclusion for avoiding any misrepresentation or misinterpretation. Irrespective of the date of inclusion, the validity of the Certificate shall remain unchanged.

2.18 Certification Fees

2.18.1 A fee may be charged to the producers for various activities of the certification scheme, without any discrimination between units, geographical location, size of the unit, caste or gender etc.

2.18.2 The certification body’s fee structure shall be publically accessible and also be provided on request.

2.18.3 The certification body shall notify and obtain consent to its fee proposed to be charged from the applicant producer organizations prior to grant of certification. As and when
the fee undergoes a change, the same shall be communicated to all including applicants and the farm units certified under this Scheme of certification for their acceptance.

2.19 Records

2.19.1 The certification body shall have a documented policy and procedures in respect of the retention of records to demonstrate that all Certification Process requirements have been effectively fulfilled.

2.19.2 The certification related records shall be retained for two certification cycles. If the certification Scheme involves complete re-evaluation of the produce(s) within a determined cycle, records shall be retained at least for the current and two more cycles.

2.19.3 The certification body shall keep records confidential. Records shall be transported, transmitted and transferred in a way that ensures confidentiality is maintained.

2.19.4 The certification records shall include records for all producers, including all producers that submitted applications, and all producers evaluated, certified, or with certifications suspended or withdrawn/ cancelled. The records of certification of producers shall include the following:

   a) Application information and results of application review and evaluator/team competence records;
   b) Evaluation planning and preparation records, evaluation plans and other related records;
   c) Records of onsite evaluation reports and related records;
   d) Final evaluation records, Records of verification of correction and corrective actions;
   e) Records of review and certification decisions; committee deliberations and decisions, if applicable;
   f) Certification agreement;
   g) Certification Documentation (certificate etc), including scope of certification;
   h) Records of complaints and appeals, and any subsequent correction or corrective actions;
   i) Records of all surveillance activities carried out suspension, withdrawal and consequent actions taken.
   j) Related records necessary to establish the credibility of the certification, such as evidence of the competence of evaluators, technical experts, evaluators, review personnel, evaluators and decision makers, continuation of certification, etc. as relevant;
   k) Any other records as relevant to the Certification Process, in order to provide confidence that the certification Scheme requirements (Part III Section 2) were complied with.

4.20 Complaints and appeals

2.20.1 The certification body shall have a documented procedure for handling of complaints and appeals. This shall include complaints from all stakeholders, especially its certified producers as well as customers of its certified/applicant producers. The procedure shall include the process steps for receiving and recording, evaluating and establishing validity of the same, investigating and make decisions on complaints and appeals. The process step shall also include the activities of root cause analysis, correction and corrective actions.
2.20.2 The procedure for handling of complaints shall be made available to public on the certification body’s website and shall also be easily accessible on the website.

2.20.3 Upon receipt of a complaint or appeal, the certification body shall confirm whether the complaint or appeal relates to certification activities for which it is responsible and, if so, shall address the same. The certification body shall acknowledge receipt of a formal complaint or appeal.

2.20.4 The certification body shall be responsible for gathering and verifying all necessary information (as far as possible) to progress the complaint or appeal to a decision.

2.20.5 If the complaint relates to a certified producer and the certified produce supplied by the producer, then the examination and evaluation of the complaints shall take into consideration the effectiveness and implementation of the producer’s internal quality systems. The process of establishing validity of the certified produce, should generally involve processes like conduct of additional surveillance activities – visit to certified producers premises for special evaluation, testing and evaluation of certified produce including those picked up from market, against which the complaint had been received, etc. The decisions on complaint shall then be based on the result of additional surveillance activities.

2.20.6 The certification body’s complaint handling process shall document the actions to be taken by the certification body as well as the certified producer, in case the certified produce, against which the complaint was received, was observed to be non-compliant with the specified requirements. Some of these actions/conditions shall also be included in the certification body’s legally enforceable contract with the producer.

2.20.7 The certification body shall record and track complaints and appeals, as well as actions undertaken to resolve them.

2.20.8 The decision resolving the complaint or appeal shall be made by, or reviewed and approved by, person(s) not involved in the certification activities related to the complaint or appeal. To ensure that there is no conflict of interest, personnel (including those acting in a managerial capacity) who have provided any service for a producer, or been employed by a producer, shall not be used by the certification body to review or approve the resolution of a complaint or appeal for that producer within two years following the end of the consultancy or employment.

2.20.9 Whenever possible, the certification body shall give formal notice of the outcome and the end of the complaint process to the complainant.

2.20.10 In respect of appeals the certification body shall ensure that the individual(s)/committee entrusted with handling of appeal and its resolution decision are independent of the persons involved in certification related recommendations and decision and their position in the certification body shall be such that it shall not be possible to influence their decisions with respect to the subject of the appeal.

2.20.11 The procedure shall also have provision for giving a written statement to the appellant, of the appeal findings including the reasons for the decisions reached and also communicating to the appellant about the provision for giving an opportunity to formally present his case.
2.19.12 Based on the presentation made, the individual or a committee appointed for hearing the case shall take a final decision on the appeal and a formal notice of the outcome and the end of the appeal process shall be given to the appellant.

2.20.13 The certification body shall take any subsequent action needed to resolve the complaint or appeal.
SECTION 3. REQUIREMENTS FOR CERTIFICATION BODIES

3.1 Scope:

3.1.1 This document elaborates on the requirements specified in ISO/IEC 17065:2012, as applicable to the Certification body operating the NEPALGAP Certification Scheme for agriculture produce and also specifies specific additional requirements that the Certification Body operating this Scheme shall need to fulfil.

3.1.2 The additional criteria described in this document shall form the necessary adjunct to the requirements prescribed in ISO 17065:2012 and will also need to be complied with by the Certification Body, in addition to the generic requirements prescribed in ISO 17065:2012 and the Certification Process requirements prescribed in Part III Section 2 “SAARC Good Agriculture Practices (GAP) Certification Scheme: Fruits & Vegetables - Certification Process”.

3.1.3 The clause numbers in this document are aligned to the main clause numbers of ISO/IEC 17065:2011 for the purpose of ease of usage. These are also prefixed with the word “A” for the purpose of indicating that these are additional.

A.1 General Requirements:

A.1.1 Legal and contractual matters

A.1.1.1 Legal responsibility

A.1.1.1.1 In addition to the requirements specified in clause 4.1.1 of ISO/IEC 17065:2012 the following requirements shall also apply.

A.1.1.1.2 Certification Body which are part of government, or are government departments, shall be deemed to be legal entities on the basis of their governmental status. Such bodies’ status and structure shall be formally documented and the bodies shall comply with all the requirements of this standard.

A.1.1.1.3 The accreditation and recognition shall be granted to a legal entity, who can be legally held responsible for its work irrespective of whether the entire organization or a part of it performs the certification functions.

A.1.1.1.4 The certification body shall be responsible for and shall retain authority for its decisions relating to certification. This includes the granting, maintaining, renewing, extending, reducing, suspending and withdrawing of certification.

A.1.1.2 Certification agreement
A.1.1.2.1 The certification body shall have a legally enforceable agreement for the provision of certification activities to its client who shall be producers of fruits and vegetables either as single entity or a group entity hereinafter referred as producer. Certification agreements shall take into account the responsibilities of the certification body and its client.

A.1.1.2.2 The Certification body shall document clear instructions regarding appropriate use of certification mark and for providing information about certification status by its clients. It shall also identify the aspects that would be considered as misleading and unauthorised as relevant to the relevant certification scheme. The certification agreement shall make appropriate cross references to the above document, so as to make it legally binding.

A.1.1.3 Use of certificates and marks of conformity

A.1.1.3.1 The following requirements are additional to those stated in clause 4.1.3 of ISO/IEC 17065:2012.

A.1.1.3.2 The certification body shall ensure that the Certification mark is affixed only to produce covered under the scope of the certificate. It shall also ensure that the size, colour of the Certification mark is as prescribed by the NEPALGAP Scheme. The certification body should not allow the accreditation mark to be used on certified produce.

A.1.1.3.3 The Certification Body shall have a documented procedure for dealing with instances of non-compliances with respect to the specified requirements for use and display of NEPALGAPs Certification Mark.

In case the Certification Body operates more than one product certification schemes, then it may have a procedure specifying generic requirements common to all schemes and in line with the requirements of ISO/IEC 17065:2012 and the specific requirements as specified for NEPALGAP scheme for farm produce.

A.1.1.3.4 If a certification body incorrectly claims accredited status for certificates issued before appropriate accreditation has been granted, the accreditation body shall require it subsequently to withdraw them and also impose any other sanctions as deemed appropriate.

A.1.2 Management of impartiality: The CB needs to comply with the requirements specified in clause 4.2 of ISO/IEC 17065:2012 the following requirements shall also apply.

A.1.2.1 The top management’s commitment to impartiality shall be demonstrated through:

   a) Documenting the CB’s policy on safeguarding impartiality and ensuring that it is understood at all levels of the organization. Implementing good practices like establishing “Code of Conduct” and requiring internal and external personnel to abide by it.

   b) Having a defined institutional structure and impartiality policy and procedures, appropriate implementation of these policy and procedures and operation and conduct of its activities and personnel.
c) Having a system that ensures appropriate management of conflict of interest for ensuring objectivity of its certification functions.

d) Taking action to respond to any threats to its impartiality arising from the actions of other parts of the organization, persons outside of the organization, subcontractors, related bodies or other bodies or organizations.

e) Maintaining a professional environment and culture in the organization that supports behaviour of all personnel that is consistent with impartiality.

f) Making available to public through its website, its policy on impartiality.

A 1.2.2 The CB shall have a system for disclosure and documentation of the types of activities carried out by its internal and external personnel and subcontractors in general and in particular regarding the designing of relevant product/process/service, consultation, internal evaluation/auditing, training, etc. The above information shall also be used for identification of actual/potential risks to impartiality.

A 1.2.3 When a relationship poses an unacceptable threat to impartiality (such as a wholly owned subsidiary of the certification body requesting certification from its parent), then certification shall not be provided.

A.1.3 Liability and financing

A.1.3.1 The certification body shall be able to demonstrate that it has evaluated the risks arising from its certification activities and that it has adequate arrangements (e.g. insurance or reserves) to cover liabilities arising from its operations in each of its fields of activities and the geographic areas in which it operates.

A.1.3.2 The certification body shall be able to demonstrate that it has a reasonable expectation of being able to provide and to continue to provide the service in accordance with its contractual obligations. Certification Body shall also be able to provide sufficient evidence to demonstrate their viability, e.g. management reports or minutes, annual reports, financial audit reports, financial plans, etc.

A.1.3.3 The means by which the certification body obtains financial support shall be such as to allow the certification body to retain its impartiality.

A.1.3.4 In addition to the above the Certification Bodies shall also demonstrate to the Impartiality committee, that initially, and on an ongoing basis, commercial, financial or other pressures do not compromise its impartiality.

A.1.4 Non-discriminatory conditions: The certification body shall have means of demonstrating compliance to this requirements of ISO 17065:2012 (clause 4.4), through its policies and procedures as well as actual practice.

A.1.5 Confidentiality: In addition to the requirements specified in ISO 17065:2012 (clause 4.5) following shall apply:
A.1.5.1 The Certification Body shall have a documented policy and mechanism to safeguard the confidentiality of information obtained or created during the course of certification activities. It shall also be part of the certification agreement.

A.1.5.2 Personnel, including any committee members, contractors, personnel of external bodies or individuals acting on the certification body’s behalf, shall keep confidential all information obtained or created during the performance of the certification body's activities. There shall be a mechanism such as obtaining signed confidentiality agreements, etc, for ensuring the same.

A.1.5.3 The certification body shall have available and use equipment and facilities that ensure the secure handling of confidential information (e.g. documents, records).

A.1.5.4 In case of transfer of certificate or application, when the client decides to move from one CB to another CB, the CB to which the client is now moving may ask the previous CB for information on the reasons for such movement or the performance of the client with respect to the certification requirements. Such information shall not be considered as confidential and the certification body shall inform its client of this requirement, in advance, through agreements, etc.

A.1.6 Publicly available information

A.1.6.1 Making the information publicly available through the CB’s website shall be the only means of meeting this requirement.

A.1.6.2 The following information with respect to NEPALGAP Scheme shall be made publicly available on the CB’s website. The information provided shall be accurate, non-misleading and where relevant detailed enough for the reader to clearly understand.

- The certification processes, from application stage to the grant of certification including the evaluation processes; the system for maintenance of certification, including processes for surveillance, market sampling, recertification, scope extension and reduction, suspension and withdrawal. The information shall also cover the terms and conditions of certification and the use of certificates or NEPALGAP, as contained in the Certification Agreement
- The specific rules and conditions for granting, for maintaining, for extending or reducing the scope of, for suspending, for withdrawing or for refusing certification.
- Requirements of NEPALGAP Scheme, including the NEPALGAP certification criteria and application form shall be available to the applicant. The CB may also provide any other guidance documents on the certification criteria for the benefit of the applicant, as long as they are not advisory/consultative in nature.
- Information about applications registered and certifications granted, suspended or withdrawn.
- On request from any party, the certification body shall provide the means to confirm the validity of a given certification and the provision for the same shall be made available on the website.
- a directory of valid certifications (Please also see additional requirements given in the document “Certification Process (Part III Section 2)”.
- a description of the rights and duties of applicants and clients, including requirements, restrictions or limitations on the use of the certification body's name and certification mark and on the ways of referring to the certification granted.
A.1.6.3 The CB shall have procedure for frequent updating of the information on its website. The responsibilities for ensuring accuracy of the information made available on the website, ensuring frequent updates, etc. shall be documented.

A.1.6.4 The CB shall list out the sources of its finances.

A.1.6.5 The information about fees charged shall clearly provide the basis on which the fees are charged. It may be generic in nature; however it shall give some basic information about the CB’s fee structure.

A.1.6.6 The information on complaints handling process and the CB’s procedure shall be directly available to the public, without the public having to go through layers of cross linkages.

A.1.6.7 Information exchange between a certification body and its clients

A.1.6.7.1 Information on the certification activity and requirements- The certification body shall provide and update clients on the following:

a) a detailed description of the initial and continuing certification activity, including the application, initial evaluation, surveillance evaluation, and the process for granting, maintaining, reducing, extending, suspending, withdrawing certification and recertification;

b) the Certification Criteria for NEPALGAP Scheme;

c) information about the fees for application, initial certification and continuing certification;

d) the certification body’s requirements for prospective clients;

e) documents describing the rights and duties of certified clients as well as obligations on part of the certification body;

f) information on procedures for handling complaints (both by the certification body as well by the producer, in respect of complaints against certified produce) and appeals;

A.2 Structural requirements: All the requirements as specified in clause 5 of ISO/IEC 17065: 2012 shall apply and in addition the following requirements shall also apply.

A.2.1.1 The organization structure shall include structure of the parent body (legal entity) if separate from the department/division that offers certification.

A.2.1.2 It shall also include structure of the related departments in relation to the department offering certification services. In addition all requirements specified vide clause 5.1.2 of ISO/IEC 17065:2012 shall apply.

A.2.1.3 The CB shall identify and document all related bodies (separate legal entities) as well as other departments of the same legal entity and their activities and functions and their relationships with the CB when describing its organizational structure.

A.2.1.4 An organization chart(s) shall be used for showing the structure, supported by the documented responsibilities and authorities for the functions described in the organization chart.
A.2.1.5 The Impartiality committee and any other committees involved in operation of the CB and the Certification Process, shall also be shown as part of the organizational structure.

A.2.1.6 The identification of responsibilities, however done, shall clearly and unambiguously reflect the responsibilities for activities/functions as described vide clause 5.1.3 a) to n) of ISO/IEC 17065:2012.

A.2.1.7 The requirement specified vide clause 5.1.4 of ISO/IEC 17065:2012 shall cover the Impartiality committee and any other committees, if established by the CB for certification scheme development, planning for certification evaluation (sampling and determination), certification review and decision making, appeals process, etc.

A.2.2 Mechanism for safeguarding impartiality

A.2.2.1 An Impartiality committee with specific responsibility for safeguarding the CB's impartiality in its certification functions and for ensuring that the policy on safeguarding impartiality and related procedures and other systems are effectively implemented shall be the means of fulfilling this requirement.

A.2.2.2 The Impartiality Committee shall:

a) assist the CB in developing the policies relating to impartiality of its certification activities,
b) counteract any tendency on the part of a certification body to allow commercial or other considerations to prevent the consistent objective provision of certification activities,
c) advise on matters affecting confidence in certification, including openness and public perception, and
d) conduct a review, as least once annually, of the impartiality of the audit, certification and decision making processes of the certification body.
e) Approve the conflict of interest analysis and the mitigation measures described in clauses 4.2.3 and 4.2.4 of ISO/IEC 17065:2012.

Other tasks or duties may be assigned to the committee provided these additional tasks or duties do not compromise its essential role of ensuring impartiality.

The composition, terms of reference, duties, authorities, competence of members and responsibilities of this committee shall be formally documented and authorized by the top management of the certification

This committee shall meet regularly, at least once a year, and a complete record of the proceedings of this committee shall be maintained.

A.2.2.3 The mechanism shall be formally documented to ensure the following requirements specified in clause A.5.2.4 of this document.

A.2.2.4 The CB shall ensure that

a) The committee for safeguarding impartiality shall be separated from the management of the CB operations and established at the highest level within the organization, independent of its day-to-day operations.
b) In the composition of the committee, participation of key interested parties shall be ensured, with a representation of a balance of interests such that no single interest predominates. Internal or external personnel of the certification body are considered to be a single interest, and shall not predominate.

c) Its chairman shall be a person independent from and external to the CB.

A.2.2.5 Impartiality Committee meetings may be observed by the Accreditation Body’s Assessment Teams as part of the Certification body’s accreditation process.

A.2.2.6 Although every interest cannot be represented in the mechanism, a certification body shall identify and invite significantly interested parties.

Such interests may include: clients of the certification body, customers of organizations whose management systems are certified, representatives of industry trade associations, representatives of governmental regulatory bodies or other governmental services, or representatives of non-governmental organizations, including consumer organizations.

A.3 Resource Requirements:

A.3.1 Certification Body Personnel

A.3.1.1 General

A.3.1.1.1 The certification body shall have, as part of its own organization, personnel having sufficient competence for managing the NEPALGAP Scheme that it operates.

A.3.1.1.2 While determining sufficiency of resources the CB shall also take in to consideration the requirements with respect to technical personnel competent for the development and establishment of certification body’s internal systems in accordance with the NEPALGAP scheme requirements and for other operational functions like application review, Evaluation (all stages like initial, final, surveillance, etc), review and decision making.

A.3.1.1.3 The certification body shall employ, or have access to, a sufficient number of inspectors, including audit team leaders, and technical experts to cover all of its activities and to handle the volume of audit work performed.

A.3.1.1.4 The CB shall determine competency requirements (knowledge and skills required for different functions defined in the CB’s structure) and describe the criteria in terms of education, qualification, experience, knowledge and skills, training, etc. These shall cover management as well as Certification Process related functions. These shall include the following:

a) Development and establishment of certification body’s internal systems in accordance with the NEPALGAP scheme requirements.

b) Management of the certification activities.

c) Application review.

d) Evaluation (all stages like initial, final, surveillance, etc).

e) Undertaking audits -these shall cover inspectors, team leaders and technical experts as well as audit teams as whole.

f) Review and decision making.

A.3.1.1.5 The activities as listed at A.3.1.1.4 – a), b), c), d) and f) shall essentially be carried out by the CB’s internal resources. Internal resources include the following:
a) Regular employees.

b) Employed on long term (one year or more) contract on full time basis.

c) Employed on long term contract (2 years or more) on part time basis.

Individuals assigned to perform certification functions as stated above need not necessarily each have all the required competencies, providing the CB can demonstrate that it has the collective competence to perform those functions and that in individual cases an individual or a group of individuals having the required competence has performed the individual function. For example, the certification decision maker may not have the required competence, but if the report has been reviewed by an independent technical expert the collective competence may be evident.

A.3.1.1.5 The CB shall also have processes for evaluating if the designated/to be designated persons have the necessary competence as described. Records should show which personnel are designated as competent and the date of evaluation.

A.3.1.2 Competence of Management and Personnel

A.3.1.2.1 The certification body shall have processes to ensure that personnel have appropriate knowledge of product certification, certification criteria, and relevant regulations and other related regulatory requirements as per the certification criteria including the package of practices and other requirements for the crops for which certification is being offered, food safety and hygiene requirements, produce quality, environment and social responsibility requirements as per the certification criteria, etc. In short the the certification body shall have processes to ensure that personnel have appropriate knowledge relevant to different levels as specified in the “Certification Criteria ( Part III Section 1)” and the certification scheme and process related requirements as specified in “Certification Process (Part III Section 2)”.

A.3.1.2.2 The certification body shall determine the competence required for each technical area required for the cultivation of fruits and vegetables and for each function in the certification activity as appropriate for the responsibilities handled. It shall also determine the means for the demonstration of competence prior to carrying out specific functions.

A.3.1.2.3 The functions described shall cover at least those listed in clause A.3.1.1.3 of this document.

A.3.1.2.4 The certification body shall have access to the necessary technical expertise for advice on matters directly relating to certification for agricultural crops in which the certification body operates. Such advice may be provided externally or by certification body personnel.

A.3.1.3 Competence requirements for Personnel Involved in Certification activities

A.3.1.3.1 Application Review function - The personnel performing the application review shall be qualified for their understanding of the certification criteria as relevant for the level applied for, the certification scheme and process requirements especially the requirements with respect to estimation of producer’s risk classification and the requirements related to manday estimations, knowledge of regulatory requirements, sufficient for carrying out the application review function effectively in accordance with the Certification Process requirements.
A.3.1.3.2 Evaluation function – Competence of personnel assigned the evaluation function shall be the same as for an auditor in the technical area. Further the evaluator shall have Lead assessor (team leader status).

A.3.1.3.3 Technical Review functions – The technical review function shall be independent of audit and evaluation functions. The technical review shall consists of an independent and structured assessment to verify if all the NEPALGAP scheme related requirements have been fulfilled. The personnel (or group of personnel) performing the certification decision shall be qualified for their understanding of The Certification Criteria, Certification Scheme and Certification Process requirements as relevant to the level being certified and the crop, regulatory requirements, and their ability to correctly grant or expand the scope of certification on the basis that the evaluation activities, information and results are a demonstration of fulfillment of requirements of the certification criteria in accordance with the certification scheme.

A.3.1.3.4 Decision making – This function involves decision on granting, maintaining, renewing, extending, reducing, suspending or withdrawing certification and essential is an authoritative function. The person(s), who take(s) the certification decision shall have a level of knowledge and experience sufficient to evaluate the information obtained from the evaluation process and the review recommendations. Review and the certification decision may be completed concurrently by the same person(s). In that case the Reviewer cum decision maker(s) shall have the combined competence of technical reviewer and decision maker.

A.3.1.3.5 Competence of inspectors - Inspectors involved in audits of the producer’s shall be qualified on the basis of appropriate education, experience, training and skills to perform an assessment against the relevant NepalGAP certification criteria. The generic requirements with respect to education, experience, training and skills, essential for initial qualification, are given below:

a) Education – Degree and/or Post-secondary education in any stream of science relevant to food, agriculture, horticulture, soil sciences or agro-forestry areas, sufficient to provide knowledge of basic microbiology, food safety, agronomy, plant entomology and pathology, and hygienic conditions in the production and processing of horticulture crops as relevant to the crops certified.

b) Work Experience – The auditor shall have at least 3 years of full time equivalent post qualification experience in horticulture/ or agriculture. The number of years of total work experience may be reduced by one year if the auditor has completed appropriate post graduate education in the education relevant to horticulture and/or agriculture sector.

c) Training – Successful completion of training in audit techniques based on ISO 17021/19011. Appropriate training in respect of agriculture, horticulture, soil sciences or agro forestry areas, agronomy, plant entomology and pathology, and hygienic conditions in the production and processing of horticulture crops. All qualified inspectors shall undergo all the training relevant to the criteria level they will be auditing in as the sector (technical Area) experts.

d) Audit experience – Experience of conducting audits/inspections in farm sector. Experience of conducting audits of crop based system shall also be considered. For initial qualification as an auditor for NepalGAP scheme at least 2 man days of audits in farm sector, as an observer/trainee, under the leadership of a qualified auditor, in the last 3 year period shall be required.. Audit experience as stated in this clause is
essential for all inspectors for the purpose of qualification. Additional has to face a witness audit form the qualified auditor.

A.3.1.3.6 The CB’s system shall also define the qualification criteria for qualification of inspectors for different crops and it shall be based on the risk classification of the crops. The risk based classification system for crops shall ensure an adequate knowledge of products and processes in the technical area of the particular crop.

A.3.1.3.7 For horticulture crops the auditor qualification criteria shall ensure that the auditor acquires the necessary competence to audit farm, product process knowledge through a combination of education and experience of at least 3 years in the relevant technical area.

A.3.1.3.8 For maintaining the qualification of the auditor, the certification body shall ensure that inspectors have performed a minimum of 4 audit mandays of farms per year.

A.3.1.3.9 Selection of audit team - The certification body shall ensure the competence of the audit team. The audit team shall have appropriate knowledge of the crops and its agronomic practices. The combination of competences may be made up through different inspectors in the team as well as supplemented through use of technical experts. However every audit team shall have as minimum one auditor qualified for the technical area. The team shall be lead by the auditor having team leader qualifications.

A.3.1.4 Management of personnel involved in the Certification Process

A.3.1.4.1 The certification body shall have defined and documented processes for recruitment selecting, training, formally authorizing personnel for functions like application review, audits, evaluation and review/decision making functions. Where applicable the initial competence evaluation shall include a demonstration of applicable personal attributes and the ability to apply required knowledge and skills during actual performance of the activity, as determined by a competent evaluator observing the conduct of the activity or through review of records, as relevant and applicable.

A.3.1.4.2 The CB shall have documented procedure for carrying out evaluation leading to the formal authorization of personnel for specific functions in the Certification Process. The evaluation process may include a combination of methods like review of records, feedback, interviews, observations (of persons performing the task) and examinations. Depending upon the role and functions in the Certification Process the appropriate combination of methods shall be chosen.

A.3.1.4.3 In respect of audit personnel, the certification body shall have a process to achieve and demonstrate effective auditing, including the use of inspectors and audit team leaders possessing generic auditing skills and knowledge, as well as skills and knowledge appropriate for auditing in specific technical areas.

A.3.1.4.4 The certification body shall ensure that inspectors (and, where needed, technical experts) are knowledgeable of its audit processes, certification requirements (including NEPALGAP scheme requirements) and other relevant requirements. The certification body shall ensure that the inspectors and technical experts have an access to an up-to-date set of documented procedures giving audit instructions and all relevant information on the certification activities.
A.3.1.4.5 The certification body shall use inspectors and technical experts and evaluators, only for those certification activities where they have demonstrated competence.

A.3.1.4.6 The certification body shall identify training needs and shall offer or provide access to specific training to ensure its inspectors, technical experts and other personnel involved in certification activities are competent for the functions they perform. The certification body shall also have a process to achieve and demonstrate effective evaluation of the training process.

A.3.1.4.7 The certification body shall ensure the satisfactory performance of all personnel involved in the evaluation and certification activities. There shall be documented procedures and criteria for monitoring and measurement of the performance of all persons involved, based on the frequency of their usage and the level of risk linked to their activities. In particular, the certification body shall review the competence of its personnel in the light of their performance in order to identify training needs.

A.3.1.4.8 The documented monitoring procedures for evaluators shall include a combination of on-site observation, review of evaluation reports and feedback from clients or from the market.

A.3.1.4.9 The certification body shall periodically observe the performance of each evaluator on-site. The frequency of on-site observations shall be based on need determined from all monitoring information available, but should not be greater than once a year.

A.3.1.4.10 The certification body shall make clear to each person concerned their duties, responsibilities and authorities.

A.3.1.4.11 The personnel records shall also include up-to-date information about their affiliations and any relevant consultancy that may have been provided, which may be considered as potential source of conflict of interest, while assigning evaluation and other jobs to them. This is most relevant in respect of the external resources.

A.3.1.5 Use of individual external inspectors and external technical experts

A.3.1.5.1 The certification body shall require external inspectors and external technical experts to have a written agreement by which they commit themselves to comply with applicable policies and procedures as defined by the certification body. The agreement shall address aspects relating to confidentiality and to independence from commercial and other interests, and shall require the external inspectors and external technical experts to notify the certification body of any existing or prior association with any organization they may be assigned to audit.

Note: Use of individual inspectors and technical experts under such agreements does not constitute outsourcing as described under A.6.2.

A.3.1.5.2 The contract shall also require the personnel to proactively declare about affiliations (personal and professional) and other jobs/associations like consultancy etc. which may have potential for presenting conflict of interest. It shall also include information about any other association that the individual feels has the potential for threat to impartiality.
A.3.2 Outsourcing/subcontracting

A.3.2.1 The certification body operating the NEPALGAP certification work shall not outsource any activity other than testing. Sending of samples to the CB’s own laboratory shall also be considered as sub-contracting.

A.3.2.2 Test Laboratory

A.3.2.2.1 In case it is required the certification body shall test all samples of produce for independent evaluation, in a laboratory accredited to ISO 17025 with relevant scope of accreditation, for ascertaining conformance to the certification criteria.

A.3.2.2.2 The certification body shall maintain a crop wise/ test wise directory of laboratories to which it intends to sub-contract. It shall have a formal contract with the sub-contracted laboratories for provision of competent services and also for ensuring aspects like impartiality and confidentiality as relevant.

A.3.2.2.3 If the certification body uses an in-house laboratory (part of the same legal entity), it shall be ensured that there exists an adequate separation, in terms of organization structure and reporting and defined responsibilities. It shall also ensure through above means and policies and procedures, that there is no possibility of compromising the independence of the lab personnel by bringing undue pressure over them.

A.3.2.2.4 The certification criteria against which the produce is to be tested shall be clearly mentioned and communicated to the testing laboratory. The sample(s) shall be so dispatched that they do not get damaged and or contaminated, undergo deterioration, and the produce integrity is maintained. The certification body shall have a documented procedure for drawal of samples and their subsequent handling and dispatch to the laboratories. The procedure shall also include aspects like receipt of test reports and their evaluation.

A.4 Process Requirements:

In addition to the requirements specified in clause 7 of ISO/IEC 17065:2012 and Certification Process for this scheme the following requirements shall also apply.

A.4.1 All the NEPALGAP scheme specific Certification Process requirements as specified vide the document “NEPALGAP Scheme for Good Agriculture Practice: Fruits & Vegetables-Certification Process” shall be applicable.

A.4.2 For the purpose of operationalizing the requirements, the certification body shall establish and documented internal processes and procedures strictly based on the requirements specified in the above referred document.

A4.3 The certification body shall also develop and document any additional guidance documents considered essential for uniform application of the certification criteria and certification/scheme requirements by its personnel and for the purpose of knowledge sharing.

A.5 Management system requirements: The requirements to be met are specified in clause 8 of ISO/IEC 17065:2012.
SECTION 4. RULES FOR USE OF CERTIFICATION MARK

4.1 Purpose:

4.1.1 All producer or producer groups (hereinafter referred as Producer) that have been certified under the GAP Certification Scheme (hereinafter referred as Scheme) by the certification bodies approved by respective MoAD of each SAARC country and have been formally approved by the same, are eligible to use of the Scheme Certification Mark.

4.1.2 This section describes the process for approval of the Producer for the use of the Certification Mark and the rules for use of the Scheme Certification Mark by the certified Producer fulfilling the above requirements.

4.1.3 The Scheme Certification Mark, is a protected mark owned by the scheme owner MoAD in Nepal. Its use would indicate that the processes of the relevant Producer's farm are in conformity with specified criteria (Certification Criteria for the Scheme) under the Scheme. The “Certification Mark” is also commonly known as a “Logo”, however for the sake of aligning it with the international requirements the same will henceforth be referred to as the “Mark”.

4.2 Scope:

4.2.1 This section covers the rules for use of the Nepal GAP Certification Mark, hereinafter referred to as the Mark, by the certified producer or producer group and the approved Certification Bodies.

4.3 Eligibility for use of Mark:

4.3.1 Producers or producer groups that have been certified under the Scheme by the certification bodies approved by the MoAD, are eligible to use the Certification Mark or apply for approval for use of the Certification Mark(s).

4.3.2 If the scheme requires an approval from MoAD to use the certification mark, the certified producer shall apply for use of the Mark to the MoAD through the approved Certification Body which has certified it.

4.3.3 The certified producer shall sign a legally enforceable agreement with the MoAD/Certification body whereby it is allowed to use the Mark after agreeing to all the relevant conditions as described in this section.

4.4 Mark and its usage:

4.4.1 There may be more than one Mark(s) depending on whether some or all modules are used as the standard or criteria to certify producers/producer groups.
4.4.2 The Mark(s) shall be distinct for each standard/criteria used by the MoAD for certification of the producers/producer groups.

4.4.3 The Mark may be used as any photographic reduction or enlargement.

4.4.4 The Mark shall be used in such a manner as to imply that the farm produce (fruits and vegetables) has been produced using good practices. It shall not be used to imply that the produce itself is certified i.e. it shall not be applied on the produce.

4.4.5 The Mark shall be used on any document accompanying the lot of certified produce along with the address of the certified farm to indicate to the recipient that the produce is GAP-certified.

4.4.6 The Mark may be used in publicity material, pamphlets, letter heads, other similar stationary; media for exchange of any communication, for promoting the awareness of the Scheme, or the Mark, etc.

4.4.7 The certified producer may also use the certificate issued by the certification body as part of publicity material.

4.4.8 While using the above documents, care shall be taken to ensure that the Mark is used only with respect to the farm(s) certified and it shall not imply that the non-certified farms having common ownership are also certified.

4.4.9 The certified producer shall not make any misleading claims with respect to the Mark.

4.4.10 The certified producer shall not use the Mark any manner as to bring the MoAD into disrepute.

4.4.11 The certified producer, upon suspension or withdrawal of its certification, shall discontinue use of the Mark, in any form.

4.4.12 The certified producer, upon suspension or withdrawal of its certification, shall discontinue use of all advertising matter that contains any reference to its certification status.

4.4.13 Depending upon the extent of violation, the suitable actions may range from advice for corrective actions to withdrawal of certification in situations of grave or repeated violations. In case the certified producer does not take suitable action against the incorrect use of the Mark, the certification body shall withdraw the Certification.

4.4.14 The MoAD may direct the approved certification body to take any of the actions for incorrect use of the Mark or take appropriate legal action itself, if deemed necessary.
4.5 Obligations of the Approved Certification Body:

4.5.1 The Approved Certification Bodies shall obtain the agreement for use of the Mark duly signed in duplicate from the producer/producer group found conforming to the criteria for certification and forward it to the MoAD, if required.

4.5.2 The MoAD, after duly signing the agreement, shall send one original copy to the certified producer/producer group with a copy to the concerned certification body. One original copy shall be retained by the MoAD.

4.5.3 The certification body shall during their surveillance of the producer/producer group monitor the use of the Mark to assist the MoAD in protecting the integrity of the Mark.

4.5.4 In case the Certification Mark is observed to be used by a certified producer contrary to the conditions specified, the certification body shall take suitable action in accordance with the relevant requirements of ISO 17065 and those specified in the documents “Nepal GAP Certification Process” and “Nepal GAP Requirements for Certification Bodies”.

4.6 Fee:

The certified producer shall pay a fee as prescribed by Scheme Owner MoAD, for the use of the Mark. This payment may be made to its certification body for onward submission to the MoAD or as decided by the MoAD.