

LEAF CERTIFICATION

GENERAL REGULATIONS



TUV HELLAS (TUV NORD) S.A.

General Regulations for audit and certification against the LEAF Standard

Version 2

Edited by George Nikolaou

Approved by Margarita Kypriotou

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1. Object

The main object of the present General Regulations is to give a description of the responsibilities and the procedure for LEAF certification. Certification procedure includes the audit preparation and conducting, the certificate granting as well as the surveillance of certification and recertification. This procedure ensures that certification is decided following uniform rules and methods providing equity and consistency of certification.

2. Scope

These procedures apply to the services offered by TUV HELLAS (TUV NORD) SA which is part of the Quality Policy and Quality Management System according to ISO 17065 for product certification. The auditors are responsible for the faithful implementation of the certification procedure according to the instructions provided by TUV HELLAS (TUV NORD) S.A.

3. Definitions

As described in the LEAF MARQUE GLOSSARY on the valid version of the LEAF MARQUE STANDARD.

4. Documents

4.1 Normative documents:

Document type	Language	Issue	Document title
Standard	English	Current	LEAF Marque Standard
Rules	English	Current	LEAF Marque System Rules
Standard	English	Current	EN ISO 17065
Standard	English	Current	EN ISO 19011
Standard	English	Current	Certification Body Requirements
Standard	English	Current	LEAF Marque Oversight Programme

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4.2 Audit checklists:

Document	Language	Issue	Document title
Checklist	English	Current	LEAF Marque Standard
Checklist	English	Current	LEAF Producer Group Quality Management System

4.3 Applications:

Document	Language	Issue	Document title
Application QF-QP-QA-IFA-01-13	English	Current	GlobalG.A.P. Application form including LEAF as add-on and LEAF APPLICATION SUPPLEMENTARY TABLE

4.4 Other Documents

Present Document

QF(QP-LEAF-05-01)-14 Acceptance of rules

5. Responsibilities

5.1 PC AGRO Manager

Is appointed by the CEO and the General Manager of TUV HELLAS (TUV NORD) S.A. and is responsible for:

- General control of the PC AGRO procedures application,
- Monitoring of PC AGRO financial activities,

5.2 PC AGRO Office Manager

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Is appointed by the CEO, the General Manager and the PC AGRO Manager having the following responsibilities:

- Control of the PC AGRO procedures application within the area of responsibility,
- Monitoring of PC AGRO financial activities within the area of responsibility,
- In case of absence is replaced by the PC AGRO Manager.

5.3 Senior Auditor

Is appointed by the PC AGRO Manager, have the Auditor qualifications and is responsible for:

- Application review and approval or rejection,
- Approval of the auditors' team,
- Approval of the audit man-days and the documentation and reporting review,
- Review of the audit process in order to verify compliance with the TUV HELLAS (TUV NORD) S.A. regulations,
- In case of absence or involvement in audit process is replaced by the PC AGRO Manager or Quality Manager.

5.4 Lead Auditor / Auditor

Is appointed by the PC AGRO Manager. The Lead Auditor is responsible for the following tasks:

- Documentation assessment in cooperation with the auditor or expert prior to pre-audit or audit conducting,
- Design of the audit program in agreement with the audit team and the client,
- Proposal to the Senior Auditor for the approval of the audit team,
- Call auditors for meetings during the audit,
- When necessary, completes non conformance reports in collaboration with the auditors,

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- Take the decision for re-audit in collaboration with the auditors,
- Compiles the audit report in collaboration with the auditors (in case of audit team), documenting the audit results.

5.5. Auditor/Inspector qualification and maintenance

Auditor qualification should at minimum include:

1. Baseline Standard (GlobalG.A.P.) auditor / inspector qualifications should be available. A GlobalG.A.P. qualified auditor is eligible to audit the QMS of a LEAF Producer Group and its members while a GlobalG.A.P. qualified inspector can only perform the inspection of individual producers (Option 1).
2. Initial, annual training and regular update or refresher training provided as appropriate by the In House Trainer that includes:

An overview of LEAF Marque and its Intended Impacts.

Structure and content of the LEAF Marque Standard.

LEAF Marque audit process.

Normative Documents.

Oversight and competencies.

3. Witness audits for LEAF Marque auditors should be completed at least once every 4 years.

Auditors and inspectors should also participate at list in one audit / inspection in order to maintain their qualification. If not, then a new training (initial) by the In House Trainer should be attended prior to a new qualification. For the In House Trainer and the Scheme Manager, participation in a minimum number of audits is not a prerequisite as soon as this person fulfills the Standard's Requirements for that position.

5.6 Expert

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A person with expertise or scientific knowledge of the inspected activity. The expert participates in the audit team whenever its contribution deemed necessary but he has no authority to conduct any type of audit.

5.7 Audits

The following table describes the several types of audits that an auditor can carry out according to his competence are demonstrated.

	Initial Audit	Certification Audit	Surveillance Audit
Senior Auditor	X	X	X
Lead Auditor / Auditor	X	X	X
Expert	Participation <i>If necessary</i>	Participation <i>If necessary</i>	Participation <i>If necessary</i>

6. Procedure

6.1 Registration

After receiving and accepting the application from a company, a LEAF Marque Membership is created together with the contractual agreement. It is a responsibility of the company to inform TUV HELLAS (TUV NORD) S.A. for any previous LEAF certification, any open non-conformities from the last audit or other open issues with the outgoing Certification Body. This information is given in the Pre-Transfer Review document of the application form (Not Applicable for first certification).

6.2 Audit arrangements

Auditors involved in LEAF audits come into contact with the client and specify the following topics:

- Scope of the the certification,

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- Basic requirements for certification,
- Certification process,
- Relevant legislation/standards and purpose of the application,
- Certification cost and time needed (approximately).

6.3 Preparation for an audit

Initially, the operator has accepted the financial offer of TUV HELLAS (TUV NORD) S.A. by signing the relevant document which states in detail all the costs for implementing the certification process and its various stages. The financial offer is based on the general information of the company that seeks certification, obtained by the Application form. The financial offer is approved by the PC AGRO Manager or by the PC AGRO Office Manager having responsibility for the particular area.

The financial offer is always consistent with the certification fees table that is notified to the client before signing the Contractual Agreement. Specific references to financial obligations and how to pay the cost of certification are given to the operator.

The decision on whether it is possible to perform the certification is based on the evaluation of the Application and any accompanying documents.

Upon acceptance of the above offer by the client, the document “QF(QP-LEAF-05-01)-14 Acceptance of rules” is signed and a registration number is issued. The names of the auditors who will undertake the audit are communicated to the client, orally or in writing.

Particular attention is paid, so as the auditors are not involved in the last 2 years in advisory services related to the production activities of the client. In addition, the auditor who performs the audit of a particular company should alternate every four years. In particular, it is avoided that an audit of a company is repeated by the same auditor for more than 4 consecutive years.

During the preparation of the audit the auditor evaluates the completeness of the company’s dossier, collects information of the results of previous audits, the closure of any non-conformities and the possible application of corrective actions taken due to sanctions that have been imposed on the business.

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As part of the assignment, the client has the right to be notified, upon request, what other audits or reviews have taken place by the designated auditors in the last 2 years.

6.4 Auditors

The Senior Auditor or the PC AGRO Manager or the PC AGRO Office Manager approves the auditors for certification audit. The audit team is appointed by the Lead Auditor or by the PC AGRO Manager and constitutes from the Lead Auditor or/and the Auditor and an expert deemed to be involved in the audit.

Auditors’ selection is based on the approved list of LEAF Auditors.

The selection is made according to the following criteria:

- Qualifications and prior experience (Lead Auditor, Auditor, Expert)
- validity of the appointment
- approval for the certification scope (according to the codes NACE)
- knowledge of the language
- company structure

The number of auditors depends primarily on the complexity of processes and company size. The required number of man-days to carry out the various stages of certification is determined by identifying the minimum mandays required for the audit, certification and surveillance audits.

The minimum number of man-days required for the audit, certification and surveillance depends on the nature and complexity of production processes, geographical distribution of sites audit standards, the number of producers, etc.

These man-days include

- review of documentation
- preparation of the audit

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- conducting of the audit
- preparation of the audit report

Travelling time is not included.

6.5 Audit planning

The Lead Auditor or the Auditor, designs the audit having taken into account the structure of the business and all its parts to be inspected and all aspects of applied regulations. The Auditor shall inform the operation of the scheduled audit and the auditor ordered.

If the customer disputes the final decision is taken by the PC AGRO Manager.

As long as there is an agreement with the client, the Lead Auditor shall inform the other members of the audit team (where applicable).

Within the framework of the audit, the auditor verifies the effectiveness of measures and actions of the operator to ensure constant compliance with the rules of organic production.

The Audit checklists (depending on the production activity), provide guidelines for assessing the implementation of the normative requirements. The above documents do not bind auditors for further questions relevant to the certification scope.

If TUV HELLAS (TUV NORD) S.A. requires to see the business operations at different times of year, the audit can take place 4 months prior to or after the certificate 'valid to' date, without impacting the certification cycle.

TUV HELLAS (TUV NORD) S.A. is entitled to perform unannounced audits, either as reasonably determined by the CB or on direction from LEAF Marque

6.6 Audit conducting

The audit begins with the opening meeting where both sides present themselves. The audit process is explained and the auditors state their confidentiality. The certification scope, as defined in the Application QF-QP-QA-IFA-01-13, is determined and the Contractual Agreement (QF(QP-LEAF-05-01)-14 Acceptance of rules) between TUV HELLAS SA and the operator that seeks certification is clarified.

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To enable TUV HELLAS issue certificates both the above documents should be completed, signed and delivered to the auditors prior the audit.

During audit, auditors look review and reassess the effectiveness of the implementation of all those measures that ensure continue compliance with the rules of organic production. The basis for evaluation is always the applicable requirements of LEAF Standards.

The audit team must determine the practical implementation of all those measures that ensure continued compliance with the rules of LEAF Standards and assess if they meet them in a constant and satisfactory way. This is achieved through:

- file review (procedures, risk assessments, production logbooks, purchases and sales documents etc),
- sampling audit of facilities (production, storage, distribution business, etc.) and fields visit according to the company size (number of cultivated plots, livestock or products),
- workers - producers involvement in the audit,

aiming eventually to collect objective evidence for compliance with applicable legislation.

Auditors apply process either jointly or separately. This depends on the size of the company. All auditors should have a representative view of various activities in order to evaluate in the most reliable and effective way compliance with the rules of LEAF Standard.

Checklists and personal notes of auditors are used and it is essential to rigorously applied. The objective evidences are documented in the audit checklists or using references to documents collected.

To draw safe conclusions on the certification audit, auditors take into account the criteria stated in the applicable LEAF Standard.

The documentation of the answers, finally, contains the evidence adduced by the company on various data that unveiled the fulfillment of the commitments and requirements of the rules of LEAF Standard, the classification of these data and scoring of the control points.

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The closing meeting is the last stage to complete the audit. At this meeting representatives from the Management should participate. The Lead Auditor makes references to positive and / or negative findings of the audit and reports non-compliance, if it has been identified.

Based on the severity and the number of issued non-Conformances, the audit team should determine whether or not a re-audit is required, or other proof of compliance must be provided in a certain and agreed period of time.

Lead Auditor proposes the certificate granting only after successful re-audit or positive assessment of proofs of compliance and complete satisfaction of all relevant legislation requirements.

6.6.1 Audit of operator transferred from other certification body (CB)

The audit of an operator transferred from another certification body should also focus on the following points:

The use of the previous CB's certificate. The auditor should check the sales of certified products and to compare them with those mentioned in the certificate of the previous CB. In case of discrepancies, a Non Compliance is raised and the previous CB is informed.

Checking stocks of certified products. The quantities of any stocks of certified products should also be checked by the auditor. Similarly, product quantities that have not yet been packed or finally processed are also counted.

The necessary changes should be done in the products labels or any other promotion material, due to the transfer of certification to another CB. For finished products that have been produced prior to the transfer of the certificate and are in stock, they are not required to change their label and are marketed under the control of TUV Hellas. Stocks of packaging and labels should either be destroyed or corrected.

6.7 Non Conformances

If auditors identify inconsistencies with the LEAF Standards' requirements report them in the audit checklist.

The non Conformances are pointed during the audit and agreed at a private meeting of the auditors before the closing meeting.

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However, during the audit the auditors indicate to the company's representative any weak points observed. The non compliance report includes at least the following:

- The respective LEAF Standard control point
- Description of the non Conformances reported this year
- Description of the non Conformances reported the previous year
- Signature of the Lead Auditor or Auditor
- Signature of the Auditee
- Time period for application of the agreed corrective action (if applicable).

The corrective actions are proposed by the company and agreed with the auditors. The amount of time given to the operator to close out the non-Conformances depends always on their severity and cannot be more than 28 days.

In case of detection of non-Conformances against recommendations, the corrective actions are checked at the next audit visit. Reference to these non-Conformances in the results of the audit is given in the final report.

When non-Conformances are not arranged in the time period set at the end of the audit then,

- in case of initial audit a new complete audit must be performed in order the company to be certified
- in case the company owns a valid certificate then this certificate is suspended and a new complete audit must be performed in order the company to be certified again.

6.8 Documentation of the Audit procedure

Documentation has the form of an audit checklist

This checklist includes the following information:

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- Audit type

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- Date of audit

Information regarding the auditee (activity, company's size, produce handling etc)

- Scope (as it is declared in the application and will appear on the certificate)
- Relevant Standard (base of the audit)

Conclusions

- Overall results of the audit
- Inspected sites (if several sites were visited)
- Non Conformances
- Classification of non compliance as Essential or Recommendations or the relevant non-compliant control points
- Deadline for submission of corrective evidence to close non-conformities (no more than 28 days from the closing meeting or 3 months in case of initial certification). If this deadline is exceeded, another LEAF Marque audit is necessary.
- Non-conformities identified in the previous audit (if applicable).

Annexes

- Attached documents when deemed necessary.

6.9 Re-audit

Re-audit might be necessary when:

- one or more non Conformances can lead to failure to fulfill the requirements,
- there is no constant and documented compliance with certain requirements of the Standard,
- a crosscheck of conducted audits' results is necessary

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- as a result of a documented complaint against the certified company

Failure to comply can lead to fatal weakening of the effectiveness of general compliance against the requirements of the Standard. In this case it does not matter whether non-compliance relates to one or more activities of the company or with one or more points of the regulation.

Decision for re-audit is taken by the Auditor. During re-audit only those points where non Conformances were observed are inspected. Documentation is completed according to the provisions of paragraph 6.7.

6.10 Certificate issue and Surveillance

The audit documentation is reviewed by a Senior Auditor no later than 28 days after the end of the audit or after non-conformances are closed and so, the (Lead) Auditor have to provide the following files:

- Application for certification
- Audit report – checklists and relevant annexes (signed accordingly by the auditor and the auditee)
- Personal audit notes and comments
- Certificates
- Contract between TUV HELLAS and the operator (one copy remains to the operator)
- Other documents required by the present procedure

The Senior Auditor (as defined in par. 5.3) approves the audit report. If he does not have the competence for the particular scope, documentation approval is given in co-operation with an expert. The Senior Auditor orders certification by signing the Document for Documentation Evaluation and Certificate Order. Copies of the issued certificates are kept by the Auditor either electronically or as a hard copy in the client’s file.

The certificate may be issued only when all nonconformities have been resolved for example after a successful re-audit or after satisfactory evaluation of new documents and all requirements of applicable Standard has been met.

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In case of business changes, certificate can be amended after actions that are decided after evaluating appropriate documentation and according to the relevant Risk-Assessment as described in the Annex of the LEAF Marque System Rules.

The certificate belongs to TUV HELLAS and is returned immediately upon request.

From the time of certificate issuance, the products may have the relative labeling. A similar labeling in other similar or different products not produced in accordance with the LEAF Standard or not been declared to TUV HELLAS prior to audit or produced by a non-registered business, is not allowed.

The certificate is sent to the client immediately after issuing by email. In case of negative certification decision a relevant letter is sent to the client explaining the reasons that led to this decision.

The labeling is based on the provisions of the LEAF Standard, provided that the terms of the above standard are fully met.

The details for the use of the logo are described in detail in the LEAF Marque System Rules.

6.11 Certificate

The LEAF Marque registration number is always mentioned on the certificate.

Certificates have the structure defined at the LEAF Marque System Rules.

An updated file of all certified operators is always available.

Specifically:

The certificate is granted in accordance with the compliance of the applicant operator to all applicable requirements as outlined in this document, in the LEAF Standard documents, in the TUV Hellas procedures and the present General Regulation.

A certificate will be issued by TUV HELLAS and will be valid for a period not longer than one calendar year (12 months) and after completing the relevant registrations in the LEAF database. Exceptions on this rule may be given as described in the LEAF Marque System Rules document.

The Contractual Agreement between TUV HELLAS and the Operator (Producer or Producers Group) may have an initial duration of up to 6 years, with the option of a 3-year renewal or extension. In case of contracts with more than one year validity the applicant must complete a new declaration

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regarding any current, pending, or past prosecutions relating to applicable regional and national laws and regulations in the previous 5 years.

Guidelines regarding the use of the trademarks, logos and Certificates are available in the LEAF Marque System Rules.

6.12 Re-certification audit

Prior the end of certificate validity a re-certification audit should be conducted. The aim of this audit is similar to the certification audit and in addition must focus on taken corrective actions.

7. Records

PC Agro maintains records of all clients who have applied for certification and have been inspected, certified or whose certificates have been withdrawn or revoked.

These records include at least the following:

- Applications for certification, Audit Reports (Initial – Certification – Recertification audits),
- Contracts,
- Verification / review of implemented corrective actions
- Complaints, Appeals and corrective actions
- Certification Divisions
- Certificates
- Files on the competence of the audit team

Also, TUV HELLAS (TUV NORD) S.A. keeps the documents of the operator in a safe way, to ensure confidentiality.

Records may be kept either as hard copies or as electronic files. The files related to applications and financial offers of non-certified companies are kept as long as these documents are valid.

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The records related to the certified operators are kept for the current Certification and for the previous Certification periods (6 years in total).

TÜV HELLAS (TUV NORD) S.A. keeps only the current version of the operator's documentation.

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