



Memorandum of Understanding between FoodPLUS and IAF

Introduction

Considering that FoodPLUS is the scheme owner of the world-wide operated **GLOBALGAP** certification scheme *including a recognition system of other schemes*,

Considering that **FoodPLUS, from now on called GLOBALGAP**, requires Certification Bodies (CBs) operating in its schemes to be accredited by IAF Product certification MLA Accreditation Bodies signatories,

Considering that GLOBALGAP contracts at this time with over 130 Certification Bodies Worldwide and that the supervision of these CBs is carried out by the Accreditation Bodies (ABs) that are MLA signatories,

Considering that GLOBALGAP delegates the responsibility of supervision of the CBs it contracts with to the corresponding Accreditation Bodies, and that harmonization of criteria applied by the different ABs is increasingly important to ensure consistency of that supervision,

Considering that GLOBALGAP has detected that there are differences in interpretation of GLOBALGAP rules by different ABs, and that this could be solved by better communication between GLOBALGAP and the ABs,

Considering that the **International Accreditation Forum (IAF)** is the world association of conformity assessment accreditation bodies in the fields of management systems, products, services, process, persons and other similar programs of conformity assessment,

Considering that IAF is responsible for the harmonization and continuous improvement of the accreditation practices of its members with the ultimate goal to ensure sound technical competence of accredited conformity assessment bodies and to support its Multilateral Recognition Agreements (MLA),

Considering that the IAF MLA is established and maintained on the basis of the ISO/IEC 17011 standard through regular peer evaluations and is the tool by which IAF contributes to the elimination of technical barriers to trade and to promoting the free circulation of certificates issued by accredited conformity assessment bodies,

Both IAF and GLOBALGAP have agreed to have a close cooperation between the two organizations to ensure harmonization in the accreditation practices performed by IAF members in the GLOBALGAP owned schemes and to cooperate in the continuous improvement of the schemes with the final goal of assuring the highest level of competence in the GLOBALGAP owned and benchmarked schemes' accredited certification bodies.

In order to achieve such goal both organizations have agreed upon the following:

1. EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION

1.1. GLOBALGAP shall inform IAF product MLA signatories working in the food sector (through info-mails, website extranet and e-mails where necessary) of the following:

- 1.1.1. Any New GLOBALGAP approved standards and schemes,
- 1.1.2. Any revision of GLOBALGAP guidance documents,
- 1.1.3. Outcomes from any CB workshop held by GLOBALGAP,
- 1.1.4. Official communication between GLOBALGAP and CBs which ABs would have an interest in,
- 1.1.5. Any change in the status of CBs with respect to GLOBALGAP Approval,
- 1.1.6. Any findings including the outcome of GLOBALGAP Integrity Programme assessments GLOBALGAP may have regarding accredited certification activities requiring the attention of ABs.

1.2. IAF product MLA signatories working in the food sector shall inform GLOBALGAP of the following:

- 1.2.1. Whenever the accreditation of a CB has been suspended or withdrawn,
- 1.2.2. Any general or technical questions regarding the interpretation of the GLOBALGAP documents,
- 1.2.3. Information on which foreign critical locations (as defined in ISO/IEC 17011) of their accredited certification bodies have been assessed by the accreditation body (on request),
- 1.2.4. Curriculum Vitae and documented evidence of the qualifications of each technical assessor employed for GLOBALGAP certification assessments (on request in the event of any complaint against the accredited certification body auditor/inspector).

2. MANDATORY INTERPRETATIONS ON GLOBALGAP DOCUMENTS

GLOBALGAP shall establish a system to receive and study questions coming from IAF product MLA signatories working in the food sector and accredited certification bodies and to release mandatory interpretations on the GLOBALGAP documents.

3. CONTACT PERSONS

Both IAF and GLOBALGAP shall appoint a liaison person of each organization to act as contact person. Each IAF member shall appoint a person from its staff to be the contact person of IAF product MLA signatories working in the food sector with GLOBALGAP.

4. ASSESSORS AND ASSESSMENTS

4.1 GLOBALGAP shall establish an online forum to facilitate the information exchange among the technical assessors of IAF product MLA signatories working in the food sector.

4.2 IAF product MLA signatories working in the food sector adhering to this MoU shall require each technical assessor used for assessment of GLOBALGAP approved CBs to consult the online forum.

4.3 A representative of IAF product MLA signatories working in the food sector shall

attend the workshops specifically organized by GLOBALGAP for accreditation bodies for specific issues (normally no more than one per year).

4.4 The IAF MLA Committee and GLOBALGAP may in their discussions establish minimum requirements on technical assessors for all IAF product MLA signatories working in the food sector to follow.

4.5 GLOBALGAP staff persons are encouraged to act as observers in the assessment teams of IAF product MLA signatories working in the food sector, if agreed by the assessed certification body, and the accredited certification body's customer (if applicable).

4.6 IAF product MLA signatories are encouraged to use the results of the GLOBALGAP Integrity Programme as an input for the Certification Body's evaluation process.

5. CROSS FRONTIER ACTIVITIES

5.1. IAF product MLA signatories working in the food sector shall apply the IAF Guidance on Cross Frontier Accreditation (IAF GD 3) to GLOBALGAP owned and benchmarked schemes.

5.2. GLOBALGAP shall maintain public information on the locations declared by CBs to GLOBALGAP. IAF product MLA signatories working in the food sector should use this information to crosscheck the information received from the CBs in application of Cross Frontier Policy.

6. IMPLEMENTATION

6.1. IAF product MLA signatories working in the food sector and GLOBALGAP shall each bear their own costs.

6.2. The revision of the implementation of this MoU is in the scope of the MLA Peer evaluation to the IAF product MLA signatories working in the food sector adhering to this MoU.

7. CANCELLATION

7.1. This Memorandum of Understanding between GLOBALGAP and IAF can be cancelled by both parties in writing with a period of notice of three months.

This MoU is effective from (date of signing)

International Accreditation Forum, Inc.

GLOBALG.A.P. c/o FoodPLUS GmbH



Dr. Thomas Facklam
Chairman of IAF

Dr. Kristian Möller
Secretary GLOBALGAP,
Managing Director FoodPLUS GmbH

Date: 29 May 2009