

**ISSUE 3
GLUTEN-FREE
CERTIFICATION
PROGRAM**

**Quick Start
Guide**



Gluten-Free Certification Program Global Standard

Quick guide for Issue 3

Benefits

Adopts a systems-based and facility certification approach to prevent product failure

Is founded upon proven, globally recognized, science-based food safety protocols

Complements GFSI-benchmarked standards

Reduces the risks associated with relying solely on end-product gluten testing

Is recognized by major celiac associations globally

Enables cost and operational efficiencies by combining audits with all existing GFSI-benchmarked standards

Permits access to a global network of trained and approved certification bodies, auditors, and training providers

Provides a comprehensive support package, including implementation and training tools

Opens new markets and increases business opportunities

Increases the availability of gluten-free product choices for a growing consumer market

Builds consumer brand trust by associating GF consumer product claims and endorsements with leading celiac organizations

Provides marketing tools and public recognition on the BRCGS Directory

Steps to certification

- 1 | LEARN** Visit the GFCP website (www.glutenfreecert.com) to learn more about the program and the benefits it can bring. Contact BRCGS for more information, visit the BRCGS online bookshop (www.brcbookshop.com), or subscribe to BRC Participate (www.brcparticipate.com)
- 2 | APPLY** Visit the BRCGS website at www.brcgs.com to apply online and receive the GFCP Global Standard Issue 3, plus other technical documents associated with the program.
- 3 | PROGRAM LICENSE AGREEMENT** Enter into a Program License Agreement outlining your terms and conditions with BRCGS. Submit a Schedule A and/or equivalent BRCGS-approved process which captures all of the gluten-free products that will be recognized under the GFCP Global Standard.
- 4 | PREPARE FOR AUDIT** Before ordering an audit, choose your preferred audit option and conduct a preliminary self-assessment, using the GFCP self-assessment checklist as part of an internal audit. Once this is complete, select your approved certification body, agree the scope of your audit, and confirm a date.
- 5 | ON-SITE AUDIT** The audit process emphasizes the practical implementation of the gluten-free management system (GFMS). Observation of production procedures and processes, reviewing documentation, and conducting staff interviews will all take place, including a traceability challenge and a review of product labels.
- 6 | NONCONFORMITIES AND CORRECTIVE ACTIONS** If any nonconformities are identified, these will be closed out within 28 days following the audit. The certification body will review your evidence, finalize the audit report, and issue your certificate within 42 calendar days from the first day of your audit.
- 7 | POST AUDIT** Identify areas for improvement and assess the ways in which you can continue to meet the requirements of the program.
- 8 | PREPARE** Get audit-ready for next year. Make sure to book your audit so that it takes place approximately 2 months before your GFCP certificate of recognition expires. This will allow enough time for the audit process to run its course and for your new certificate to be issued.
- 9 | MARKET** Resonate with consumers by using the GFCP owner or managed endorsement trademarks on retail packaging. Review the requirements of the GFCP Trademark Usage Guide to design your marketing materials and labels. Submit them for approval to proudly promote certification and the brand's socially responsible commitment

Why choose the GFCP Global Standard Issue 3?

Achievable Takes a common sense, risk-based practical approach, providing companies with a clear path towards achieving certification within a reasonable timeframe and at a realistic investment cost.

Appropriate The Standard is HACCP-based and incorporates food safety management systems and internationally accepted best manufacturing practices to ensure product safety and quality.

Supported by customers Many retailers, food service companies, and major food manufacturers around the world support the use of the Standard and accept it as part of their supplier approval process.

Cost-effective The widely accepted certification reduces the need and expense of duplicate audits. Audits are completed by local auditors trained and approved to an internationally accepted standard in the requirements of the GFCP Global Standard.

Combined audits GFCP audits may be conducted as standalone or in combination with any GFSI certification audit. This reduces audit costs, disruption to your business activities, and harmonizes certification dates for your convenience.

Auditing The factory audits are carried out by independent certification bodies. These companies have to meet stringent requirements approved by BRCGS. A full list of these bodies can be found on the BRCGS Directory.

Every auditor carrying out GFCP Global Standard audits also has to demonstrate competence in terms of education, training, and practical experience. BRCGS operates an ongoing monitoring and calibration process for auditors and certification bodies and publishes performance ratings every 6 months. This drives consistency and confidence in the audit and certification process.

Requirements

1 Senior leadership commitment Commitment at a senior level is essential in the development of a good food safety culture. It is also necessary if the GFMS is to be effective, and to ensure the full application and continual development of the system.

2 Prerequisite programs The site shall have fully implemented prerequisite programs in place to control the operational conditions of the site and promote the production of safe food. These programs form the foundation of a robust GFMS.

3 Gluten controls Measures must be in place to control gluten throughout the production process. This includes appropriate training of staff, supplier and ingredient approvals, finished product specifications, and testing.

4 HACCP principles The site shall have a documented, fully implemented, and effective food safety plan incorporating the Codex Alimentarius HACCP principles.

5 Records Records shall be kept demonstrating the effective application of each control measure and to facilitate official verifications by the BRCGS approved auditor or other competent authority.

6 Document control The site shall have a procedure to manage documents that form part of the GFMS.

7 Validation Control measures must be validated. Documentation must include sufficient proof of the effective control of each hazard, including supporting data.

8 GFMS maintenance and reassessment The GFMS team shall review the GFMS at least annually, and prior to any changes that may affect product safety. Appropriate changes resulting from the review shall be incorporated into the GFMS, communicated through relevant training, fully documented, and the validation recorded.

9 Internal audits There shall be a scheduled program of internal audits. The frequency at which each activity is audited within the scheduled program shall be established in relation to the associated risks and previous audit performance; all activities shall be covered at least once a year.

Support

Access the GFCP Global Standard, supporting publications, and additional resources quickly and easily via our online information management platform, BRC Participate (www.brcparticipate.com). Purchase printed copies from the BRCGS bookshop; the GFCP Global Standard is available to download FREE of charge at www.brcbookshop.com.

Training

The BRC Academy provides a wide range of courses globally in local languages through its network of qualified trainers. Available courses include understanding and implementing the GFCP Global Standard, as well as specific food safety topics such as HACCP, root cause analysis, and vulnerability assessment (assessment of food fraud risks).

For more information or to book a course, please visit www.brctrainingacademy.com.

Contact us

For more information, call the BRCGS technical services helpline on +44 (0)20 3931 8150 or email enquiries@brcgs.com.
To learn more about the BRCGS GFCP, please visit www.brcglobalstandards.com