



December 2020

Dear Customer,

Covid-19 Update – Prioritization and risk management of BRCGS audits for Brands/Specifiers

As we move into a second global lockdown, there are still significant restrictions within the supply chain and we are now faced with the first wave of certificate extensions expiring in a traditionally busy period for delivery partners. BRCGS recognizes there are challenges in auditor availability and site accessibility to deliver BRCGS certification.

Working together as an industry we can ensure the continued high level of product safety BRCGS has always provided for you and continue to protect the consumer and your brand.

Together with our International Advisory Boards in North America and Europe, BRCGS would like to provide some further guidance to help manage the audit backlog. We understand there are logistical challenges and want to help and support you wherever possible.

We believe we have now reached a point where a peak in demand for auditors may exceeded capacity. Certification Bodies have been asked to give priority to sites that have already had a scope extension and whose certificates will expire. In such circumstances, certificates of sites at 12 months may need to be extended using the certification extension process, rather than carrying out the usual full audit. In such cases the onsite audit may be delayed for up to 6 months without affecting the certification status of the site.

BRCGS would like to offer the following guidance.

- Communicate your priorities within your supply chain, including who is most important, and your position on expired certifications.
- Seasonal operations may expire while out of season. An audit cannot be performed while the site is inactive, recognize that a seasonal production site will have been certification during active production, but expired post-production, yet still sell and ship product produced under the certification. BRCGS will be working with the Certification Bodies issuing an endorsement statement that will be unable to get an audit until their next season.

Once again, thank you for your continued support of BRCGS. If you have any questions, or need BRCGS to help you maintain certification of your sites or suppliers, then please contact me directly or a member of my team at enquiries@brcgs.com

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Mark Proctor". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Mark" and the last name "Proctor" clearly distinguishable.

Mark Proctor

CEO

BRCGS