



December 2020

Dear Partner,

**Covid-19 Update – Prioritization and risk management of BRCGS audits for Delivery Partners**

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 certifications.

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 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 has exceeded capacity. Priority should be given to sites that have already had a scope extension and whose certificates will expire after 18 months. 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, with the agreement of the site, 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.

- Continue to maintain certification, using the four options available:
  1. On site audit
  2. Certification extensions
  3. Blended audit
  4. Remote audit
- Prioritize those sites coming to the end of their certificate extension (18+ months).
- Possibly extend sites coming to their end of the normal certificate (12+ months), but consider supplier risk based on product category and historical performance.
- Prioritize short season operations. BRCGS have developed an endorsement process to support sites that had extended certificates and now unable to be audited.
- Focus on administration capacity to reduce the back log.
- Collaborate with other certification bodies to maximize auditor utilization regionally using the auditor loan scheme.



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, then please contact me directly or a member of my team at [enquiries@brcgs.com](mailto:enquiries@brcgs.com)

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Mark Proctor'.

**Mark Proctor**  
CEO  
BRCGS