

BRCGS

Plant-Based Standard

Guide to Certification

For over 30 years, BRCGS has been at the *forefront* of standards, driven by a commitment to delivering rigorous third-party *certification* that achieves the best results for businesses, consumers and the food industry.

Inspiring trust and transparency in a competitive global market

BRCGS is the global leader in food safety certification, helping the industry protect consumers, strengthen supply chains and demonstrate trusted product integrity.

Now approaching 40,000 certificated sites across more than 130 countries, BRCGS is the preferred choice for certification as it is recognised by brands, retailers and specifiers worldwide.

The BRCGS Plant-Based Standard is designed for food manufacturers producing vegetarian and vegan products.

It applies only to the control of animal inputs in plant-based products, in the manufacture, processing and packing of:

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- **Processed foods, both own brand and customer branded.**

 - **Ingredients for use by food service companies, catering companies, and food manufacturers.**

 - **Pet foods (GFSI benchmarked schemes only).**

 - **Natural health products.**

Why choose BRCGS Plant-Based?

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- **A systems-based approach founded upon proven, globally recognised, science-based claim management protocols designed to prevent failure.**
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- **Significantly reduces the risk of relying solely on end product animal input testing.**
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- **Increases access to a rapidly growing global market with certification that is recognised by retailers and specifiers.**
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- **Builds consumer trust in your brand through use of a recognised on-pack trademark.**
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- **Enabling informed consumer product choices through the on-pack trademark ensures your brand stands out in a competitive market.**
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- **Increase operational efficiency and reduce costs with the option of combining audits with other BRCGS standards.**
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- **Greater visibility of your business through your listing on the BRCGS Directory; the tool that brands and retailers use for supplier selection.**

The standard can be accessed *free* of charge via the BRCGS Store.

More than certification—the proven economic benefits

Independent Research carried out by the University of Birkbeck found that sites certificated to a BRCGS standard see benefits that go beyond compliance.

Commercial benefits

50%

Benefit from domestic growth

60%

Benefit from export growth

28%

Benefit from greater profitability

47%

Benefit from fewer customer audits

7.5%

Average sales growth

6%

Average increase in profitability

Operational efficiencies and improvements in productivity

70%

Have achieved efficiencies and greater productivity

30%

Have benefited from product innovation

63%

Reported production improvements

40%

Reduction in food recalls

Steps to certification

01

Getting started

Read the standard and Interpretation Guideline publications thoroughly to familiarise yourself with the standard and its requirements. Contact your chosen BRCGS-approved certification body to discuss your application.

02

Learn

Attend training with the BRCGS Academy to gain a practical understanding of implementing the requirements.

03

Review

Perform a self-assessment gap analysis with the standard (gap-analysis tool available on the BRCGS website). Assemble and train a team for implementation. Obtain consultancy if needed.

04

Prepare

Use the outputs of the self-assessment to develop an action plan to implement the standard requirements in your operation. Carry out risk assessments where needed and establish necessary control points. Prepare your procedures and undertake internal audits.

05

Plan audit

Contact your chosen certification body to arrange an audit. Make sure you plan ahead so that staff are available and preparations are made.

06

On-site audit

The audit will assess the practical implementation of the standard requirements. Observation of procedures and processes, review of documentation, and staff interviews will all take place.

07

Non-conformities and corrective action

If non-conformities are identified, you will need to carry out any corrective action, root cause analysis and plan preventive action. These will be closed out within 28 days following the audit.

08

Certification

Your certification body will review the non-conformities and finalise the audit report to determine whether certification will be awarded. If certification is achieved, the certification body will issue your certificate within 42 calendar days from the first day of your audit.

Training for sites preparing for certification

Kick-start your preparation by attending a BRCGS training course, which will provide you with the essential knowledge and insights required for a successful certification audit.

Sites training course (1 day)

By the end of this course you will:

- Understand the principles of plant-based product integrity.
- Have a practical knowledge of how to interpret the standard requirements and how to implement a preventative, risk-based plant-based management system.
- Be familiar with BRCGS audit methodology, the preparation required and post-audit activities.

E-Learning module (4-6 hours)

Guided online learning that covers:

- Understanding the requirements and audit protocol.
- The importance of identifying materials of animal origin and understanding plant-based product manufacture.
- The concept of cross contact and its potential in a food production process.
- The key requirements of plant-based product management.
- The controls that must be implemented as part of a plant-based management system.
- The importance of prerequisite programs in safeguarding a plant-based site.

Find out *more* and
book *your place* at
[brcgs.com](https://www.brcgs.com)

On-pack trademark

The on-pack trademark empowers consumers to make informed choices about products quickly and easily. It plays a vital role in building brand trust with consumers as it validates any plant-based claims and reinforces product integrity.

The on-pack trademark allows brands and products to differentiate themselves and remain competitive in an increasingly crowded market.



All certificated sites feature in the BRCGS Directory, the 'shop window' *for brands and retailers looking for trusted suppliers.*



Learn with the experts at the BRCGS Academy.

Over 65 interactive courses available all delivered by experts worldwide in a range of languages.

BRCGS *certification* audits are delivered by a *global* network of approved certification bodies.

Find a
certification
body at
[brcgs.com](https://www.brcgs.com)



With over 2,500 auditors worldwide, BRCGS *certification* is accessible no matter where you are located.

Tip for best success

Use the Interpretation Guideline alongside the standard when implementing the requirements. It will help you to understand each requirement and ways to comply.

Benefits

01—Trusted certification

02—Credibility built over decades

03—Brand protection

04—Truly global footprint

Impacting
over
\$800bn
in annual
retail sales

BRCGS

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