



Changes to food safety recognition for horticulture exports

April 2023

The department now recognises current food safety certification to a Global Food Safety Initiative (GFSI) approved scheme as evidence to meet some export regulatory requirements.

Our instructional material for horticulture exports has been updated to include this change.

Key points

1. The performance standards for accredited properties and horticulture registered establishments have changed.
2. Export audits are now streamlined for businesses with current certification to an approved food safety scheme.
3. Areas where recognition applies include pest control, hygiene and waste management activities.
4. The amended performance standards came into effect on 1 October 2022.

Cutting duplication while maintaining assurance

Horticulture businesses undergo audits with similar elements from different organisations. These include food safety certifying bodies and various levels of government.

The department has identified areas of overlap in the packhouse between food safety and quality assurance schemes and plant export regulatory requirements. We can streamline horticulture export audits to remove this overlap while maintaining strong assurance systems.

We will now recognise current food safety and quality certification to a GFSI approved scheme. This means we won't need to audit some export audit requirements and we won't need as much evidence from businesses.

Some performance standards have changed

What has changed	Evidence that can now be used	Audit requirements it applies to
Performance standards for accredited properties packhouses	Current food safety certification to a GFSI approved scheme	<ul style="list-style-type: none">HygieneWaste managementPest management relating to non-protocol pests
Performance standards for plant export registered establishments registered for inspecting fresh fruit and/or fresh vegetables	Current food safety certification to a GFSI approved scheme	<ul style="list-style-type: none">HygieneWaste managementPest management relating to non-protocol pests

Food safety and quality schemes

The department now recognises GFSI approved schemes. These include:

- GLOBALG.A.P.
- Freshcare
- British Retail Consortium (BRC) Global Standard for Food Safety
- Safe Quality Food (SQF)

If an audited business cannot show evidence of current food safety certification, we will conduct a full export audit.

Certification evidence required to obtain recognition

Managers of horticulture registered establishments and/or accredited properties packhouses can provide the following as evidence of current food safety certification at plant export audits:

- a food safety certificate showing certification to one of the GFSI approved schemes that
 - is issued by a third-party food safety audit certification body accredited by JAS-ANZ; and
 - has not expired at the time of the export audit; or
- a food safety certificate extension notification showing details of certification to one of the GFSI approved schemes that
 - is issued by a third-party food safety audit certification body accredited by JAS-ANZ; and
 - has not expired at the time of the export audit.

Performance standards changed in October 2022

The amended performance standards came into effect on 1 October 2022.

A more efficient audit process for industry

The horticulture export audit process will be more efficient for businesses that can show evidence of food safety certification.

There will be less duplication between food safety standards and plant export regulatory requirements, saving audited businesses time and money at audit.

Supporting material

These documents have been updated as part of the recognition of food safety certification:

- Guideline: Audit of plant export registered establishments
- Guideline: Audit of horticulture export accredited properties
- Reference: Performance standards for plant export registered establishments
- Reference: Performance standards for packhouses

The instructional material is in the [Plant Export Operations Manual](#)

Contact us

For questions about the changes, please contact the Plant Export Reform Program at congestionbustingplant@agriculture.gov.au

Reforms in agricultural export trade

The department is pursuing a range of reform projects to modernise and streamline our agricultural export sector. This will enable our exporters to experience faster and more cost-effective services. We are streamlining existing assurance measures by recognising where our requirements overlap with industry systems and by making more of our agricultural export services available online. These changes will deliver substantial time and cost benefits to industry and the government, while helping exporters get their goods to market faster.

Visit our website to learn more: agriculture.gov.au/transforming-export-services