



# Certification regulations animal feed

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## Introduction

According to the applicable requirements of certification schemes and enforcement bodies such as the Dutch Accreditation Council, requirements of certification schemes and the procedure of the certifying body must be documented.

These certification regulations document the procedure of Schouten Certification in relation to products, processes or (management) systems in the *animal feed* chain that are to be certified. The regulations are numbered P06-01 in Schouten Certification's management system.

Standard-specific procedures are set out in the appendices.

Supplementary to the regulations for Foodstuffs and Animal Feed, the 'Mediation and Improvement Regulations' (P12-01) describe the procedure in case of a difference of opinion between the Client and Schouten Certification.

### *Changes compared to the previous version*

The current version of these regulations has been changed compared to the previous version on the following points:

- Added requirement on the withdrawal of certificate in case of no activity

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## Article 0 Terms and definitions

In defining the terms in this document, Schouten Certification has made use of the definitions laid down in the ISO standards. The following terms in these regulations have a specific definition:

*Schouten Certification*: The private limited liability company Schouten Certification B.V., with registered office in Giessen, hereinafter also referred to as 'SC'

*Client*: The party with which Schouten Certification has entered into an agreement for the assessment of a product, process or system. In these regulations, the Client can also be referred to by the terms 'the Company' or 'the Organization'.

*Certification Regulations*: This document

*Assessment (inspection/certification)*: Work that results in the certification of a product, process or management system. As a rule, the assessment is concluded with the issue of a certificate.

*Scheme* The standard described in the applicable certification agreement. In these regulations, the Scheme can also be referred to by the terms 'the standard requirement', 'the criteria', 'the certification system' or 'the requirements'.

*Certification* In these regulations, the term certification refers to the activities carried out by SC on the basis of which SC declares that the product, process or system meets the standard requirements specified in the certification agreement.

*System* As used in these regulations, the term 'System' means the 'management system'.

## Article 1: Scope of application

- a) The scope of application of this document is documented in Appendix I. These certification regulations apply to Schouten Certification B.V., (the contractor | hereinafter referred to as SC) and to the companies (the client | organization | participant) that have SC assess their product, process or system for the purpose of obtaining a certificate. The certificate is granted to companies operating in the animal feed chain.
- b) As used in these regulations, the term 'certification' refers to the activities carried out by SC on the basis of which it is declared that products and services of a company that are intended for use in the animal feed sector, or - in case of system certification - the management system of a company that generates such products or services, meet or meets the requirements of the respective scheme manager as specified in the certification agreement. The certificate gives customers and other interested parties the legitimate expectation that the products, services or management system meet or meets the applicable standards.
- c) If the company is certified via an SC partner CB, SC's general conditions and certification conditions apply in full throughout the execution of the certification procedure(s). Also if the SC partner CB enters into an (own financial) agreement with the company, SC's conditions regarding certification procedure(s) remain in full force.

## *Article 2 – basis for certification*

- a) In so far as the regulations do not require otherwise, SC applies the procedures as in force according to the certification scheme. When carrying out the certification, SC is bound by the requirements of governments, scheme managers and accreditation bodies. SC grants the certificate exclusively on the basis of the current status of the product, service or management system and not on the basis of expected (future) measures. In the information phase, SC sends the application form for certification to the companies specified in the quotation.
- b) Certification bodies must inform companies about the content of the requirements against which they assess products, services or management system and about changes in such requirements. Governments, scheme managers and accreditation bodies inform feed companies by news messages about (changes in) the requirements they publish and/or applicable to companies and about any changes in such requirements.

## *Article 3 – employees*

- a) SC has certification work carried out by qualified personnel. The employees meet the competency requirements as set out in the certification requirements of the respective scheme manager. Each new employee engaged for certification work is, if necessary, notified by SC to the respective scheme manager. Each SC employee engaged in certification work is obliged to attend the required training programme. The certification coordinator acts as the contact person for the respective scheme manager. Where applicable, a replacement may be designated.
- b) SC may engage independent and impartial third parties to carry out the certification work or parts thereof. To the extent that scheme and/or accreditation requirements have been set for these third parties, SC will only engage third parties that meet these requirements.

## *Article 4 – information on the certificate*

- a) The certificate issued by SC lists the products, services or management system that meet or meets the requirements set out in the respective certification scheme. The text on the SC certificate meets the requirements set out in the respective certification scheme. After expiry of the period of validity, the certificate will be renewed after SC has again established that the products, services or management system meet or meets the requirements. Duplicates and other-language certificates are provided on request. The issue takes place in such a way that there is always one unique and traceable certificate.
- b) If the company and/or SC uses a logo associated with the certification scheme and/or accreditation body, the requirements of the respective certification scheme and accreditation body regarding use of the logo apply in full. SC will monitor this during its audits.
- c) In response to an application for change of the scope of application of an already-granted certificate, SC decides which assessment procedure is appropriate to determine whether or not the change is necessary, and subsequently act accordingly.

## *Article 5 – agreement*

Before the start of the certification work, SC and the company conclude a certification agreement, which covers at least the following:

- the description of the standards against which each product, service or management system must be certified;
- the scope of application of the desired certification;
- the declaration that the company agrees to comply with the certification requirements and provide any information required for the assessment of the products, services or management system to be certified;
- that any payment to the scheme manager is charged on to the company;
- a description of the products, services or management system to be certified ;
- a description of the certification system;
- the applicable regulations;
- the payment to SC (the duration of audits and the fee may increase if the Certification Body must investigate EWS, complaints, exemptions, incidents, etc.
- the duration of the agreement.

By signing the certification agreement, the company accepts the obligations and consequences under the

agreement, the certification regulations and the requirements set out in the certification scheme, such as:

- the obligation to cooperate in audits by SC, witness audits, scheme manager and/or accreditation body;
- the obligation to cooperate in additional audits in accordance with the requirements of the certification scheme;
- the obligation to accept that the scheme manager or the legislator is informed of the outcome of audits in accordance with the requirements of the certification scheme;
- the obligation to inform SC, the scheme manager and governments of any product contamination found. This within the deadline set by the scheme manager and/or government.
- the duration of a man-day (8 hours unless otherwise provided in the certification scheme).

The full list of requirements can be found in the applicable certification scheme.

## **The certification process**

### *Article 6 – application*

At the company's request, SC will submit a quotation for carrying out the certification work, informing the company of the main points of the application process and the procedure to be followed. SC will also draw the company's attention to these regulations, the most recent version of which is on the Internet.

### *Article 7 – quotation*

SC reviews the application for certification on the following points:

- are the certification requirements clearly defined?
- is SC able to carry out the certification work, taking into account the scope of application of the certification sought?
- if applicable, are the requirements set by the scheme manager met?

### *Article 8 – communication*

- a) Unless the applicable accreditation standard, scheme manager or law requires otherwise, information about a specific product, service, management system or company will not be disclosed to third parties without the written consent of the company.
- b) SC may not make any statement to third parties regarding the application and its handling, unless with the consent of the company.
- c) Statements to the scheme manager are made in accordance with the requirements of the certification scheme.
- d) During the application process, the company may not create the impression that its product, service or management system has already been certified.

### *Article 9 – agreement*

- a) If the company has agreed to the quotation, the certification agreement referred to in Article 5 will be deemed concluded. SC starts the implementation of the certification procedure, i.e. planning, assessment of documents, on-site audit, reporting, final audit, administrative processing and certificate decision and issue, within a reasonable period (3 months and subject to employee availability).
- b) If the certification procedure cannot be started in a timely manner, the agreement will be terminated or renewed.
- c) In the event of changes in the certification requirements, SC will apply those requirements immediately after the applicable implementation date.
- d) SC may terminate the agreement if the company persistently fails to meet the certification requirements and appears unable to meet the requirements within the time limits set.

### *Article 10 – audit team*

SC designates a properly qualified audit team to perform the tasks related to the specific assessment. Team members must be free from biases and influences that could affect their objectivity. Companies and third parties involved in the certification must respect and support the independence and integrity of SC's employees. Specific Certification Regulations Animal Feed

requirements with regard to the professional expertise are set out in the requirements of the respective certification scheme.

### *Article 11 – initial audit*

- a) The initial audit consists of a document assessment and an on-site assessment. This in accordance with the requirements of the certification scheme;-
- b) If this is provided for in the certification scheme, SC may issue a temporary declaration (certificate / acceptance) to companies that wish to obtain a certificate for the first time, after a document assessment, on-site or otherwise, which temporary declaration is not renewable. The duration of this temporary declaration is laid down in the certification scheme. A temporary declaration may not be granted to a company that already had a certificate under the same certification scheme in the past. A company that has a temporary declaration is considered a 'participant' and therefore appears on the public list of participating companies of the relevant certification scheme.

### *Article 12 – preparation*

The company must give the audit team full access to all relevant parts and information of the company.

During the audit, the company must ensure that conditions are appropriate to carry out the audit. The company must in any event provide for:

- a person or team of persons to accompany the audit team during the days on which the audit takes place;
- a room in which the audit team can withdraw for mutual or telephone consultation.
- 

At the start of each audit, the audit team organises an introductory meeting.

#### **Verification scope**

At the start of the audit, the certification scope (the scope of application) must be verified. The scope must be laid down clearly and unambiguously. Think of:

- products, services or management system;
- locations;
- activities;
- services.

If the scope of the company does not correspond to the description in the agreement, this must be reported to the certification coordinator. The coordinator must assess whether the agreement should be adjusted. In addition the company must check name and address particulars, as set out in SC's relationship management system, for accuracy and completeness, prior to or at the start of the audit.

For a company that has during 3 years no activities within the scope as defined on the certificate, the scope will be withdrawn, if required r a period of suspension.

For a certificate holder that does not perform any activity for a certified scope for a term of 3 years, SC can decide suspend the certificate. On request of the company, SC can withdraw the suspension if the company has resumed to perform the activities for which the company is certified. A suspension has a maximum duration of 6 month after which the certificate will be withdrawn.

#### **Provision of information about the context**

If requested, the company must give full insight into the context of the certification scope. Think of:

- structure of the company (legal entities and mutual relationship)
- operational management and control.

#### **Collection and verification of information**

During the audit, the audit team collects and verifies information relevant to the objectives, scope and criteria of the audit by means of appropriate sampling. The company must render assistance to ensure that the samples are of sufficient size and depth. Both managers and other employees may be interviewed and assessed for their knowledge and application of the procedures.-

Information is collected by means of interviews, observation of activities, assessment of documents and testing

where applicable. Only objective information may serve as audit evidence. The audit evidence is recorded by the audit team.

### **Recording findings in work documents**

The audit team assesses the evidence on the basis of audit criteria and then formulates the findings. The findings show whether the audit criteria are met or any deviations from the criteria have been found. The deviations and associated audit evidence are recorded and classified by the audit team. The audit team discusses the deviations with the company in order to obtain confirmation that the audit evidence is accurate and the deviations are understood.

Deviations are classified in accordance with the abovementioned criteria, provided that deviations which directly (adversely) affect a product, service or management system prevent certification or continuation of certification. The same applies to deviations arising from non-compliance with legislation. SC reports the deviations as indicated in the reporting model, as laid down by the scheme manager in the certification scheme.

### **Final meeting**

At the final meeting, the audit team presents the audit findings and conclusions. The company must ensure that relevant officers, including, where appropriate, the board of directors, are present at this meeting.

The company is given the opportunity to formulate proposed improvement measures, which the company and/or the audit team include in the check list with audit findings. The audit team then determines the period within which the company must have completed corrective (and preventive) measures and, where applicable, submit them to the audit team. A copy of the check list with findings and improvement measures is left with the company or sent by email shortly after the audit.

The audit team is not obliged to provide additional explanations or make additional statements to employees of the company after the final meeting. Questions aimed at clarification of the findings must be asked during the audit or at the final meeting.

### **The assessment report**

The audit team draws up an assessment report after the end of the audit. The assessment report contains the findings with regard to all certification requirements. The assessment report is always provided by the audit team to the reviewer.

The assessment report is presented to the company within the period stipulated in the certification scheme-after decision-making. If applicable, the report lists any deviations that need to be remedied in order to meet all certification requirements, as well any necessary additional audits or tests. The completion and effectiveness of the corrective measures and the analysis of the cause of the deviations must be verified by the audit team. This verification can be part of a follow-up audit. If the assessment report does not list any deviations, this will usually lead to a positive advice to the board of directors (decision-maker).

## ***Article 13 – certificate***

- a) SC grants the certificate if the requirements of the certification scheme and the certification agreement between the company and SC are fully met. SC decides on whether to grant or continue the certificate or the temporary declaration within 2 weeks of completion of the review. SC communicates its decision to the company in writing. If the decision is positive, the company receives a certificate or the temporary declaration. If the decision is negative, SC rejects the application, stating the reasons for its decision in writing. If an application is rejected or its processing is terminated by mutual agreement, SC will only accept a new application for processing after the company has taken corrective measures.
- b) If required in the certification scheme, SC also reports to the scheme manager and provides the data referred to in the certification scheme (certificate and/or report). The scheme manager and/or SC manage and publish a public register of companies. The personal data in this register are limited to initial, first name, last name, gender, mobile number and e-mail address as documented.
- c) **Change of the scope of application – duplicates – foreign-language certificates.** In case of an application for change of the scope of application of an already-granted certificate, the certification coordinator of SC decides which assessment procedure is appropriate to determine whether or not the change is necessary and act accordingly. The requirements set out in the certification scheme are leading in

this respect. If provided for in the certification scheme, SC may, after an extension audit, issue a temporary declaration for the extension with an end date not falling after the anniversary date of the decision-making on the first subsequent regular audit and for a maximum period of 12 months. A company that already had a temporary declaration or certificate for the activity concerned in the past is not eligible for a new temporary declaration.

- d) Duplicates and other-language certificates are provided on request. The issue takes place in such a way that there is always one unique and traceable certificate.

#### *Article 14 – supervision audits*

- a) From time to time, supervision audits (also referred to as (un)announced or annual audits) and renewal audits (also referred to as re-certification or repeat audits) are conducted. In accordance with the requirements of the scheme, a supervision audit may be conducted unannounced.
- b) Supervision audits are conducted in accordance with the respective certification scheme. Supervision audits are conducted at least once a calendar year, except in the year of renewal of the certificate. The date of the supervision audits may not fall more than 12 or 24 months after the date of the certification decision. It may be necessary to adjust the frequency of supervision audits in connection with factors such as seasonal activities. In accordance with the requirements of the respective certification scheme, failure to conduct supervision audits in a timely manner may result in suspension of the certificate. It is the company's responsibility to enable SC to conduct the supervision audits in a timely manner.
- c) A renewal audit is conducted in accordance with the respective certification scheme and ~~Articles 6 to 13~~ these regulations, while the results of previous certification periods are taken into account in the preparation of the audit. Step 1 of the renewal audit is carried out on the basis of a document assessment. The frequency of audits is determined per certification scheme (with a minimum of 1x per year).
- d) Additional audits (extra supervision) or audits on short notice may be carried out if any information (deviations, complaints, violations during a suspension, etc.) suggests that the product, service or management system may no longer meet the requirements of the certification scheme, or if the company reports:
  - I. changes that significantly affect the design or specification of the product, service or management system ;
  - II. changes in the standards against which compliance is certified;
  - III. changes in ownership, structure or management at the company.
- e) The company will only be allowed to release products or services made after such changes with reference to the relevant certificate after SC has given it permission to do so.
- f) After the end date of the previous certificate, an audit in response to a request for 'renewal' of the certificate is conducted as an initial audit. For the sake of completeness, it is noted that the certificate immediately ceases to be valid after the end date.
- g) If a participant switches to a new certification body, the audit reports (if justified and after written consent of the participant) are made available to the new certification body.

#### *Article 15 – suspension / revocation*

- a) A certificate or temporary declaration may be revoked by SC with immediate effect if:
  - 1) a serious deviation has been found during audits;
  - 2) adequate corrective measures are not taken or not taken in a timely manner during a period of suspension;
  - 3) the company has seriously violated one or more obligations under the certification agreement, including financial obligations;
  - 4) the company is no longer formally active (for example after a bankruptcy or business discontinuation);
  - 5) the company has seriously damaged SC's interests.
- b) Revocation of the certificate or temporary declaration covers the entire scope of the certificate.
- c) If it is found that the certified company no longer meets the requirements of the certification agreement and/or certification scheme, SC will, if applicable according to the certification scheme, immediately increase the audit frequency or suspend or revoke the certificate or temporary declaration. In the event of deviations that present a direct risk to the food safety of the product, service and/or chain, the audit team must immediately inform SC's board of directors. After final determination, the audit team or the management board informs the scheme manager and competent authority (government) in accordance with the applicable procedures of the certification scheme. The same applies in the event of suspension or revocation of a certificate or temporary

declaration.

- d) In cases other than those mentioned above, revocation of the certificate or temporary declaration is always subject to a notice period of at least three full calendar months. Revocation must be communicated to the other party by letter, stating the reason(s) and the date of revocation. Revocation of the certificate does not affect the (financial) obligations of the company to SC under the certification agreement.
- e) Termination of the certification agreement, at the request of either party or by mutual consent, is always subject to a notice period of at least three full calendar months. Termination must be communicated to the other party by letter, stating the reason(s) and the date of termination. Termination does not affect the (financial) obligations of the company to SC under the certification agreement.
- f) If a participant's certificate for a certification scheme or part thereof that has not been certified by SC is not or no longer revoked or suspended, the participant must immediately report this to SC. SC determines the next steps for all schemes for which the participant has been certified by SC.

## **Other provisions**

### *Article 16 – appeal*

- a) If an audit results in a difference of opinion between the company and the audit team with regard to the interpretation of a standard requirement or SC's procedure, the company may submit the dispute to SC's certification coordinator. The coordinator consults the parties involved and any other experts or interested parties. The certification coordinator takes a decision and informs the parties involved thereof.
- b) Interested parties may submit a request for mediation to the Conciliation Committee against a decision of SC regarding technical and procedural aspects of certification, within 30 days of the date of the decision. A request for mediation is submitted on the basis of the Mediation and Improvement Regulations (P12-01) of Schouten Certification. The Mediation and Improvement Regulations are available from SC. A request for mediation does not affect SC's decision until the Conciliation Committee has given its decision on the matter.
- c) If the aforementioned dispute resolution procedure does not lead to a solution, the dispute may be heard in the second instance in accordance with the dispute regulations referred to in the documents of the certification scheme. This appeal to an external organization may only be filed when all opportunities for appeal to SC are exhausted.

### *Article 17 – complaints*

The procedure for complaints is described in the document 'P12-01 Mediation and Improvement Regulations', which is published on the website.

### *Article 18 – working conditions*

The company must ensure that the working conditions in its company are such that there is no risk to the safety and health of SC's audit team, the accreditation body or the scheme manager in carrying out their work. If necessary, the company must provide safety equipment and corresponding instructions.

An assessment expert may abort an audit at any time if the company cannot secure personal safety during the audit or if there are doubts in this regard.

### *Article 19 – logo, certificate and communication*

- a) The certified company may use the logo specified in the certification scheme of the scheme manager. The company shall comply strictly with the requirements set by the scheme manager. It is not allowed to use the accreditation logo, otherwise than on the certificate.
- b) The certified company may use the certificate only as specified in the certification scheme of the scheme manager and/or the General Conditions of SC. It is not allowed to use and/or communicate to third parties parts of the certificate and/or scope. In communications with third parties, the company must at all times use the full content of the certificate and scope. Use of and communications about certification, certificate and/or scope must be such that SC is not discredited. Nor may such use and/or communications lead to deception or unauthorized use.
- c) SC may bring an action, alone or together with certified companies, against third parties that make improper use of certificates.
- d) The company may not use the certificate from the date of termination of the certificate or during a period of suspension of the right to use the certificate. Nor may it create the impression that it still has the right to use the certificate. In case of violation of this provision, the company must pay SC an immediately payable penalty of EUR 7,500 plus a penalty of EUR 750 for each day the violation continues.
- e) SC may exercise the legal remedies at its disposal to prevent or eliminate violations of this article.

### *Article 20 – confidentiality*

- a) Employees of SC are obliged to maintain confidentiality vis-à-vis third parties regarding all data they become aware of within the framework of their certification work. External employees (experts) will be required to sign a declaration containing the confidentiality obligations laid down in this article.
- b) It is the responsibility of the company to inform employees that their personal information may be inspected or documented during audits.

### *Article 21 – accreditation / acceptance*

- a) If SC is not or no longer accredited or recognized by a scheme manager, SC will report this to the competent authorities and/or other scheme managers.
- b) This may also mean that companies certified by SC will have to switch to another certification body if they want to maintain their certification. If this situation occurs, SC will do its utmost to assist companies certified by it in the switch to another certification body.

### *Article 22*

These regulations may be referred to by the name 'Certification Regulations Animal Feed'. Amendments to these regulations only enter into force after approval by SC's internal Advisory Board and publication by SC stating the date of entry into force.

- end -

## **Appendix I : Scope of application**

The schemes to which these regulations apply are explained in Appendix 1 of these regulations.

- GMP+ FC scheme
- OVOCOM FCA
- Autocontrolegids G\_001 (incl. DBP)
- SecureFeed
- BFA Lastenboek Plantaardig
- BVI Better for everyone (formerly HFA)

## Appendix II : Specific instructions GMP+

For GMP+ FSA certification, the following applies to the assessment of gatekeeper files. Depending on the number and type of files, an X number of files is assessed.

### GMP+ FC scheme | supplement audit time to be spent on gatekeeper files

As regards gatekeeper files nos. 4.3.1, 4.3.2, 4.3.5, 4.3.7, 4.3.9, 4.4.1, 4.4.2 and 4.4.3, 0.5 hours per file according to GMP+ CR2.0 annex 2. As regards gatekeeper files nos. 4.3.3, 4.3.4 and 4.3.8, 1.0 hours per file.

The number of gatekeeper files assessed per certification period of 3 years according to GMP+ C6 Annex 2:

Number of gatekeeper files	Minimum number of gatekeeper files assessed per 3 years	Number of gatekeeper files	Minimum number of gatekeeper files assessed per 3 years	Number of gatekeeper files	Minimum number of gatekeeper files assessed per 3 years
1 - 5	all	16 – 30	7	51 - 100	9
6 - 10	5	31 – 50	8	101 and more	10
11 - 15	6				

Invoicing of the number of gatekeeper files assessed per audit takes place at the applicable rate per man day (hours converted to man days) and on the basis of the number of gatekeeper files-the company has reported to Schouten Certification.