

GLOBALG.A.P. is a brand of smart farm assurance solutions developed by FoodPLUS GmbH in Cologne, Germany, in cooperation with producers, retailers, and other stakeholders from across the food industry. These solutions include a range of standards and add-ons for safe, socially, and environmentally responsible farming practices. The collaboration was voluntary, and still is. Since the very first public consultation, producers/suppliers have been more involved in determining the content of our standards and add-ons than retailers/food service providers.

Consultations on the content of standards and add-ons (and their revision) are public, involving at least two rounds of official public consultation, as well as parallel webinars for several sectors, including NGO's. This is in accordance with the ISEAL recommendations for standard revision processes.

The GLOBALG.A.P. Risk Assessment on Social Practice (GRASP) was initiated by GIZ (German Agency for International Cooperation) with the support of many local working groups.

About our social approach

GRASP is currently in transition from GRASP v1.3-1-i to GRASP v2. GRASP v2, published in 2022, will become obligatory on 1 January 2024.

GRASP has been significantly revised and has been made stricter, also regarding several criteria already covered by the Integrated Farm Assurance (IFA) standard (e.g., producer seeking a GRASP letter of conformance shall be fully compliant with all IFA principles and criteria on workers' health, safety, and welfare). The improved GRASP v2 introduces new mechanisms that strengthen compliance with workers' human rights and workers' well-being, while maintaining the efficiency and cost reductions that have always been associated with GRASP. In GRASP v2,

core workers' human rights have been defined as Major Must principles and criteria (P&Cs), signaling zero tolerance for non-compliance with these P&Cs. These include:

- Workers engage in employment voluntarily and without being pressured, forced, or intimidated (P&C 6.2).
- Workers are not subject to any form of debt bondage or forced labor (P&C 4.1).
- Producers do not support or tolerate any form of discrimination or harassment (P&Cs 4.1, 5.1, and 8.3).
- Producers respect workers' freedom of association (P&C 1.1).
- Producers observe the laws of the respective country and especially those concerning minimum wage (P&C 8.3), maximum working hours (P&C 12.4), and legal rest breaks (P&C 12.5).

About the GLOBALG.A.P. certification system

The GLOBALG.A.P. certification system is deliberately different from others because we set up firewalls between us (the standard setter), those who verify compliance (the certification bodies (CBs)), and those who implement our standards and add-ons (the producers). The purpose of these firewalls is to ensure integrity through independence. Our integrity program monitors and assesses the performance of approved CBs to ensure that they are conducting audits correctly. Checks may include witness audits or the repetition of audits conducted by a CB. If we identify any deficiencies, the respective CB is sanctioned. Sanctions are visible in the list of approved CBs https://www.globalgap.org/uk_en/what-we-do/the-gg-system/certification/Approved-CBs/index.html.

From the very beginning, our certification system was set up with firewalls to ensure independence and objectivity, as well as to ensure privacy and guarantee that producers retain control over their own data – and this system has proven itself.

About certification and the handling of complaints

The GLOBALG.A.P. certification system is based on cooperation with independent and accredited CBs. These CBs audit the producers. Certification decisions are made exclusively by these CBs based on predefined P&Cs in the GLOBALG.A.P. standards and add-ons. The certification process is a robust procedure in which the production processes of producers seeking certification are subject to an annual in-depth audit, conducted on-site in accordance with the guidelines and P&Cs of the respective standard or add-on.

Complaints are a valuable source of feedback for the GLOBALG.A.P. Secretariat and an important tool for verifying a producer's compliance with the P&Cs in the respective standard or add-on during the validity period of a certificate or letter of conformance. We investigate every complaint we receive that is based on valid and solid evidence, whether it comes to us from external sources, arises internally, or through our media monitoring tools.

If a producer becomes the subject of a complaint, they will be investigated. If the producer is certified to IFA and/or GRASP and the alleged violations fall within the scope of the standard or add-on, the GLOBALG.A.P. Secretariat will oversee this investigation and, if necessary, support a direct on-site audit by the producer's CB. Depending on the nature and extent of any confirmed violations, the producer will either be given time to take corrective action, be subject to a temporary suspension, or lose their certification. In cases where fraud and/or lack of confidence in a

producer's compliance with IFA and/or GRASP is demonstrated, certification will be withdrawn and a cancellation will be imposed for 12 months, disqualifying the producer from any type of GLOBALG.A.P. certification for that period.

GLOBALG.A.P. maintains a database of certified producers. IFA for aquaculture certificates are visible in the GLOBALG.A.P. database. Aquaculture producers who appear in the GLOBALG.A.P. database have successfully completed a GRASP assessment as a compliant GRASP assessment is a requirement to be certified to IFA for aquaculture.

Complaints can be lodged in two different systems. In the first system, producers are required to have their own complaint process in place. The CB assesses whether the producer has a complaint process in place and whether it is effective (to protect workers in their grievances). GRASP does not prescribe what that process should look like in detail. Farms, workers, contexts, etc., differ too much to make a single prescription that fits all farms.

The second system allows complaints to be lodged directly with the GLOBALG.A.P. Secretariat. Workers can lodge complaints with us if they believe that the positive result of an audit does not reflect the reality. To do this, they can use the complaint form on the GLOBALG.A.P. website (for more details please see here:

https://www.globalgap.org/uk_en/contact/complaint-management/index.html)