



Frequently Asked Questions

Q1. I failed my CanadaGAP audit and have a number of autofails and/or corrective actions to complete. What happens next?

A. You need to get a copy of the Corrective Actions Report. This can be found on the CanadaGAP website (www.canadagap.ca) under “tools”.

Q2. Can I just choose anywhere I lost marks on the audit or any autofail(s) received and correct them?

A. No, the participant cannot just choose any issue to fix.

Program participants must always correct autofail items first. All autofail items must be corrected. Other than these, the auditor will have identified some of the higher priority corrective action requests in the Executive Summary (Section C – Action Plan) of the audit report. Those would be the next items that the certification body and auditor would expect you to correct.

Beyond the autofail items and those listed in the Executive Summary, program participants can determine which remaining items to fix. It is advisable to speak first with your certification body (including the auditor) and/or your customers, if appropriate, to ensure their expectations and priorities will be addressed.

Important Note: It might not always be possible to correct autofail items or lost points after the audit within a desired time frame (e.g., to meet a customer deadline). It might be too late or not possible to take appropriate action until the next season (for example, if the production season is already over).

Q3. What are some situations where it is not possible to fix my autofail item(s) or lost marks until the next season?

- A. Here are some examples of issues that would require the participant to wait until the next season to be certified:
- If agricultural chemicals not registered for use in Canada were sprayed on crops during the course of the season and therefore caused product contamination.

- If apples or tomatoes were washed in water that was not kept potable and temperature was not monitored or controlled, and product was not discarded.
- If untreated sewage water was used on crops throughout the season.
- If personal hygiene facilities were not provided for employees and the harvest season was completed.

Q4. Who decides which corrective actions are acceptable?

- A.** In all cases, corrective actions implemented by the participant are subject to review by the Certification Body. The Certification Body will decide which are acceptable, based on evidence and clarification from the participant which shows they have sufficiently completed the corrective action.

Q5. How long do I have to complete my corrective actions?

- A.** The participant is responsible for implementing corrective actions to the best of their ability, within the timeframe indicated by their customer and/or certification body [e.g., immediately (1 week), 1 month, up to 3 months, etc. depending on the nature and severity of the items)]. Under program rules, participants are given a maximum of one year to complete corrective actions.

It is advisable to **avoid delays** in implementing corrective actions and initiating follow-up with the certification body or auditor, since delays:

- Increase the likelihood of not being certified in the current year. For instance, it could become too late in the production season to adequately implement, monitor or assess the effectiveness of your corrective actions.
- Entail a shorter certification period. Regardless of when your certificate is issued, it will expire close to the anniversary of your **original audit date**. The longer you delay implementation of corrective actions, the shorter your certificate validity period will be.

Q6. What sort of evidence will the Certification Body accept as proof that my correction actions are complete?

- A.** It depends on the situation and the issue being corrected. The Certification Body may accept:
- Documentary evidence (e.g., missing records)
 - Photographic evidence

Important note: there may be situations where demonstrations of the corrective action can only be confirmed by a further site visit. The decision about a return visit is at the discretion of the certification body and depends on your audit results and the corrective actions required. If in doubt, consult your certification body or auditor about the type of evidence that will be acceptable for your situation.

Q7. What happens if the Certification Body decides that they have to confirm my corrective actions through an on-site visit? Who pays for that?

- A.** If the Certification Body decides that the demonstration of the corrective action can only be confirmed by a future site visit, they will coordinate that with the participant. When this is required, the participant is responsible for costs (i.e., auditor time and travel).

Please note that participants will not become certified until the corrective actions can be completed. If the Certification Body has to come back for a site visit and the season is over, they will have to schedule for the next season, and certification will not be possible until that time. Take this into consideration when you are scheduling your audit, particularly when you are starting out on the program and are uncertain whether your operation meets the standard.

Regardless of whether an on-site visit is required, the program participant is responsible to pay the certification body fees for follow-up on corrective actions. Charges also apply to desk review of evidence (documents, photographs, etc.) even when a return visit to your site is unnecessary. Check the rates in your contract with the certification body.

Q8. What happens if I am not able to complete my corrective actions?

- A.** If participants are unsuccessful in implementing corrective actions to pass the audit:
- They can withdraw officially from the program, enrol again the next year, and re-attempt certification. The CHC must be informed so that the CanadaGAP Annual Program Enrolment fee for the current year can be refunded, minus an administrative charge of \$100. For example, if it was impossible or unacceptable for the program participant to implement corrective actions within the program's one-year grace period and a full re-audit was needed during next year's harvest. The audit fees (auditor's time and travel) for the failed audit are not refundable.
 - They can maintain their enrolment if they will be implementing corrective actions next season, but within the program's one-year grace period. In that case, the participant's enrolment status is considered active, no direct notification to the CHC is required, and the CanadaGAP Annual Program Enrolment Fee is applied to the current year.