

# NEWSLETTER

CANADAGAP NEWSLETTER

JUNE 2021



Welcome to the first edition of the CanadaGAP newsletter! We are very excited to launch this quarterly newsletter that will feature helpful information, timely news and everything pertinent to program participants. If you have any feedback on what you'd like to see highlighted or featured in future newsletters contact the CanadaGAP office at [info@canadagap.ca](mailto:info@canadagap.ca) or 613-829-4711.

## Success Stories: De Dreu Farms

**D**e Dreu Farms is a family owned business that started in 2004 and farms about 650 acres, comprising of cabbage, broccoli and kale, in addition to cash crops (soybeans and non GMO corn).

In April of 2014, de Dreu farms began to prepare for CanadaGAP certification for the first time, and passed their audit that year with their old facilities. Later that year, the farm built a new 14,000 sq. foot facility primarily for increased cold storage of cabbage. It also has a more convenient area for packing product, storing packaging, and a lunch area for their employees.

They became CanadaGAP certified at their customers' request, and it has had a positive effect on their business. Anita de Dreu explained that "we have had the strongest demand for our product in the history of our business since we became CanadaGAP certified." It has also led to them obtaining new customers who will pay a higher price for their product. De Dreu says an added benefit to CanadaGAP is that it has started them on the path of having systems in place. They are doing a better job of managing their overall business and have incorporated systems into all aspects of their business, not just food safety.

"We have a Food Safety culture in place now and we all take pride in growing a good product with these standards."

## Buyer's Corner: Mike Furi, Manager, Farm to Fork



**Do you require your fresh produce suppliers to be certified to a GFSI-recognized program?**

Yes, Federated Co-operatives Limited requires all fresh fruits and vegetable suppliers to have a food safety certification that is GFSI recognized.

**What are the benefits of doing so?**

The Canadian consumer wants to be assured that the food they are buying is grown in as safe a manner as possible. GFSI programs provide reassurance to us as a retailer that producers can prove they're following best practices when they're certified.

**Many of your suppliers use the CanadaGAP program for their certification needs. In your experience, do you see benefits for growers implementing or using the CanadaGAP program?**

By implementing the program, growers gain access to the retail market. Without that certification, growers will be restricted in sales and growth opportunities, with additional expenses needed to sell at the farm gate or farmers' markets. I had a supplier once tell me when he watched the first load of a commodity being shipped to our distribution centre, one of his colleagues stated that's a lot of hours at the farmers' market going out in one delivery.



**What score does an operation need to pass their CanadaGAP audit?**

The score to pass the audit will depend on your certification option. Generally, if you fail the audit, you will still have an opportunity to achieve certification through the corrective action process.

For Options B, C, and D (repacking and wholesaling): You must comply 100% with the CanadaGAP audit checklist to pass the audit. Items that receive less than full points must be addressed through corrective actions, or if corrective actions are not possible in the current year, you must submit a corrective actions plan for approval by the Certification Body.

For Options A1, A2, D (brokerage): A score of 85% with no autofail items is required to pass the audit. You must always correct all autofail items first. Those scoring below 85% must implement corrective actions to obtain a passing score of 85%.

**What happens if an operation is not able to complete their corrective actions?**

If operations are unsuccessful in implementing corrective actions to pass the audit:

- If there is time left in the season, they can undertake another audit to achieve certification.
- They can maintain their enrolment and have their annual program fee applied to next season, when they will re-attempt certification. The CanadaGAP office must be informed in writing of their plans to ensure that the annual program fee is properly applied.
- They can withdraw officially from the program, and if desired, enrol again the next year and re-attempt certification. CanadaGAP must be informed in writing so that the annual program fee for the current year can be refunded, minus an administrative charge of \$100, or applied as a credit against a future year. The audit fees (auditor’s time and travel) for the failed audit are not refundable.

**Process for CanadaGAP Program Participants to Appeal Audit Results or File a Complaint**

Audit appeals (where you disagree with any of the findings of your audit) should be sent directly to the certification body (CB) who provided the audit service. When you sign a contract with your CB for the audit services, they provide you with information about their appeal and complaints process, including where the appeal should be directed.

The process depends on the CB. Appeals may go first to the auditor, or may be directed to the certification manager or other identified contact within the CB.

If you contact the CanadaGAP office to appeal your audit results, we will refer you to the CB to begin the process. Once that process has run its course, you can file a complaint with CanadaGAP if you remain dissatisfied.

**Program Benefits to Customers**



- GFSI-recognized (certification options B, C, D [repacking and wholesaling])
- Program has full Canadian Government Recognition
- Consistency of audit results
- Objective, third party certification of suppliers
- Internationally accredited Certification Bodies
- Certification Bodies are arm’s length to both the scheme owner (CanadaGAP) and the customer
- Auditors trained specifically on requirements of the CanadaGAP Program
- Trained professionals responsible for assessing supplier conformance to technical requirements
- Ongoing oversight of Certification Body and auditor performance by CanadaGAP and international accreditation bodies