

NEWSLETTER

CANADAGAP NEWSLETTER

SEPTEMBER 2021



Welcome back for the second edition of the CanadaGAP newsletter! This quarterly newsletter features 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 or 613-829-4711.

Success Stories: Windset Farms

Established in 1996, Windset Farms has four facilities in multiple locations spanning a total of 148 acres. Windset was introduced to the CanadaGAP program by Loblaw Companies Ltd.

Food Safety/Quality Assurance Manager Suby Kaur explains that while Windset also maintains its own food safety program (in order to meet various customer requirements), the CanadaGAP Program is “the most straightforward to implement in a pack house.”

“It’s very user-friendly,” she says, noting that the already-written SOPs and documentation provided to the farm—especially Microsoft Excel format—are handy for producers, who are able to personalize the records provided to them, without having to “re-write the book.”

“It’s great because the audit is the same, the standards are the same (as other food safety programs), just the processes are different—they’re adapted to fresh produce production.”

Windset Farms is also a marketing agency for several independent farms—ranging in size from two to 30 acres—that are certified under the CanadaGAP Program. Kaur says the CanadaGAP Program helps to keep the quality and food safety standards at all farms consistent across the board.

Changes to unannounced audits starting Oct 1 2021

Starting October 1, 2021, to maintain compliance with GFSI requirements, unannounced audits will work differently for CanadaGAP program participants enrolled in certification options B, C, and D. A reminder of the CanadaGAP certification options affected by this change:

- Option B – Group Certification
- Option C – Individual Certification with an annual audit
- Option D – Certification for Repacking, Wholesaling, and Brokerage operations

CanadaGAP is introducing two new unannounced audit (UA) options for program participants enrolled in certification options B, C, and D:

1. All CanadaGAP Certification Bodies must make available the first option (UA Option 1)
 2. At the discretion of the CB, they may also make available the second option (UA Option 2).
- For further information please consult:

- Your Certification Body
- The CanadaGAP office at 613-829-4711 or info@canadagap.ca
- FAQ(s) about unannounced audits on the CanadaGAP website at: www.canadagap.ca/program/faq/audit-process/
- Version 9.1 of the CanadaGAP Program Management Manual (2021) at www.canadagap.ca



What is an unannounced audit?

An unannounced audit is an audit that is not scheduled in advance with the operation. The details regarding unannounced audits vary depending on certification option (see further FAQs for more details and also a detailed guidance document on changes to the UA program on the CanadaGAP website).

What are the two new UA options introduced?

1. UA Option 1: Unannounced audit that year, to replace the client's regularly scheduled audit.
 - Certification bodies must offer UA Option 1.
2. UA Option 2: Two audits that year, one announced and one unannounced.
 - Certification bodies may choose to offer UA Option 2. Check with your CB. More details about both UA options are available on the CanadaGAP website.

What kind of notice is provided by the CB?

Options B, C, D (GFSI-recognized)

Early in the year, the CB contacts clients chosen for an unannounced audit to inform them that they have been selected and to gather information about what will need to be seen.

The operation receives no advance notice of the unannounced audit date.

Option A1 and A2 (not GFSI recognized)

Early in the year, the CB contacts clients chosen for an unannounced audit to inform them that they have been selected and to gather information about what will need to be seen.

The Certification Body provides notice 2-5 business days advance notice before the audit is to occur.

Who will have an unannounced audit?

The unannounced audit programme is for operations enrolled in all certification options.

For Options A1, A2, C, and D: Each year the Certification Body will choose 10% of its clients for an unannounced audit; therefore, over time, everyone will have an unannounced audit.

For Option B (group certification): Certification Bodies will select 25% of the group members each year to undergo an unannounced audit.

Does having an unannounced audit for an operation enrolled in Option A1/A2 affect their audit cycle or random audit selection?

If an operation is enrolled in Option A1 or A2 (4-year audit cycle), there is no change to the way the audit cycle or random audits work. The operation will still be informed in advance if they are randomly selected for an audit. However, they may not be told the exact date of the random audit (i.e., it could be unannounced).

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