

Procedure No.	TP-02-CA
Created:	June 2009
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## **Corrective Actions Follow-up Procedures for Auditors and Certification Bodies**

### **Audit Failures and Corrective Actions**

Please see the process below for follow-up on Corrective Action Requests after failed audits.

1. Auditees who fail the audit have 60 days from receipt of the audit report to close out Corrective Action Requests, or the end of the season, whichever is sooner. Those who have not implemented corrective actions by the deadline will either not be certified, or will have certification withdrawn, and will need another full audit. As determined by the Certification Body, provisions can be made for a longer timeframe than 60 days to deal with exceptional circumstances (e.g., if needed for major capital investments). The close-out period (60 days or end of the season, whichever is sooner) **INCLUDES** the review and approval of corrective actions by the certification body. The auditor or certification body may require additional documentary evidence (records, photos, etc.), or a follow-up visit to the operation, or both. The auditee must allow enough time (minimum 2-3 weeks) for the auditor and certification body to review and approve the corrective actions implemented.
2. Some customers have set out expected timeframes for their suppliers regarding audit failures and corrective actions follow-up, which may differ from the base requirements of the program. If the customer's deadline is shorter than the close-out period required by the program, the auditee is responsible to respond to Corrective Action Requests in a timeframe appropriate to meet his customer's expectations.
3. A certificate will not be issued until the auditee has corrected any autofail items, if applicable, and/or implemented corrective actions sufficient to bring him up to a passing score on the audit.
4. The process for auditors and auditees is as follows:
  - 4.1 The auditor completes the audit report (failed) and sends to the Certification Body. In some cases and only as appropriate, the auditor may await receipt of further information from the auditee before finalizing the audit report (e.g., additional records that were not available on-site during the audit but that can be sent to the auditor within a reasonable time delay.) For further guidance in specific situations, please contact the program lead for CanadaGAP at your Certification Body.
  - 4.2 As per CanadaGAP auditor training, the auditor must complete the Executive Summary in the Audit Checklist, identifying any autofails and other findings, with target timeframes for completion (see Section C – Summary of Audit Findings). The auditor leaves a copy of the Executive Summary with the auditee or sends a copy to him as soon as possible after the audit. The auditor informs the auditee that audit findings are subject to review by

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the Certification Body (CB), and the final copy of the audit report will be sent to the auditee by the CB.

- 4.3 The Certification Body will receive the audit report from the auditor, review it and provide a final copy to the auditee to inform him of the failed audit.
- 4.4 The audit report is not shared automatically with the auditee's customer(s), although some customers require this. Regardless, the auditee must pre-authorize release of the report by the Certification Body. The auditee may otherwise have the option of providing his customer(s) with a copy directly. In the case of an audit failure, if the auditee has not pre-authorized release, the report can be retained by the auditee until such time as corrective actions are taken, and certification granted. At that point, the auditee can share the audit results with his customer(s) – i.e., both the original audit report and the completed *Corrective Actions Report*.
- 4.5 The auditee is responsible to implement corrective actions to the best of his ability, within the timeframe indicated by the program and/or his customer, whichever is more stringent. Customer requirements may be very short [e.g., immediately (1 week), 1 month, etc.] depending on the nature and severity of the non-conformance(s).
- 4.6 It is in the auditee's best interest to avoid delays since they increase the likelihood of not being certified in the current year, or could entail a shorter certification period (e.g., regardless of when a certificate is issued, it could expire close to the anniversary of the original audit date).
- 4.7 The auditee is responsible to implement corrective actions and contact his **auditor** to provide evidence of action(s) taken. This could include sending missing records, digital photos, etc. In some cases a return visit on-site may be required. The auditee should contact the auditor/Certification Body for guidance as required in specific cases.
- 4.8 If it is determined by the Certification Body that a return on-site visit is required, the participant is responsible for costs (i.e., auditor time and travel). Regardless of whether an on-site visit is required the auditee is responsible to pay the Certification Body fees for follow-up on corrective actions. Charges also apply to desk review of evidence even when a return visit is unnecessary.
- 4.9 All auto failure items must be corrected first. Next, higher priority items that may have been identified in the Executive Summary under "Other Findings" should be corrected. The auditee should refer to the full audit report for all findings and has some choice as to which items to correct to bring him up to a passing score.
- 4.10 It may not always be possible to correct autofail items or lost points after the audit within the required timeframe. It might be too late or not possible to take appropriate action until the next season (e.g., if the production season is already over). If in doubt, it is advisable for the auditee to contact the auditor or Certification Body to ensure that enough time remains to take and close out corrective actions.

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- 4.11 All Corrective Actions activity will be recorded in a **separate document** from the Audit Checklist. The blank template of this document, the *Corrective Actions Report*, is an Excel file publicly available on the CanadaGAP website: [www.canadagap.ca](http://www.canadagap.ca). The auditee initiates the follow-up by using this form to indicate what action has been taken (completes columns 2, 3, 4). The auditor completes the last three columns of the *Corrective Actions Report* to record follow-up findings/observations/comments, adjustments to the original score, and recommendations on whether to close the corrective action request. The auditor also fills in the *adjustment to score* table. **Use only this Corrective Actions Report document**; do not add information to the original audit report. Do not revise original scoring or auditor's comments/observations within the audit report in any way.
- 4.12 The auditor reviews evidence of corrective actions for completeness, and forwards for assessment and decision by the Certification Body. It is in the auditee's best interest to provide the auditor with complete information to minimize follow-up time.
- 4.13 The auditor sends the completed *Corrective Actions Report* and evidence to support closure of corrective actions (records, digital photos, etc.) to the Certification Body.
- 4.14 The Certification Body will review the *Corrective Actions Report* and available evidence to determine whether to certify the operation.
- 4.15 The adjusted final score after closure of CARs will be recorded on the *Corrective Actions Report*, and a copy of the finalized *Corrective Actions Report* transmitted to the auditee (and, if authorized, to the customer).
- 4.16 The final audit result consists of the two reports: 1) the original audit report, which reflects the audit findings and original score, and 2) the completed *Corrective Actions Report*, which shows the final adjusted score.

Auditors are expected to direct all inquiries regarding the Certification Body's processes for receiving and reviewing reports, corrective actions follow-up, etc. to the program lead for CanadaGAP at their certification body.

### **Corrective Actions to Increase Audit Score**

The CARs procedure can also be used if the auditee wants to increase their audit score. Some auditees may need to take corrective action(s) to satisfy a minimum scoring requirement from a buyer, retailer, etc.

The same procedures (above) apply when corrective actions are taken by the auditee to increase their audit score, except that there is no step of withdrawing certification if the auditee does not close out corrective actions within the required 60-day timeframe.