

To: CanadaGAP Program Participants and Other Stakeholders
Date: February 7, 2017
Subject: CanadaGAP Introduces Unannounced Audits

Effective April 1, 2017 CanadaGAP will introduce an Unannounced Audit programme in response to new GFSI benchmarking requirements.

What is an Unannounced Audit?

- Unannounced audits will not be scheduled in advance with the producer.
- The certification body will provide 2 to 5 business days' notice that the auditor is coming.
- An unannounced audit will take place **instead of** a scheduled audit (NOT additional to a scheduled audit).
- The producer will pay the **regular audit fee** for the unannounced audit.

Only if needed, the certification body or auditor may contact you ahead of time (e.g., early in the season)

- To confirm the scope of your operation's certification
- To confirm in general when certain activities are occurring (e.g., harvesting, packing, shipping, etc.)
- NOT to identify a specific time for the audit.

When will Unannounced Audits occur?

Like all CanadaGAP audits, unannounced audits must occur while activities relevant to the scope of your operation's certification are occurring.

- You cannot block off "busy periods" like harvesting or shipping.
- Unannounced audits can occur during periods of high activity.

Be Audit-Ready

- You can refuse the first notification, for valid reasons as determined by the certification body.
- You **cannot** refuse the second notification.
- Not responding to the notification (phone or email) from the certification body or auditor will be considered an ACCEPTED notification.
- If you are not prepared to proceed with the audit when the auditor arrives, you will still be charged for the cost of the auditor's time and travel.
- If possible, the auditor will return for another unannounced audit during the current season. Note that it may be impossible for the auditor to return during the current season due to scheduling demands.
- In other words, not being prepared for the unannounced audit could put your operation's certification in jeopardy.

Who Will Be Chosen for an Unannounced Audit?

- The new Unannounced Audit programme will be for those enrolled in CanadaGAP certification Options **A1, A2, C and D**.
- The certification body will choose 5% of its clients each year.
- Over time, all individually certified companies will have an unannounced audit.
- Those enrolled in group certification Option B already have an unannounced component to their option. Option A3 will also see the introduction of an unannounced component in 2017.

What About Random Audits?

If you are enrolled in CanadaGAP certification Option A1 or A2 (four-year audit cycle):

- there is no change to your four-year audit cycle, and
- there is no change to the way that random audits work.
- You would still be informed in advance if you've been randomly selected for an audit. However, you may not be told the exact date of your audit. It could be an unannounced audit.
- Likewise, if you already expect to be audited this year (because you are due for an audit in your four-year cycle), this audit could be unannounced.
- "Unannounced" means you won't know more than 2 to 5 business days in advance of the date of your audit. You will still know in advance that you are having an audit sometime this year.

"Although certification options A1, A2 and A3 are not GFSI-recognized, the CanAgPlus Board has chosen to include all certification options in the unannounced audit programme to improve the overall rigour of CanadaGAP certification," explained Heather Gale, Executive Director for CanadaGAP.

Why are Unannounced Audits being introduced?

- To meet new GFSI requirements
- To respond to market signals
- To ensure that producers are maintaining their program on a continuing basis

"We need to be ready to demonstrate to our customers that CanadaGAP-certified companies can meet program requirements at any time," commented Jack Bates, Chair of the CanAgPlus Board.

A PowerPoint presentation outlining the new Unannounced Audit programme is available on the CanadaGAP website at: <http://www.canadagap.ca/publications/canadagap-presentations/>.

Please direct any questions to the CanadaGAP office.

