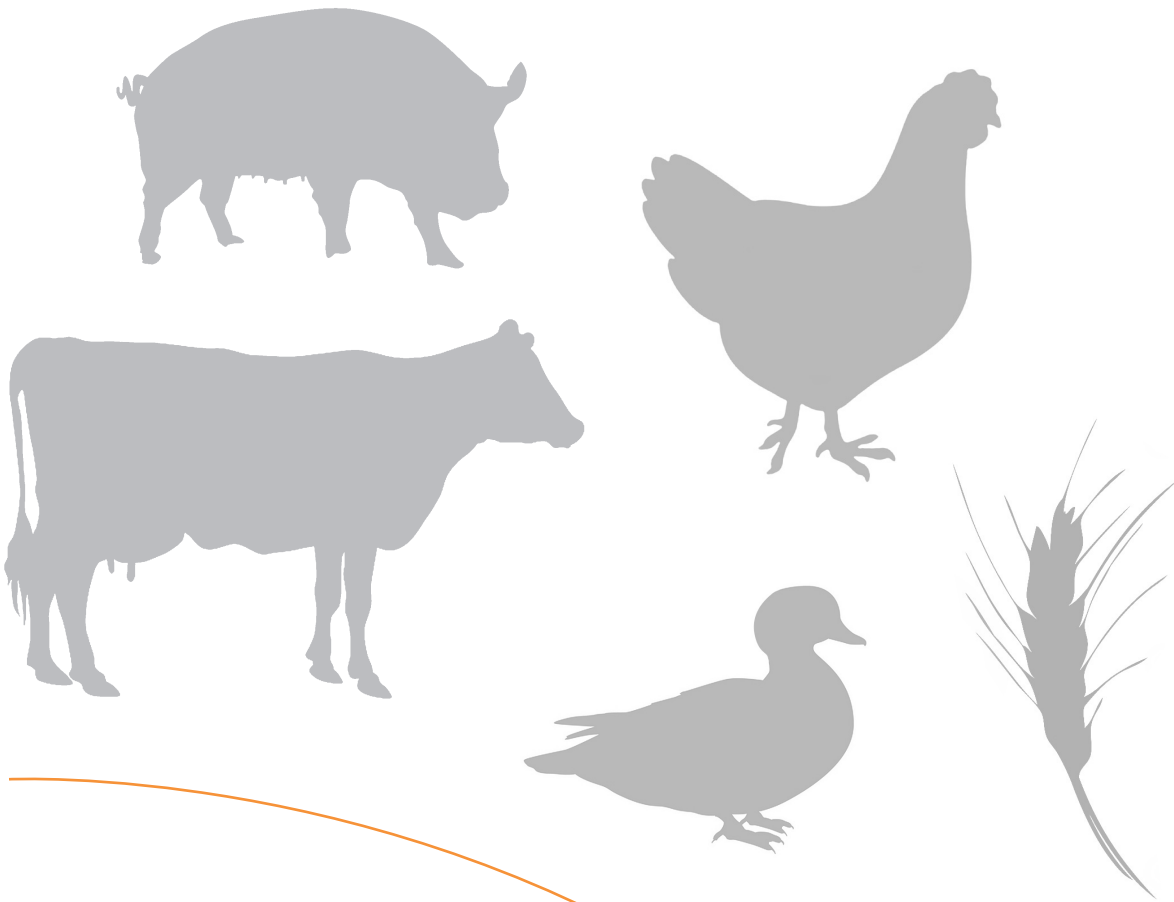


Genesis GAP – Scheme Rules and Protocol

Applicable to all Genesis GAP Standards



GENESIS
STANDARDS



Version 3 2014

GENESIS GAP 2014 PRODUCTION STANDARD V3

GENERIC SCHEME RULES & PROTOCOL

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Section I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Acknowledgements

Genesis is grateful to the members of the Technical Advisory Boards (TAB) and other parties who prepared and provided comments on the technical requirements. Further information may be provided by Genesis on written request.

1.2 Background to Genesis Standards

Genesis is about a commitment to doing things well and being able to prove what has been done in order to achieve high standards of service, product safety and quality.

It is about taking positive steps to show that all due care is taken throughout the supply chain and being able to demonstrate this through record keeping and audit to give confidence to all who purchase products or services from these suppliers. Assurance exists to assist businesses to secure markets for their products.

At Genesis Standards, our philosophy is one of achieving the benefits of assurance in a logical and cost effective manner which allows the maximum time to focus on the production and handling of safe, quality products. We aim to achieve the benefits of assurance by making the most of existing records and using a common sense approach, allowing the maximum time to focus on the production of quality food. Through our focus on food safety, traceability and (where appropriate) animal welfare and through the inclusion of a range of financial, social and environmental sustainability criteria, those who purchase and consume the certified products can have confidence that these important issues (which include health and safety) have been addressed.

Genesis has always tried to remain at the cutting edge of farm assurance and was the first mainstream scheme to:

- develop the modular whole farm assurance approach;
- state that effective farm assurance must be based on annual assessment;
- include elements of health and safety;
- score conformance (not only non-conformance) to stimulate improvement;
- include elements of financial, social and environmental sustainability;
- encourage the development of Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs);
- evaluate animal welfare requirements against both the 5 Freedoms and 3 S approach to minimising pain in farm animals – “Suppress, Substitute, Sooth”;
- introduce scored continuous improvement rating (CIR) technical requirements to enable producers to gain certification whilst being encouraged to improve certain elements over time;

1.3 Format of the Genesis GAP Standards

Like the original Genesis approach, the Genesis GAP Standards are intended to cover the whole of the farm business and include all production enterprises. As such, Genesis was the first “whole farm assurance” standard and these were originally based on good agricultural practice, legislation and (where appropriate) animal welfare principles.

The Standard is designed to be flexible and can be applied to either a straightforward single unit farm or complex multiple units and yet still offer the same degree of farm assurance and cost-efficiency. The modular nature of the standards is intended to facilitate the measurement of conformity of other agriculture production enterprises taking place on the same site without the need for duplication of effort on the part of the auditor or producer.

The Genesis GAP Standards are composed of the introduction, scheme rules, protocol and the technical requirements. Applicants and participants must conform with these requirements in order to gain certificate of conformity with the standard. The technical requirements are categorised into one of four types: Must, Shall, Recommendation or CIR (Continuous Improvement Rating). Please see Section 2.6 below for an explanation of the consequences of non-conformity against individual technical requirement types.

Conformity to all the requirements contributes to assuring customers, retailers, consumers and food manufacturers that all legal, food safety and animal welfare requirements have been met.

Please note: In all cases, legal requirements take precedence over any requirements of the standard.

Section II

PROTOCOL

2.1 Self-Audit against Genesis GAP Standards

Before each audit, it is the responsibility of the applicant or participant to ensure that they have the most up to date edition of the standard and any other relevant normative documents. Copies of the standard are available from www.genesisstandards.com

Applicants and participants must:

- be fully aware of the requirements of the standard;
- have read and fully understood the technical requirements;
- undertake a self-audit (internal audit) of their systems, procedures and policies and any areas considered to be non-conformant should be suitably addressed prior to a third party audit being conducted.

Applicants and participants may opt for a pre-audit visit to be conducted by their nominated Certification Body, however no certificate can be issued for such an activity and the auditor delivering the pre-audit visit cannot offer any consultation to the site.

2.2 Selection of Certification Body

Once applicants/participants are confident that they are in a position to undertake an audit to the Genesis GAP Standard they must select a Certification Body. A current list of approved Certification Bodies will be listed on the Genesis Standards website.

2.3 Certification Standards and Scope

Audits are carried out using the relevant Genesis GAP Standards. The scope must make clear the name of the site, the standard used along with any version number and the activities included.

2.4 Arranging Audits

The Genesis GAP Standards requires an annual audit of the production facilities of each participant to each of the relevant modules. Audit visits are conducted at a mutually convenient date after discussion with the applicant/participant.

The purpose of the on-farm audit is to confirm that the applicant/participant meets all the requirements of the Genesis GAP Standards. Participants are required to meet all national legal requirements as well as the minimum Good Agricultural Practices requirements established by Genesis. The Certification Body auditor will make a detailed examination of the site, policies, procedures, records and any relevant animals present. The auditor will also confirm that copies of the relevant enterprise specific booklets, codes of practice and any other relevant normative documents required by the standards are available to members of staff for reference.

It is the responsibility of the participant/applicant to ensure that key members of staff are present during the audit. The person responsible for the day-to-day management of the site must accompany the auditor during the audit.

For units with livestock or poultry, an inspection of stock will be required and therefore it will not be possible to carry out a complete audit of units that are empty or de-stocked at the time of the visit. If the auditor cannot complete the audit in full, the application cannot be progressed nor certification maintained.

2.5 Audit Procedures

Audits of most types of operation usually consist of four elements: an opening meeting, a site and production inspection, a review of quality assurance systems, records and procedures and a closing meeting. Audit duration will be longer for larger, complex, multi operational sites.

During the audit, detailed notes are made of the client's ability to comply with the standard. These will be used as the basis for the audit report. Should a technical requirement of the standard not be met, the auditor will record a non-conformity.

Where the auditor finds that an applicant/participant does not conform to the technical requirements of the scheme standards, the auditor will bring it to their attention during the audit. At the end of the audit visit, all non-conformities will be recorded in a report, which will be explained and discussed with the applicant. The applicant/participant will be asked to sign the Audit Report, copies of which will be left on site or provided within five working days.

2.6 Correction of Non-Conformities

Where non-conformities have been reported during the audit, the applicant/participant is required to undertake suitable corrective actions and provide suitable objective evidence to demonstrate conformity. The evidence may be in the form of documents, photographs or invoices as appropriate to the type of non-conformity. Where a significant number of non-conformities have been identified or where the nature of the non-conformity is such that documentary evidence alone could not demonstrate conformity, a further audit visit may be required.

New applicants will be allowed 28 days, to provide a plan of intent for each and every non-conformity and up to 90 days to provide objective evidence of corrective action that each and every non-conformity against any "must" and "shall" technical requirement is adequately addressed, prior to certification being granted. Where no plan or documentary evidence is provided within the timescales defined above, or the information is insufficient to address the non-conformity, the process will end. A new application will be required, followed by a full re-audit.

Certificated producers will be allowed 28 days, to provide objective evidence of corrective action that all non-conformities against any "shall" technical requirement and minor non-conformity against and "must" technical requirement to ensure certification is maintained. Where no documentary evidence is provided within 28 days, or the information is insufficient to address any non-conformity against the "shall" technical requirements and any minor non-conformity against the "must" technical requirement then certification will be suspended.

Where a **certificated producer** has a major non-conformity against any "must" technical requirement, certification will be suspended immediately and not re-instated until suitable and sufficient objective evidence of corrective action has been provided. Where no suitable and sufficient objective evidence is provided within 28 days the suspension of certification will become irreversible and a new application will be required followed by a full re-audit.

Non-conformities against “recommended” technical requirements will not be regarded in respect of the certification decision but applicant/participants are reminded that these can be upgraded to “must” or “shall” at any time in the future.

Non-conformities against any Continuous Improvement Ratings (CIR) cannot not be raised and will not be included as part of the certification decision making process. These ratings are for classification purposes only. The continual improvement ratings will each be awarded one colour score from the possible range of Green, Amber or Red, as per the definitions in any CIR section of the technical requirements. A Green score is the best score available for that particular parameter, whereas a Red score is the poorest score available. These results will be indicated as a series of small boxes containing the word Green, Amber or Red on the certificate of product conformity and will read from left to right reflecting the number and order of Continuous Improvement Ratings in that particular standard.

2.7 Audit Reports

After each audit a written report is prepared in the standard Genesis format.

At the end of the audit visit, all non-conformities will be recorded in a report, which will be explained and discussed. The applicant/participant will be asked to sign the Audit Report, copies of which will be left on site or provided within 5 working days.

2.8 Issue of Certificates

The certification decision will be taken by a Certification Manager. The Certification Manager will review the audit report and audit checklist together with any documentary evidence provided by the client to close any non-conformity before coming to a certification decision.

Where these requirements are not met within 28 days of the audit in the case of existing participants or 90 days in the case of new applicants, certification will not be granted or maintained.

Certificates of Conformity will contain the following information:

- Name of the Certification Body (CB) and a statement to the effect that the certificate remains the property of the CB.
- Certificate Number
- Name of the certificated Entity/ Company
- Address of the certificated site(s)
- Title of the Standard and version number
- The scope of the certified products or activities included.
- Issue Date and Expiry Date
- Authorised signature

Where it has not been possible to issue a certificate, a full re-audit will be required before a certificate can be issued.

The certificate remains the property of the Certification Body and is issued subject to the company complying with the rules governing certification, a copy of which is provided by the Certification Body.

In the event there are substantial changes to the site or product or process, these must be notified in writing to the Certification Body. The certificate may be withdrawn in the event that changes occur which affect the company's ability to maintain their certification status.

The certificate will normally be issued for a period of 12 months from the audit date.

Certificates of Conformity will be revoked if the participant;

- Is declared bankrupt
- Fails to comply with protocol or scheme rules
- Fails to maintain farm standards that comply with the technical requirements
- Acts in a manner that may discredit Genesis or the Certification Body e.g. does not notify the CB of relevant past and pending prosecutions.

Continuing certification into the second and subsequent years will be conditional on receipt of the fee demanded on or before the renewal date and having no outstanding non-conformities. Failure to renew within one month of the renewal date will result in scheme participation being terminated. In circumstances where the participant renews more than one month after the renewal date, certification will not be continued and the application, audit and certification process will be repeated as per a new applicant.

2.9 Audit Frequency

In order to maintain the certification status the site must have an audit each year.

Clients that do not achieve a certificate may re-apply to be re-audited as soon as they believe they have met any outstanding requirements and are ready for re-audit.

Re-audit visits will cover all clauses of the standard and will be carried out in the same way as the initial audit.

It is anticipated that future versions of this standard will include a mechanism that will provide a reduction in audit frequency as a result of the levels of conformity achieved.

2.10 Complaints and Appeals

In the first instance, any complaint or appeals regarding audits or the outcomes of audits should be made to the Certification Body.

In case of dissatisfaction or dispute, Genesis Standards operates a complaints and appeals procedure, these must be made in writing by named person(s) and addressed to the Technical Director, Genesis Standards, 23 Hanborough Business Park, Long Hanborough, Oxford, OX29 8SJ, United Kingdom.

2.11 Data Protection and Confidentiality

Genesis Assurance and the Certification Body will be suitably registered in line with legally defined data protection requirements.

Genesis Assurance and the Certification Body will treat all information about Applicants and Scheme Participants in confidence. The certificate remains the property of the certification body and is issued subject to the client complying with the Rules Governing Certification a copy of which is provided with the certificate.

In the event there are substantial changes to the site or product or process, these must be notified in writing to the Certification Body. The certificate may be withdrawn in the event changes occur which affect the company's ability to maintain their certification status.

Members shall notify Genesis Standards of any prosecutions brought or likely to be brought against them with respect to animal welfare, animal movements, food safety, environmental legislation or Cross Compliance requirements that directly affect the scope of their certificated status.

Genesis Standards and the Certification Body are obliged to respond to queries from third parties enquiring about the status of any business certified to a Genesis standard. Genesis Standards and the Certification Body are required to and make available the following information about Scheme Members, on request;

- The name
- The address
- The scope of certification
- Date of certification
- Date of certificate expiry

This information may be supplied to an industry member checker, other information will only be divulged on the written authority of the Scheme Member since it is regarded as strictly confidential between the applicant or participant, Genesis and the certification body.

Information about applicants will not be published until they have been assessed and have received a Certificate of Product Conformity.

2.12 Leaving the Scheme

Participation in Genesis Standards schemes brings recognisable benefits and therefore any participant leaving or suspended from the scheme must immediately stop making claims, whether explicit or implied, that they are certified under Genesis Standards.