



# IFS Food version 6

Audit protocol for unannounced audits

**Version 1**  
February 2016



# IFS Food version 6 audit protocol for unannounced audits Version 1, February 2016

## 0 Introduction

Due to increasing requirements of the market, the IFS Board and IFS International Technical Committee have made the decision to implement a process for performing unannounced audits against the IFS Food Standard.

This document is an additional document to the IFS Food Standard and describes the protocol to perform unannounced audits.

The rules of this document apply from 1<sup>st</sup> October 2016, meaning that any audit scheduled after this date may be performed as an unannounced audit.

### 0.1 Unannounced audit protocol

Prior to scheduling and performing the audit, the company shall inform its certification body about the chosen option:

- IFS Food announced audit (option “Announced”): the requirements defined in the current audit protocol of IFS Food Standard apply.
- IFS Food unannounced audit (option “Unannounced”): the information below described the requirements which will apply. This option involves a full unannounced audit against the audit checklist of the IFS Food requirements, which replaces the yearly scheduled audit. The audit date shall not be notified to the company in advance of the audit.

This option is preferably aimed at renewal audits (i.e. for companies already IFS Food certified), but may also apply for initial audits, if the company prefers starting directly with an unannounced audit.

For each renewal audit, the company shall inform its certification body about the chosen option.

# 1 Audit planning

## 1.1 Timeframe for registration for an unannounced audit

To get registered for an unannounced audit, the company shall notify its certification body at latest before the start of audit time window (see below). This applies both to companies keeping the same certification body and those changing certification body.

The registration date shall be stated in the contract between the certification body and the company.

**Note:** if the company does not inform the certification body before the start of audit time window, the option “Unannounced” cannot be chosen.

As the date of the audit shall not be made known to the company, the expected date shall not be communicated by the certification body in the diary function of the IFS audit portal.

The certification body shall tick the box “Unannounced audit” in the IFS audit portal. When the audit has been performed, the certification body shall provide the audit dates in the portal, at latest 2 working days after the first audit day. This will ensure that the portal users are informed that the audit has taken place and that the certification process is on-going.

## 1.2 Time window for performing the audit

The time in which the certification body shall perform the unannounced audit is [–16 weeks; +2 weeks] of the audit due date. The audit shall be performed during consecutive days.

### Example:

Initial IFS Food audit (announced): 1 November 2014

Renewal IFS Food audit 1 (announced): 25 October 2015 (between 6 September 2015 and 15 November 2015, based on audit due date: 1 November, following IFS protocol for announced audits)

Renewal IFS Food audit 2 (unannounced): between 12 July 2016 and 15 November 2016, based on audit due date 1 November, following IFS protocol for unannounced audits

**Note:** if the audit is scheduled by the certification body outside the defined time window, the audit will not be a valid IFS Food unannounced audit and will be processed as an announced audit.

**Blackout period**

When registering for an unannounced audit with its certification body, the company has the opportunity to identify maximum 10 operational days, plus not operating periods, when the site is not available for the audit.

These dates shall be notified to the certification body at the same time as the company is registered for the unannounced audit by its certification body and reasons shall be provided. Reasons may be challenged by the certification body or by the auditor during the audit.

Note: the company may only split the 10 operational days into a maximum of 3 periods (e.g. planned customer visit, holidays of Quality manager, etc.).

**1.3 Other information to be provided by the company to its certification body**

The company shall provide its certification body with the name(s) of the person(s) to be contacted on-site when entering the site the day of the unannounced audit, to facilitate the auditor entry.

As for an announced audit, the certification body may ask, before the start of the time window, for some company's documentation, in order to prepare the audit.

**1.4 Audit scope**

The same requirements as in the current IFS Food Standard (part 1, chapter 4) apply to determine audit scope.

**1.4.1 Specific audit process for multi-location companies with central management**

If defined processes are centrally organized in a company with several production sites (e.g. purchasing, personnel management, complaint management, etc.):

- The central managing site – headquarters – shall be audited announced or unannounced. The audit shall always take place before the audit of each production site and shall be performed before the start of the unannounced audit time window of the production site audits.
- The production sites shall be audited unannounced.

- The audit of headquarters (announced or unannounced) and the unannounced audit of the production site(s) shall not be performed during consecutive days (e.g. if the headquarter is located within one of the production sites, there shall be 2 different audits: an announced or unannounced audit for the centrally organized processes and an unannounced audit for the production site.)
- All audits, including headquarters', shall be performed within a maximum timeframe of 1 year.

#### **1.4.2 Specific requirements for companies having seasonal products**

If a company produce seasonal products and would like to register for an unannounced audit, the expected seasonal production dates shall be notified to the certification body (and the above described time window does not apply). For these companies, it is not allowed to provide a blackout period to the certification body: the unannounced audit may take place at any time of the seasonal production.

### **1.5 Audit duration**

The same requirements as in the current IFS Food Standard (part 1, chapter 5.3) apply to calculate audit duration.

### **1.6 Audit time schedule**

As it is not relevant to send an audit time schedule for an unannounced audit in advance, the auditor shall present, on the day of audit, a provisional audit time schedule, which may have to be adapted during the audit.

## **2 Preparation of the audit**

Before being audited, the company shall review all requirements of the IFS Food Standard in detail and, if existing, IFS doctrine and erratum. On the day of the audit, the current version of the Standard shall be available at the site being audited. The company is responsible for acquiring the current version of the Standard.

If the audit is not an initial audit, and if the company has changed certification body, the company shall also inform the certification body, so that the auditor can check the corrective action plan from the previous audit (the certification body shall anticipate the report release by the company).

## 3 On-site audit performance

### 3.1 Start of the unannounced audit

The company should prepare a minimum set of documents to be provided to the auditor.

When entering the company, the auditor will ask to meet the person(s) whose names were provided by the company at the time of registration.

**Note:** If company denies access to the auditor (apart from “force majeure”), the currently valid IFS certificate shall be suspended by the certification body, within a maximum of 2 working days after the audit date (notification will be received by customers having placed the company in their favorites’ list in the audit portal) and this information will be visible in the company history in the audit portal. The company shall be invoiced by the certification body for the total cost of the audit. Moreover, the next audit can only be scheduled announced and shall preferably be performed by the same certification body.

After arrival and introduction, the auditor may briefly review the documents prepared by the company and shall immediately start the audit on the location (production area). The opening meeting and documentation audit shall be undertaken later during the audit.

As for announced audits, it is not possible to include in the scope of the IFS Food certification production lines of the audited site, which are not operating during the audit, unless those production lines involve the same HACCP study, the same product and technical scopes as the lines, which are audited when operating.

If, during the unannounced audit, some lines are not operating and involve different HACCP plans, product and technical scopes, an additional audit of the lines, when operating, is mandatory. When performing the audit, two options are possible:

- If it is possible, the auditor can ask the company to run the production line(s) later during the first audit day or the following audit day(s), so that the line(s) is/are assessed later during the unannounced audit.
- If it is not possible for the company to start the production line(s) during the audit, the auditor shall come back to audit the line(s) when operating, during an extension audit (if the company wants to include these products into the audit scope and/or an exclusion is not possible). The extension audit shall be performed announced.

### **3.2 Evaluation of requirements**

The same requirements as in the current IFS Food Standard (part 1, chapter 5.5) apply for the evaluation of requirements

## **4 Audit report**

The same requirements as in the current IFS Food Standard (part 1, chapter 5.7) apply to the IFS audit report.

The option “Unannounced” will be clearly stated in the audit report.

## **5 Conditions for issuing audit report and certificate**

The same requirements as in the current IFS Food Standard (part 1, chapter 5.8) apply for issuing the certificate.

The option “Unannounced” will be clearly stated on the IFS certificate.

## **6 Awarding the certificate**

The same requirements as in the current IFS Food standard (part 1, chapter 6) apply for issuing the certificate.

The certificate validity date remains the same each year and is determined by the date of the initial audit.

### Example:

Initial IFS Food audit (announced): 1 November 2014

Certificate valid until: 26 December 2015

Renewal IFS Food audit 1 (announced): 25 October 2015 (between 6 September 2015 and 15 November 2015, based on audit due date: 1 November)

Certificate valid until: 26 December 2016

Renewal IFS Food audit 2 (unannounced): between 12 July 2016 and 15 November 2016, based on audit due date 1 November

Certificate valid until: 26 December 2017



**Note:** if a company would like to include new product(s) in the scope of the certificate whereas the audit has already been performed, two options are possible:

- The company can decide to perform an announced extension audit during the on-going certification cycle
- Production of new product(s) is assessed and included in the audit scope of the renewal audit.

## **7 Further requirements from the current IFS Food Standard applying to the unannounced audit protocol**

All requirements from the IFS Food Standard which are not detailed in the current document apply to the unannounced audit protocol. This include, among others:

- The scoring system
- The calculation of audit duration
- The possibility to perform the audit with an audit team
- The possibility to witness an auditor during the audit.

## GLOSSARY

<b>Audit time window</b>	<p>Period of time during which the unannounced audit may be performed. The date of reference for this time window is the audit due date (date of first certification audit). Within the IFS protocol, the time window is [-16 weeks; +2 weeks] of the audit due date.</p> <p>In case where initial audit will be performed directly unannounced, there will not be a specific time window.</p>
<b>Initial IFS Food audit</b>	<p>The Initial IFS Food audit is considered the first audit as defined in the IFS Food 6, April 2014 Standard</p>
<b>Blackout period</b>	<p>Period of time that the company may notify its certification body of a period when the unannounced audit cannot take place (e.g. staff holidays, maintenance days, non-production days, etc.).</p> <p>This includes maximum 10 operational days, plus non operating periods.</p> <p>Note: the company cannot provide 10 individual days, but periods related to days when the company cannot ask the auditor to perform the audit in optimum conditions (e.g. planned customer visit, holidays of Quality manager, etc.).</p>
<b>Non operating periods</b>	<p>Periods when the production lines are not operating at all, e.g. planned maintenance work, bank holiday, company planned shutdown for holidays, etc.</p>
<b>Seasonal products</b>	<p>Products which are processed during a defined and limited period.</p>

## ANNEX 1

### Cover page of the audit report

**Unannounced audit**

Logo of the certification body

**IFS Food  
Version 6**

**Final Audit Report**

**Audited company:** "Fruit and Vegetables GmbH"

**Date of audit:** 04./05.10.2016

Name and address of certification body

Accreditation number of the certification body

## First pages of the audit report

<b>IFS Food</b> <b>Version 6, April 2014</b> <b>Unannounced audit overview</b>					
<i>Audit details</i>					
<i>Lead auditor:</i> Max Mustermann  <i>Co-auditor:</i> Falk Lehmann  <i>Trainee:</i> Mr. Example	<i>Date/time of current audit:</i> 04. 10. 2016 (09:00–18:00)  05. 10. 2016 (08:30–17:30)	<i>Date/time of previous audit:</i> 29. 09. 2015 (08:30–12:30) 30. 09. 2015 (09:00–18:00)  <i>CB and auditor of previous audit:</i> TEST GmbH/FrankTest			
<i>Name and address of the company (or headquarter)</i> <b>Fruit and Vegetables AG</b> Example street 12345 Witzenhausen Germany			<i>Name and address of the audited site</i> Fruit and Vegetable GmbH Musterstraße 12346 Berlin Germany		
			<i>EAN Code/UCC Global Location Number</i> <i>COID</i>		
<i>Phone:</i> 0 12 34 56	<i>Fax:</i> 01 23 45 67 89	<i>Phone:</i> 0 12 34 57	<i>Fax:</i> 01 23 45 67 88		
<i>Scope of audit</i>					
<b>Production of strawberry and rapsberry puree</b> (Mandatory translation into English of the audit scope)					
<b>Product scope(s): 5</b> <b>Technology scope(s): B, D, E, F</b>					
<i>Audit participants</i>					
Name:	Position:	Opening meeting	Documentation review	Site assessment (Audit):	Closing meeting
Mr. Quality	Quality Manager	X	X	X	X
Mr. Manager	General Manager	X			X
Mr. Transport	Transport Department	X		X	X
<i>Final Result of Audit</i>					
As a result of the audit performed on 04.10.2016 and 05.10.2016, "xyz" found that the processing activities of <b>Fruit and Vegetable GmbH</b> for the above-mentioned scope of audit comply with the requirements set out in the IFS Food, Version 6, at <b>Foundation Level</b> , with a score of XX%.					Next audit between XX.XX and XX.XX OR unannounced
<i>Company profile</i>					
(Mandatory translation into English of detailed activity of the company including all processing steps) Audit duration, as calculated by the calculation tool: Audit duration decided by the certification body (if different): Explanations of the reasons for modifying audit duration (if applicable):					
<i>Reviewer:</i>					

## Explanations regarding the audit report

### Evaluation of requirements

Result	Explanation	Points
<b>A</b>	Full compliance	20 points
<b>B (deviation)</b>	Almost full compliance	15 points
<b>KO requirement scored with a B</b>	Almost full compliance	15 points
<b>C (deviation)</b>	Small part of the requirement has been implemented	5 points
<b>D (deviation)</b>	Requirement has not been implemented	-20 points

<b>Major</b>	When there is a substantial failure to meet the requirements of the Standard, which includes food safety and/or the legal requirements of the production and destination countries. A major can also be given when the identified non-conformity can lead to a serious health hazard. A major can be given to any requirement which is not defined as KO.	15% of the possible total amount of points is subtracted
<b>KO requirement scored with a D</b>	The KO requirement has not been implemented	50% of the possible total amount of points is subtracted

<b>N/A</b>	Not applicable Requirement not applicable for a company	N/A requirements will be excluded from the final scoring
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### Scoring and awarding of certificates

Audit result	Status	Action company	Report form	Certificate
<b>At least 1 KO scored with D</b>	Not approved	Actions and new initial audit to be agreed upon	Report gives status	No
<b>&gt; 1 Major and/or total score &lt; 75 %</b>	Not approved	Actions and new initial audit to be agreed upon	Report gives status	No
<b>Max 1 Major and total score ≥ 75 %</b>	Not approved unless further actions taken and validated after follow-up audit	Send completed action plan within 2 weeks of receiving the preliminary report. Follow-up audit max. 6 months after the audit date	Report including action plan gives status	Certificate at foundation level, if the Major non-conformity is finally solved as controlled during the follow-up audit
<b>Total score is ≥ 75 % and &lt; 95 %</b>	Approved at foundation IFS Food level after receipt of the action plan	Send completed action plan within 2 weeks of receiving the preliminary report.	Report including action plan gives status	Yes, certificate at foundation level, 12 months validity
<b>Total score is ≥ 95 %</b>	Approved at higher IFS Food level after receipt of the action plan	Send completed action plan within 2 weeks of receiving the preliminary report.	Report including action plan gives status	Yes, certificate at higher level, 12 months validity

## ANNEX 2

### IFS Food Version 6, April 2014 Unannounced audit report

#### Result:

The processing activities of company "Fruit and Vegetable GmbH" met the requirements of the IFS Food, Version 6.

The company passed with a score of XX% at:

**Foundation (Higher) level**  
... %

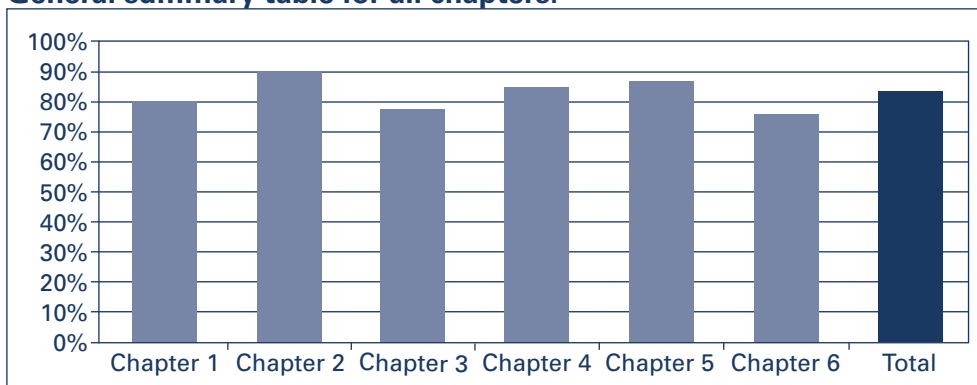
Date of renewal audit: between the XX/XX and the XX/XX or unannounced audit.

#### Summary:

	Chapter 1	Chapter 2	Chapter 3	Chapter 4	Chapter 5	Chapter 6
	Senior management responsibility	Quality and Food safety management system	Resource management	Planning and production process	Measurements, analyses, improvements	Food defense
KO	0	0	0	0	0	0
Majors	0	0	0	0	0	0
A	0	0	0	0	0	0
B	0	0	0	0	0	0
C	0	0	0	0	0	0
D	0	0	0	0	0	0
N/A	0	0	0	0	0	0

#### Observations regarding KO's and Majors:

#### General summary table for all chapters:



**Overall summary of the audit:**

**Description of follow up of corrective actions from the previous audit:**

## **Chapter 1: Senior management responsibility**

**Summary of all Chapter 1 deviations and non-conformities found:**

N°	Reference	IFS requirements	Evaluation	Explanation
1.	1.1.1			
2.	1.1.2			

## **Report of the N/A evaluations**

N°	Reference	IFS requirements	Evaluation	Explanation
1.				

## **Detailed audit report**

N°	Reference	IFS requirements	Evaluation	Explanation
1.				
2.				



## ANNEX 3

### Unannounced audit

#### Action plan

Name and address of the audited company

The Corrective Action Plan must be returned to the certification body before: \_\_\_\_\_

Requirement number	IFS requirement	Evaluation	Explanation (by the auditor)	Corrective action (by the company)	Responsibility/ Date/Status of implementation (by the company)	Release by the auditor

## ANNEX 4

### UNANNOUNCED AUDIT

## CERTIFICATE

Herewith the certification body

### Name of the certification body

being an accredited certification body for IFS certification and having signed an agreement with the IFS owner, confirms that the processing activities of

### Name of the audited company

#### Address

(packing code)

(Veterinary agreement number)

COID

(Headquarter)

for the audit scope:

(detailed descriptions of processes/products)

### Number and name of the product scope(s)

### Code number of the technology scope(s)

meet the requirements set out in the

### IFS Food

### Version 6, April 2014

and other associated normative documents

### at Foundation level/Higher Level

with a score of XX% (if required)

Certificate – register number: \_\_\_\_\_

Audit date: \_\_\_\_\_

(If relevant: date of follow up audit)

Date of issue of certificate: \_\_\_\_\_

Certificate valid until: \_\_\_\_\_

Next audit to be performed: \_\_\_\_\_

(specify if unannounced or announced, according to requirements of related audit protocol)

Date and place

Name and signature of the responsible person  
at the certification body

Address of the certification body

Logo of the  
accreditation body or its name  
and registration number

