



IndG.A.P Certification Procedure – Fruits & Vegetables



AGROCERT is an inspection and certification unit of Rural Outreach Pvt Ltd (ROPL)

Rural Outreach Pvt Ltd. – AGROCERT.

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About Us

AGROCERT is an inspection and certification unit of Rural Outreach Pvt Ltd (ROPL) towards promoting sustainable agriculture and safe food production through crop stewardship and certification.

AGROCERT is established in compliance with the Quality Council of India (QCI) for its India Good Agriculture Practices (IndG.A.P.) certification scheme in conformity with ISO/IEC 17065:2012. The fundamental objective of laying down the criteria is strengthening Good Agriculture Practices (GAP) in the country.

AGROCERT provides third-party certification to farmers and producer groups in the agriculture and horticulture sectors, who will be maintaining their field operations and activities in accordance with the Good Agriculture Practices (GAP) scheme.

With a team of experience professionals from the field of agriculture and quality assurance sectors, AGROCERT leads in providing certification services to individuals or organizations, who are working with farmers and producer groups.

In addition, AGROCERT also aims to improve the yield and quality of the farm produce, reduce application of chemical fertilizers in crop production and guarantee safe and quality products to the consumers through certification and minimize threats to human health and the environment as well as more remunerative returns to the farmers.

Steps to IndG.A.P. Certification Process:

- **Application for certification:**

Any Farmer/producer/organization who is a legal entity can apply for certification to AGROCERT. Applications should be in the prescribed format and submitted to AGROCERT at

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- **Evaluation of application for acceptance:**

After receiving of an application for certification, a certification officer review / scrutinize the application to ensure its completeness and communicate its findings to the applicant.

- **Cost estimation & Payment:**

After successful evaluation of the application form, a cost estimate is prepared. The cost estimation then sends to the applicant for his /her approval. On accepting of the offer, the applicant needs to deposit / submit 50% of the fee in advance either through DD / NEFT. The remaining or rest of the fee will be deposit after completion of the inspection or at the time of grant of scope certificate.

- **Signing of agreement :**

Applicant need to sign a service contract stating a commitment to IndG.A.P. production or relevant certification scheme. AGROCERT will prepare applicant specific agreement to meet out the demand / requirement of the certification. The operators particularly commit themselves to:

1. Conform to the applicable production standards.
2. Cooperate in on-site inspection visits, announced or unannounced, of production site/s, Sampling, recording keeping and provide relevant supporting documents and related records as and when required.
3. To be responsible for any possible additional inspection requested by the Certification Committee.

- **Product / site Evaluation and submission of inspection report.**

The evaluation tasks can include activities such as design and documentation review, sampling, testing, inspection, audit, etc. Upon receipt of the advance payment and successful signing of the agreement by the applicant, one of our assigned auditors will visit for inspection this include onsite office and field assessment. The date and time of inspection will be plan in consultation with applicant. At the time of ending of the inspection the auditor/s will summarize the deviations or Non Conformities (NC) to the applicant. A complete report will be prepared and submit to AGROCERT. The applicant has to close the entire NC within three weeks after the completion of the inspection.

- **Review and evaluation inspection report:**

After completing the inspection, the auditor/s will report to AGROCERT certification committee with his findings. Upon receipt of the inspection report, the committee will scrutinize the report and finding of the audit and develop a report review notification stating the entire major/minor/critical NC. The report then sends to the concerned applicant for his necessary action. The applicant has to close the entire NC within three weeks after the completion of the inspection.

- **Closures of Non-Conformities (NC):**

After receiving of the report review notification, the applicant should submit a report to the AGROCERT regarding the necessary action taken for closing of the NC/s. The applicant has to submit the supporting / necessary documents and evidences for action taken against closing / correction (when correction is possible) of the NC/s. All the relevant information / document have to be submitting within three weeks after completion of the audit / inspection at AGROCERT office.

- **Recommendation for certification:**

The actions taken report submitted by the applicant in the AGROCERT office will be scrutinize / review by the competent authority. And if required by the committee, a verification / reassessment of the same can be done for checking the correctness of the reports. On successful closure of all the Non conformities by the applicant, the certification committee will decide on granting / denying of the certificate. The Certification committee then makes the decision and reports back to the applicant. The applicant has to signs the certification decision on acceptance and sends it back to the AGROCERT Office.

- **Issue of License :**

After receiving the acceptance of certification decision by the applicant, the certification committee then provide /issue / grant applicant a "Certificate of Conformity".

- **Surveillance:**

1. Surveillance evaluation of the certified sites shall be carried out at least once a year, ensuring that the gap between two surveillance evaluations doesn't exceed one year. The AGROCERT may allow a grace period of one month based on valid grounds beyond which delay shall lead to suspension of the certificate. The surveillance should be time around harvest time of some crop under certification.
2. In case where the farmer/organisation is certified a number of produce of different types under the same certificate, AGROCERT Plan for surveillance evaluation with view to covering as much of the entire range of produce during the certification period.
3. If any nonconformity is observed, the same shall be categorized as either a Critical, Major or Minor. The nonconformity report shall be provided to the client in writing, generally on site, for correction and corrective action. Details of the same shall be reported in the Surveillance evaluation report
4. The AGROCERT may increase the frequency of surveillances with duly recorded justification for reasons like investigation of complaints, any doubts about continuing adherence to standards prescribed etc.
5. If the surveillance evaluation results in an in fructuous visit due to any reason, the AGROCERT shall conduct another surveillance evaluation. Such additional evaluations may be charged to the certified unit as decided by the AGROCERT.

- **Label Approval:**

The applicant shall make the label incorporating the logo and other relevant details and shall send to AGROCERT for approval. The certification committee of AGROCERT approves the

label as per standards and sends the approval decision to the applicant. Applicant may use the label for marketing only after the label approval.

- **Termination, Reduction, Suspension or withdrawal of certification:**

AGROCERT shall consider and decide on reduction, suspension and/or withdrawal of certification upon substantiating nonconformity with any certification requirement. If certification is terminated (by request of the client), suspended / withdrawn or scope of certificate is reduced, AGROCERT shall take actions specified by the certification marks and shall make all needed modifications to formal certification documents, public information, authorizations for use of marks, etc. to ensure it provides no indication that the product continues to be certified.

- **Complaints and Appeals:**

AGROCERT has a documented process to receive, evaluate and make decisions on complaints and appeals. AGROCERT shall record and track complaints and appeals and actions undertaken to resolve them.

- **Complaints:**

Applicant/s is free to approach AGROCERT for any type of complaints against the AGROCERT certification system or other applicant/s certified by AGROCERT. Any complaints may be verbally directed to AGROCERT staff and/or through e-mail or post to the AGROCERT office. Complaints will be handled confidentially.

- **Appeals:**

If the applicant does not accept the certification decision, he/she can request for reconsideration of the decision in writing. Then the file will be submitted to the certification committee for reconsideration. If the applicant/s still does not agree with the revised decision, he/she can appeal to the appeal committee in writing within 30 days of the notification of certification decision. The file will then be submitted to the appeals committee, which takes final decision on the case. The appeal committee gives a formal notice of the outcome and end of the appeal process to the appellant.