



Certified Responsible Soy (CRS)
Certification Protocol

Issue date: 27-06-14

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1. Introduction

This document explains the structure of certification to Certified Responsible Soy (CRS), and the procedures that should be followed in order to obtain and maintain certification.

2. Definitions

Certification :	Action by a party (in this case: the certification body, CU), to confirm there is satisfactory confidence that a sufficiently identified product, process or activity is in conformity with a standard, regulation or rule.
Certification body:	Body that conducts certification of conformity.
Certifier:	Person who under supervision of the Program Manager is responsible for marketing of program, instructions to the (Senior) Inspector, certification decision, reporting to the client, issuance of certificates, customer relations and post certification activities.
Client:	Contract partner of CU for inspection and certification programs, with the aim of being inspected and certified.
Client number:	Unique number that CU provides the client to identify himself as a CU client. The client number does not indicate that the client is certified.
Inspection	Investigation by means of competent judgement and/or by means of testing of a product, process or activity and determination of its conformity with a standard or other normative document; this includes inventories (first inspections).
Inspector	Person who is responsible for the execution of inspections and reporting to the Account Manager or Certifier and client.
Non-conformity	Deviation of product from specified requirements, or the failure to maintain one or more required management system elements.
Production unit	Companies or company unit where actions are carried out defined under “production” in the different normative documents.
Scope Certificate	Document issued under the rules of a certification system, demonstrating that adequate confidence is provided that a duly identified product, process or service is in conformity with a specific standard or other normative document.
Transaction Certificate	Certificate in which CU declares – based on an issued scope certificate – that the production process of a certain lot of products is inspected and positively evaluated.

3. Scope

This certification protocol describes the rules for the implementation of the CRS standard for both the agricultural producers as well as for the other relevant elements of the supply chain. This document covers all phases of audit and certification , from registration till the final certification by the Certification Bodies.

4. Normative references

As a basic principal, all relevant CRS documents are valid for the certification scope. The normative references listed below are directly linked in the certification process

Relevant references:

- CRS Normative document
- CRS Producer checklist
- ISO 19011:2002; Guidelines for quality and/or environmental management systems auditing

5. Certification process

For the certification of both producers and traders the principles of ISO19011:2002 shall be followed. Therefore the following certification activities are be defined and applicable to the CRS certification program.

- Registration / initiating audit
- Conducting document review
- Preparing for th onsite audit activities
- Conducting onsite audit activities
- Preparing, approving and distributing the audit report
- Completing the audit
- Conducting audit follow up
- Certification

5.1 Registration

Registration of the project need to be done through an application form. The minimum information required for registration are which operators will be included in the certification program, company/contact details, crop plan and when applicable processing activities on site.

The following elements of the supply chain shall be registered:

- Farms / plantations
- Traders / processors

Registration is completed when all information is available and accepted by the certification body.

5.3 Audit planning (Farms / plantations)

The inspection of a producer is linked to the registration, no inspection can take place until the certification body has accepted the producer's registration.

All records to be externally inspected in the first year shall go back to the sowing stage of the soy of the last harvest. If more than three months have passed after the initial inspection before corrective evidence is provided to Control Union, a complete inspection needs to be performed before a certificate can be issued. As the certification is linked to a harvest season an annual CRS audit must take place. In case of reasonable suspicion, especially due to the results of precedent surveillances, the CB may induce the surveillance audit of the operator in shorter than annual intervals.

- Timing

The first inspection have to be done during or before the harvesting time, when all control points and sufficient records/evidence are available.

- Alternative timing

Alternative timing options may be followed where inspection during harvest time is not possible during or before harvesting time. In this cases, justification for this alternative timing must be given by CU and noted in the audit report. Example of justification can be logistics and timing constraints of farmer and/or auditor.

- Unannounced surveillance audits

The CB may decide to schedule an unannounced surveillance audit as an instrument of risk management.

5.2 Inspection Execution (Farms / Plantations)

The operator seeking certification must give the certification body, for inspection purposes, access to all parts of the unit and all premises, as well as to the accounts and relevant supporting documents. They must provide the certification body with any information deemed necessary for the purpose of the inspection.

When requested by the certification body, the company seeking certification shall submit the results of its own voluntary inspection and sampling programs.

5.3 Certification

Based on a positive audit showing conformity with the CRS requirements, the CB issue certificates to the operation being audited successfully. Granting of a scope certificate is conditional on compliance by the producer with all the applicable requirements set out in this normative document and will be issued linked to a harvest season.

The CB shall document properly all certifications carried out in a register. In each case, such a register must contain the names, addresses, registration numbers and audit reports of the audited entities. The CB must update their register on an ongoing basis. All results of inspections, and copies of all certificates which are issued shall be archived for at least 10 years.

5.3.1 Transaction certificates

From producers audited, and which have been certified as being in compliance with the requirements of the CRS, the amount of soybean can be classified as certified “Certified Responsible Soy”. The certification body will issue a transaction certificate (TC), mentioning the metric tons which can be claimed as certified soybean meal. The total of certified soy listed in the TC’s will never be more than the total of soybean certified in the fields.

5.4 Non conformances and sanctions

5.4.1 Critical non conformance

This type of non-conformance is when the producer does not comply with 100% of the Major Musts control points. Positive certification is not possible.

5.4.2 Warning

For all types of detected non-conformances, a warning is issued.

A time period allowed for correction will be agreed upon between the certification body and producer with a maximum of three months.

NOTE) The producer MUST close out Critical non-conformances before obtaining/regaining certified status.

5.4.3. Decision and sanctions

The certifier shall decide on all sanctions. If there is a non-conformance detected during the inspection, the producer must be served a warning when the inspection is finalized.

5.4.4. Resolution

The producer must either resolve the non-conformances communicated or appeal to the certification body in writing against the non-conformances, explaining the reasons for the appeal.

If the non-conformances are not resolved within in the permitted time scale, the sanction will be escalated as explained in 4.2

5.4.5 Lifting of sanctions

If a producer notifies the certification body that the non-conformance is resolved before the set period, the respective sanction will be lifted, subject to satisfactory evidence and closing out.

6. Requirements for Certification Bodies

In order to perform certification audits according the CRS standard Certification Bodies must comply to the following requirements

- Recognition by a national public authority or an accreditation body¹
- Conduct audits in conformity with standard ISO 19011 establishing guidelines for quality and/or environmental management system auditing
- The workflow of the certification process complies with the requirements of ISO Guide 65 (EN 45011)
- Conduct audit and certification according to the principles and requirements of ISO 17021:2006
- Cooperation agreement with the schemeholder to conduct certification audit

6.1 Independence, impartiality, confidentiality, and integrity

All personnel must operate to high levels of professional integrity, be free from commercial, financial or other pressures, which might affect their judgment and are expressly forbidden from promoting any goods or services during evaluation activities.

Information relating to the applicant producer including details of products and processes, evaluation reports and associated documentation will be treated as confidential (unless otherwise required by law). No information is released to third parties without the prior consent of the applicant.

Employees or subcontractors of the Certification Body involved in the CRS program are not permitted to carry out any activities which may affect their independence or impartiality, and specifically shall not carry out consultancy or training activities for the producers on whom they perform inspections. Training is not considered consultancy, provided that, where the course relates to management systems or auditing, it is confined to the provision of generic information that is freely available in the public domain; i.e. the trainer cannot provide company-specific solutions. Inspectors must strictly observe the producer's and the CB's procedures to maintain the confidentiality of information and records.

7. Requirements for auditors

All auditors and certifiers shall need to comply at least to the following general requirements

¹ Accreditations for similar product certification schemes would also qualify

- At least a post-high school diploma or equivalent (minimum course duration of 2 years obtained in a discipline related to agricultural farming)
- Minimum 3 years of overall experience, of which minimal 2 year after completing the study, in agricultural industry. Experience in production, quality systems or food safety.
- Inspection experience on agricultural industry.
- Knowledge in handling and evaluation of data sources
- Personal aptitude in the sense of ISO 19011:2002
- The auditor should plan and carry out the audit with respect to the nature, timing and extend of evidence gathering procedures in such a way that a meaningful level of assurance for a decision regarding compliance is available.

In addition the following specific program related requirements are applicable

- One-day practical inspection course setting out basic principles of the CRS program
- Formal training in HACCP principles either as part of the auditors formal qualifications or by the successful completion of a course based on the principles of Codex Alimentarius
- Formal food hygiene training either as part of the auditors formal qualifications or by the successful completion of a course
- Formal pesticide and fertilizer training either as part of the auditor's formal qualifications, or by the successful completion of a course.
- "Working language" skills in the corresponding native/working language. This must include the locally used specialist terminology in this working language.