



FAQ FOR CERTIFICATION BODIES AND AUDITORS

VERSION 1

January 2017

FAQ, VERSION 1

The aim of this document is to provide answers for the certification bodies and auditors to the most frequently asked questions about IFS Wholesale/Cash & Carry version 2.

All explanations and decisions in this document apply from the date of publication, unless a different date of application is specified.

1 Audit protocol (Part 1)

1.1 Specific information that the company shall address with the certification body (2.2)

The ISO/IEC 17065 demand that certified companies inform their certification body in case of a recall. Is this information also necessary in case of a withdrawal?

As already stated in the Standard and described in the ISO/IEC 17065 “... *the company shall inform its certification body about any change that may affect its ability to conform with the certification requirements*”. The list is not complete; withdrawals may also be affected, in case of having an influence on certification requirements or product safety.

Certification bodies have the duty to define with the company in which cases the company has to inform the certification body, as they are responsible for the certification decision.

1.2 Coverage of the Standard (4.1):

1.2.1 Demarcation of IFS Wholesale/Cash & Carry and other IFS Standards

Can wholesale companies continue to perform a combined audit against IFS Broker/IFS Logistics? What is the exact demarcation?

Wholesale companies in general can choose on their own, if they want to perform a certification according to IFS Wholesale or a combined certification according to IFS Broker/IFS Logistics. In case of doubt, it should be agreed with the trading partner, which Standard the company has to be certified to.

Can packaging companies continue to be certified to IFS Food?

Yes, the IFS has no requirements or containment on that. In case of doubt, it should be agreed with the trading partner, which Standard the company has to be certified to.

1.2.2 Cash & Carry markets

Are Cash & Carry markets, which sell products to both, business customers and private customers, covered by this scope Cash & Carry? (e.g. Austria, B to B & and B to C at the same time)?

Yes

1.2.3 Core business of the company/selection of the checklist

A wholesale company is divided into 50 % classic delivery wholesale and 50 % Cash & Carry market. Which scope has to be chosen here?

In this case, the scope has to be chosen based on risk, i.e. in this case, the scope Cash & Carry has to be selected.

Do companies (which have both wholesale and cash & carry) still have the possibility to receive an IFS Cash & Carry/Wholesale certificate? (like in version 1)?

No, it can be either an IFS Wholesale or an IFS Cash & Carry certificate, only. If the company wants to have both, then a combined audit is necessary and two reports and certificates are going to be issued.

1.2.4 eCommerce/online trading

Is the area eCommerce/online trading covered by the certification scope of the IFS Wholesale/Cash & Carry?

Yes, the product safety and quality related aspects of the eCommerce is covered by the IFS Wholesale/Cash & Carry.

1.3 Certification scope of the audit (4.2)

1.3.1 Exclusion

Is the exclusion of specific activities possible?: e.g. a small Cash & Carry market close to the certified distribution center?

Yes, as long as the cross contamination risk between certified and excluded products/processes is properly controlled (see IFS Wholesale/Cash & Carry v2, Part 1, 4.2). In this case, the cash & carry area (excluded area) has to be clearly separated from the distribution center (storage, sanitary facility, etc.).

1.3.2 Packaging companies

From which point is the Standard applicable for packaging companies?

The Standard is applicable if product development and/or purchasing activities are carried out and/or as soon as the goods are passed into ownership of the site (e.g. purchasing, storage before call off the goods, receiving).

1.3.3 Quantity limit of 2.5 tons/week

Who has the responsibility to review the quantity limit of 2.5 tons/week for the scope Cash & Carry?

The certification body has to clarify this within the framework of contracting/agreement of which Standard has to be certified. The verification has to be carried out by the auditor on-site.

Are the 2.5 tons/week in the scope Cash & Carry the average peak or are they already meant to be the maximum peak per week?

The quantity limit is defined related to the German AVV LMH from 9. November 2009. The weekly based quantity limit of 2.5tons per product group can be exceeded during high peaks, but shall not be exceeded frequently.

Is the expression “product group” comparable to the relative IFS product scope (as described in ANNEX 5, Part 1 of the Standard)?

The expression “product group” in the meaning of the Standard is not necessarily equal to the term “IFS product scope” laid down in the Standard. In the glossary, product groups are defined as “grouping of products due to similar characteristics or legal requirements”. This means, different product groups can exist per IFS product scope.

Is the pure weighing listed in the ANNEX 6, Part 1 for e.g. fish (scope Cash & Carry) an activity counted for the quantity limit of 2.5 tons/week?

As pure weighing is not a „processing“ activity in a strict sense, weighing activities are excluded from the defined quantity limit.

Can processes be excluded which exceed the allowed certification scope of e.g. scope Cash & Carry “plus”?

No, for the decision which Standard is applicable, all activities of the related site have to be taken into consideration. If the concerned site exceeds the allowed processing activities mentioned in ANNEX 6, Part 1 of the Standard, an IFS Food certification is necessary.

1.4 Outsourced processes

1.4.1 Outsourced processes

Please name some examples for outsourced processes within the scope “IFS Wholesale”.

Outsourced processes are all processes, which are covered by the certification scope of the site subject to the IFS Wholesale/Cash & Carry certification, but are subcontracted by the certified site to a third party, e.g. sorting of potatoes, cleaning of seeds/kernels, classification of fruit.

1.5 ANNEX 5, Part 1 of the IFS Wholesale/Cash & Carry version 2

1.5.1 How have the following products been referred to the IFS product scopes?

- **Gelatine:**

Dependent on the source (animal origin or non-animal origin), product has to refer to either product scope 1.1 (red and white meat, poultry and meat products) or 1.10 (dry goods, other ingredients and supplements).

- Soy products (e.g. soy milk, tofu):
Soy as well as products made of soy refer to product scope 1.5 (fruit and vegetables).
- Living lobsters, mussels or fish:
All fish, seafood and crustaceans refer to product scope 1.2 (fish and fish products).

Note: an overview of the IFS Food product scopes with product samples can be downloaded on the IFS website:
https://www.ifs-certification.com/images/standards/ifs_food6/documents

1.6 ANNEX 6, Part 1 of the IFS Wholesale/Cash & Carry version 2

1.6.1 Is it necessary to choose the scope Wholesale “plus”, if products on-site are being refrigerated (e.g. refrigerated storage with modified atmosphere)?

The general storage of food under specific temperature conditions (refrigerated/frozen) is generally intended to maintain the product requirements (cooled/frozen).

A treatment in the normal sense is not carried out. Therefore storage under certain temperatures is considered as scope “classic”. As soon as treatment activities (e.g. ripening with ethylene) are carried out, the module „plus“ has to be chosen.

1.6.2 Is it possible for a wholesaler treating natural casings (pig interstines, treated with brine) to get certified against IFS Wholesale, or is an IFS Food certification required?

This treatment activity is not covered by the scope of the IFS Wholesale/Cash & Carry. Therefore, an IFS Food certification is necessary here.

1.6.3 Product scope 1.5 fruit and vegetables (scope Wholesale)

Is the confectioning of mirepoix (mixed vegetables for soups) allowed in the scope Wholesale?

Yes. Simple cutting activities, like e.g. cutting kohlrabi in halves for mixpoire or removing stems of brussels sprouts are allowed.

Further cutting activities of fruit (e.g. melons) or vegetables (e.g. carrots in advance of IQF) are not covered by the standard, as these activities contain a higher microbiological risk.

1.7 Certification of multi-site companies with sampling procedure

1.7.1 Is it possible that the central managing site (Headquarters) is IFS Food certified whereas all other related sites are certified against IFS Wholesale?

No, a certification of multi-site companies with sampling procedure is possible against one (1) Standard, only. Moreover, for IFS Food there is no possibility for such a procedure, yet.

1.7.2 How to manage companies, which are already certified against the certification of multi-site companies with sampling procedure in the version 1 of the Standard?

The new version of the Standard makes it necessary to begin the cycle again. This means, in the first year of certification against Version 2, 100% of all locations in the multi-site sampling program have to be audited.

1.7.3 Does every location in the multi-site sampling program receive an own COID, also the sites that were not audited?

In general, every location in the multi-site sampling program receives an own COID. As in the first year of every site of the program has to be audited, all locations are being edified with an own COID in the IFS database.

1.8 Process of audit procedure after a KO assessment with "D" (5.8.1)

It is mentioned in the Standard that the audit has to be completed after a KO-requirement has been assessed with a "D". However, how to proceed in case the company insists to stop the audit?

The auditor has to assess all requirements which are not assessed due to the cancellation with N/A and has to write the note, that these requirements are not assessed because of that reason. Furthermore, the cancellation of the audit has to be noted in the company profile.

2 List of audit requirements (part 2)

2.1 Product development Chapter 4.3 (scope Wholesale) & 4.4 (scope Cash & Carry)

Does a company need to have a product development procedure in place, even if they do not carry out these kind of activities?

For the module „classic“ it is not necessarily demanded to have a procedure for product development in place, if this company is not purchasing (developing) the company's own brands or customer brands. As soon as the company is purchasing (developing) the company's own brands or customer brands, such a procedure is necessary to have in place.

2.2 Purchasing Chapter 4.4 (scope Wholesale) & 4.5 (scope Cash & Carry)

If the certified company is a pure service provider, is the chapter „purchasing“ still applicable or can it be assessed with N/A (not applicable)?

Yes, since also service providers have purchasing activities, such as purchasing of internal used materials or services, which can influence product safety and -quality. Therefore, the sub chapter purchasing is applicable and cannot be assessed with N/A.

2.3 Recipes Chapter 4.3 (scope Cash & Carry)

Why is the sub-chapter „recipes“ not included in the Wholesale checklist?

Since only certain treatment activities are allowed within the scope Wholesale (see ANNEX 6, Part 1 of the Standard), recipes in the classical sense are not to be assessed in the scope Wholesale.

The confectioning of e.g. potatoes or mirepoix (vegetables for soups) is normally carried out on the basis of a specification. The relevant assessment has to be made here under “specification”.

2.4 Traceability Chapter 4.17 (scope Wholesale) & 4.18 (scope Cash & Carry)

Which products are covered under „primary packaging“?

Primary packaging means all packaging material which has a direct contact with the product. Beside primary packaging which is intended for selling-on and also especially primary packaging used on-site are addressed here. These include service packaging, too.

2.5 Food Fraud:

2.5.1 For which kind of products is the chapter food fraud applicable?

As implied by the title of the chapter, these requirements are applicable for food, only.

3 Requirements for accreditation bodies, certification bodies and auditors (part 3)

3.1 Required auditor qualification for the IFS Wholesale/Cash & Carry scopes (3.4)

3.1.1 Which specific qualifications are demanded to audit the HPC and packaging product scopes?

For auditing wholesalers/cash & carry markets that handle food and HPC and packaging products, there is no approval as HPC or PACsecure auditor necessary.

If only applicable HPC products and/or packaging material are handled at the concerned site, a relevant approval as HPC or PACsecure auditor is mandatory.

3.1.2 Are IFS Wholesale/Cash & Carry version 2 audits being taken into account for the 5 mandatory IFS Food audits/year?

No, these audits are not counted for the obligation of minimum 5 IFS Food audits/year.

4 Reporting, Software and the IFS Database (part 4)

4.1 Compulsory fields in AuditXpressX

Do all compulsory fields, as described in ANNEX 3, Part 4, have to be translated into English?

Compulsory fields listed in ANNEX 3, Part 4, have to be translated into English, as soon as the language is others than English. Further, voluntary information added by the auditor/certification body, can but does not necessarily need to be translated into English (see 5.7.3.2, Part 4).

4.2 How much is the license for the new AuditXpressX™?

One license for AuditXpressX™ costs 150 €. The software can be bought at the IFS Shop.

4.3 Wording of certification scope:

Is it necessary to also mention “self-evident” processes like e.g. storage in the certification scope?

Yes, as storage is a central process in the wholesaling, this process has to be named on the certificate.

How shall outsourced processes be noted on the certificate?

If processes are being outsourced, which are also included in the certification scope of the IFS Wholesale or IFS Cash & Carry certified site, following notation shall be written on the certificate **“Besides own treatment (scope Wholesale) (and/or) processing (scope Cash & Carry) of products, the company also has outsourced products/processes”**.

A detailed description of outsourced products and/or processes has to be made in the company profile.

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