

# Description of the Certification procedure FSSC 22000

Certification

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If you should require any further information then please do not hesitate to contact us. We will be please to help you.

Please contact us via mail to [info.tncert@tuev-nord.de](mailto:info.tncert@tuev-nord.de) or by telephone 0800 245 74 57 (Free-phone from within Germany) or +49 511 9986-1222 from abroad.

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The rules and descriptions of service and performance regarding certification according to the FSSC 22000 apply alongside our offer. They are valid alongside the general Conditions of Certification.

Further applicable documents and rules can be found on the FSSC website ([www.FSSC22000.com](http://www.FSSC22000.com))

The auditors are selected by the Head of the Certification Body of TÜV NORD CERT GmbH in accordance with their approvals for the particular sector and their qualification.

The client accepts the requirements of FSSC 22000:

- Share information concerning the certified organization with the Foundation and governmental authorities when appropriate.
- Display information with regards to the certified status on the website of the Foundation in the FSSC 22000 Register of Certified Organizations.
- For the purposes of the FSSC 22000 Integrity Program, to allow assessors from the Foundation on their premises to witness the CBs auditors during FSSC 22000 audits.
- In the case of a product recall, the client shall inform the certification body immediately and will describe the details regarding the incident. For its part, the certification body will take suitable steps in order to assess the situation and its impact on the certification and will take appropriate action

The following mailbox shall be used for the information of the CB: [tncert-food-recall@tuev-nord.de](mailto:tncert-food-recall@tuev-nord.de)

## **1 CERTIFICATION PROCEDURE**

### **1.1 Audit Preparation**

Following signing of the contract, the auditor prepares for the audit based on the questionnaire filled in by the customer and the calculation sheet, and discusses and agrees the further procedure with the organization to be audited.

During preparation for the surveillance or recertification audit, the organizations to be audited have the duty to report fundamental changes in their organisational structure or changes in procedure to the certification body.

The organization shall ensure that the relevant products and/ or services and related processes for the scope of certification are in place and can be assessed during the audit.

### **1.2 Audit Stage 1**

The Stage 1 audit is conducted in order to

- audit the management system documentation of the customer,
- assess the site and site-specific conditions of the customer and hold discussions with the personnel of the organization in order to determine the degree of preparedness for the Stage 2 audit,
- assess the status of the customer and his understanding of the requirements of FSSC 22000 particular with regard to identification of key performance or significant aspects, processes, objectives and operation of the management system,
- collect necessary information regarding the scope of the management system, processes and location(s) of the client, and related statutory and regulatory aspects and compliance (e.g. food safety legal aspects of the client's operation, associated risks, etc.),

- review the allocation of resources for stage 2 audit and agree with the client on the details of the stage 2 audit,
- evaluate if the internal audits and management review are being planned and performed, and that the level of implementation of the management system substantiates that the client is ready for the stage 2 audit.

If nonconformities were identified in the stage 1 audit, these must be corrected by the customer before the stage 2 audit.

If at the end it cannot be established positively that the customer is ready for the Stage 2 Audit, the audit is broken off after the Stage 1 Audit.

The lead auditor is responsible for the coordination of the activities of the stage 1 audit and if necessary for coordination and cooperation of the auditors concerned amongst themselves.

### **1.3 Audit Stage 2 – Certification Audit**

The customer receives an audit plan at the beginning of the stage 2 audit. The plan is agreed with the customer in advance.

The audit begins with a start-up meeting, in which the participants are introduced to each other. The procedure to be followed in the audit is explained. Within the framework of the audit at the organization's premises, the auditors review and assess the effectiveness of the management system which has been installed. The basis for this is standard FSSC 22000 respectively.

The task of the auditors is to compare the practical application of the management system with the documented processes and to assess them in relation to fulfilment of the requirements of the standard. This is achieved by means of questioning of the employees, examining the relevant documents, records, orders and guidelines and also by visiting relevant areas of the organization

A final meeting takes place at the end of the on-site audit. At least those employees take part in the audit who have management functions within the organization and whose areas were included in the audit. The lead auditor reports on the individual elements and explains the positive and negative results. If nonconformities are established, the lead auditor can only recommend the organization for issue of the certificate after acceptance or verification of the corrective actions by the audit team, see Section 7 "Management of nonconformities". Attention must be drawn to this fact in the final meeting.

The audit is documented in the audit report (the documentation must be separate for stage 1 and stage 2 audits) and is completed by means of further records (e.g. audit questionnaire and hand-written records)

### **1.4 Award of Certificate**

The certificate is issued when the certification procedure has been reviewed and released by the head of the certification body or his deputy or nominated representative. The person who reviews and releases the procedure may not have participated in the audit.

The certificate can only be issued when the nonconformities have been accepted or verified by the audit team.

The certificates are valid for 3 years.

The audit report and the certificate are registered on the FSSC Database (<https://viasyst.net/fssc>). FSSC charges a fee per site and year for registration in the Database. This amount is invoiced by TÜV NORD CERT and then passed on to FSSC

## **2 SURVEILLANCE AUDIT**

The company data are updated before the surveillance audit, in order to take any changes which have a significant influence on the area of activity or the operational methods of the client into consideration.

- Surveillance audits must be conducted once per year during the period of validity of the certificate. Surveillance audits shall be performed prior the due date / planning-relevant date. The planning-relevant date for the annual surveillance audit, which follows the initial certification audit, may not be later than 12 months after the last day of the stage 2 audit. The planning-relevant date controls all the surveillance audits.
- At least one of the two annual audits shall be unannounced.
- If not all audit objectives are fulfilled during an unannounced audit, an additional audit shall be performed of which the nature shall be determined by the CB.

## **3 RECERTIFICATION AUDIT**

Recertification audits – including the review of corrective actions of identified nonconformities – have to be completed prior to the expiry of the certificate. The recertification shall consider a continuous certification.

In the recertification audit, a review of the documentation of the management system of the organization takes place and an on-site audit is conducted, whereby the results of the previous surveillance programme(s) over the period of the certification are to be taken into consideration. All requirements of the standard are audited.

Activities related to the recertification audit may include a stage 1 audit if there are significant changes in the management system or in connection with the activities of the organization (e.g. changes to the law).

Changes to the FSMS system must be submitted in advance by the client in writing along with the corresponding documents.

The audit methods used in the recertification audit correspond to those used in a stage 2 audit.

## **4 SPECIAL AUDITS**

### **4.1 Extension of scope audit**

If it is intended to extend the scope of an existing certificate, this can be implemented by means of an extension audit. An extension audit can be conducted within the framework of a surveillance audit, a recertification audit or at a time which is set independently.

The period of validity of a certificate does not change as a result. Exceptions must be justified in writing.

## **4.2 Short Notice Audits**

If the client becomes aware that legal action could be taken with regard to the safety or legality of a product, he shall inform the certification body immediately. For its part, the certification body will instigate suitable steps in order to assess the situation and its impact on the certification, and will take appropriate action.

If the certification body gains knowledge of incidents which have an impact on the safety or legality of the product, the certification body is entitled to perform announced or unannounced audits at any time, and, following assessment of the situation and its effects, to withdraw the certificate(s).

## **5 TRANSFER OF CERTIFICATION FROM OTHER CERTIFICATION BODIES**

In general, only certificates from accredited certification bodies can be taken over. Organizations with certificates which originate from non-accredited certification bodies are treated like new clients. A "Pre-Transfer-Review" must be conducted by a competent person from the certification body which is taking over the certificate. This review generally consists of an examination of important documents and a visit to the client.

Certificates which have been suspended, or where there is risk of suspension, may not be taken over. Any nonconformities which have not been corrected should as far as practicable be clarified with the previous Certifier before the takeover. Otherwise they must be dealt with in the audit.

The further surveillance programme is based on the programme which has been in place up to the time of the takeover of the certificate.

## **6 CERTIFICATION OF COMPANIES WITH MULTIPLE LOCATIONS (MULTI-SITE)**

Certification of organizations with several production sites/branch offices/locations etc. with similar types of activity and which operates under a single management system may be done by means of random sampling procedure. Random sampling is only possible for companies with more than 20 sites and for categories E (Catering) and G (transport and storage).

## **7 MANAGEMENT OF NON-CONFORMITIES**

### **Minor NC:**

If a Minor NC is identified in an audit a proposed corrective action plan is required within 3 months of the audit. Corrective actions should be completed within 12 months after the audit.

Implementation / completion of the corrective plan should be reviewed, at the latest, at the next on-site audit.

A major nonconformity is raised (on management responsibility and resource allocation) in the event of non-completion of the approved action plan at the next scheduled on-site audit.

### **Major NC:**

If a Major NC is identified in an audit, the client must provide a root cause analysis and proposed corrective action plan, agreed on by the CB within 14 days after the audit. The client shall submit objective evidence of implementation to the CB.

The CB shall conduct a follow-up audit to verify the implementation of the CA to close the major nonconformity. In cases where documentary evidence is sufficient to close out the major nonconformity, the CB may decide to perform a desk review.

A critical nonconformity is raised in the event of non-completion of the approved corrective action.

### **Critical NC:**

A critical nonconformity is issued when a direct food safety impact without appropriate action by the organization is observed during the audit or when legality and/or certification integrity are at stake:

- The certificate will be immediately suspended for a maximum period of six (6) months.
- The client must provide objective evidence of an investigation into causative factors, exposed risks and the proposed corrective action plan. This shall be provided to the CB within 14 days after the audit.
- A follow-up audit will be conducted within the six (6) month timeframe to verify the closure of the critical nonconformity.
- The certificate will be withdrawn when the critical nonconformity is not effectively solved within the six (6) month timeframe.
- In case of a certification audit, the full certification audit will be repeated.

## **8 LOGO USE**

Certified organizations are entitled to use the FSSC 22000 logo. The FSSC 22000 logo may be used on the organization's printed matter, website and other promotional material.

The FSSC 22000 logo is not allowed to be used on:

- a product,
- its labelling,
- its packaging,
- in any other manner that implies FSSC 22000 approves a product, process or service.

## **9 NOTIFICATION**

The organization shall report significant changes to the CB within three (3) working days.

These include changes relating to:

- legal, commercial, organizational status or ownership,
- organization and management (e.g. key managerial, decision-making or technical staff),
- organization name, contact address and site details,
- scope of operations and product categories covered by the certified management system,
- management system and/or processes,
- any other change that renders the information on the certificate inaccurate.

The organization shall seek the advice of the CB in cases where there is doubt over the significance of a change.

## **10 SERIOUS EVENTS**

The organization shall report serious events to the CB immediately and these include at a minimum:

- legal proceedings, prosecutions and the outcomes of these related to food safety or legality, public food safety events (such as e.g. public recalls, calamities, etc.)
- extraordinary events which pose major threats to food safety or certification integrity such as war, strike, riot, political instability, geopolitical tension, terrorism, crime, pandemic, flood, earthquake, malicious computer hacking, other natural or man-made disasters.

## **11 CERTIFICATE SUSPENSION, WITHDRAWAL OR SCOPE REDUCTION**

The certification will be suspended when there is evidence that their client is either unable or unwilling to establish and maintain conformity with Scheme requirements within the time frames applicable to the clearance of major nonconformities.

The certification will be withdrawn when there is evidence that their client is either unable or unwilling to establish and maintain conformity with Scheme requirements, within the timeframes applicable to the clearance of critical nonconformities.

When the client holds a certificate whose scope exceeds their capability or capacity to meet, the CB shall reduce the certification scope accordingly.

In case of withdrawal or suspension the status of the client in the FSSC 22000 database will be changed.

In case of scope reduction the clients' management system certification is invalid beyond the revised certification scope statement. The scope of the certified organization will be changed in the FSSC 22000 database

In both cases the client has to inform its clients through various forms of communication.