Certification Regulation for Food Safety MS

Standard or Certification scheme:	FSSC 22000 version 6	Accreditation Standard:	ISO 17021-1:2015 ISO/TS 22003-1:2022

Certification Cycle:

TÜV AUSTRIA will issue the certificate within thirty (30) calendar days from the date of the certification decision. The certificate expires three years after the date of the initial certification decision. However, whilst the certificate is issued to the applicant organization, it remains the property of TÜV AUSTRIA under the conditions outlined in the contract. To maintain validity of certification annual surveillance audits shall be carried out. Renewal of the certification period for another three-year period is granted after a recertification audit before the expiration of the existing certificate.

Certification audits are carried out in two stages. Stage 1 and stage 2 audits shall be carried out at the client's premises. The Stage 1 audit, verifies that the system has been designed and developed in accordance with the organization’s top management commitment to conform to Scheme requirements. The objective of this audit is to assess the preparedness of the applicant organization to proceed to stage 2 audit. Stage 2 audit substantiates top management’s claim by auditing implementation of the food safety management system

During the initial certification audit all the requirements of FSSC 22000 Scheme are audited. This includes the ISO 22000 requirements, the applicable technical specifications for the prerequisites programs (eg ISO/TS 22002-1: 2009) and the additional requirements of the Scheme.

The interval between the stage 1 and the stage 2 audit must not exceed 6 months. In case that the 6 months period elapse between stage 1 and stage 2 audit, stage 1 audit shall be repeated. Stage 1 audit findings may lead to postponement or cancellation of Stage 2.

The audits shall be scheduled for a period when the client’s activities are in full operation (eg. Seasonal products) and covers a representative number of sectors covered by the scope. No processes, products or services are to be excluded from the application scope if they affect the safety of the final product.

Audit planning and time table: Surveillance audit process has to be completed annually, with due date the last date of the certification decision after the Initial Certification audit. Correspondingly the re-certification audit process has to be completed within the same time frame. Example:

Certification Decision	**1st Surveillance audit**	**2nd Surveillance**	**Re-certification audit**
15/7/2023	*15/7/2024*	*15/7/2025*	*15/7/2026*

In case of exceeding time limits certificates are suspended for six months and after this period finally suspended. Recertification audit activities may need to have a stage 1 audit in situations where there have been significant changes to the management system, the client, or the context in which the management system is operating (e.g. changes to legislation).

Annual audits shall take place to ensure certificate validity or that recertification is granted before the expiry date of the certificate.

	In case the certificate expires prior to the recertification activities being undertaken, the CB can restore certification within 6 months, provided that the outstanding recertification activities are completed, otherwise a full initial audit (stage1 and stage 2) shall be conducted.
Unannounced audits	At least one of the two annual surveillance audits shall be unannounced. The certified organization can voluntary choose to replace all surveillance audits by unannounced annual surveillance audits recertification audits can be replaced by an unannounced audit after the request of the client. TÜV AUSTRIA sets the date of the unannounced audit. The site shall not be notified in advance, by TÜV AUSTRIA, of the date of the unannounced audit. When there are legitimate business reasons, blackout days may be agreed in advance. TÜV AUSTRIA decides which of the scheduled surveillance audits shall be chosen for the unannounced audit. If the certified organization refuses to participate in the unannounced audit, the certificate shall be suspended immediately, and TÜV AUSTRIA shall withdraw the certificate, if the unannounced audit is not conducted within a six-month timeframe. If access is denied to the auditor, the certified organization will be liable for all costs.
Notification of significant changes and factors affecting the certification	The organization shall report significant changes to TÜV AUSTRIA within three (3) working days. These include changes relating to: legal, commercial, organizational status or ownership; organization and management; 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 TÜV AUSTRIA reviews the reported changes and comes to a conclusion whether or not additional verification activities are necessary and whether or not certification changes of scope shall be granted. If granted, the current certificate will be replaced by a new certificate using the same expiry date as detailed in the original certificate and the organization's entry in the FSSC 22000 Register of Certified Organizations will be updated accordingly. The organization shall report serious events to TÜV AUSTRIA 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. TÜV AUSTRIA in turn shall take appropriate steps to assess the situation and any implications for the certification, and shall take any appropriate action.
Non conformity grading	**Head office** In case of non-conformities noticed in a head office audit, these are assumed to have impact on the equivalent procedures applicable to all sites. Corrective actions shall therefore address issues of communication across the certified sites and appropriate

	actions for impacted sites. Such nonconformities and corrective actions shall be clearly identified in the relevant section of the site audit report and shall be cleared in accordance with TÜV AUSTRIA before issuing the site certificate. **Minor Non Conformity:** A failure in a requirement of the Management System which does not affect the capability to achieve the intended results. **Major Non Conformity:** A major nonconformity shall be issued when the finding affects the capability of the management system to achieve the intended results or a legislative noncompliance linked to quality. **Critical Non Conformity:** A significant failure in the management system, a situation with direct adverse food safety impact and no appropriate action is being observed or when food safety legality and/or certification integrity is at stake.
Timeframe to close Non Conformitites:	If a **minor non conformity** is identified in an audit, the organization provides TÜV AUSTRIA with objective evidence of the correction, evidence of an investigation into causative factors, exposed risks and the proposed corrective action plan (*CAP*). TÜV AUSTRIA reviews the provided data and approves if it is acceptable. The approval shall be completed within twenty-eight (28) calendar days after the last day of the audit. Exceeding this timeframe shall result in a suspension of the certificate, or in the case of an initial audi, the stage 2 audit shall be repeated within maximum six (6) months of the last day of the previous stage 2 audit. Corrective actions shall be implemented within twelve (12) months of the audit. Effectiveness of implementation of the corrective action plan shall be reviewed, at the latest, at the next on-site audit. Failure to address a minor nonconformity from the previous audit could lead to a major nonconformity being raised at the next scheduled audit. If a **Major non conformity** is identified in an audit the client must provide TÜV AUSTRIA with objective evidence of an investigation into causative factors, exposed risks and evidence of effective implementation. TÜV AUSTRIA shall review the CAP and 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, TÜV AUSTRIA may decide to perform a desk review. This follow-up shall be done within twenty-eight (28) days from the last day of the audit. The major nonconformity shall be closed by TÜV AUSTRIA within twenty-eight (28) calendar days from the last day of the audit. When the major cannot be closed in this timeframe, the certificate shall be suspended. Where completion of corrective actions might take more time, the CAP shall include any temporary measures or controls necessary to mitigate the risk until the permanent corrective action is implemented. Supporting evidence of the temporary measures or controls shall be submitted to the CB for review and acceptance within twenty-eight (28) calendar days from the last day of the audit. If a major non-conformity is raised at the Stage 2 audit, the nonconformity shall be closed by the CB within twenty-eight (28) calendar days from the last day of the audit. Where completion of corrective actions might take more time, the Corrective Action Plan (CAP) shall include the temporary measures or controls necessary to mitigate the risk until the permanent corrective action is implemented. Evidence of these temporary measures shall

	be submitted and accepted by the CB within twenty-eight (28) calendar days from the last day of the audit. Based on this information, a certification decision shall be taken. In addition, where temporary measures are accepted, the CB shall agree a suitable timeframe with the organization, to verify the effective implementation of the permanent corrective action, but not later than 6 months after the last day of the audit. In any event, where the twenty-eight (28) calendar days after the last day of the audit is exceeded e.g., not closing the major nonconformity or non-acceptance of the evidence of the temporary measures, the full Stage 2 audit shall be repeated. If a **critical non conformity** is identified in an audit the certificate shall be suspended within three (3) working days of being issued, for a maximum period of six (6) months. The organization must provide TÜV AUSTRIA with objective evidence of an investigation into causative factors, exposed risks and the proposed CAP within fourteen (14) calendar days after the audit. A follow-up audit shall be conducted by TÜV AUSTRIA between six (6) weeks and six (6) month after the regular audit to verify the effective implementation of the corrective actions. This audit shall be a full on-site audit (with a minimum on-site duration of one day). After a successful follow-up audit, the certificate and the current audit cycle will be restored and the next audit shall take place as originally planned (the follow-up audit is additional and does not replace an annual audit). This audit shall be documented and the report uploaded as part of the audit documentation linked to the audit where the critical NC was raised. The certificate shall be withdrawn when the critical nonconformity is not effectively resolved within the six (6) month timeframe. In case of a certification audit (initial), the full certification audit shall be repeated.
Scope Reduction	When TÜV AUSTRIA has evidence that the certified organization holds a certificate where the scope is not an accurate reflection of the management system for example due to changes at locations or the control of the organization, TÜV AUSTRIA shall reduce the certification scope accordingly. TÜV AUSTRIA shall not exclude activities, processes, products, or services from the scope of certification when those activities, processes, products, or services can have an influence on the food safety of the end products as defined in the scope of certification. Certificates may be suspended or withdrawn by The Foundation or by TÜV AUSTRIA upon instruction by the Foundation, as a result of TÜV AUSTRIA noncompliance to Scheme requirements or termination of a TÜV AUSTRIA license with the Foundation.
Register of certified organizations	The Foundation keeps a register with the names and certification information of the certified organizations. This register is made publicly available on the website of the Foundation.
Use of FSSC Logo	✔ FSSC 22000 certified organizations may use the FSSC 22000 logo, but only in conjunction with the mark of TÜV AUSTRIA. ✔ The latest FSSC logo (request a copy of the latest FSSC logo from TÜV AUSTRIA) may be used on the organization’s printed matter, website and promotional material subject to the design specifications below:

	(colour table below)

Colour	PMS	CMYK	RGB	#
Green	348 U	82/25/76/7	33/132/85	218455
Grey	60% black	0/0/0/60	135/136/138	87888a

- ✔ Use of the logo in black and white is permitted when all other text and imagines are in black and white.
- ✔ The certified organization is not allowed to use the FSSC 22000 logo, any statement or make reference to its certified status on:
  - a product;
  - its labelling;
  - its packaging (primary, secondary or any other form);
  - certificate of analysis or certificates of conformance (CoA/CoC)
  - in any other manner that implies FSSC 22000 approves a product, process or service.
  - Where exclusions to the scope of certification apply
- ✔ The certification body will audit the use of the FSSC 22000 logo by certified organizations during every surveillance and re-certification audit. Any non-conformance associated with the use of the logo will require remedial action to correct the use of the logo on issued documents as well as corrective action for future use.

Reference: Conditions for the use of the logo which can be found on the FSSC 22000 website

Risk based audits	TÜV AUSTRIA will participate in a risk-based program of announced, but unscheduled, audits of certified organizations (witness audits). The client states that he will permit a possible Witness Audit (participation of FSSC 22000 inspectors) to be performed in his company.
Certified Organization Identification Codes (COIDs)	The COID is a unique code allocated to every (certified) organization that is registered in the Assurance Platform. The COID stays with the organization to ensure traceability, also in the event of a transfer. The COID code is available to the organization on the public register, and to the accepting CB when requested in the case of a certificate transfer. The COID is also included on the FSSC 22000 certificate.
Transition to FSSC 22000 certification	Transition audits are allowed from ISO 22000 and GFSI recognized certification programs with equivalent scopes (valid at the time of the transition audit). Transition audits are the start of a new certification cycle and shall therefore be a stage 2 audit (a stage 1 may be performed at the discretion of TÜV AUSTRIA)