

CMi Certification

Certification for Food Manufacturers and Packers

SERVICE PROTOCOL

For Certification against the BRC Global Standard -
Food
Issue 4 Jan 2005.

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1.0 Introduction

CMi Certification offer a range of Certification Schemes to the Farming, Food Processing and Food Packaging Industries and hold EN 45011 and EN45004 Accreditation for many of the schemes currently available. This certification Protocol and explanation of the standard is designed for companies seeking certification against the BRC Global Standard - Food (the Standard). CMi Certification is accredited to EN 450011 for assessment activity against this standard.

The purpose of this protocol is to provide existing and prospective customers with information on the way in which CMi Certification operates its certification scheme against the BRC Global Standard - Food and to provide an explanation of the requirements of this standard.

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2.0 About CMi Certification

CMi Certification is a specialist food inspection and certification company providing accredited and bespoke services to the food supply chain. We operate in the UK and internationally through an expanding network of in-country operations including:

• Spain	• France
• Italy	• Czech Rep.- Eastern Europe
• Greece	• Rep. of South Africa – Sub Saharan Africa
• Holland	• Chile – South America
• USA/ Mexico - Central America	• India

Our services reflect evolving trade and consumer assurance demands for product integrity, safety, legality and quality throughout the food supply chain.

We are accredited by the United Kingdom Accreditation Service (UKAS) to EN45011 enabling us to provide a broad range of UKAS accredited certification services.

In accordance with UKAS requirements and good practice CMi Certification operate rigorous systems to ensure the independence and impartiality of the assessment process, and for maintaining strict confidentiality.

Where accredited inspection or certification to recognised standards is inappropriate, we work closely with clients to design bespoke certification programmes to address specific business needs.

➤ ***We have a unique perspective on the food industry, and the ability to address a wide range of issues, in a consistent and integrated way.***

2.1 Why CMi Certification?

There are many reasons why people choose CMi Certification; here are just a few!

- ◆ CMi Certification is approved by all major purchasers currently utilising BRC Certification and we are the preferred certification body of many of them – the CMi Certification and report will satisfy your key clients.
- ◆ All our people are experienced in the Food industry with detailed product and industry knowledge – we know there’s nothing worse than an assessment by somebody that doesn’t understand the real issues and raises unreasonable non-conformances.
- ◆ CMi Certification charges sustainable, fair prices – we won’t try to win your business with a ridiculously cheap price at the beginning and then try for a big increase next time.
- ◆ Lastly, CMi Certification is part of the CMi Group. We operate throughout the UK and internationally, employing approximately 170 full-time personnel. We provide independent inspection, certification and other services to clients in primary production, manufacturing, wholesaling, foodservice and retail – we don’t just do inspections!

2.2 The CMi Team

CMi Certification employs a team of qualified food industry professionals, recruited from leading manufacturers and retailers, supplemented by acknowledged industry experts in specialist areas. Our rigorous approach to auditor selection and training has enabled us to develop an international reputation for practical industry experience and in-depth knowledge of all sectors of the food supply chain.

The growing network of International offices with local auditors trained and supervised through the UK enables many assessments to be carried out in country in the local language reducing costs and improving communications.

All CMi assessors meet or exceed the UKAS requirements. Assessors are routinely co-audited by an authorised manager to ensure assessments are consistently carried out in accordance with the requirements of UKAS and our clients.

- ***Using a recognised certification body provides added credibility and enhanced customer recognition***

2.3 CMi Assessment Services

CMi are committed to provide a full range of certification services for the food industry either delivered as separate audits or where ever possible as combined audits. This enables sites to save on both costs and management time to satisfy their various customer or regulatory needs. The range of services we can provide includes:-

BRC Global Standard - Food

CMi is one of the leading providers of certification to the BRC Global Standard - Food and is approved by major UK and European retailers and foodservice companies using the standard.

We are experienced in the assessment of all types of food processing operations and are the acknowledged experts in a number of specific sectors.

- ***We provide detailed CMi guidance notes as an aid to interpretation of the BRC Technical Standard.***
- ***Our inspection reports provide detailed process information and in-depth comments and are a valuable source of management information.***

International Food Standard (IFS)

The IFS standard was developed by the German and French Retail groups (HDE and FCD) to provide a comprehensive assessment standard for suppliers of food products to major retailers in Europe. The standard like the BRC Standard is benchmarked as part of the GFSI and the scope and requirements of the standard are very similar to those of the BRC standard.

CMi were the first UK based certification body to be accepted to undertake assessments against the IFS Standard and the first accredited to EN 45011 by UKAS for this work.

CMi are able to offer assessments against the IFS standard either on its own or as a combined assessment with the BRC Standard. Assessments are carried out by assessors approved by IFS and are usually conducted in the native language of the country where the assessment takes place.

Wholesale and Distribution

The CMi Technical Standard for Food Wholesaling, Storage & Distribution was developed with industry to provide non-processing operations with a more appropriate alternative to the BRC Technical Standard. The scope of the standard includes the procurement and purchase, importation, where relevant, storage and distribution of food and non food products. The standard is intended for both single, stand-alone operations and more complicated multi-site operations with central technical functions. CMi is able to devise scopes of certification on a whole-company basis as well as for individual operations.

- ***Using this standard facilitates the development of a consistent approach to Quality Management in multi-site operations.***

CMi Due Diligence Standard.

The CMi due diligence standard was developed to provide a standard which enabled the food safety standards of smaller manufacturers to be recognised. The standard also forms a stepping stone to help prepare sites for the full BRC Standard. It is based around the practical implementation of food safety systems ensuring legal and due diligence requirements are met, rather than the development of detailed written quality management systems which may not always be applicable for small often family owned businesses.

The standard is particularly appropriate for local suppliers to the catering industry and as a standard to assess smaller ingredient suppliers to food manufacturers.

- ***A practical approach to assessing the standards of smaller suppliers.***

BRC / IoP Packaging Standard

CMi has a proven track record in the food packaging industry. We provide a range inspection services to leading manufacturers, retailers and purchasing groups, including certification to the BRC/IOP packaging standard. Our packaging experience enables us to provide clients with a practical risk-based approach to certification.

- ***Packaging suppliers can have confidence that certification by CMi will be recognised by their food processing and retailer customers.***
- ***By carrying out both the inspection and certification to the BRC/IOP Packaging Standard, we are able to provide an integrated and cost-effective approach to certification.***

Organic Certification – UK10

CMi Certification is a registered organic certification body (UK10) approved by DEFRA. We provide organic certification services to primary producers, food processors and importers.

Where appropriate, CMi can also combine organic assessment with inspections to assess compliance with other internationally recognised standards e.g. BRC Standard, thereby helping ensure that organic suppliers consistently meet high standards of food safety, legality and quality.

- ***CMi policy is to provide a simple but effective Organic Certification service with the emphasis on transparency and value.***

Product Authenticity and Traceability

CMi provides independent verification of product authenticity and traceability in accordance with national legislation and in-house specifications on behalf of major purchasers and processors. We provide an integrated approach to certification, by using specialist technical teams operating throughout the entire chain from farm, through primary and secondary processing and distribution to point of sale.

Services include:

- Beef labelling – accredited certification of beef labelling claims, through all stages of production, in accordance with EU legislation.
- GM – verification of Identity Preserved raw materials and ingredients.
- Organic Integrity.

Bespoke Audits and Supplier Improvement

For clients with more specific requirements, CMi provides a bespoke auditing service to give clients a more targeted approach to food safety, legality and quality. While some services are designed to provide an enhanced food safety and due diligence, others focus on supplier improvement as a means of ensuring product quality and consistency.

- ***Certification to recognised industry standards may provide a base-line assessment of food safety and legality but could be insufficient where there are specific concerns.***

3.0 Service Protocol

3.1 Administration, Enquiries and Requests for Certification

All enquiries and requests for certification should be directed to

CMi Certification Ltd
Long Hanborough, Oxon, OX29 8LH.

Telephone: 01993 885651

Facsimile: 01993 885611

E-Mail: enquiries@cmicertification.com

Contact may also be made through any other CMi Office. The full list of CMi international offices and their contact details are available on the CMi website www.cmi-plc.com

Full details of the certification including field and sub-fields to be covered, scope of certification, timescale and charges, are discussed and agreed with the client.

3.2 Application.

New applicants to the CMi certification scheme for the BRC Standard are required to complete the CMi BRC Scheme application form. This provides CMi with the necessary information on the site to ensure that a suitably qualified assessor is appointed and that sufficient time is allocated for the assessment.

The application form also asks for an undertaking that the applicant will abide by the CMi scheme rules and conditions for certification as required for all EN45011 UKAS Accredited schemes.

3.3 Arranging Assessments Visits

The first assessments are conducted at a mutually convenient date after discussion with the client, taking into account the requirements of the client and their customers. The frequency of subsequent assessments is determined by the certificate grade achieved and will be either 6 or 12 monthly.

Arrangements for assessments will be fully discussed in advance and the assessment allocated to an experienced assessor with relevant industry knowledge and expertise. Confirmation will be sent to the site and/or agent, detailing the assessment date, time and assessment agenda.

Travel arrangements including flights, hotels, car hire as required will normally be organised in consultation with the customer and the assessor to ensure the most efficient and cost effective service.

3.4 Certification Charges and Invoicing

CMi Certification prides itself on being able to offer certification services of the utmost technical integrity and service quality, while at the same time remaining highly competitive. Assessment charges are calculated after consideration of the size, type and location of the plant. A typical assessment takes 1 to 1½ days to complete, with a further half day for preparation of the assessment report.

Travel to and from assessments will be charged at the current mileage rates and will be declared on any quotes. Overnight expenses as required are charged at cost, whether in the UK or overseas. Charges for assessments outside UK may need to take account of travel time to and from the assessment, although our extensive involvement in overseas inspection often allows us to combine several assessments together into a tour. Under these circumstances travel and accommodation charges are allocated to the individual participants on a mutually agreed basis.

All assessment charges are agreed with the client and confirmed in writing. Under normal circumstances, the client is invoiced after completion of the assessment.

3.5 Cancellation of Assessment Visits

For CMi Certification to continue to offer its clients highly competitive certification charges, it is essential, that we utilise our resources efficiently. Assessment visits that are cancelled or postponed at short notice mean that other work cannot be allocated to the assessor concerned, and a days' income is lost. In addition, the complex nature of some assessment tours necessitates several days' work for administration staff, co-ordinating visits and booking travel and accommodation. In the event a client wishes to cancel or postpone an assessment visit, written notification must be sent to CMi Certification at least ten working days prior to the date the assessment visit is due.

In the event that an assessment visit is cancelled or postponed without mutual agreement, CMi Certification reserves the right to charge the client a cancellation fee as follows:

- ◆ Cancellation/postponement within ten working days' of the assessment date – 50 % of the full charge
- ◆ Cancellation/postponement within five working days' of the assessment date – 75 % of the full charge
- ◆ Cancellation/postponement on the day of assessment – 100% of the full charge

3.6 Duration of the assessment.

Assessments against Issue 4 of the BRC Standard are expected to take longer than assessments against previous issues of the standard and the standard requires that an assessment will typically take 1.5 days on site with a further half a day to prepare the report.

It is recognised that whilst the typical assessment will take 1.5 days, certain factors can necessitate an increase or decrease in the duration of the evaluation. The time required will be assessed based on the information provided in the application form and by discussion. The factors which effect the audit duration have been identified as follows:

Factors which may lengthen the duration of the evaluation are:

- High company staff numbers and functions
- more than one location, with separate office, manufacturing or storage sites
- complex manufacturing processes using a number of different technologies
- many product groups of many different types
- large, widely dispersed site
- older sites, not purpose built, with difficult material flow
- labour-intensive processes
- first visit by the evaluator to the company
- time-consuming access procedures to high-risk areas
- evaluation not carried out in the first language of the evaluator
- the number of non-conformances recorded in the previous evaluation
- difficulties experienced during the evaluation requiring further investigation
- ill-prepared company e.g. poorly co-ordinated documentation

Factors which may shorten the duration of the evaluation are:

- simple, single process (e.g. packing)
- high degree of automation
- limited product and process diversity
- low company staff numbers and functions
- modern purpose-built site
- well-structured and established HACCP system
- well-structured and established quality management system
- company well briefed and prepared to provide the evidence required (procedures, records and other documentation)

The factory inspection process will typically take a minimum of 3 hours to complete but may increase or decrease in duration in accordance with the factors above or the circumstances arising during the assessment.

3.7 Scope of assessments.

The scope of the assessment will be defined with the client prior to undertaking the assessment and reconfirmed at the opening meeting. Parts of a site or operation may be excluded from the scope; such exclusions; will be clearly defined in the report and certificate. The standard will however be used in its entirety and no relevant elements of the BRC standard may be omitted.

Assessments against the BRC Standard may be combined with other assessment activities either recognised schemes such as the IFS standard, Organic Certification or bespoke assessments at the client's request.

It should be noted that additional inspection requirements may be outside the scope of CMi Certification's Accredited activities and where this is the case this will be clearly indicated to the client.

3.8 Preparation for the assessment.

Prior to each assessment the processing operation should be reviewed in relation to the requirements of the standard with a view to making any necessary amendments or improvements to the operation and systems. It is the supplier's responsibility to ensure that they are using the most up to date issue of the BRC Standard.

There is no requirement for a pre assessment before the full assessment however some clients who are less familiar with the standard and its interpretation may benefit from this. CMi Certification is able to offer pre assessment audits where required.

It is important that the production programme at the time of the assessment represents products for the intended user (s) of the certification. Where possible the widest range of these products shall be in production for the evaluator to assess. Where the product range is large or diverse the evaluator has the discretion to continue the evaluation until sufficiently satisfied that the intended scope of the certification has been assessed.

3.9 Assessment process

The duration of the assessment will be dependent upon a number of factors as outlined above. CMi Certification will agree the likely duration of the assessment in advance of the assessment however

this will be an estimate as the evaluator may require more time if issues arise during the site visit on the day.

Assessments will usually be conducted in English, however CMi Certification have the facility to offer foreign language assessments through the CMi Certification network of local offices.

Assessments consist of six elements:

- Opening meeting
- Factory inspection – typically 3 hours
- Document review
 - HACCP or hazard and risk management
 - Quality Management Systems.
- Check back of audit trails, verify and further documentation checks
- Final evaluation of findings by the evaluator in preparation for the closing meeting
- Closing meeting

It is expected that at the opening and closing meetings those attending on behalf of the company will be senior managers who have the appropriate authority to ensure that corrective action can be progressed, if non conformances are found.

During the assessment, detailed notes are made of the client's ability to comply with the standard. These will be used as the basis for the assessment report. Should a clause of the standard not be met, the assessor will consider the nature and significance of any non-conformance against the standard and the site representative made aware.

At the closing meeting, the assessor will present his/her findings and discuss any non-conformances that have been identified. The assessor will prepare a copy of the assessment summary and non-conformances, which are left with the company's technical representative on the day or in exceptional circumstances provided within 1 day of the assessment.

The decision to award certification has to be taken following a review of the assessment report and any documentary corrective action provided, independently by CMi Management and can not therefore be given at the assessment.

3.10 Assessment Reports

After each assessment a full written report is prepared in accordance with the required format dictated by the BRC. The report is in four sections and contains an evaluation summary, overview of performance, summary of non-conformances and a detailed evaluation report. The detailed evaluation report section provides comprehensive details of how the plant complies with the standard and objective evidence to support any non-conformities that have been identified.

The official report shall be provided in English, unless specified otherwise by the user, however local language versions can also be provided on request where CMi's local offices are undertaking the assessment.

3.11 Notification of Serious Food Safety/Legality Issues

It is a requirement of many purchasers that the certification body notify them immediately of serious food safety and/or legality issues arising out of a supplier assessment. In this unlikely event, CMi will discuss with the client what action is necessary to fulfil the wishes of the specific customer(s) involved.

Please note that the BRC standard requires that where certification is withdrawn or suspended that the company shall immediately inform its customers and make them fully aware of the circumstances relating to the withdrawal or suspension.

3.12 Corrective Action assessment.

In order for a certificate to be issued it is necessary for all non conformances to be corrected and the appropriate documentary evidence provided to CMi to enable this to be verified **within 28 days** of the assessment.

Guidance will be provided at the assessment on the nature of evidence that will need to be supplied in order to demonstrate compliance.

Corrective actions will be assessed at the end of this period and a decision made on the award of a certificate.

3.13 Distribution of Assessment Reports

After initial preparation of the report, this is usually held for the 28 day corrective action period. The report is then checked and signed off together with any evidence of corrective actions, by a technically competent authorised manager. The report is despatched to the client usually within 42 days of the assessment date.

The person paying for the assessment is regarded as the customer. As such, it is this party that receives the assessment report.

In addition to the above, overseas clients may receive, by prior arrangement, a copy for their agent. Any further additional copies of the report can be provided at a nominal charge.

In all cases, reports are only distributed to third parties provided the owner of the report (usually the supplier) has consented in writing.

CMi will retain a copy of the report and the information on which a certification decision is based for a period of 5 years.

3.14 Certificates

Certificates will be issued to clients who meet the requirements of the standard and in accordance with the requirements of the BRC Certification protocol.

The certificate remains the property of CMi Certification and is issued subject to the client complying with the Rules Governing Certificates a copy of which is provided with the certificate.

3.15 Maintaining Certification.

The issue of the certificate provides an assurance to customers that CMi Certification has assessed the certified site and is satisfied that the requirements of the standard have been met through the assessment and any corrective actions **and** that processes are in place to ensure that the standard is maintained for at least the duration of the certificate.

It is important therefore for the integrity of the standard that in the event that there are substantial changes to the premises or products, these must be notified in writing to CMi Certification.

In the event of the company becoming aware of possible legal proceedings with respect to product safety or legality, or in the event of a product recall; the company is obliged to make CMi aware of the situation. We in turn are obliged to take appropriate steps to assess the situation and any implications on the certification, and to take any appropriate action.

3.16 Expert Witness

Over our trading period of the last twenty years, a central element of our service has been the development and defence, where appropriate, of due diligence systems. Several of our senior technical staff have represented clients in court and, more importantly, have successfully prevented court action.

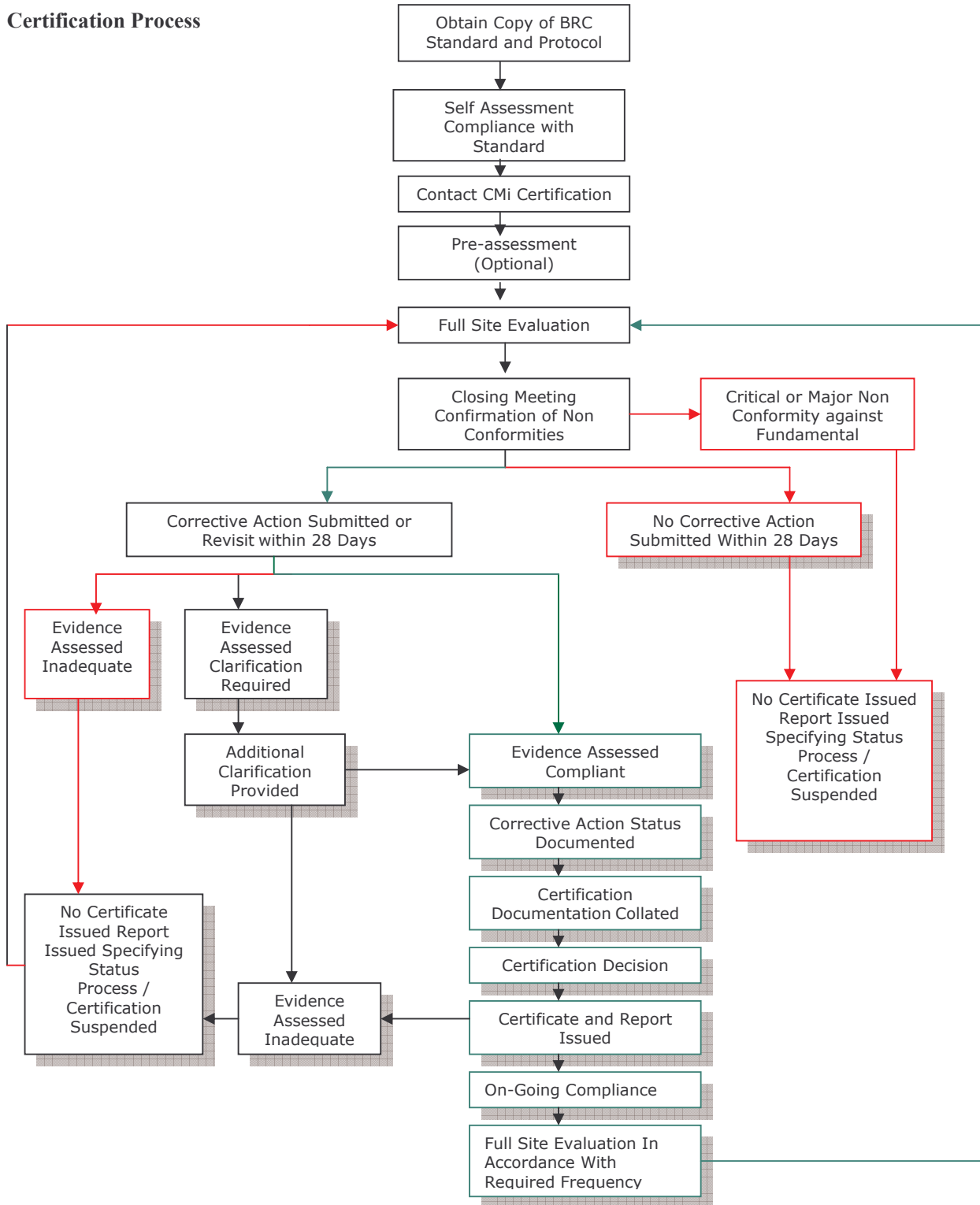
Companies wishing to use evaluations as part of a due diligence defence may call upon the services of CMi Certification to provide expert witness. The charges for this service will be agreed between the company and CMi.

3.18 Complaints and Appeals

CMi Certification operates a documented complaints and appeals procedure as part of the quality system. Full details are available on request.

Complaints and appeals must be made in writing by named person(s) and addressed to the Director, CMi Certification Ltd, Long Hanborough, Oxford, OX29 8LH.

Certification Process



CMI CERTIFICATION

SCHEME RULES FOR BRC GLOBAL STANDARD - FOOD

1. ACCESS TO THE SCHEME

Applications to participate in the Certification Scheme and for registration as an Approved Producer are open to all companies with operations meeting the scope of the standard. Applications must be made using the designated application form stating the products for which certification is sought. A separate application is required for each production establishment.

Applicants are required to give an undertaking to comply with the requirements of the relevant Scheme and with the company's Rules Governing Certification by signing an application form

2. THE CERTIFICATION SCHEME

2.1 Rules Governing Certification

2.1.1 These Rules relate to the Certification Scheme of CMi Certification Ltd for determining conformity with the BRC Global Standard - Food

2.1.2 The Governing Board, through its appointed nominees, is the sole authority by which Certificates of Approval may be granted or withdrawn. The Board acts through the Managing Director for the general administration and development of the Certification Scheme, under these Rules

2.1.3 Applicants who satisfy the Governing Board that they are capable of compliance with the requirements of the Certification Scheme and the regulations and standard of the BRC Global Standard - Food and who give the company such undertakings as may be required shall, subject to complying with these rules as amended from time to time and such undertakings, be entitled to a Certificate of Approval which shall nevertheless remain the property of the Company

2.1.4 Certificates are valid from the date of issue subject to satisfactory performance assessed at a frequency determined by the BRC Global Standard - Food scheme regulations. Certificates remain valid until their expiry date and a new certificate will be issued following successful completion of the re-assessment process. The right to use a certificate is not transferable.

2.1.5 Approved Producers shall:

- (a) at all times comply with these Rules as amended from time to time.
- (b) retain a copy of the most recent Regulations and Scheme Standards for the relevant Certification Scheme
- (c) nominate a management representative and one or more deputies who shall be responsible for all matters in connection with the requirements of the Certificate of Conformity.
- (d) comply with all requirements of the relevant Certification Scheme
- (e) maintain and document a quality system in accordance with the Scheme Standards and make available copies of all or any part of the documented system should they be required by CMi Certification for reference purposes.
- (f) not significantly vary the quality system under which any Certificate is issued during the period of registration unless agreed with CMi Certification and notify CMi Certification of any major changes to methods of production or storage which would effect the operation of the quality system or changes in the ownership, structure or management of the organisation.
- (g) maintain at all times compliance with all relevant legislation pertinent to the scope of activity of which Certification has been granted.
- (h) correct non-compliance's noted during a continuing assessment in accordance with the timescale laid down in the scheme regulations (normally 28 days).
- (i) give access during normal working hours to representatives of CMi Certification to premises in which production or storage, the subject of the Certificate of Conformity, is being carried out for the purpose of examination of products, processes, the production environment, distribution facilities, methods of test, records, details of internal audits and systems to ensure that continued compliance to the scheme standard is being achieved at times other than the scheduled assessment dates., or establishing that the procedures for the termination of approval have been carried out if necessary.
- (j) use any product marks in accordance with the conditions defined herein.
- (k) discontinue any use of any product mark which is unacceptable to CMi Certification and any form of statement with reference to the authority of the Producer to claim compliance with the System which, in the opinion of CMi Certification, might be misleading.
- (l) not deliver or knowingly permit the delivery or sale of downgraded products as complying with the Product Standards defined in the Certification Scheme.
- (m) not conduct operations in a manner which may have an adverse effect on the integrity and reputation of the Certification Scheme or CMi Certification.
- (n) upon withdrawal of the Certificate of Approval (however determined) forthwith discontinue the use of the any product mark and all advertising matter which contains it or any reference thereto. In addition, any other documents in the possession of the producer which bear reference to the Certificate shall, if CMi Certification requires, be so treated to erase it.

2.1.6 Having regard for CMi Certification's costs related to the administration of the System, Approved Producers shall pay:

- the relevant fee for assessments and certification
- the cost of any additional assessment deemed necessary by the representative of the board
- the cost of any additional sampling or testing deemed to be necessary by the representative of the board
- any additional cost incurred by the company due to non compliance with these Rules.

These fees will be reviewed regularly by the CMi Certification Board and nominated Managers.

2.1.7 CMi Certification shall:

- (a) undertake continuing assessments periodically at the production establishments of Approved Producers for the purpose of verifying that the obligations defined by the Certificate of Approval are being observed.
- (b) notify the Approved Producers of any changes in the Scheme Standards for the Scheme and give them such time as, in the opinion of CMi Certification, is reasonable in which to adjust their processes and relevant procedures to meet the revised requirements.

- (c) not disclose any information concerning the producer which is of a confidential nature other than information which is already in the public domain unless otherwise required to do so by law or requested/permitted to do so by the Approved Producer.
- (d) notify the producer of customer complaints relating to products which the Certificate of Approval applies.
- 2.1.8** If a producer is temporarily unable to comply with the requirements of these Rules as amended from time to time, CMi Certification may require the Producer to discontinue the use of the any mark or any claim of compliance with the Scheme with immediate effect until it is satisfied that compliance is again achieved, or pending the results of an appeal.
- 2.1.9** If the producer fails to comply with these Rules as amended from time to time, CMi Certification may, as appropriate:
- withdraw the Certificate of Conformity or reduce its scope or
 - refuse to grant a Certificate of Conformity or extend its scope.
- Such decisions, and the grounds for them, shall be communicated to the producer in writing.
- 2.1.10** CMi Certification may, at its sole discretion withdraw or refuse to grant a Certificate of Approval if the producer's business is likely to be disbanded or unable to pay its debts.
- 2.1.11** These Rules may from time to time be altered by CMi Certification. No such alterations shall affect the right of an Approved producer to use the appropriate Certification Mark or claim compliance with the System, unless it shall have been given notice in writing of such alterations by CMi Certification who will notify the Producer of the date by which it must comply with the altered Regulations, which shall normally be less than six months from the date of notification of the alteration.
- 2.1.12** A register of Approved Producers and Products shall be kept by CMi Certification and shall be open to inspection by the public at its registered office. The list of Approved Producers and Products shall be published from time to time.
- 2.1.13** Any notice under these Rules shall be in writing and signed by or on behalf of the party giving it and may be served by leaving it or sending it by pre-paid recorded delivery or registered post at its address for the time being. Any notice so served by post shall (unless the contrary is proved) be deemed to have been served forty eight hours from the time of posting; and in such service it shall be sufficient to prove that the notice was properly addressed and was posted in accordance with this clause.
- 2.1.2 Certificate of Conformity**
A Certificate of Conformity granted to an Approved Producer is valid from the date of issue until the expiry date with its maintenance being subject to satisfactory performance assessed at a frequency determined by the BRC Global standard –food scheme requirements.
- 2.1.3 Continuing Assessments**
It is a condition of granting a Certificate of Conformity that continuing assessments shall be carried out to ensure that the criteria defined in the Scheme Standards are being met and maintained.
Where non compliances to the scheme standard are identified at an assessment documentary corrective action or a further assessment will be required in accordance with the scheme regulations to maintain the certification status.
Change of status may, depending on scheme requirements, be a change of category reflecting change in assessment frequency or notification of withdrawal of approval.
If approval is withdrawn the reason will be clearly specified in writing to the producer inviting the submission of a proposed corrective action plan before re-assessment for approval could be considered.
Should the producer wish to appeal against the withdrawal of a Certificate of Approval the appeal will be heard in the manner described in the Rules Governing Certification (section 2.1.8/9).
- 3 APPEALS**
- 3.1** In the event that an Approved producer or Applicant disagrees with any decision of CMi Certification they are invited to respond to the decision in writing giving reasons and requesting further consideration by the Board. Should the outcome of this further review by the Board still be unacceptable to the Approved producer or Applicant they have recourse to the independent appeals process defined in paragraph 2.1.12.
- 3.2** Any appeal against a decision of the Board made under these rules requires the Approved Producer or Applicant to submit to the Managing Director within 14 days of being officially informed of the Boards decision notice of appeal giving grounds for doing so.
- 3.3** The Managing Director will refer the matter to the Chairman of the Board who shall appoint a Panel to hear the appeal. The Panel shall comprise a Chairman and two members none of whom shall have any commercial interest in the subject of the appeal. A meeting of the Panel shall be held within 60 days of the receipt of the notice of appeal. The appellant shall be given at least 14 clear days' notice of the constitution of the Appeal Panel, the time and the place of the meeting. The appellant has the right to state objections to the constitution of the Appeal Panel. Such objections shall be stated in writing and shall be lodged with the Managing Director at least 7 clear days before the scheduled date for the meeting of the Panel. The appellant's objections to the constitution of the Appeal Panel will be considered by the Board at its next scheduled meeting, or sooner if this would lead to a period of longer than 60 days between lodging the appeal and the meeting of the Panel, when the Board will decide whether or not to accept them and amend the constitution of the Panel accordingly. The appellant will be informed in writing of the Board's decision and of a new date for the hearing of the appeal. The decision of the Board shall stand pending any meeting of the Appeal Panel at which representatives of CMi Certification and the appellant shall be entitled to be heard in confidence. The decision of the majority of the Appeal Panel as declared by its Chairman shall be final.
- 4. PRODUCT CERTIFICATION MARK**
- Approved producers holding a valid Certificate of Conformity may use the Certification Mark appropriate to the scheme and/or issue a Statement of Conformity.
 - The Mark may be used only in the form approved by the Board of CMi Certification and only on documents which are associated to the subject of the Certificate of Conformity issued to the producer concerned. The Mark must be used only in accordance with the specific rules issued as a condition of use.
- 5. COMPLAINTS**
- 5.1 Complaints Related to Product**
The responsibility for complying with the requirements of the Certification Scheme as defined in the Scheme Regulations and in the Standards for the Scheme and for complying with Statutory requirements rests absolutely with the participant and, therefore, any complaint about a product or any complaint arising from possible infringements of the law shall be dealt with by the participant concerned. Complaints of this nature coming directly to CMi Certification will be referred to the participant concerned for appropriate corrective action to be taken. Participants are required to

maintain a record of all complaints and any subsequent action taken and make this available to assessors during surveillance visits.

5.2 Complaints Related to the Certification Scheme

Written complaints concerning the Certification Scheme will be dealt with by the Quality Director of CMi Certification who will in accordance with CMi Certification's Complaint Procedure.

- acknowledge the complaint
- investigate the complaint and respond to the complainant providing information as to the findings of the investigation, whether the complaint is considered to be justified and where applicable an indication of improvements to be made to prevent recurrence.
- prepare a summary report for the Board of CMi Certification to consider at its next meeting.

Having considered the report, the Board of CMi Certification may order corrective action to be taken. The decision of the Board will be recorded in the minutes of the meeting and any decision requiring corrective action to be taken will be implemented by the Managing Director.

6 DEFINITIONS

Applicant - A business or person who has applied for, but has not yet been granted a Certificate of Conformity

Approved Producer - A business or person holding a valid Certificate of Approval for the production and/or processing of products specified on the Certificate of Approval.

Certificate of Conformity - A Certificate issued under a specific serial number by CMi Certification to Approved Producers for a designated location or site

Certification Scheme - The CMi Certification Scheme which is designed to certify conformity in accordance with the BRC Global Standard – Food using a Quality system complying to the requirements of EN45011.

Mark of Conformity/ Q mark - A mark owned by CMi Certification Ltd and applied by an Approved Producer to letterheads, promotional materials or other authorised paperwork indicating that the producer is an approved member of the CMi Certification Scheme for the BRC Global Standard - Food

Statement of Conformity - A document issued by an Approved Producer to a customer confirming the products supplied have been produced in accordance with and meet the certification scheme standards. This document may also carry the Mark of Conformity.

Scheme Regulations - The protocol section of the BRC Global Standard – Food; the document which contains the details of how the certification standard shall be operated by accredited certification bodies.

Production Establishment - A place where product is produced prepared, processed, packed and/or stored prior to distribution.

Scheme Standards - The BRC Global Standard – Food; the document which defines the product quality standards, the operational procedures and practices, the standards for the production environment and for transporting/distributing the product which participants in the Certification Scheme must meet and maintain