



UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF
AGRICULTURE

**Agricultural Marketing Service
Specialty Crops Program**

**Good Agricultural Practice & Good Handling Practices
Audit Program (GAP&GHP)
Identity Preservation Program (IP)
Partners in Quality Audit Program (PIQ)
& Other Audit Programs**

AGREEMENT FOR PARTICIPATION IN AUDIT VERIFICATION PROGRAMS

Company Information

I _____ a duly authorized representative of
(Insert Name)

(Name of Company)

(Street Address, City, State, and Zip Code)

hereinafter referred to as the applicant, do hereby agree to be audited under the a voluntary USDA, AMS, Specialty Crops Inspection Division audit program. The audit shall include verification of the company's farm(s), packing facilities, storage facilities, wholesale distribution centers or other locations as applicable to the audit scope(s).

1. The applicant agrees that with respect to:

- a. Laws, Regulation, Statutes** - To conform with all applicable Federal, State, and local government laws, regulations, or statutes, including, but not limited to: Regulations Governing Inspection and Certification of Fruits and Vegetables and Related Products (7 CFR, Part 52), any other pertinent regulations, and any such instructions covering inspection and certification of the products and verification of the processes as may be issued by AMS.
- b. Audit Request** - To contact and schedule the audit with the appropriate federal or federal-state inspection office (using the SC-237A form). The request for the initial audit will be made no later than two (2) weeks prior to the end of the growing/harvesting/packing season.
- c. Records** - To maintain all records required by the specific audit program including, but not limited to, quality manual, food safety manual, water test results, employee training records, manure use records, laboratory testing results and other records as required by the quality manual, food safety manual or specific audit program requirements. The applicant shall make these records available to USDA federal and/or federal-state auditors.
- d. Access to Facilities** - To grant permission for AMS authorized personnel to enter any and all farms and/or facilities covered by the specific audit program for the purposes of conducting the audit. This includes the initial audit and any unannounced audits as may be required by the program.
- e. Payment** - To pay by credit card, check, draft, or money order drawn to the order of the appropriate federal or federal-state agency for the services covered herein on or before the due date specified on the billing statement. Charges for GAP&GHP audits include, but are not limited to, the audit fee as listed in the fee schedule or Federal Register and travel expenses for the initial audit and any unannounced audits as may be required by the program.

2. AMS agrees that with respect to:

- a. Perform Audit** – To provide objective third-party verification of the applicant's specific audit program using internationally recognized audit principles.
- b. Opening & Exit Interviews** - To discuss the audit prior to and report the results and observations with the applicant after each audit and provide a timeframe in which a copy of the completed audit report or checklist will be provided.
- c. Reports** - To issue to the applicant reports of all audits and evaluations of the applicant's specific audit program and provide written notification of any deficiencies found, if any.
- d. Confidentiality** - To consider and treat any trade secrets or confidential information as proprietary and confidential. To consider any records and related information provided to AMS as information that is voluntarily submitted to AMS because of their participation in the specific audit program.
- e. Issuance of Certificate, Posting and Sharing Audit Results** - To issue a certificate to the applicant and to post audit results to the USDA website, (with the exception of the Preventative Food Defense Procedures scope), only when the applicant receives at least the minimum passing score for each scope being audited. To provide the specific applicant checklist and results of individual questions to other parties only at the written request of the applicant. NOTE: Reports containing a compilation of generic audit information may be shared with the Food and Drug Administration. Any personal information linking the audit results to the auditee shall be redacted prior to issuance.

3. It is mutually agreed that with respect to:

- a. Length of Service** - That the audit results for GAP&GHP audits are valid for one year from the date of the initial audit, provided that at least the minimum score is achieved on both the initial audit and any unannounced audits that may be required by the program. For all other audit programs, the length of service is outlined in the specific audit program policy guide. This agreement shall remain in effect for the length of time the auditee remains a participant in the specific audit program.
- b. Maintaining Certification** - That a company's information will only remain on the USDA website if any and all unannounced audits show satisfactory adherence to the program. If the minimum passing score is not achieved, the company's information will be removed from the website until a follow-up audit is conducted by AMS verifying that effective corrective actions have been taken and the company attains the minimum score on all appropriate scopes of the audit.

Approved By:

Should AMS personnel be at a facility for other purposes and notice issues that would jeopardize the company's standing on the specific audit program, AMS has the obligation to bring this to the attention of the company representative and, depending on the severity, withdraw certification.

Name of Applicant (Print): _____

Title: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

USDA Agricultural Marketing Service, Fruit & Vegetable Programs/ Federal or Federal-State Inspection Program Supervisor

Name of Representative (Print): _____

Title: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, an agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number. The valid OMB control number for this information collection is 0581-0125. The time required to complete this information collection is estimated average 8.5 hours per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information.

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity (including gender expression), sexual orientation, disability, age, marital status, family/parental status, income derived from a public assistance program, political beliefs, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity, in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA (not all bases apply to all programs). Remedies and complaint filing deadlines vary by program or incident.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.) should contact the responsible Agency or USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program discrimination complaint, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, AD-3027, found online at http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html and at any USDA office or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by:

- 1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights 1400 Independence Avenue, SW Washington, D.C. 20250-9410;
- 2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or
- 3) email: program.intake@usda.gov.

USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer, and lender.