



***Perry Johnson Registrars Food Safety, Inc.***

# LEAF Marque Certification Procedure

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PJRFSI offers certification services to companies seeking LEAF Marque certification. This procedure details from start to finish the life cycle of the LEAF Marque certification process.

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## 1. References

- 1.1. ISO/IEC 17065: Conformity Assessment – Requirements for Bodies Certifying Products, Processes and Services (latest revision)
- 1.2. LEAF Marque Manual (latest edition)
- 1.3. LEAF Marque Checklist(s)
- 1.4. FS-1gap.it – Food Safety Certification Questionnaire/Client Application
- 1.5. F-207 – PJRFSI Food Safety Quote Approval and Audit Duration Justification Checklist
- 1.6. FS-3leaf – LEAF Marque Certification Agreement
- 1.7. FS-3tc – Terms and Conditions
- 1.8. PFCleaf-AP – LEAF Marque Audit Package Component Identification Key
- 1.9. F-71fs65 – Certification Personnel Statement of Availability Form
- 1.10. F-163fsi – Audit Scheduling Acknowledgement Form
- 1.11. F-27fsi – Auditor Assignment Form
- 1.12. WB-LEAF Marque – Auditor Workbook
- 1.13. F-184fs65-A – Audit Plan Template
- 1.14. F-18fsi – Customer Satisfaction Survey
- 1.15. F-38fsi – Auditor Evaluation (Client Feedback Form)
- 1.16. F-67fs65 - Audit Package Review Form – Food Safety Programs
- 1.17. F-67fs65-A, Audit Report Review Form - Food Safety Programs
- 1.18. F-211 – Food Safety Programs Corrective Action Extension Request Form
- 1.19. F-144 Transfer of Certification Body Checklist
- 1.20. SOP-10 – Dispute/Appeal Procedure
- 1.21. PJView – Perry Johnson Registrars Food Safety, Inc. client database and project management system
- 1.22. FS-213 – LEAF Marque Control Point Checklist

## 2. Definitions

- 2.1. Operation/Operation Group – A person (individual) or business (individual or Operation group) who is legally responsible for the production of the products relevant to the scope, and who has the legal responsibility for the products sold by that farming business. Until a certification agreement for certification services is signed with PJRFSI, the Operation is initially referred to as the Applicant.
- 2.2. Scope of Certification – a description of the certification which is sought by the Operation/Operation Group and will be detailed in the Certificate. The product scope is linked to the location where the product is produced. Products produced in a non-registered location cannot be certified, and likewise products that are not registered but are grown on a registered location cannot be certified.
- 2.3. Individual Certification – The individual Operation applying for certification and will be certificate holder once certified.
- 2.4. Group Certification – a Operation Group applies for group certification and the group, as a legal entity, will be the certificate holder once certified
- 2.5. Technical Reviewer – individuals who are competent to review audit results and render certification recommendations.
- 2.6. Designee – a PJRFSI employee who is designated and trained to complete specific procedural functions on behalf of another PJRFSI position. Throughout this SOP-1leaf procedure, functions which may be completed by a designee will include the following references: “[position] or designee...” or “[position]/designee...”
- 2.7. LEAF Marque Number – Unique LEAF Marque number which is a unique identifier for all LEAF Marque activities.
- 2.8. MyLeaf – the online database program

## 3. Request for Certification

- 3.1. The Applicant initiates the certification process via a written or verbal request for information to PJRFSI.
- 3.2. In response, a PJRFSI Project/Sales Manager or the Food Safety Sales Coordinator or designee provides the Applicant with the FS-1gap – Food Safety Certification Questionnaire/Client Application.
- 3.3. Duly Authorized representatives of the Applicant must complete and sign the Questionnaire/Application to provide PJRFSI with sufficient information required for the quotation/certification process.
- 3.4. Upon receipt of the signed application, PJRFSI's Food Safety Sales Coordinator or designee trained in LEAF Marque quoting procedures conducts and maintains records of an application review to ensure that certification requirements are clearly defined, documented, and understood; any differences in understanding between PJRFSI and the Applicant are resolved; and PJRFSI has the resources and competencies to perform the certification services sought by the applicant, and if not, PJRFSI's Food Safety Sales Coordinator or designee will reject the application until such time as the required resources and competencies are acquired.
- 3.5. The record of this review is the Food Safety Sales Coordinator or designee's signature at the bottom of the FS-1gap Client Application and a completed F-207 – Food Safety Quote Approval and Audit Duration Justification Checklist.
- 3.6. Based on the information furnished by the Applicant and input from the application review the Food Safety Sales Coordinator or designee completes a quotation in the form of a certification agreement which identifies the scope of certification and details the costs of the certification audit and subsequent recertification audits.
- 3.7. Justification for quoted audit days is recorded on the F-207 Food Safety Quote Approval and Audit Duration Justification Checklist and must be approved by the Food Safety Sales Coordinator or designee. Transfers are handled in accordance with @Section 11 below.
- 3.8. PJRFSI may conduct LEAF Marque audits combined with other certification system audits or audit elements, as long as all program rules are met and the integrity of any one component of the combined audit is not compromised.
- 3.9. A pre-assessment is optional but encouraged for Operations, particularly those seeking initial certification to the applicable standard.
- 3.10. The Project/Sales Manager provides the Applicant with a duly authorized copy of the LEAF Marque Certification Agreement (FS-3leaf), PJRFSI's Terms and Conditions (FS-3tc) and the LEAF Marque Certification and Sublicense Agreement. The Applicant then completes, signs, and returns a copy of the Certification Agreement.
- 3.11. Signatures by both parties indicate mutual agreement of the Certification Agreement including the scope of certification and any exclusions, the certification costs, and the associated Terms and Conditions. After the Agreement is signed, amendments, agreed on by both parties, may be issued as necessary.
- 3.12. Receipt of the signed Certification Agreement and the first installment payment by the Applicant to PJRFSI is taken as an instruction to proceed in accordance with the LEAF Marque Certification Agreement and the Terms and Conditions. The Food Safety Program Coordinator or designee sends the Applicant, hereafter referred to as the Operation. The applicable LEAF Marque standard checklists; and as appropriate, any other guidance documents describing the audits or the certification process.
- 3.13. By registering, the applicant commits to comply with the following:
  - a. Compliance with the certification requirements at all times
  - b. Payment of the applicable fees established by LEAF Marque and by PJRFSI
  - c. Communication of data updates to PJRFSI
- 3.14. Prior to the audit the organization must register complete their LEAF Sustainable Farming Review (LSFR). The LSFR is a self assessment completed online at [www.myleaf.uk](http://www.myleaf.uk).
- 3.15. The Food Safety Program Coordinator or designee is responsible for monitoring and verifying the progress of the Operation's certification program including but not limited to audit stage/type, audit/certification status, and timeline/due date performance for both Operation and Certification Body (PJRFSI) activities. To support these

monitoring and verification activities, the Food Safety Program Coordinator or designee utilizes: the PFCleaf LEAF Marque Process Flow Chart and PJRFSI's database, PJView.

- 3.16. If the requirements for certification change at any time and need retroactive implementation, PJRFSI's Food Safety Program Coordinator or designee will ensure that the Operation is notified as soon as possible by the most appropriate means and that the new requirements.

#### 4. Scheduling Audits

- 4.1. Once the signed Certification Agreement (FS-3leaf) is received, The Food Safety Program Assistant/Scheduler or designee assigns a LEAF Marque Auditor that:
  - a. The Auditor is qualified to audit to the LEAF Marque standard
  - b. The Auditor has had no prior relationship with the Operation which would present a conflict of interest. The Auditor will confirm this by signing a F-71fs65 Certification Personnel Statement of Availability before completing the audit.
- 4.2. The Audit Program Coordinator (Scheduler) will contact the Operation's Management Representative to confirm tentative dates for the auditing activities. The Scheduler coordinates the desired dates with the availability of the assigned Auditor. Often this process requires the Scheduler to contact the Operation and the Auditor multiple times before mutually agreed upon dates can be scheduled for the auditing activities.
- 4.3. Audits can occur either at the same time as the LEAF Marque approved baseline certification system(s) audit (such as GLOBALG.A.P), or as a stand-alone audit.
- 4.4. The Scheduler sends the Scheduled Audit Form to the Auditor when the dates are confirmed and entered into PJview.
- 4.5. The Scheduler then sends the Operation an Audit Scheduling Acknowledgement form (F-163fsi) or equivalent document for the Operation to sign and return by fax which indicates:
  - a. Operation's acceptance of the proposed audit dates and time;
  - b. Operation's acceptance of the proposed audit team whose background information is available upon request. The Operation has the right to object in writing to the appointment of any particular Auditor or technical expert providing the objection is valid, i.e. employee of a competitor, personal differences, etc.
  - c. Operation's confirmation that all processes/procedures/activities will be ready by the proposed audit date.
- 4.6. The Scheduler then creates an Auditor Assignment Form (F-27fsi) and forwards it to the Auditor (s) after approval by relevant Customer Service Personnel.

#### 5. The Assessment Process

- 5.1. In order to achieve certification, a registered party must perform Prior to the audit the organization must register complete their LEAF Sustainable Farming Review (LSFR). The LSFR is a self assessment completed online at [www.myleaf.uk](http://www.myleaf.uk).
- 5.2. The audit will take place by arrangement between PJRFSI and the Operation, at a time that enables an effective and representative audit. The business must have prepared all relevant documentation and records prior to an audit.
- 5.3. The Auditor is responsible for creating a Audit Plan using the F-184fs65-A Audit Plan Template and providing this plan to the Operation in advance of the audit.
- 5.4. An opening meeting is held using the Opening Meeting Agenda found in the Auditor Workbook (WBfs65).
- 5.5. Control Points consists of two types: Essential (E) and Recommendations (R).
  - a. Essential: full compliance of all applicable is compulsory
  - b. Recommendations: preferable but not mandatory

- 5.6. For multiple day audits, the Auditor holds a daily wrap-up meeting with the management to discuss a summary of the findings of that day. On the last day of the Audit, the Auditor holds a closing meeting using the Closing Meeting Agenda. At a minimum, the Auditor leaves a copy of nonconformities with the Operation.
- 5.7. The scheduler or appropriate designee seeks feedback from the Operation by sending them the F-18fsi Customer Satisfaction Survey and F-38fsi Auditor Evaluation (Client Feedback Forms) within approximately two weeks from the last day of the onsite facility audit.
- 5.8. The Auditor and/or other PJRFSI personnel are allowed to explain findings and/or clarify the requirements but shall not give prescriptive advice or consultancy as part of the audit or the certification process. This does not preclude normal exchange of information with the Operation.

## 6. Group Certification

- 6.1. The LEAF Producer Group must hold a certificate for GLOBALG.A.P. Option 2 prior to being inspected to LEAF Marque. For joint inspections, a LEAF Marque certificate cannot be awarded until the GLOBALG.A.P. certificate is awarded.
- 6.2. GLOBALG.A.P. Option 1 certified producers are not eligible to be certified as a LEAF Producer Group. There must only be one Quality Management System (QMS) that delivers GLOBALG.A.P. certification and LEAF Marque certification within the Producer Group.
- 6.3. The LEAF Producer Group may be a sub-set of a larger GLOBALG.A.P. Option 2 group.
- 6.4. PJRFSI audit is conducted annually to the QMS and Producer Member Group. Selection is made by taking a random sample that as a minimum is the square root of the total number in the LEAF Producer Group. The sample should take into account factors such as crops grown and/or animals reared, location, size of production site, volume supplied, internal inspector(s), previous audits, travel time and external influences.
- 6.5. If the producers in the LEAF Producer Group are a subset of a larger group the calculation is based on the number in the LEAF Producer Group (for example, if the GLOBALG.A.P. group is 100, PJRFSI completes 10 producer inspections, if the LEAF Producer Group is 36 of the 100 then the PJRFSI will complete 6 LEAF Marque inspections).

## 7. Audit Reporting and the Certification Decision

- 7.1. The Auditor documents the results of the audit on the appropriate checklist.
- 7.2. The Auditor will provide comments for all control points. The audit report must be uploaded on myLEAF within 7 working days, regardless of certification decision. All non-conformances (NC) and Not-Applicable (N/A) must be recorded.
- 7.3. If there non-conformance(s) are detected during the audit, the Auditor will record them on the LEAF Marque Control Point Checklist Report FS-213 and leave a copy with the Operation.
- 7.4. For an initial inspection outstanding non-conformances shall be closed within three (3) months, a complete audit must be performed before a certificate can be issued.
- 7.5. For subsequent inspections outstanding non-conformances shall be closed within 28 calendar days from the last day of the audit.
- 7.6. When all corrective action requests have been closed, the Auditor submits the applicable LEAF Marque checklist and Completed LEAF Marque Control Point Checklist FS-213 to PJRFSI's Audit Support Assistant (ASA) or designee to forward to a Technical Reviewer for technical and grammatical review.
- 7.7. PJRFSI's Technical Reviewers are required to sign the F-71fs65 (Certification Personnel Statement of Availability) prior to beginning a review of an audit report or package in order to confirm that they are impartial and free from any conflict of interest. Note: the Auditor who carried out the evaluation may not serve as the Technical Reviewer.
- 7.8. In cases where the Technical Reviewer rejects the audit package, s/he or the Food Safety Program

Coordinator or designee is responsible for contacting the Auditor or Operation for resolution. As appropriate, the Technical Reviewer or other competent designee is responsible for any Auditor re-training.

- 7.9. If Certification is granted, PJRFSI's Food Safety Program Assistant or designee creates the electronic Certificate in the latest LEAF Marque format and executes certification in the LEAF Marque Directory. The Certificate is valid for twelve (12) months from the date the certification decision. Delivery of the Certificate and other documents may be delayed until the Operation has paid all outstanding invoices.
- 7.10. LEAF Marque certificates will list a business' certified products. LEAF Marque certification is a whole farm approach, and all of a business' products must be included within an audit and listed on the certificate. In exceptional circumstance where the exemption criteria stated in the LEAF Marque Standard is met, a business' product may not be listed on the certificate. However, the product cannot be marketed as LEAF Marque certified and must comply with the LEAF Marque Standard and LEAF Product List.
- 7.11. When certification is granted, PJRFSI's Food Safety Program Coordinator or designee also provides the Operation with:
  - a. At least one paper copy of the Certificate (provided by the Certificate Dept.);
  - b. A statement detailing the duration of the Certification (certificate expiry date and SOP-01leaf);
  - c. The grounds upon which Certification may be suspended or withdrawn and the requirements for undertaking Surveillance and Recertification Audits and their frequency (SOP-01leaf) ;
  - d. Appropriate use of the Certificate and Certification Marks (SOP-03); and

## **8. Maintaining Certification: Surveillance and Recertification Audits**

- 8.1. In order to maintain Certification, a Operation is required to:
  - a. attain the minimum compliance audit rating or greater; and
  - b. ensure all non-conformities are corrected within specified timeframes.
- 8.2. The registration of the Operation and the proposed products for the relevant scopes must be reconfirmed with PJRFSI annually before the expiry date. For the process of certification to be continued without interruption, the Auditor must complete the full checklist and verification processes annually.
- 8.3. The subsequent the audit can take place 4 months prior to or after the certificate 'valid to' date. The certification cycle would remain the same regardless of the audit date. If the Operation wishes to align their LEAF Marque audit with a LEAF Marque approved baseline certification system audit, the LEAF Marque audit can take place at any point prior to the 'valid to' date (see also 3.1). The Operation can also have different certification cycles for different certification systems.
- 8.4. When a Operation has undergone a change in location or in their operations including an expanded scope of certification (including products and processes), PJRFSI determines whether an audit is required prior to the Operation's due date in order to maintain certification.
- 8.5. If the Operation recertification audit is due but the site is inaccessible due to COVID-19 restrictions, PJRFSI conducts a risk assessment to determine the risk to food safety and the Operation LEAF Marque certification by extending the certificate. The Scheduler sends the Operation the FS-228gap to fill out and send back. A two hour risk assessment is then scheduled with an approved LEAF Marque auditor.
- 8.6. The auditor documents the information from the risk assessment information and conversation with the site on the FS-229. A risk level (e.g. low/ high) is assigned for determining certificate extension. Examples of low and high-risk levels:
  - Low. PJRFSI approves a (6) month extension to the current certificate
  - High. PJRFSI will not extend the certificate. Current certificate will expire if recertification audit cannot take place.
  - Other. More information is requested form the Operation.
- 8.7. PJRFSI will reissue the certificate with the extended expiration date and send an electronic copy of the certificate to the client. The recertification audit can be conduct anytime during the extension period. This is just a temporary extension and the re-audit window does not change for future audits.

## 9. Conditions for Suspending or Withdrawing Certificates

- 9.1. PJRFSI is responsible for initiating the suspension and withdrawal of the LEAF Marque Certificate.
- 9.2. PJRFSI has the right to immediately suspend or withdraw a LEAF Marque certificate if it receives information – from audits, surveillance, or any reliable sources – that indicates any of the following:
- The business is not maintaining the requirements of the LEAF Marque Standard
  - The business' baseline system certification is suspended or withdrawn
  - Any regional or national laws have been broken
  - Requirements and legislation requiring food safety have not been achieved
  - False or misleading statements were made on the application and/or renewal documentation, during an audit or any other communication. This may lead to exclusion from future membership.
- 9.3. During the period of suspension, the Operation will be prohibited from using the LEAF Marque logo/trademark, license/certificate or any other type of document that is in any way linked to LEAF Marque in relation to the suspended product.
- 9.4. PJRFSI has the right to refuse, withdraw or amend the certification status of a member when it considers that it is necessary to do so to prevent the LEAF Marque System from being brought into disrepute.

## 10. Operation Requirement to Notify PJRFSI of Special Situations

- 10.1. The Operation is required to notify PJRFSI in writing and in a timely manner about any significant change(s), *actual or intended*, which include but are not limited to:
- changes in legal or commercial status including changes in name;
  - changes in ownership;
  - changes in key managerial, decision-making or technical staff;
  - changes in the number of employees;
  - changes in location and/or site address for the Operation's operations;
  - damage to the site, e.g., damage by fire or natural disaster such as a flood;
  - changes to the physical building(s) and/or processing operations and equipment;
  - changes to the scope of certification (including expansion or reduction) in terms of products, processes, and/or facilities;
  - changes in the Operation's LEAF Marque System or factors influencing the Operation's LEAF Marque System;
- 10.2. When a certified Operation relocates its business premises, the Operation's Certificate is no longer valid until a successful Recertification Audit of the new premises as conducted.
- 10.3. PJRFSI reserves the right to conduct special audits during the course of the certification period, and as needed in response to changes/incidents as described in @9.1. Where such changes may affect the conformity of the product(s) and/or the LEAF Marque certification, PJRFSI's Food Safety Program Accreditation Manager or designee as appropriate determines whether the announced changes require further investigation and schedules a special audit as necessary. The Auditor documents all nonconformities on the FS-213 (LEAF Marque Control Point Checklist for Special Audits) and supplies this summary worksheet to the Operation. The Operation, in turn, documents all corrective actions taken in the Operation sections of the FS-213 and submits it along with corrective action evidence to the Auditor for approval. Following approval of all corrective actions, the Auditor submits the worksheet and corrective action evidence to the Audit Support Assistant or appropriate designee so that the special audit package may undergo technical review for final approval of corrective actions and a recommendation to maintain the Operation's certified status and amend their certification details as necessary.
- 10.4. The Operation must not promote products, processes, and/or facilities/sites which have not been covered in the scope of certification as audited and approved by PJRFSI. Unauthorized promotion will result in the withdrawal of the Certificate.
- 10.5. Where Operation fails to notify PJRFSI of any of the above changes, PJRFSI may accordingly suspend or withdraw, as deemed appropriate, the Certificate and reserves the right to retroactively invalidate the Certificate effective as of the date the change occurrence.



## **11. Promotions of LEAF Marque Certification by Operation**

When providing copies of any certification documents (certificates and audit reports) to interested parties, Operations shall reproduce those documents in their entirety or otherwise seek permission in writing from PJRFSI. Operations shall comply with the latest LEAF Marque Logo Rules of Use issued and any additional requirements issued by PJRFSI regarding use of certification marks and promotion of certification. The proprietary names and logos of LEAF Marque, any applicable accreditation bodies, and PJRFSI shall not be used by the Operation in any manner which could be misconstrued or defamatory to the respective parties and/or parties' brands. Any misuse of these proprietary names or logos by a certified Operation or a Operation seeking certification shall be reported to the interested parties and responded to with appropriate actions by PJRFSI.

## **12. Conditions for Change of Certification Body (Transfers)**

- 12.1. When an Operation wants to change to PJRFSI, PJRFSI must as a first step for all applicants carry out a search in the LEAF Marque Database to verify the status before any further actions are taken.
- 12.2. Operations can change CBs at any time but should inform PJRFSI of any previous certification and membership information. A review of this information must be completed before the certificate status can be confirmed and transferred. PJRFSI has the right to reject the transfer application if there are outstanding non-conformances still to be rectified or any other certification or membership conditions which have been imposed which prevent the application from being accepted. Non-conformances must be resolved, and any corresponding conditions must be accepted by both the previous and new CB before a transfer can take place.
- 12.3. The existing LEAF Marque Membership Number of the transferred Operation will remain, and double registration is not permitted.
- 12.4. Where a Certified Operation elects to transfer its Certificate to PJRFSI, PJRFSI's Food Safety Program Coordinator or designee as appropriate undertakes a pre-transfer review of the Operation's certification status and fills out the F-144 Transfer of Certification Body Checklist.

## **13. Disputes and Appeals**

- 13.1. Disputes and appeals are handled in accordance with SOP-10, PJRFSI's Dispute/Appeal Procedure which is available upon request.

## **14. Confidentiality**

- 14.1. PJRFSI, including all Auditors, administrative staff, technical reviewer, Impartiality Committee, and any other employee or contractor, ensures that all records, data, and information received during the execution of an LEAF Marque audit remain confidential and the property of the Operation. Only with the Operation's written authorization will PJRFSI release audit data to any entity other than LEAF Marque except when mandated by law, statute, or the regulations of accreditation bodies. In the event that disclosure of such information is required by law or statute, PJRFSI will disclose the information as required and inform the Certified Operation in writing of such disclosure in a timely fashion.