



*Perry Johnson Registrars Food Safety, Inc.*

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# Appeal Procedure

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Any effective system must have a means for allowing a party who feels unjustly treated to present their case for redress to an impartial panel. PJRFSI relies upon its Food Safety Program Accreditation Manager or President, as appropriate, to appoint a committee to hear appeal requests. This procedure defines how an interested party can present an argument for reversal of a decision with which they disagree. This procedure is available upon request or accessible on the client access page at [www.pjrfsi.com](http://www.pjrfsi.com).

# APPEAL PROCEDURE

## 1. General

- 1.1. Purpose: To set forth a process whereby organizations can receive a fair and equitable handling of appeals a process by which organizations can appeal decisions made by PJRFSI.
- 1.2. Scope: All organizations applying for or holding certified status with PJRFSI.

## 2. Related Procedures, Definitions, Exhibits

- 2.1. ISO/IEC 17065: Conformity Assessment – Requirements for Bodies Certifying Products, Processes and Services (latest revision)
- 2.2. SQFI Certification Body License Agreement (latest revision)
- 2.3. Criteria for SQF Certification Bodies (latest edition)
- 2.4. BRCGS Certification Body Framework Agreement (latest revision)
- 2.5. BRCGS 004: Requirements for Certification Bodies Offering Certification Against the Criteria of the BRCGS Global Standards (latest issue)
- 2.6. GLOBALG.A.P. General Regulations (latest version)
- 2.7. GLOBALG.A.P. Certification and Sublicense Agreement (latest version)
- 2.8. GLOBALG.A.P. Integrated Farm Assurance (IFA) (latest version)
- 2.9. Harmonized Produce Safety Standard Addendum to GLOBALG.A.P. General Regulations (Latest version)
- 2.10. LEAF Marque (latest version)
- 2.11. PJRFSI Cannabis Safety Standard (latest edition)
- 2.12. Gluten-Free Certification Program Global Standard (latest issue)
- 2.13. PrimusGFS General Regulations (latest version)
- 2.14. NSF/ANSI 455-2: GMP for Dietary Supplements (latest version)
- 2.15. PJRFSI-0: By-Laws
- 2.16. PJRFSI-1: Quality Manual
- 2.17. SOP-01 series: Certification Procedure
- 2.18. SOP-09: Complaint Procedure
- 2.19. FS-3 series: Certification Agreement
- 2.20. FS-1001: Appeal Resolution Request Form

## 3. Responsibilities

- 3.1. The Special Committee Chairperson or appropriate designee is assigned the responsibilities and authority for appeal activities.
- 3.2. PJRFSI ensures that all interested parties are made aware, as and when appropriate, of the existence of the appeal process and the procedures to be followed (FS-3 series, SOP-01 series, PJRFSI website). PJRFSI ensures that appeals shall be handled promptly and without undue delay.
- 3.3. International Division Managers that receive appeals will send them to the Food Safety Program Accreditation Manager for processing.

## 4. Appeal Procedure

- 4.1. In all appeals, the Food Safety Program Accreditation Assistant or appropriate designee supplies the interested party, hereinafter referred to as the Appellant, with the FS-1001 Appeal Resolution Request Form and requests that the Appellant complete the Organization section of the form in order for PJRFSI to obtain all pertinent information related to the appeal. Appeals must be filed within 15 calendar days of the NCR being issued/or decision being made.

- The dispute shall in the first instance be referred to LEAF's Assurance Manager (or Manager within LEAF/LEAF Marque of similar standing) and the CB Scheme Manager (or a Manager in the CB of similar standing for resolution) at a meeting, which may be by telephone, to be arranged as soon as practicable after the failure to reach consensus arises, but in any event, within 10 working days.
- 4.2. Upon receipt of the completed FS-1001 Appeal Resolution Request Form, the Food Safety Program Accreditation Assistant confirms receipt of the appeal via email and the Food Safety Program Accreditation Manager or appropriate designee appoints a committee, hereinafter referred to as the Appeal Review Committee, to evaluate the appeal in light of PJRFSI policies and applicable standards. Personnel, including management, should not be employed to investigate any appeal if: they have been directly involved with the Appellant within the past two years and/or in the Appellant's complaint; or if their relationships to the parties involved may compromise the impartiality of the investigation.
- 4.3. PJRFSI uses all reasonable efforts to resolve the appeal in a constructive and timely manner (within 30 days of receiving the Appellant's completed FS-1001).
- 4.4. A hearing is held in the case of all appeals, hearings are attended by the Appeal Panel members, Lead Auditor and Appellant. Special approval may be granted by the Food Safety Program Accreditation Manager (or designee) in cases where extenuating circumstances prevent the Lead Auditor from being present at the hearing. The Appellant's consultant may observe the hearing but may not actively participate.
- 4.5. Appeal hearings shall be conducted as follows:
- Introductions
  - Presentation by the Appellant, uninterrupted and limited to 30 minutes
  - Presentation by the Lead Auditor, uninterrupted and limited to 30 minutes
  - Rebuttals, limited to 10 minutes for each party
  - Appeal Panel questions
  - Closing remarks by the Appellant
  - Closing remarks by the Lead Auditor
  - Closing the hearing, the Special Committee Chairperson or designee shall communicate the expected timeframe for a final decision to be made, inform all parties that the appeal may be appealed to an Accreditation Body and/or Standard Licensing Body within 30 days of decision by the Appeal Panel.
- 4.6. Following the appeal review, the Appeal Panel members shall deliberate without any involvement of the Appellant or Lead Auditor. Under the leadership of the Chair, the Panel is careful to consider the results of previous similar appeals when rendering a decision.
- 4.7. The Special Committee Chairperson shall document the Panel's decision using the PJRFSI section of the FS-1001 Appeal Resolution Request Form and send it to the Appellant and PJRFSI Auditor via email.
- 4.8. When a hearing is conducted, the Special Committee Chairperson or designee shall generate minutes of the appeal hearing and save it along with the FS-1001 Appeal Resolution Request Form in the audit file.
- 4.9. The decision of appeal panel is final and binding.

## 5. Records

- 5.1. A record of all appeals and appeal resolution decision shall be maintained by the Food Safety Program Accreditation Assistant or appropriate designee in accordance with SOP-05 Quality Records Procedure.

## **6. Additional Actions**

- 6.1. PJRFSI recognizes protests and appeals as a source of possible nonconformity with certification body guidance documentation (licensing and/or accreditation body specific) or as signaling a need for auditor and/or personnel re-training or additional follow-up actions. The Food Safety Program Accreditation Manager or appropriate designee is responsible for ensuring that re-training and follow-up activities occur and their effectiveness is verified.
- 6.2. Appeals regarding decisions on the suspension or withdrawal of certification by PJRFSI shall not delay the decision to suspend or withdraw the Certification.
- 6.3. Any members of the appeal committee cannot participate in the technical review or certification decision for the Appellant.