

Regenevate Certification Guidelines for Certification Bodies

FOOD and AGRICULTURE

RGV-G-002-V2.0



Version 2.0

May 2025

CONTENT

1	PURPOSE	3
2	SCOPE	3
3	CERTIFICATION BODY CERTIFICATION PROCESS REQUIREMENTS	3
3.1	Application and Application Review	3
3.2	Audit Planning	3
3.3	Audit	4
3.4	Audit Report	6
3.5	Technical Review	6
3.6	Certification Decision	6
3.7	Issuance of the Scope Certificate	8
3.8	Product/Transaction Certificate Issuance	8
3.9	Surveillance	8
3.10	Changes Affecting Certification	8
3.11	Suspension, Cancellation, Withdrawal, Reduction or Extension of the Scope of Certification	8
3.12	Complaint and Appeal Management	8
3.13	Use of Certificates and Regenerate Certification Claims	9
	DEFINITIONS AND ABBREVIATIONS	10

1 PURPOSE

The purpose of this document is to define the procedures and principles of the audit and certification processes carried out by Certification Bodies for companies operating in the food and agriculture sector in accordance with Regenevate Standards.

2 SCOPE

This document covers all activities to be carried out by Certification Bodies throughout the entire process, from receiving certification applications from food and agriculture companies to conducting audits and issuing certification decisions.

3 CERTIFICATION BODY CERTIFICATION PROCESS REQUIREMENTS

3.1 Application and Application Review

3.1.1 Certification Body shall receive an application from applicants in accordance with clause 7.2 Application of the TS EN ISO/IEC 17065 'Conformity assessment – Requirements for bodies certifying products, processes and services' Standard.

3.1.2 The application must be registered by the Certification Body using the application form. In addition to the application form, at least the following documents must be requested:

- Documents showing the legal ownership of the land to be certified in accordance with the country's legal regulations and the size of the land,
- Sketches showing the location of the land and its surroundings,
- Information about the location and position of the food business,
- Business Registration and Approval Certificate obtained in accordance with the country's legal regulations for food businesses.

The following documents must be submitted for Producer Group applications:

- Application form completed by the group manager,
- Documents showing the legal structure of the group management,
- List showing the land and product information of the group members,
- Sketches showing the location and surroundings of the lands belonging to the group members.

3.1.3 See TS EN ISO/IEC 17065:2012 'Conformity assessment – Requirements for bodies operating certification of products, processes and services', Clause 7.3 Review of the application.

3.1.4 After the applications are approved, a contract must be signed with the producer/company in accordance with the selected scope. This contract must include all rules and legal issues that must be complied with by the producer/company and the Certification Body. The contract period must be 3 years.

3.2 Audit Planning

3.2.1 The Certification Body shall use the databases, templates and tools provided by Regenevate to record audit information and activities.

3.2.2 Audits should be planned annually and conducted every year during the three-year certification cycle.

3.2.3 When planning the timing of inspections in accordance with the Regenevate Plant Production Land Standard, the following periods should be taken into account:

- During soil preparation,
- During intermediate work,
- During the harvest period and/or after the harvest, during the cover crop planting period.

3.2.4 When calculating the number of inspection days for field inspections, the inspection plan should be organised so that no more than two producers are inspected per day during individual inspections.

3.2.5 The number of audit days according to the Regenevate Supply Chain Standard should be determined based on the following factors:

- Production season,
- Number of production sites,
- Number of employees.

3.2.6 In plant production inspections related to the producer group, the number of producers to be checked using the sampling method is determined as follows:

- Producer group certification must be organised as a cooperative or as a structured group of producers affiliated with an operator.
- For the internal control system:
 - o For groups with fewer than 10 members: Half a day,
 - o For groups with 10 or more members: A full day of inspection is required.
- If the producer group has fewer than 10 members, each group member is audited.
- If the producer group has 10 or more members, the number of producers to be audited is calculated by taking the square root of the total number of producers in the producer group. If the square root result is a decimal number, this number is rounded up to the nearest whole number.
- A maximum of 6 producers may be inspected in a single day.
- All products covered by the standard scope must be inspected during producer selection.
- Subsequent inspections must ensure that different producers are inspected.

3.2.7 Certification Body shall assign authorised personnel to carry out the audit activities (see Regenevate Qualification Guide).

3.3 Audit

3.3.1 If an on-site audit cannot be conducted for any reason, the Certification Body must request permission for a remote audit by sending an email to **info@regenevate.org**

3.3.2 During the Regenevate Plant Production Land Standard inspection, the Regenevate Land Standard Application Guide Worksheet records should be reviewed and these records should be used as the measurement method for soil improvement.

3.3.3 During the certification audit of the Producer Group;

- First, the group's Internal Control System (ICS) must be audited.
- Non-conformities identified during the ICS audit must be evaluated, and producers to be audited must be selected based on these findings.
- Once the ICS audit is complete, producer audits must be conducted.

3.3.4 The producer group management shall establish an internal control system (ICS) and ensure the following requirements are met:

- The producer group must be formally established based on written agreements with its members. The producer group must have a central management, established decision-making procedures and legal personality.
- The producer group must have an effective and documented internal control system.
- The producer group may be organised through a cooperative or a processor/brand.
- ICS audit should assess the management capacity of group members.
- Producer group practices should be uniform, consistent with the same inputs and processes, and based on a consistent methodology.
- Participation in the producer group should be limited to members who market Regenevate-certified products exclusively through the group, unless members are individually certified.
- ICS must have a procedure to remove non-compliant group members from the list.
- When a member is suspended or voluntarily withdraws, this must be reported to the Certification Body within 10 (ten) working days.

3.3.5 During the audit and certification process, Certification Bodies shall:

- Explain the relevant standard and clarify any misunderstandings regarding the indicators.
- Provide explanations about the Regenevate programme and the relevant certification process.
- Share documents related to the Regenevate programme.
- Focus on highlighting good practices in the areas for improvement identified during the audit.

3.3.6 In the audit and certification processes, the Certification Body shall not:

- Require a specific approach to the implementation of the relevant standard,
- Provide any paid or free consultancy services or training,
- Make an official statement regarding the certification decision during the audit visit,
- Provide recommendations regarding the documents and procedures of the audited person.

3.3.7 All audit reports shall clearly explain compliance and non-compliance with each relevant standard, supported by evidence.

3.3.8 Auditor shall classify nonconformities (NC) in accordance with the Regenevate Supply Chain Standard as follows:

Minor Nonconformity: Minor deficiencies in full compliance with standards. They do not seriously affect system effectiveness or product/service quality.

Major Nonconformity: Nonconformities that do not comply with standard requirements and may have a serious impact on the overall operation of the system or the quality of the product/service.

Critical Nonconformity: Very serious deficiencies or errors in the system or process. Such nonconformities can lead to customer dissatisfaction, legal nonconformities or safety risks.

3.3.9 The requirements for the Regenevate Plant Production Land Standard are classified as follows:

Mandatory Requirements: These applications are essential elements of the standard. Failure to meet any of the Mandatory Requirements will result in the certification process being unsuccessful.

General Requirements: : These requirements form the core components of the certification process. Failure to meet them will negatively impact the certification decision. At least 60% of the General Requirements must be fully completed for the process to proceed.

3.3.10 At the end of the audit, a document confirming that Regenevate Standard rules have been followed should be left with the company.

3.3.11 Evidence of closure of nonconformities identified must be communicated to the auditor.

3.4 Audit Report

3.4.1 The auditor shall prepare an audit report confirming compliance with all certification requirements.

3.4.2 The audit report must be sent to the certification assessment for review of non-conformity closure documents.

3.4.3 If any issues are identified that could lead to the suspension of the company from the Regenevate programme, the Certification Body must notify the Regenevate team within 72 hours of completing the audit. The notification must be sent by email to info@regenevate.org

3.5 Technical Review

3.5.1 Certification Body shall appoint an authorised person or persons to review the audit report and findings. This person or persons shall meet the following conditions:

- Must be independent of the audit team.
- Must have sufficient knowledge and competence regarding the relevant standard and audit processes (see Regenevate Qualification Guide).

3.5.2 The following reports/documents prepared by the auditor in relation to the audit process shall be submitted to the technical review team:

- Question lists,
- Non-conformity closure documents,
- Audit reports and appendices.

3.5.3 Once the technical review process has been completed, the relevant documents must be forwarded to the certification body for the decision stage.

3.6 Certification Decision

3.6.1 Certification Body is responsible for all certification decisions and must ensure that all processes related to these decisions are followed correctly.

3.6.2 Certification Body shall ensure that the following requirements are met by the persons who will make the certification decision:

- The personnel in question must be independent of the audit team.
- These individuals should not have been directly involved in the evaluation process.

3.6.3 The certifier reviews all reports and attachments and decides whether the company complies with the Regenevate Standard certification requirements.

3.6.4 In the certification assessment decision for the Regenevate Plant Production Farm Standard, the weight of two different types of requirements is calculated (see 3.3.9 Mandatory and General Requirements).

3.6.5 All nonconformities identified during the certification assessment process in the Supply Chain Standard must be closed in order for the process to be completed.

3.6.6 Certification decision is positive or negative and is communicated to the relevant company in writing in an official manner.

3.6.7 Certification Body shall have procedures in place to publish warnings, suspensions and withdrawals of certification for certified clients. The procedures shall include the following information.

- a. The results of the current assessment are communicated in writing to the producer/company, and corrective actions are requested to be implemented within 30 (thirty) calendar days. Otherwise, the certificate may be suspended or revoked.
- b. If no response is received within the specified timeframe, Certification Body shall notify the relevant producer/company in writing that the certificate cannot be issued or, if an existing certificate is held, that the certificate will be revoked within 15 (fifteen) calendar days.
- c. If the producer/company requires additional time to complete the corrective actions, it must submit this request to Certification Body at least 15 (fifteen) calendar days in advance and obtain approval. The certification process is suspended until the additional time is approved.
- d. In the event of any breach of the contract terms by the Producer/Company, Certification Body shall issue a written warning. If the Producer/Company fails to take corrective action despite the warning and continues the breaches, a written notification of the certificate's cancellation shall be communicated to the customer.
- e. In the event of misuse of the Regenevate logo/trademark or misleading or false statements regarding certification, the producer/company is warned in writing. If such circumstances persist, the certificate is revoked.
- f. In the event of significant changes in scope or ownership, Certification Body has the right to request a new application and audit. Additionally, if the site requirements are not met, the certificate may be suspended or revoked.
- g. In the event of any fraudulent activity related to Regenevate, the certificate will be revoked.

3.6.8 If the Certification Body suspends or withdraws a certificate, it shall inform the customers and other relevant parties.

3.7 Issuance of the Scope Certificate

3.7.1 Regenevate Scope Certificate is issued in accordance with the format specified in the programme.

3.7.2 Regenevate Scope Certificate is valid for a period of three years. The update date for each year and the audit dates for that year are indicated on the certificate.

3.8 Product/Transaction Certificate Issuance

3.8.1 The product/transaction certificate indicates that the producer/company complies with the standard requirements.

3.8.2 The product/transaction certificates are issued for products grown in accordance with standard rules in field applications.

3.8.3 Certification Body shall establish a system for product/transaction certification applications.

3.8.4 The following requirements must be met in order for a product/transaction certificate to be issued:

- Must have a valid scope certificate.
- Products must be grown on certified land.
- Product harvest records, transport documents, and sales documents must be available.
- All documents must include the product's land information and the name of the standard.

3.8.5 The product/transaction certificate is issued in accordance with the format specified by the programme.

3.8.6 The Regenerate Plant Production Standard product/transaction certificate aims to:

- Ensure traceability of the contents of produced products from the final product to the raw material,
- Record production in accordance with standards in a transparent and reliable manner,
- Facilitate the separation of certified products from uncertified products in terms of storage and quantity,
- Support the tracking of sales, conversion quantities, and products bearing the logo.

3.9 Surveillance

3.9.1 Products that have been issued a product/transaction certificate and are subject to any processing that requires labelling must comply with the Regenerate Logo Rules Guide when using the logo.

3.10 Changes Affecting Certification

3.10.1 See TS EN ISO/IEC 17065:2012 'Conformity assessment – Requirements for bodies operating certification of products, processes and services,' Standard, Clause 7.10 Changes affecting certification.

3.11 Suspension, Cancellation, Withdrawal, Reduction or Extension of the Scope of Certification

3.11.1 See TS EN ISO/IEC 17065:2012 'Conformity assessment – Requirements for bodies operating certification of products, processes and services,' Standard, Clause 7.11 Termination, reduction, suspension or withdrawal of certification.

3.12 Complaint and Appeal Management

3.12.1 Certification Body shall define, document and implement policies and procedures for handling complaints received about itself and the producers/companies it certifies.

3.13 Use of Certificates and Regenevate Certification Claims

3.13.1 Certification Body shall control the ownership, use and display of licences, certificates, conformity marks and other promotional elements relating to certified products and ensure that these elements are used appropriately.

3.13.2 In the event that the incorrect, misleading, non-compliant or illegal use of the licence, certificate, conformity mark or other elements indicating a certified product that refer to the Regenevate standard, or incorrect references to the standard owner are detected in the producer's documents or promotional materials, the Certification Body shall record this situation and document it with the necessary documents.

3.13.3 When the Certification Body finds that licences, certificates, conformity marks or other signs indicating that a product has been certified are being used incorrectly, misleadingly, without authorisation or in violation of the regulations, it shall immediately initiate and implement the necessary corrective measures to rectify the situation.

DEFINITIONS AND ABBREVIATIONS

Audit: Any inspection carried out by a certification body auditor to determine whether the activities performed by the operator within the scope of their application comply with Regenerate Standards rules.

Corrective Action: Activities carried out to ensure that the processes audited comply with standard rules.

Product/Process Certificate: A document issued by a certification body confirming that products sold or shipped from one producer/company to another comply with Regenerate Standards.

Scope Certificate (SC): A document issued by a certification body confirming that a producer/company is capable of producing and selling specified products in compliance with Regenerate Standards.

Producer/Company: Refers to the person who holds the certificate or is under its control within the scope of Regenerate Standards and includes primary producers, processors, carriers, importers, and exporters.

Producer Group: A group of producers that have come together under a legal entity to produce in accordance with Regenerate Standards and have signed a contract with the legal entity.

Producer Group Manager: A legal entity responsible for the marketing of products produced by producers who have come together under a contract and for the applications made in accordance with this standard.

Non-conformity: The failure of processes subject to inspection to comply with standard rules.

