



राष्ट्रीय बागवानी बोर्ड

कृषि एवं किसान कल्याण मंत्रालय, भारत सरकार

85, इंस्टीट्यूशनल एरिया, सैक्टर-18, गुडगाँव-122015

National Horticulture Board

Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare, Govt. of India
85, Institutional Area, Sector - 18, Gurgaon - 122015

No. NHB/Delhi/BGAP/2024-25/875

19th December 2024

Notice

Subject - "Inviting applications for Accreditation of Certification Bodies under Bharat GAP Certification Scheme".

Keeping in view of the indiscriminate use of chemical fertilizers and pesticides which adversely affects soil health, the environment and food quality, the Department of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, Government of India has decided to launch a Voluntary Certification Scheme for promotion and adoption of Good Agricultural Practices under the Programme "BHARAT GOOD AGRICULTURE PRACTICES (Bharat GAP)". The National Horticulture Board shall act as the Secretariat for the Bharat GAP programme. Detailed information regarding the Bharat GAP programme and its operation manual can be seen at NHB Website.

In this context, the National Horticulture Board (NHB), as the secretariat of Bharat Good Agricultural Practices (Bharat GAP) certification programme, invites applications for accreditation of Certification Bodies, as per the eligibility requirement outlined for the Bharat GAP certification Programme. The minimum eligibility criteria for accreditation are attached herewith for reference.

Eligible agencies that are accredited under ISO-17065 or authorised for IndGAP by the Quality Council of India (QCI) are invited to apply to NHB for accreditation under Bharat GAP certification scheme, using the prescribed format

The detailed procedure for accreditation of Certification Bodies under Bharat GAP certification scheme can be seen in Chapter 4 of Bharat GAP Certification manual which is available on the NHB website.

The stated procedure of Accreditation of Certification Bodies under Bharat GAP certification scheme is an open and continuous process to be pursued until any further amendment/orders by NHB.

Detailed information in this regard may be obtained from NHB's website at <https://www.nhb.gov.in/BharatGAP.aspx>

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Accreditation criteria for Certification Bodies under Bharat Good Agricultural Practices (BHARAT GAP)

1.0 INTRODUCTION

With the advent of green revolution, the usage of chemical fertilizer has significantly raised to increase crop production globally. Similarly, with the progress in science and technology, the usage of chemical pesticides for the control of disease, pest, and weed has increased. Large scale application of chemical fertilizer and pesticide in the crops has created concerns among consumers about the safety of produce. Increasing residue in fresh fruits and vegetable also resulted in rejections in international trade.

Further, excessive usage of fertilizers and pesticides harms the soil, environment, and impedes the trading of agri-products. The enforcement of Good Agricultural Practice (GAP) has greater relevance in recent days as it ensures safe crop production, facilitate regional trade through the implementation of common GAP standards in the region and ensure acceptability of fruits and vegetables in the national and international markets. It helps to produce quality goods with high yield that comply with the standards of national and international regulations. Implementation of GAP ensures environment friendly agricultural production, considering human health and welfare, improving the profitability and productivity of the farm.

To initiate the implementation of GAP suitable to Indian farming situations, wide consultations were made at different levels, and it was decided to launch a country suitable GAP system under Department of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, Govt of India under the name “**BHARAT GOOD AGRICULURAL PRACTICES (BHARAT GAP)**” with National Horticulture Board (NHB) as its secretariat. National Horticulture Board being secretariat shall be acting on behalf of the Bharat GAP National Accreditation Body which shall be the main accreditation and empanelment/ recognition body.

The proposed BHARAT GAP focusses on production process, produce quality, food safety and hygiene, workers & farmers safety, and traceability and has following unique features:

- a. The Bharat GAP shall be based on ISO-17065 and a third-party certification
- b. Simple, easy to operate and Indian farming system centric,

- c. Data management through on-line digital portal (minimum documentation)
- d. Testing through a mix of rapid testing kits and NABL accredited labs
- e. Specific provision for small farmer groups with individual certificates
- f. End-to-end traceability.

2. Objective

Objective of the accreditation programme is to accredit competent certification and verification bodies, complying to the requirements laid down under Bharat GAP scheme for providing independent and impartial certification services to the operators applying for Bharat GAP Certification.

3. Scope of certification

- a. Fresh fruits and vegetables
- b. Flowers and ornamentals and
- c. Combination crops being grown in combination with above two categories

4. Categories of Operators

- a. Individual producers/ farmers
- b. Small group of farmers without QMS and
- c. Large group of farmers with QMS

5. Eligibility criteria for Certification Bodies for accreditation under Bharat GAP certification programme

1. Applicant agency shall be a legal entity registered under relevant act (Companies act, Registrar of Societies act, Cooperative act or Trust Act).
2. It shall have a functional office with sufficient infrastructure. In case of multinational companies it shall have functional office in India registered under relevant act.
3. Government agencies are considered deemed legal because of their Government status.
4. The agency has well organized institutional structure as required under Bharat GAP accreditation guidelines with defined roles and responsibilities for each person/ position.
5. The agency shall have adequate financial resources supported with annual balance sheets and shall also have funds/insurance to meet liability arising out of their operations

6. The applicant agency shall be accredited under ISO 17065 by NABCB of QCI or any other accreditation body, being member/signatory of IAF or have already been assessed and approved by QCI for IndGAP.
7. Agency shall have well structured quality operating manual complying to the requirements of ISO-17065
8. Standard operating procedures, formats and checklists as per the requirement of Bharat GAP certification scheme for accreditation.
9. Agency shall have sufficient number of trained and experienced manpower to function as Quality Manager, Reviewer, Inspectors/ auditors. Competence and experience need to be substantiated with documentary evidences. (See competency requirement for Reviewer and inspector in Chapter 4 at Clause 4.1.7.1 and 4.1.7.2)
10. List of accreditations (if any) with supporting documents
11. Other certification activities (if any) being done with details of certifications, since when and number of operators being certified

Application

All applications for accreditation under Bharat GAP certification scheme shall be made on-line through Bharat GAP Certification-cum-Traceability portal.

Before applying on-line, please ensure that applicant has ready access to following documents in soft copy. All files needed to be uploaded shall not exceed 10MB. For each category of document all the pages need to be converted into one single file in PDF format.

1. Application (To be filled on-line, through <https://www.nhb.gov.in/OnlineApplication/GAPRegistrationForm.aspx>).
2. Registration certificate copy indicating its legal status
3. Memorandum of Company/Association/Trust etc
4. List of Directors and their contact details, PAN No and Aadhar Nos/ other IDs
5. Organizational structure
6. List of manpower along with their competence status, experience, qualifications, experience in auditing and trainings etc
7. Copy of audited balance sheets (last 3 years)
8. Prescribed accreditation fee
9. Copy of Accreditation under ISO-17065 by QCI/ any other accreditation agency or authorization letter from QCI about approved agency under IndGAP

10. Copy of Operating and Quality manual as per ISO17065 (See Chapter 4 - Accreditation process for certification bodies under Bharat GAP)
11. Copy of standard operating procedures, formats and checklists as per the requirement of Bharat GAP certification scheme for accreditation (See Chapter 3, 3A, Chapter 5, 5A to 5F and Chapter 6)
12. Copy of authority letter from organization for the person as signing authority
13. Fee structure with detailed breakup, proposed to be levied from operators
14. Any other relevant information

Fee structure for accreditation and Accredited Certification Bodies

Payable to NHB through online payment gateway while submitting the application

Accreditation of Certification Bodies

- | | |
|--|-------------------------|
| 1. Initial accreditation fee for 3 years | Rs. 2.00 lakh + GST |
| 2. Annual surveillance fee | Rs. 1.0 lakh + GST/year |
| 3. Renewal of accreditation for next 3 years cycle | Rs. 1.50 lakh + GST |

Certification and traceability fee payable to NHB online

1. Rs. 250/- per certificate for individual operators
2. Rs. 500/- per certificate for small group of growers without QMS
3. Rs. 1000/- per certificate for grower groups with QMS

**INDICATIVE APPLICATION FORM FOR CERTIFICATION BODY (CB)
BHARAT GOOD AGRICULTURAL PRACTICES (BHARAT GAP)
CERTIFICATION SCHEME**

PART I General Information			
Name of Applicant Certification Body			
Address of Registered Office			
	City		District
	State		Pin code
Contact Details	Phone/Mobile (company)		
	Fax		
	Email		
	Website		
Legal Details	Registered under act and Registration authority		
	Registration No		
	Dt of registration		
	Place of registration		
Ownership details	Type of company	Proprietorship	
		Partnership	
		Pvt Ltd etc	
Name of Directors (Board members)			
Address of Operational office (if other than registered office)			
	City		District
	State		Pin code
Contact Details	Phone/Mobile (company)		
	Fax		
	Email		
	Website		
Name of Chief Executive	Name		
	Designation		
	Mobile No.		
	Email		
	Office phone nos		

Name and contact details of programme In-charge	Name	
	Designation	
	Mobile No	
	Email ID	
Branch offices (if any)		
Details can also be attached as annexure		
PART II	Personals information	
Details of personals responsible for Bharat GAP certification (Details to be provided on separate sheet with details on educational qualifications, experience and trainings etc for each staff member)	Name and Designation	Responsibility
PART III	Information about other activities	
Accreditations already having (if any) such as ISO 17065 etc		
(If yes attach copy of accreditation certificate)		
Other Government approvals (if any), attach copy of certificates.		
Certification services (if any being carried out)		
Attach separate sheet giving details on type of certification services and number of certificates issued in last 2 years		
Related organizations/ subordinate offices		
Major clients		
(list to be attached)		

PART IV		Financial Status	
Details of Insurance/ reserve to cover liabilities in the area of operation			
Financial status in last 3 years (attach last 3 years audited balance sheets)			
PART V		Documents to be attached with the application	
Annex 1	Registration certificate with Details of Directors and Memorandum of Association/ company		
Annex 2	List of Branch offices with contact details and their activities		
Annex 3	List of personals responsible for BHARAT GAP certification along with their individual resumes detailing educational qualifications, experience, trainings in ISO systems, GAP and other certifications etc		
Annex 4	Proof of insurance/ liability reserve		
Annex 5	Last three years financial balance sheets		
Annex 6	Copy of Quality manual conforming to ISO17065		
Annex 7	Copy of operational manual for BHARAT GAP		
Annex 8	Copy of check lists on scopes being applied		
Annex 9	Copy of Guidance documents to operators		
Annex 10	Copy of guidance documents for evaluators/ assessors		
Annex 11	Copy of authorisation to its representative by the company as signing authority		
Annex 12	Any other		
PART V		Declaration	
<p>I,Name of authorised representative..... on behalf of an applicant Conformity Assessment Body (CAB), agree to the following Terms & Conditions of BHARAT GAP Scheme being operated by National Accreditation Body for Agriculture Certification Services with secretariat at National Horticulture Board, Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, Govt of India and Rules and Procedures prescribed under BHARAT GAP scheme for accreditation:</p> <p>1. All statements, information and documents provided along with this application are correct and true to the best of our knowledge and belief.</p>			

2. BHARAT GAP criteria, requirements, procedures and documents have been read, understood and implemented.
3. Have adequate resources to undertake certification work under the BHARAT GAP Certification Scheme.
4. Agree to undergo assessment as well as maintain conditions for approval, and shall pay all necessary fee and charges (including any applicable taxes) to accreditation body.
5. Shall ensure that the operations, staff and procedures of Conformity Assessment Body (CAB) will always continue to comply with the BHARAT GAP Scheme requirements and procedures.
6. Shall always maintain impartiality and integrity in operations as well as in certification work.
7. Shall always provide, or give access to, all documents, records, information and facilities during the entire assessment process to enable a thorough assessment of and also later during the period of approval.
8. Shall take adequate and prompt corrective and/or preventive action(s) as may be necessary on the issues raised by accreditation body.
9. Shall immediately notify accreditation body of any changes in organizational status / structure, operations, facilities, main policies, procedures, staff or competence, which are likely to affect our approval.
10. Shall undertake routine assessments, surveillances & reassessments as prescribed by the accreditation body and also the verification or surprise visits as decided by accreditation body.
11. Any fee and charges payable and which remains unpaid shall be recovered from our Conformity Assessment Body (CAB) with late payment charges as appropriate and decided by accreditation body.
12. In case if our Conformity Assessment Body (CAB) at any time is found not complying with the above declaration or the requirements of accreditation body or ISO/IEC 17065 standard as applicable or is found misrepresenting or misusing approval or carrying out malpractices or bringing accreditation body into disrepute, any action against our Conformity Assessment Body may be taken including suspension and withdrawal as deemed appropriate.

13. If any information given along with this application is later found to be false, accreditation body may decide to cancel our application/approval.
14. Shall submit annual report as per the format prescribed by the accreditation body from time to time.
15. Shall undertake to take up entire certification process and maintain end-to-end traceability through BHARAT GAP Certification portal

Signature

Name

Designation

Email

Date and Place

**Format of Agreement between Bharat GAP Accreditation Body
and Accredited Certification Body (CB)**

(To be submitted in hard copy only after the intimation of grant of accreditation)

**AGREEMENT FOR THE OPERATION OF BHARAT
GOOD AGRICULTURAL PRACTICES (GAP) CERTIFICATION**

This agreement is made on day of Month..... Year..... between the National Horticulture Board, An Autonomous Board under Department of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, Government of India, having its Head office located at Sector 18, Gurugram, Haryana, which expression shall include its successor and assignees and herein referred to as “Accreditation Body” on one part

and

The Name of accredited Certification Body..... represented by itsDesignation....., located at Full address..... for operation of GAP Certification services (herein referred at as Certification Body - CB) as per the terms and conditions laid down here.

1. General

- 1.1 The National Horticulture Board, An Autonomous Board under Department of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, Government of India being scheme owner and Accreditation Secretariat of Bharat Good Agricultural Practices (Bharat GAP) certification scheme, offers accreditation toName and Address of CBfor implementation of Bharat GAP certification as accredited Certification Body (CB).
- 1.2 This Agreement sets out the responsibilities between Accreditation Body and CB as per standards and terms and conditions specified under Bharat GAP certification scheme
- 1.3 Name of CB undertakes to implement the Bharat GAP certification scheme in letter and spirit as accredited Certification Body (CB).
- 1.4 Both Accreditation Body and accredited CB are expected to abide by the terms and conditions as specified in this agreement and intent of this Agreement.
- 1.5 CBs applying for accreditation are expected to act as accredited CBs as part of complying with the requirements for accreditation.

1.6 The Accreditation Body through its certification portal shall be the custodian of all certification data including the details of certified operators, their process and product details and certification process as per the format available in the certification portal and updated from time-to-time.

1.7 It will be the responsibility of the Accredited CB to operate and manage the certification through the Bharat GAP certification portal and keep the process updated for real time monitoring by the Accreditation Body.

2. Conditions to be met by the Accredited Certification Bodies

2.1 The accredited CB shall offer Accreditation body, Accreditation secretariat and its representatives un-restricted access and co-operation as necessary to enable Accreditation Body to evaluate and monitor conformity with this Agreement and the relevant standard(s). The accredited CB shall also ensure un-restricted access to Accreditation Body assessors and experts to its customers' premises to conduct assessment activities, as Accreditation Body/ Secretariat shall reasonably require.

2.2 The accredited CB shall:

- a) at all times comply with these terms of this Agreement and with the Bharat GAP Scheme standards, procedure and other related documents; Refusal to sign the document or any other notification within the stipulated timeline shall result into non-conformance and/ or termination of accreditation.
- b) commit to fulfil continually the requirements for approval set by Accreditation Body for the scopes for which accreditation is sought or granted including adapting to changes in the requirements for approval as and when communicated and shall also commit to provide evidence of fulfilment.
- c) afford such accommodation and cooperation as is necessary to enable Accreditation Body to verify fulfilment of requirements for approval at its premises and certification
- d) locations where the certification activities are being done or proposed to be taken up.
- e) provide access to CB personnel, locations, equipment, information, documents and records as necessary to verify fulfilment of requirements for accreditation.
- f) arrange the witness audit of certification activities as and when requested at their client's place
- g) only claim that it is accredited in respect of those activities which are the subject of the schedule attached to the accreditation certificate;

- h) use the logo of Bharat GAP scheme only on those certificates (and schedules where applicable) which fall within the scopes approved by Accreditation Body and commit to follow the policy for the use of the logo;
- i) not issue any non-accredited product / process / services / management system certificates in scopes for which they are not authorised.
- j) pay to Accreditation secretariat any outstanding fees prior to accreditation and pay all fees due to accreditation, in accordance with the Fee Schedule as updated from time to time;
- k) not use its accreditation in such a manner as to bring Accreditation Body into disrepute, and take appropriate steps to correct any statement or expression, which Accreditation Body considers to be misleading;
- l) upon withdrawal/ termination of accreditation, discontinue forthwith its use of any reference to accreditation, withdraw all advertising matter which contains any reference thereto, return the certificate of accreditation, discontinue issue of certificates, and take such action with existing clients holding approved certification as accreditation body may specify;
- m) make it clear in all contracts with its clients and in guidance documents that a certificate issued by it in no way implies that any product, process, service or management system certified is approved by Accreditation Body;
- n) ensure that approved certification shall not be used by itself or its clients for promotional or publicity purposes in any way that Accreditation Body considers to be misleading, and take such immediate steps as Accreditation Body may direct to correct any such misleading use.
- o) have legally enforceable arrangements with their clients that commit the clients to provide, on request, access to Accreditation Body assessment teams to assess the certification body's performance when carrying out conformity assessment activities at the client's site;
- p) provide, on demand, or during assessments all records/information relating to complaints, appeals and disputes related to certification
- q) shall inform at the time of application and subsequently, without delay, any significant changes relevant to its approval, in any aspect of its status or operation relating to:
 - i. its legal, commercial, ownership or organizational status, the organization, top management and key personnel, main policies and procedures,
locations of its premises,

- ii. personnel, equipment, facilities, working environment or other resources, where significant.
 - iii. capability of certification or scope of approved activities, or conformity with the requirements in this Agreement or the relevant approval criteria.
 - iv. Or other such matters that can affect the ability of the CB to fulfil requirements for accreditation.
- r) shall assist in the investigation and resolution of any certification related complaints about itself, referred to it by the Accreditation Body.
- 3.3 The accredited CB may use in documents, brochures or advertising media, without variation, the phrases “An Accredited Certification Body with Accreditation number
- 3.4 The accredited CB shall inform Accreditation Body of any changes which it is planning and which may have any impact on the accredited CB’s conformity with this Agreement and the relevant standard(s) or otherwise affecting, or potentially affecting, the approved CB’s capability or scope of accreditation, as soon as possible, or, in any event, at least fourteen days prior to implementing any such change.
- 3.5 The accredited CB will be given due notice of any proposed changes by the Accreditation Body relating to this Agreement. The accredited CB shall be given such reasonable time as is necessary to make any adjustments to its procedures under the proposed changes. The accredited CB shall notify Accreditation Body regarding the completion of such changes within the time fixed for such adjustments.
- 3.6 An accredited CB wishing to relinquish its accreditation shall give at least ninety days written notice to Accreditation Body of its intent, stating the arrangements made for protection of clients holding approved certification, settlement of accreditation fees, and the return of the certificate of accreditation.
- 3.7 Any notice or other communication given or sent by Accreditation Body to an accredited CB in connection with, or under, this Agreement, shall be deemed to be duly given or sent if despatched by registered / speed post or courier to the address of the CB last known to Accreditation Body and shall be deemed to be given at the time when the same would have been delivered in the ordinary course of post. Same notice shall also be sent to official email of the CB.
- 3.8 Financial arrangements between an accredited CB and its client are not the responsibility of, and are not subject to the control of, Accreditation Body.

However, information contained therein may be subject to audit by the Accreditation Body

- 3.9 If one of CB issues a sanction, all CBs operating with that producer or producer group have the obligation to communicate with each other, regarding the scope and, if appropriate, details of actions to be taken across all CBs. The same undertaking shall be done by the producers and the CB.
- 3.10 The communication between CBs shall include all relevant details, but the sanction issued shall be valid and all relevant CBs shall observe this. The CB shall establish and implement procedures for collecting data updates of the accepted producers, such as production site or product area changes and inclusion/de-listing of members within a producer group.
- 3.11 The CBs shall have process for on boarding of applicants coming from other CBs. They shall be transparent in giving all the required information as desired by the other CB in terms of the last audit report, Non Conformance listing and action taken, copy of certificate and any other documents that clarifies the status of the clients seeking transfer.
- 3.12 In case client moves from one CB to another, the CB transferring the client shall close the registration process before handing over all details including the UIN no. that will be continued for the purpose of continuity and traceability.

4 APPEALS

- 4.1 Appeals will be considered only against an approval decision made by Accreditation Body. An approval decision is a decision by accreditation body to grant, suspend or withdraw accreditation or to grant or deny an extension to scope or reduce scope or reject application for grant of accreditation at any stage. Such a decision by Accreditation Body shall stand pending hearing of appeal if any.
- 4.2 Appeals in writing against a decision of Accreditation Body will be processed in accordance with the accreditation body's Appeals Procedure. The Complaints and Appeals procedure is available on NHB's certification portal and is freely downloadable

5. COMPLAINTS

- 5.1 Any complaint against Accreditation Body or the accredited CBs should be addressed to the Managing Director, National Horticulture Board, Sector 18, Gurugram, Haryana.

6. ASSIGNMENT

Except as otherwise agreed by the parties in writing, accreditation shall not be assigned to any other party/ agency.

7. LIABILITY

No representation, promise or warranty, express or implied, is or will be made or given as to the accuracy or completeness of any information, review, audit, or advice supplied, made or given by Accreditation Body (or any of its officers, employees or agents) in the course of providing services pursuant to this Agreement and no officer, employee or agent of Accreditation Body is authorised (nor shall any such person be deemed to have been given any such authority) to make or give any such representation, promise or warranty, and any such representation, promise or warranty purported to be so made or given shall not be relied upon by the approved CB.

8. FORCE MAJEURE

No failure or omission by either party to carry out or observe any of the stipulations, conditions or warranties to be performed shall give rise to any claim against such party or be deemed to be a breach of contract to the extent that such failure or omission rises from causes reasonably beyond the control of such party.

9 INDEMNITY

The accredited CB undertakes to indemnify Accreditation Body against any losses suffered by or claims made against Accreditation Body as a result of misuse by the accredited CB of any approval, or symbol granted by Accreditation Body as a result of any breach by the accredited CB of the terms of this Agreement.

10. CONDITIONS GOVERNING THE USE OF THE ACCREDITATION SYMBOL FOR USE BY COFORMITY ASSESSMENT BODIES

The approved CB may download the procedure *Conditions for use of Bharat GAP accreditation Scheme Approval Symbol and other claims of approval* from NHB certification website and hereby agrees to comply with the same and to take all reasonable steps to ensure that compliance with these *conditions* is enforced amongst its customers of approved certification.

11. LAW

This Agreement shall in all respects be construed and operate as an Agreement made in India and in conformity with Indian Law and the construction and validity shall be

governed by the Indian Laws and is subject to the exclusive jurisdiction of the Delhi Courts.

12. ARBITRATION

All disputes, differences or questions at any time arising between the parties as to the construction of this agreement or as to any matter or thing arising out of this Agreement or in any way connected therewith (which cannot be settled by mutual agreement) shall be referred for arbitration to the Secretary, Department of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, MoA&FW, New Delhi or to any other person to be nominated by the authority. The arbitration shall be held in the City of Delhi and shall be in accordance with the Arbitration and Conciliation Act, 1996. The outcome of the arbitration shall be binding on both the parties

13. TERMINATION

These arrangements shall continue in force unless and until terminated:

- a. by either party upon 90 days written notice to the other.
- b. immediately by decision of the Managing Director, NHB, in accordance with NHB procedures as formally notified in advance of such a decision to the accredited CB.

At the date of termination Accreditation body's approval shall immediately cease to be valid but the accredited CB shall remain bound by the relevant conditions of this Agreement.

THE PARTIES TO THE AGREEMENT

For the Accredited CAB

Name:

Address:

.....

Signed:

Name :..... (BLOCK CAPITALS)

Position:

Date:

For National Horticulture Board

Address: Sector 18

Gurugram, Haryana

Signed:

Name

(BLOCK CAPITALS)

Designation

Date