

BRCGS095: Factsheet on the certification process for seasonal sites affected by Covid-19 restrictions.

Document Scope:

Information on the certification process for Seasonal sites affected by Covid-19 restrictions, including recommendations for short season suppliers who have temporarily fallen out of certification due to the Covid-19 restrictions.

Change log

Version no.	Date	Description
1	17/12/2020	First version.

BRCGS recognises the Covid-19 pandemic has resulted in restrictions which may prevent some seasonal sites from receiving an onsite audit for recertification. These sites may apply for a one time 6-month extension to their certification by contacting their certification body.

In some cases, a site's certification (even with the 6-month extension) may expire while out of season and not producing at the site. This is because it is not possible to extend a certificate for more than 6 months and certification audits can only be completed when the site is in active production.

BRCGS recognizes the value specifiers and customers place on suppliers maintaining BRCGS certification as part of their supply chain assurance. In some limited cases, it may be necessary for a specifier or customer, to provide a concession to short season suppliers who have temporarily fallen out of certification due to the pandemic and access issues. In such cases, it is recommended that the customer is provided with:

- Details about products manufactured whilst the site was certificated along with a copy of the last BRCGS certificate. This will provide evidence that the products were manufactured according to the requirements of the Standard (i.e. whilst the site was certificated).
- An explanation of the reasons why the onsite audit has not taken place. Examples of common restrictions which prevent seasonal sites from receiving an onsite audit include:
 - Site is in a country or region where government advice/restrictions prevent movement or access to the site
 - Company policy prevents visitors to the site to safeguard the health of employees
 - Certification body policy restricts auditor travel to a particular country or region to safeguard the health of their auditors.
- Sites should contact the Certification body to discuss the next audit date. This information should also be provided to the customer.

Certification bodies will make every effort to maintain certification and plan an audit as soon the restrictions are lifted and seasonal production resumes.

The site may also obtain evidence from their certification body indicating either commitment or contract to perform an audit in the next scheduled season. Certification bodies are committed to prioritizing this type of operation wherever possible.