

Explanations on the combined audit:
**QS Wholesale and IFS Food/IFS Cash &
Carry/Wholesale or QS Agency and IFS Broker**



Stand: 01.01.2025



1 General information

After consultation with the certification body, the regular QS system audit can be carried out in combination with audits of other standards. In the audit the auditor checks all QS requirements. The following table describes which QS-specific requirements need to be fulfilled within the guideline QS Wholesale Fruit, Vegetables and Potatoes (version 01.01.2022) that go beyond the requirements of the standards **IFS Food** (version 8 from 2023)/ **IFS Cash & Carry/Wholesale** (version 3 from 2024) or the standard IFS Broker (version 3.2 from 2024):



QS requirements that are not covered by the IFS standards









QS requirements that are partially but not completely covered by the IFS standard

Requirements that are relevant to agencies are identified by "(A)".

Note: The information mentioned in this supporting document has been carefully compiled but does not claim to be complete; no guarantee is given. The basis for the QS certification is always the currently valid guideline QS Wholesale Fruit, Vegetables, Potatoes.

2 QS-specific requirements

Number	Requirements
1 General scheme requirements	
<p>2.1.1</p> 	<p>General business data (A)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A company overview with all required master data (e.g. QS-ID, location number, production scope (first-line merchant, trading partner)) is available; data need to be kept updated. • Information on commissioned laboratories is available.
<p>2.1.2</p> 	<p>Use of the QS certification mark (A)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scheme participants are entitled to use the QS certification mark once they have been permitted to do so within the framework of a QS scheme contract. • Scheme participants may only deliver goods with the QS certification mark on the label or on the packaging, if their own location as well as the location of the recipient/reseller of the goods are eligible to deliver in the QS database. • Use of QS certification mark in accordance with the stipulations in the style guide. • Goods from producers with a GLOBALG.A.P. Option 2 certificate or with a GLOBALG.A.P. Option 1 Multisite with QMS certificate may only be labelled with the QS certification mark, if the producers are authorized for the usage. Producers that are not authorized for the usage of the QS certification mark on their products are marked as such in the QS database.

<p>2.1.3</p> 	<p>Incident and crisis management (A)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • QS and appropriate authorities need to be informed immediately about scheme-relevant critical events and public product recalls. • QS paper of incident is available. • Crisis manager is entered in the QS database.
<p>2.1.6</p> 	<p>Monitoring of test equipment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If there are no manufacturers specifications given, the test equipment has to be calibrated or checked in line with the personal estimation of the risk but at least once a year (approx. every 12 months). • If a calibration is not possible for certain test equipment, these must be serviced and maintained regularly.
<p>2.1.7 [K.O.]</p> 	<p>Conducting self-assessments (A)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compliance with the QS requirements must be checked annually (e.g. based on QS checklist)
<p>2.1.10</p> 	<p>Commissioning of logistics companies (subcontractors) (A)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Logistics companies that are commissioned to transport QS produce between QS scheme participants at stage wholesale/logistics and/or preparation/processing, or to store and in some cases pick goods, must be registered and approved in the QS database for either the logistics or wholesale or preparation/processing production scopes. • GMP+ certified companies that are eligible to deliver for the production scope "logistics" as well as companies that are certified according to the standard QS guideline Feed Sector and eligible to deliver for the production scope "road transport (feed)" may be commissioned for the transportation of unpackaged, loose potatoes and onions in bulk/big bags. • The principal/consignor (QS scheme participant) is responsible for fulfilling the requirements. He must inform the logistics company if the delivery involves QS produce. • In the case of short-term commissioning of additional logistics companies for the transport of QS goods within the framework of individual daily contracts (e.g.in the case of high seasonal volumes, goods from the spot market), this requirement may be deviated from. <p><i>Prerequisite:</i> companies must be committed to complying with the QS requirements (⇒ Guideline Logistics 2.3, 3, 5). The implementation of these requirements within each company (e.g. carriers) must be ensured through evidence and monitored using random sampling as part of their self-assessments.</p>

2.3 Good hygiene practice

2.3.1



Water quality

- Water, irrespective of origin or state, which has direct contact with unprocessed products (e.g.: washing water/process water) must be sampled in accordance with a risk-based plan (at least once per year (approx. every 12 months) for *E. coli* and Enterococcus (0 CFU/100 ml each).
 - Requirement to perform water analyses is only necessary when handling products that are suitable for raw consumption.
 - If limits are exceeded, measures to prevent product contamination must be defined and documented immediately.
- The water sample must be taken directly at the tapping point without removing any attached devices and inserts, without prior disinfection and without draining water. Sampling must be carried out by a qualified sampler.
- Only an accredited and officially approved laboratory may be commissioned to analyse the water samples.

2.3.3



Pest control

- Monitoring and bait points must be controlled at least once a month by qualified personnel provided no other control intervals were determined based on a risk assessment.
- Permanent baiting (without infestation) using rodenticides (anticoagulants) is only permissible in exceptional cases if it is carried out strategically by a pest controller or professional operative → exception case must be provided by a professional operative or pest controller via an annual risk analysis and risk assessment.

2.7 Staff hygiene

2.7.1



General rules of conduct

- If disinfectants are provided, signage with instructions on how to use the disinfectant must be displayed.

2.8 Training of staff

2.8.2



Information on the QS scheme (A)

- Responsible employees must be informed of the basic principles of the QS scheme and the proper use of the QS certification mark.

3.1 Incoming goods

3.1.3 also

3.2.3 (Storage), **3.3.3** (Cold storage rooms),

3.4.3 (Frozen storage rooms) **3.5.3** (Packaging/ redistribution),

3.6.3 (Order picking, outgoing goods/ shipping) **3.8.4** (Transport/ Logistics)



Ground clearance (2.6)

- Products may not come into direct contact with the floor. Containers containing or intended for food must not be directly on the ground.
Exceptions:
 - Certain storage systems and industrial containers
 - Loose potatoes and onions can be stored directly on the floor or in appropriate facilities if the floors or the material on which the products are being kept are in a hygienically sound, clean condition (exception: frozen storage rooms)

3.1.7 [K.O.] also

3.6.6 [K.O.] (Order picking, outgoing goods/ shipping)



Labelling of purchased/marketted QS produce (A)

- QS produce must be unambiguously labelled in the accompanying documents.
- QS produce can always be clearly assigned to the corresponding delivery notes and other accompanying documents. The same applies to the use of goods documents in electronic form.
- For labelling of QS produce customers and suppliers can alternatively agree upon general regulations or use of synonyms.
- Procedure of QS labelling must be documented in the company and reconcilable in the audit (also if no QS produce is traded).

3.1.9



Returns management (A)

- The separation of QS produce and non-QS produce must be observed when processing returns.
- In the case of returns of goods that are not legally marketable, the further handling of the goods or the disposal of the goods must be documented.

3.1.11



Quality requirements

- Compliance with the quality requirements and completeness of the goods must be randomly checked and documented.
- Potatoes: representative sample is to be taken before or while putting them into storage and at the end of long-term storage. Sample is to be examined and documented in line with the RUCIP rules and in Germany the Berlin Agreement and Leitfaden für die Qualitätskontrolle bei Speisekartoffeln (Guideline on quality control for food potatoes).

3.1.14 and **3.6.9** (Order picking, outgoing goods/ shipping)



Labelling of QS produce with an identification number (A)

- QS produce must be labelled with the OGK number, or another producer identification number stored in the QS database (e.g. QS-ID, GLOBALG.A.P. number (GGN) or global location number (GLN)) on the delivery note/accompanying documents or on the produce label (or box label).
- For batches that may contain produce from multiple producers due to the produce being combined as a consequence of bulk storage or technical packaging/preparation processes (e.g. sorting facilities), and for packages that may contain goods from multiple producers, the QS ID, GH No. or other identification number stored in the QS database for the packaging location (e.g. GGN, GLN) may be used.

3.2 Storage

3.2.4 also
3.3.4 (Cold storage rooms),
3.4.4 (Frozen storage rooms)



Stock management

- It must be quick and easy to identify which goods were stored and when.
- Goods are stored in batches; batches must be labelled.
- Varieties may not be mixed.

3.2.5 also
3.4.6 [K.O.] (Frozen storage rooms)



Best-before date

- It must be ensured that the best-before date (BBD) is observed; regular inspection must be guaranteed.
- Handling of goods with expired BBD must be handled according to internal guidelines; responsibilities are defined.

3.3 Cold storage rooms

3.3.5 [K.O.]



Temperature recording and monitoring

- Separate records on climate control and climate development in the warehouse are necessary for potatoes.

3.3.6 [K.O.]



Best-before date/use-by date

- It must be ensured that the BBD/use-by date is observed; regular inspection must be guaranteed.

- Handling of goods with expired BBD must be handled according to internal guidelines; goods with an expired use-by date may not be distributed.
- Responsibilities are defined.

3.6 Order picking, outgoing goods/shipping

3.6.5 [K.O.]



Inspection of outgoing goods

- A structured and comprehensible inspection of outgoing goods must be implemented.
- Before loading, the accompanying documents must be checked, the load must be reconciled (goods and packaging) as well as an inspection of the correct product labelling must be conducted.
- Quality controls of the goods and the labeling must be carried out on a random basis.
- QS produce is clearly identifiable and that no confusions may arise.

3.9 Treatment

3.9.1



Treatment and sorting

- QS produce are clearly identifiable and that no confusions may arise.
- Potatoes:
 - Before potatoes are removed from long-term storage, a representative sample must be taken to determine the internal and external tuber defects. Depending on the established results, a decision is made regarding the next steps for preparation and marketing.
 - Potatoes may only be removed from storage if the tubers are in a suitable condition.
 - Tuber grading/laboratory analysis results must be noted and documented in the inventory file.

3.9.2 [K.O.]



Post-harvest treatment and sprout suppressants

- Post-harvest treatment or application of chemical sprout suppressant must be documented.
- The statutory requirements of the country of destination, including the labelling on each of the packages and shipping units, must be adhered to.

3.10 Product-specific criteria for the storage of potatoes

3.10.1



Suitability of warehouse

- The structural and technical design of the warehouse must meet the requirements of potatoes in terms of protective handling.

3.10.2



Suitability of the equipment for incoming and outgoing goods

- Number and height of the steps at each transfer point must be as low as possible.
- Avoid strain on potato tubers.

3.11 Residue monitoring

3.11.1



Organisation of the residue monitoring (A)

- The organisation of the QS Residue Monitoring is familiar.

3.11.2 [K.O.]



Implementation of the residue monitoring (A)

- Participation in the QS residue monitoring is mandatory if QS produce is purchased.

Exceptions:

- Wholesale companies that do not own the goods but act solely as a service provider (e.g. washing, sorting, packing)
- Companies at the stage wholesale that are closely associated with their suppliers on the wholesale level in terms of organisation and company law.
- Compliance with the guideline Residue Monitoring and the Control Plan.
- The required number of samples is taken, the samples are entered into the QS database in due time and are completed by the commissioned laboratory.

4.1 Methods and control of traceability

4.1.1 [K.O.]



Methods of traceability (A)

- Information on traceability is available within 24 hours after contact to QS.
- Internal traceability processes must be structured during an audit in such a way that the respective information can be compiled within four hours.
- A valid list of all suppliers and customers must be available.

4.1.2 [K.O.]



Separation and identification of QS produce/non-QS produce

- A comprehensible system for separating QS produce from non-QS produce must be present.
- QS produce must be clearly identifiable at all times. It must be ensured that there is no possibility of confusion.

4.1.5 [K.O.]



Check on QS eligibility of delivery (A)

- Delivering companies must be clearly identified in the QS database as a location with eligibility of delivery at the time of handing over the goods. This also applies to agencies and to companies that handle and/or store products but do not own the goods.
- Delivering producers must also have eligibility of delivery for the corresponding production scope and, if applicable, the crop.
- If goods are labelled with the QS certification mark on the label or outer packaging, the location of the consignee/recipient of the goods must be identified in the QS database eligible to deliver.

Exceptions:

- *For service providers who do not become the owner of the goods (e.g. packing stations), the requirement is not relevant, as the verification of the eligibility of delivery has to be carried out by the ordering party.*

Explanations on the combined audit:
**QS Wholesale and IFS Food/IFS Cash & Carry/
Wholesale or QS Agency and IFS Broker**

QS Fachgesellschaft Obst-Gemüse-Kartoffeln GmbH

Managing Director: Dr. A. Hinrichs

Schwertberger Straße 14, 53177 Bonn

T +49 228 35068 -0

F +49 228 35068 -10

E info@q-s.de

Photo: QS

q-s.de