Scheme Overview

Scheme Year 2012

Gafta Promoting international trade

Scheme Overview

Effective from: 1st September 2012

Incorporating:
The GAFTA International Standard of Best Trade Practice for the trading and supply of Combinable Crops, Animal Feed Materials and Rice

Scheme Operating Protocols

Scheme Standards

GTAS Scheme Manual.
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1.0	**INTRODUCTION TO THE GAFTA TRADE ASSURANCE SCHEME** The Grain and Feed Trade Association (Gafta) is the international Association representing trading companies supplying grain, animal feed materials, pulses and rice world-wide (the 'trade'). The international commodities' chain of supply starts with the grower, whose crops are processed and consumed in a wide range of products. At every link of the supply and demand chain there are prospective sellers and buyers (traders) whose commercial interaction creates the international food and feed markets. The objective of the trade is to deliver safe and wholesome goods to satisfy its customers, and to assure that goods are being traded, handled and transported according to the best professional practices, to maintain consumer confidence. The GAFTA Trade Assurance Scheme (GTAS) which comprises the Gafta International Standard of Best Trade Practice, supported by the logistics best practice Manuals (in seven separate modules) and Certification (audit) process, covers each stage in the supply chain from farm in country of origin to the final delivery to end-user in the country of destination. The central pillar of the Gafta Trade Assurance Scheme is the requirement to apply HACCP principles at all stages of the trading, handling and transportation of goods (see 11.0 introduction to HACCP). The stages of the trading and supply chain are reflected in the following Manuals: • Trading and Merchanting • Brokerage • Bulk Storage and Handling • Transport by road • Analysis and Testing • Supervision, sampling and weighing • Fumigation and Pest Control
2.0	**TRADING AND MERCHANTING** The Gafta Trade Assurance Scheme includes best practice guidance comprising a set of minimum standards of best practice for companies and individuals operating as Traders or Merchants, who trade and handle goods, including imports and exports intended for use as food or feed. Traders are required to buy on written contract forms and only from suppliers operating under this standard or an equivalent standard approved by Gafta.
2.1	**Transport by sea, waterway, rail or container** Responsibility for the arrangement of the required transport by waterway, sea or rail is set out in the contract for the supply of goods. It is essential for the safety of the goods that a Loading Compartment Inspection (LCI) of the cargo hold be undertaken prior to the commencement of loading and security must be constantly maintained during the loading process. Traders will be audited to ensure that procedures are in place to ensure that the required standard of transport is arranged and that the correct procedures are followed to ensure the suitability of the modes of transport before commencing transport operations. For full details please see the Trading and Merchanting Manual
3.0	**BROKERAGE** The Gafta Trade Assurance Scheme includes best practice guidance on the operations and conduct of brokerage companies in accordance with the contracting parties' instructions and the GTAS Rules and Code of Conduct for Brokers. For full details please see the Brokerage Manual
4.0	**SUPERVISION, SAMPLING AND WEIGHING** The Gafta Trade Assurance Scheme provides best practice guidance on loading and discharge supervision operations to ensure that the quality and integrity of the goods are maintained throughout these operations under the supervisory role of the Gafta Approved/GTAS Certified Superintendent.

	Traders are required to appoint Superintendents in accordance with their contractual obligations. Where Gafta contracts apply this must be from the Gafta Register of Approved Superintendents. Where other types of contract apply this must be from the list of GTAS Certified Superintendents and/or from the Gafta Register of Approved Superintendents. Superintending operations must be undertaken in accordance with the applicable contract and any instructions given by the contracting parties. Written procedures must exist for sampling, testing and weighing operations. For full details please see the Supervision Manual
5.0	**ANALYSIS AND TESTING** Stores, silos and other handling places that have quality testing facilities must comply with the Code of Practice for Analysis and Testing Facilities that forms part of the Gafta Trade Assurance Scheme. The key points of control are the requirement for regular proficiency testing and the application of Rules and Code of Conduct concerning independence, neutrality, sub-contracting, sample retention and the issuing of reports/certificates. Where a facility has a small number of pieces of testing equipment which are: a) always serviced by the manufacturer or supplier, and b) where the samples to be tested require no preparation before testing, these may qualify as "small testing facilities" and can be subject to a simplified audit process. For full details please see the Analysis and Testing Manual
6.0	**FUMIGATION AND PEST CONTROL** The Gafta Trade Assurance Scheme provides best practice guidance for the implementation and management of a critical control programme necessary to protect against, monitor, and treat the ingress of pests into stores and stored commodities. In addition, the specialised area of fumigation is covered both in-ship and in-store or silo, where the best practice requires the use of fully trained GTAS certified fumigation experts. For full details please see the Fumigation and Pest Control Manual
7.0	**BULK STORAGE AND HANDLING** The Gafta Trade Assurance Scheme Manual of best practice must be followed for the storage and handling of combinable crops and dry, moist and liquid feed materials. It endeavours to ensure that the quality and condition of the goods when placed in store will be maintained throughout the storage period by the storekeeper in accordance with HACCP principles. Handling and storage must be performed by operators with clear management systems and rules as laid down in the Gafta Trade Assurance Scheme, or in accordance with an equivalent scheme recognised by Gafta that takes into consideration the legal requirements of competent authorities. For full details please see the Bulk Storage and Handling Manual
8.0	**TRANSPORT BY ROAD** Transport must be performed by operators with clear management systems and rules as laid down in the Gafta Trade Assurance Scheme or in accordance with an equivalent scheme recognised by Gafta that takes into consideration the legal requirements of the competent authorities. The best practice is provided on the transport of combinable crops and dry, moist and liquid feed materials to ensure that the quality and condition of the goods will be maintained and that the risk of contamination is eliminated, and where this is not possible, minimised and controlled. For full details please see the Transport by Road Manual
9.0	**SANITARY AND PHYTOSANITARY CONTROLS** Cross-border movements may require compliance with the importing country's Sanitary and/or Phytosanitary controls. Identifying the importing country's requirements is part of the Gafta Trade Assurance Scheme, to ensure that the trader can comply with the Sanitary/Phytosanitary controls for any importing country. The best practice is intended to ensure that significant costs and delays do not occur as a result of the refusal of import entry due to non-compliance with these rules. See Part 3 Guidance Notes

10.0	**CONTAMINANTS** Monitoring and control procedures for biological, physical and chemical contamination must be established. Biological, physical and chemical contamination must be in accordance with Maximum Residue Limits fixed by the legislation in country of destination. Where no national limits have been set the Maximum Residue Limits set by the Codex Alimentarius Commission shall apply.
11.0	**INTRODUCTION TO HACCP** The application of a HACCP risk assessed approach is central to the Gafta Trade Assurance Scheme with the aim of minimising losses, damage and contaminant risks. The HACCP system is a science-based systematic tool which identifies specific hazards and measures for their control to ensure the safety of food and feed. HACCP is a tool to assess hazards and establish control systems that focus on prevention rather than relying mainly on end-product testing. Any HACCP system is capable of accommodating change, for example in technological developments. A formal risk assessment must be carried out with the aim of identifying and controlling any hazards that might adversely affect the integrity of goods. The requirement for the application of HACCP is enshrined in EU Food and Feed legislation. GTAS is a HACCP based Assurance Scheme and a comprehensive set of guidance notes for HACCP can be found in Part 3 – Guidance Notes. The Gafta HACCP guidance is based on the principles outlined in: Codex Alimentarius Commission Document – 'Recommended International Code of Practice General Principles of Food Hygiene – CAC/RCP 1 – 1969, Rev.4–2003'. http://www.codexalimentarius.org/input/download/standards/23/CXP_001e.pdf **An alternative document is:** Campden & Chorleywood Food Research Association (CCFRA), Technical Manual No. 42- 'HACCP: A Practical Guide (Fourth Edition)'.
11.1	**Risk Assessment** In order to establish a risk assessment system, the applicant company must conduct the risk assessment study using personnel from all of the relevant operations and functions within the company.
11.2	**Defining Process Stages** The Risk Assessment must identify and record all of the process stages involved in the operations of the business from the start to the finish and must be in the form of a flow diagram of the operation/process.
11.3	**Hazard Analysis** The Risk Assessment must identify and record any possible chemical, physical or microbiological hazards that could adversely affect the materials being traded, recognising the nature of their products and their intended use. For practical purposes, the applicant company may wish to recognise 'prerequisites' for the HACCP Scheme they implement (i.e. specified, formal procedures that control potential hazards on a site-wide basis, such as pest control, glass policies, training, etc). Where this is the case, such prerequisites must be defined as part of the HACCP Plan and included in any auditing schedule established as a result of the HACCP Plan.
11.4	**Establish Critical Limits** The Risk Assessment must identify the Critical Limits for all of the hazards that have been identified and be able to show the basis on which the suitability of these Limits are based. Critical Limits must be set at levels such that the integrity of the traded materials is assured.
11.5	**Control Measures** For each process stage, the applicant company must either specify or reference the system/procedure that is in place that controls the operation. These are known as Control Measures and must be sufficiently robust to either prevent the occurrence of new hazards or detect/eliminate the presence of existing hazards. If these control measures were essential in detecting and eliminating hazards (i.e. the hazard would not be detected or removed at any later stage) then they are regarded as Critical Control Points (CCPs) and should be identified as such within the study.

11.6	**Actions When Hazards Are Not Under Control** Applicant companies must take suitable, prompt and effective remedial action when information shows that hazards are not within Critical Limits. The company must record the action taken and make sure that actions are designed to deal with the cause of the problem as well as the problem itself.
11.7	**Risk Assessment System Reviews** The company must carry out regular reviews of the Risk Assessment System to check whether the requirements of the System are being met and that the System effectively and consistently ensures that the company continues to assure the safety and integrity of the traded materials. At least one complete Audit must be carried out each year. A record must be kept of Risk Assessment System Audits showing the Risk Assessment findings and actions required. See Part 3 Guidance Notes
12.0	**TRACEABILITY AND LABELLING** Traceability is a way to retrospectively detect where problems occurred in the supply chain. Traceability is not the same as Identity Preservation (IP). Bulk commodities are produced in various production locations all over the world. Following production, commodities are transported either directly from the various production points to their destination or to a delivery or export point where they are loaded or stored awaiting shipment to their destination. In the case of fungible goods commodities from various production locations are co-mingled at the delivery or export point. In the case of single source goods, no co-mingling must take place. Each individual operator must maintain clear administrative records with relevant data for effective tracing of the goods from the delivery or export point to the point of destination. Labelling must be in accordance with labelling requirements in force in legislation and/or as required by the terms of the contract.
13.0	**EU LEGISLATIVE REQUIREMENTS** The Gafta Trade Assurance Scheme includes guidance notes for European Union (EU) importers of food and feed and exporters of these commodities located outside the EU. Traders need to be aware of their legislative requirements prior to entering into contract negotiations leading to a binding contract with a buyer or seller for goods to be imported into or exported from the EU. Implementing Codes of Practice such as GTAS help to ensure that safe food and feed is placed on the EU market and it is a requirement of GTAS that all the relevant national or international legislative requirements are met. Responsibilities under the contract terms need to be followed as well as those set out under EU law. The responsibilities of parties operating in the grain and feed trade are outlined and explained in these guidance notes as stipulated under EU law. All items of interest to the trade are covered including responsibilities and obligations, quality standards, labelling, hygiene requirements, trading GM food and feed, sampling and analysis etc. See Part 3 Guidance Notes
14.0	**RECALL AND WITHDRAWAL** Although every effort is made to minimise the risk of the production or placing on the market of unsafe goods, there are occasions when an accident or mistake occurs which may require the withdrawal or recall of goods in the market where the risk to the consumer is considered to be high. Under EU General Food Law, food and feed business operators that consider (or have reason to believe) that a food/feed which they have imported, produced, processed, manufactured or distributed does not comply with food/feed safety requirements, must immediately initiate procedures to withdraw the goods in question and must inform the competent authority. A product withdrawal or recall system is a fundamental component of a company's safety management system.
15.0	**GTAS RULES, REGULATIONS AND CODES OF CONDUCT** Professional conduct must be guided by basic rules of professional ethics and the adherence to all applicable laws and regulations, in order to uphold the integrity, honour, and dignity of the trading profession. GTAS Members are committed to ethical professional conduct and operate in good faith.

	The Gafta Trade Assurance Scheme sets out the required standard of professional conduct with detailed provisions made on conduct, the complaints procedure and disciplinary regulations.
16.0	**ARBITRATION AND DISPUTE RESOLUTION** The Gafta Trade Assurance Scheme aims to minimise disputes, however if a dispute does arise, all the relevant information on the procedure for arbitration and dispute resolution – Gafta Rules, Code of Practice, Criteria for Qualified Arbitrators and Mediators, is available from Gafta.
17.0	**CERTIFICATION** Companies involved in the trade are able to seek certification for compliance with the requirements of the Gafta Trade Assurance Scheme. Gafta may recognise other Schemes, verifications, and audits that satisfy the requirements of this Code of Practice. For details of any schemes that Gafta has approved as satisfying the requirements of the applicable GTAS manual(s) please refer to Gafta or to the Certification Body. The provision of certification against the scope of this scheme can only be carried out by an independent organisation that has been approved by Gafta for the purpose of so doing and where appropriate has achieved the appropriate accreditation for the provision of said certification. After the issuance to the applicant of the certificate of compliance and unique identification/registration number by the appointed auditing company, the applicant is entitled to use the GTAS Assured logo. Gafta will retain for its own records a list of companies attaining certification under the scheme. A database of GTAS Assured companies is available on the Gafta website, www.gafta.com. At the home page select the GTAS tab then click on GTAS Search, then follow the search instructions. For each scheme member the database will show the company name and address, identification of the scope of the certification (for which a company has been audited and certificated) and the expiry date of its current certificate. The applicant may not consider themselves as being 'GTAS Assured' until they have received their Certificate of Conformity and their unique identification/registration number. The auditing/certification procedure must be repeated annually. In case of a complaint against a GTAS certified company an initial investigation by the auditing company will be undertaken. Thereafter the Council of Gafta may elect to carry out an independent audit by a qualified audit company at its choice and expense. After receipt of the results of the audit, the Council of Gafta - operating under the Gafta disciplinary procedures - may in its absolute discretion decide the appropriate action to be taken, which may include the withdrawal of certification, removal from the GTAS database register and withdrawal of permission to use the GTAS Assured logo.
18.0	**REFERENCE MATERIAL** Within any best practice operation the use of reference material can prove invaluable for personnel. The Gafta Trade Assurance Scheme provides supporting reference material covering many aspects of the international grain and feed trades. The use of this supplementary information can enhance the best practice operations, and the skills and knowledge of the company. See Part 3 Annexes, Guidance and Rules

PART 3.

Supplementary information
(Annexes, Guidance and Rules) available on request from Gafta:

Annexes

- A-Z of Insurance
- Arbitration Code of Practice
- Distance Learning Programme
- Membership Complaints and Disciplinary Regulations
- Training/CPDP

Guidance

- Appropriations
- Carriage of Goods by Sea and Waterway
- Definitions
- EU Food and Feed Legislation
- GMOs/Organic products
- HACCP
- Letters of Credit
- Salmonella Monitoring Code of Practice
- Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures
- Fumigation and Pest Control

Rules

- Code of Conduct for Arbitrators and Mediators
- GAFTA membership - Rules, Regulations and Code of Conduct
- Insurance Terms No. 72
- Maritime Arbitration Rules No. 127
- Methods of Analysis No.130
- Sampling Rules No. 124
- Simple Dispute Resolution/Mediation
- Simple Dispute Resolution No. 126.
- Mediation Rules No.128.

Note: the list and availability of Annexes, Guidance and Rules may change from time to time in line with Gafta's policy of continuous updating and improvement.

DEFINITIONS

For the purposes of this Code the following definitions shall apply:

- "**animal feed materials**" - shall mean raw materials and straight feeds, feed additives, etc., (as defined under the applicable Feedingstuffs Regulations) intended as an animal feed material.
- "**biomass**" - shall mean the biodegradable fraction of products, waste and residues from agriculture (including vegetal waste and animal substances), forestry and related industries, as well as the biodegradable fraction of industrial and municipal waste to be used for the production of power.
- "**broker**" - shall mean a person or company acting as an intermediary between buyer and seller and drawing an agreed commission for services rendered. A Broker does not act as a principal in the transaction.
- "**COSHH**" - shall mean Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations.
- "**carrier**" - shall mean the shipping company, haulage company or operator of any vessel under this code.
- "**combinable crops**" - shall mean grain, pulses (peas and beans) and oilseeds (rapeseed and linseed), as-grown cereal seeds and herbage seeds (grass, clover, etc.), pulse seeds and oilseeds for seed processing.
- "**the Code of Practice for the Control of Salmonella**" - shall mean the Code of Practice for the Control of Salmonella during the storage, handling and transport of raw materials intended for incorporation into, or direct use as, animal feedingstuffs, current in the country where the code is being applied. In the absence of any such national code, the Gafta Code of Practice for Salmonella shall apply.
- "**the company**" - shall mean any company who is a principal in a transaction or for whom a service is being provided.
- "**co-mingling**" - where goods of the same description and quality are mixed in a common bulk.
- "**contamination**" - shall mean the undesired introduction of impurities of a chemical or microbiological nature or of foreign matter during production, sampling, packaging, storage or transport.
- "**contracting out**" - shall mean where a provider of services contracts out the responsibility for the performance of a contract that it has been given (including any required reporting and/or certification) in part or entirely to another suitably qualified company.
- "**critical (control) point**" - shall mean a point at which control can be applied in such a way that will prevent, reduce or eliminate a potential hazard to food and/or feed.
- "**derogated protein**" - shall mean fishmeal, dicalcium phosphate or tricalcium phosphate of animal origin or hydrolysed protein (as defined in the EU Transmissible Spongiform Encephalopathies [TSE] Regulations) which are prohibited in farmed animal feeds intended for ruminants but permitted in such feeds intended for non-ruminants.
- "**desk Trader**" - shall mean any trader, whether or not employing staff, but with no owned storage, laboratory or transport facilities.
- "**farmed animals**" - shall mean cattle, sheep, goats, deer, pigs, poultry, rabbits, horses, fish or any other animals which may be used for human consumption.
- "**farmed ruminants**" - shall mean cattle, sheep, goats or deer.
- "**feed" or "animal feed**" - shall mean any substance or product, including additives, whether processed, partly processed or unprocessed, intended to be used for oral feeding to animals.
- "**food**" - shall mean any substance or product, whether processed, partially processed, intended to be, or reasonably expected to be ingested by humans.
- "**fumigants**" - hall mean gases which are toxic to target infestations.
- "**fumigator**" - shall mean a contractor whose business it is to apply fumigants to eradicate infestations.
- "**fungible**" - movable bulk goods valued by weight or measure. May be replaced by other goods of the same description and quality.
- "**Gafta Approved Analyst**" - shall mean a laboratory engaged in the profession of sample analysis and the provision of analysis certificates. They carry out analysis in accordance with the Methods of Analysis Form No. 130, the Gafta Rules and Code of Conduct for Approved Registered Analysts for commodities traded on Gafta contracts. They are members of Gafta.
- "**Gafta Approved Superintendent**" - shall mean a company engaged in the profession of inspection. They carry out their duties in accordance with the respective contract terms, sampling rules and Code of Practice, inspection, verifications, examinations, quality and condition assessment, sampling measurements. They are members of Gafta.

- "**goods**" - shall mean all animal feed materials, combinable crops, finished products and processed materials for food and/or feed purposes.
- "**grower**" - shall mean the farmer producer of the raw materials.
- "**HACCP**" - shall mean Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points.
- "**haulier**" - shall mean the operator of any vehicle engaged in the transport of goods by road.
- "**hazard**" - shall mean a biological, chemical or physical agent that is in, or a condition of, food and/or feed.
- **"identity preservation"** - shall mean a system of production, handling and marketing practices that maintains the integrity and purity of goods.
- "**load compartment**" - shall mean the sub-divided part of the load carrying area of a bulk vehicle or vessel into which goods are loaded and transported.
- "**loading inspector**" - shall mean a person in a quality system who on the basis of training and experience has sufficient knowledge and expertise to inspect cargo spaces for suitability for loading the goods. The appointed person shall have certification or accreditation to perform this role.
- "**merchant**" - shall mean a trading business, employing staff operating with a combination of storage and/or laboratory and/or transport facilities.
- "**principal**" - shall mean the buyer or seller in a transaction.
- "**processed animal protein**" - shall mean meat and bone meal*, meat meal*, bone meal*, blood meal*, dried plasma* and other blood products*, hydrolysed protein, hoof meal, horn meal, poultry offal meal, feather meal, dry greaves, fishmeal, dicalcium phosphate and tricalcium phosphate of animal origin, gelatin and any other similar products including mixtures, feedingstuffs, feed additives and premixtures, containing these products. *whether of mammalian or non-mammalian origin.
- "**producer**" - shall mean a farmer, grower, processor or manufacturer of food or feed.
- "**[R]**" - the symbol [R] in the text indicates the requirement to keep a record.
- "**recall**" - the process by which the removal of an unsafe or illegal goods/product in the possession of the consumer is made.
- "**risk**" - shall mean a function of the probability of damage to goods or an adverse health effect and the severity of that damage or effect, consequential to a hazard.
- "**road haulage**" - shall mean all appropriate forms of transport including bulk tippers, bulk blowers, flat-beds, walking floor and bulk tanker vehicles used for any movement of goods by road.
- "**store**" - shall include any building, shed, silo, bin, tank or other container used to store goods.
- "**storekeeper**" - shall mean the operator of any store used to store goods.
- "**testing facility**" - shall mean any facility that operates testing or analytical apparatus for the purpose of establishing quality criteria not relating to Gafta contracts.
- "**trader**" - shall mean a desk trader or a merchant.
- "**traceability**" - shall mean the ability to establish and identify the source of supply of contractual goods.
- "**transport**" - shall mean any movement of goods by road, rail, inland waterway, shipment by sea or by container.
- "**undesirable substance**" - shall mean any substance or product, with the exception of pathogenic agents, which is present in and/or on the product intended for animal feed and which presents a potential danger to animal or human health or could adversely affect livestock production.
- "**vehicle**" - shall include trailers or other containers used to transport goods by road.
- "**vessel**" - shall mean ship, barge or coaster.
- "**withdrawal**" - the process by which the removal of an unsafe or illegal product from the supply chain is made, but does not involve the removal of product in the consumer's possession.

Scheme Operating Protocols

Effective from: 1st September 2012

	SCHEME OPERATING PROTOCOLS
1.0	INTRODUCTION The Gafta Standards offer the general public and consumers genuine assurance about the operation of the international grain and feed trade in relation to public safety, food and feed safety and the environment. These standards require the maintenance of comprehensive records of companies' activities and this is monitored by an independent certification company to verify compliance. Companies will only be certified if they can meet the appropriate standards. Certification to these standards is therefore conditional on a successful initial audit assessment and annual audit assessments thereafter. The certification system is an independent third party system for determining a company's conformity to the GTAS standards for trading and logistical services provided within the scope of the scheme manuals. The certification system requires examination of the trading process, the storage, handling, inspection, analysis and transport of traded goods, and assessment of the quality management system. Acceptance after initial assessment is followed by ongoing annual audits. Details of all applicants and their certification status will be forwarded to Gafta. The certification system is linked to a Certificate of Conformity and approved scheme marks. The mark is the property of the scheme owners, the Grain and Feed Trade Association and is issued, under licence, through NSF-CMi Certification Ltd. NSF-CMi Certification Ltd is appointed by Gafta as lead Certification Body under this scheme. From time to time, other Certification Bodies (CB) may be approved to audit and certify the GTAS scheme and be licensed to issue scheme marks.
2.0 2.1	APPLICATION NSF-CMi Certification Ltd or other approved CB will send companies wishing to be certified an application pack and supporting literature (schemes overview, operating protocol and manuals as appropriate).
2.2	Companies should make an application in respect of the manuals for which they wish to be audited for compliance.
2.3	Companies should complete the relevant form in full and submit it to NSF-CMi Certification Ltd or other approved CB, together with the appropriate fee. The owner of the business or a duly authorised employee must sign the form(s). By signing and returning an application form companies agree to be bound by the Scheme standards and operating protocols. The scheme owners reserve the right to alter the standards and operating protocols for schemes where, at their absolute discretion, they consider it necessary to do so and changes will be notified.
3.0 3.1	MEMBERSHIP New Applicants - Applications will be received at any time of the year and assessments will be carried out against the standards in force at that time. Renewal for Existing Members – Renewal of Certification will be conditional upon the receipt of the appropriate fee on or before the anniversary date of the scheme membership. Receipt of payment and signed renewal paperwork will be confirmation that the member will operate to the current scheme standards and operating procedures.
4.0 4.1	INDEPENDENT ASSESSMENT Routine surveillance assessment will be carried out annually at any time during the year.
4.2	Once the application or renewal form has been accepted, arrangements will be made for an assessment visit.
4.3	Assessment visits will normally be by appointment with the company, however, NSF-CMi Certification Ltd or other approved CB, reserves the right to make short notice or unannounced visits.
4.4	All participants agree to give employees and agents of NSF-CMi Certification Ltd or other approved CB, reasonable access to their business and relevant sites to carry out the assessment visits required. Failure to do so will result in the suspension of membership. Reasonable notice will be given of any routine assessment visit.

4.5	Once the assessment visit has been completed, NSF-CMi Certification Ltd or other approved CB, will either issue the applicant with a 'notice to remedy' for non-conformances or forward the assessment report for certification. Non-conformances will be graded as Major or Minor, defined as follows: **Major** - a substantial failure to meet any clause of the Standard **Minor** - a clause has not been fully met The level of non-conformity assigned by an evaluator against a requirement of the Standard is based upon evidence and observations made during the evaluation.
4.6 REV	**Key/other standards** Standards marked "K" indicate a "key" standard. If the assessor finds a major non-conformance against one of the key standards it will result in suspension of certification until it is put right. Non-conformances against "other standards" should not result in suspension provided they are corrected within the agreed timescale with the assessor (see 1.4.7). The CB also reserves the right to suspend certification in the case of a large number of non-conformances or in the event that the same non-conformances are found on successive assessment visits. Summary table:

Assessment outcome	Conforms	Major N/C	Minor N/C
Key Standards	Certified	Certificate suspended until rectified	Certificate not suspended but must be rectified

Assessment outcome	Conforms	Non-conformance
Other Standards	Certified	Certificate not suspended but must be rectified

4.7	Certificates may be granted to participants who have had an assessment against the appropriate GTAS Standard and have closed any non-conformances identified at the assessment. Non-conformances may be closed by submission of documentary evidence or by revisit. Non-conformances must be closed within 3 months of an initial audit assessment or 28 days for any subsequent audit assessment.
4.8	The company should inform NSF-CMi Certification Ltd. or other approved CB, once any non-conformance(s) has been remedied and submit documentary evidence. NSF-CMi Certification Ltd. or other approved CB may then arrange for a site revisit in circumstances where product integrity may be compromised. The costs associated with these procedures, including any additional visits will be borne by the company, but will be kept as low as reasonably possible.
4.9	Assessors may refuse to carry out an assessment in the presence of a third party who they believe will, intentionally or otherwise, influence its outcome in an inappropriate manner.
4.10	Certificates will be issued when the company meets the certification requirements. Certificates are not transferable and remain the property of issuing CB. Once a Certificate has been issued, a company may promote themselves as being 'GTAS Assured'.
5.0	SUSPENSION/TERMINATION OF MEMBERSHIP
5.1	Failure to supply satisfactory documentary evidence within 28 days of a surveillance assessment or pass a revisit where necessary will result in the company being suspended, and the database altered accordingly. All revisit costs will be bourne by the company.
5.2	NSF-CMi Certification Ltd. or other approved CB, reserves the right to suspend or withdraw certification when it considers that it is necessary to do so to prevent the Scheme from being brought into disrepute. Failure to reinstate from 'suspended' status within 28 days will result in withdrawal from the scheme.
6.0	APPEALS
6.1	In the event that a company feels they have been incorrectly assessed during an assessment visit, they have the option to ask, within 14 days, for a re-assessment by another assessor appointed by the CB. If the company's complaint is upheld, there may be no cost for this and any suspension of membership that may have been

	imposed will immediately be lifted. If the findings of the original assessment are corroborated, or if it is clear that the company has taken action in the interim that will materially affect the outcome of the re-assessment, the cost of the visit will be borne by the company. Any requests for re-assessment visits will be undertaken as soon as possible by the CB.
6.2	If a company still feels that they have been incorrectly assessed following the procedure outlined in 6.1 above, they will have the option of having their appeal heard by a panel convened for this purpose by the CB. This panel will consist of at least three persons and will normally include one person involved in grain and feed trade management, one person involved at another stage in the grain and feed industry and one person not directly involved in the areas covered by the Scheme. A company may either put their own appeal to the panel or nominate someone to do so on their behalf. In the latter case the Company will still be expected to attend the panel session. Both sides will endeavour to keep costs to a minimum. In the event that an appeal to the panel is upheld, all costs reasonably incurred by the appellant will be met by the CB. If an appeal is turned down, any costs reasonably incurred through the operation of the panel will be borne by the Company.
7.0	USE OF TRADE MARK AND/OR LOGO
7.1	Companies certified to the standards shall be permitted to indicate that they hold a certificate and, for that purpose only, shall be permitted to use on stationery, publicity materials, exhibition stands and signage, the Trade Mark and/or the Logo in accordance with directions from Gafta with regard to the use of the Trade Mark and/or the Logo. Certified participants agree to observe all such directions.
7.2	The above consent, in so far as it applies to use of the Trade Mark, is limited to using the entire designation "GTAS Assured" and, in so far as it applies to using the Logo, is limited to using the Logo in an identical form to that used by Gafta. The consent is personal to the certified participant and may not be transferred or licensed to any other business.
7.3	Certified participants shall not use (or authorise or license others to use) the Trade Mark and/or the Logo in any way outside the scope of the above consent and they shall not use or authorise or license others to use any name, mark, sign or device confusingly similar to the Trade Mark and/or the Logo nor file or cause to be filed any trade mark or company name registration applications containing or confusingly similar to the Trade Mark and/or the Logo. The certified participant will not oppose or cause any opposition to be filed to any trade mark applications filed by the Grain and Feed Trade Association, register the Trade Mark and/or the Logo anywhere in the world nor otherwise cause any question to be raised concerning the company's ownership of the Trade Mark and the Logo.
7.4	Gafta reserves the right, after giving one months notice or upon immediate notice if the certified participant fails to observe the directions of the Company with regard to the use of the Trade Mark or the Logo or if certification is suspended or terminated for whatever reason, to withdraw permission to use its Trade Mark or Logo to any certified participant.
8.0 REV	CERTIFICATION RULES The Grain and Feed Trade Association as owners of the Gafta Trade Assurance Scheme may contract with Certification Bodies (CB) to undertake assessments and certifications under the Scheme. Such agreements shall be set down in a contract to be retained by Gafta and the appointed Certification Body. Certifications under the Scheme meet EN 45011 ISO/IEC Guide 65 standards. Certification Bodies agree to meet certain requirements regarding administration and performance. These must include: • **Assessor competency** The CB may only utilise assessors for audits under the Gafta Trade Assurance Scheme that meet the following minimum set of criteria: Education and Technical Requirements: 1. Assessors must have had a minimum of 3 years work experience within the scope to be assessed and/or training within the scope of the scheme. 2. Have had formal recognized HACCP training. 3. Possess a formal qualification in agriculture, food or related biosciences. 4. Possess NPTC farm inspection or lead assessor qualification. 5. Demonstrable competency within the module of the standard to be assessed. 6. Have evidence of, and undertake ongoing training as required.

- **Training and evaluation of assessors**

Assessors must receive the appropriate training and evaluations in accordance with approved written procedures.

- **Rights of Scheme owner to perform audits at CB office**

Gafta has the right after giving reasonable notice, to attend at the offices of the Certification Body with the express purpose of auditing scheme assessments and certifications. The Certification Body shall provide its full cooperation and reasonable access to all scheme related documents for this purpose.

- **Rights of Scheme owner to supervision visits of CB**

Gafta has the right after giving reasonable notice to perform supervision visits of the Certification Body and/or undertake any witnessed audits it feels is appropriate.

- **Minimum number of audits per year per assessor**

Scheme assessors are required to undertake a minimum of 5 assessments per annum. Where an assessor does not meet the minimum requirement they are required to undertake further training before continuing with assessments under the scheme.

- **Minimum number of auditor training hours**

Training of assessors should be appropriate to the standard and meet UKAS requirements. It is envisaged that regular training seminars should be held by the CB. Assessors undertaking a minimum of 5 audits per annum are expected to participate in a minimum of 5 training hours per year.

- **Independence of auditor and audited company**

In order to prevent excessive familiarity with any single audited company, scheme assessors may not audit a company more than 5 times in succession. After a maximum period of 5 years the CB is obligated to instruct a different assessor to undertake these scheme audits.

- **Average audit times**

Scheme assessors are not constrained by any time limits for conducting assessments under the Gafta Trade Assurance Scheme. Assessors are required to take any reasonable time to complete scheme audits in accordance with scheme requirements and charge for this service accordingly. Assessments for compliance with the scheme protocols vary on a site to site basis. As an indication for planning purposes, under normal conditions (which assume an average standard of working practices and written procedures) the following times taken per assessment visit may be expected to apply:

Trading and Merchanting Manual – 3 hours
Transport by Road (medium/large operation) - 2-3 hrs
Transport by Road (owner/driver, small operation) – 1-2 hours
Storage and Handling (small store) – 2-3 hours
Storage and Handling (large store) – 3-4 hours
Analysis and Testing (small laboratory facility linked to store) – 1 hour.
Analysis and Testing – (full laboratory facility) – 3 hours
Supervision Manual – 3 hours
Fumigation Manual – 2 hours

9.0 REV

Where a CB demonstrably does not meet its scheme delivery requirements the Council of Gafta may elect to carry out an independent audit by a qualified audit company at its choice and expense. After receipt of the results of the audit, the Council of Gafta - operating under the Gafta disciplinary procedures - may in its absolute discretion decide the appropriate action to be taken, which may include the withdrawal of the rights to conduct assessments and issue certification under the scheme.

10.0

CONFIDENTIALITY

All references to agents of Gafta refer only to those persons appointed, employed or contracted by Gafta to provide computing and/or database services or in connection with such services as are required to maintain the database.

10.1

Details of registered participants are held on a database. Where an enquirer is able to quote the name and address or name and registration number of a certified participant The Grain and Feed Trade Association or its agents will confirm the member's certification status, and the GTAS Manuals to which they refer. No other specific information will be given without the permission of the certified participant.

10.2	The Grain and Feed Trade Association and its agents reserve the right to also release information from its database about the certification status of a participant to a person (for example such as The Food Standards Agency) with a legitimate interest in knowing that information if proof of certification might be in the member's interest. The member accepts that information about his lack of certification status may be revealed under the provisions of this paragraph.
10.3	The Grain and Feed Trade Association may produce and publish statistical reports drawing upon aggregated Scheme data so that individual data cannot be traced back to individual applicants or members.
10.4	Participant data may be retained on the above mentioned databases and will be treated as specified above for up to 5 years after a person has ceased to be a member of The Grain and Feed Trade Association Scheme.
11.0	**DISCLAIMER**
11.1	Under no circumstances will The Grain and Feed Trade Association or its employees or agents (e.g. NSF-CMi Certification Ltd. or other approved CB) be liable for any losses, damage, charges, costs or expenses of whatever nature (including consequential loss) which any producer may suffer or incur by reason of or arising directly or indirectly out of the administration by The Grain and Feed Trade Association or its employees or agents or the performance of their respective obligations in connection with the standards save to the extent that such, loss, damage, charges, costs and, or, expenses arise as a result of the finally and judicially determined gross negligence or wilful default of such person.
11.2	If any competent authority considers that any of the operating protocols are unreasonable, then the operating protocols shall be taken to be varied in such a way as shall make them reasonable but no other part of the operating protocols shall be affected.
11.3	These operating protocols represent the entire understanding between companies operating in the grain and feed trades and The Grain and Feed Trade Association and each company acknowledges that they have not relied upon any other statement (written or oral) in applying to be certified to the standards.

Gafta Promoting international trade

LONDON
9 Lincoln's Inn Fields
London
WC2A 3BP
United Kingdom

T: +44 20 7814 9666
F: +44 20 7814 8383
E: post@gafta.com
W: www.gafta.com

BEIJING
Leading International Center,
No.1 Guang Qu Men Nan Xiao Jie
ChongWen District, 100061,
Beijing China

T: +86 10 6712 1741
F: +86 10 6712 1742
E: beijing@gafta.com
W: www.gafta.com.cn

GENEVA
8 Rue de la Cloche
1201 Geneva
Switzerland

T: +41 22 715 24 30
F: +41 22 731 72 79
E: geneva@gafta.com
W: www.gafta.com

KIEV
8 Saperno Slobidska Street
Kiev
03039
Ukraine

T: +380 44 524 0329
F: +380 44 524 0231
E: kiev@gafta.com
W: www.gaftakyiv.com