

Final Unannounced Recertification Audit Protocol

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4.5 Unannounced Re-certification Audit

Within three (3) certification cycles the certification body shall conduct one (1) unannounced re-certification audit of the supplier. The unannounced audit shall occur in the supplier's facility within the sixty (60) day re-certification window (i.e., the anniversary date of the initial certification audit +/- thirty (30) days). Currently certified SQF suppliers shall be required to undertake one (1) unannounced audit within the three (3) year certification cycle.

- i. The supplier's certification cycle begins with the initial certification audit date. Unannounced re-certification audits shall occur once in every three (3) certification cycles.
- ii. Unannounced audits shall not be conducted on the initial certification audit or on a surveillance audit.
- iii. If a supplier changes certification bodies, the supplier's unannounced re-certification audit schedule shall not change.
- iv. The unannounced re-certification audit shall follow the protocol under the SQF Code, Part A, section 4.3 and 4.4.
- v. Multi-site suppliers are exempted from unannounced audits.
- vi. The date of the unannounced audit shall be determined by the certification body within the 60 day re-certification audit window. vii. The unannounced audit year shall be determined between the supplier and certification body.
- viii. A defined blackout period shall be established by negotiation between the supplier and their certification body that prevents the unannounced re-certification audit from occurring out of season or when the facility is not operating for legitimate operational reasons.
- ix. Immediate suspension of the supplier certificate shall occur in facilities that refuse entry to the auditor for an unannounced audit.