

# Freshcare Certification Guidebook

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**Revision History**

Rev No	Revision Date	Author	Approved by	Page No	Sec. No	Brief Description of Change
1	June 2017	Stephanie Vincent	Stephanie Vincent			New
2	December 2018	Luanshya Naidoo	Alison Lord	ALL	ALL	Revised guidebook to align with updated Freshcare Scheme requirements and addition of Freshcare Supply Chain
3	November 2019	Luanshya Naidoo	Alison Lord	ALL	ALL	Revised guidebook to align with updated Freshcare Scheme requirements
4	December 2019	Luanshya Naidoo	Alison Lord	ALL	ALL	Revised scheme manual to with feedback from JAS-ANZ

**Related Documents**

Document Number	Title
PP1030	Freshcare Scheme Manual
PF627	Freshcare Checklist and Report template
PF1070	Freshcare: Supply Chain Audit Checklist

## **1 Introduction**

This Certification Guidebook is designed to assist your organization on the requirements for certification to the Freshcare program. Freshcare Ltd (Freshcare) is a national, industry owned, not for profit program designed for business in the fresh produce and associated cropping sectors.

## **2 Accreditation status**

BSI holds accreditation for the Freshcare Food Safety and Quality and Supply Chain standard with JAS-ANZ. This scheme follows the requirements of ISO 17065:2012.

## **3 The certification process**

The following section outlines the steps that apply during the BSI recognition process for the Freshcare program.

### **3.1 Initial inquiry and proposal**

BSI will respond to either verbal or written expressions of interest from organizations interested in one or more of our programmes. If your organization is located near a BSI office, an advisory visit may be arranged to discuss your certification requirements and how BSI can help your organization achieve them.

BSI will also, on request and receipt of a Service Request Form, prepare a proposal tailoring our services to your organization's needs. The proposal includes a copy of the BSI Standard Terms and Conditions. This document (Freshcare Certification Guidebook) is an addendum to the Standard Terms and Conditions and outlines additional contractual requirements that your organization is required to follow to ensure certification, once achieved, is maintained.

Receipt of the signed proposal along with the accompanying payment of the non-refundable application fee forms the contract between your organization and BSI.

Your organization is required to be registered on the Freshcare database before BSI can progress the application (Refer to the Freshcare Rules).

### **3.2 New Client Set Up**

Your client details and requirements will be entered into our database and a Client Services Officer (CSO) will be appointed to look after your certification and assessment requirements. Your CSO will be your primary point of contact with BSI and their responsibility is to ensure that our services are delivered to your organization in the most effective manner possible.

If you are working with a consultant it is often useful for that person to be party to the communication process.

### **3.3 Evaluations**

#### **3.3.1 Arranging the evaluation**

Your CSO will arrange your evaluation assessment with you. We will try and book as far in advance to ensure that your organization can have flexibility in terms of assessment dates. An auditor will be

assigned to you to conduct this activity who has the correct approvals to conduct your assessment and they will be experienced in your industry sector.

Your CSO will ask you to confirm the type of audit (announced or unannounced), business's scope of operations including categories, crops/ produce groups as per your Freshcare registration and in accordance with the Freshcare Crop list.

You will also need to confirm that the assessor will be able to witness the business operations:

- a) Food Safety and Quality: audit activities will take place in the harvest season or as close to harvest as practically possible. If the audits take place prior to harvest commencing, a follow up visit may be required during production or proof of compliance via other means may be required.
- b) Food Safety and Quality - Supply Chain: audit activities will take place during operational months
- c) Environmental: audit activities will take place during operational months

Once the evaluation date has been confirmed we will send you a confirmation letter which outlines the details relating to the assessment. This letter also serves as the agreement to conduct the assessment. Your organization is not required to respond to this letter however, no contact from your organization is taken to be agreement.

If, for some reason, you are not happy with the auditor that we have assigned to complete your assessment let us know as soon as possible and we will make arrangements for another auditor.

A requirement of the Freshcare program is to rotate auditors every three (3) years. This allows a fresh set of eyes on your business so we can help you improve.

### 3.3.2 Evaluation audit

All auditors are required to follow a standard process on every audit they conduct as outlined in Conducting a BSI Assessment procedure as appropriate for this program.

At the start of the audit an entry meeting will be conducted. This is an opportunity for the auditor to meet the key people within your organization and to ensure that both you and the auditor are in agreement with regards to the scope of the assessment.

The auditor will re-iterate the audit process that they will be following and outline the non-conformances that could be raised and what will occur if a critical non-conformance is identified.

The audit process involves interviews with key personnel including people involved in the monitoring and measuring activities and the auditor is required to record their findings as evidence of what has been looked at.

The auditor is required to advise your organization of their findings and areas of non-conformance as the audit progresses.

At the end of the audit the auditor needs to have a period of time to collect their thoughts prior to conducting an exit meeting. The exit meeting is a short meeting to report the findings from the audit and outlines the timeframes and process for close out of the non-conformances.

As your third party certification body, BSI is not able to provide any solutions to any of the non-conformances or observations that are raised.

The auditor will have a Freshcare checklist that needs to be completed during the audit. The checklist is BSI's record of what was audited during the assessment.

### **3.3.3 Audit Report**

At the document review there may be some Findings identified where your organization does not meet the requirements of the Freshcare Program. These will need to be addressed within the timeframe that Freshcare has set for their program.

The interim report is reviewed by an independent person at BSI to ensure that the auditor has completed all the requirements before the final report can be sent to your organization.

Your audit report will be uploaded to FreshcareOnline by BSI following the audit. Your audit report may also be read by JAS-ANZ as part of BSI's accreditation audit process.

### **3.4 Additional Audits**

Additional audits may be required by Freshcare if there are complaints relating to your organization or as part of their routine compliance activities. These audits may be carried out as an announced audit or unannounced.

### **3.5 Non-conformities**

If non-conformities have been raised during your organizations' these are minors, majors or critical corrective actions.

Each corrective action ratings have different time frames for actions.

#### **3.5.1 Critical non-conformances**

A critical non-conformance is raised when an issue presents an immediate risk to food safety or to the environment, or when the integrity of the Freshcare Program has been compromised.

The auditor will inform the Compliance & Risk department of a critical non-conformance raised during an audit. The Compliance & Risk department will immediately notify Freshcare and the relevant health authorities if required (within 24 hours), isolation of product and/or termination of production until the instance is thoroughly investigated and rectified.

Critical non-conformance is required to be addressed immediately to ensure that the product/s affected has been appropriately managed. The critical non-conformance will then be re-raised as a major non-conformance to address the processes that were involved in the critical situation occurring.

The business is immediately suspended whilst a resolution is determined to close or downgrade the Critical non-conformance. A re-audit (follow-up audit) may be required.

#### **3.5.2 Major non-conformances**

A major non-conformance is raised when there is the potential to compromise food safety, the environment or the integrity of the Freshcare Program.

*For Freshcare – Food Safety and Quality:*

Compliance with the majority of Freshcare elements is considered essential to certification.

If a major non-conformance is not resolved within the nominated 28 day period, the business's certification status will be placed in 'Certification Pending' within the Freshcare database until such time as the corrective action(s) are addressed

If major non-conformances are not resolved within 6 months of audit, the audit is deemed to have lapsed

*For Freshcare – Food Safety and Quality – Supply Chain:*

A major non-conformance is required to be addressed within 14 days of the last day of the assessment

If the major non-conformances are not resolved within the nominated 14 day period, the business's certification status will be placed in 'Certification Pending' within the Freshcare database.

If major non-conformances are not resolved within 6 months of audit, the audit is deemed to have lapse

### **3.5.3 Minor Non-Conformance**

A minor non-conformance is raised when the issue is not likely to directly impact on food safety or the environment or the integrity of the Freshcare Program, but still is of a nature that requires the business to act.

*For Freshcare – Food Safety and Quality:*

A minor non-conformance does not impede certification.

A minor non-conformance must be addressed within 28 days of audit, if a minor non-conformance is not resolved within the nominated 28 day period, it becomes a major non-conformance. The business must then address the non-conformance as outlined under Major CARs above.

*For Freshcare – Food Safety and Quality – Supply Chain:*

A minor non-conformance must be addressed within 28 days of audit, if a minor non-conformance is not resolved within the nominated 28 day period, it becomes a major non-conformance. The business must then address the non-conformance as outlined under Major CARs above.

*For Freshcare – Environmental*

These are required to be closed out prior to or at the next assessment.

A corrective action plan outlining the correction, root cause analysis and corrective are to be provided to BSI within 28 days of the assessment.

If a minor non-conformance is not addressed by the next external audit, it becomes a major non-conformance. The grower must then address the corrective action as outlined under major non-conformance above.



### **3.5.4 On-going non-conformities**

Corrective Action Plans (CAPs) are required to be sent to BSI (food.division@bsigroup.com) within the stated time frame along with appropriate information to support the actions taken.

The client manager will review the information provided and will determine if this is sufficient to close out the corrective action.

It is your organization's responsibility to respond to the non-conformities detailed in your audit report by the designated time frame. Failure to do so may result in suspension or cancellation of your certification.

### **3.6 Certification decision**

Following the audit your client manager will make a recommendation for the outcome of the assessment. The audit outcome may be determined to be acceptable or not acceptable.

The verification decision is made by the BSI the independent technical reviewer who are specifically trained in the scheme and accreditation requirements. The decision is based on the evidence provided to them through the audit report and the audit evidence that is documented during the assessment.

It is independent technical reviewer who makes the decision for your organization to be certified.

#### *For Freshcare – Food Safety and Quality and Supply Chain:*

Certification and re-certification shall only be granted once all non-conformances have been corrected and the corrections verified by the independent technical reviewer. The audit report, is then uploaded onto the FreshcareOnline as the final version.

#### *For Freshcare –Environment:*

Certification and re-certification shall only be granted once all critical and major non-conformances have been corrected and the corrections verified by the independent technical reviewer. The audit report, is then uploaded onto FreshcareOnline as the final version.

### **3.7 Certificates**

When your organization has achieved certification, BSI will provide you with a Freshcare electronic certificate that is created and issued using FreshcareOnline. The certificate is a statement that your organization has achieved certification to the relevant standard(s). The certificate will include important information including your organizations;

- Business Name;
- Freshcare Standard;
- Certificate number;
- Scope of Certification;
- Category;
- Certified sites;
- Crops;

- Audit dates, Expiry dates etc.
- Signature of a responsible BSI person

Your certificate should be displayed where it will be seen by customers and potential customers. When copies or elements of the certificate are used in tenders or offered to potential or existing customers, the entire certificate should be provided.

When certificates are presented in part not all of the information that reflects your certification status is sent and this could be misleading

All original certificates remain the property of BSI Group ANZ Pty Limited and must be returned on request.

### **3.8 Scope of Certification**

The scope of certification fully details the scope of your organization's certification in terms of:

- Names and addresses of all locations covered by the certification;
- Achievement of certification to the relevant standard(s) or code(s) of practice;
- The capability statement (range of products, services, and activities) for each location covered by the certification and;
- Any specific exclusions from the scope of certification

Clients are obliged to ensure that BSI has been formally briefed in a timely manner when any variations occur. Clients should not wait until the next scheduled assessment to notify BSI. Failure to do so may compromise the organization's certification status.

The Freshcare Business status can be searched using the Freshcare "Certified Business Search" which is publically available on the Freshcare website.

### **3.9 On-going audits**

Once your organization has become certified your organization will require annual re-certification audits. These are required to be scheduled up to 60 days prior to the certification anniversary. Audits are also to be scheduled to coincide with harvest and for Freshcare Supply Chain, the certification anniversary month must coincide with operational months (the period of supply/handling of the main product lines by the supply chain business).

Requests for changing the anniversary month can be made by the client directly to Freshcare.

Your organization is responsible for scheduling the assessment with your CSO.

Where required the BSI shall ensure that, irrespective of the defined minimum audit frequency, there is a process in place to undertake additional surveillance audits, if in the opinion of BSI such audits are necessary to protect the interests and integrity of the Freshcare Program. These may be conducted unannounced or announced at the discretion of the Certification Body.

**Unannounced Audits Program (preferred option)**

The unannounced audit program option is available for Freshcare Food Safety and Quality audits.

The business can choose to either have unannounced or announced audits and this can be changed by the business prior to their re-certification audit, with agreement of BSI. The business shall request this in writing no later than 70 days ahead of the expiry of their certificate.

All unannounced audits shall meet the following criteria:

- Shall be conducted to the requirements of the Freshcare Rules (7 – Audit Process)
- BSI shall provide the business the expected audit window (Certificate expiry date minus 60days) as part of the contract and or audit plan for audit service
- BSI shall allow the business to submit request for approval for blackout dates for up to 14 days of non-operational activities per audit activity

The report of the audit activity shall stipulate whether the audit was unannounced or announced and this shall be recorded in FreshcareOnline.

**3.10 Variations to certification**

Your organization is required to ensure that Freshcare is informed of any changes to the registered business as this will likely require an evaluation and re-submission of your Freshcare Program.

BSI also requires your organization to formally advise us of any changes that occur. Failure to do so may compromise your organization's certification status.

Variations to certification may originate from:

- Variations to the scope of certified product
- Changes to the premise and equipment
- Changes to the CCPs
- Major nonconformities
- Voluntary withdrawals
- Withdrawal or suspension of certification by BSI
- Change of certification scope
- Change of ownership
- Change of management
- Change of company name
- Change of ABN etc.

### 3.11 Changes affecting certification

New or revised scheme requirements issued by Freshcare will be communicated to your organization by Freshcare. All changes are notified on FreshcareOnline.

BSI is required to ensure that your organization has implemented these changes within a timeframe agreed with Freshcare. Certified clients are obligated to advise BSI in writing of changes to their business as per the Standard Terms and Conditions. Changes include;

- Scope
- Crop Site
- Business Ownership
- Constitution
- Management Personnel
- Key Contact

BSI is required to notify Freshcare via FreshcareOnline **in a timely manner** following notification.

### 3.12 Suspension or refusal of certification

Suspension is a temporary hold on your certification which means that no product/s can be produced, supplied or handled by your organization during that period.

When an organization's certification is suspended the organization shall, for the period of suspension or refusal:

- Withdraw and cease to use any advertising or promotional material that promotes or advertises the fact that the organization is certified
- Ensure that all copies of certificates and scopes of certification are removed from areas of public display and
- Cease to use the certification mark on stationery and other documents including media and packaging that are circulated to existing and potential clients, or in the public domain

The organization shall advise BSI in writing of action taken with respect to the requirements listed above;

- BSI shall advise the organization in writing of the certification processes that will need to be completed to restore certification; and
- During the period of suspension the organization shall continue to pay all fees levied by BSI

Your organization is required to ensure that BSI is aware of any changes to your certification status.

#### 3.12.1 Enforced by BSI

In the event that your organization is unable to comply with the requirements of the Freshcare Program, BSI may refuse to grant certification or suspend your current certificate.

The decision to refuse certification, and the grounds for that decision, will be communicated to your organization in writing.

Reasons for BSI enforcing a suspension include;

- Failure to pay for services provided by BSI
- Providing misleading information about your certification status
- Breaching the BSI Standard Terms and Conditions
- Failing to close out non-conformances

### **3.12.2 Voluntarily by your organization**

Where your organization wishes to voluntarily suspend your certification you will need to advise BSI. BSI is obligated to advise Freshcare as soon as possible.

### **3.12.3 Re-instatement of certification**

When your organization is ready to reinstate certification an audit is required to be undertaken to ensure that your Freshcare Program is still in operation.

Any changes that may have occurred during the period of suspension are required to be notified to Freshcare and BSI. An audit may also be required to re-instate the certificate.

### **3.13 Cancellation or transfer of certificate**

Your organization is required to advise BSI and Freshcare if you are cancelling certification.

If your organization is transferring to a different certification body it is important to advise BSI of this as there are processes that BSI is required to follow to allow the transfer to occur.

When your organization's certification is cancelled or has transferred, you shall immediately:

- Cease any advertising and promotional activities that promote the fact that the organization holds certification
- Withdraw and cease to use any advertising and promotional material that promotes the fact that the organization holds certification
- Cease to use relevant certification marks in any way to promote the fact that the organization holds certification and
- Return all certificates and pay outstanding fees

### **3.14 Reduction in scope of certification**

When an organization's scope of certification is reduced, BSI shall issue revised certificates and scopes of certification as appropriate and the certified organization shall:

- Return all superseded certificates
- Ensure that use of the certification mark is adjusted to reflect the reduced scope of certification
- Ensure that all advertising and promotional activities and materials are adjusted to reflect the reduced scope of certification and
- Pay any fees that are applicable for the facilitation of this activity

A reduction in scope includes removing products from the scope or removing sites.

#### **4 Use of the BSI certification mark**

You are entitled to use the appropriate BSI 'Kitemark' whilst you maintain certification to this program with BSI. For a copy, visit our website at [www.bsigroup.com](http://www.bsigroup.com)

Use of the logo is subject to Condition and rules of its application.

#### **5 Use of the JAS-ANZ logo**

Organisations that have been granted certification to the Freshcare Program by BSI are entitled to use the JAS-ANZ Accreditation Symbol. The rules for the use of this mark are governed by JAS- ANZ. The JAS-ANZ Accreditation Symbol is required to be used in alongside the BSI Accreditation mark at all times.

Your organisation is required to use the specifications and use of the JAS-ANZ Accreditation Symbol described in the following hyperlink -

<https://www.bsigroup.com/LocalFiles/EN-AU/JAS-ANZ%20Mark%20Use%20Guidelines.pdf>

#### **6 Use of the Freshcare Logo**

Freshcare encourages organizations to use their logo and the Freshcare name. The requirements for using these are outlined in Freshcare Logo Style Guide Specifications Ref 1604 which is available from Freshcare.

#### **7 Standard owner information**

Freshcare Ltd is the scheme owner.

BSI is obligated to advise the Freshcare as soon as practical of;

- Any unacceptable outcome from a certification decision relating to your organization
- Any critical non-compliance identified by BSI

#### **8 Feedback**

Freshcare may contact your organization directly to seek feedback on the performance of the auditor or BSI.

#### **9 Confidentiality**

BSI will treat all information in accordance with the Privacy Amendment (Enhancing Privacy Protection) Act 2012.

All information of a confidential nature relating to your organization that is disclosed to BSI in connection with the Services will be maintained as confidential for 6 years after it has been received and it will not be disclosed except where BSI is;

- conducting its obligations under the Terms and Conditions;

- asked to release information by any governmental or other regulatory authority of accreditation authority;
- instructed by a court or other authority of competent jurisdiction

BSI is not required to notify your organization of such disclosure and cannot oppose to any demand made by your organization.

## 10 Additional obligations

Following certification, there are a number of managerial responsibilities which your organization will need to observe to maintain BSI's certification. These include:

- Continued compliance with the relevant systems standard(s) or code(s) of practice;
- Compliance with the BSI Standard Commercial Terms and Conditions and obligations as specified in this document as well as other guidance documentation that may be specifically provided from time-to-time;
- Conduct regular internal reviews of your system, with appropriate documentation of such reviews and of any subsequent corrective actions;
- Notification to BSI of any significant changes in the structure (key responsibilities and management system), ownership and operations of your organization to enable the impact of such changes on the certified ownership system to be evaluated; and
- Notification to BSI of any litigation or serious events or matters that relate to the scope of your certification. In the event of a serious food safety incident resulting in a customer recall or stop supply, you shall inform Freshcare and BSI in writing within 48hrs.

### 10.1 Freshcare fees

Freshcare charges a certification fee and a Royalty fee. These are both paid directly to BSI. Payment of these fees is a requirement for your organization to participate in the Freshcare program.

#### 10.1.1 Certification Fee

BSI is required to charge a certification fee and royalty fee to clients, this is remitted to Freshcare. This fee is charged through your Annual Management Fee (AMF) which is invoiced in September each year.

#### 10.1.2 Royalty Fees

A royalty fee is also payable to Freshcare by BSI for every audit conducted and reported regardless of the outcome of the audit. The royalty fee is automatically calculated by Freshcare as audits are reported. The royalty fee will be added to your invoice.

### 10.2 Complaints

Your organization is required to keep a record of all known complaints. These records must be made available to the audit team and BSI when requested.

Your organization is required to demonstrate that you have taken appropriate action to address these complaints through investigation and correct any deficiencies found. These actions must be documented.

### **10.3 Certification guidebook**

Your Organization is required to meet the requirements of this Certification Guidebook. This requires that your organization and products remain compliant with the scheme requirements and the conditions of certification at all times.

Your organization is required to implement appropriate changes as communicated by BSI in a timely and appropriate manner.

### **10.4 Assessment scheduling**

Your organization is required to make all necessary arrangements to allow the evaluation and surveillance activities to take place. This includes but is not limited to; Equipment, Product, Locations, Personnel and Sub-contractors.

### **10.5 Misleading statements**

Your organization is not permitted to use its certification in a manner that could bring BSI or Freshcare into disrepute. This includes making misleading or unauthorized statements.

If you are unsure if a statement could be misleading, you are advised to contact BSI prior to making the statement. Statements include, but are not limited, to the use of the logo on non-certified product, advertising (including your website) and internal communication.

Where BSI becomes aware of their logo or name being used in a misleading manner BSI is obligated to disclose the instance to Freshcare.

If your organization is required to provide copies of your certification documents, these must be reproduced in its entirety. Failure to do so may be misleading to the recipient as to the scope of certification.

### **10.6 Observers**

From time to time BSI requires an observer to be in attendance at an audit. This may be related to training of new staff, witness assessment of existing staff, accreditation bodies and scheme owners. It is a requirement of certification that your organization allows these activities to occur. The Observer does not take an active part in an assessment.

Failure to allow this activity to occur may result in cancellation of your certification.

BSI will, at all times, ensure that the use of observers is kept to a minimum and your organization will be advised prior to the assessment activity.



## 11 Complaints and reconsideration of verification decision

Appeals against certification decisions and/or complaints against service delivery levels may be raised with your Client Manager. If you remain dissatisfied, contact the BSI General Manager Technical and Operations in writing.

All complaints will be investigated and the originator of a complaint will be advised of the outcomes, as appropriate.

BSI will also investigate legitimate documented complaints, relevant to operation of the system, from customers of certified organizations and the accreditation body. Certified organizations shall, at all reasonable times, provide representatives of BSI with access to its premises and records for the purposes of investigating such complaints.

Complaints relating to BSI's performance may also be made directly to Freshcare.

### 11.1 Appeals

If your organization's application for certification has been refused; or your certified organization's certification has been suspended, withdrawn, or reduced in scope, you may appeal against the decision to a Review Committee constituted and operated as set out below:

- The appellant shall, within 15 working days of the provision of the BSI Certification Report, lodge an appeal as to the grounds of appeal with the BSI Group ANZ Pty Ltd.'s General Manager – Technical and Operations in writing.
- BSI is required to consider the decision within 20 working days of receiving the appeal.
- Where appropriate, the appeal review may be considered by a person independent of the assessment process. The qualifications of the independent person will be considered to ensure that the concerns of your organization are understood but can be placed into the context of the product/s risk and the requirements of the assessment criteria.

To raise a complaint or appeal against the service delivery by BSI or the audit outcome please notify:  
GM Technical & Operations (ANZ)

Phone: 02 8877 7100

Email: [technical.anz@bsigroup.com](mailto:technical.anz@bsigroup.com)