

## CHECKLIST

# GFSI Standards Getting Started With BRCGS



BRCGS Global Standards is the world's leading safety and quality certification program, used by more than 20,000 certificated suppliers in 90 countries, with certification issued through a worldwide network of accredited bodies. The Global Standard for Food Safety can be used by any food processing operation where open food is handled, processed, or packed.

## BRCGS Enrollment Program—Prepare for BRCGS Before Pursuit of Full Certification

Designed to encourage the development of optimal food safety practices and to help prepare companies to pursue full certification, the BRCGS enrollment program incorporates the main features of the BRCGS Global Food Standard. The program is open to all food manufacturing sites not already certified.

**Note:** The BRCGS Enrollment Program is designed to help sites progress toward full certification, which includes a complete audit. Sites that have good results during those audits may go on to become certified without the need for another full audit. If there is a problem, however, corrective actions must be taken before certification is complete.

## 8 Steps For BRCGS Pre-Certification Via the Enrollment Program

- ☐ 1. **Get the BRC Global Standard for Food Safety Issue 8:** To get a copy of the Standard, visit the organization's website: <https://www.brcgs.com>.
- ☐ 2. **Review requirements:** Relevant staff, including senior management, should read and understand the BRCGS requirements. It's important to not only read the Standard, but to assess its status against the requirements and identify areas for improvement.
- ☐ 3. **Registration:** Select a BRCGS-approved certification to complete the registration on behalf of your company. The certification body is also responsible for organizing the audit, auditor, and issuing the audit report and scorecard. The first audit typically occurs within six months of registration.
- ☐ 4. **Development and preparation:** Complete a review and assessment for each Standard requirement to identify areas for improvement. This can either be done in-house or externally via a consultant or a pre-audit visit from the chosen certification body—most of whom are happy to provide a pre-audit assessment visit. However, to maintain impartiality, auditors aren't permitted to provide consultancy services.
- ☐ 5. **Audit planning:** The complete audit is carried out by a fully trained and BRCGS-registered auditor working for (or on behalf of) a certification body. The length of the audit is based on factors like the size of the site and lasts up to two days. All audits in the enrollment program are announced.

When setting the date, don't forget these factors:

- Products included within the scope are being manufactured.
- The appropriate personnel are available.
- The date will form the basis for annual follow up audits.

### Audit planning cont.:

Before the audit, the certification body will request copies of certain documents, including:

- Summary of CCPs.
- Process flow diagram.
- Simple site plan.
- Management organizational chart.
- List of products included within the scope.
- Production schedules.
- Details of any recent issues.

6. **The audit:** The exact sequence of activities during the audit can vary, but the auditor will generally follow this process:

- Open meeting.
- Inspect production areas/GMP activities.
- Review systems and paperwork.
- Write up and organize evidence.
- Closing meeting.

During the course of the audit, the auditor will:

- Walk the perimeter of the site and the production flow.
- Observe the manufacturing processes in operation at the site.
- Speak with personnel in the factory about their job function.
- Review and question the overall structure of the operation and the company's procedures.
- Ask to see documented company policies and historical records to determine if they meet requirements.
- Conduct a traceability exercise with a product in production.

7. **Nonconformities and possible certification:** After the audit is complete, the auditor will categorize the list of nonconformities as critical, major, or minor. Nonconformities represent a failure to produce a product that is safe and/or legal. Critical nonconformities require immediate corrective action and typically another visit to demonstrate resolution. Only after the critical nonconformity is corrected (and confirmed) can the site progress to receive an enrollment score.

8. **Audit report and scorecard:** Enrollment audits are scored using a system based on the number of nonconformities, which are weighted using the GFSI Global Markets audit program, and scored for each section. The objective of the score is to help identify areas for improvement and to demonstrate a continually improving score as the site progresses toward full certification.

To help earn your BRCGS certification or get ready for any audit anytime, reach out to TraceGains today.

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