

CHECKLIST

GFSI Compliance Getting Started with IFS



Since 2003, IFS has been one of the leading global certification standards for the food supply chain. More than 14,000 facilities have earned certification to one of seven IFS standards worldwide. Well-written and easy-to-understand requirements, a practical approach to continuous improvement, and robust technical support are all elements of the IFS approach to food safety and quality certification.

IFS standards are GFSI benchmarked—when available—and provide a high level of confidence to retailers and manufacturers worldwide due to their rigorous, integrated audit criteria.

IFS Standards are found throughout the supply chain and are available for:

- **IFS Food v.7 for food processors and packers** – Updated with an increased focus on the on-site evaluation, less on documentation.
- **IFS Logistics v2.2 for warehouse and transportation** – Appropriate for both food and non-food products and covering all logistics activities, like loading, unloading, and transportation.
- **IFS PACsecure v1.1 for primary and secondary food contact/non-contact packaging materials** – The standard for auditing primary and secondary packaging material manufacturers and converters.
- **IFS Broker 3 for brokers, agents, importers** – The first and most widely used broker standard in the world and applicable to companies primarily involved in trading.
- **IFS Wholesale and Cash & Carry** – for cash-and-carry markets. IFS developed these standards to improve the audit procedures of wholesalers and cash & carry markets. These two distinct business types remain critical intermediaries between producers and converters as well as commercial clients.
- **IFS Global Markets Food:** This standardized food safety assessment platform is for retailers and private label food products. IFS drafted this program to support “small and/or less developed businesses” in building their food safety management systems and taking the first step toward the implementation of the IFS Food Standard.
- **IFS HPC:** IFS designed this standard to drive product safety, cut costs, and boost transparency around the entire production chain of household and personal care products.

How to Get Started with IFS

1. **Download the IFS standard that fits your needs:** The complimentary IFS standards are available on the [IFS website](#).
2. **Review the standard:** Perform an internal gap analysis and upgrade any lacking programs based on an internal risk-based analysis.
3. **Conduct a pre-audit:** This internal pre-audit doesn't include recommendations. A certification body can execute it, but companies must conduct it with IFS support.

How to Get Started with IFS cont.

4. **Select a certification body:** To begin the IFS audit, the company should appoint a certification body approved to perform such audits. Only those IFS-approved certification bodies—which are accredited and have signed a contract with IFS— can carry out IFS audits and issue certificates.
5. **Sign a contract with the certification body:** The agreement should spell out the audit scope, duration, and reporting requirements. The contract should reference an Integrity Program, which specifies the possibility of on-site audits organized by the IFS offices' quality assurance management experts. Companies must verify the accreditation of the certification body.
6. **Perform the audit:** Companies should perform all audit tasks at least once over an average of two days. The audit should consist of the following elements:
 - Opening meeting.
 - Document review.
 - Site inspection.
 - Audit conclusions.
 - Closing meeting.

For IFS Food, IFS has implemented a tool to calculate the minimum audit duration based on the following criteria:

- Total number of people (part-time workers, shift workers, temporary staff, administrative personnel, etc.).
- Number of product scopes.
- Number of processing steps ("P" steps).

Benefits to having a plan for Corrective Actions:

- GFSI-benchmarked standards.
- Up to 12 months to implement Corrective Actions, providing a practical way to manage continuous improvement.
- Risk-based, non-prescriptive—develop your own solutions based on your business needs.
- Cost-effective and business-driven—proven to reduce recalls, error rates, customer complaints, and regulatory issues, which adds to the bottom line.

Digital, easy-to-access documentation can make certification much more manageable. TraceGains can help.

+1.720.465.9400 | connect@tracegains.com | tracegains.com