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# Voluntary Certification

Good Agricultural Practices (GAP)  
India GAP

## **CERTIFICATION PROCESS**

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# Scope of the Scheme

This standard covers control points (CP) and compliance criteria (CC) for the following farm produce in fresh unprocessed form for direct human consumption or for further processing for human consumption by food industry. The main components of this standard are Base modules and crop based modules:

- **BASIC MODULES**
- All farm base module
- Crops base module
- **CROP BASED MODULES**
- Fresh fruits and vegetables
- Combinable crops
- Tea
- Green Coffee

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## **CERTIFICATION OPTIONS FOR GAP CERTIFICATION**

- 2 options (individual or group certification).
- **3.1 Option 1 Individual Certification**
- Individual producer applies for certification and gets certification.
- **3.1.1 Multisite without implementation of QMS**
- Individual producer or one organization owns several production locations or Production Management Units (PMU's) that do not function as separate legal entities applies and gets certification without implementation of Quality Management Systems (QMS)
- **3.1.2 Multisite with implementation of QMS**
- Individual producer or one organization owns several production locations or Production Management Units (PMU's) that do not function as separate legal entities applies and gets certification with implementation of Quality Management Systems (QMS)
- *Note- Details of certification process for QMS implementation is given in IGAP -03*

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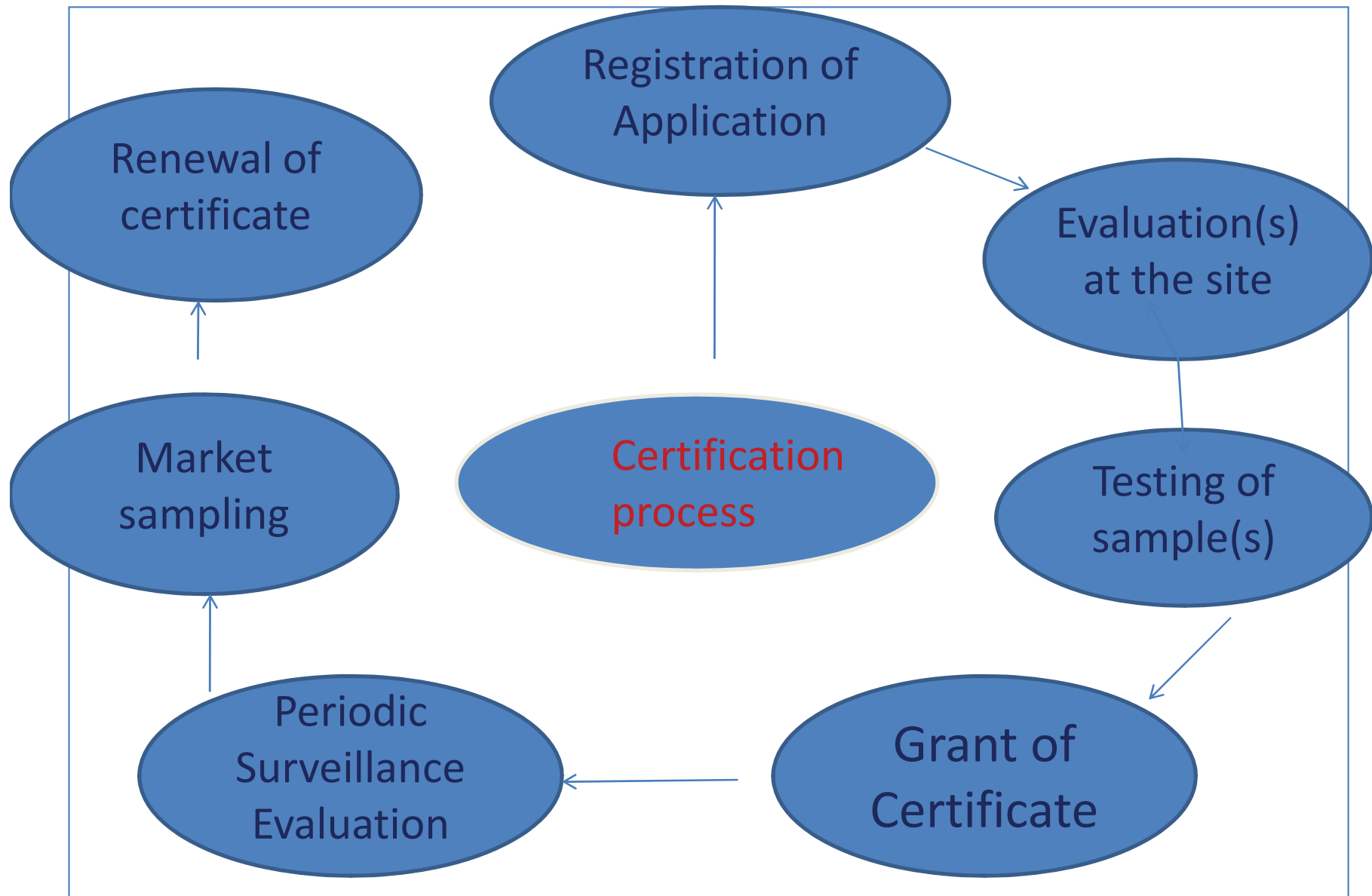
## CERTIFICATION OPTIONS AND CERTIFICATION BODY

- **3.2 Option 2 Group certification**
- A producer/farmer group applies for group certification and the farmer group, as legal entity gets certification.
- *Note- Details of group certification is given in Group Certification process (IGAP 03)*
- **3.2** The Scheme is open to all farmers/producers or organizations engaged in IndiaGAP implementation who are legal entities in India.
- **3.3** The information on how to obtain certification for Good Agricultural Produce is also available on the website of QCI ([www.qcin.org](http://www.qcin.org)).

**The certification shall be carried out by the Certification Body (CB) duly accredited for**

the certification scheme as per ISO/IEC Guide 65, by **NABCB and/or recommended by QCI**. To operate under the Scheme the CBs will require an extension of scope within the accreditation for ISO/IEC Guide 65.

# Certification Process



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## Application for certification

- Any producer/ or group of producers/forming an entity can apply for certification to an approved accredited Certification Body.
- Register a client.
- Issue a unique client number, which will be used as a unique identifier for all certification activities.
- Certification Agreement signed between the producer/collector and the CB.

Each producer/ group wishing to be registered should have :

- i) Producer/group to be certified
- ii) Annual Area under production
- iii) Covered products
- iv) First harvest or further harvest



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# CB public information

- CB shall maintain and make **publicly available** accurate information **describing** its certification **processes** for granting, maintaining, extending, renewing, reducing, suspending or withdrawing certification and geographical areas in which it operates.
- The information shall include:
  - a) Reference to the Certification Criteria,
  - b) procedure for obtaining Certification,
  - c) an Application form,
  - d) list of documents required along with the application,
  - e) information on fee for application, initial certification and continuing certification,
  - f) documents describing the rights and duties of certified clients, and
  - g) information on procedures for handling complaints and appeals.

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# CB Response

- The CB shall respond to all enquiries within seven days of receipt of the query.
- CB should have Application format having minimum info. on
  1. name and address of applicant, contact details,
  2. proof of legal entity, location,
  3. produce being handled, Produce handling area
  4. number and competence of manpower
  5. relevant certification criteria GAP ( Basic, India GAP, F& V, Tea
- Applicant should declare any judicial proceedings relating to their operations / product, any proceedings by any Regulatory body or suspension / cancellation / withdrawal of any certification / approvals under any Regulations or otherwise.
- The certification body shall review all applications for the above and ensure the same.



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# Application Rejection

CB shall reject or close all Application in following conditions;

- a) If Initial Evaluation is not carried out within six months of registration of application,
  - b) Lack of competent personnel for production and handling,
  - c) If organizations shows no progress towards completion of corrective actions within three months of Initial Evaluation and six months of Registration of application,
  - d) Non acceptance of internal quality assurance protocol within a month of Initial Evaluation,
  - e) Misuse of Certification,
  - f) Evidence of malpractice and
  - g) Voluntary withdrawal of application.
- In the event of a closure/rejection the application fee submitted with the application may be refunded as decided by the CB

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# Certification process

- The Control Points and Compliance Criteria (CPCC) checklist based on respective standards shall be used both for internal and external evaluation.
- **Initial evaluation** shall be carried out in two stages (Stage 1& Stage 2) by a competent evaluation/audit team.
- Initial evaluation should be within **one month** of registration of application.
- CB shall **communicate team composition , duration, Conflict of Interest (COI)**, any objection to applicant and examine on merit
- Timings and date of Initial Evaluation shall be fixed with the **consent** of the applicant ensuring that processes such as **harvesting time** representative of **normal operations will be open for witnessing** during the planned Evaluations

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# Inspection timings

- Only after registration
- The ideal timing for inspecting all control points is when sufficient records/evidence is available during **harvest time**, especially to facilitate verification of the control points related to harvest.
- Alternative timing options with justifications .
- First inspection therefore takes place before or after harvest (very close to harvesting) for the evaluators to verify as many control points as possible



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## 1st Inspection Timing for Multiple produce Certification

- i) If more than one produce, and all have the different seasonal timing, i.e. harvest of one produce does not necessarily coincide with the harvest of other produce,
- ii) Where the crops to be included in the certification scope are **concurrent**, i.e. harvested at the same time, then the 1st inspection will be timed so that the principal crop can be inspected as close to harvest as possible, assuming that the other crops will be compliant to the same degree,
- iii) Where the crops to be included in scope are **consecutive**, i.e. the production of one crop finalizes before the production of the next one commences, then in the first year a full inspection of the first crop must be made during harvesting.
- Subsequent crops grown in first year can be added to the certificate **only when compliance has been verified for each crop**, either through a site inspection at harvest of each crop or through data collection and discussion with the applicant



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# Evaluation

- During the Stage 1 evaluation **CB** shall check the applicant's state of preparedness for the Stage 2 evaluation, and availability of competent personnel and adequate records of producers/ collectors on CPCC.
- Deficiencies observed **shall be informed in writing** to the applicant.
- The Stage 2 evaluation by CB shall take place only after necessary actions on the identified deficiencies have been taken and confirmed by applicant.
- The CB may **seek documentary evidence** or organize an onsite visit, if necessary, to verify the implementation of corrective actions.
- During the Stage 2 evaluation of the applicant, the team shall witness the processes covering as many **CPCC as possible keeping in view earlier nonconformity observed** during Stage 2 evaluation with respect to the conformance criteria inform applicant in writing for taking necessary action.
- In case of group certification, selection of producers is made by taking a **random sample** , minimum is the square root of the total registered producers in the group. For the first inspection, the square root of the producers must be inspected in full by the CB.



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# Compliance levels for certification

- Compliance with 3 types of control points set out in the standard GAP that the producer is required to comply with in order to obtain certification.
- **Critical ,Major and Minor** which must be fulfilled
- **Critical** 100 % compliance.
- **Major Musts** 90% compliance is compulsory. Reference evidence must be recorded as comments next to each Major Must in the checklist.
- **Minor Musts** 75% compliance is compulsory for the sum of the control points in the applicable modules.
- $\{(Total\ number\ of\ Major\ control\ points/module) - (Not\ Applicable\ Major\ control\ points\ scored)\} \times 10\% = (Total\ Minor\ Must\ control\ point\ noncompliance\ allowable)$ .
- For example. Total number of Major control points/module is 122) & NA Major Must is 50 then it would be  $(122 - 50) \times 0.10 = 21 \times 0.10 = 7.2$ . Major non-compliance allowable is 7.2, which must be **rounded down 7**.
- 72 applicable Major control points – 7 non-compliant = 65. Comes 90.2777% **compliant with certification rule.**
- Same we can calculate Minor 70%.



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## Compliance Verification and Comments

- Compliance is indicated with a “Yes” (for compliant), “No” (for not compliant) on the checklist( See Annex A& Annex B).
- **Evidence/comments should** be provided for each control point- these shall enable the audit trail to be reviewed after the event, and will include details of references taken during the inspection.
- It is, however, **obligatory to give evidence /comments for all the Critical** control points inspected/audited in all external inspections, self-assessments, and internal inspections.
- Certification Body shall maintain records of all certification activities- application registration, documents provided by applicant, on site evaluation report.

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# Internal quality assurance

- **Individual producer** : The internal self-assessment **must be carried out at least once a year**. This is the responsibility of the producer/collector.
- The self-assessment shall be against the complete checklist (Major and Minor Musts and Recommendations) of the applicable scope(s).
- The completed checklist must be available on site for review by the evaluator during the external inspection
- **Producer Group**
- A minimum of **one internal inspection** / year of each registered producer within the group must be carried out by qualified internal producer group inspectors **within the producer group or subcontracted to an external verification body**, different from the certification body responsible for the external certification inspections of the group.
- The internal inspection shall be based on the complete checklist ( Critical, Major and Minor Musts and





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# Grant of Certification

- A Brand Name declaration shall be obtained from the applicant indicating the Brand names the producer/collector intends to use on produce covered under the Certification Scheme.
- The applicant shall have to provide proof of ownership of the Brand name, and to facilitate any product recall if such a situation were ever to arise during the operation of the certification of scheme.
- **Validity of certification**
- The validity of the certificate will be 3 years subject to any suspensions and extensions in accordance with the scope described.
- A certificate cannot be issued with a validity period of less/ more than 3 years.

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# Scope of certification

- The product scope is linked to the location (GLN) where that product is produced.
- Certificate is issued to the registered producer/collector, on the farm for the products declared.
- The legal entity of the places certified must be declared by the certificate holder.
- The entire production/ collection process of the declared and registered produce must comply with requirements.
- CB shall grant certification after ensuring complete compliance to the Certification Criteria (IndiaGAP) and certification scheme requirements and all nonconformities have been accepted. There shall be no conditional grant of certification.
- On grant of certification, CB shall inform the organization and issue a Certificate, uniquely identified, to the organization indicating the names of the produce certified, the certification criteria against which the certification has been awarded, effective date, validity date, and the name and address of the organization site where certified as a minimum..
- No Brand names shall be mentioned on the Certificate
- The effective date of certification shall not be before the date of decision to grant the certification
- The certificate for produce certification shall be for a maximum period of 3 years from the date of decision to grant the produce certification.

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# Surveillance Evaluations

- Surveillance evaluations of the certified sites shall be least once a year,
- CB may allow a grace period of one month based on valid grounds beyond which delays shall lead to suspension of the certificate.
- Full checklist and verification process must be completed by the inspector annually.
- There must be at least one produce registered in the field or in the storage to give the CB confidence that any other registered crops not present at that time, are handled in compliance with the standard.
- CB shall ensure that basic operations and their controls are witnessed during the surveillance evaluation.
- Surveillance planning must keep in view the crop maturity timings to coincide visit with harvest as far as possible.
- In case where the organization is certified to a number of produce of different types under the same certificate, certification body shall plan for surveillance evaluation with a view to covering as much of the entire range of products during the certification period.

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# Surveillance

During the surveillance , the evaluators shall as a minimum check and report:

- a) Status of compliance to the requirements of the certification criteria,
  - b) Internal inspection/audit,
  - c) Handling and disposal of nonconforming products,
  - d) Actions taken on nonconformities observed during the previous evaluation,
  - e) Redressal of complaints if any,
  - f) Information on production of produce and the names of consignees to who certified produce have been supplied.
- If any NC is observed, the same shall be categorized as either a Critical, Major Must or a Minor Must. Give in writing, generally on site for correction and corrective action. Details of the same shall be reported in the Surveillance evaluation report.
  - CB may increase or decrease the frequency of surveillance evaluation based on the performance of the organization.
  - If the surveillance evaluation results in an in fructuous visit due to any reason, the CB shall conduct another surveillance evaluation. Such additional evaluations may be charged.

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## Suspension of certification

- CB shall issue due notice of at least one week for suspension. In case of serious failures, the notice may not be required.
- A Suspension is issued when a producer cannot show sufficient corrective action on NC raised.
- A suspension may also be issued to the producer who voluntarily asks for it, for some (partial) or all (complete) of his products.
- After the Suspension is applied, a time period allowed for correction will be set **by the CB, and will have a maximum validity of 6 months. If the suspension is voluntary, the period** for corrective actions for compliance are set by the producer/collector himself, which must be agreed upon with the CB, but must be closed out before re-registration.
- **A Partial Suspension is issued to the group whereby one producer is suspended and not the whole group:** NC is detected at one producer in a producer group, and after the CB investigated by increasing the sample size to determine the seriousness of the nonconformities within the producer group, decided that the one producer is noncompliant.

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# Suspension cont...

- During the period of suspension, the producer will be **prevented** from using the logo/trademark, Licence/certificate or any other type of document that has any relation to certification.
- The producer/collector unit shall be advised to undertake a root cause analysis and identify the necessary corrective actions for resolving the same.
- The certification body shall **revoke** suspension only **when corrective actions have been taken and verified** by CB.
- Suspension shall not exceed a period of six months. If the cause of the Suspension is not resolved within the time period set, **the certification is recommended for Cancellation**

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# Cancellation of certification

A Cancellation shall be issued when:

- a) A producer cannot show sufficient corrective action after a Partial or Complete Suspension has been issued and six months have elapsed,
  - b) A nonconformity in one scope leads to doubt about the integrity of the produce,
  - c) When major contractual nonconformities are detected.
  - d) Certified unit contravenes the terms and conditions of certification and provisions of certification scheme like suspension of certificate, inadequate corrective actions, lack of compliance to criteria for Certification etc
- A Cancellation result in prohibition of the use of the logo/trademark, Licence/certificate.
  - A producer that has had a Cancellation applied may not re-submit for certification until 12 months after the date of Cancellation.
  - ***The producer must either resolve the nonconformities communicated or appeal to the*** CB in writing against the nonconformities explaining the reasons for the appeal.
  - if the operation(s) in the certified units premises can no longer be carried due to reasons of natural calamities such as flood, fire, earthquake etc, lock out declared by the management, or closure of business operations etc.

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# Recertification

- The certification body shall send the recertification notice to the certified units at least four months prior to expiry of certificate validity period.
- The certified organization shall apply for recertification in the prescribed format along with fee, at least 3 months before expiry of the certification..
- CB shall review the performance of the certified unit who has sought recertification of the Certificate, with respect to compliance to certification criteria during the certification cycle the period of validity of the certificate, prior to a decision on the recertification of the certificate.
- The review shall be based on
  - a) The surveillance evaluation reports,
  - b) Handling and disposition of nonconforming products
  - c) Any suspension of certificate during the previous validity period;
  - d) Corrective actions taken, e) Complaints, if any received,
  - f) Adverse information, if any.
- In case the certified unit has NCs and does not complete satisfactorily actions within three months, the certificate shall stand expired from the date of expiry of previous validity





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## Change of location / Ownership / Name

- The certified organization shall inform the CB of any change in the location.
- The certified unit shall be subject to an evaluation at the new site like an Initial Evaluation of an applicant.
- If the evaluation is satisfactory the CB shall transfer the Certificate to the new location and the certified unit be permitted to operate certification from the new site.
- The CB shall endorse the change on the Certificate.
- CB shall ask the organization for proof of legal entity afresh. The same process shall be followed as and when an existing applicant undergoes a change in management.
- In case of change of Name, the certified unit shall inform the change in the name to the CB supported with documentary evidence, and if satisfied the CB shall endorse the Certificate in the new name.

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# Extension of scope

- Extension of scope of certificate for inclusion of additional produce, varieties of the under the same certificate shall be done after ascertaining that the certified organization has requisite resources required for the new produce/variety and technical skills.
- The extension of scope shall be clearly mentioned in the certificate document along with its date of inclusion for avoiding any misrepresentation or misinterpretation. Irrespective of the date of inclusion, the validity of the Certificate shall remain unchanged.

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## Certificate

- The CB shall provide a certification document to the certified client that clearly conveys, or permits identification of:
  - a) the name and geographic location of the client ,
  - b) the dates of granting, extending or renewing certification;
  - c) the expiry date or recertification due date, recertification cycle;
  - d) a unique identification code;
  - e) the certification criteria, including issue number and/or revision,
  - f) the scope of certification with respect to product(s)
  - g) the name, address and certification mark of CB; other marks (e.g. accreditation symbol) may be used provided they are not misleading or ambiguous;
  - h) any other information required by the certification criteria
  - i) in the event of issuing any revised certification documents, a means to distinguish the revised documents from any prior obsolete documents
- The effective date on a certification document shall not be before the date of the certification / recertification decision.
- The formal certification documentation shall include the signature of the individual(s) of the certification body assigned such responsibility.

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# Fee

A fee to be charged to the organization for various activities of the scheme, without any discrimination between units, geographical location, size of the unit.

- The CBs fee structure shall be publically accessible and also be provided on request.
- CB shall notify and obtain consent to its fee structure from the organizations prior to grant of certification. As and when the fee undergoes a change, the same shall be communicated to all including applicants and the manufacturing units certified under this scheme of certification for their acceptance.

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# Certification Process: At A Glance

- Scheme Ownership:
  - FSSAI, Government of India
- Custodian of the Scheme:
  - Quality Council of India
- Voluntary Scheme to Start with
- Certification through 3<sup>rd</sup> Party/ Independent Evaluation :
- The Certification Body:
  - A Legal Entity in India
  - Accredited by NABCB (QCI)

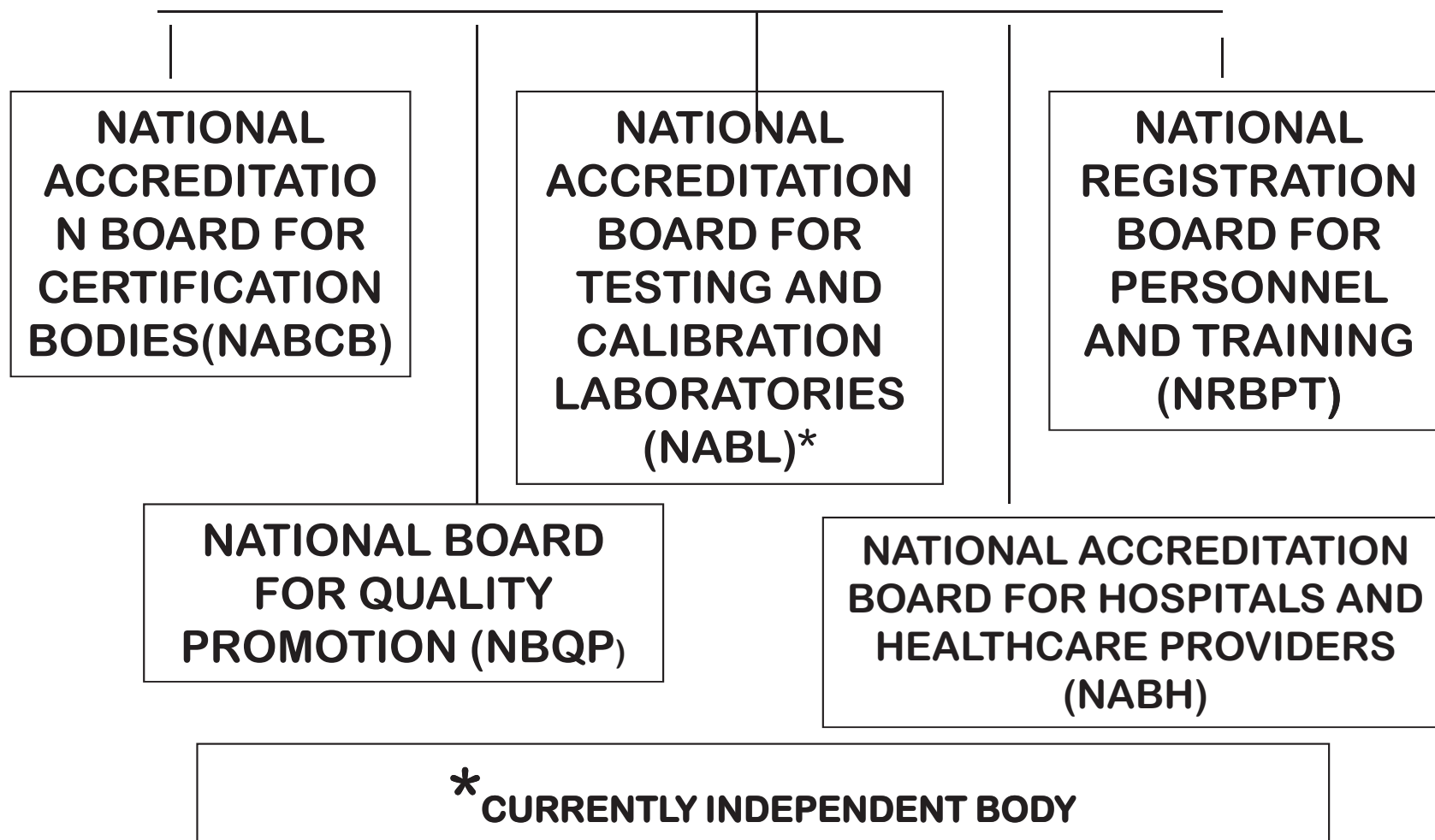


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# QUALITY COUNCIL OF INDIA(QCI)

- Established in 1997 by a Cabinet decision – in partnership with CII, FICCI, ASSOCHAM
- Autonomous body – registered as society - Chairman appointed by PM (Ratan Tata, Venu Srinivasan, Dr. R.A.Mashelkar) – currently Mr. Ajay Shankar, Secretary, DIPP
- Provide accreditation structure in the country
- Spread quality movement in India – assigned National Quality Campaign funded by Govt
- Provide right and unbiased information on quality & related standards
- Represent India's interest in international fora
- Help establish brand equity of Indian products and services

# STRUCTURE OF QCI



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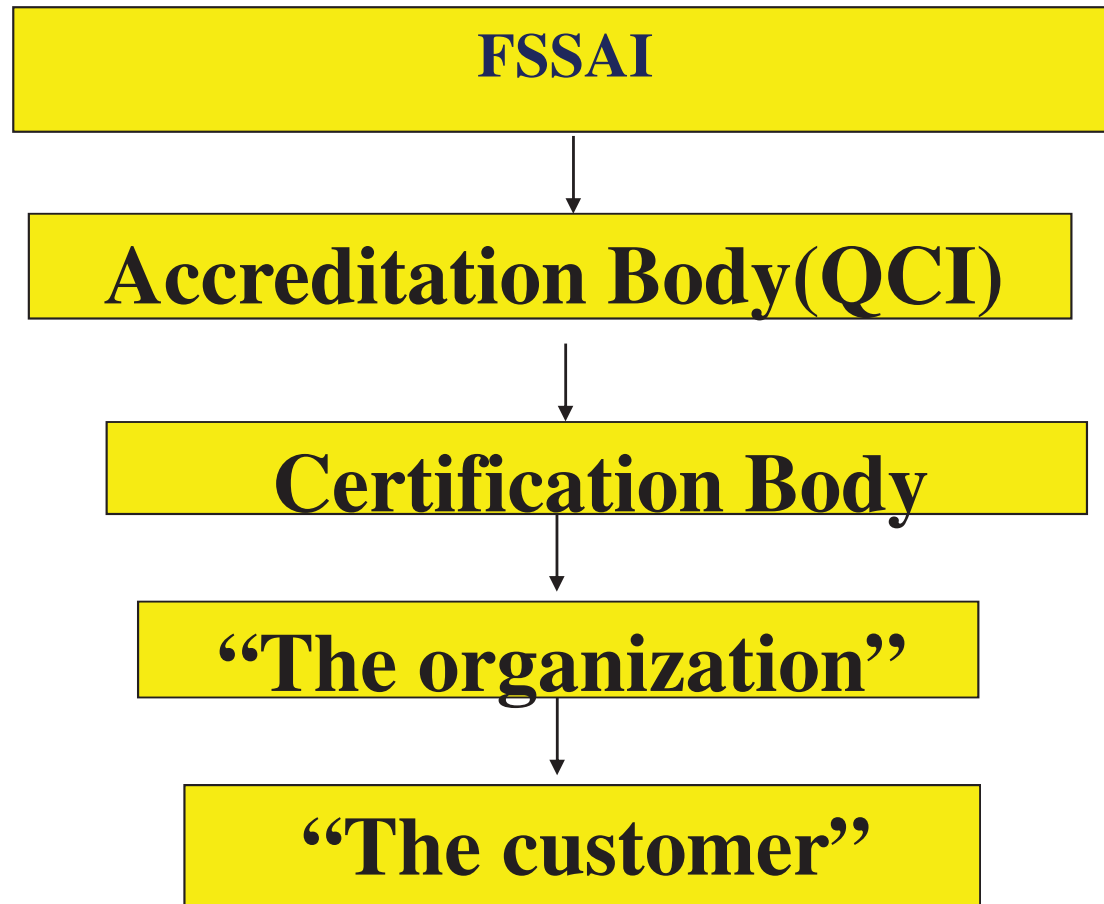
# MUTUAL RECOGNITION

- Multi-lateral arrangement for mutual recognition
  - QMS MLA program - IAF
  - EMS MLA program - IAF
  - Product certification MLA program - IAF
  - Inspection MRA - ILAC
  - Laboratory MRA – ILAC
  - Food Safety Management Systems
  - Occupational Health & Safety
- Under development
  - Personnel certification
- Possible future MLAs
  - Information Security Mgmt Systems





# Voluntary Certification





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# Thanks

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