

September 17, 2024

Contracted Accreditation Bodies  
 Contracted Certification Bodies  
 (Registered Certification Bodies)

Upgrade process to JFS-C Certification Program Document Ver.3.2 and Standard Document Ver.3.1

Japan Food Safety Management Association, JFSM

Dear Sir.

Thank you for your continued support and cooperation in the activities of the Food Safety Management Association. We have revised the JFS-C Certification Program Document Ver. 3.1 and the JFS-C Standard Document [Requirements for Organizations] Ver. 3.0, as well as the JFS-C Standard Document [Requirements for Organizations] Ver. 3.0 Supplemental Requirements, effective May 14, 2024. We would like to notify you for the transition procedures as below for the upgrade process.

Yours sincerely

**【Outline of Upgrade】**

JFS-C Certification Program Document Version 3.2	Addressing consistency with standard documents related to food safety management system certification schemes. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ISO22003-1:2022</li> <li>• IAF Mandatory Document CRITERIA FOR EVALUATION OF CONFORMITY ASSESSMENT SCHEMES Issue 1 (IAF MD 25:2022)</li> </ul>
JFS-C Standard Document Version 3.1	Addressing consistency with food safety reference documents <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CODEX Commission's General Principles of Food Hygiene GENERAL PRINCIPLES OF FOOD HYGIENE CXC 1-1969 (Adopted in 1969. Amended in 1999. Revised in 1997, 2003, 2020,2022. Editorial corrections in 2011.)</li> <li>• CODEX Committee's Code of Practice for Food Allergen Management for Food Businesses CODE OF PRACTICE ON FOOD ALLERGEN MANAGEMENT FOR FOOD BUSINESS OPERATORS CXC 80-2020</li> <li>• GFSI Benchmark Requirement Part III JII Referring to the benchmarking requirements for sanitary design in the subsector, add where required for food business operators</li> <li>• GFSI New Global Market Program (Intermediate) Requirements</li> </ul>

We would like to inform you of our response to this upgrade as follows.

## Descriptions

### **1. Transition policy for upgrade**

- Accreditation bodies shall audit the conformity of certification bodies to the certification program document Ver. 3.2 and the standard document Ver. 3.1 in accreditation surveillance audits, re-accreditation audits and special audits of certification bodies after October 1, 2024, with the certification body's relevant certification work documents. 3.2 and the standard document Ver. 3.1 at the certification program document Ver. If the certification body has a track record of certification audits at the time of accreditation surveillance audit or reassessment, the accreditation body shall include the certification body's implementation status in the audit. The Accreditation bodies shall conduct the transition audit to the certification program document Ver. 3.2 by September 30, 2025.
- When a certification body audits the conformity of an organization based on the standard document Ver. 3.1, it may continue to conduct audits based on the standard document Ver. 3.1 after October 1, 2024, because the relationship between the revision of the certification program and the standard document Ver. 3.1 is low. Even before conducting audits, re-audits, or special audits related to the transition to certification program document Ver. 3.2, it is possible to conduct audits and operations under the standard document Ver. 3.1.
- The certification body shall complete preparations for transition of accreditation to certification program document Ver. 3.2 and preparation for certification audit of the standard document Ver. 3.1 by September 30, 2024. If the transition cannot be completed by this date, Certification body shall contact JFSM and make separate arrangement. In addition, the certified organization shall be notified of the standard document Ver. 3.1 and a plan shall be made as to when the conformity audit will be conducted at the certification audit.
- The certification body shall audit the organization's conformance to the standard document Ver. 3.1 at certification surveillance audits, re-certification audits, and normal cycle audits conducted on or after October 1, 2024, in accordance with the plan. If it is not possible to conduct the audit after the due date, Certification body shall notify JFSM and make separate arrangements. Certification bodies that are ready for transition of accreditation to the certification program document Ver. 3.2 and ready for certification audit to the standard document Ver. 3.1 at an early stage shall be able to conduct the audit of the standard document Ver. 3.1 and operation with the certification program document Ver. 3.2 from that time.
- The 2024 notification document (JFSM\_2024\_ND\_301\_2\_en) shall become invalid and certification bodies and registered certified organizations shall base all audits conducted after October 1, 2024, on the certification program document Ver. 3.2.
- If the above-mentioned certification transition audit falls under the triennial un-announce audit in accordance with GFSI Benchmarking Requirement 2020.1 clause 5.6, it shall in principle be conducted as un-announced audit with the agreement of the organization.

- The certification body and the registered certified organization shall conduct the transition audit to the standard document Ver. 3.1 by September 30, 2025. If it is not possible to conduct the audit by the due date, the certification body shall contact JFSM and make separate arrangements.

## 2. Required processes for the transition

### 1) Processes by contracted accreditation bodies

The contracted accreditation body shall promptly notify the certification body of the implementation procedures for the transition of accreditation in accordance with this document, and complete preparations for the accreditation transition audit, including the upgrade of documents related to accreditation operations consistent with the JFS-C Certification Program Document Ver. 3.2 and training for personnel involved in accreditation (based on the materials of the liaison meeting between accreditation bodies and certification bodies held on May 17, 2024), by September 30, 2024. Preparations for the accreditation transition audit, including the upgrade of documents related to accreditation operations consistent with Ver. 3.2 and training for personnel related to accreditation (based on the materials from the liaison meeting of accreditation bodies and certification bodies held on May 17, 2024) shall be completed by September 30, 2024.

The contracted accreditation body shall audit the certification body's certification operation-related documents and operational status during accreditation surveillance audits, reassessments, and special audits of each certification body, and complete the accreditation transition audit to the certification program document Ver. 3.2 by September 30, 2025.

In the audit of organizations for Ver. 3.1 of the standard document, JFSM positions that contracted certification bodies may audit Ver. 3.1 of the standard document after October 1, 2024, before undergoing accreditation transition audit, since the relevance of the revised certification program and Ver. 3.1 of the standard document is low. JFSM shall position contracted certification bodies as being able to audit the standard document Ver. 3.1 after October 1, 2024, prior to undergoing accreditation transition audits.

**Table 1: Accreditation transition schedule for certification bodies in accreditation audits**

Transitional measures in accreditation audits	Year Month	2024												2025							
		5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9			
1 Preparation for Accreditation Transition Audit to Certification Program Document Ver. 3.2	5/14 Publish					9/30 Finish the Ready															
2 Transition of accreditation to certification program document Ver. 3.2							10/1 Start of accreditation transition audit											9/30 End of accreditation transition audit term			

### 2) Processes by Contracted certification body's

The contracted certification body shall notify the certified organization of the certification program document Ver. 3.2, the standard document Ver. 3.1, and the transition procedure according to this notification document. The contracted certification body shall also proceed with training of personnel

involved in certification activities and upgrade of documents related to certification activities in accordance with the following documents, and complete preparations for accreditation transition by September 30, 2024. (See Table 1 No. 1 and Table 2 No. 3.) If this cannot be completed by the deadline, Certification body shall contact JFSM and make separate arrangements.

(1) Certification Program Document Ver. 3.2

(2) Standard Document Ver. 3.1

(3) Accreditation body/certification body liaison meeting (conducted on May 17, 2024) documents explaining (1) through (3)

The contracted certification body shall complete the transition audit of accreditation by September 30, 2025, in accordance with the implementation guidelines for the transition audit of accreditation issued by the accreditation body. If it is not possible to complete the audit by the deadline, Certification body shall contact JFSM and make separate arrangements.

The contracted certification body shall notify the certified organization of the Ver. 3.1 standard document and plan when the certified organization will be audited for conformity to the Ver. 3.1 standard document at the certification audit and shall follow the plan for the certification surveillance audit, re-certification audit, and normal cycle audits conducted after October 1, 2024. The organization's conformity to the standard document Ver. 3.1 shall be audited at certification surveillance audits, recertification audits, and extraordinary audits conducted on or after October 1, 2024. If it is not possible to conduct the audit after the due date, Certification body notifies the JFSM, and arrangements shall be made separately.

The contract Certification Bodies that have prepared for transition of accreditation to Ver. 3.2 of the certification program document and preparation for certification audit to Ver. 3.1 of the standard document at an early stage shall be able to conduct audits to Ver. 3.1 of the standard document and operation under Ver. 3.2 of the certification program document from that time onwards.

The 2024 notice (JFSM\_2024\_ND\_301\_2\_en) shall become invalid, and contract certification bodies and registered certification bodies shall base all audits conducted after October 1, 2024, on the standard document Ver. 3.1. In accordance with the GFSI Benchmarking Requirement 2020.1 clause 5.6, if this transition audit falls under the triennial un-announce audit, the transition audit shall, in principle, be conducted as a un-announce audit with the agreement of the organization. In addition, at least 1/8 of the audit duration shall be added as the duration for checking the requirements newly added or enhanced in the JFS-C standard document ver. 3.1 as the duration for the audit in the transition audit to certification.

On the other hand, in the audit of organizations for Ver. 3.1 of the standard document, JFSM positions that contracted certification bodies may audit Ver. 3.1 of the standard document after October 1, 2024, before undergoing accreditation transition audit, since the relevance of the revised certification program and Ver. 3.1 of the standard document is low. JFSM shall position contracted certification bodies as being

able to audit the standard document Ver. 3.1 after October 1, 2024, prior to undergoing accreditation transition audits.

Harmonization of Certification Bodies and Organizations with Document Ver. 3.1

Transition to Ver. 3.1 certification

Table 2: Certification Transition Schedule for Registered Certified Organizations in Certification Audits

Transition support during certification	Year Month	2024											2025							
		5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9		
3	Harmonization of Certification Bodies and Organizations with Document Ver. 3.1	5/14				9/30														
		Publish				Finish the ready														
4	Transition to Ver. 3.1 certification						10/1											9/30		
							Start of accreditation transition audit											End of accreditation transition audit term		

### 3) Processes by Registered Certification Bodies

The 2024 Notice (JFSM\_2024\_ND\_301\_2\_en) shall become invalid. Registered certified organizations shall refer to the standard document Ver. 3.1 published on May 14, 2024, and prepare for conformity as necessary, given that surveillance audits, re-certification audits and audits outside the normal cycle to be conducted between October 1, 2024 and September 30, 2025 will include assessment of conformity to the standard document Ver. 3.1. 1 published on May 14, 2024, and prepare for conformity as necessary. If an audit including conformity assessment to the standard document Ver. 3.1 cannot be conducted within the above period, the registered certified organization shall contact JFSM through its contracted certification body and make separate arrangements.

In addition, when the above-mentioned certification transition audit falls under the triennial un-announced audit in accordance with GFSI Benchmarking Requirement 2020.1 clause 5.6, the certified organization is required to agree with the certification body that, in principle, the audit shall be conducted as un-announced audit. In addition, the certified organization is required to agree that at least 1/8 of the audit duration will be added to the certification transition audit to confirm the requirements newly added or enhanced in the JFS-C standard document ver. 3.1.

Since there is little relevance of the certification program upgrade to the Ver. 3.1 standard in an organization's audit of the Ver. 3.1 standard, JFSM positions the contracted certification body as being able to audit the Ver. 3.1 standard after October 1, 2024, prior to undergoing the accreditation transfer audit.

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