

FAQ's

Combined audit QS Wholesale/CoC

Background

GLOBALG.A.P. provides with the Chain of Custody (CoC) standard a standard for traceability of GLOBALG.A.P. goods. As cross-stage traceability is a core element of the QS scheme, QS-certified wholesalers already meet a large part of the CoC requirements. QS wholesalers who wish to obtain an additional CoC certification have the option of having a [CoC add-on checklist](#), consisting of five CoC-specific requirements, checked as part of the QS audit. Unnecessary additional work and double certifications can thus be avoided.

General regulations for QS/CoC combined auditing can be found in the document linked [here](#).

In the following, we have summarized the most frequently asked questions (FAQ's) about the QS/CoC combined auditing:

Which companies can have a QS/CoC combined auditing?

- QS scheme participants at stage wholesale who are QS certified with the following production scopes can have the CoC add-on checklist checked as part of their QS audit and obtain certification for CoC:
 1. 81 (Wholesale fruit, vegetables, potatoes (first-line merchant))
 2. 82 (Wholesale fruit, vegetables, potatoes (trading partner))
 3. 801 (Agencies fruit, vegetables, potatoes (first-line merchant))
 4. 802 (fruit, vegetables, potatoes (trading partner))

Is an audit of the CoC add-on mandatory?

- No, the CoC add-on is not mandatory. For QS scheme participants who, for example, wish to be certified according to the CoC standard in the future due to a customer requirement, the option of a QS/CoC combined audit is intended to avoid unnecessary additional work and double certifications.
- Note: Using the GGN alone does not require CoC certification.

Which CoC requirements are audited in the combined audit?

- The CoC add-on checklist consists of five CoC specific requirements on the topics "GLOBALG.A.P. supplier management" and "marking of GLOBALG.A.P. goods".
- The add-on checklist can be viewed [here](#).

When is the CoC add-on passed so that a CoC certificate can be issued?

- The CoC add-on is passed if all five CoC requirements have been evaluated with A. The prerequisite for issuing the CoC certificate is that the QS audit has also been passed. The decision on the CoC certification is made in combination with the QS certification decision.

With which frequency is the CoC add-on checked?

- The inspection of the CoC add-on is carried out according to the QS inspection system:
 1. Wholesalers with goods contact (production scopes 81 and 82): The audit of the CoC add-on is carried out as part of the QS scheme and spot audits. The audit of the CoC add-on is only possible with the audit option "regular audit + unannounced spot audit".
 2. Agencies (production scopes 801 und 802): s. Wholesalers with goods contact. In the time between the regular audits, in which no additional spot audit takes place for agencies (with status I, which only have a system audit every 2 years), the verification of the CoC add-on takes place in a remote audit as an alternative to an on-site audit.

Which testing system is used for the CoC add-on requirements?

- The GLOBALG.A.P. audit system applies to the check of the CoC add-on requirements. This also includes, for example, a remedial period of 28 days for corrective actions.

What settings have to be made in the QS database if a QS wholesaler wants to have a QS/CoC combined auditing?

- Wholesalers who also want to have the CoC add-on checked as part of their QS audit must store this in the QS database. The following steps are required:
 1. Login to the [QS database](#)
 2. Open "Master data" menu → open submenu „Locations“
 3. Click on the update button in the upper right corner
 4. Open the desired location via the edit button
 5. Check the "Chain of Custody Combi Audit" box*
 6. Save (green tick at the right upper corner)
 - The certification body will automatically be informed about the request for the QS/CoC combined audit. Organizational details can be discussed directly with the certification body if required.
- * Note: Registration is only possible if the responsible certification body has an approval from GLOBALG.A.P. for the QS-CoC combined audit.*

Does the CoC checklist with the five specific CoC requirements need to be loaded into the QS database?

- No, the checklist is exclusively uploaded to the GLOBALG.A.P. IT system.
- In the QS checklist, only the add-on requirement "Chain of custody combined audit" is evaluated with A (add-on passed), D (add-on failed) or E (add-on not audited). This has no influence on the result of the QS audit.

Do companies that want a QS-CoC combined audit also have to register in the GLOBALG.A.P. database?

- Yes, a corresponding registration in the GLOBALG.A.P. database is required.

What are the requirements for QS certification bodies that want to offer the QS-CoC combined audits in addition?

- Interested certification bodies have to contact GLOBALG.A.P. and register there. The certification bodies receive comprehensive feedback on the requirements and framework conditions directly from GLOBALG.A.P.. Among other things, each certification body must name an in-house trainer. This trainer has to register for a GLOBALG.A.P. CoC in-house trainer training and complete this training within 6 months after admission.
- QS approved auditors are qualified for CoC but have to pass a GLOBALG.A.P. online exam for CoC version 6.1.

Do QS certification bodies that want to audit the CoC add-on at their QS wholesale customers need GLOBALG.A.P. CoC accreditation?

- No, QS-accredited certification bodies do not require any additional CoC accreditation for the verification of the CoC add-on in the course of the QS audits. However, when issuing the certificate, care must be taken to ensure that it is issued without an accreditation mark.
- Certification bodies issuing CoC certificates that are not based on a QS-CoC combined audit require accreditation according to ISO 17065 for the GLOBALG.A.P. CoC Version 6 standard. Those certificates are issued with accreditation marks.

What are the costs for scheme participants due to the additional testing of the CoC add-on?

- The fees for CoC participation can be taken from the GLOBALG.A.P. fee schedule.
- The QS scheme fees do NOT change due to the additional testing of the CoC add-on.
- The extent to which additional costs are incurred by the certification bodies due to the additional verification of the CoC add-on must be enquired about directly with the respective certification body.

Is there a minimum audit time specified for the CoC add-on's audit?

- No, there is no defined minimum audit time for the CoC add-on's audit. The additional time required depends on the mix of GLOBALG.A.P.-certified products and the complexity and size of the company.

Are companies that obtain CoC certification through the CoC add-on allowed to use the GGN label?

- No, QS scheme participants having a CoC certification based on a QS/CoC combined audit are not allowed to use the GGN label. The use of GLOBALG.A.P. trademarks and GLOBALG.A.P. identifier numbers (e.g. GGN, CoC number.) is allowed. Details can be found on the GLOBALG.A.P. website.

Is there a transitional arrangement so that QS wholesalers can obtain CoC certification promptly if they wish, even if the next QS audit does not take place until next year, for example?

- Yes, QS wholesalers can obtain a CoC approval before the next QS audit. For this, the following steps are required:
 1. The wholesaler performs self-inspection using the CoC add-on checklist.
 2. The wholesaler registers into the IT system of GLOBALG.A.P..
 3. The wholesaler registers in the QS database that he wants a QS/CoC combined audit.*

4. The CoC add-on checklist is verified in a remote audit as an alternative to an on-site audit by the responsible certification body.
5. Based on the valid QS certificate and the passed test of the CoC add-on, the certification body enters the CoC approval into the GLOBALG.A.P. IT system.

** Note: Registration is only possible if the responsible certification body has an approval from GLOBALG.A.P. for the QS-CoC combined audit.*

FAQs on specific requirements

Regarding the requirement CoC/QS 1.1 (CoC-SC 1.6) and CoC/QS 2.1 (CoC-SC 2.1)

If my company carries out a QS/CoC combined audit, do my suppliers and service providers also have to have a corresponding GLOBALG.A.P./CoC certification?

- Suppliers and service providers require a GLOBALG.A.P./CoC certification if GLOBALG.A.P. certified goods are traded/handled. A distinction must be made between the following situations:
 - a. Use of GGNs on products and delivery notes WITHOUT a statement on the GG certification status of the goods
→ Requirements 1.1 and 2.1 are NOT applicable; suppliers and service providers DO NOT require appropriate certification
 - b. Use of GGNs on products and delivery notes WITH a statement on the GG certification status of the goods (e.g.: GG-certified apples)
→ Requirements 1.1 and 2.1 are relevant; suppliers and service providers require appropriate certification

Regarding requirement CoC/QS 1.2 (CoC-SC 1.7)

What options are available for the CoC certification of QS certified "high-risk service providers" (e.g. packing companies)??

- The following options are available to fulfil the requirement CoC/QS 1.2 (CoC-SC 1.7):
 - a. The service provider has a separate CoC certification carried out in addition to its QS certification.
 - b. The service provider has a QS-CoC combined certification carried out.
 - c. The commissioned "high-risk processes" are included in the CoC certification of the client and the client's self-assessment. The service provider is listed in the annex to the client's CoC certificate.

For more FAQ's and information on Chain of Custody, please visit the [website of GLOBALG.A.P.](#)