

# Florverde®

## General Regulations v4 June 2007

*Application to companies certified on Florverde® standard version 2007*

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## 1. DOCUMENT SCOPE

1.1 This document establishes the conditions and reference terms, including company rights and duties and obligations by Asocolflores, the certified producer and the Certification Bodies (CBs) approved by Asocolflores. It describes the use of the brand.

1.2 This is a Florverde® normative document.

1.3 Other Florverde® normative documents are:

1.3.1 Florverde® Brand Instruction Manual: Establishes conditions that must be complied in the use of the Florverde® brand by a a certified company.

1.3.2 Florverde® Standard: Includes requisites and compliance criteria for the company interested in applying for a certification.

1.3.3 Besides the above interpretation guidelines for some requisites can be made, which will become Florverde® normative documents, once approved by the Florverde® committee.

1.3.4 Implementation guidelines can arise as a description of good practices for some of the requisites. These are not normative documents.

1.4 This document is composed of:

1.4.1 Main Body: The 15 chapters explain the conditions that must be complied with by certified companies, those that are already certified, by Asocolflores and approved CBs.

1.4.2 Annexes: explain in more detail the information. These are not normative documents.

1.5 Abbreviations used in this document:

- i) CB: Certification Body
- ii) AB: Accreditation Body
- iii) NC: Non Conformance

**2. Florverde® PROGRAM REFERENCE TERMS****Sustainable floriculture with social responsibility.****Local capacity building with international recognition**

- 2.1 Program's Goals: Asocolflores has created the Florverde® program as a strategic instrument to promote sustainable floriculture with social responsibility both at the company – producer level as well as at the collective level of the sector, through:
  - 2.1.1 Promoting growers to adopt continuous improvement in quality, social and environmental responsibility assurance schemes.
  - 2.1.2 Accomplishing market recognition for the producers.
  - 2.1.3 Local Capacity Building: Promote at the collective level an information system through which the sector can be diagnosed and actions for improvement can be made. As an instrument of constant diagnosis and in synergy with other local and regional initiatives, Florverde® works for the continuous acquisition of knowledge that can be translated into local actions for regional and sector improvement.
  - 2.1.4 Accomplish recognition for the Florverde® Brand by stakeholders so that a larger number of producers gets certified and the sector as a whole can be more competitive and have a positive impact on society.
- 2.2 What is Florverde®. The Florverde program is an integrated strategy that includes a certification system and a sector information system. That is:
  - 2.2.1 A voluntary certification system based on national and international standards, that provide confidence on conformity with social and environmental control points of the program related to the production system of flowers and ornamentals, thus eliminating possible barriers to trade.
  - 2.2.2 An information system about the performance of the companies or producers that participate in the program, even those that are not yet certified.
- 2.3 General Principles of the program:
  - 2.3.1 Welfare of workers: establish integrated management human resources standards to guarantee worker health protection in a workspace that respects individuals and promotes the worker and his/her family well-being.
  - 2.3.2 Environmental protection: establish standards for floriculture which will minimize impacts of agricultural production through application of good agricultural practices. These practices will provide a sustainable and environmentally friendly floriculture.

- 2.3.3 Product care and handling: establish standards for care and handling of the product with the aim of to protect product quality, and avoid it from being mixed with non certified products.
- 2.3.4 Managerial responsibility: promote responsibility by management in direction, follow up and continuous improvement of its social and environmental performance in its production process as well as quality assurance of its product.

#### 2.4 Goals of the certification system

- 2.4.1 Provide the standards for third party certification of the production of flowers and ornamentals.
- 2.4.2 Cover the production process prior to planting until post harvest.
- 2.4.3 The application of the standards by the producer is voluntary.
- 2.4.4 Be open to those certification bodies that have been previously approved by Asocolflores.
- 2.4.5 Be recognized on the main markets through benchmarking and mutual recognition with similar schemes interested in networking with Florverde®.

#### 2.5 Certification goal population

- 2.5.1 Consumers by obtaining quality flower and ornamental products produced under social and environmental responsibility.
- 2.5.2 Handlers by offering quality flower and ornamental products produced under social and environmental responsibility.
- 2.5.3 Producers by strengthening their internal production process and accomplishing recognition of its social and environmental responsibility.
- 2.5.4 Society as a whole by having a responsible and organized sector that supports sustainability within the community.

### 3. RULES

#### 3.1 Introduction of new normative documents

##### 3.1.1 Introduction to version 4 of General Regulations

- i) Version 4 comes into force on the 1st of July of 2007 and will be applicable to producers certified on version 2007 of the Florverde standard on the date that the company receives the certification.
- ii) Version 3 of General Regulations, of 2003, applies for producers or companies certified on version 2002 of the Florverde standard and will have last validity date with the same last validity date of the certificates on version 2002.

##### 3.1.2 Introduction to version 2007 of the Florverde standard that replaces version 2002

- |      |  |             |
|------|--|-------------|
| i)   | version 2007 publishing date               | 01 jul 2007 |
| ii)  | producer may certify against version 2007  | 01 jul 2007 |
| iii) | last certification date on version 2002    | 31 dic 2007 |
| iv)  | last certificate validity on version 2002  | 31 dic 2008 |
| v)   | no application to 2002 certification since | 01 jan 2008 |

3.1.3 Asocolflores will publish any update of the normative documents as well as the transition periods, both to the approved Certification Bodies as to producers.

#### 3.2 Applicants to certification (4.4)

- 3.2.1 Producers applying to certification must be members of Asocolflores and be participating in the program. The term “producer” in this document refers to individual producers as well as producer groups, that grows flowers and/or ornamentals, be them final product or propagation material. (4.4)
- 3.2.2 Handlers are not certifiable under Florverde scheme. They may use the Florverde® brand following the specific guidelines described in the document: Florverde Brand use; Guidelines for Handlers.

#### 3.3 Relationship between the producer, Asocolflores, the CB and Eurepgap

- 3.3.1 Asocolflores approves the Certification Bodies (CB) and licences it the use of the Florverde® brand to those producers interested in the Florverde certification. A signed agreement must exist between Asocolflores and the approved CB.
- 3.3.2 Only the CB approved by Asocolflores may licence the use of the Florverde® brand (sublicence) to the producer that accomplishes the certification and complies with the normative documents, as well as with the internal procedures of the CB that were approved by the AB for the Florverde certification scope. A signed agreement must exist between the CB and the producer.

- 3.3.3 Communications between Asocolflores, the CB, the producer and Eurepgap: Asocolflores and Eurepgap in the context of their equivalence agree the following information flux in order to keep updated the CBs, the producers and between themselves.

The objective is to: "Know at any point in time, instantly and world-wide" the following information of the producer: present status and status history regarding certification, products grown, production area of certified products and audit/farm audit and Compliance details and Central validation of certificates by market participants.

- i) The producer is responsible of sending in information to Asocolflores. In case the CB needs information from the producer in a direct way, this must be approved by Asocolflores and it is only justified in case its needed within the internal procedures required by the AB for the accreditation of the CB within the Florverde scope. (No gap)
- ii) Asocolflores processes and communicates the information to the CB and to Eurepgap, within the context of equivalence. Asocolflores must send to Eurepgap information related to Regsitracion and Eurepgap must send back Asocolflores the EGN so that Asocolflores may communicate it both to the CB and to the producer. (2.4)
- iii) Producers certified in Florverde and simultaneously in Eurepgap, must communicate to Asocolflores their EGN or Eurepgap number and Asocolflores will inform Eurepgap that the producer makes part of the equivalent scheme Florverde. (no gap)
- iv) Asocolflores must ensure that as soon as the CB has made the certification decision, the producer's status is updated to "Certified" in the EUREPGAP database. (2.4.i)
- v) Asocolflores must ensure that as soon as it knows that the CB will sanction a producer or group of producers, its status must be changed in the database to the relevant status (time between issuing the sanction and updating the Eurepgap database must not exceed more than 2 working days). (2.4.ii)
- vi) Asocolflores must ensure Eurpegap, availability of immediately accessible information on all audit and farm audit details and compliance details for each certificate. (2.4.iv)
- vii) The CB must confirm reception of application within 14 calendar days. (2.5.i)

### 3.4 Obligations of producers

- 3.4.1 The certificate holder (individual producer or producer group) is responsible for compliance of the Florverde Standard and General Regulations on the farm or group of farms. (4.4.2.i)
- 3.4.2 Producers interested in the Florverde® certification must register with Asocolflores. Asocolflores must send the information of interested producer to an approved CB. The registration process must be finalised before the first CB inspection/audit. (4.4.2.ii)
- 3.4.3 Producers who are sanctioned by a responsible CB cannot change that CB until that CB (the “outgoing” CB) closes out the corresponding non-conformance, or until the sanction penalty period is over. (4.4.2.iii)
- 3.4.4 Producers can change the CB they are working with only after “annulment” has been granted by the “outgoing” CB. (4.4.2.iv)
- 3.4.5 A registered producer that changes CB, must communicate the unique number assigned by Asocolflores, to the CB applied to. (4.4.2.v)
- 3.4.6 Registered producers are responsible for communicating data updates to Asocolflores and Asocolflores to the CBs according to the internal procedures of each CB, such as farm or product area changes and inclusion/de-listing of members within a producers group. (4.4.2.vii)
- 3.4.7 Producers must commit themselves to follow the requirements established in this General Regulations document, including payment of the registration fee established by Asocolflores, and declare this in a signed document held by Asocolflores the CB. (4.4.2.viii)
- 3.4.8 Producers applying for Florverde® must specify, at registration, all farms and product handling locations that belong to its organization (legal entity), as well as the list of all ornamental products grown in these areas and locations and a list of those that are handled but are not grown by its organization. (4.4.2.ix)
- 3.4.9 The producer assumes responsibility for subcontractors involved in labors related to the Florverde® standard.
- 3.4.10 The producer or group of producers commits to making a proper use of the Florverde® Brand.

### 3.5 Rights of Producers

- 3.5.1 Asocolflores and applicant will agree on Service of Notice terms, which must include a commitment by Asocolflores to confirm the receipt of formal application for registration within 14 calendar days. Asocolflores will guarantee that the CB will confirm to the producer its first certification within 14 calendar days after closure of any outstanding non-conformances. (4.4.1.i)

- 3.5.2 The service contract between the CB and producer may have an initial duration of up to 3 years, with subsequent renewal or extension for periods of 3 years. (4.4.1.ii)
- 3.5.3 Any complaints or appeals against CBs will follow the CB's own complaints and appeals procedure which each CB must have and communicate to its clients. In case the CB does not respond adequately, the complaint can be addressed to the Florverde Committee in Asocolflores using the Complaints format available on the Asocolflores website ([www.asocolflores.org](http://www.asocolflores.org)) (4.4.1.iii)
- 3.5.4 A producer may change from one CB to another CB, (unless a sanction is pending by a CB, either voluntarily or if a situation arises where a CB that has previously been approved by Asocolflores should become not approved (through sanction enforcement, bankruptcy, or other reasons). The accepting CB must be approved by Asocolflores. (4.4.1.v)
- 3.5.5 A producer/producer group is able to ask for annulment of the contract held with a CB at any time (unless a sanction is pending by a CB), and is obliged to do so when changing CBs. This will not allow the producer to avoid paying the registration and other applicable fees owed to the "outgoing" CB. (4.4.1.vi)
- 3.5.6 Confidentiality: Asocolflores and Asocolflores approved CBs will treat any information relating to the producer, including details of products and processes, evaluation reports and associated documentation as confidential (unless otherwise required by law). No information is released to third parties without the prior written consent of the producer, except where stated otherwise in this General Regulations document (4.4.1.ix).
- 3.5.7 A producer/producer group is able to ask voluntarily from the respective CB(s) for a suspension of one, several or all of the products covered by the certificate (unless a sanction is pending by a CB, see point 7.2). This can happen if the producer experiences difficulty with compliance to the standard and needs time to close any non-compliance out. This suspension will not delay the renewal date, nor will it allow the producer to avoid paying registration and other applicable fees. The producer's status shall change to "self-declared partial suspension" on product level.
- 3.5.8 The producer may apply to different certification options (individual or group options) within the Ornamentals category but may not do so for the same product.
- 3.5.9 A producer may apply to one CB for certification of one product, and to another CB for another product, under the following circumstances: a) If the producer seeks certification for more than one product under more than one option (as explained in 5.1) or (b) If the producer participates in more than one certified producer group (e.g. roses under one producer group and heliconias under another with another CB).

#### 4 Registration

4.1 The following information concerning producers applying for Florverde® certification must be registered with Asocolflores and updated annually. This information will be used by Asocolflores to supply the registered party with a unique Florverde® number and a EUREPGAP client number (EGN), within the context of Eurepgap and Florverde equivalence. The registration information includes (4.8):

##### 4.1.1 General Information (4.8.1)

- (i) Name of Company and tax identification number (NIT).
- (ii) Name of Contact person, telephone number and e-mail and/or fax number
- (iii) Full updated address (physical and postal)

4.1.2 Producer Registration information (must be consistent with the information required by the Sub-license and Certification Agreement signed between the producer and the CB). The following information is required (4.8.2):

- (i) Ornamental crops or types of flowers produced and handled by the producer. (4.8.2.i)
- (ii) Area under production (crops), covered and non-covered crop (4.8.2.ii)
- (iii) Interest in individual or Group Option certification. (4.8.2.v)
- (iv) Previous EUREPGAP Number (EGN) and EUREPGAP-related registration number (4.8.2.vi y 4.8.2.vii)
- (v) Certification Body to be used. (4.8.2.viii)

##### 4.1.3 Registration Acceptance

- (i) For the registration to be accepted, the producer will have signed the Sub-licence and Certification Agreement between the CB and the producer (4.8.3.i)
- (ii) For the registration to be accepted, the producer must have been assigned a Florverde® number, and a EUREPGAP Client number (EGN). (4.8.3.ii)
- (iii) The registration process must be finalized, before certification can take place. (nota 4.8.3)

4.1.4 Florverde Program Information: (no gap) besides the information required during the certification process which has been described under 4.1.1 and 4.1.2, the Florverde program requires additional information in order to accomplish its goal of promoting sustainable floriculture (social and environmental) in the regions where they are grown, so as to improve its competitiveness. This additional information allows the sector to strengthen its local capacity building of knowledge (both at farm and sector level and in its interaction with other non governmental and government institutions).

The program, beyond certification, requires from its participating producers, both certified and non certified, the active and permanent participation in its information system. To meet this end, producers commit themselves to send in the following information:

- i) Performance quantitative indicators: referring to indicators defined by the Florverde committee both in the social and environmental scopes. They have a double purpose: at the producers level to facilitate management and at the sector level to help diagnose and identify opportunities and strategies in order to help improve the whole sector.
- ii) Characterization: additional to the information required for Registration (4.1.1. and 4.1.2), it refers to information that describes the producer at a more detailed level, in order to accomplish sector statistics that are important, such as: number of employees and type of contract, or number of underwater facilities and their location. The Florverde committee defines this information.
- iii) Checklist or self evaluation: it refers to information about the results of the audit, either internal or external. In this case its scope widens to cover producers that are not yet certified.

## 5. Certification Process

### 5.1 Certification Options (5)

The producer may apply to different certification options (individual or group options) within the Ornamentals category but may not do so for the same product

Producers can achieve Florverde® certification one of the two options described below.

#### 5.1.1 Individual Certification Option (5.1)

Note: The individual producer is the certificate holder once certified. (5.1)

##### 5.1.1.1 Internal Self-assessment (5.1.1)

- i) Frequency: The internal self-assessment must be carried out at least once a year. This self-assessment will be carried out under the responsibility of the producer. (5.1.1.1)
- ii) Scope: The self-assessment shall be against a checklist with control points in levels 1, 2 and 3. The completed checklist must be available on site for review by the inspector during the external inspection. (5.1.1.2)

##### 5.1.1.2 External Farm audit by Asocolflores approved CB (5.1.2)

- i) Frequency: One announced external farm audit carried out by the Asocolflores approved CB per annum of the registered producer. (5.1.2.1)

- ii) Scope: The CB will inspect the checklist with control points in levels 1, 2 and 3. (5.1.2.2)

#### 5.1.1.3 Unannounced Surveillance Inspections

- i) Frequency: The granting CB will carry out an additional minimum of 10% unannounced surveillance inspections per annum among all certified producers it has registered under Individual Certification Option. (5.1.3.1)
- ii) Scope: The CB will inspect the control points in levels 1, 2 and 3, including those that can be NA or non applicable. Any non-compliance will be handled in the same way as those found during an announced inspection. (5.1.3.2)
- iii) Notification: The CB will inform the producer within 48 hours in advance of the intended visit. In the exceptional case where the proposed date is impossible to be accepted by the producer (due to medical or other justifiable reasons), the producer will have one more chance to be informed of an unannounced surveillance inspection. The producer shall receive a written warning if the first, or where applicable, second proposed date has not been accepted. The producer will receive another 48-hour notification of a visit. If the visit cannot take place because of non-justifiable reasons, a complete suspension will be issued. (5.1.3.3)

#### 5.1.2 Group Certification Option (5.2)

Note: A producer group (section 10.1) applies for group certification. The producer group, will be the certificate holder once certified.

##### 5.1.2.1 Internal Quality Management System (QMS) Audit (5.2.1)

- i) Frequency: The QMS, developed according to requirements set out in section 10.1 of the General Regulations, must be audited internally, at least annually by the internal producer group auditor (see internal auditor requirements in section 10.2). (5.2.1.1)
- ii) Scope: The audit must be carried out by using the QMS Checklist, which is based on the General Regulations section 10. (5.2.1.2)

##### 5.1.2.2 Producer Group Internal Producer Inspections (5.2.2)

- i) Frequency: A minimum of one internal farm audit per annum of each registered producer within the producer group must be carried out by qualified internal producer group farm auditors (section 10.2) 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. (5.2.2.1)

NOTE: Self-assessments by each member of the group is only required if it is an internal requirement by the group, but it is not a Florverde requirement

- ii) Scope: The internal farm audit shall be based on the checklist with control points in levels 1, 2 and 3. (5.2.2.2)

#### 5.1.2.3 External Quality Management System (QMS) Audit by Asocolflores approved CB (5.2.3)

- i) Frequency: One announced external audit carried out annually by the Asocolflores approved CB of the registered producer group. (5.2.3.1)
- ii) Scope: The CB will audit the QMS by using the QMS Checklist based on sections 10.2 and 10.2 of the General Regulations. (5.2.3.2)

#### 5.1.2.4 External Producer Farm audit by Asocolflores approved CB (5.2.4)

- i) Frequency: External farm inspections are annual. (5.2.4.1)
- ii) Sampling: Selection of producers is made by taking a random sample that, as a minimum, is the square root (or next whole number rounded upwards if there are any decimals) of the total number of Florverde® registered producers within the producer group (see criteria to determine sample size in General Regulations section 10.3). (5.2.4.2)

For the first farm audit by a newly chosen CB or against a new version, the square root (as a minimum) of the producers in a producer group must be inspected in full by the CB. Example: Producer Group X has 25 registered members, and the CB, after the QMS audit, sets the square root as the sample. Therefore, 5 producers (square root of 25) must be inspected at this first inspection. (5.2.4.2.i)

During the validity period (12 months) of a certificate, the CB will carry out an unannounced farm audit on a number of producers in the producer group equivalent to 50% of the farm audit sample size inspected in the previous announced inspection. Only if the producers inspected externally have no non-conformities raised in that unannounced surveillance inspection, the following regular announced farm audit by the CB will be reduced to 50% of the original farmer sample size (providing the findings from the Quality Management System audit carried out at the following regular announced farm audit are also favourable to this reduction) (5.2.4.2.ii)

Example: Six months after the certificate was issued to Group X (full compliance with QMS audit and 5 farm inspections), the CB inspects 3 (50% of 5 = 3) producers unannounced. If the 3 producers have no non-conformities during this unannounced surveillance inspection, the CB will only check 2 producers during the following regular announced farm audit IF the QMS audit during the regular announced farm audit does not show any non-conformances. If any non-conformance is raised during the “unannounced” surveillance inspection, Group X

will be sanctioned accordingly, and no reduction of sample size will result in the next regular announced inspection. If there are non-conformities raised in the unannounced inspections, in the following regular announced inspection, justification must be given for inspecting only the minimum (square root) sample size, and not an increased sample size. (5.2.4.2.iii)

- iii) Scope: The CB will inspect the control points in levels 1, 2 and 3. (5.2.4.3)

#### 5.1.2.5 Unannounced Surveillance Audits (5.2.5)

- i) Frequency: The granting CB will annually carry out additional unannounced surveillance audits on a minimum of 10% of all certified producer groups it has registered under Group Certification Option. These additional unannounced surveillance audits will cover only the Producer Group Quality Management (QMS) system. If the CB has 10 or fewer producer groups registered under Group Option, 1 producer group must be chosen. (5.2.5.1)

The 10% must not only take into account total numbers, but must be calculated considering factors such as geography, legislation (where several jurisdictions are covered by the CB), crop type, compliance history, etc. (5.2.5.1)

- ii) Scope: The CB will audit the QMS of the group. Any non-conformances will lead to a sanction applied to the whole group. (5.2.5.2)
- iii) Prior Notification: The CB will inform the producer group within 48 hours in advance of the intended visit. In the exceptional case where the proposed date is impossible to be accepted by the producer group (due to medical or other justifiable reasons), the producer group will have one more chance to be informed of an unannounced surveillance inspection. The producer group shall receive a written warning if the first, or where applicable, second proposed date has not been accepted. The producer group will receive another 48-hour notification of a visit. If the visit cannot take place because of non-justifiable reasons, a complete suspension will be issued. (5.2.5.3)

#### 5.1.2.6 External inspections by CBs approved by Asocolflores

- i) Frequency: Producers are audited externally according to the rules established by the Individual Certification Option and Group Certification Option.

### 5.2 Levels of compliance and Compliance Criteria (4.9.3)

- 5.2.1 Compliance with Florverde consists of three types of control points that the producer is required to comply with in order to obtain Florverde certification. These are Level 1, Level 2 and Level 3 control points, which must be fulfilled with as follows. The internal or external audit covers all control points. Control points in level 3 are only intended to act as a guideline for the company.

- i) 100% compliance of all applicable Level 1 control points is compulsory. Reference evidence must be recorded as comments next to each Level 1 in the checklist. (4.9.3.1)
- ii) 95% compliance of all applicable Level 2 control points is compulsory. For the sake of calculation, the following formula will apply for each module:  $\{ (\text{Total number of Level 2 control points}) - (\text{Not Applicable Level 2 control points scored}) \} \times 5\% = (\text{Total Level 2 control point Noncompliance allowable})$

NOTE: A score for example of 94.8% cannot be rounded to 95% (the pass percentage) (4.9.3.2)

- iii) Recommendations: No minimum percentage of compliance is set. They are meant to be an alert to producers on what will be expected from them in the future. (4.9.3.3)

#### 5.2.2 Compliance Verification and Comments (4.9.4)

- i) Compliance is indicated with a “Yes” (for compliant), “No” (for not compliant), and “N/A”.
- ii) Control points that are indicated as “N/A” must be inspected in order to determine if it is really NA and justify.
- iii) In cases of exception where the control point is not applicable, the answer must be given as “yes” with a clear justification.
- iv) It is obligatory to give evidence (comments) for all Level 1 control points audited in all external audits inspections, self-assessments, and internal inspections.
- v) Comments must be entered in the checklist for all control points that are found to be noncompliant during external inspections and self-assessments/internal inspections and audits

#### 5.2.3 Non-compliance vs Non-conformance (4.9.4.1)

- i) Non-compliance: A control point in the checklist is not fulfilled according to the compliance criteria. e.g. The producer does not comply with control point 15.1.
- ii) Non-conformance: A Florverde rule that is necessary for obtaining the certificate is infringed. e.g. The producer does not comply with a Level 1 or complies only with less than 95% of the applicable Level 2.

#### 5.3 Audit procedure (NO GAP)

- 5.3.1 Type of evaluation : the audit will be based on document review, worker interviews and site inspection.
- 5.3.2 Sample handling: the audit will be based on samples of documents, as well as interviews and sites.
- 5.3.3 Process emphasis on the follow up audits: once the producer holds a certificate, the auditor may evaluate a sample of the processes that the producer has, as long as he can evaluate all required control points in them.
- 5.3.4 Farm inspection timing (4.9.2.1)

The inspection of a producer is linked to the registration (no inspection can take place until the CB has accepted the producer's registration or re-registration, which must be done on an annual basis - for more information on registration see Annex I.3), but has a different timing according to whether it is a first or subsequent inspection, and depending on the product to be inspected. This is explained below.

i) First inspections

All records to be externally inspected in the first year are only valid going back up to three months before the date of first harvest after registration is completed, or to the date of the producer's first registration with Florverde®, whichever is longer. Harvest and Produce handling must take place after registration with Florverde®. Records that relate to harvest or produce handling before the producer registered with Florverde® are not valid.

a) First Inspection Timing at Harvest (4.9.2.1.a)::

The ideal timing for inspecting all control points and when sufficient records/evidence is available is during harvest time, especially to facilitate verification of the control points related to harvest (i.e. hygiene during harvest, etc.).

b) First Inspection Alternative Timing

Alternative timing options may be followed where inspection during harvest time is not possible. The 1st inspection therefore takes place before or after harvest (though always after registration of the farmer). In these cases, justification for this alternative timing must be given by the CB, and noted in the audit report. Examples of justification may be logistics and timing constraints of farmer and/or inspector, variation in harvest dates, perennial crop not yet producing a crop, etc. Additionally the following constraints need to be followed by the CB:

1. Practically, inspection of records and visual evidence requires that the inspection must take place as close to harvest as possible, for the inspector to verify as many control points as possible.

2. Some control points will not be able to be inspected if the inspection is made before harvest of the registered crop, and as a result either a follow-up visit will be required, or proof can be sent by fax, photos or other acceptable means (to be discussed and agreed between farmer and CB). No certificate will be issued until all control points have been verified and closed out. If once the farmer is registered, harvest has already taken place at the moment of inspection, the farmer must retain evidence for compliance of control points related to that harvest, otherwise some control points may not be able to be checked and certification is not possible until the following harvest.

3. The CB must make sure that in the sampling for unannounced visits, those farmers that did not receive a 1st inspection during harvest have a greater chance of getting an unannounced inspection during the next harvest (this needs to be conveyed to the farmer when discussing inspection timing). Additionally, the CB must make every effort to carry out the subsequent inspection during harvest.

c) First Inspection Timing and Multiple Crop Certifications  
(4.9.2.1.c)::

The farmer may be seeking certification for more than one crop, and the crops may not all have the same seasonal timing, i.e. harvest of one crop does not necessarily coincide with the harvest of other crops. Here there are two scenarios:

1. Where the crops to be included in the certification scope are concurrent, i.e. cropped at the same time, then the first year's inspection will be timed so that the principal crop can be viewed at or as close to harvest as possible, making an assumption that the other crops will be compliant to the same degree ("principal crop" will be defined by the CB in their inspection procedures, taking into account area, food risk, market for export, or any other relevant criteria). Where the CB considers it necessary, evidence of compliance can be demanded closer to harvest of the "non-principal" crops, and a re-visit may be scheduled when any outstanding control points may be verified.

2. Where the crops to be included in the certification scope are consecutive, i.e. the production of one crop finalises 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 that same first year can be added to the certificate only once compliance has been verified for each crop, either through a site inspection at harvest of each crop or through application of guidelines set out in point 4.9.2.1.i.b.3 above.

(ii) Subsequent inspections

There must be at least one product present (present meaning in the field, in the storage, or crops that are not yet ready for harvest, or in dormant phase in the field on site) to give the CB confidence that any other registered crops (if any) not present at that time, are handled in compliance with Florverde®.

a) Extension of certificate validity:

There may arise situations where there is no crop or produce present at the time when the annual inspection is due (i.e. only one crop is registered and harvest has already taken place and there is no storage on farm). In such cases, providing the farmer has re-registered at the end of the period of validity of the previous certificate, and the CB concerned had also issued the previous certificate of the farmer, the CB can opt to extend the validity of the previous certificate by up to 3 months longer than the 12 month period (15 months in total), in order to be able to reach a point in time when the farm may be inspected with presence of crop / produce. An extension can only be granted if the producer re-registered before the expiry date. **Therefore, the subsequent inspection can be done at any time** during an "inspection window" that ranges for 9 months: **from 6 months before** the original expiry date of the certificate, and (only if the CB extends the certificate validity in the EUREPGAP database) **up to 3 months after** the original expiry date of the certificate. e.g. 1st certification date: 14 February 2007 (expiry date: 13 February 2008) 2nd inspection can be any time from 14 August 2007 to 13 May 2008, if the certificate validity is extended. The **validity date** for subsequent certificates issued shall however always **revert** to the date linked to the original certification date (13 February 2009, 13 February 2010, etc.).

**NOTE: Certified/registered producers must** re-register annually before the expiry date, otherwise the product status will change from "Certified" to "Certificate not renewed or not reregistered". A valid justification (see 4.9.2.1.ii.a) must be given before the CB can extend the certificate validity in the database.

#### 5.4 Granting of the Certificate

5.4.1 Granting: the official granting of the certification includes a certificate with the information described in Annex 1.

5.4.2 A certification cannot be granted if all required control points are not evaluated and

#### 5.4.3 Validity of certificate (4.9.5)

- i) Certificate granting is conditional on compliance by the producer with all the applicable requirements set out in this General Regulations as well as other normative documents.
- ii) A certificate will be issued by the CB approved by Asocolflores with validity of 3 years, but has to be confirmed every 12 months after external inspection. The date of validity that appears on a paper certificate will be the date when the CB made the certification decision after all non-conformances were closed out. 4.9.5.1

#### 5.4.4 Granting Scopes (4.9.6)

These scopes are cumulative, not alternative, and must be considered together when registering, certifying and applying any sanctions. This means that product scope is linked to the location where that product is produced. Product produced in a non-registered location cannot be certified, and likewise products other than those in the registered scope that are grown on a

registered location cannot be certified. Sanctions will apply across products and location if a complete sanction is imposed. Only producers may apply for Florverde certification.

#### 5.4.4.1 Product Scope: (4.9.6.1)

- i) Certificate and sub-Licence is issued to the registered producer, on the farms where the products are produced and for the products declared.
- ii) A producer who is included in the annex of a certificate of a producer group for a registered list of product(s) may only sell product outside of the group IF the product is not sold as Florverde certified. Products sold outside of the group cannot make reference to the Florverde certificate and all sales volumes must be reported to the group and the mass balance will indicate these sales.
- iii) The legal entity that places the certified product on the market must be the legal certificate holder.

#### 5.4.4.2 Location scope (4.9.6.2).

- i) The entire production process of the declared and registered products must comply with Florverde® requirements. Certified locations cannot be separated into growing areas or production facilities that are certified and other growing areas or production facilities of the same product that are excluded from certification.

### 5.5 Maintenance of certification (4.10)

- 5.5.1 The registration of the producer must be reconfirmed with Asocolflores every year. Asocolflores must confirm this to Eurepgap and to the CB. In case its not confirmed the status will change from "Certiifed" to "Certificate not reregistered" (4.10.i)
- 5.5.2 All control points of the checklist and the full verification process must be completed by the inspector annually and sent to Asocolflores (4.10.ii)

## 6. ABOUT THE USE OF THE MARK OF CONFORMITY

- 6.1 The correct use of the Florverde® Mark of Conformity is described in the Brand Use Instruction Manual. The electronic files must be solicited to Asocolflores. Florverde® Mark of Conformity can be acquired through Asocolflores to assure exact format as in Manual.
- 6.2 Only producers holders of a certificate are allowed to use the Florverde® Mark of Conformity.
- 6.3 The use of the Florverde® Mark of Conformity does not exonerate the Company from applicable obligations imposed by social and environmental legislation.

6.4 The company owner of a valid certification that buys flower and/or ornamentals to third non certified suppliers and uses these product on the bouquet arrangements that use the Florverde Mark of Conformity must demonstrate that at least 70% of the stems are certified and use the corresponding Mark of Conformity..

6.5 Non certified stems (maximum 30%) used in the arrangement or bouquet or packaging with the Florverde Mark of Conformity mentioned in 6.4 must come from suppliers that comply the basic control points described in Annex 2.

6.6 The applicant producer for the certification must verify that his suppliers comply the above.

6.7 In case the company changes the ownership or it is finished, a mandatory written authorization from Asocolflores will be necessary for transferring rights for the use of the Florverde® Mark of Conformity.

6.8 The use of the brand must be stopped immediately after suspension or cancellation of the certificate, as well as to stop making any reference to the brand. No imitation or simulation of the brand may be used.

## 7. NON-CONFORMANCES AND SANCTIONS

### 7.1 Types of Non-Conformances

Note: Three types of non-conformances exist within Florverde; Level 1, Level 2 and Contractual. They cover control point compliance and contractual and General Regulations related issues, as detailed below:

#### 7.1.1 Level 1 Non-Conformances

This type of non-conformance is when the producer does not comply with 100% of the Level 1 control points.

#### 7.1.2 Level 2 Non-Conformances

When a producer complies with less than 95% of the Minor Musts of the applicable control points, a Level 2 non-conformance is issued.

#### 7.1.3 Contractual Non-Conformances

##### 7.1.3.1 Contractual Non-Conformance

- i) Non-compliance of any of the agreements signed in the contract between the CB and the producer that objectively shows mismanagement on Florverde related procedures at producer level.
- ii) Non-compliance of any of the agreements signed in the contract between the CB and the producer or any issue found during the farm audit that leads to technical doubts about the producer's way of proceeding.
- iii) Non-compliance of any of the issues of the General Regulations.

## 7.2 Types of Sanctions (6.2)

Note 1 All CBs and producer groups must have in place a penalty procedure addressing non-conformances identified as described in 7.1.

Note 2 Three types of sanction exist within Florverde; Warning, Suspension and Cancellation. These apply to non-compliances of control points and contractual and General Regulations related issues.

Note 3 Producers will be prevented from changing CB until the non-conformance that led to the respective sanction is satisfactorily closed out.

### 7.2.1 Warning (6.2.1)

- a. For all types of non-conformance detected, a Warning is issued.
- b. A time period allowed for correction will be agreed upon between the CB and producer, up to a maximum corrective action submission period of 28 calendar days from the date of the Warning.

NOTE 1) If the non-compliance is against a Level 1 obligation that is not complied with, time given for compliance before suspension is applied, which is up to a maximum delay of 28 days, will depend on the criticality of the non-compliance, in terms of safety of people, environment and consumers, evaluated by the inspector/auditor carrying out the inspection/audit decision on the period for implementing corrective actions. The CB shall make the decision on the period that is given (within the 28-day limit) to the producer for closing out the Level 1 non-conformance. No time is given for compliance where a serious threat to the safety of people, environment and consumer is present. QMS points can be closed out through a plan for closing out the non-compliance. The period must be set according to criticality of non-compliances and circumstances, detailing the specific number of days for the producer to close out the non-compliance, up to a maximum of 28 days. The producer MUST close out Level 1 non-conformances before obtaining/regaining certified status.

- c. If the cause of the sanction is not resolved within the time period set (maximum of 28 days), a Suspension is imposed.

### 7.2.2 Suspension (6.2.2)

(i) A Suspension is issued when a producer cannot show sufficient corrective action after a Warning has been issued. A suspension may also be issued to the producer who voluntarily asks for it, for some (partial) or all (complete) of his products.

(ii) 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.

iii) During this time (period of suspension), the producer will be prevented from using the Florverde logo/trademark, Licence/certificate or any other type of document that has any relation to Florverde.

iv) Suspension will be lifted when there is sufficient evidence of corrective action within the allocated time for correction (6 months or shorter).

(v) If the cause of the Suspension is not resolved within the time period set, the certificate and the producer will be sanctioned with a Cancellation.

### 7.2.3 Cancellation (6.2.3)

- (i) A Cancellation of the contract will be issued when a) A producer cannot show sufficient corrective action after a Suspension has been issued and six months have elapsed, or b) A non-conformance leads to doubt about the integrity of the produce, or c) when contractual non-conformances are detected.
- (ii) A Cancellation of the contract will result in the total prohibition of the use of the Florverde logo/trademark, Licence/certificate, or any device or document that could relate to Florverde.
- (iii) A producer that has had a Cancellation sanction applied may not re-submit for Florverde certification until 12 months after the date of Cancellation.

## 7.3 Notification and Appeals (6.3)

### 7.3.1 Decisions on Sanction (6.3.1)

- (i) All sanctions will be decided by the CB Certification Committee (or equivalent decision making department of the CB).
- (ii) Upon finding that a producer no longer conforms to the Florverde standard, the farm auditor will report this to his CB and to the certified producer, detailing the non-compliances identified during the inspection.
- (iii) The EUREPGAP Sector Committees reserve the right to impose certain sanctions for certain non-compliances. These will be detailed in an Annex and CBs and their clients will be made aware of these.

### 7.3.2 Producer Resolutions (6.3.2)

- (i) The producer must either resolve the non-conformances communicated or appeal to the CB in writing against the non-conformances, explaining the reasons for the appeal.

- (ii) If the non-conformances are not resolved within the permitted time scale, the sanction will be escalated as explained in 7.2.

### 7.3.3 Lifting of Sanctions (6.3.3)

- (i) If a producer notifies the CB that the non-conformance is resolved before the set period, the respective sanction will be lifted, subject to satisfactory evidence and closing out.

### 7.3.4 6.3.4 Sanctioning of Certification Bodies

- (i) The Florverde committee at Asocolflores reserves the right to sanction CBs based on evidence of not following procedures or clauses of the Certification and Licence Agreement signed between Asocolflores and the CB.

**8. RULES OF THE CERTIFICATION BODY (CB) (Part II 2.1)**

## 8.1 Certification Bodies

## 8.1.1 CB Approval by Asocolflores

- (i) Asocolflores reserves the right to choose those CB to which it will licence the use of the brand and the certification of Florverde. (2.1.i)
- (ii) Between Asocolflores and the CB there must be a signed agreement regarding certification and license of brand use. (2.1.ii)
- (iii) CBs must apply to an Accreditation Body (AB) for accreditation to ISO Guide 65 for the Florverde® scope, after the signature of the Asocolflores Licence and Certification Agreement. A copy of the confirmation of this application to the AB must be forwarded to Asocolflores within 28 days. (2.1.iii)
- (iv) The Accreditation Body to which the CB applies must be signatory to the multilateral agreement (MLA) on Product Certification and must: a) either be part of the European Co-operation for Accreditation (EA), or b) must be a member of the International Accreditation Forum (IAF) which has been subject to a peer evaluation in the product certification field with a positive recommendation in its report. (2.1.iv)
- (v) CBs must obtain accreditation within the set timeframe, which is set currently at 6 (six) months after the date of application. This period can be extended for an additional time-span of 6 months if the AB gives justified reasons that are acceptable to Asocolflores. (2.1.v)
- (vi) Once accreditation has been obtained, the CB must send a copy of the accreditation evidence to Asocolflores, stating clearly the extent of the accreditation scope. (2.1.vi)
- (vii) Once the CB has been approved by Asocolflores, the CB can place the Florverde® logo on the certificate, and license its use by the certified producers according to the Brand Instruction Manual and this General Regulations. (2.1.ix)
- (viii) Every CB approved by the Florverde® Committee will nominate a contact person, called the "Florverde® Scheme Manager", who will be the representative of the CB before the Florverde® Committee. This person:
  - does not necessarily need to be a Florverde® auditor, but must at least qualify as a Florverde® inspector
  - must be committed to assist in any harmonization activities performed by Florverde Committee.
  - must be part of the decision-making process of the CB;
  - shall be responsible for returning to Florverde® Committee the requested signed reception of the latest approved copy of any communication requiring written receipt.
  - shall be responsible for communication and administration of users within the Florverde® CB Extranet and to ensure that all registered Florverde® auditors and inspectors comply the required characteristics.

- shall respond to Florverde® operational enquiries within 3 working days. If this person is not available, a substitute shall respond in this time frame.

- (xix) The CB is responsible for communicating updates, date of first application and grace period of any new Florverde® versions of normative documents and any edition updates issues by Florverde® to their Florverde® registered clients.

### 8.1.2 CB Operational Requirements

- (i) All the points described in the General Regulations must be accepted and included in the operational documents of the CB (ISO Guide 65), and be available for Accreditation Body evaluation (ISO 17011). (2.3.i)
- (ii) The CB must include the requirements for following general or specific guidelines issued by Florverde® committee into its certification system procedures pertaining to Florverde® certification. (2.3.ii)
- (iii) Florverde® certification granting procedure must be clearly identified in the CB operational documentation, and must follow the Florverde® General Regulations. (2.3.iii)
- (iv) Each CB will be responsible for the information filed; documentation related to Florverde® procedures must be made available to Asocolflores on request. (2.3.iv)
- (v) The person who makes the certification decision or at least one member of the certification committee of the CB shall comply with auditor qualifications (for the scope the certificate is being issued) as set out in Appendix II.2. (2.3.vi)
- (vi) For carrying out Florverde inspections and audits, the CB must employ/contract only farm auditors or auditors that fulfil the requirements as established on \_\_\_\_\_ (Appendices II.1 and II.2, respectively) (2.3.vii)
- (vii) The farm audit and certification activities of the Certification Body must be carried out at the respective registered production sites of the registered producers and, to the extent relevant, at the relevant administrative sites. (2.3.viii)
- (viii) When a producer or producer group that has previously had a Florverde® Registration N° applies for registration, the CB must act according to the Florverde® procedure for Transfer between Certification Bodies as set out in Annex II.1 (2.3.xii)
- (ix) When a producer wants to change CB, the receiving CB as a first step, must verify in the data base of Asocolflores as well as in the Eurepgap data base, according to the procedure of CB transfer described in 8.3. (Part II 2.3.xiii)
- (x) CBs with previous ISO/IEC GUIDE 65 accreditation that are not yet Florverde® accredited to issue a limited number of non-accredited certificates during the application phase for accreditation. The maximum number of producers that may receive non-

- accredited certificates (individual or group options) is 20, unless an increase is allowed by the Florverde committee under extremely justified conditions. If a CB has one producer group of 33 producers, it can only issue a nonaccredited certificate covering 20 of the 33 producers. The CB cannot issue any further certificate for any individual or group option, until it has received accreditation. Alternatively, the CB can issue 20 individual certificates. A CB can issue a non-accredited certificate for a group option for a group covering 12 producers and 8 individual option certificates for 8 individual producers (not connected to the option 2 group) (total = 20 non accredited certificates). (Part II 2.3.xvii)
- (xi) Asocolflores shall be entitled to participate, upon prior notice and at its own cost, in inspections or audits carried out by Certification Bodies. (Part II 2.3.xix)
- (xii) As soon as the CB has made the certification decision, no certificate is issued before the producer's status is updated to "Certified" in the Asocolflores database. (Part II 2.4.i)
- (xiii) Ensure that as soon as a sanction has been issued, the producer's status must be changed in the Asocolflores database to the relevant status (time between issuing the sanction and updating the database must not exceed more than 1 working day). (Part II 2.4.ii)
- (xiv) For all other producer statuses, be sufficiently up to date so as to ensure that the status of a producer on the EUREPGAP database is current. (2.4.iii)
- (xv) Ensure availability of immediately accessible information on all audit and farm audit details (including those of the unannounced surveillance inspections and audits) and compliance details for each certificate. (Part II 2.4.iv)
- (xvi) The CB must confirm Certification within working days after the producer has shown sufficient evidence of corrective action. (2.5.i)
- (xvii) The CB must fully explain the Sub-licence and Certification Agreement to his client, especially the issues regarding data security. This agreement must be signed as part of the registration process. (2.5.ii)
- (xviii) Every CB approved by the Florverde Committee will nominate a contact person, called the "Florverde Scheme Manager", who will be the representative of the CB before the Florverde Committee. This person:
- does not necessarily need to be a Florverde auditor, but must at least qualify as a Florverde inspector
  - must be part of the decision-making process of the CB;
  - shall be responsible for returning to Florverde Committee the requested signed reception of the latest approved copy of any communication requiring written receipt.
  - shall be responsible for communication and administration of users within the Florverde CB Extranet and to ensure that all registered Florverde auditors and inspectors complete the required profile

- shall respond to Asocolflores operational enquiries within 3 working days. If this person is not available, a substitute shall respond in this time frame (2.3.v).

(xix) The CB is responsible for communicating updates, date of first application and grace period of any new Florverde versions of normative documents and any edition updates issues by Asocolflores to their Florverde registered clients (2.3.xvi)

### 8.1.3 Independence, Impartiality, Confidentiality and Integrity of CB

- (i) In accordance with ISO/IEC Guide 65, the Asocolflores approved CB must be structured to ensure separation of activities which could cause a conflict of interest. All CB personnel must operate to high levels of professional integrity, be free from commercial, financial or other pressures, which might affect their judgment and are expressly forbidden from promoting any goods or services during evaluation activities. (2.6.i)
- (ii) Confidentiality: Information relating to the applicant producer including details of products and processes, evaluation reports and associated documentation will be treated as confidential (unless otherwise required by law). No information is released to third parties without the prior consent of the applicant unless stated otherwise in the General Regulations or the Sub licence and Certification Agreement. (2.6.iii)
- (iii) Data Protection: Within the framework of the Florverde system, only parties to the system, previously defined, will be authorised to view the data (the producer, CB and Asocolflores).

## 8.2 CB SANCTIONS (3)

Two types of Non-compliances can lead to sanctioning of CBs.

8.2.1 Contractual Non-compliances Contractual non-compliances are found when CBs are not in compliance with contracts signed with Asocolflores. These may include, but are not limited to: (3.1.1)

- i) Misleading or false communication on Florverde certification and logo use.
- ii) Refusal to sign the Licence and Certification Agreement and any amendments after a period set by the Florverde committee at Asocolflores
- iii) Failure to provide proof of accreditation within the established periods during CB approval
- iv) Confirmed fraud
- v) Loss of accreditation (based on AB decision)

8.2.2 Standard or General Regulations Non-compliances (3.1.2)

Standard or General Regulation non-compliances are found when the CBs are not complying with the rules set out in any Part of the General Regulations or are not interpreting the Control Points and Compliance Criteria according to the Florverde rules. Examples of such non-compliances are (non exhaustive list):

- (i) Not participating in meetings arranged by Asocolflores with the purpose of harmonizing interpretation criteria of standard and General Regulations.
- (ii) Infrequent or late update of certification data of companies in the Asocolflores information system.
- (iii) Unreliable registration and audit data
- (iv) No response to Asocolflores official communication and/or complaints
- (v) Confirmed fraud
- (vi) Not applying approved Florverde committee Interpretation Guidelines.
- (vii) Conflict of interest (e.g. consultancy and certification)
- (viii) Delay or non-application of producer sanctions
- (ix) Inadequate internal training
- (x) Not complying with the scope of the external inspections (3.1.2.xi)

Note: The relevant AB and the Florverde committee will be responsible for dealing with these non-compliances.

### 8.3 TRANSFER BETWEEN CBs (ANNEX II.1)

#### 8.3.1 Introduction (1.1)

- i) The objective of this section is to assure the maintenance of the integrity of Florverde certificates issued by one CB if subsequently transferred to another CB.
- ii) Also to guarantee that the case of any producer registered entering into contract with a CB will be reviewed in the light of that producer's history within EUREPGAP and Florverde.
- iii) This section states minimum requirements for the transfer of producers found in the Florverde database between CBs working with Asocolflores.
- iv) CBs may implement procedures or actions, which are more stringent than those, contained herein, provided that an organisation's freedom to choose a CB is not unduly or unfairly constrained.
- v) Only producers found in the Florverde database and that are not sanctioned may change CB. All others must first resolve any outstanding sanction before being able to transfer to a new CB.

#### 8.3.2 Transfer of Producers between CBs (1.2)

The transfer between CBs is defined as the recognition of a producer that is found in the Florverde database in any status, either with or without an existing and valid Florverde certificate by one Asocolflores Approved CB [hereinafter referred to as the “outgoing CB”] by another Asocolflores Approved CB [hereinafter referred to as the “accepting CB”] for the purpose of issuing its own Certification.

### 8.3.3 Minimum requirements (1.3)

Accepting CBs must be accredited to the Florverde scope. Newly approved EUREPGAP CBs that are not yet accredited cannot therefore take on clients that are transferring from an already approved and accredited CB (unless the producer has not yet ever been certified).

### 8.3.4 Pre- Transfer Review (1.4)

A competent person from the accepting CB shall carry out a review of the certification of the prospective client. This review shall be conducted by means of both a database and paper enquiry, and normally a visit to the prospective client. The review shall cover the following aspects:

- (i) Confirmation that the client’s certified activities falls within the accredited scope of the accepting CB.
- (ii) The reason for seeking a transfer.
- iii) That the status of the producer in the Florverde database correlates correctly with reality, and if applicable that a valid Florverde certificate, in terms of authenticity, duration, and scope of activities covered by Florverde, is held in respect of the site or sites wishing to transfer. If practical, the validity of and the status of outstanding nonconformities should be verified with the issuing CB unless it has ceased trading.
- (iv) A consideration of the last evaluation/re-evaluation reports, subsequent surveillance reports and any outstanding non-conformities arising there from. This consideration should also include any other available, relevant documentation regarding the certification process i.e. handwritten notes, checklists.
- (v) Complaints received and action taken.
- (vi) The stage in the current certification cycle.
- (vii) Whether any contractual commitments with the outgoing CB are still outstanding, which would impede a correct transfer to the accepting CB.
- (viii) In particular, whether a producer has had a sanction applied by the outgoing CB, which has not yet been closed out. In cases where sanctions are outstanding, the sanction must be resolved and closed out with the outgoing CB before any transfer of the producer to the accepting CB.

### 8.3.5 Certificate transfer (1.5)

(i) Transfer should normally only be of a current valid certificate but, in the case of a certificate issued by a CB that has ceased trading, or that has had its Asocolflores Approval or Accreditation withdrawn, the accepting CB may, at its discretion, consider such a certificate for transfer on the basis described in this guidance.

(ii) Certificates that are known to have been suspended or to be under threat of suspension should not be accepted for transfer.

(iii) Outstanding non-compliances should be closed out, if practical, with the issuing CB, before transfer. Otherwise the accepting CB should close them out.

(iv) The accepting CB must as a first step for all applicants carry out a search in the Florverde database, to verify the status, before any further actions are taken.

(v) If no further outstanding or potential problems are identified by the pre-transfer review, a certificate dated from the date of completion of the review, may be issued following the normal decision making process. The pattern of the previous certification regime should be utilised to determine the programme of on-going surveillance and re-evaluation unless, as a result of the review, the accepting CB has performed an initial or re-evaluation audit.

(vi) Where doubt continues to exist, after the pre-transfer review, as to the adequacy of a current or previously held certification, the accepting CB should, depending upon the extent of doubt, either:

- \_ Treat the applicant as a new client, or
- \_ Conduct an evaluation concentrating on the identified problem areas

(vii) The decision as to the action required will depend upon the nature and extent of any problems found and should be explained to the organisation

**9. FARM AUDITOR AND QMS AUDITOR QUALIFICATIONS (APPENDIX II.1)**

## 9.1 Qualifications for Farm Auditor (Individual Certification Option)

## 9.1.1 Formal Qualifications

## 9.1.1.1 Post-high school diploma (4.2.1)

- (i) At least a post-high school diploma or equivalent (minimum course duration of 2 years) must have been obtained in a discipline related to the scope of certification (Crops)

## 9.1.2 Technical Skills and Qualifications (4.3)

9.1.2.1 Farm Auditor Training (4.3.1) : One-day practical farm audit course setting out basic principles of inspection.

9.1.2.2 GAP Training: For Crop Scope: Plant protection, fertilizer and IPM training either as part of formal qualifications, or by the successful completion of a formal course.

9.1.2.3 A minimum of 2 years experience gained after finishing academic studies mentioned in point (10.1.1), and 3 years overall experience in the ornamental industry. This must involve working directly in ornamental production or in quality assurance within the flower or ornamental industry.

## 9.1.2.4 Communication Skills (4.3.3)

- (i) "Working language" skills in the corresponding native/working language. This must include the locally used specialist terminology in this working language.
- (ii) Exceptions to this rule must be consulted and confirmed in writing beforehand with the Asocolflores.

## 9.1.3 Key Tasks (4.4)

## 9.1.3.1 Farm Audits (4.4.1)

- (i) Farm audit of farms (either producer or producer in producer group) to assess compliance with the Florverde standard.
- (ii) To produce timely and accurate reports on such inspections in accordance with ISO/IEC Guide 65 and Florverde timelines and system requirements.

## 9.1.3.2 General (4.4.2)

- (i) To maintain up to date files of all quality policies, procedures, work instructions and documentation issued by the CB.
- (ii) (ii) To keep abreast of developments, issues and legislative changes pertaining to the scope in which audits are carried out.
- (iii) (iii) To carry out any other tasks the CB may assign, outside the scope of Florverde so long as these activities do not contradict ISO/IEC Guide 65 principles or any stipulation set down by Florverde General Regulations.

#### 9.1.3.3 Independence and Confidentiality (4.4.3)

- (i) Farm auditors are not permitted to carry out any activities which may affect their independence or impartiality, and specifically shall not carry out consultancy or training activities for the producers on whom they perform inspections. Training is not considered consultancy, provided that, where the course relates to management systems or auditing, it is confined to the provision of generic information that is freely available in the public domain; i.e. the trainer cannot provide company-specific solutions.
- (ii) (ii) Farm auditors must strictly observe the producer's and the CB's procedures to maintain the confidentiality of information and records.

#### 9.2 Qualifications for QMS Auditor (Group Certification Option) (5 APPENDIX II.2)

##### 9.2.1 Formal Qualifications (5.2)

9.2.1.1 Post-high school diploma (5.2.1): (i) At least a post-high school diploma or equivalent (minimum course duration of 2 years) must have been obtained in a discipline related to the scope of certification (Crops).

##### 9.2.2 Technical Skills and Qualifications (5.3)

###### 9.2.2.1 Lead Assessor Training (5.3.1)

- (i) Practical auditing experience in ISO 9000 or ISO 14000 series (minimum 15 days).
- (ii) Successful completion of a Lead Assessor training course based on ISO 19011 principles, that must have a minimum duration of 37 hours, and must be externally recognized by the industry. The certificate must specify the course content, duration. Successful completion must be indicated on the certificate.
- (iii) Lead Assessor training course must cover: applicable standards on quality auditing, auditing techniques, focus of the audits (psychological aspects and communication) and reporting, and it must also include a practical case study.

###### 9.2.2.2 GAP Training (5.3.2)

- (i) Plant protection, fertilizer and IPM training either as part of formal qualifications, or by the successful completion of a formal course. (Parte II 5.3.2.iv)
- (ii) A minimum of 2 year's experience gained after finishing academic studies mentioned in point 9.2.1.1, and 3 years overall experience in the agricultural industry. This shall involve work in the production of ornamentals. (Parte II 5.3.2.vi)

#### 9.2.2.3 Communication Skills (5.3.3)

- (i) "Working language" skills in Spanish. This must include the locally used specialist terminology in this working language.
- (ii) Exceptions to this rule must be consulted beforehand with the Florverde committee.

#### 9.2.3 Key Tasks (5.4)

##### 9.2.3.1 Producer Group Audits (5.4.1)

- (i) Auditing and assessment of the Quality Management System of producers groups for compliance with the Florverde standard according to the QMS Checklist, available at Asocolflores.
- (ii) To produce timely and accurate reports on such audits in accordance with ISO/IEC Guide 65 requirements and Florverde timelines and system requirements.

##### 9.2.3.2 Farm Inspections (5.4.2)

- (i) Farm audit of farms (either individual producer Option) or producer in producer group Option) to assess compliance with the Florverde standard. (5.4.2.i)
- (ii) To produce timely and accurate reports on such inspections in accordance with ISO/IEC Guide 65 and Florverde timelines and system requirements.(5.4.2.ii)

##### 9.2.3.3 General (5.4.3)

- (i) To maintain up to date files of all quality policies, procedures, work instructions and documentation issued by the CB. (5.4.3.i)
- (ii) To keep abreast of developments, issues and legislative changes pertaining to the ornamental industry. (5.4.3.ii)

- (iii) To carry out any other tasks the CB may assign, outside the scope of Florverde so long as these activities do not contradict ISO/IEC Guide 65 principles or any stipulation set down by Florverde General Regulations. (5.4.3.iii)

9.2.3.4 Independence and Confidentiality (5.4.4)

- (i) Auditors are not permitted to take ultimate certification decisions regarding own audits or inspections they have carried out themselves. (5.4.4.i)
- (ii) Auditors are not permitted to carry out any activities which may affect their independence or impartiality, and specifically shall not carry out consultancy or training activities for the producers on whom they perform inspections. Training is not considered consultancy, provided that, where the course relates to management systems or auditing, it is confined to the provision of generic information that is freely available in the public domain; i.e. the trainer cannot provide company-specific solutions. (5.4.4.ii)
- (iii) Auditors must strictly observe the producer's and the CB's procedures to maintain the confidentiality of information and records. (5.4.4.iii)

**10. GROUP CERTIFICATION OPTION (Parte III)**

## 10.1 What is a producer group? (Parte III.1)

- i) .A producer group is a group of producers seeking to be Florverde® certified. The structure of the producer group must enable the application of a Quality Management System across the whole group.
- ii) The Quality Management System (QMS) in place must be sufficiently robust to ensure (and to demonstrate through audits) that the group's registered producer members/production locations comply in a uniform manner with the Florverde® standard requirements. The producer group registered members must be legally responsible for their respective production locations. The producer group must comply with the requirements set out in this document to qualify for Group Certification Option.
- iii) A producer group is not a multi-site operation where an individual or one organization owns several production locations or "farms", which in itself are NOT separate legal entities. This type of operation falls under Individual Certification Option. Only if such an operation has a Quality Management System including internal annual inspections, and the QMS is included in the Florverde® certification, can it be certified under Group Certification Option with a random sample of sites (maximum square root) selected based on the criteria as described in section 10.3.

NOTE: The entire ornamental crops of a registered producer must be certified.

## 10.1.1 Administration and Structure (Parte III 1.1)

## 10.1.1.1 Definition of Group (Parte III 1.1.1.)

- i) There shall be documentation, which clearly demonstrates that the applicant producer group is or belongs to a legal entity. The legal entity must have been granted the legal right to carry out agricultural production and/or trading, and be able to legally contract with and represent the group members.
- ii) The group or legal entity must, as a group, be registered legally for example as a Cooperative, Producers Association, Packing Company, Trading Company, Farming Company, etc. (not consultancy companies, Non-Governmental Organisations, development agencies, agrochemicals distributor, etc).
- iii) This legal entity must have a direct responsibility over the production, handling and ownership of the products, thus it is responsible for the compliance with the Florverde® standard and General Regulations within the Florverde® producer group. The legal entity will enter into a

contractual relationship with Asocolflores through the signature of the Florverde® Sub-Licence and Certification Agreement with an Asocolflores approved CB, and becomes the sole holder of the Florverde® certificate

#### 10.1.1.2 Structure (Parte III 1.1.2)

i) The administrative structure of the producer group shall be documented and clearly identify the relationship between the producers and the legal entity that coordinates.

#### 10.1.1.3 Contractual Documentation (Parte III 1.1.3)

There shall be written signed contracts between each producer and the legal entity that coordinates. The contracts shall include the following elements:

- (i) Name or fiscal identification (NIT) of the producer
- (ii) Contact address
- (iii) Details of the individual production locations
- (iv) Commitment to comply with the requirements of the Florverde® standard
- (v) Agreement to comply with the group's documented procedures, policies and where provided, technical advice.
- (vi) Sanctions that may be applied in case of Florverde® and any other internal requirements not being met.

#### 10.1.1.4 Producer Register (Parte III 1.1.4)

A register shall be maintained of all Florverde® member producers, and of all the applicable sites used for production in accordance with the EUREPGAP standard. All these member producers in the producer register must be registered individually on the Asocolflores according to the requirements of the General Regulations 4.1 Registration.

The register shall at least contain the following information for each producer:

- i) Name of producer
- ii) Name of contact person
- iii) Full address (physical and postal)
- iv) Contact data (telephone number and e-mail and/or fax number)
- v) NIT (fiscal identification number)
- vi) Growing/Production area
- vii) Internal audit date
- viii) Current Florverde® status

NOTE: Those producers of the legal entity who do not apply for Florverde® certification must be listed separately and will not be registered in the Asocolflores database. This list is for management purposes within the producer group, and the disclosure of its contents externally is not required, unless it is needed for clarification of any issues raised for example on the effectiveness of the producer group's Quality Management System. All data protection rules shall be published and observed.

## 10.1.2 Management and Organization (Parte III 1.2)

## 10.1.2.1 Structure (Parte III 1.2.1)

The producer group shall have a management structure and sufficient suitably trained resources to effectively ensure that the registered producers meet the requirements of Florverde® on their production locations. The organizational structure of the group shall be documented and shall include:

- (i) Florverde® management representative - person or department responsible for managing the implementation of Florverde® in the group.
- (ii) Internal auditor(s) – person(s) responsible for the internal audits of each producer member of the group annually; complying with the Florverde requirements set for an internal group auditor (Section 10.2).
- (iii) Internal auditor(s) – person(s) responsible for the internal audit of the Quality Management System, complying with the Florverde® requirements set for an internal group auditor (Section 10.2).
- (iv) Agricultural technical person/department – person(s) responsible for technical advice to the group.
- (v) Quality Systems Management (QMS) person/department – person(s) responsible for managing the QMS.

NOTE: A group needs at least one internal auditor, who can cover the functions of internal group inspector and internal auditor (in case only one internal auditor who performs also the inspections, another person, identified in the QMS must approve the producer internal inspections; see section 10.2).

## 10.1.2.2 Responsibility and Duties (Parte III 1.2.2)

The duties and responsibilities of all personnel involved with the compliance of Florverde® requirements shall be documented, and an individual who holds a position of sufficient seniority and resources to serve as the overall responsible person will be nominated for maintenance of the Florverde® certification.

## 10.1.3 Competency and Training of Staff (Parte III 1.3)

- a. The group shall ensure that all personnel with responsibility for compliance with the Florverde standard are adequately trained and meet defined competency requirements.
- b. The competency requirements, training and qualifications for key staff shall be documented and shall meet any defined competency requirements laid out in the Florverde standard.
- c. Records of qualifications and training shall be maintained for all key staff (managers, auditors, farm auditors, etc.) involved in compliance with Florverde requirements to demonstrate competence.
- d. The internal auditor(s) and inspector(s) shall undergo training and evaluation, e.g. by documented shadow audits, to ensure consistency in their approach and interpretation of the standard.

- e. Systems shall be in place to demonstrate that key staff is informed and aware of development, issues and legislative changes relevant to the compliance to the Florverde standard.

#### 10.1.4 Quality Manual (Parte III 1.4)

- (i) The operating and quality management systems related to the Florverde standard shall be documented and contained in a Quality Manual(s).
- (ii) Policies and procedures shall be sufficiently detailed to demonstrate the group's control of the principal requirements of the Florverde standard.
- (iii) Relevant procedures and policies shall be available to the producer group registered members and key staff.
- (iv) The contents of the Quality Manual shall be reviewed periodically to ensure that it continues to meet the requirements of the Florverde standard and those of the producer group. Any relevant modifications of the Florverde standard or published guidelines that come into force must be incorporated into the Quality Manual within the time period given by Asocolflores.

#### 10.1.5 Document Control (Part III 1.5)

##### 10.1.5.1 Quality Management System (QMS) Documents (Part III 1.5.1)

All documentation relevant to the operation of the Quality Management System (QMS) for FLORVERDE compliance shall be adequately controlled. This documentation shall include:

- i) The Quality Manual
- ii) FLORVERDE operating procedures
- iii) Work instructions
- iv) Recording forms
- v) Relevant external standards, e.g. the current FLORVERDE normative documents.

##### 10.1.5.2 Quality Management System Document Control Requirements (Parte III 1.5.2)

- (i) There shall be a written procedure defining the control of documents.
- (ii) All documentation shall be reviewed and approved by authorised personnel before issue and distribution.
- (iii) All controlled documents shall be identified with an issue number, issue date/review date and be appropriately paged.
- (iv) Any change in these documents shall be reviewed and approved by authorized personnel prior to its distribution. Wherever possible an explanation of the reason and nature of the changes should be identified.
- (v) A copy of all relevant documentation shall be available at any place where the QMS is being controlled.
- (vi) There shall be a system in place to ensure that documentation is reviewed and that following the issue of new documents, obsolete documents are effectively rescinded.

#### 10.1.6 Records (Parte III 1.6)

- (i) The group shall maintain records to demonstrate effective control of the FLORVERDE

Quality Management System requirements and compliance with the requirements of FLORVERDE standard.

- (ii) Records from the QMS related to compliance of FLORVERDE requirements shall be kept for a minimum of 2 years.
- (iii) Records shall be genuine, legible, stored and maintained in suitable conditions and shall be accessible for farm audit required.
- (iv) Records that are kept on-line or electronically are valid. If a signature is required, this can be a password or electronic signature that ensures the unique reference and authorization of the person signing. If a written signature of the responsible person is needed then this must be present. The electronic records must be available during the CB inspections. Backups must be available at all times.

#### 10.1.7 Complaint Handling (Parte 1.7)

- (i) The group shall have a system for effectively managing customer complaints.
- (ii) There shall be a documented procedure that describes how complaints are received, registered, identified, investigated, followed up and reviewed.
- (iii) The procedure shall be available to customers as required.
- (iv) The procedure shall cover both complaints to the group and against individual producers.

#### 10.1.8 Internal Audits and Inspections (Part III 1.8)

Internal audit systems shall be in place both to assess the adequacy and compliance of the documented QMS and to inspect the producers and farms against the FLORVERDE standard.

##### 10.1.8.1 Quality Management System Audit (Parte III 1.8.1)

Internal auditor(s), complying with the FLORVERDE requirements set for an internal group auditor (section 10.2), will do the internal audit of the QMS.

- (i) The QMS for the FLORVERDE scheme shall be audited at least annually.
- (ii) Internal auditors shall be suitably trained and independent of the area being audited.
- (iii) The CB will evaluate the competence of the internal auditor during the external audit by checking compliance with section 10.2.
- (iv) Records of the internal audit plan, audit findings and follow up of corrective actions resulting from an audit shall be maintained and available.

NOTE: It is permitted for the same person to initially develop the QMS within the group, and then undertake the required annual QMS audit, however the person responsible for the day-to-day ongoing management of the QMS is not allowed to undertake the required subsequent annual internal QMS audits.

##### 10.1.8.2 Producer and Production Location Inspections (Parte III 1.8.2)

Internal farm auditors, complying with the FLORVERDE requirements set for an internal group inspector will be responsible for carrying out the farm inspections.

- i) Inspections shall be carried out at each registered producer and production location at least once per year against the FLORVERDE Control Points and Compliance Criteria, based on the FLORVERDE Checklist. All Level 1 and 2 must be inspected in full.

- ii) There shall be a process for the review of the farm audit reports and producer status.
- iii) New members of the group must always be internally inspected prior to them entering into the FLORVERDE registered producers list.
- iv) The original farm audit reports and notes shall be maintained and available for the CB farm audit as required.
- v) The farm audit report shall contain the following information:
  - a) Identification of registered producer and production location(s)
  - b) Signature of the registered producer
  - c) Date
  - d) Inspector name
  - e) Ornamental products included in the certificate
  - f) Evaluation result against each FLORVERDE control point
  - g) All Level 1 in the Checklist must include details of what was verified in the comments section of the checklist, in order to enable the audit trail to be reviewed after the event.
  - h) Details of any non-compliances identified and time period for corrective action.
  - i) FLORVERDE status
- vi) The internal auditor will make the decision on whether the producer is compliant with the FLORVERDE requirements, based on the inspection reports presented by the internal inspector.

#### 10.1.8.3 Non-Compliances and Corrective Action Systems (Parte III 1.8.3)

- i) There shall be a procedure to handle non-compliances and corrective actions which may result from internal or external audits and/or inspections, customer complaints or failures of the QMS.
- ii) There shall be documented procedures for the identification and evaluation of non-compliances to the QMS by the group or by its members.
- iii) Corrective actions following non-compliances shall be evaluated and a timescale defined for action.
- (iv) Responsibility for implementing and resolving corrective actions shall be defined.

#### 10.1.9 Product Traceability and Segregation (Parte III 1.9)

- (i) Product meeting the requirements of the FLORVERDE standard and marketed as such shall be traceable and handled in a manner that prevents mixing with non-FLORVERDE approved products.
- (ii) There shall be a documented procedure for the identification of registered products and to enable traceability of all product, both conforming and non-conforming to the applicable production sites. A mass balance exercise must be carried out to demonstrate compliance within the legal entity.
- (iii) Effective systems and procedures shall be in place to negate any risk of mis-labeling or mixing of FLORVERDE certified and non-FLORVERDE certified products.

## 10.1.10 Sanctions and Non-Conformances (Parte III 1.10)

- (i) The group shall operate a system of sanctions and non-conformances with their producers, which meet the requirements defined in the FLORVERDE General Regulations.
- (ii) Contracts with individual producers shall define the procedure for sanctions including the levels of Warning, Suspension and Cancellation.
- (iii) The group shall have mechanisms in place to notify the FLORVERDE approved Certification Body immediately of Suspensions or Cancellations of registered producers.
- (iv) Records shall be maintained of all sanctions including evidence of subsequent corrective actions and decision-making processes.

## 10.1.11 Withdrawal of Certified Product (Parte III 1.11)

- (i) Documented procedures shall be in place to effectively manage the withdrawal of registered products .
- (ii) Procedures shall identify the types of event which may result in a withdrawal, persons responsible for taking decisions on the possible withdrawal of product, the mechanism for notifying customers and the Asocolfiores approved Certification Body; and methods of reconciling stock.
- (iii) The procedure shall be capable of being operated at any time.
- (iv) The procedure shall be tested in an appropriate manner at least annually to ensure that it is effective and records of the test retained.

## 10.1.12 Subcontractors (Parte III 1.12)

- (i) Procedures shall exist to ensure that any services subcontracted to third parties are carried out in accordance with the requirements of the Florverde.
- (ii) Records shall be maintained to demonstrate that the competency of any subcontractor is assessed and meets the requirements of the standard.
- (iii) Subcontractors shall work in accordance with the group's QMS and relevant procedures and this shall be specified in service level agreements or contracts.

## 10.2 PRODUCER GROUP INTERNAL FARM AUDITOR QUALIFICATIONS (APPENDIX III.1)

## 10.2.1 Internal Producer Group Inspector (Parte III 2.1)

- i) Farm auditors will be able to audit once factual evidence (as described below) of their qualifications and experience have been verified by the producer group. The CB will audit compliance with the requirements as set out below during the external QMS audit.

## 10.2.2 Formal Qualifications (Parte III 2.2)

- i) Post-high school diploma (2.2.1): At least a post-high school diploma in a discipline related to the scope of certification (Crops) or an Agricultural high school qualification with 2 years of experience in Ornamentals after qualification.

### 10.2.3 Technical Skills and Qualifications (Parte III 2.3)

#### 10.2.3.1 Farm auditor Training (2.3.1)

- i. One-day practical farm audit course setting out basic principles of inspection.
- ii. Two witness inspections (accompanying an audit, could be Florverde or other) OR 2 shadow audits by the CB.
- iii. If the group has more than one internal inspector, there must be records of shadow audits between them.

#### 10.2.3.2 GAP Training (Parte III 2.3.2)

- (i) Plant protection, fertilizer and IPM training either as part of formal iv. qualifications, or by the successful completion of a formal course.

#### 10.2.3.3 Communication Skills (2.3.3)

(i) "Working language" skills in Spanish. This must include the locally used specialist terminology in this working language.

(ii) Exceptions to this rule must be consulted beforehand with the Florverde Committee Secretariat.

### 10.2.4 Key Tasks(2.4)

#### 10.2.4.1 Farm Audits (2.4.1)

- (i) Farm audit of farms of the producer group to assess compliance with the Florverde standard.
- (ii) To produce timely and accurate reports on such inspections.

#### 10.2.4.2 Independence and Confidentiality (2.4.2)

- (i) Farm auditors cannot inspect their own daily work.

NOTE: The relevant CB shall have a complete and current list of all the producer group internal farm auditors. These internal farm auditors shall be approved by the CBs during the external inspections.

### 10.3 PRODUCER GROUP INTERNAL AUDITOR QUALIFICATIONS (3 APPENDIX III.2 )

#### 10.3.1 Internal Producer Group Auditor (Parte III 3.1)

- (i) Internal auditors will be able to audit the Quality Management System of a group and approve the Florverde registered members of the group (based on the internal farm audit reports) once the producer group has verified their qualifications and experience.
- (ii) The CB will audit compliance with the requirements as set out below during the external QMS audit.

NOTE: Where the internal auditor does not have the necessary GAP training (3.3.2 below), but only QMS training/experience, another person with these qualifications (and identified in the QMS) must form part of the “audit team” to do the approval of the farm inspections (key task 3.4.2)

#### 10.3.2 Formal Qualifications (Parte III 3.2)

##### 10.3.2.1 Post-high school diploma (3.2.1)

- (i) At least a post-high school diploma in a discipline related to the scope of certification (Crops) or an Agricultural high school qualification or 2 year experience of Quality Management Systems with 2 years of experience in Ornamentals after qualification.

#### 10.3.3 Technical Skills and Qualifications (3.3)

##### 10.3.3.1 Auditor Training (3.3.1)

- (i) Practical knowledge of Quality Management Systems
- (ii) Completion of a short (2 days) internal auditor-training course related to QMS.

##### 10.3.3.2 GAP Training (3.3.2)

- (i) Plant protection, fertilizer and IPM training either as part of formal qualifications, or by the successful completion of a formal course.

##### 10.3.3.3 Communication Skills (3.3.3)

- (i) “Working language” skills in Spanish. This must include the locally used specialist terminology in this working language.
- (ii) Exceptions to this rule must be consulted beforehand with the Florverde committee.

#### 10.3.4 Key Tasks (3.4)

## 10.3.4.1 Quality Management System Audits (3.4.1)

- (i) Auditing and assessment of the QMS of the producer group for compliance with the Florverde standard (according to the QMS Checklist).
- (ii) To produce timely and accurate reports on such audits.

## 10.3.4.2 Approval of Farm Inspections (3.4.2)

- (i) The approval of the members of the group, based on farm audit reports of the internal producer group inspector. (Refer to 10.3.1.i)

## 10.3.4.3 Independence and Confidentiality (3.4.3)

- (i) Internal auditors cannot approve any producer inspections done by him/herself.
- (ii) Internal auditors cannot audit the QMS if he/she implemented or operates the QMS for the group.

NOTE: The relevant CB shall have a complete and current list of all the producer group internal auditors. These internal farm auditors shall be approved by the CBs during the external inspections.

## 10.4 RULES FOR EVALUATING OPTION 2 PRODUCER GROUPS (6 APPENDIX II.3)

These rules must be followed by CBs performing external verification of producer groups. This section is based on the requirements for the producer group seeking certification under Group Option (as laid out in the Florverde General Regulations and ISO/IEC Guide 65) which must be met by the approved CBs.

The evaluation process will by necessity involve a sampling of the components to assess compliance with the standard and enable certification. All documentation, sites, personnel and operations that are declared by the group to be relevant and pertinent to the setting up and administration of the Group Option system must be evaluated.

## 10.4.1 Evaluation Process (Parte II 6.1)

- a. The evaluation process is designed to establish that the group's QMS and administrative structure meets the criteria for Option 2 and that the internal audits and farm audit of producers meet the requirements for competency, independence and accuracy.
- b. The evaluation process is therefore divided into two elements:
  - a) Audit of the group's QMS and
  - b) Farm audit a sample of registered producers.

## 10.4.1.1 Producer Group Quality Management System Audit (6.1.1)

- (i) The audit of the QMS or "System Check" will be undertaken at the central office of the group or administrative centre for the group scheme.
- (ii) The audit will be undertaken using the rules set out in this section.
- (iii) The evaluation process will take one or more days and will include:
  - a) Opening meeting with management

- b) Review of all relevant documentation
- c) Evaluation of records
- d) Review of internal audits and inspections conducted
- e) Discussion / interviews with key staff
- f) Closing meeting including review of non-compliances identified.

#### 10.4.1.2 Farm audit of Registered Producers and Production Locations (6.1.2)

- (i) A sample of approved registered producer members will be inspected against all control points of the applicable modules of the Florverde standard. The final selection and communication to the producer group of the which and how many producers to inspect, shall be done after the QMS audit, using criteria based on the group structure and defined in a sampling procedure, which is risk based.
- (ii) A minimum farm audit sample size will be based on the square root of the number of registered producers that have been registered.
- (iii) Additionally sample size calculation shall be based on the numbers of registered producers separated into subgroup combinations taking into account production type as set out in the following point.
- (iv) Certification Bodies can at their discretion and based on justifiable criteria increase the verification rate up to a maximum of 4 times the square root of total numbers of registered producers.  
  
E.g.: Doubts as to the consistency of application of the Quality Management System within the producer group could arise from:
  - a. customer complaints of illegal pesticide residue detection
  - b. inconsistencies between the internal audit/farm audit reports and the CB inspection/audit findings
- (v) The sample size will be confirmed on completion of the QMS audit (unless, due to non compliances found at one producer, the CB needs to further investigate; see 7.2.2 Suspensions), and will take into account the results of unannounced inspections carried out. As part of the QMS audit, the results of the external and internal audits and inspections will be compared, to identify structural and non-structural non-compliances.

NOTE: Refer to Florverde General Regulations point 5.1.2.4.

#### 10.4.2 Audit and Farm audit Frequency (6.2)

NOTE: Refer to Florverde General Regulations .5.1.2

##### 10.4.2.1 6.2.1 Announced Audits and Inspections

- (i) One announced external audit of the group's QMS will be carried out annually by the Asocolflores approved CB.
- (ii) External farm inspections are annual.

#### 10.4.2.2 Unannounced Surveillance Audits and Inspections (6.2.2)

- (i) The granting CB will annually carry out additional unannounced surveillance audits on a minimum of 10% of all certified producer groups it has registered under Group Option. These additional unannounced surveillance audits will cover only the producer group's Quality Management system.
- (ii) The 10% must not only take into account total numbers, but must be calculated considering factors such as geography, legislation (where several jurisdictions are covered by the CB), crop type, compliance history, etc.

#### 10.4.3 Non-Compliances (6.3)

- (i) Any non-compliance identified during the evaluation will be discussed during the evaluation and documented at the end of audit day.
- (ii) Any non-compliances, which show deliberate mismanagement of Florverde related procedures will result in a Complete Suspension of a certificate and notification to the Florverde Committee Secretariat.
- (iii) All non-compliances against the QMS shall be resolved before a certificate can be issued to the group.
- (iv) Satisfactory corrective actions must be completed to achieve approval level for any individual producer before the producer can be included on an approval list.

#### 10.4.4 Corrective Actions (6.4)

- (i) Evidence of the resolution of non-compliances can be provided in the form of documentary evidence or photographic evidence as appropriate.
- (ii) There may be occasions where demonstration of the resolution of a non-compliance can only be confirmed by a further site visit where this is required a charge may result.
- (iii) All corrective actions will be assessed, with clarification provided to show whether the action taken and evidence provided is sufficient to close the non-compliance.

#### 10.4.5 Reports (6.5)

- (i) At the end of each evaluation day, any non-compliances identified will be summarized and confirmed in writing to allow corrective action to be implemented.
- (ii) On completion of the full evaluation process a full written report will be produced which summarizes the evaluation activity undertaken, provides

- information on how the group complies with the requirements of the standard, and where applicable, lists any non-compliances identified.
- (iii) The evaluation report format will be based on the QMS Checklist. The evaluation report will form the basis by which a decision can be made on the award of a certificate to the group.
  - (iv) A copy of the evaluation report will be provided to the group at the end of the audit.
  - (v) Copies of the report will only be provided to other parties if the producer group provides express written authorization.

#### 10.4.6 Certification (6.6)

- (i) A list of all the producers and sites to which the certificate relates shall be issued in an appendix referred to in the certificate. The CB shall keep this list up to date.

#### 10.4.7 Registration of Additional Producers within the Group (6.7)

- (i) New producers may be added (subject to internal approval procedures being met) to the list of registered producers during the period of validity of the certificate. It is the responsibility of the group to immediately update the CB on any addition or withdrawal of sites to/from the list of registered producers.
- (ii) Up to 10% of new producers in one year can be added to the approved list by registering the producers with the Asocolflores approved Certification Body without necessarily resorting to further verification by the Asocolflores approved Certification Body.
- (iii) Should the number of approved registered producers increase by more than 10% in one year, further external sample inspections of the newly added producers and/or a review of the QMS will be required during that year before additional producers can be added to the approved list.
- (iv) Regardless of the percentage by which the number of approved registered producers increases in one year, should the newly registered farms increase the area or number of livestock of previously approved registered products by more than 10% in one year, further external sample inspections of the newly added farms or producers and/or a review of the Quality Management Systems will be required during that year before additional farms or producers can be added to the approved list.