



Title: Procedure for Complain Handling

A. Complaint handling Process:

This procedure applies to all complaints relevant to audit, inspection, certification. It addresses the entire chain from farm level up to delivery of the product. The scope aims to identify nature of complaint and resolve it as per indicated procedure.

All members of organic certification program are responsible for handling, critically analyzing and sorting out complaints by adopting methods for achieving root cause analysis and prescribing non-compliance closure. They are also responsible for preparation and documentation of complaint related records. The Head of Certification / Quality Manager is responsible for periodic review and update of this procedure.

A complaint is an expression of displeasure, in the form of a written information either by fax, email or letter. A complaint may be related to poor service or poor attitude or activities that put an issue in maintaining certain specific standards or integrity. A complaint may be of two types:

Locally detected complaint: A complaint reported by any personnel in the entire operation before final delivery of the produce from the farm.

Quick notifications are sent when the food or feed presenting the risk is on the market and when immediate action is required.

The receipt of complaint shall be acknowledged to the Complainant. The complaint shall be recorded with a reference number.

- Internal committee shall be formed for handling the complaint.
- Adequate information relevant to claimed complaint shall be collected.
- Un-announced audit or a surprise visit shall be conducted to verify the claimed information.
- An internal inspection shall be carried out.
- The root cause relevant to the complaint shall be appropriately identified for further actions.
- The identified cause and all other relevant information shall be shared with the party.

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- On the basis of the identified non-compliances, the corrective action requests shall be raised.
- Action taken report shall be prepared and sent to the accreditation body.
- If the complaint has no details of the complainant or the description is not adequate, the Certification Body will reserve the right of dealing with the complaint as deemed fit.
- If the complainant is not satisfied with the response of the Certification Body, the complaint would be taken up further.
- The log of all complaint records shall be stored in a systematic manner. This log shall indicate the details of complaining body, identified complaint and actions taken. All complaint records shall be transported, transmitted or transferred in a way that ensures confidentiality.

Specific Procedure

Non-conformance to the standards

- Non-conformances, which may arise due to one or more of the following reasons shall be recognized properly:
- The client's system and/or performance do not meet program's standard requirements
- The client is not in compliance with its own documented system (plans, procedures, etc.)
- Internal committee shall be formed for handling the complaint.
- An unannounced audit or surprised visit shall be carried out in the farm or processing unit or retailing outlet as per the scope of the claimed matter. This is for risk assessment of the operations and identification of the critical points.
- The root cause of the complaint shall be identified with relevant supportive documents.
- The certificate issued to the party may be suspended or cancelled or withdrawn depending on the severity of the non-compliance identified.

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- The corrective action request shall be raised on the basis of the identified problem. It shall provide a clear indication of the corrective action required. It shall be substantiated by objective evidence and where possible the words of the relevant checklist shall be used.
- Proper care shall be taken by the 'Internal Committee', to monitor the auditor's judgment.
- The client shall be requested to submit a document explaining the measures taken to satisfy the non-compliances to the Certification Body.
- Another verification audit shall be conducted to corroborate the actions taken by the party to meet the standards.
- The report shall be prepared after compiling all the information and evidences and documented for record keeping.

Residue problem

- Internal committee shall be formed for handling the complaint.
- Surprise audit shall be performed in premises of the respective unit for verification of the operations carried out there.
- The root cause responsible for the problem shall be identified.
- In order to rule out any possibility of contamination during execution of operations, the client shall be directed to conduct a full scale investigation of their operations. This must put special emphasis to the measures for keeping all organic produces separately. It also must rule out comingling of all materials including storage materials, packaging materials, spraying equipments, etc. in case of parallel operations.
- Samples in question shall be picked up from the inspected areas for testing in laboratory for detection of the residue of all pesticides along with that claimed chemicals in the complaint.
- If test reports show positive result, a thorough risk analysis shall be undertaken to ascertain the critical points that could have led to cause the problem.
- The corrective action request shall be raised on the basis of the identified problem.

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- Test reports and the surprise audit report shall be sent to the respective client.
- The party shall be requested to follow the instructions as per the observation of the auditor and submit a document stating the corrective and preventive measures undertaken.
- Another inspection shall be conducted to verify the actions taken by the client to meet the standards.
- Final report along with the test results shall be sent to the complaining personnel.
- The action taken report shall be prepared, sent to the accreditation body and filed for record.

Auditor's conduct

- Internal investigation shall be carried out to identify the problem and discuss the gravity of the situation with the responsible auditor.
- In case of grave concern, 'Show Cause Notice' shall be issued.
- The auditor shall be asked for submitting a report explaining the actual cause of misconduct within a stipulated time period.
- The actions taken shall be intimated to the complaining body.
- A general meeting shall be arranged involving the complaining body and the responsible auditor to mutually solve the problem and continue good relation with the client.

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