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		<b>RWANDASTANDARDS BOARD</b>	
<b>NATIONAL CERTIFICATION DIVISION</b>			
<b>TITLE:</b>		<b>INDENTIFICATION No.</b>	
<b>SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS FOR GROWER GROUPS</b>		<b>QUALITY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM OFFICER</b>	
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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Internal Control System (ICS) is a documented quality assurance system which may include legally recognized farmers' association, cooperatives, NGOs or exporters, project or a farmer group. ICS is managed with organic production rules and procedures. It means, in practice that a grower's group basically controls all farmers for compliance with organic production rules according to defined procedures. The ICS guards the integrity of the organic quality of the products particularly in smallholder projects. One application is required to certify the entire group.

## 2. SCOPE

These specific requirements are covering Internal Control System (ICS).

## 3. TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

All applicable terms and definitions are contained in ISO/IEC 17065, ISO/IEC 17000 or the RSB document Guide on Terms, Definitions and Acronyms NCD/GID/10 in the latest available version.

## 4. REQUIREMENTS FOR GROUP CERTIFICATION

### 4.1. Group certification

The group Certification will require to have an Internal Control System (ICS).

### 4.2. Group composition:

The producer group shall be composed only of farmers that meet the size restrictions. The maximum farm size for group members is 5 ha. Farmers shall be members of the producer group. The producer group shall be a legal entity.

### 4.3. Detailed rules for ICS:

#### 4.3.1. Each group of operators

Shall:

- i) be legal entity;
- ii) only be composed of members whose production activities take place in geographical proximity to each other
- iii) set up a joint marketing system for the products produced by the group; and
- iv) establish a system for internal controls comprising a documented set of control activities and procedures in accordance with which an identified person or body is responsible for verifying compliance of each member of the group.
- v) Roles and responsibilities of each function need to be clearly described and implemented

#### 4.3.2. The Internal Control System (ICS) requirements:

- i. An organizational chart (e.g. including main positions as ICS manager, ICS inspector, approval committee but not limited to)
- ii. Registration of the members of the group; including a membership agreement
- iii. Conduct of internal inspections, which include the annual internal physical on-the-spot inspections of each member of the group, and any additional risk-based

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inspections, in any case scheduled by the ICS manager and conducted by ICS inspectors;

- iv. Approval of new producer member(s) wanting to join an existing (already approved) group,
- v. Approval of the addition or reduction of units/activities or scope of existing members;
- vi. Use of competent inspectors. To ensure competencies, training of the ICS inspectors should take place at least annually and an assessment shall be conducted to qualify them;
- vii. the training of members of the group on the ICS procedures and the requirements of the RSB organic certification scheme;
- viii. the control of documents and records including the list of the members of the group and keep it up to date;
- ix. Tasks and responsibilities are assigned to the ICS inspectors;
- x. liaison between the members of the group and RSB, including requests for derogations;
- xi. verify annually the conflict-of-interest of the ICS inspectors;
- xii. schedule internal inspections and ensure their adequate implementation in accordance with the ICS manager's schedule;
- xiii. decide on the status (approved or not approved) of members after each inspection;
- xiv. decide on measures in case of non-compliance in line with the ICS measures established by documented procedures and ensure the follow-up of those measures;
- xv. decide, if applicable, to subcontract activities, including the subcontracting of the tasks of ICS inspectors, and sign relevant agreements or contracts;
- xvi. Management of Complaints

#### **4.3.3. Internal ICS inspector**

Shall:

- i) carry out annually internal inspections of all members of the group according to the schedule and the procedures provided by the ICS manager;
- ii) draft internal inspection reports on the basis of a template and submit it within a reasonable time to the ICS manager;
- iii) submit at appointment a written and signed statement on conflict of interest and update it annually;
- iv) participate in trainings.
- v) Shall be free from any conflicts of interest.

#### **4.3.4. Documents and records of a group of operators**

The group of operators shall keep the following documents and records for the purposes of the system for internal controls (ICS):

##### **4.3.4.1. The list of members of the group of operators**

Based on their registration of each member and consisting of the following elements for each member of the group of operators:

- i) name and identification (e.g.: code number);
- ii) contact details;

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- iii) date of registration;
- iv) total land surface under the management of the member and whether it is part of an organic, in-conversion or non-organic production unit;
- v) information on each production unit and/or activity: size, location, including a map where available, product, date of the beginning of the conversion period and yield estimates;
- vi) date of the last internal inspection with the name of the ICS inspector;
- vii) date and version of the list of members;

#### **4.3.4.2. The signed membership agreements**

Between the member and the group of operators as legal person, which shall include the rights and responsibilities of the member;

#### **4.3.4.3. The internal inspection reports**

Signed by the ICS inspector and the inspected member of the group of operators and including at least the following elements:

- i) the name of the member and the location of the production unit or premises, including purchase and collection centers where the group is only composed of members who are farmers or processors that produce the specific crop; or placing on the market subject to the inspection take place;
- ii) the date and starting and ending hour of the internal inspection;
- iii) the findings of the inspection;
- iv) the scope of inspection
- v) the date of issue of the report;
- vi) the name of the internal inspector.

#### **4.3.4.4. Carry witness inspection**

To verify the competence and knowledge of ICS internal inspectors

#### **4.3.4.5. The training records of the ICS inspectors**

Consisting of:

- i) the dates of the training;
- ii) the subject matter of the training;
- iii) the name of the trainer;
- iv) the signature of the trainee;
- v) where appropriate, an assessment of the knowledge acquired.

#### **4.3.4.6. The training records of the members of the group of operators**

Training records for farmers include:

- i) Training course (summary)
- ii) Attendance lists (names dates)
- iii) Awareness of certification requirement
- iv) Training on documentation use.

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#### **4.3.4.7. The records of the measures taken in case of non-compliance**

Which shall include:

- i) the members subject to measures in case of non-compliance, including those suspended, withdrawn or required to comply with a new conversion period;
- ii) documentation of identified non-compliance;
- iii) documentation of follow-up of the measures.

#### **4.3.4.8. Traceability records,**

Including information on the quantities, on the following activities, where relevant:

- i) purchase and distribution of farm inputs including plant reproductive material by the group;
- ii) production including harvest
- iii) storing;
- iv) preparation;
- v) delivery of products from each member to the joint marketing system;
- vi) placing on the market of products by the group of operators.

#### **4.3.4.9. The written agreements and contracts**

Between the group of operators and subcontractors including information on the nature of the subcontracted activities;

#### **4.3.4.10. The appointment of the ICS manager**

The ICS manager or coordinator bears the overall responsibility for the performance of the ICS.

He/she is responsible for the following:

- i) the ICS Manager coordinates the ICS
- ii) Organizes the internal inspectors
- iii) coordinates between the field staff and approval staff
- iv) coordinated the external inspections and acts as the contact person for the certification body

He/she must be someone who:

- i) has received trained in organic agriculture and training
- ii) is familiar with the agricultural and ecological system of the area
- iii) has sufficient knowledge on quality control
- iv) must not have conflict of interest that may affect his/her work

#### **4.3.4.11. The appointment of the ICS inspectors**

As well as the list of ICS inspectors. The list of members shall be updated by the ICS manager after any modification. It shall be indicated whether any of the members has been suspended or withdrawn due to measures in case of non-compliance resulting from internal or external inspections

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#### 4.3.5. Language

The internal organic standard in a language or form that can be understood by all farmers shall be in place.

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