

IndGAP Certification Scheme For Good Agricultural Practices

Dr. T Srichandana, Dr. K. Ashok Kumar and T. Vishnu Vardhan Reddy

Krishi Vigyan Kendra, Banavasi.

Manuscript No: KN-V2-08/001

Corresponding Author : chandanaphd39@gmail.com

INTRODUCTION

The Quality Council of India (QCI) was established in 1997 through a collaboration between the Government of India and leading industry associations such as ASSOCHAM, CII, and FICCI. Its primary mission is to create and oversee a national accreditation system that enhances quality across various sectors through the National Quality Campaign. The QCI is supervised by the Department of Industrial Policy & Promotion (DIPP) within the Ministry of Commerce & Industry. Accreditation plays a crucial role in supporting international trade by ensuring that certifications, inspections, and testing by different conformity assessment bodies meet global standards and achieve international recognition in fields like quality, environmental management, and food safety.

The National Quality Campaign is designed to foster a culture of quality among manufacturers and service providers, promoting the adoption of quality standards and practices. It also aims to empower consumers to expect and demand high-quality products and services. This campaign spans several sectors, including manufacturing, healthcare, education, and public services.

MISSION STATEMENT

“QCI's mission is to lead a nationwide quality initiative, involving all stakeholders to emphasize adherence to quality standards across various sectors. This effort is fundamentally focused on advancing and protecting the interests of the nation and its people.”

IndGAP CERTIFICATION SCHEME

QCI has introduced the IndGAP Certification Scheme to encourage the adoption of Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) across India. This scheme, which adheres to ISO 17065, the international standard for product and process certification, features a robust certification and accreditation framework. It benefits both domestic and international markets and serves both large-scale farm owners and small and marginal farmers, providing valuable advantages to all.

The IndGAP standards aim to enhance the quality and safety of agricultural produce by focusing on pre-harvest and post-harvest practices, as well as worker health and safety. This comprehensive approach ensures a consistent supply of high-quality produce. The standards apply to all agricultural products but are specifically designed to support small and marginal farmers through the IndGAP Basic Standard, which helps them gradually move towards international GAP standards. For larger farmers, extensive farms, and group farming projects, the IndGAP Premium Standard offers a more immediate pathway to adoption.

WHY IndGAP

IndGAP plays a crucial role in ensuring food safety right from the primary production stage. It effectively prevents contaminants such as pesticide residues, veterinary drug residues, metallic residues, aflatoxins, and microbiological hazards. The initiative also enhances farmer knowledge on essential practices, including soil analysis, water testing, crop planning, optimal use of agricultural inputs, crop management, and harvesting techniques. Moreover, IndGAP sets specific targets for measurable improvements, such as increased productivity, enhanced produce quality, and higher farmer income. A growing demand for safe and

high-quality agricultural commodities is reflected in the desire for GAP-certified produce among processors, exporters, retailers, and food service buyers.

BENEFITS OF CERTIFICATION

IndGAP certification will:

- **Enhance Global Competitiveness:** Implement internationally recognized Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) to improve the global competitiveness of farm products.
- **Enhance Pricing:** Raise the price at which agricultural products are realized to provide you a competitive advantage in both home and foreign markets.
- **Support Farmer Livelihoods:** Improve and safeguard the livelihoods of small and marginal farmers.
- **Assure Produce Safety and Quality:** Throughout the food supply chain, preserve the produce's safety and quality.
- **Optimize Supply Chain:** Enable new market advantages through enhanced supply chain management.
- **Promote Resource Efficiency:** Encourage the efficient use of natural resources, improve worker health, and enhance working conditions.
- **Create Market Opportunities:** Open up new market opportunities for farmers and exporters.
- **Build Trust:** Strengthen trust among producers, marketers, and consumers.

MAIN COMPONENTS OF IndGAP

- Soil conditioning and fertilization.
- Selection of planting materials.
- Water management strategies.
- Use of pesticides and application methods.
- Health and safety of workers, including training.
- Harvesting techniques and field hygiene.
- Traceability and documentation practices.

SCOPE OF CERTIFICATION

IndGAP Basic defines key Good Agricultural Practices needed to ensure quality and food safety in agricultural production. It applies to all farming methods with a focus on sustainability, offering control points and compliance criteria tailored for small and marginal farms and those seeking to enhance produce quality. The standard focuses on fresh, unprocessed agricultural products intended for direct human consumption or further processing.

In contrast, IndGAP Premium provides specific control points and compliance criteria for farms aiming to achieve international standards. This standard is designed for agricultural produce meant for direct human consumption or further processing in the food industry. It comprises core modules as well as crop-specific modules.

General Modules

- a) All farm base modules
- b) Crops-base modules
- c) Fresh fruits and vegetables
- d) Combinable crops
- e) Tea
- f) Green Coffee

SCHEME DOCUMENTS

- The Quality Council of India (QCI) has developed the IndGAP certification scheme, which includes the following documents accessible on QCI's IndGAP page:

Section 1: Overview

Section 2: The Structure of Governance

Certification Requirements (IndGAP Basic and IndGAP Premium) in Section 3

Section 4: The Process of Certification

Section 5: Certification Bodies' Requirements

Section 6: Guidelines for Using the CertMark

- To ensure the scheme meets both national and international standards, it incorporates various references, including GLOBALG.A.P., industry standards, relevant ISO standards, and best practices.
- The cost of IndGAP certification is partially covered by:
- The Ministry of Agriculture through the Mission for Integrated Development of Horticulture (more information available at MIDH)
- The Agriculture and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA) under its Agriculture and Processed Food Export Promotion Scheme for the Medium-Term Expenditure Framework (2017-18 to 2019-20).

REFERENCES

<https://indocert.org/indgap-try/>

<https://krishigap.com/ind-GAP-Certification.php>

<https://www.agrocert.in/>