

**[ DA ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER NO. 30, December 07, 2012 ]**

**REVISED GUIDELINES ON THE CERTIFICATION OF GOOD AGRICULTURAL PRACTICES (GAP) FOR FRUITS AND VEGETABLE (FV) FARMING**

Pursuant to the Philippine commitment to the Strategic Plan of Action on ASEAN Cooperation in Good Agricultural Practices (SPA ASEAN GAP) 2009- 2012 which compels the ASEAN Member States (AMSs) to align their national GAP program (standard, certification procedures, training of inspectors, etc) with the adopted regional standard on GAP, this Administrative Order replaces A.O. 25 s. 2005 and A.O. 30 s. 2008 in order to be harmonized with the ASEAN common vision.

These guidelines provides for the basis of farm inspection for the purpose of certification. The farms producing horticultural products intended for domestic and export markets will be assessed using the same checklist which spells out the minimum requirements for certification. However for farms engaged in export, additional requirements imposed by the importing country will apply.

**SECTION 1. Objectives of the Certification** – The certification of farms is aimed at the attainment of the following:

- Facilitate farmers adoption of sustainable farming practices which is aimed at ensuring food safety and assuring produce quality while having regards for environmental protection and that of workers health, safety and welfare;
- Access of Philippine agricultural commodities to neighboring ASEAN markets and other foreign markets;
- Empower farmers to respond to the demands of consumer; and
- Enable consumers exercise the option of buying safe and quality fruits and vegetables from traceable and certified sources.

**SECTION 2. Scope of the Guidelines** - This establishes the rules applied by the Department of Agriculture (DA) for granting, maintaining and withdrawing Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) Certificate to individual growers or farms, cooperative-owned and/or operated farms, corporate farms or to Produce Marketing Organizations (PMOs) or consolidators that market and/or trade the produce. Demonstration farms of government, academic and research institutions are also eligible to apply for GAP certification.

**SECTION 3. GAP Certification Committee** –

**A. Composition** – The Good Agricultural Practices Certification Committee (GAPCC) shall be composed of the Directors of attached agencies of the Department of Agriculture (DA), representatives from the private sector, non-government organization and academe.

Chairperson     Director

Bureau of Agriculture and

Vice-Chairperson Members	Director	Fisheries Product Standards (BAFPS)
	Director/Authorized Representative	Bureau of Plant Industry (BPI)
	Director/Authorized Representative	Fertilizer and Pesticide Authority (FPA)
	Director/Authorized Representative	Bureau of Animal Industry (BAI)
	Director/Authorized Representative	Bureau of Soils and Water Management (BSWM)
	National Program Coordinator/ Authorized Representative	High Value Crops Development Program (HVCDP)
	Sectoral Representative	National Agricultural and Fisheries Council (NAFC) Sub Committee on Crops
Secretariat	Director/ Authorized Representative	National Consumer Affairs Council (NCAC)
	Representative	Non-government organization (NGO)/ Peoples' organization (PO)
	Representative	Academe
	Technical Staff	Bureau of Agriculture and Fisheries Product Standards (BAFPS)

## B. Tasks

In general, the Committee is tasked to:

- Set directions for the Philippine GAP Program, including policy formation, strategies on capacity building, strengthening market linkage and information dissemination;
- Undertake annual review of the program, set priorities and endorse the proposed plan to the Secretary for approval;
- Undertake annual review of the Guidelines, its inspection procedures and training programs and propose changes, as necessary;
- Recommend to the Secretary the list of qualified National, Regional and Local Inspectors, as applicable and as identified and endorsed by the Directors of the various agencies and Regional Field Offices;
- Recommend to the Secretary the list of qualified technical personnel of the Department and Local Government Units (LGUs) that will be subsequently trained to extend assistance to farmers prior to their application for certification; and
- Participate in international discussions to better align PhilGAP with existing international GAP programs.

Meanwhile, the representatives from the various Department agencies (i.e. BPI, BAI, BSWM, FPA and HVCDP) shall have the following tasks related to certification:

- Undertake review and make appropriate decisions regarding GAP applications;
- Endorse to the DA Secretary the list of applicants that has been found to be compliant with the appropriate provisions of the Revised Philippine National Standard (PNS) for Good Agricultural Practices for Fruits and Vegetable Farming (PNS/BAFPS 49:2011);
- Hear appeal(s) and endorse to the Secretary appropriate action(s) in response to the petitions;
- Annually review investigations of complaints about abuses in the production and sale of products that do not adhere to GAP standard, including the use of mark;

#### C. Secretariat

The Bureau of Agriculture and Fisheries Product Standards (BAFPS) shall act as Secretariat of the GAPCC. The GAPCC Chairperson may authorize the Secretariat to issue official communication regarding an application, except those that pertains to a decision. This may include, call for a meeting, request for submission of documents from an applicant, etc. The Secretariat will also accompany the inspectors during the conduct of inspection(s) to provide assistance during the farm operation evaluation of the applicant. In case of unavailability of inspectors to conduct follow-up inspections to verify compliance of the applicant to the list of non-compliant item(s), the GAP secretariat may be authorized to conduct the visit using the list as a guide. A report of such visit(s) will be submitted to the GSP inspectors for their evaluation.

#### D. Inspectors

The National and Regional Inspectors from the line agencies of the Department shall be composed of identified technical personnel duly designated by the Directors of BPI, BAI, BSWM and FPA.

The local DA designated inspectors, meanwhile, will be those that have been duly designated by the Regional Executive Directors (REDs) of the Regional Field Offices (RFOs) of the Department.

The national, regional and local inspectors will be trained on the provisions of the Revised Philippine National Standard (PNS) for Good Agricultural Practices for Fruits and Vegetable Farming (PNS/BAFPS 49:2011) and re-tooled on the aspects of inspection.

### SECTION 4. Application

#### A. Application

The DA GAP Certification Scheme acknowledges the following type of organizations requesting for certification.

- individual grower;
- Small-holder group (e.g. cooperative, outgrowership scheme);
- Demonstration farms of government, academic and research institutions;

- Corporate farms; and
- Produce Marketing Organization (PMOs) or consolidators.

#### Initial application:

The applicant shall submit the completed application form to the GAPCC through its Secretariat. The duly accomplished form shall be accompanied by the following supporting documents:

- farm or organizational profile;
- farm map;
- list of fertilizers and pesticides used; and
- certificate of training on GAP principles

In addition to the afore-mentioned requirements, corporate farms, cooperatives, and consolidators, are to submit these papers (as applicable):

- Company/corporation/cooperative- Certificate of Registration;
- Field operation procedures;
- Procedure for accreditation of farmers/growers;
- Manual of procedure for outgrowership scheme which will show that the company/PMOs/cooperative have 100% control of all registered or accredited growers (e.g. internal policies on accreditation of farmer/grower, sanctions, etc.)

Upon the receipt of application, the GAPCC will inform the concerned DA RFUs on the received application. The GAPCC, in its formal communication, may request the DA RFO to extend assistance to the applicant in conducting the initial assessment of the farm and in facilitating farmer's adoption of GAP practices.

#### Renewal

For entities applying for renewal of certificate, the following documents shall accompany the accomplished application form:

- Updated farm map (showing new areas/expansion of areas), if applicable;
- Updated list of fertilizers and pesticides used;
- Revised (if any) manual of operation; and
- Copy of results of post-certification monitoring inspection (inspection report and certificate of analyses).

#### B. Fees

The Cost of certification pertaining to the administrative expenses to be incurred by the Committee and the GAP inspectors during the evaluation, inspection and audit shall be free of charge and will be shouldered by the BAFPS.

For applicants requesting for its first (1<sup>st</sup>) certification, the cost of analyses for the first sampling shall be free and will be borne by BAFPS. However, in cases when the results of analyses shows non-compliance to standards set, the inspectors shall conduct another sampling after the corrective actions has been complied with. The cost of analyses for the subsequent sampling(s) shall be borne by the applicant.