

**[ DA ADMINISTRATIVE CIRCULAR NO. 10, S. 2013,  
September 23, 2013 ]**

**GUIDELINES ON THE CERTIFICATION OF GOOD AGRICULTURAL  
PRACTICES (GAP) FOR CROPS**

**WHEREAS**, the Philippines, as a member of the ASEAN, is committed to the implementation of the Strategic Plan of Action on ASEAN Cooperation on Good Agricultural Practices (SPA ASEAN GAP) 2009-2012 which compels the ASEAN Member States (AMSs) to align their national Good Agricultural Practice (GAP) program (standard, certification procedures, training of inspectors, etc.) with the adopted regional standard on GAP;

**WHEREAS**, over the years, the national GAP Program, or the Philippine GAP (PhilGAP) Program, has been gaining significant impact on market access as trading partners are increasingly requiring GAP certification for commodities entering their borders;

**WHEREAS**, previous guidelines on GAP certification as contained in Department of Agriculture (DA) Administrative Order No. 30, series of 2012, cover only fresh fruits and vegetables;

**WHEREAS**, there is a need to widen the coverage of GAP certification to include all agricultural crops and facilitate compliance with the GAP requirements of our trading partners;

**NOW THEREFORE, I, PROCESO J. ALCALA**, Secretary of the Department of Agriculture, in accordance with the powers vested in me by law, do hereby issue this Administrative Circular to expand the scope and coverage of the National GAP Program to include all agricultural crops and to provide guidelines for granting, maintaining, and withdrawing GAP Certificate, including procedures for farm inspection for the purpose of certification.

**SECTION 1. OBJECTIVES OF GAP CERTIFICATION**

- Facilitate adoption of GAP aimed at ensuring food safety and assuring produce quality while keeping high regard for environmental protection and that of workers health, safety and welfare;
- Produce quality and safe agricultural crops for consumers; and
- Facilitate access of Philippine agricultural crops to neighbouring ASEAN markets and other foreign markets.

**SECTION 2. SCOPE AND COVERAGE**

This Circular establishes the rules and procedures to be observed by the Department of Agriculture in granting, maintaining, and withdrawing GAP Certificate to any of the following types of entities engaged in the production of agricultural crops: (a) individuals; (b) partnership/joint ventures; (c) cooperatives; (d) corporations; and

(e) associations/organizations. Demonstration farms of government, academic and research institutions are also eligible to apply for GAP certification.

Agricultural crops include cultivated plants of which products are harvested at some point in their growth stage intended for human consumption.

This Circular also establishes the composition and tasks of the GAP Certification Committee, the Technical Working Group, GAP Inspectors, and Secretariat.

### **SECTION 3. GAP CERTIFICATION BODIES**

#### **A. GAP Certification Committee**

##### **A.1 Composition**

The GAP Certification Committee (GAPCC) shall be composed of representatives from concerned agencies of the DA. There shall be designated permanent members of the GAPCC who will endorse to the Secretary all eligible applications. Other concerned agencies and commodity-based units under the DA may be called when deemed necessary.

<i>Chairperson</i>	<i>Director, Bureau of Agriculture and Fisheries Product Standards (BAFPS)</i>
<i>Vice-Chairperson</i>	<i>Director, Bureau of Plant Industry (BPI)</i>
<i>Permanent Members</i>	<i>Executive Director, Fertilizer and Pesticide Authority (FPA)</i> <i>Director, Bureau of Soils and Water Management (BSWM)</i> <i>Executive Director, Philippine Center for Postharvest Development and Mechanization (PhilMech)</i> <i>Director, Agricultural Training Institute (ATI)</i>
<i>Commodity-Based Members</i>	<i>National Program Coordinator, High Value Commercial Crops (for fruits and vegetable applications)</i> <i>National Program Coordinator, Corn Program (for corn and cassava applications)</i> <i>National Program Coordinator, Rice Program (for rice grain applications)</i> <i>Administrator, National Food Authority (NFA) (for grain applications)</i> <i>Administrator, Philippine Coconut Authority (PCA) (for coconut applications)</i> <i>Administrator, Sugar Regulatory Administration (SRA) (for sugar applications)</i> <i>Executive Director, Philippine Rice Research Institute (PhilRice)</i>
<i>Other Members</i>	<i>Director, Bureau of Animal Industry (BAI)</i> <i>Director, Agriculture and Fisheries Information Service (AFIS)</i> <i>Director, Agriculture and Marketing Assistance Service (AMAS)</i>
<i>Secretariat</i>	<i>Technical Staff, BAFPS</i>

##### **A.2 Tasks**

In general, the GAPCC is tasked to:

- Undertake final evaluation of and make appropriate recommendations regarding GAP applications;
- Endorse to the DA Secretary the list of applicants that have been found to be compliant with the appropriate provisions of applicable Philippine National Standards (PNS);
- Hear appeals, if any, and endorse to the Secretary the appropriate action in response to the appeals;
- If and when necessary, review and investigate complaints about abuses in the production and sale of products that do not adhere to GAP standard, including the use of GAP mark, and make the necessary recommendations on withdrawing GAP certifications; and
- Recommend to the Secretary the list of qualified inspectors, as applicable and as identified and endorsed by the Directors of the various agencies or the DA Regional Field Units (RFUs).

Aside from the general tasks related to certification, the GAPCC shall also have the following tasks related to direction-setting and policy formulation:

- Set directions for the Philippine GAP (PhilGAP) Program, including policy formulation, strategies on capacity building, strengthening market linkage and information dissemination on the PhilGAP;
- 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 technical personnel of the Department and Local Government Units (LGUs) who would be subsequently trained to extend assistance to farmers prior to their application for certification; and
- Participate in ASEAN and other international discussions to ensure alignment of PhilGAP with existing international GAP programs.

### ***B. Technical Working Group (TWG)***

The Technical Working Group (TWG) shall serve as the technical support group for the implementation of the PhilGAP program as set by the GAPCC. It shall be composed of experts from relevant DA agencies and National Programs, the academe, and NGOs who participated in the drafting of the standard for specific commodity/ies.

If and when deemed necessary, members of the TWG who drafted the standard or representatives from National Programs may be tapped as resource persons during the conduct of inspection in order to provide clarifications on the specific provisions of the subject standard as they relate to the GAP certification.

The TWG members who joined the team of inspectors will also be tapped during the conduct of review, evaluation, and validation of submitted inspection report(s) prior to its endorsement to the GAPCC.

### ***C. GAP Inspectors***

The GAP inspectors of the program shall be composed of relevant professionals and identified technical personnel designated by the Secretary upon recommendation by the Directors of BPI, BSWM, FPA or by the DA Regional Executive Directors (REDs).

When necessary and appropriate, inspectors from commodity-based DA programs may also be requested and designated.

The GAP inspectors shall be trained on the provisions of the related Philippine National Standards (PNS) and re-tooled on the aspects of inspection. They shall also be responsible for the monitoring of GAP-certified farms at least once or as deemed necessary during the period of validity of the certificate.

#### ***D. 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 communications regarding an application, except those that pertain to a decision. This may include notices or calls for a meeting, requests for submission of documents from an applicant, and other duties that may be assigned by the GAPCC from time to time.

The Secretariat may also accompany the inspectors during the conduct of inspection/s. 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 Secretariat, accompanied by appropriate members of pool of experts may be assigned to conduct the validation visit using the checklist mentioned in Section 4B of this Circular as guide. A report of such visit(s) will be submitted to the GAP inspectors for their evaluation.

### **SECTION 4. PROCEDURES FOR CERTIFICATION**

#### ***A. Filing of Application***

The following may apply for GAP certification:

- Individuals;
- Partnership/joint ventures;
- Cooperatives;
- Corporations;
- Associations/organizations; and
- Demonstration farms of government, academic and/or research institutions;

In the initial application, the following requirements shall be submitted:

- Duly accomplished application form;
- Farm and/or organizational profile, as applicable;
- Farm map or area map (where the outgrowership takes place);
- Field operation procedures including the list of fertilizers, pesticides and other agro-chemical inputs used;
- Certificate of training on GAP;
- Certificate of Registration (if applicable) and other related permits
- Procedure for accreditation of farmers/growers (if applicable);
- 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.) (if applicable)

Applicants from the various regions may submit their duly accomplished form to the Office of the DA Regional Executive Director (RED), which together with the