



Temporary Guidance for Issuing Six-Month Certificate Extensions

A. Introduction:

- i. Azzule Systems is continuously monitoring the COVID-19 situation and taking action to help PrimusGFS clients deal with the uncertainties that have arisen due to the pandemic. Additionally, Azzule Systems is actively engaging in stakeholder discussions to provide on-going communication and guidance to certification bodies, certified operations, and others in the supply chain.

B. Summary:

- i. Due to [GFSI's Temporary Audit Measures During Covid-19 Pandemic position](#), CPOs, including PrimusGFS, must provide guidance to the Certification Bodies in how to grant certificate extensions when requested by a certified operation.
- ii. The extension period must meet the GFSI's mandated 6-month rule.
- iii. This temporary change supersedes the PrimusGFS General Regulations Section 6. f. iii allowances for three-month extensions.

C. Procedure for Granting an Extension due to COVID-19:

- i. Certified PrimusGFS operations may apply for an extension through the certification body that issued their current valid certification.
- ii. The certification body's qualified technical staff or scheme manager must evaluate each extension request through assessing the risk of the operation and follow [IAF Informative Document For Management of Extraordinary Events or Circumstances Affecting ABs, CABs and Certified Organizations](#), as applicable, before granting a 6-month certificate extension.
- iii. Examples of evidence to assess when evaluating risk:
 - a. History and maturity of operation's PrimusGFS food safety management system
 - b. Pending compliance or legal related issues
 - c. Recalls or complaints related to the operation since the previous PrimusGFS audit
 - d. Is the operation currently in normal production, and has production continued as normal since the previous PrimusGFS audit?
 - e. Have significant changes to their management system or operation been made since the previous PrimusGFS audit, i.e., not outsourcing activities in response to COVID-19, physical location change, scope of activities change?

This list is provided as guidance, and is not an exhaustive list, for assessing operational risk during the decision making process.
- iv. The decision for granting a six-month extension must be recorded by a Certification Body qualified technical staff member or scheme manager in the PrimusGFS database when making edits to the certification validity and generating the new certificate. Refer to image 1

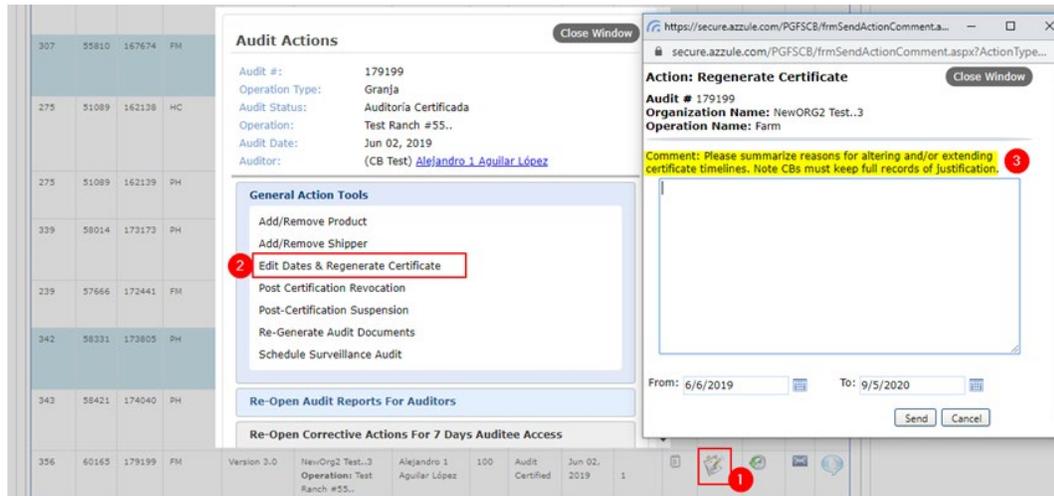


Image 1.

- v. Certification bodies are responsible for ensuring certified operations understand GFSI’s Temporary Audit Measures position and PrimusGFS’s temporary guidance when requesting a six-month extension due to the effects of COVID-19.
- vi. The Certification Body and the operation must have an agreed-upon plan for how the follow up on-site audit will be conducted and/or scheduled prior to the extension expiration.
- vii. When, for whatever reasons, an extension cannot be granted, the Certification Body should not issue extension of the certificate.
- viii. If any additional changes are made to this guidance due to the current COVID-19 Pandemic, by GFSI, or by our stakeholders, the guidance document will be updated and communicated as appropriate.

D. Resources:

[GFSI’s Temporary Audit Measures During Covid-19 Pandemic position](#)

[IAF Informative Document For Management of Extraordinary Events or Circumstances Affecting ABs, CABs and Certified Organizations](#)

[PrimusGFS General Regulations](#)