



Wednesday, 25 March 2020

**Re: Approach to the management of HARPS Audits during extraordinary Circumstances, COVID-19**

Dear Industry Stakeholders,

First and foremost, we would like to acknowledge the substantial impact Coronavirus (COVID-19) is having on all Australians, individuals and businesses alike. We recognise local governments have implemented their own policies in relation to the movement and isolation of individuals. We also acknowledge that company policies will determine the best approach for their own business with respect to the authorization of visitors on site.

We are writing to let you know that the HARPS Stakeholder Working Group have agreed that the approach for HARPS audits during this period is to continue to follow the rules of the approved GFSI schemes that support the HARPS Standard. This agreement is in line with our ongoing objective to avoid duplication and reduce additional complexity in auditing.

This means that if you are a supplier undergoing Freshcare and HARPS audits to meet the requirements of HARPS for Australian Retailers, you will be required to follow the policy released by Freshcare regarding the *Management of Extraordinary Circumstances in relation to COVID-19*. Similarly, if your business is undergoing an SQF audit in conjunction with HARPS, your business will be required to follow the *Recertification Date Change Policy*. The same applies for businesses on GLOBALG.A.P. and BRC.

Should you have any questions or concerns regarding your certification or an upcoming scheduled audit, we recommend you contact your Certification Body in the first instance.

We are also here to help. You can reach us on the HARPS Helpline on 1300 852 219 or email us at [harps@harpsonline.com.au](mailto:harps@harpsonline.com.au)

Sincerely,

Tristan Kitchener  
Managing Director - HARPS  
On behalf of the HARPS Retailers