**IFS**

INTERNATIONAL FEATURED STANDARD

**WHAT IS IFS Logistics**

IFS Logistics was developed in 2012 and it is a standard for companies, offering logistics services like transport and storage. IFS Logistics is applicable to both food and non-food products and covers all logistics activities, such as loading, unloading and transportation. The standard can be applied to all sorts of transportation; heavy goods vehicles, trains, ships, aeroplanes and every other type of transport (temperature controlled or at room temperature); frozen/refrigerated products or ambient stable products (different states of matter: liquid, solid or gas). This standard also applies to freezing service providers as well as for logistics companies using service providers for their transport and/ or storage activities. IFS Logistics marks the joint objective of trade and industry to create transparency and trust across the entire supply chain. If a food processing company has a logistics or transporting area of its own, this will be covered by the IFS Food Standard (Transport and storage). If logistics and transporting activities are outsourced, IFS Logistics will be applicable. V.2.3 is the latest IFS version, since June 2021.

IFS Certification is a valuable asset for food businesses who wish to export their products to Germany and France, as more and more retailers from these countries require an IFS certificate from their suppliers. IFS Regulation specifies a quantified assessment of requirements that have been fulfilled and the evaluation result is expressed in percentage terms. Thus, a supplier’s customer can evaluate quantitatively the performance of their supplier.

**OBJECTIVES AND BENEFITS OF THE AUDIT**

The requirements of the IFS Logistics are divided into six chapters:

1. Senior management responsibility
2. Quality and product safety management system
3. Resource management
4. Realization of the service
5. Measurements, analysis, improvements
6. Product defense and external inspections

The IFS standard creates an important opportunity for appraisal and certification in two levels: HIGHER LEVEL and FOUNDATION LEVEL, which helps companies, assess their ability to meet the necessary requirements. FOUNDATION LEVEL requirements are considered to be the same as the minimum requirements that must be met by all companies of the international food industry. HIGHER LEVEL sets higher-level requirements. IFS also includes requirements under the title RECOMMENDATIONS which represent "best practice" in the food industry.

**WHY CERTIFY WITH EUROCERT?**

An important fact is that IFS audits can only be performed by auditors approved by IFS, and under IFS supervision. Certification Bodies are required to publish their audit reports on the IFS website. IFS validity is 12 months.

**CERTIFICATION IN 8 STEPS**

1. Application for IFS Certification sent to Eurocert.
2. Decision on date of audit. Note that an important step of the IFS certification process is the conduct of internal audits in order to ascertain the company’s compliance with the IFS requirements.
3. HACCP- IFS Manual reviewed in order to be reviewed by auditors.
4. Audit program is sent to the company. The audit length is determined by the size, people and complexity of processes and products of the company.
5. Audit.
6. A preliminary report is sent to the company. Please note that the standard’s regulation does not allow the issue of the IFS certificate in case of more than one Major non-compliances.
7. The Action Plan is sent to the Certification body. The Certification Body issues a Final Report and the IFS certificate.
8. The IFS Certificate and the Final report are sent to the company.

The time between the date of the audit and the awarding of certificate is determined as follows:

• 2 weeks to draw up the pre-report of the audit

• 4 weeks for the company to respond to the deviations and non-conformities (i.e. draw up the corrective action plan)

• 2 weeks for the auditor /certification body to review the action plan (all corrections shall be implemented) and upload of the audit report, the corrective action plan and the certificate to the IFS Database.

The timeline is 6 weeks (as a target time) or 8 weeks (as a maximum time) between the date of audit and the upload of the audit report in the IFS Database/issue of the certificate