



# Certification Procedure

The Global Standard for **Vegan** Products and Services

# Introduction

## Certification Procedure

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### Document purpose

The purpose of this document is to present the EVE Vegan® **Certification Program**: how it works, the assessment rules and the applicable control measures. It also specifies the rights and obligations of companies, whether certified or candidates for certification.

### Translation disclaimer

If you have any questions about the precise meaning of the information contained in this document, please refer to the official English version for clarification.

Any discrepancies or differences in meaning resulting from translation is not binding and have no effect on certification.

### Document protection

Any use of this content, including reproduction, modification, distribution or republication, without the prior written consent of EVE Vegan®, is strictly prohibited.

### Need more information?

For more information on EVE Vegan®, visit [www.certification-vegan.org](http://www.certification-vegan.org), contact us by email at [contact@certification-vegan.org](mailto:contact@certification-vegan.org) or send your request by post to the EVE Vegan® head office in France.

### References and definitions

EVE Vegan® is committed to comply to respecting international standards defining the operating rules of certification bodies, despite the fact that it is not obliged to do so.

This policy of rigor and example has been an integral part of the values of the EVE Vegan® certification mark since its creation.

The definitions given in the following standards apply to this document and to the following standards:

NF EN ISO/IEC 17000 - Conformity assessment - Vocabulary and general principles

NF EN ISO 9001 Quality management systems - Requirements

ISO 9000 Quality management systems - Essential principles and vocabulary

Further definitions can be found in **Appendix 27.1 Vocabulary**.

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### 1. General summary

The **Certification Procedure** is available in the form of a short summary in appendix **27.2 General summary**.

### 2. Certification program

The general requirements for EVE Vegan® compliance are defined in appendix **27.5 Compliance Standards**, and are supplemented by the present **Certification Procedure**.

#### 2.2 Specific requirements

The general requirements may be supplemented by specific requirements, when a new category of product or service is applied for and when the general requirements are insufficient or not established for this category. The specific requirements will be clearly indicated to the applicant when the **Certification Contract** is sent, or after review of the application or after the first assessment of the **Certification File**.

#### 2.3 Partners

For reasons of language or geographical area, the present general requirements may be adapted to allow all or part of the certification project to be handled by an EVE Vegan® partner.

These are explained by the partner to the applicant prior to the contractualization phase. Acceptance of the contract implies acceptance of the adaptations outlined.

### 3. Certification application

#### 3.1 Application form

Companies wishing to join the certification program should familiarize themselves with the general requirements and formalize their application using appendix **27.7 Application Form** (available online at <https://www.certification-vegan.org/request>). The company must return the completed and signed form for an admissibility assessment.

On the basis of the data transmitted in the previous form, EVE Vegan® verifies that the certification project is feasible. It contains at least:

- Identification of the company and the people in charge of the certification project;
- Identification of the products or services for which certification has been requested;
- The number of employees, the number of production sites, the geographical location of production sites, including those that have been outsourced;

If necessary, additional information may be requested from the company.

#### 3.2 Applicable certificates

Depending on the project submitted, the applicant can obtain two types of certificate:

• **Product certificate:** A certificate of the product's compliance with the certification criteria. The applicable validity period is (18) eighteen months from the date of issue, renewable on request.

• **Factory Certificate:** A certificate of the QMS (Quality Management System) compliance with certification criteria and operational control of the plant, without mention of products. The applicable validity period is (36) thirty-six months from the date of issue, renewable on request.

The period of validity of the Factory Certificate may vary according to pre-established agreements with EVE Vegan® partners. If applicable, please refer to the previous section 2.3.

In the case of a Factory Certificate, certification is not transferable to products without first obtaining a Product Certificate. In other words, factory certification does not allow automatic certification of all products manufactured by the factory, with the exception of those which have obtained Product Certificate.

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### 4. Demand review

#### 4.1 Validity check

A review of the certification project is carried out by the Certification Department and the Commercial Administration in order to verify EVE Vegan®'s understanding and ability to meet the requirements, without discrimination.

In particular, the following points are checked:

- Applicant information is sufficient to carry out the assessment and audit;
- The desired scope of certification is defined and exhaustive (locations, products and activities concerned);
- The competence, technical capacity and human resources to carry out the certification service are assured;
- The time required to carry out the audits and any other points influencing certification activities (such as language, security conditions, threats to impartiality, etc.) have been assessed;
- Any differences of interpretation identified between EVE Vegan® and the operator are resolved.

If necessary, additional information may be requested from the company. The Certification Department also reserves the right to refuse a request when there are fundamental or proven reasons for doing so.

For example, a company involved in illegal activities or with a history of repeated offences. A written notification with the reason for refusal will be sent to the company.

EVE Vegan® also reserves the right to refuse an application on the grounds of incompatibility with another certification for the same product or service. Written notification of the reason for refusal will be sent to the Operator.

The language of evaluation is English or French. Any request for evaluation in another language will be studied on a case-by-case basis and will be subject to prior agreement between the parties.

#### 4.2 Validity

In the event of a positive opinion, the Certification Department approves the application project. The Commercial Department draws up a **Certification Contract** valid for (3) three months from the date of issue, to which the **General Terms and Conditions of Sale** are attached. Commitments are accepted throughout the calendar year. However, after October 30, certification may not be implemented until the following year. The Commercial Administration will notify the company if necessary.

### 5. Certification contract

#### 5.1 Contract validation

Integration into the certification program only begins once both parties have signed the Certification Contract and paid the deposit, if applicable.

The Applicant becomes an **Operator** during the program integration phase.

The **Certification File** is then opened. An access to the Client Area is sent to the Operator, enabling the company to consult the elements of the file and the instructions for submitting documents.

The Certification Contract is valid for a period of (18) eighteen months from the date of signature, extended by the period of validity of the certificates issued (up to (4) four years in the maximum case).

By signing the Certification Contract, the Operator undertakes in particular to:

- To read and understand the present Certification Procedure and its appendices;
- Respect the General Terms and Conditions of Sale;
- Submit its **Certification File** within a maximum period of (12) twelve months;
- Accept the necessary inspection visits;
- Accept to take samples for analysis;

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- Accept access to evidence and records of the quality system;
- Accept that the scope of certification will be referenced online in the Certified Operators Catalogue;
- Notify any changes that may affect the conformity of the certification scope;
- Accept that the information transmitted will be kept for 3 years after termination or cancellation of the certification contract.

During the entire period of validity of the Certification Contract, the Operator must notify:

- Any new product to be certified, even if it is part of an already certified range;
- Any change in organization or production likely to call into question the conformity of inspected products (e.g. change of formula, supplier, raw material, packaging, subcontractor, etc.);
- In general, any new project to use the EVE Vegan® certification mark that does not yet appear on the certificates issued.

### 5.2 Irregularities

The **Certification File** is closed without further action within (12) twelve months of signature of the Certification Contract in the following cases:

- The Operator has not honored the initial payment;
- The Operator has not submitted a file;

Any application or submission after the closing date will be considered as a new application, and will be subject to a new contract and costing. Any payment previously made cannot be refunded.

## 6.Document assessment

A **Certification Manager** is appointed to assess and monitor the **Certification File**. The assessment consists of an in-depth examination of the documents and evidence required for the certification project.

### 6.1 Required documents

Details of the documents required are given in appendix **27.4 Required documents**.

### 6.2 Assessment process

An **Assessment Report** is issued to the Operator at the end of the assessment. It includes a summary of the checks carried out and any discrepancies observed. In the event of discrepancies, a request for corrective action is sent.

### 6.3 Evaluation conclusions

The **Assessment Report** must be deemed complete and contain a favorable opinion. Once admissibility has been granted, the on-site audit is authorized, if applicable to the certification project. The **Operator Statement**, including a summary of the certification project, is issued and transmitted to Operator for final validation. If the certification project does not include an audit, go directly to chapter 10.

### 6.4 Irregularities

If the admissibility examination reveals significant shortcomings, or if the Operator's activity does not offer a sufficient number of convincing assessment points, the on-site audit may be postponed until further information is received or the shortcomings identified are corrected.

In all cases, if the information provided is not satisfactory, the application will not be accepted and will be closed without further action within (12) twelve months of the date of the last exchange with the Operator.

Any application or submission after the closing date will be considered as a new application, and will be subject to a new contract and costing. Any payment previously made cannot be refunded.

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### 7. Certification audit

#### 7.1 List of documents consulted during the audit

Details of the documents consulted by the auditor are given in **Appendix 27.4**: Audit support documents.

#### 7.2 Preparing for the audit

As soon as administrative admissibility has been determined by the Certification Manager, an Auditor is appointed from the register of qualified EVE Vegan® Auditors. The **Certification File** is also sent to the Auditor.

The Auditor, with the help of the Certification Manager, is responsible for scheduling the on-site audit directly with the Operator, and with the referents designated in the event of an audit at a subcontractor's site.

Audits are scheduled in all cases, including multi-site certifications, in such a way as to ensure sufficient audit coverage and duration to give confidence in the certification. The duration takes into account the size of the organization, the scope and complexity of the Operator's Quality management system, its products and processes, and the level of effectiveness as demonstrated by the results of previous audits, if any. It is organized in such a way as to guarantee an effective evaluation of the Quality management system.

The Audit Plan sent by the Auditor to the Operator serves as the basis for an agreement to carry out the audit activities and enables the Operator to organize itself to ensure the availability of the information, people and facilities audited. This plan specifies the elements of the company's organization which are to be assessed, as well as the organization of the interviews. This plan can be adapted during the opening meeting on the day of the audit. The Audit Plan is sent at least (10) ten days before the audit date.

Prior to the audit, the Operator undertakes to provide the safety instructions applicable to the sites concerned, in particular where a prevention plan is to be drawn up, as well as access procedures in the case of secure access (confidentiality, dangers for the auditor, etc.).

In addition to all initial audits, an initial audit may be recommended when EVE Vegan® takes over a certification project that has expired.

During audits, samples may be taken by the auditor on behalf of EVE Vegan®.

#### 7.3 Performing the audit

The audit of the quality system set up by the Operator enables:

- Establish contact between the Auditor, EVE Vegan® and the Operator;
- Evaluate the company's specific location and conditions, and create the opportunity for an exchange of information with staff to ensure the necessary guarantees for long-term certification;
- Verify understanding of the standard's requirements, particularly with regard to understanding and identifying mandatory criteria;
- Determine whether the level of implementation of certification in the Quality management system meets the minimum acceptable level;
- Verify that the information declared upstream during the documentary assessment phase tallies with the tangible reality on site.

Other applicable provisions are available in the General Terms and Conditions of Sale, particularly in the event of cancellation or postponement of the audit.

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### 7.4 Audit conclusions

The results of the audit are set out in an **Audit Report** drawn up by the Auditor. This report is then sent first to the Certification Manager. The Auditor issues a favorable or unfavorable opinion on all or part of the certification project. His decision is always adapted to the activity audited and the size of the company.

The Certification Manager reviews the Audit Report. Problems likely to be classified as major or minor non-conformities are highlighted, and their level of seriousness may be reassessed.

Finally, the Certification Manager decides on the final admissibility of the certification project. If the audit reveals problems that could jeopardize a positive decision, the certification decision may be delayed or postponed.

The certification procedure resumes its normal course with the correction of serious non-conformities by the Operator, and after acceptance on the basis of tangible evidence by the Certification Officer.

## 8. Special audits

### 8.1 Pre-audits

Pre-audits are not part of the certification process in the strict sense of the term. Pre-audits may be carried out at the request of the Operator and with the prior agreement of EVE Vegan®. They do not constitute advice. They must under no circumstances be considered as internal audits by the Operator.

### 8.2 Remote audits

When circumstances make it necessary (e.g. COVID19 pandemic), the audit may be carried out remotely from EVE Vegan® premises or a partner's premises, with the management system documentation and a set of information collected beforehand by telephone, video or audioconference.

All the information required to carry out the remote audit must be obtained in advance. If EVE Vegan® refuses to carry out a remote audit, and in all other cases, the audit is carried out as planned in the certification project.

### 8.3 Unannounced audits at short notice

Auditors appointed by EVE Vegan® may be required to carry out audits at short notice in order to:

- Investigate complaints;
- Carry out surveillance operations following product or certificate modifications;
- Verify the implementation of corrective action following a major non-conformity;
- Apply the monitoring policy of the use of the certification mark;

These surveillance audits are time-limited and do not necessarily cover the entire quality system.

The Operator is obliged to accept unannounced audits for which it has received prior written notification from EVE Vegan®.

If the result of an unannounced audit reveals serious non-conformities, EVE Vegan® reserves the right to apply sanctions as provided for in these rules.

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### 9. Non-conformities and corrective actions

The **Audit Report** is submitted to the Operator at the end of the review by the Certification Manager. It includes a summary of the verifications carried out and any discrepancies observed. In the event of discrepancies, a request for corrective action is sent, with a deadline for completion. Depending on the seriousness of the deviations observed, these may give rise to requests for corrective action, the conditional issue of a certificate, or the non-issuance or downgrading of a valid certificate.

#### 9.1 Major non-conformity

In the event of a major non-conformity, certification can only be issued after proof of correction.

If the Certification Manager deems it necessary, depending on the risk involved, an additional audit is requested to monitor the implementation of the action plan. This will give rise to new certification fees to be paid by the Operator. In the event of refusal, EVE Vegan® reserves the right to suspend the certification process until further notice.

The Operator must propose an appropriate action plan to the Certification Manager, including a timetable for compliance and proof of implementation.

The action plan and evidence of its implementation must be proposed, accepted and its effectiveness verified within a maximum of (3) three months after receipt of the Audit Report.

If the Operator does not consider it appropriate to implement an action plan, it must justify this in its Quality management system. If the deadline is not met, the Certification Department will take the necessary sanctions to ensure compliance with the present rules.

#### 9.2 Minor non-conformities

Minor non-conformities are deviations which do not call into question the guarantee that mandatory requirements have been met. Recommendations are made by the Auditor in the Audit Report. They do not prevent the issue of the certificate, but if they are not followed up, they may become major non-conformities.

The effective implementation and effectiveness of the action plan relating to the recommendations made by the Auditor are assessed at the next audit.

An action plan that has not been implemented, or the manifest ineffectiveness of an action plan, may lead to an over-evaluation of the deviation: from minor non-conformity to major non-conformity, or from major non-conformity to suspension of certification. This over-evaluation of the deviation must be justified by the Certification Department.

#### 9.3 Adaptations

EVE Vegan® reserves the right to deviate from the present **Certification Procedure** and its appendices in order to decide on any particular or provisional adaptation which it deems necessary, justifiable or opportune.

The Operator may request an exceptional adaptation on the basis of a written, reasoned request to the Certification Manager. Adaptations are accepted and monitored by the Certification Department.

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### 10. Certification decision

The Certification Manager forwards the **Certification File** to the Certification Department. The certification file includes at least the following elements:

- The **Assessment Report**;
- The **Operator Statement** signed by the Operator;
- The **Audit Report**, if applicable;
- The recommendation as to whether or not certification should be granted, together with any reservations or observations.

The **Certification File** is then examined by the Certification Department for review and creation of the **Review Report**. The review includes a summary of the verifications carried out and any discrepancies observed. In the event of discrepancies, a request for corrective action with a deadline for completion will be sent. This opinion is issued within a maximum of (20) twenty working days of submission.

In the event of disagreement, an exchange may take place between the Operator and Certification Department until a consensus is reached. The case may request additional information, or even an on-site investigation, before making a decision. In this case, it informs the Operator in writing.

Once the positive opinion has been issued, the certificates applicable to the scope of certification are drawn up. At the same time, invoices are issued and sent to the Operator, either at the same time or separately.

If the decision is negative, the Certification Department informs the Operator of the non-conformities noted and sets a deadline for response. In the absence of a satisfactory response within (12) twelve months of the last exchange with the Operator, the file will be closed as non-compliant.

### 11. Certificate issue

Certificates issued are signed by the person legally responsible for EVE Vegan®. This signature does not imply that the President is in charge of the certification decision, as this function may be delegated to the Certification Department.

Certification takes effect from the date of first issue and expires on the expiry date indicated on the certificate.

The data displayed on certificates is considered by EVE Vegan® as public data, and is published on the **Certified Operators Catalogue** throughout the validity of the certification.

The certificates supplied specify:

- Operator's company name,
- Date of issue of the certificate,
- Certificate expiry date,
- Unique identification number,
- Applicable reference system, its version number,
- Scope of certified activities, with the exception of confidential information,
- List of certified products,
- EVE Vegan® warnings, where applicable.

The electronic files corresponding to the EVE Vegan® logos are transmitted to the Operator. The operator is now authorized to use them in accordance with the rules of appendix **27.6 Graphic Charter**.

Only one Product or Factory certificate is issued per company and per contract period. If the scope of certification is reduced or extended, the same certificate is updated.

Requests for additional certificates not covered by the initial Certification Contract will be subject to prior acceptance and assessment of the applicable fees.

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### 12. Monitoring

The Certification Department sets up a surveillance system to regularly monitor the products and activities covered by the certification program. This surveillance activity includes documentary investigations, sampling campaigns and unannounced on-site audits following certification, downgrading or suspension of certification.

The objectives of surveillance operations include checking that:

- Compliance commitments continue to be applied over time;
- Action plans decided upon following any deviations identified during previous assessments have been effectively implemented, and their effectiveness assessed;
- Changes made by the Operator to its organization and resources since the last on-site assessment have been managed satisfactorily;
- The commitments made under the present rules have been respected over the long term.

Evaluation is carried out using the following methods:

- Analysis of new or revised documents,
- Examination of the traceability system,
- Interviews with staff, particularly new staff,
- Observation of the performance of services specified in the scope of certification,
- Observation of compliance with quality procedures,
- Sample analysis results.

EVE Vegan® reserves the right to carry out random checks on certified products and services at any time, as it deems necessary and as described in the present **Certification Procedure**, in order to ensure their compliance in terms of manufacturing history, quality criteria or use of the certification mark.

EVE Vegan® reserves the right to impose sanctions on the Operator based on the results of the monitoring operations carried out, upon delivery of written notification.

### 13. Interruption and penalties

#### 13.1 Interruption of application processing and cancellation of certification

The Operator is free to interrupt the certification process at any time for all or part of its certification scope. In the event of a scheduled audit, the Operator must notify EVE Vegan® in writing at least (8) eight calendar days before the scheduled date.

#### 13.2 Suspension

In the event of fraud by the Operator, or if it is proven that the Operator has intentionally concealed information or produced false information, the Certification Department reserves the right to initiate a certification suspension process. Suspension may also follow a complaint, the detection of a non-conformity during a surveillance action, or the detection of a non-conformity during the renewal phase.

The suspension notification specifies the existing problems or the actions to be taken by the Operator to cancel the suspension within the given timeframe. The Operator must formally request cancellation of the suspension when he considers that he has fulfilled these conditions or taken these actions.

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Suspension temporarily invalidates any right to use the certification mark on the certification scope concerned.

EVE Vegan® reserves the right to suspend certificates issued in cases where:

- Operator has failed to comply with the requirements of the Certification Procedure and its appendices;
- Operator has failed to comply with the terms of the Certification Contract and the General Sales Conditions;
- Operator has voluntarily requested a temporary suspension;
- Operator has not allowed audits to be carried out at the required intervals, for example following successive cancellations without valid justification;
- Operator has not proposed any action plan for serious non-conformities;
- Refusal to take samples for analysis;
- Refusal to respond to a formal notice,
- Operator is recognized guilty of the operator in the case of a court decision (use of forgeries, etc.);
- Other serious misconduct towards consumers.

The Certification Department is responsible for verifying the implementation of corrective actions.

### 13.3 Downgrading

The administrative act of downgrading causes the certification scope to lose its valid character and to be permanently removed from the certification program to which it belonged. The certification scope may be downgraded in the event of:

- Certification expiry,
- Suspension by EVE Vegan® following penalty.

In the event of downgrading, the Operator is notified in writing of the steps to be taken. In all cases, the Operator must immediately cease all reference to the certification mark. Unless otherwise specified in the notification, the disposal of stock already manufactured during the period of validity of the certification is tolerated. EVE Vegan® may verify compliance with these provisions by any appropriate means.

### 13.4 Restoration after interruption, suspension or downgrading

If the Operator corrects the non-conformities that led to the interruption, suspension or downgrading of all or part of its certification project, it may obtain reinstatement of the validity of its certification. EVE Vegan® will inform the Operator in writing.

## 14. Extension or modification

Certification can be extended at any time to:

- Integrate new sites into the certification perimeter,
- Include new activities into the certification scope.

If an extension is requested by the Operator or identified as such by EVE Vegan®, a new Certification Contract and costing is sent for prior approval. As with the initial contract, the admissibility of the extension project is reviewed by the Certification Department.

An unsuccessful extension project, or one submitted less than (6) six months before the certificate expires, is automatically included in the renewal project.

In the event of a change in compliance status (an item becomes non-compliant after certification), all or part of an initially certified certification project may not be renewed by EVE Vegan®. If no corrective action is taken, the validity will not exceed the initial validity granted.

The expiry date of a certificate, after its first edition, cannot be modified. This applies regardless of the number of products added subsequently.

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### 15. Reduction

The Operator is free to reduce the scope of certification at any time in order to exclude sites or activities if the situation so requires.

### 16. Renewal

#### 16.1 Certification contract

The new **Certification Contract** is offered to the Operator (3) three months prior to expiry, to enable the company to prepare for renewal in the best possible conditions.

The Operator is free to renew the certification at the end of the contract. In the event of a validated renewal, the Certification File must be reassessed before the certificate expires. The renewal phase of the certification contract includes the potential modification of the scope of certification, if the situation so requires.

#### 16.2 File review

The renewal procedure requires a complete review of the Certification File. Provisions for documentary assessment and auditing are identical to those for the initial procedure. Whatever the situation, this assessment gives rise to a new **Assessment Report**.

The documentary assessment includes the request for all or part of the mandatory documentation, with the exception of products and factories with a certification date of less than (6) six months.

#### 16.3 Review conclusions

On completion of the assessment and review, a new certificate is issued. All products, regardless of when they were submitted in the past, and regardless of the expiry date previously granted, benefit from a new identical certification period of (18) eighteen months.

In the event of non-renewal, the Certification Manager will issue a new certificate reserved for newly registered products, so that they benefit from a full certification period of (18) eighteen months.

#### 16.4 Renewal audit

The purpose of the renewal audit is to confirm the continued conformity of the Quality management system as a whole, as well as its relevance and applicability, while taking account of internal and external changes. It also includes a review of previous audit reports. Its scope takes into account previous results, non-conformities identified, non-conformity resolutions and ongoing complaints.

However, at the Operator's request, the renewal audit may be carried out at shorter intervals than those specified in this procedure.

#### 16.5 Irregularities

EVE Vegan® will issue a written warning when the Operator has validated his renewal application but has not respected the deadline before expiry of the certificate. The scope of certification concerned is then downgraded on the scheduled expiry date until the renewal process is finalized. In the event of repeated warnings, sanctions may be imposed.

### 17. Termination of contract

If the operator wishes to leave the certification program, he must notify EVE Vegan® in writing, giving the notice period specified in the General Terms and Conditions of Sale.

EVE Vegan® may also terminate the contract in the event of a sanction or failure to cooperate within (12) twelve months of the last exchange with the Operator. EVE Vegan® will notify the Operator in writing, stating the reasons for the decision to terminate the contract.

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The end of the contract automatically terminates the validity of the certificates issued. Consequently, from this date, the Operator is no longer authorized to manufacture or market products referring to the certification mark.

Unless otherwise stated in the notification, the disposal of stock already manufactured during the period of validity of the certification is tolerated. EVE Vegan® may verify compliance with these provisions by any appropriate means.

### 18. Transition to another standard

In the event of a change to another certification standard proposed by EVE Vegan®, the operator must notify EVE Vegan® before the audit concerned.

The transition can be carried out as part of a renewal audit, provided that the audit time is adapted, and a transition review stage is organized. The additional audit time may not be less than half a day. A transition plan may be documented by the Operator, and submitted to the Auditor approximately one month before the transition audit. The transition may require an amendment to the Certification Contract.

### 19. Certification transfer

EVE Vegan® may take over a certification cycle from another certification body. Before doing so, Certification Department will draw up a procedure to be integrated into the Operator's current certification cycle. The provisions for accepting the contract, carrying out audits and deciding on certification are identical to those described in the previous chapters.

### 20. Change of certification program

In the event of a change in the certification program, and if these changes have an impact on existing contracts, EVE Vegan® informs the Operator of the transition procedures. The maintenance of current certificates is conditional on compliance with the transition terms, which may be the subject of an amendment to the Certification Contract. EVE Vegan® will monitor and apply the planned changes.

No withdrawal of products may be required in connection with a change in the certification program. However, it is possible that the registration of a product or service will not be renewed due to newly applicable modifications.

### 21. Complaints

Complaints are handled by the EVE Vegan® quality department. Complaints from Operators or third parties can be sent by e-mail or post directly to EVE Vegan®, if possible specifying "Complaint" in the subject line.

Certification Department will acknowledge receipt of the complaint by e-mail. An analysis is carried out to determine the causes. A response is given to the claimant and the nature of the treatment is recorded. If an action plan is necessary, it is implemented and documented by Certification Department.

The analysis and the response are brought to the attention of the **Impartiality Committee** and the **Management Committee** to monitor the effectiveness of EVE Vegan® quality management.

### 22. Appeals

The Operator has the right to appeal to EVE Vegan® in the following cases:

- Refusal to accept his application,
- Refusal of certification in relation to an unresolved non-conformity,
- Suspension of certification following penalty,
- Contract termination.

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Appeals must be sent in writing by e-mail or post directly to EVE Vegan®, if possible specifying "Appeal" in the subject line, within (30) thirty working days of notification of the decision. Following the appeal, the decisions taken by EVE Vegan® will be communicated to the operator as soon as possible.

### 23. Publications

The name of the Operator and its scope of certification are available in the **Certified Operator Catalogue** within (30) thirty working days after delivery of the certificate. EVE Vegan® reserves the right to use the authorized data of operators internally or externally, orally or in writing, on any communication medium for commercial purposes without the prior agreement of the Operator.

The **Certified Operator Catalogue** displays the following information:

- Product identification (trade name, brand, category, format, variants, photo).
- Identification of the certified factory (company name, address, type of activity).
- Standards and other normative documents according to which conformity has been certified.
- Identification of the company name, head office address and website of the operator.
- Expiry date of the certification scope.

The list of EVE Vegan® certified operators, as well as the list of certified products and factories, can also be consulted at the EVE Vegan® head office, during opening hours and by appointment. No list is transmissible other than the information available online in the Catalogue of Certified Operators.

EVE Vegan® does not take part in any private commercial operation that would threaten its independence and impartiality. No mention stipulating or suggesting that EVE Vegan® endorses or recommends a product or service in any way is authorized, apart from the sole fact that the latter has joined the certification program.

The Compliance Standards and the present Certification Procedure are available on request from EVE Vegan®.

### 24. Use of the certification mark

Any issue of a Product or Factory certificate gives rise to the transmission of EVE Vegan® graphic material by the Sales Department. The Operator is authorized to prepare his labelling project with the certification mark before obtaining the certificate. However, no printing project may be carried out before final certification has been obtained.

To satisfy its monitoring policy, the Certification Department periodically verifies the use of the EVE Vegan® certification mark, in particular by checking that the mark is:

- Reproduced in its entirety, including compliance with the rules of the Graphic Charter;
- Used to promote only the scope of certification granted;

On receipt of written notification, the operator may be required to take corrective action, suspend the right to use the mark until it is brought into compliance, withdraw the right to use the mark for a set period, recall the identified products for destruction or modification, or be permanently excluded.

In addition to the aforementioned sanctions, EVE Vegan® reserves the right to take legal action against any infringement of its trademark, registered logos or image, as a civil or criminal offence of counterfeiting.

EVE Vegan® also reserves the right to prosecute any misrepresentation that may have led to the granting of the EVE Vegan® certification mark, the use of counterfeit EVE Vegan® documents, or any other infringement that may cast doubt on the competence and reputation of the certification.

# Rules

## Certification Procedure

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In addition to these rules, the Operator's rights and obligations are specified in the **Certification Contract** and **General Terms and Conditions of Sale**.

In particular, the Operator undertakes to:

- Declare that he is certified only for the scope of certification concerned;
- Ensure that its own customers, distributors and partners comply with the rules governing the use of or reference to the certification mark;
- Must cooperate fully with EVE Vegan® in handling complaints.
- Must inform EVE Vegan® of any significant modification to the structure, organization and resources that were the subject of the certification;
- Must cooperate fully in the proper instruction of its Certification File and respect the deadlines set by the program.

### 25. Records

EVE Vegan® retains records relating to the certification activities of all operators, whether they have only applied for certification (applicants) or have been audited or certified by EVE Vegan® (clients and subcontractors). Data concerning operators whose certification has been totally suspended, cancelled or downgraded are kept for (3) three years, from the date of their departure. For applicants, they are also kept for (3) three years.

Records relating to certified operators include at least:

- Information relating to the Certification File;
- Records of complaints and appeals, as well as any resulting corrections and corrective actions;
- The opinions of the Certification Department;
- Associated records required to establish the credibility of certification, such as proof of auditor and technical expert competence.

### 26. Participation of observers

EVE Vegan® may need or be required to involve observers in its certification audits.

These observers may be:

- Internal auditors (as part of maintaining the quality system),
- Pre-qualified auditors in training,
- External auditors as part of an accreditation program requested by EVE Vegan®.

The Operator is obliged to accept the presence of an observer in the case of an accreditation program requested by EVE Vegan®.

### 27. Appendices

**27.1 Vocabulary**

**27.2 General summary**

**27.3 Required documents**

**27.4 Audit support documents**

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**27.5 Compliance Standards (outsourced appendix)**

**27.6 Graphic Charter (outsourced appendix)**

**27.7 Application Form (outsourced appendix)**

# Appendix 27.1

## Vocabulary

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**Applicant:** Company wishing to join the certification program.

**Audit:** Methodical, independent and documented process for obtaining objective evidence and evaluating it objectively to determine the extent to which audit criteria have been met.

**Audit plan:** Description of the activities and arrangements required to carry out an audit.

**Audit planning:** Scheduling of the tasks involved in carrying out an audit.

**Audit schedule:** Set of audits scheduled over a given period, involving several operators.

**Auditor:** Person carrying out an audit.

**Audit program:** Set of one or more audits planned for a specific duration and directed towards a specific goal.

**Assessment Report:** Report drawn up following the documentary examination by the Certification Manager, including a summary of the verifications carried out and any discrepancies observed.

**Certificate:** Certificate issued for a limited period of time, establishing for each product or service its relative conformity to a standard.

**Certification:** Procedure designed to validate a company's compliance with an organization's standards, by an independent body.

**Corrective action:** Action to eliminate the cause of a non-conformity and prevent its recurrence.

**Certification Manager:** Person in charge of planning and evaluating the Certification File.

**Certification File:** File containing all the operator's evidence.

**Certification Procedure:** Description of the general operation of the certification program.

**Certification program:** Certification system to which predefined requirements, rules and procedures apply.

**Compliance Standards:** Set of predefined rules designed to produce a standardized product or service.

**Documentary assessment:** Assessment of the evidence provided by the operator to meet predefined requirements.

**Fees:** Certification costs.

**Impartiality:** Neutrality, objectivity, implying absence of conflict of interest.

**ISO:** International Organization for Standardization

**Operator:** Legal or natural person holding the right to use certification, or wishing to obtain this right. The word "operator" designates both the "applicant" and the "client".

**Major non-conformity:** A major deviation is the observation of substantial non-compliance with a mandatory requirement (absence of control of the requirement or non-application of the requirement).

**Minor non-conformity:** A minor deviation is the non-compliance with a non-substantial requirement, or at least one that does not call into question the guarantees that the mandatory requirements are met.

**Process:** A set of correlated or interacting activities that use inputs to produce an expected result.

**Scope of certification:** Product, process or service for which certification is issued.

**Sanction:** Action taken in response to a complaint or deviation.

# Appendix 27.2

## General summary

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### 1. Application for certification

Applicant send a request  
Business administration send Certification Procedure to Applicant.

### 2. Contract review

Evaluation of certification project  
Evaluation of certification fees  
Creation of Certification Contract  
Contract review by the Certification Department  
Contract sent to Operator

### 3. Certification contract

Validation of contract by Operator  
Certification file opened

### 4. Administrative admissibility

Evaluation of Certification File  
Issue of Assessment Report  
Issue of Operator Statement  
Conclusions and discrepancies

### 5. Certification audit

Audit order issued  
Selection of Auditor  
Preparation of auditor file  
Audit plan sent  
Perform certification audit  
Audit Report writing

### 6. File review

Review of Audit Report  
Delivery of Audit Report  
Follow-up of non-conformities  
Finalization of Certification File with signature of definitive Operator Statement

### 7. Certification

Final review of Certification File  
Follow-up of identified non-conformities  
Additional information, if necessary  
Positive opinion  
Issue of Certificate of Conformity

### 8. Delivery

Certificate delivery  
Delivery of post-certification documentation  
Invoicing  
Listing in the Certified Operator Catalogue

### 9. Monitoring

Monitoring plan for certified operators  
Follow-up of identified non-conformities  
Penalties measures if necessary

### 10. Renewal

Renewal contract sent (3) three months before certificate expires.

The certification process may be adapted according to the needs of the certification project.

# Appendix 27.3

## Required documents

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List of documents required by the certification program. Additional information may be requested according to the needs of the certification project.

**Documents in bold are provided by EVE Vegan®.**

### 1. Operator

#### [1.1] **Certification contract**

[1.2] Company registration certificate less than (6) six months old

[1.3] **Information form** (company profile)

[1.4] Company logo (PDF, JPG or PNG).

[1.5] Sales brochure (optional)

### 2. Certification candidate product

[2.1] Formula sheet (date, commercial name, specifications and variants, operator contact details, format e.g. 75cl, bulk code or product code if applicable).

[2.2] Raw materials list (product trade name, raw material supplier name, raw material name, document version date, operator contact details).

[2.3] Copy of label (prototype accepted).

[2.4] **Packaging form** (Declaration of packaging materials used).

[2.5] Product photo (PDF, JPG or PNG). Otherwise, provide no later than (3) three months after placing on the market.

[2.6] Brand logo displayed on the product, if different from the operator logo (PDF, JPG or PNG).

[2.7] **Non-animal testing certificate**, if applicable, mentioning the date of the last test carried out. (Displays date less than (18) eighteen months old, product trade name, operator name).

### 3. Raw materials

[3.1] Raw material data sheet (displays date less than (5) five years old, commercial name, name of supplier, technical specifications enabling unambiguous identification of the nature of the components, including the origin of substrates in the case of biotechnology). In the absence of a Technical Data Sheet, a Safety Data Sheet (SDS) or signed certificate may be accepted.

[3.2] **Non-animal testing certificate** of the raw material and, if applicable, mentioning the date of the last test carried out (Display a date less than (5) five years old, the commercial name of the material, the name of the supplier, a clear and unambiguous statement guaranteeing the absence of animal testing carried out for internal and external obligations).

### 4. Subcontracted operations

[4.1] Description of subcontracted operations and addresses of the sites concerned.

[4.2] **Non-animal testing certificate** carried out on behalf of the product applying for certification, if applicable mentioning the date of the last test carried out. (Displays date less than (18) eighteen months old, product trade name, name of subcontractor).

### 5. Other documents

The operator may submit any other type of document if it is required for the certification project to run smoothly.

# Appendix 27.4

## Audit support documents

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### Preparing for your certification audit

Non-exhaustive list of documents likely to be examined by the auditor during his visit. Please note that **documents in bold are mandatory** according to appendix **27.5 Compliance Standards**. Note: It is not necessary to send these documents; they can be consulted on site.

#### Operator

- Business registration of the company
- Company presentation document
- Site plan
- Organization chart by name
- Plan or description of security measures against unauthorized access and malicious acts

#### Quality System

- Risk analysis**
- Certification management procedure**
- Withdrawal and recall procedure**
- EVE Vegan® complaints records**
- Quality manual
- Management reviews
- Quality procedures
- Traceability records
- Internal audit reports
- Supplier and subcontractor audit reports

#### Sales and marketing

- Sales records
- Supplier invoices
- Copies of communication materials bearing EVE Vegan® certification mark

#### Human resources

- Organization chart
- Personnel management procedure
- Proof of certification referral role
- Proof of training or information given to employees on certification

#### Purchasing

- Pre-purchase conformity assessment procedure**
- Purchasing register
- Purchase receipts and invoices
- Suppliers' list and conformity follow-up sheets

#### Supplier data

- Raw material data sheets**
- Raw material non animal testing certificates**
- Raw materials register**

#### Packaging

- Register and supplier data sheets for packaging items used

#### Production

- Product formula**
- Cleaning and disinfection procedures**
- Manufacturing diagram
- Traceability procedure
- Last proof of product traceability test
- Procedure for monitoring, detecting and eliminating non-conforming products
- Technical data sheets for maintenance, cleaning and disinfection products
- Risk analysis control procedure
- Animal testing records carried out by the company

#### Storage area

- Product storage procedure or plan

#### Other documents

- Pest management procedure
- Transport management procedure for semi-finished or finished products

# Other appendices

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## Outsourced appendix

**27.5 Compliance Standards**

**27.6 Graphic Charter**

**27.7 Application Form**

## More information ?

[www.certification-vegan.org](http://www.certification-vegan.org)

## Apply online ?

Interested in joining the certification program? Fill in the application form on our website in just a few minutes. You can also use appendix **27.7 Application Form** of this document and send it to our offices at: [contact@certification-vegan.org](mailto:contact@certification-vegan.org).



*The future is vegan*



[www.certification-vegan.org](http://www.certification-vegan.org)