



Textile
Exchange

Responsible Animal Fibers Certification Procedures



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The RAF Certification Procedures 2.2 replaces RAF Certification Procedures 2.1 and is effective as of June 1, 2023. **All audits and assessments conducted after** September 1, 2023, **shall be conducted using** RAF Certification Procedures 2.2. See section A1 for more details.

English is the official language of the RAF Certification Procedures. In any case of inconsistency between versions, reference shall be made to the English version.

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Document Revision

The RWS will undergo a revision process at least every five years. The RAF Certification Procedures will typically be revised alongside the RAF standards, which are being incorporated in the new comprehensive Textile Exchange standard that will be released at the end of 2023. (The next revision is tentatively scheduled to begin in 2024, for completion in 2025.) You may submit feedback to the certification procedures at any time; send to Assurance@TextileExchange.org. Points of clarification may be incorporated into supplementary and guidance documents prior to 2024. More substantive feedback or suggested changes will be collected and reviewed as part of the next revision of the document.

Revision History

Responsible Animal Fiber Certification Procedures 2.0, released April 2020

Note: V2.0 is the earliest version of this document in order to align with versions of the RWS.

Responsible Animal Fiber Certification Procedures 2.1, released July 2021

Responsible Animal Fiber Certification Procedures 2.2, released June 2023



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Section A – General Information

A1. Implementation

A1.1.1 The following implementation timelines apply:

- a. The *RAF-102-V2.2 Certification Procedures* replaces *RAF-102-V2.1 Certification Procedures*, is effective June 1, 2023 and may be used immediately.
- b. All audits and assessments conducted on or after **September 1, 2023** shall be conducted using *RAF-102-V2.2 Certification Procedures*.

A1.2 About Responsible Animal Fiber

Responsible Animal Fiber (RAF) is a framework used by Textile Exchange to cover standards which address animal fibers. Currently the RAF includes wool (Responsible Wool Standard), mohair (Responsible Mohair Standard), and alpaca (Responsible Alpaca Standard).

The Responsible Animal Fiber framework, along with the Responsible Wool Standard (RWS), Responsible Mohair Standard (RMS), and Responsible Alpaca Standard (RAS) are owned and managed by Textile Exchange. The RWS, RMS, and RAS are all international voluntary standards that focus on animal welfare, land management and social welfare on farm and within the chain of custody from farm to final product.

Individual sites are certified by independent third-party certification bodies using annual audits. Material is tracked from the farm to the final product using transaction certificates, following the criteria of Textile Exchange’s Content Claim Standard (CCS). For more information, please visit: ResponsibleWool.org, ResponsibleMohair.org, and ResponsibleAlpaca.org.

A1.3 About Textile Exchange

Textile Exchange is a global nonprofit that creates leaders in the sustainable fiber and materials industry. The organization develops, manages, and promotes a suite of leading industry standards as well as collects and publishes vital industry data and insights that enable brands and retailers to measure, manage, and track their use of preferred fiber and materials.

With a membership that represents leading brands, retailers, and suppliers, Textile Exchange has, for years, been positively impacting climate through accelerating the use of preferred fibers across the global textile industry and is now making it an imperative goal through its 2030 Strategy: Climate+. Under the Climate+ strategic direction, Textile Exchange will be the driving force for urgent climate action with a goal of 45% reduced CO2 emissions from textile fiber and material production by 2030.

A1.4 About the Certification Procedures

The RAF Certification Procedures presents normative criteria for accreditation bodies and certification bodies which are specific to the Responsible Animal Fiber framework. These criteria are in addition to the assurance criteria for all Textile Exchange standards, which can be found in ASR-101 Accreditation and Certification Procedures for Textile Exchange Standards.

Section B – References

B1. Terms and Definitions

Refer to *TE-101 Terms and Definitions for Textile Exchange Standards and Related Documents* for definitions of terms used in these procedures. Defined terms are shown in italics in the first usage in this document, and in some other uses for clarity.

B2. Textile Exchange Document References

The following documents are key documents for conducting RAF certification. It is essential that they are used alongside this document.

1. *RAF-101a Responsible Wool Standard*
2. *RAF-101b Responsible Mohair Standard*
3. *RAF-101c Responsible Alpaca Standard*
4. *RAF-201a RWS User Manual*
5. *RAF-201b RMS User Manual*
6. *RAF-201c RAS User Manual*
7. *TE-301 Standards Claims Policy*
8. *ASR-101 Accreditation and Certification Procedures for Textile Exchange Standards* (“ACP”)
9. *CCS-101 Content Claim Standard*
10. *TE-101 Terms and Definitions for Textile Exchange Standards*

References to “ACP” refer to criteria in *ASR-101-v2.1 Accreditation and Certification Procedures for Textile Exchange Standards*. References to “AW” refer to animal welfare criteria, references to ‘LM’ refer to land management criteria, and references to ‘SW’ refer to social welfare criteria in *RAF-101a-v2.2 Responsible Wool Standard*, *RAF-101b-v1.2 Responsible Mohair Standard*, and/or *RAF-101c-v1.0 Responsible Alpaca Standard*. References to “farms” in this document include communal farmers and herders unless otherwise specified.

Section C – Criteria for Accreditation Bodies

C1. General Criteria

C1.1 Assessor Qualifications

C1.1.1 In addition to the assessor qualifications listed in ACP C3.1.2, assessors shall have training and/or experience with mammalian livestock and pasture based agriculture.

Section D – Criteria for Certification Bodies

D1. General Criteria

D1.1 Personnel Qualifications

D1.1.1 In addition to the auditor qualifications listed in ACP D3.1.5-8, auditors and certification decision makers shall have training and/or experience with mammalian livestock and pasture-based agriculture. This should include experience with sheep for RWS, goats for RMS, and alpacas for RAS, and may be demonstrated through shadow audits, training, or approved courses.

D1.2 Data and Reporting

D1.2.1 The certification body shall report the following information to Textile Exchange quarterly. Data shall be reported in a format specified by Textile Exchange or in an alternate format which has been approved by Textile Exchange. This data is considered to be confidential and will only be made publicly available in aggregate.

- a. An NC Report which includes:
 - i. An anonymized list of non-conformities issued to farms and farm groups, divided into the categories: animal welfare, land management, social, and ICS non-conformities; and
 - ii. A list of exemptions issued or applied to farms by Textile Exchange or the certification body. This includes exemptions issued by Textile Exchange for a specific farm/farm group, as well as exemptions issued more generally for farms which meet particular conditions (e.g. which may be applied to all farms in a specific country).
- b. A set of Farm Questions for each certified farm (including each member in the case of Farm Group Certification and Communal Farmer Group Certification). The certification body shall ensure all questions are complete and accurate following the submission by

each farm/group. These shall be submitted via the online survey form, using the custom link provided to the certification body (preferred option), or in another format specified by Textile Exchange.

D1.3 Certification Body Qualifications

- D1.3.1** The certification body shall be licensed¹ by Textile Exchange for the Responsible Animal Fiber (RAF) scope as defined in ACP Section B to conduct certification at the farm or slaughter site level for any RAF standard.
- D1.3.2** The certification body shall be licensed by Textile Exchange for the Content Claim Standard (CCS) scope (see ACP B2.1.3).

D1.4 Supplementary Assurance Criteria

- D1.4.1** The certification body shall follow the criteria included in *CCS-102 CCS Certification Procedures* Sections E and F regarding scope certificates, transaction certificates, and claims with regard to RAF farm certifications.

D2. General Auditing Criteria

D2.1 Farm Auditing Criteria

- D2.1.1** The certification body shall request information needed to follow biosecurity measures prior to the audit. All biosecurity measures shall be followed to ensure the auditor is allowed to enter the farm without risk of spreading disease.
- D2.1.2** A minimum of 20% of farm audits shall be conducted during times when high-risk activities (castration, tail docking, or shearing, as applicable to the species) are occurring. This number includes any simplified audits (see D2.5.3) and is calculated across all of a certification body's clients per RAF standard.

EXAMPLE: A certification body audits 90 farms certified to the RWS only, 40 farms certified to the RMS only, and 10 farms certified to both the RWS and RMS. A minimum of $(90+10) \times 20\% = 20$ RWS farms and $(40+10) \times 20\% = 10$ RMS farms shall be audited during times when high-risk activities are occurring annually. Farms which are certified to both the RWS and the RMS may count towards both totals.

¹ Licensing refers to formal approval and the presence of a contract with Textile Exchange. Licensed certification bodies who are not yet accredited are typically granted a grace period to conduct a limited number of certifications over a limited time period.

NOTE: References to “farm audits” refer to each evaluation of a farm. This represents the entire audit of an Individual Farm Certification and a portion of the audit of a Farm Group Certification.

D2.2 Critical Practices and Non-Conformities

D2.2.1 Non-conformities shall be issued as described in ACP Appendix B, with the following adaptations:

- a. Major non-conformities issued during annual audits shall have a 30-day timeline and shall result in suspension of the scope certificate if they are not closed within the timeline.
- b. Minor non-conformities for LM criteria which are issued during an initial audit, or during a farm audit for a farm which has been part of a group for less than six months may be issued with a timeline of up to one year. And
- c. All other minor non-conformities for Communal Farmer Groups may be issued with a timeline of up to six months.

D2.2.2 When a critical non-conformity is issued to a farm for an animal welfare criterion, the certification body shall:

- a. Immediately remove the farm from the scope certificate or suspend the scope certificate;
- b. Notify Textile Exchange with the farm name, region, scope certificate identification, the criterion, and the date the non-conformity was identified;
- c. Notify the scope certificate holder, if held by a different company; and
- d. Not permit the farm to be recertified (including lifting the suspension or rejoining the group) until the later of
 - i. 180 days from the date the critical non-conformity was identified, and
 - ii. After the farm has regained ceased mulesing status, if this was lost (RWS only).

NOTE: D2.2.2.d still applies to a farm group member if the farm group scope certificate is suspended, and the suspension is lifted or the scope certificate re-issued during the specified time.

D2.2.3 When a critical non-conformity is identified during a Farm Group or Communal Farmer Group audit, the certification body shall identify the scope certificate as high risk and shall increase sampling for the current audit accordingly if a low or medium risk designation was in place.

D2.2.4 When two or more critical non-conformities are identified during a Farm Group or Communal Farmer Group audit for different farms, a major non-conformity shall be issued to the organization/ICS.

D2.2.5 The certification body shall not issue an Individual Farm Certification to a farm where a critical non-conformity has been issued, and where the required waiting time defined in D2.2.1.c has not been completed, and shall not allow such a farm to be included in a Farm Group or Communal Farmer Group Certification.

D2.3 Multiple Certification

D2.3.1 A farm may be part of more than one scope certificate, including one Individual Farm Certification per RAF standard and one or more Farm Group Certifications. The certifications may be to the same or to different RAF standards. Members of a Communal Farmer Group shall not be part of more than one scope certificate per RAF standard. This is an exception to ACP D1.1.13.a and D1.1.14.e.

D2.3.2 The same site may act as the ICS/certified organization for multiple scope certificates per RAF standard, provided that the following is met:

- a. There is no overlap in the farms included in the scope certificate (i.e. a single farm cannot be part of multiple groups managed by the same ICS);
- b. The ICS site is not included in more than one scope certificate which also includes the processing of animal fiber; and
- c. If more than one certification body is involved, a full copy of each scope certificate including all farm and subcontractor details is shared with each certification body.

D2.3.3 In the case that a farm is included in multiple scope certificates for RAF standards, each applicable organization/ICS and certification body shall be made aware of the situation, and non-conformities relating to the farm shall be shared with each applicable organization/ICS and certification body.

D2.3.4 Upon receiving notification of a non-conformity issued by another certification body to a farm which it has certified under D2.3.2, the certification body shall take action as follows:

- a. If the non-conformity is critical, follow the process outlined in D2.2.1. If the certification body does not believe this is justified, the certification body shall file a complaint with Textile Exchange against the certification body which issued the non-conformity. or
- b. If the non-conformity is minor or major, take immediate action to determine if the same non-conformity is needed under the certification body's scope certificates, and maintain a written justification for the decision.

D2.3.5 Auditing of volume reconciliation shall take into account all of the wool sales from the farm, including wool sold as non-RWS and wool sold under another RWS scope certificate.

D2.4 Risk Assessment Process

D2.4.1 Prior to each audit, the certification body shall conduct a risk assessment and assign a risk level for each scope certificate following the process in ACP Appendix C.

- a. For Farm Group Certification and Communal Farmer Group Certification, the certification body may divide the farms into multiple subgroups in coordination with the ICS for the purposes of risk assessment and sampling. Criteria which reference the “scope certificate” shall apply at the scope certificate level.
- b. No risk assessment is required for initial audits of individual farms.

D2.4.2 Within each risk assessment, the risk level shall be assigned as follows:

- a. A risk level of low risk may be assigned if all low-risk core criteria are met along with at least two low-risk additional criteria.
- b. A risk level of medium risk may be assigned if the criteria for low risk (D2.4.2.a) are not met and no high-risk criteria apply.
- c. A risk level of high risk shall be assigned if any of the high-risk criteria are met.
- d. The certification body may increase the risk level above the minimum specified level if they identify another relevant risk indicator which justifies the increase.

D2.4.3 Before determining the risk level, the certification body shall also conduct a background check on the organization and shall consider any other feedback (solicited or unsolicited) which has been received about the organization or the farms when determining the risk level. The background check should at a minimum include information about legal compliance history (e.g. past prosecutions for animal welfare issues) of the applicable farms. (See AW 5.1 for legal compliance criteria for farms.)

D2.4.4 Risk criteria shall apply as follows:

Risk Factor		Applicability
Low-Risk Core Criteria	a. No high-risk criteria are met.	All
	b. No <u>critical</u> non-conformities issued for the scope certificate in the past <u>two</u> years including during the	All except initial audits

Risk Factor		Applicability
All applicable criteria shall be met for low-risk designation	previous two audits, or since initial certification (whichever is less).	
	c. No <u>major</u> non-conformities were issued for the scope certificate in the past year including during the previous audit.	All except initial audits
	d. Farming practices are consistent/homogeneous within the group or subgroup.	Farm groups and communal farmer groups only
	e. Meeting the applicable RAF standard(s) does not require major changes in management from current practice. e.g. Farms are not currently tail docking (sheep) or castrating (any species) outside of the methods or ages allowed by the applicable RAF standard(s).	Initial audits only
	f. No major changes in group structure or management since the last audit. Major changes include: Group expands by more than 50% and includes more than 20 farms; change of ICS management with no continuity of knowledge of the relevant standard(s) and/or group members and practices.	All except initial audits
	g. ICS functioning effectively: the certification body auditor did not identify non-conformities not identified by the ICS during the previous audit.	Farm groups and communal farmer groups only, excluding initial audits
	h. No major changes on the farm since the previous audit. e.g. Doubling of herd or flock size, complete change in farm management with no continuity of knowledge	Individual farms only, excluding initial audits
	i. Mulesing is illegal or not practiced in the country/area or state/province. OR	RWS farms only

Risk Factor	Applicability
<p>At least three previous years' audits have shown full conformity with RWS mulesing criteria for all farms within the scope certificate.</p> <p>OR</p> <p>Prior to audit all farms sign <i>RAF-231a Ceased Mulesing Declaration</i> confirming that they have and will maintain ceased mulesing status, including no removal of wool-bearing strips of skin from between the hind legs of sheep (the "breach" area) by any technique, and no purchasing of mulesed stock without a valid exemption from Textile Exchange; <u>and</u> all ICS inspectors sign <i>RAF-231a Ceased Mulesing Declaration</i> to confirm that they understand the Textile Exchange definition of <i>ceased mulesing</i>.</p>	
<p>Low-Risk Additional Criteria</p> <p>At least two criteria shall be met for low-risk designation</p>	All
<p>j. Farms have a minimum of one experienced stock person for a maximum of 200 sheep or goats, or 100 alpacas in the herd or flock, and daily oversight is conducted of all animals. For larger herds or flocks with multiple stock people, oversight must be carried out by a sufficient number of stock people.</p> <p>e.g. For a herd of 1000 goats a minimum of five stock people must be involved in daily oversight of the animals.</p> <p>k. No minor non-conformities in the previous year for the following criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RWS AW2.12/RMS AW2.13/RAS AW2.12 (provision of effective shade, shelter, or windbreaks); • RWS AW3.14.1/RMS AW3.12.1/RAS AW3.11.1 (monitoring for lame animals on a regular basis); • RWS AW3.14.2/RMS AW3.12.2/RAS AW3.11.2 (stock people are able to recognize lameness, assess severity, and take prompt action to resolve); • RWS AW3.17.3/RMS AW3.15.3/RAS AW3.15.3 (records of serious injuries that occur at shearing are kept); • RWS AW3.22.3/RMS AW3.20.3/RAS AW3.21.2 (lambs/kids/cria have access to milk in their diets until they are at least a specified age); and 	All except initial audits

Risk Factor	Applicability
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RWS/RMS/RAS AW5.6 (mortality records are kept). 	
<p>l. High welfare potential for the species and the system. The right animal is kept in the right landscape.</p> <p>(e.g. Extensive alpaca production in Peru has high welfare potential. Merino sheep in wet and humid climates have welfare challenges. Goats generally dislike wet conditions.)</p>	All
<p>m. Suitable pain relief is available and used as specified in the relevant standard(s).</p> <p>OR</p> <p>Painful procedures (e.g. castration, tail docking, laparoscopic artificial insemination) are not undertaken.</p>	All
<p>n. Tools for stunning animals for euthanasia and on-farm slaughter are available and in use on all farms.</p>	All
<p>o. On-farm slaughter (i.e. excluding euthanasia) is never carried out either for human food or feed for other farm animals (e.g. dogs). No live animals are given to stock workers for food unless slaughter occurs at a government-licensed slaughter facility.</p>	All
<p>p. No third-party transport of animals.</p>	All
<p>q. No transport in excess of 14 hours total journey time.</p>	All
<p>r. Country/area has a World Animal Protection Index score of A, B, or C overall.</p>	All
<p>High-Risk Criteria</p> <p>High risk if any are met</p> <p>s. <u>Critical</u> non-conformities issued for the scope certificate in the past year including during the previous audit.</p>	All except initial audits
<p>t. High degree of variation in farming practices within the group or subgroup.</p>	Farm groups and communal farmer groups only

Risk Factor		Applicability
	u. ICS not functioning effectively e.g. The ICS does not have up to date information about all farms.	Farm groups and communal farmer groups only
	v. Mulesing is prevalent in the region, and the low-risk core criterion (g.) for mulesing is not met.	RWS farms only

D2.5 Audit Types

D2.5.1 The following audit types shall be used:

- a. Announced audits;
- b. *Semi-announced audits*, where one of the following options for notice are used, at the discretion of the certification body:
 - i. The site receives up to 72 hours' notice of the audit, to ensure that the site is open, and the correct people are available; or
 - ii. The site receives notice of a 2-month window during which the audit will be conducted, but does not receive any additional notice prior to the auditor's arrival.
- c. *Unannounced audits*, where the farm receives less than one hour's notice of the visit, and a full audit is conducted.
- d. *Semi-announced confirmation visits*, where the site receives notice as for a semi-announced audit and the auditor limits the evaluation to a visual check for animal welfare, land management, and social welfare only.
- e. *Unannounced confirmation visits*, where the site receives less than one hour's notice of the visit, and the auditor limits the evaluation to a visual check for animal welfare, land management, and social welfare only.

NOTE: A confirmation visit is not considered to be a full audit. The purpose of confirmation visits is to provide additional oversight of the conditions of the farm without requiring a full audit. Where unannounced confirmation visits are required, the certification body shall make efforts to avoid the farm predicting when the confirmation visit will occur.

D2.5.2 In some cases (see D3), simplified audits are permitted. In the case of a simplified audit, the farm audit criteria may be limited to the following:

- a. All non-documentation related criteria at the farm, including visual inspections and interviews relating to animal welfare, land management, and social welfare criteria;
- b. RWS/RMS/RAS Section G1; and
- c. All documentation related criteria where the farm has received a non-conformity from the certification body during one of the previous two audits.

D2.5.3 On-site audits shall be conducted in a way which allows the auditor to observe a representative sample of the animals, which shall not be less than 10% of each class of stock.

NOTE: If problems with animal welfare are identified, the sample size specified in D2.5.3 should be increased.

D2.5.4 The certification body may conduct the document review portion of a farm audit as a remote audit, provided that it occurs no more than seven calendar days before or after the site visit.

D2.6 Audit Duration

D2.6.1 The following minimum time shall be spent on-site to conduct each audit. This does not include auditor travel or reporting time.

- a. Individual farm: 3 hours
- b. Farm group or communal farmer group ICS evaluation: 4 hours
- c. Farm group member farm: 2 hours, and should be a minimum of 3 hours if the ICS does not conduct internal inspections
- d. Communal farmer group member: 1 hour
- e. Confirmation visit to a farm: 1 hour
- f. Slaughter site: 2 hours
- g. Storage facility, when section G2 of the Standard does not apply: 0.5 hours
- h. Supply chain site: See CCS-102 CCS Certification Procedures.

NOTE: The audit times listed in D2.6.1 are presented as a minimum. Individual farm and farm group audits should typically have a longer duration than the minimum, and certification bodies should allow for more time in planning.

D3. Certification Types

D3.1 Auditing Individual Farms

The following criteria apply to Individual Farm Certification only.

- D3.1.1** All farms included in an Individual Farm Certification shall be audited annually, as described in D4.2.1, except where an audit is waived (see D3.1.2).
- D3.1.2** All audits shall be announced for the first year of certification. After the first year of certification, audits shall be conducted as follows:
- a. At low-risk farms, one of the two annual (non-recertification) audits may be waived per three-year certification cycle, provided that one of the other two audits is conducted during times when castration, tail docking, or shearing (as applicable to the species) are occurring. The other non-recertification audit may be conducted as a simplified audit. All audits may be announced.
 - b. At medium-risk and high-risk farms, one of the two annual (non-recertification) audits during each cycle may be conducted as a simplified audit if it is conducted during times when castration, tail docking, or shearing (as applicable to the species) are occurring.
 - c. At least 5% of audits of medium risk farms and 10% of audits of high-risk farms shall be semi-announced or unannounced.

NOTE: Percentages of farms in D3.1.2 apply per certification body, per year. They should apply per country/region per year and for each scope certificate over time, though sampling may focus more on farms where fewer low-risk criteria or more high-risk criteria apply within each risk category.

- D3.1.3** A minimum of 10% of individual farm certifications shall receive a semi-announced or unannounced confirmation visit each year. Farms should be selected to focus on areas of higher risk or where a lower level of conformity with standard criteria has been identified.

D3.2 Auditing Farm Groups and Communal Farmer Groups

The following criteria apply for Farm Group Certification and Communal Farmer Group Certification, and are in addition to ACP Appendix E.

- D3.2.1** The certification body shall carry out annual on-site audits of farm group members based on the group risk level, determined based on D2.4. The number of farms audited shall be determined as follows, where n is the number of farms in the farm group:
- a. For up to 400 farms in a group or subgroup:
 - i. High-risk level: audits of at least $2\sqrt{n}$;

- ii. Medium risk level: audits of at least $1.5\sqrt{n}$; and
 - iii. Low-risk level: audits of at least \sqrt{n} .
- b. For groups or subgroups with more than 400 farms:
- i. High-risk level: audits of at least 10% of farms;
 - ii. Medium risk level: audits of at least 7.5% of farms; and
 - iii. Low-risk level: audits of at least 5% of farms.

EXAMPLE: A farm group with a medium risk designation that has 1000 member farms, where the certification body has divided them for sampling purposes in two subgroups of 800 and 200 farms respectively, will receive $800 \times 7.5\% = 60$ on-site audits for the first subgroup and $1.5\sqrt{200} = 22$ on-site audits for the second subgroup.

D3.2.2 In place of the sampling rate defined in D3.2.1 a sample size of 10% of farm group members or two farms (whichever is greater) may be used if all of the following are met:

- a. The entire farm group is low risk based on D2.4
- b. The farm group has no more than 100 members; and
- c. Risk criterion **Error! Reference source not found..j** (animal oversight and staffing) is met.

D3.2.3 The certification body shall conduct semi-announced or unannounced confirmation visits to at least 10% of farms in high-risk groups and at least 5% of farms in medium-risk and low-risk groups each year, with a focus on doing the audits during higher risk times of the year when tail docking, castration, or shearing procedures are being executed. The certification body may conduct additional confirmation visits to farms in Farm Groups or Communal Farmer Groups of any risk level when deemed necessary.

EXAMPLE: A farm group has 64 member farms and is assessed at medium risk by the certification body. A minimum of $1.5\sqrt{64} = 1.5 \times 8 = 12$ farms are required to be audited annually. An additional $64 \times 5\% = 3.2$ confirmation visits are needed based on the number of farms in this group – typically 3 or 4 each year. However, since confirmation visit numbers are calculated across the certification body, there may be more or fewer confirmation visits for this group in a specific year.

EXAMPLE: A farm group has 1000 member farms and is assessed at low-risk level. A minimum of $1000 \times 5\% = 50$ farms are required to be audited annually. Approximately an additional $1000 \times 5\% = 50$ farms are required to receive a confirmation visit annually (see first example for more explanation).

D3.2.4 If the ICS chooses not to conduct internal inspections per F4.1.2 of the applicable RAF standard, the certification body shall audit all farms in the farm group on a set schedule. Additionally, new farms shall be audited by the certification body prior to joining the group. This takes the place of D3.2.1 through D3.2.3.

- a. For each group or subgroup, the audit schedule shall include:
 - i. High-risk level: audits of each farm annually;
 - ii. Medium risk level: audits of each farm at least every 24 months; and
 - iii. Low-risk level: audits of each farm at least every 36 months.
- b. In addition to the audits specified above, at least 2% of group members at medium and low-risk levels shall receive a semi-announced or unannounced confirmation visit each year, with a focus on higher risk times of year. For group members at high-risk level, there is no requirement for additional confirmation visits, though the certification body may choose to conduct them.
- c. If a group which is audited under this criterion changes certification body, the new certification body's initial audit shall either include:
 - i. An audit of each farm prior to that farm being included in the succeeding certification body's scope certificate; or
 - ii. An audit of a sample of farms as required by D3.2.1, in addition to the regular audit schedule.

D3.2.5 A minimum of 20% of farm audits during the three-year certification period (scope certificate validity) shall be conducted during times when castration, tail docking, or shearing (as applicable to the species) are occurring.

D3.2.6 During the audit of each communal farmer group member the auditor shall evaluate a minimum sample of animals using *RAF-230a RWS Animal Based Assessment Checklist*, *RAF-230b RMS Animal Based Assessment Checklist*, or *RAF-230c RAS Animal Based Assessment Checklist*. The minimum sample size shall be as defined in those checklists.

D3.3 Auditing Other Sites

D3.3.1 Each slaughter site shall be audited annually, during a time when animals are present and slaughter is occurring.

D3.3.2 If the organization is implementing section G2 of the Standard, *CCS-102 CCS Certification Procedures* shall apply for the auditing of all supply chain sites, including storage facilities.

D3.3.3 If a certified organization has owned or subcontracted storage facilities and is not applying section G2 of the Standard (i.e. is not being evaluated to the CCS), the following shall apply:

- a. The certification body shall list the storage facilities on the scope certificate, either as sites (if owned by the certified organization) or as subcontractors (if independent);
- b. The certification body shall audit the traceability system for the animal fiber at both the farm level and the group level (where applicable), including documentation, volume reconciliation, and technical specifications of claimed material.
- c. The certification body shall audit storage facilities if:
 - i. Any repacking or relabeling of animal fiber occurs;
 - ii. The traceability system does not include government or credible third-party oversight;
 - iii. Gaps or errors are identified in the volume reconciliation; or
 - iv. The certification body identifies other concerns with the traceability system.

D3.3.4 If audits of storage facilities are required based on D3.3.3.c:

- a. The certification body shall audit a sample of the square root of the number of storage facilities annually, or shall audit each storage facility at least once every three years;
- b. Audits of storage facilities may be conducted remotely provided that they include a live video tour of the animal fiber storage and provided that the certification body does not have concerns about RAF and non-RAF animal fibers being mixed or substituted; and
- c. The certification body may conduct a single audit of a storage subcontractor to be included in the scope for multiple certified organizations (e.g. if multiple individually certified farms use the same storage subcontractor).

D4. Scope Certification Duration

D4.1 Scope Certificate Expiry

D4.1.1 Individual Farm, Farm Group, and Communal Farmer Group scope certificates for RAF standards shall be issued for a duration of three years. The certification body shall not issue certification for a duration of less than three years. (See ACP D4.7.3.)

D4.1.2 If a certification decision is not completed 60 days following an annual audit, the scope certificate shall be suspended until the certification decision is made. (See ACP D4.6.8.)

D4.1.3 An RAF scope certificate may include supply chain sites, including processing sites. Any scope certificate which includes farms shall be issued following D4.1.1. Any scope certificate which does not include farms shall be issued in accordance with the certification timelines for the Content Claim Standard.

D4.2 Annual Audits

D4.2.1 Two annual audits shall be conducted during the three-year duration of each scope certificate, unless an audit is waived (see D3.1.2). This does not include the recertification audit. One audit shall typically be conducted per calendar year.