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1 Purpose

The Total Quality Food Association (herein referred to as TQFA) approves and authorizes TQF recognized certification bodies to conduct document reviews, on-site audits, surveillance audits, certification contract signings, and issue certificates in support of the Total Quality Food Certification Program (herein referred to as the TQF Program). This document specifies the integrity program for effectively managing certification bodies (CBs) and ensuring the certification process has been completed in accordance with TQF Program requirements to maintain the conformity and impartiality of TQF Program.

2 Scope

This document covers the CB integrity program for the selection, management, accreditation scope changes, approvals, suspensions and terminations of qualification, contract renewals evaluation, appeals, management and maintenance for CBs managing food factory clients.

3 Responsibility and authority

3.1 Certification Service Division, TQFA (herein referred to as TQFA-CSD)

TQFA-CSD establishes this integrity program regulations, verifies the effectiveness of certification implemented by CBs, and communicates with CBs on other matters related to the TQF Program.

3.2 Selection Panel

This panel assesses and selects CBs and handles matters related to their selection.

4 Terms and definitions

4.1 Total Quality Food Certification Program (TQF Program)

The requirements, systems, specifications, and certification mark management and related documents established by TQFA to be referenced and applied by accreditation bodies (ABs), CBs, and food factories.

4.2 Certification Body (CB)

A third-party conformity assessment organization approved and contracted by TQFA to assess the TQF program.

4.3 Certification

A process by which an accredited and contracted certification body confirms compliance of a food factory's implemented TQF Program, as appropriate, following a certification audit and/or re-certification audit.

4.4 Auditor

A person qualified to conduct audit activities on behalf of the contracted CB.

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4.5 TQF-ICT Platform

The Internet communication platform for TQF-certified food factories and other interested parties to upload documents and search for relevant information concerning the TQF Program.

4.6 Certification Body (Head Office)

The address (location) where the CB is registered and from where TQF Program certification activities are executed.

5 Content

5.1 Selection of CBs

5.1.1 Selection process

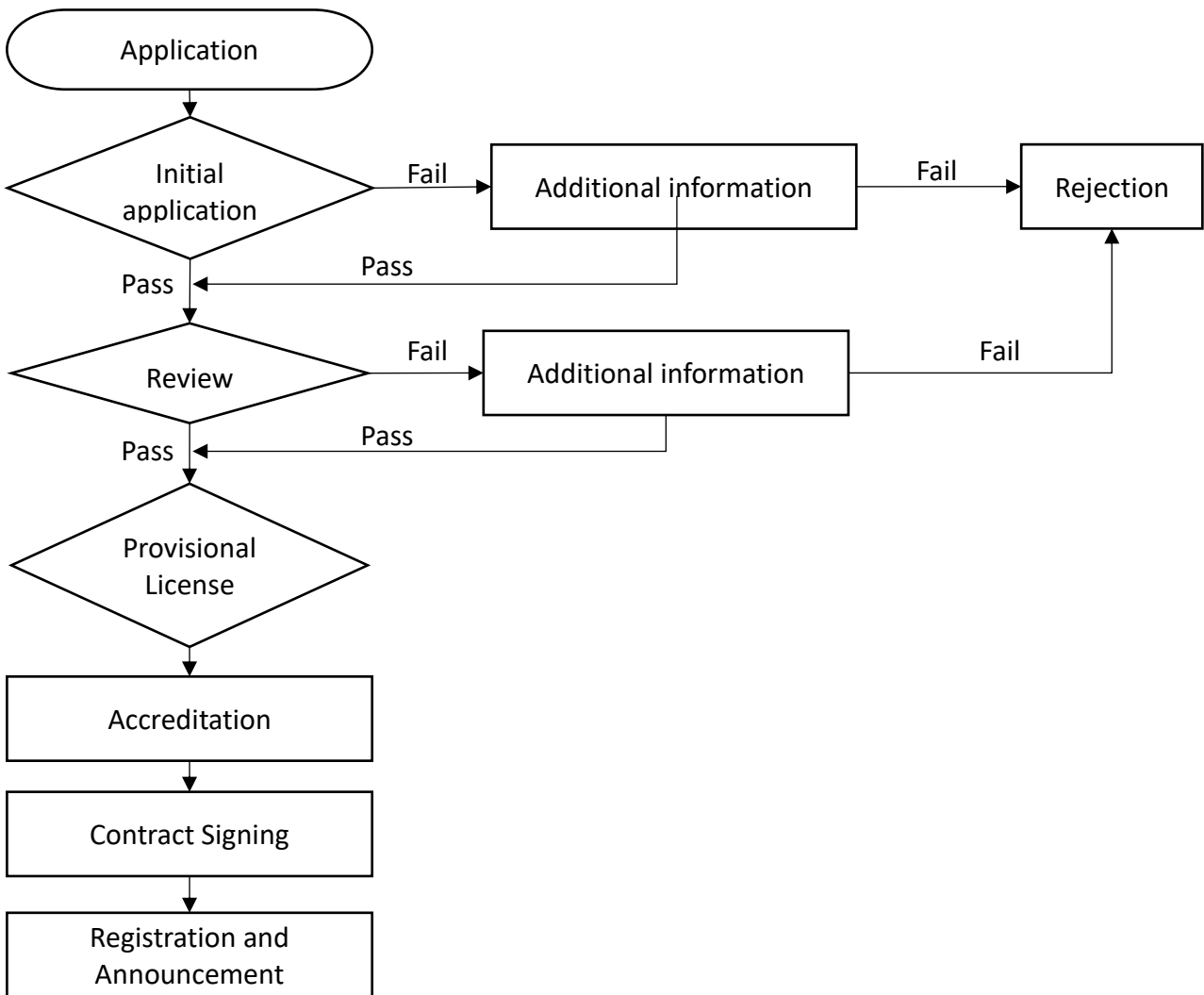


Figure 1. Selection Process for Certification Body

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5.1.2 Qualifications for Selection

5.1.2.1 Requirements for CB organizations

- (1) Certification bodies shall be a legal corporate entity with a business purpose which includes auditing and certification activities, and with the resources, competence, and technology to implement the certification services required by the TQF Program.
- (2) A department shall be established within the certification body to implement and manage TQF Program requirements.

5.1.2.2 Management requirements: The certification body shall be equipped with the following management systems:

- (1) Internal audit system.
- (2) Human resources management system.
- (3) Financial control and accounting system.
- (4) Document and record management system.
- (5) Data confidentiality management system.
- (6) Complaints, appeals and disputes management system.
- (7) Management review system.
- (8) Impartiality system.
- (9) Remote audit system.
- (10) Auditor training system.
- (11) Other related systems.

5.1.2.3 Equipment requirements

CBs shall have appropriate offices, conference rooms, office equipment, computer equipment, and access to a laboratory (within the CB or contracted) that is accredited to ISO 17025 by an appropriately authorized AB and is able to conduct product testing as per TQF Program requirements. CBs shall have documented policies, procedures, and records for the qualification and monitoring of contracted laboratories, and audited food factories shall be informed of the contracted laboratory service. Contracts with external laboratories shall include provisions for confidentiality and conflict of interest.

5.1.2.4 Workforce requirements

Refer to Chapter 6 TQF Program Certification Personnel of TQF Program-Program Management for details.

5.1.3 Application

Applicant certification bodies shall ensure they meet the requirements in Section 5.1.2 and submit the Total Quality Food Product Certification Program- Application

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Form for Certification Body (TQF-CBM-000-02) with related information to apply to become a TQFA registered CB.

5.1.4 Initial Application Review

5.1.4.1 After receiving an application and related documents, TQFA-CSD shall complete the initial application review within ten (10) working days. The application shall be formally accepted once the initial application review is completed and TQFA-CSD shall reply to the applicant CB in writing.

5.1.4.2 Applicant certification bodies that supply insufficient information shall be informed of the need for further information within twenty (20) working days. If the applicant CB fails to provide the required information within this time frame, the application shall be rejected without returning the application documents.

5.1.5 Review

5.1.5.1 Following formal acceptance of an application, TQFA shall form a selection panel to review the application received from the applicant CB to ensure its competence meets the requirements for performing TQF certification. External experts may be contracted to assist with the review if necessary.

5.1.5.2 The selection panel may conduct an on-site interview if during the review and shall complete the review within (20) working days after formal acceptance. TQFA-CSD shall advise the applicant certification body after the review.

5.1.5.3 If the selection panel considers that additional information or proof of competence is required, the applicant CB shall submit the required additional information and corrective action plan (if required) within three (3) months of receiving the review results. If the applicant CB fails to furnish the information within the required time frame, the application shall be rejected without returning the applicant documents.

5.1.5.4 TQFA maintains the application and selection results for all applicant certification bodies.

5.1.6 Provisional license

5.1.6.1 TQFA shall grant a one-year provisional license to certification bodies that successfully complete the panel review and sign the Total Quality Food Product Certification Program Certification Body Authorization Agreement (TQF-CBM-000-01). TQFA may also conduct on-site interviews with provisional CBs during the provisional one-year period. The CB shall be accredited by the Taiwan Accreditation Foundation (TAF), or other TQFA approved accreditation body within a year of acquiring the provisional

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license and shall provide the accreditation certificate to TQFA. If the CB fails to acquire accreditation within this timeframe, TQFA-CSD shall be informed of the reason for the delay.

5.1.6.2 If the CB violates the Total Quality Food Product Certification Program Certification Body Authorization Agreement (TQF-CBM-000-01), TQFA shall inform the CB of its suspension or termination, and the CB shall immediately stop conducting certification activities.

5.1.6.3 Refer to Chapter 5 TQF Program Certification Body Management of TQF Program-Program Management for details.

5.1.7 Contract Signing

Following successful completion of the provisional license period, including accreditation, the applicant CB shall be granted a three-year renewable contract with TQFA.

5.1.8 Registration and announcement

5.1.8.1 After receiving the certificate of accreditation from the CB, TQFA shall announce the CB registration on the TQFA website.

5.2 CB Management

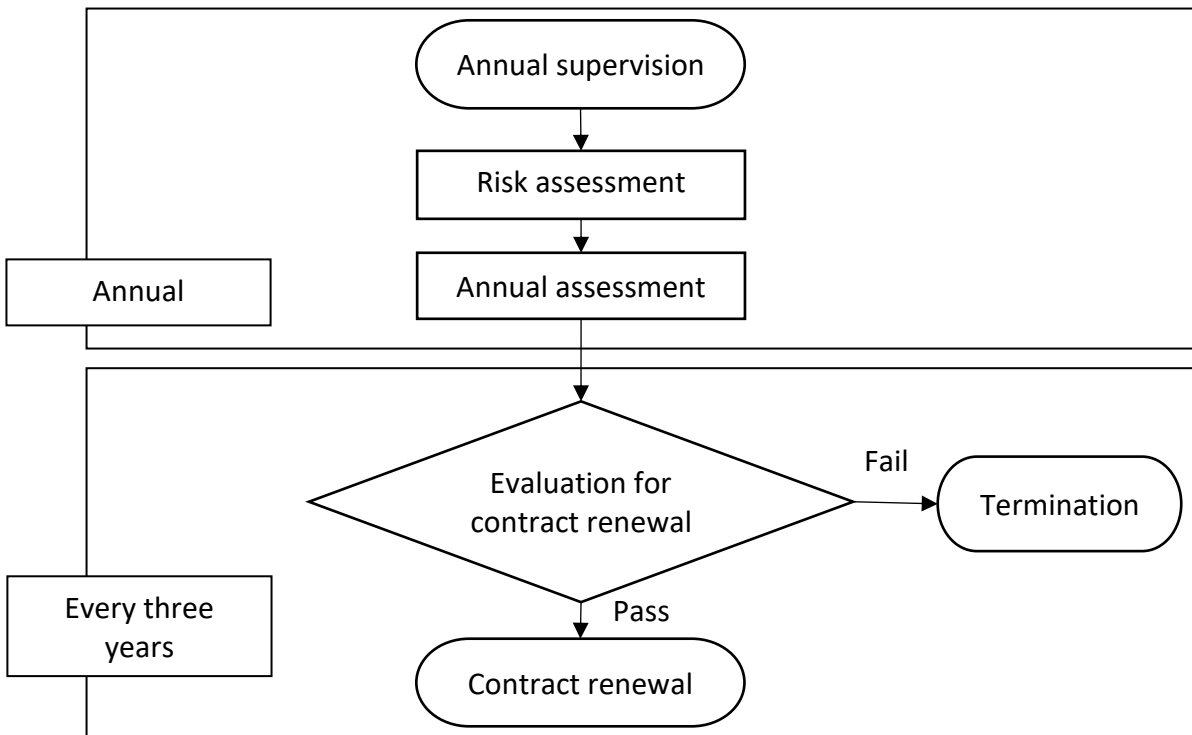


Figure 2. Annual Supervision and Contract Renewal Evaluation Process for Certification Body

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5.2.1 General

5.2.1.1 The CB shall have the competence and resources to implement the TQF certification process in accordance with the requirements of Criteria for Total Quality Food Certification Program Certification Bodies (TQF-CBM-001).

5.2.1.2 The process by which the CB conducts TQF certification shall comply with the requirements of Total Quality Food Product Certification Program Certification Body Authorization Agreement (TQF-CBM-000-01).

5.2.2 Transition period

5.2.2.1 During an amendment or revision of the TQF Program, TQFA shall establish and advise a transition period for CBs to meet the requirements.

5.2.2.2 After TQFA announces an amended or revised version of the TQF Program, the CBs shall inform their certified sites of the latest version within twenty (20) working days.

5.2.3 Changes

5.2.3.1 If there is a change of entity name, address, and/or responsible personnel in the CB, TQFA shall be advised by the CB in writing with supporting documents within ten (10) working days from the day of the change.

5.2.3.2 If TQFA considers the changes shall affect the certification process conducted by the CB, a suspension of the CB certification activities may be requested by TQFA.

5.3 Annual Supervision

TQFA conducts annual supervision of licensed CBs to ensure they comply with all certification activities they are authorized to conduct on behalf of TQFA. Annual supervision shall include at least once a year, conducting office assessment, witness assessments and desktop assessments by TQFA-CSD. Risk assessment and annual assessment of CB shall be conducted every year.

5.3.1 Risk Assessment

5.3.1.1 The risk assessment for licensed CBs shall include the number of certified production systems, the number within each product recognition scope, and the number of auditors and auditing countries carried out by the certification body. The score shall be calculated in accordance with Table 1, and Table 2 used to determine the frequency of office assessments.

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Table 1. Risk assessment score calculation.

Risk factor Score	Number of certified production systems	Number within each product recognition scope*	Number of auditors	Number of auditing countries
1 point	Below 100	1-6	1-10	1-2
2 points	101-350	7-12	11-20	3-4
3 points	Above 351	Above 13	Above 21	Above 5

* The product recognition scope uses the GFSI product recognized scope as standard.

Table 2. The total risk assessment score and the basic frequency of office assessment.

Total risk assessment score	Basic frequency of office assessment
4-6	1 time per year
7-9	2 times per year
10-12	3 times per year

5.3.1.2 The risk assessment process and office assessment frequency shall be recorded in the Total Quality Food Association Certification Body Annual Assessment and Risk Assessment Form (TQF-CBM-000-07).

5.3.1.3 TQFA-CSD may increase the frequency of office assessment and/or witness assessments based on:

- (1) Outcomes of previous office assessment or witness assessments;
- (2) Complaints or appeals received from certified sites, accreditation bodies or other stakeholders;
- (3) Repeated problems detected in audit reports;
- (4) Food safety incidents in one or more certified sites, or certified products recalled for any reason.

5.3.2 Annual Assessment

5.3.2.1 The key performance indicators (KPIs) for CBs shall include:

- (1) Desktop assessment results for certified sites, including grading and number of non-conformances;
- (2) Individual auditor performance;
- (3) Numbers of complaints, appeals, disputes;
- (4) Change in the number of certified sites.

5.3.2.2 The CB's KPIs and the result of the office assessment are included in the score

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	<p>for the annual assessment.</p> <p>5.3.2.3 The scores for the office assessment, witness assessments, desktop assessment, complaints and appeals, and changes in the number of certified sites are based on a 3-point system with 3 points being the highest and 1 point the lowest.</p> <p>5.3.2.4 The score for the annual assessment is the average score for annual assessment KPIs for the year (rounded to 1 decimal place).</p> <p>5.3.2.5 Each CB shall be graded according to its annual assessment score, with the grade affecting the frequency of office assessments in the following year:</p> <p style="margin-left: 20px;">(1) Grade A (3 points): The frequency of office assessments in the following year may decrease by one, as long as the frequency of office assessments is not less than one per year.</p> <p style="margin-left: 20px;">(2) Grade B (2.9 to 2.4 points): The frequency of office assessments shall be maintained for the following year.</p> <p style="margin-left: 20px;">(3) Grade C (less than 2.3 points): The frequency of office assessments shall increase by one for the following year.</p> <p>5.3.2.6 The result of the annual assessment and grade for each CB shall be recorded in the Total Quality Food Association Certification Body Annual Assessment and Risk Assessment Form (TQF-CBM-000-07).</p> <p>5.3.3 The Office Assessment and Witness Assessment Process</p> <p>5.3.3.1 The CB shall be given the Total Quality Food Certification System Certification Body Evaluation Plan (TQF-CBM-000-06) by TQFA in writing five (5) working days before the evaluation date.</p> <p>5.3.3.2 The plan shall be agreed, signed and returned by the CB, and the relevant documents shall be prepared before the performance evaluation starts.</p> <p>5.3.3.3 TQFA-CSD shall carry out the evaluation in accordance with the plan, and the observations shall be recorded in the Total Quality Food Certification System Certification Body Office Assessment Form (TQF-CBM-000-03) and the Total Quality Food Certification System Certification Body Witness Assessment Checklist (TQF-CBM-000-04).</p> <p>5.3.3.4 Any non-conformity shall be confirmed by the TQFA assessor at the end of the evaluation and the content shall be confirmed by the manager of the evaluated unit. The non-conformities shall be discussed immediately to achieve consensus if there is any disagreement, and the corrective actions shall be confirmed.</p> <p>5.3.3.5 Identified non-conformities and the score of the office assessment shall be recorded in the Total Quality Food Certification System Certification Body</p>
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	<p>Office Assessment Report (TQF-CBM-000-09). The non-conformity corrective actions shall be submitted to TQFA by the CB within twenty (20) working days of the evaluation.</p> <p>5.3.3.6 The corrective action plan shall be checked by the TQFA assessor and reviewed by a TQFA reviewer prior to replying to the CB. The corrective actions shall be confirmed at the next evaluation.</p> <p>5.3.3.7 Failure to submit a corrective action plan or take corrective action to the satisfaction of TQFA-CSD may result in a further unannounced office assessment.</p> <p>5.3.4 Office Assessment</p> <p>The office assessment shall focus on the CB’s KPIs, compliance with the TQF Program requirements and CB agreement, and identified areas for correction, improvement and growth. The score shall be calculated (after excluding not-applicable clauses) as 3 points for more than 90% of clause conformity, 2 points for 75-89% clause conformity, and 1 point for clause conformity of less than 74%.</p> <p>5.3.4.1 Certification Body Criteria Conformity</p> <p>To improve the independence and objectivity of the certification process to gain the trust from stakeholders, TQFA shall assess the conformity of the CB with the relevant requirements of ISO/IEC 17065 and the certification process of TQF Program in accordance with Criteria for Total Quality Food Certification Program Certification Bodies (TQF-CBM-001).</p> <p>Completed TQF audit reports shall be randomly selected and reviewed to ensure compliance with the requirements of the TQF Program.</p> <p>5.3.4.2 Management of Certification Personnel</p> <p>TQFA shall assess the CB’s TQF certification personnel and management in accordance with the TQF Certification Program Management (TQF-CPM) and Criteria for Total Quality Food Certification Program Professionals (TQF-ATM-001) to ensure that their qualifications and abilities comply with requirements.</p> <p>5.3.5 Witness Assessment</p> <p>TQFA shall conduct a witness assessment on a minimum of one (1) TQF Auditor per CB. CBs shall not evade, prevent, obstruct, or refuse the witness assessment.</p> <p>The score for the witness assessment shall be evaluated based on preparation work, professional audit knowledge, auditing technique and the auditor conducting the closing meeting.</p> <p>5.3.6 Desktop Assessment</p> <p>During the licensed period as a CB for TQFA certification, TQFA shall receive and</p>
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review every audit reports from CBs in accordance with the requirements of Total Quality Food Certification Program Audit Report Review Regulation (TQF-CBM-002) and provide reports to the CB quarterly. The review frequency may increase if TQFA identifies issues considered serious or recurring.

5.3.7 Complaints and Appeals

5.3.7.1 Complaints and appeals received by TQFA shall be recorded in the Total Quality Food Program Customer Service Form (TQF-CCM-000-01), and the number of complaints and appeals recorded in Total Quality Food Association Program Audit Report Statistics (TQF-CBM-002-01) quarterly.

5.3.7.2 The score for complaints and appeals is calculated by the number of complaint and appeal cases received by TQFA and the CB. The complaints and appeals received by the CB are collected by TQFA during the office assessment and recorded in the Total Quality Food Certification System Certification Body Office Assessment Form (TQF-CBM-000-03). The score for complaints and appeals shall be recorded in the Total Quality Food Association Certification Body Annual Assessment and Risk Assessment Form (TQF-CBM-000-07).

- (1) 3 points for 0 to 2 complaints or appeals
- (2) 2 points for 3 to 4 complaints or appeals
- (3) 1 point for 5 or more complaints or appeals

5.3.8 Change in the number of certified sites

The score for the change in number of certified sites is calculated year-on-year (YoY):

Change in number of certified sites YoY = (number of certified sites this year - number of certified sites last year) ÷ number of certified sites last year × 100%

- (1) 3 points for change in the number of certified sites YoY > 2%
- (2) 2 points for change in the number of certified sites YoY± 2%
- (3) 1 point for change in the number of certified sites YoY < 2%

5.4 Evaluation for Contract Renewal

TQFA evaluate for CB contract renewal shall be conducted once every three years. The score shall be calculated by taking the average of the three (3) year assessment scores (rounded to the first decimal place), as recorded in the Total Quality Food Association Certification Body Annual Assessment and Risk Assessment Form (TQF-CBM-000-07). The contract renewal shall be granted if the CB achieves 2 points or more, but the contract shall not be granted if the CB achieves less than 2 points. The process and result shall be recorded in the Total Quality Food Association Certification Body Contract Renewal Evaluation Form (TQF-CBM-000-08).

5.5 Contract Renewal

TQF certification service may be continued when the CB passes the contract renewal

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evaluation, and re-sign the Total Quality Food Product Certification Program Certification Body Authorization Agreement (TQF-CBM-000-01) before the expiration of the license.

5.6 Opportunity for Appeal

If the application is rejected after formal acceptance, or the CB fails , the CB has an opportunity to appeal within one (1) month after receiving the notification. If the CB does not appeal in time, it will be deemed to have forfeited its application.

6 References

- (1) TQF-CPM Total Quality Food Association Certification Program-Program Management
- (2) TQF-CBM Total Quality Food Certification Program Certification Body Integrity Program Regulations
- (3) TQF-CBM-001 Criteria for Total Quality Food Certification System Certification Bodies
- (4) TQF-CBM-002 Total Quality Food Certification System Audit Report Review Regulations
- (5) TQF-ATM-001 Criteria for Total Quality Food Certification System Professionals

7 Forms

- (1) TQF-CBM-000-01 Total Quality Food Product Certification Program Certification Body Authorization Agreement
- (2) TQF-CBM-000-02 Total Quality Food Product Certification Program- Application Form for Certification Body
- (3) TQF-CBM-000-03 Total Quality Food Certification System Certification Body Office Assessment Form
- (4) TQF-CBM-000-04 Total Quality Food Certification System Certification Body Witness Assessment Checklist
- (5) TQF-CBM-000-06 Total Quality Food Certification System Certification Body Evaluation Plan
- (6) TQF-CBM-000-07 Total Quality Food Association Certification Body Annual Assessment and Risk Assessment Form
- (7) TQF-CBM-000-08 Total Quality Food Association Certification Body Contract Renewal Evaluation Form
- (8) TQF-CBM-000-09 Total Quality Food Certification System Certification Body Office Assessment Report
- (9) TQF-CBM-002-01 Total Quality Food Association Program Audit Report Statistics
- (10) TQF-CCM-000-01 Total Quality Food Program Customer Service Form