Step by Step to NCP-Certification

Certification of your products sets clear quality standards and communicates this in a simple way at the same time. The NCP label thus condenses your marketing and supports your credibility.

At the same time, certification places high demands on manufacturing. So that these do not become an inhibition threshold, we recommend approaching certification step by step.

Content

Step 1: Information and Cost Estimation

If you are considering having your products certified according to the NCP standard, you will have to deal with at least 2 institutions. Firstly with us - the standard and label holder - and secondly with the certification body. We keep the standard and the positive list up to date, take care of the trademark rights of the label and manage the label usage. The certification body checks your products for conformity with our NCP standard.

Please inform yourself about the possible costs and procedures of certification with us - done with this letter - and with the certification bodies

EcoControl https://ecocontrol.website/en/ (contact person Mrs. Holtz carmen.holtz@ecocontrol.online)

Or

Prüfgesellschaft https://pruefgesellschaft.bio/

(contact person Mrs. Bailer n.bailer@oeko007.de)

If your products are not yet registered, please contact your competent authority (veterinary office or food control authority) to find out what is required for you to be allowed to place your products on the market.

If you have your products manufactured in a country other than Germany, but would also like to market the products in Germany, we recommend that you contact Pfeiffer Consulting (https://www.pfeiffer-consulting.com/en/) for advice on the legal requirements.

The cost of any safety analysis that may be required must be integrated into your pricing, as must the cost of certification and label fee.

The label fee for products is **105.00 EUR** net per product, brand and year; for raw materials 50.00 EUR net (Attention only for raw material producers!).

In the first year we charge a setup fee of 250,00 EUR net. If your products are marketed in countries outside the EU, 200.00 EUR net per year will be charged for trademark monitoring - regardless of the number of products.

Step 2: Product Design

Please deal with the standard in detail. The valid version is available for download on our website (https://gfaw.eu/downloads).

Ingredients

At this stage, it is important that all raw materials used come from natural source materials and must be produced exclusively by the processes listed in the standard.

Also the auxiliary materials for the production of the raw material must comply with the standard.

!Note: Some raw materials must come from organic as long as they are used as natural materials - i.e. not chemically modified. These are listed in the standard: Sunflower oil, olive oil, soybean oil, shea butter, coconut oil, jojoba oil.

The NCP standard regulates requirements for several product categories. As described in the introduction, this covers detergents and cleaning agents as well as biocides or plant fortifiers. Please pay attention to the respective tabs in the positive list to correctly assign your ingredients to the requirements.

If you want to offer a vegan product, it must not contain any ingredient of animal origin.

Packaging

Page 01.01.2023 the NCP standard contains criteria for packaging. These apply to packaging ordered from 01.01.2024. The criteria are supplemented by a list of materials. Please familiarize yourself with the requirements.

Your documented decision on how you arrived at the selected packaging and the specifications of the packaging materials serve as proof of the criteria. The certification body and auditors will review both your decision-making process and the packaging materials during or before the audit. Please note the following:

1. the certification body only accepts prepared documents as evidence. The specifications, data sheets or safety certificates must be marked where the relevant information is located (type of material, recycled content, etc.).

2. the documents must be clearly assignable. Either via a batch, article or specification number, the assignment to the product is clearly recognizable and traceable.

3. the documents are not nested in several forwarded emails. Auditors or the certification body must be able to access the essential information easily and without lengthy searches.

Attention: if the assignment or search for the essential information takes longer than 1.5 hours, the certification body will terminate the audit in order to avoid exorbitant costs.

Own checklist

We recommend creating your own small checklist for each raw material:

o Are the starting materials of the raw material natural (no petrochemical starting and auxiliary materials allowed, except for the substances according to the positive list)?

o Is there an organic certificate for the mandatory organic substances?

o Are the processes, chemical or physical, used to produce the raw material listed in the standard?

o Are the excipients used in the production of the raw material and remaining in the product compliant with the standard?

o Are the raw materials free of genetically modified organisms?

o Is a GMO-free declaration available, including for excipients such as fermentation organisms, if applicable?

For vegan claims:

o Are all raw materials free from animal origin?

o Is a vegan declaration available?

Packaging:

o Is the decision to use packaging based on the criteria of avoid, reduce, re-use, recyclability, and drainability?

o Does the material correspond to the recommended or tolerated materials according to the material list?

o Is our evidence easy to follow, clearly assigned to the products and is the key information marked on the documents? (In the best case scenario, have we even created an overview for checking the documents?)

If all points can be answered with "yes", step 3 follows.

Step 3: Contract and Apply of Products

When your products are developed and you are sure that all raw materials comply with the standard, you conclude the certification contract with the certification body and the label use contract with us.

If the certification body operates a digital registration and evaluation system, you will receive access to the registration portal shortly after signing the contract. You then use this to register your products. If the certification body does not have a digital system, please use the registration file in Excel form, which is part of the contract documents.

The raw materials must be specified in this table and broken down into INCIs - if this is possible for your product group[1]. If you choose a vegan claim, please indicate this when registering.

Important: please do not forget to enter the countries in which your products are to be marketed.

Please attach all documentation on the raw materials to this registration table. The documentation should indicate the following information for each raw material:

1. starting material of the raw material

2. processes, chemical or physical, used to produce the raw material

3. auxiliary materials used in the production of the raw material

4. GMO-free declaration, if applicable also for auxiliary substances such as fermentation organisms

5. organic certificates, if applicable, for the mandatory organic substances

6. vegan declaration, if applicable - if vegan claim is desired.

If all this information is completely available to the certification body and complies with the standard, nothing should stand in the way of your certificate.

Step 4: Design of Tag

After receiving the certificate, the label will be sent to you digitally via a download link. You can use it to design your label. We have drawn up a guideline for this, which you will receive with the label. You may use the NCP label in its various versions, depending on how it fits on your packaging.

[1] Not all substances that end up in NCP products can be broken down in INCIs. However, this does not mean that they are not compliant. We are always breaking new ground for new product categories. When registering, it is important that sufficient evidence is available to provide the required information.

For vegan certified products:

Please make sure that you comply with Chapter 9 of the NCP standard. This means that **all ingredients** of the product must be stated in everyday language understandable for consumers. The positive list lists suggestions for everyday names of raw materials.

If you have used raw materials from organic agriculture in your product and would like to indicate this on the label, you can mark these raw materials with an asterisk* and explain below on the label what the asterisk stands for. It is important that you state either on the label or on your website how high the proportion of organic raw materials is in relation to the proportion of raw materials that can be organic. This usually requires an explanation. Take the opportunity to inform consumers about the composition of your product and why some raw materials cannot be organic (e.g. surfactants).

Step 5: First Audit

In the first audit, which will take place at your premises either by means of documents or an on-site visit, you must, among other things, demonstrate the auditability of your production facility. To do this, please complete the "Description of measures" form in advance, which you will receive from the certification body. The information you provide on the form is the basis for the certification body to decide whether your production site is auditable at all. The basis of GMP is queried, such as release systems, goods flow controls and batch traceability options.

Another subject of the initial audit is proof of the conformity of your packaging. Please have the documents described above ready for this.

The third point of the initial audit is the labels. Here it is important to observe the explanations from "Label design".

Receiving the Certificate

If your steps up to this point have been successful, you will receive a certificate and can start producing and marketing your wonderful products.

Step 6: Communication

You now have a successful process behind you and can communicate the special nature of your products to the outside world. The label helps you to identify not only on the label, but also on your website, in your advertisements and all other communication channels. Use the condensed statement to highlight your products.

Since 2024, all certified products have been published on our website https://gfaw.eu/en/fuer-privatpersonen/. After signing the contract, you will receive a log-in and can design the appearance of your products yourself.

Step 7: Audit

You have received the certificate on the basis of the documents submitted. You are still responsible for ensuring that the products are manufactured according to the standard.

Part of the certification is the on-site audit, which verifies that the products are manufactured according to the standard. An auditor from the certification body will contact you or your contract manufacturer early in the year to set up an appointment. Please allow some preparation time for this appointment.

Items to prepare would tend to be the following (please also refer to the certification body's audit announcement):

1. list of all products bearing the mark => customer list, parts list, promotional material, price catalogs, or similar.

2. inspection of the labels

3. possibility of batch tracing of the last production (retain samples of the products as they leave the company: Bulk, semi-finished or finished goods).

4. documents on the raw materials used - see specially prepared checklist in steps 2 and 3

5. documentation on packaging (decision documentation and specification on material)

6. inspection of the inventory control system

7. possibility to set up a tour of the plant and to inspect basic aspects of cosmetic GMP or other management systems

Please ensure that there is a hospitable atmosphere during the audit. Auditors/auditors are often on the road for days, sometimes have not slept as well as they would at home, and are very happy to be treated as a welcome guest.

Auditors need at least:

1. a warm or temperature-controlled workplace where they can set up their laptops

2. space to file documents they have viewed

3. something to drink and eat

A pleasant atmosphere during the audit makes the work easier for both parties.

Although the audit is an audit, auditors are not representatives of the authorities or even the police. Therefore, do not get unnecessarily excited. You can make good use of the audit by looking at your manufacturing processes together with the help of the auditor and finding out whether you can improve on some points. Auditors are also well informed about the industry and have undergone numerous training courses, so you can use the annual audit as a side conversation among experts.