

## **Certified Sustainable Beef Framework – COVID-19 EXCEPTION**

### **Exception**

#### **Certified Sustainable Farm Audits**

At the discretion of the Certification Body (CB), an on-site certification may be replaced with a remote audit where necessary. If an on-site audit or remote audit is not viable, the audit may be postponed and an extension may be granted for operations requiring recertification on-site audits.

#### **Chain of Custody Audits**

On-site chain of custody audits may, at the discretion of the Certification Body (CB), be replaced with a remote audit. If an on-site audit or remote audit is not viable, the audit may be postponed and an extension may be granted for operations requiring recertification on-site audits up to six months.

#### **Certified Sustainable Processing Plant Audits**

On-site processing plant certification audits shall be postponed until further notice.

#### **Duration of Exception**

This Exception is in effect until December 31, 2020 or withdrawn by the CRSB, at its discretion. The CRSB shall monitor the Exception.

### **General Information Regarding Implementation of Exception**

Certification Bodies shall at all times operate in accordance with all applicable laws, including, without limitation, the federal, provincial/territorial, and local authorities' regulations, directives and guidance with respect to public health, food safety and workplace health and safety ("Applicable Laws").

#### **Certification Body Requirements Regarding the Exception**

Certification Bodies (CBs) shall have appropriate policies and procedures in place to conduct remote audits in accordance with the CRSB Assurance Protocol; this shall include:

- A description of the remote audit methodology;
- A COVID-19 policy in accordance with Applicable Laws; and
- A process to meet the reporting and record keeping requirements of the Exception.

#### **Certification Body Reporting Requirements**

In addition to the reporting requirements outlined in the CRSB Certification Body Requirements, Certification Bodies (CBs) shall submit an aggregated semi-annual report to the Oversight Body on remote audits conducted according to this Exception.

All audits that are conducted remotely must be reported separately from the aggregated report for on-site audits that were conducted in the same reporting period.

The policies and procedures regarding the Certification Bodies implementation of the exception shall be reviewed by the Oversight Body (NSF) to ensure that the certification Bodies have developed the required documents.

**Audit Cycle and On-site Audit Implications**

Operations are required to have an on-site audit within twelve months of the expiry or earlier withdrawal of this Exception. Certification Bodies should prioritize farms that had significant corrective actions to have their on-site completed within six months.

For operations that become certified through a remote audit, the start of the audit cycle (year 1) will be the date that the certificate is issued to the producer for the remote audit. Once the requirements of this Exception are met (on-site audit within twelve months) the operation will then resume participating in a standard audit cycle.