



IFS INTERNATIONAL FEATURED STANDARD

WHAT IS IFS Broker

IFS Broker created in 2010 is a standard for checking the compliance of services of trading agencies, importers and brokers in relation to product quality and safety. IFS Broker was developed to ensure product safety and quality by bridging the gap between production and distribution.



The Standard assesses traders to ensure that they have implemented appropriate measures for their suppliers to operate in accordance with product safety and quality requirements. Brokers, dealers and importers must also monitor their supplier's compliance to ensure that the products supplied meet regulatory specifications. The certification also covers private label products. From September 2020, companies can choose whether the inspection will be carried out on-site or remotely.

Certification based on the IFS standard is an important basis on which food companies can rely in order to export their products to Germany and France, as more and more retailers in these countries request an IFS certificate from their suppliers. The regulation of the standard specifies a quantified system of assessment of fulfillment of the requirements and the result of the assessment is expressed on a percentage basis. Thus, a supplier's customer can quantitatively evaluate their supplier's performance.

THE OBJECTIVES AND BENEFITS OF THE INSPECTION ARE

IFS Broker consists of five main chapters:

1. Senior management
2. Quality and Product Safety Management
3. Resource management
4. Planning and Services Process
5. Measurements, Analyses and Improvement

Important is the possibility given by the standard to carry out assessment and certification at two levels: HIGHER LEVEL and FOUNDATION LEVEL, as this way the company is able to assess its capabilities to meet the relevant requirements. In general, the requirements of the standard corresponding to the FOUNDATION LEVEL are considered the minimum requirements that must be met by an enterprise in the international food industry. HIGHER LEVEL includes requirements of a higher level, while the standard also includes requirements characterized as RECOMMENDATIONS that represent "best practice" in the food sector.

WHY WITH EUROCERT

EUROCERT is a UKAS accredited body (Cert. No.180) to carry out IFS inspections. Particularly important is the fact that IFS inspections are carried out only by inspectors approved, after examinations, by IFS, while within the framework of its cooperation with IFS, **EUROCERT** is obliged to share the inspection report on the IFS website. The certificate is valid for 12 months.



CERTIFICATION PROCEDURE

- Presentation of the Certification Application by the interested company to the EUROCERT secretariat
- Determination of a commonly agreed date for conducting the inspection. It is noted here that an important step for the convergence of the company to the requirements of the standard is to carry out an internal inspection based on its requirements.
- Submit HACCP study – IFS Manual for review by inspectors.
- Sending an inspection program to the company. The duration of the inspection is determined by the size and complexity of the company's processes and products.
- Conduct an inspection.
- Sending a Preliminary Report to the company, in which it is asked to complete the Action Plan for closing the deviations from the standard. It is noted here that the regulation of the standard does not allow the issuance of a certificate in the event that a KO or more than one (1) Main non-conformity is found during the inspection.
- Receipt of the Action Plan from the certification body, issuance of the Final Report and the certificate.
- Sending a certificate and report to the company.

The time between the date of the inspection and the issuance of the certificate is determined as follows:

- 2 weeks to write the Preliminary Report
- 4 weeks for the company to complete the Action Plan for closing the deviations from the standard.
- 2 weeks for the inspector/certifier to review the Action Plan (all corrective actions implemented) and upload the Audit Report, corrective action plan and certificate to the IFS database.

The timing is 6 weeks (target) or 8 weeks (maximum time) between the inspection date and the upload of the Final Report to the IFS database/certificate issue.