



Fair Trade USA Certification Accommodation Policy due to Coronavirus

Fair Trade USA

Version 2.0.0

1. Purpose

In this time of ongoing and changing global challenges, Fair Trade USA wants to ensure that our partners' health and safety are treated as a top priority. This includes all workers, farmers and fishermen in our Certified supply chains, our Certificate Holders' management and employees, our brands, traders and Conformity Assessment Bodies (CABs) and their staff and auditors globally, as well as all related communities. This document outlines our current and ongoing approach to auditing and certification during the global Coronavirus crisis.

2. Scope

This policy is applicable to all applicants and entities certified globally to any standard in the Agriculture, Seafood, Apparel and Home Goods, and Trade programs. It also applies to pilot programs audited against the Agriculture Production Standard, i.e. aquaculture and dairy programs. While this policy applies to Fair Trade USA at large, it is implemented at the program level and exceptions may occur within an individual program.

3. Approach to Certification Accommodation

3.1. Fair Trade USA recognizes that an audit involves the visit of an external individual at a site and creates uncertainty due to risks of Coronavirus contagion.

3.2. When countries, sectors and/or specific sites are in operation, Fair Trade USA may allow audits to be conducted as part of the assurance program. Fair Trade USA monitors the World Health Organization and countries' government announcements related to travel regulations, business operations and workers' rights, and has developed a decision tree (Annex 1) and risk-based approach to guide partners and offer a transparent framework for deciding when and where to proceed with onsite audits. Decisions to conduct onsite and remote audits may differ on a country-per-country, or even site-per-site basis, due to changing and local conditions.

3.3. To support all individuals involved in Fair Trade USA programs, the following accommodations to Certification operations are being implemented, effective July 1st, 2020:



3.4. Certified Producers

3.4.1. Scheduling of onsite audits may begin, where Fair Trade USA has granted approval, starting July 1st, 2020.

3.4.2. In all cases where onsite audits are not approved by Fair Trade USA, under the Agriculture and Seafood program CABs shall replace, where possible, onsite surveillance and recertification audits with procedures as listed below:

- a) Remote desk review / remote audits in one or more phases to take place as soon as practicable;
- b) Completion of follow-up onsite audit to be conducted at a future date pending review of safety and with authorization by Fair Trade USA;
- c) CABs will inform Certificate Holders about the specific procedures, timelines, and audit plans in advance of commencing each part (remote and onsite) of the audit.

3.4.3. Extension of Certificates (up to 6 months), if validity is expiring by December 1st, 2020.

3.5. Applicants Producers

3.5.1. Scheduling of onsite audits may begin, where Fair Trade USA has granted approval, starting July 1st, 2020;

3.5.2. Producers should continue to submit new applications to Fair Trade USA in preparation for initial Certification audits. It should be noted that in countries/localities where Fair Trade USA has not approved a return to onsite audits, the application will be put on hold until further notice;

3.5.3. Initial Certifications are postponed until an onsite audit is conducted and certification is made per standard procedures;

3.6. Licensed Traders

3.6.1. Fair Trade USA will offer remote audits for traders where possible;

3.6.2. In all other cases, onsite audits may be approved by Fair Trade USA, starting July 1st, 2020;

3.6.3. Fair Trade USA will inform traders with upcoming audits whether their onsite audit will be carried out remotely or will be scheduled;

3.6.4. Ongoing desk auditing and transactions communications with partners will continue as per normal procedures;

4. Duration, Revisions and Limits of Policy

4.1. Duration

4.1.1. This temporary policy is valid as of the date of publication and until revised or rendered null and void;

4.2. Revisions and Communication

4.2.1. The content of this policy will be revised and updated as needed, as Fair Trade USA monitors the situation globally;

4.2.2. All updates to this policy will be published on Fair Trade USA's website;



4.3. Limits

4.3.1. Fair Trade USA reserves the right to schedule and conduct audits as per standard procedures, should it consider the situation safe and a risk is identified, specifically in the areas listed below:

- a) Child labor
- b) Forced, bonded, or compulsory labor
- c) Discrimination, harassment, or abuse

4.3.2. Individual programs may have additional limits considered within the program;

5. Exceptions to this Policy

5.1. Requesting an Exception

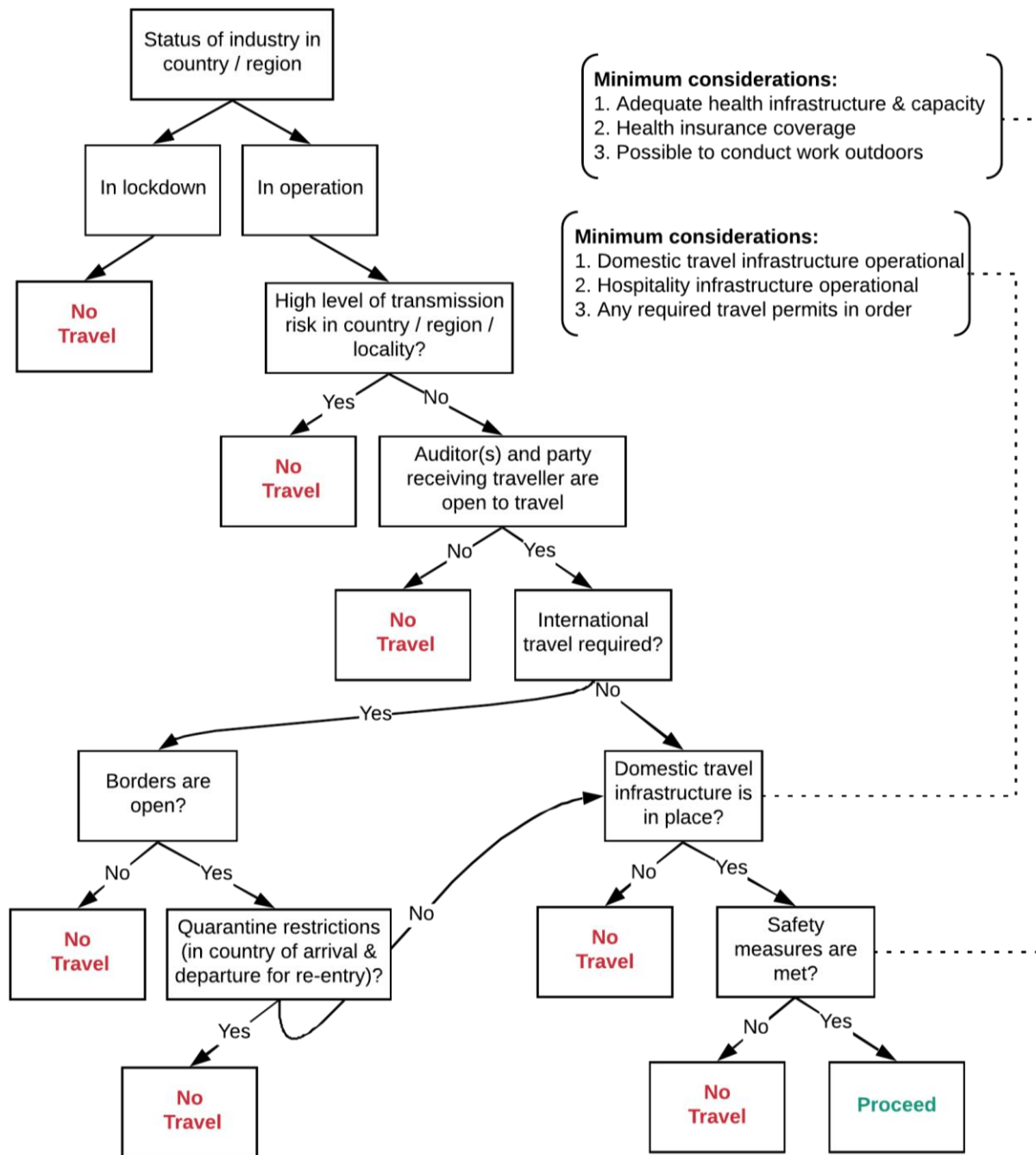
5.1.1. In cases where the authorities allow onsite audits and the CAB, the auditor(s) and Fair Trade USA agree to proceed with conducting the audit, Certificate Holders are expected to facilitate the process and audit activity as required in the program assurance manual;

5.1.2. Should a partner disagree to proceed with an onsite audit, an Exception Request Form must be submitted to Fair Trade USA for review and decision, according to the Exception Procedure available on the website;

5.1.3. Should the implementation of this policy lead to other consequences that would result in the need for an exception to a different aspect of the Fair Trade USA standard or assurance system, the partner may follow the Exceptions Policy to request an exception.



Annex 1: Decision Tree for Travel to Conduct On-Site Audits



Step 1: Fair Trade USA conducts initial risk assessment following decision tree
 Step 2: If approved by Fair Trade USA, CAB follows decision tree and any existing process for determining whether to proceed with an audit

