Introduction

One of the objectives of the Agricultural Production Standard (APS) is to ensure that workplace risks are minimized and appropriate measures are taken to ensure that farmers and workers are safe from harm. As such, there are requirements within the APS targeted to ensure that indoor workplaces, equipment, and other buildings are maintained to be safe. The requirements focus on basic safety provisions, such as ventilation and lighting, exit routes, fire safety, and safety around machinery and electrical equipment. While the APS generally defers to local and national laws and regulations on these issues, in order to ensure that a minimum level of safety is maintained in all equipment, indoor workplaces, and buildings that fall within the scope of a Certificate, it is important to provide guidance to Certificate Holders and auditors on the precise measures that must be implemented to ensure compliance with the APS.

Purpose

The purpose of this document is to clarify equipment and building safety requirements and best practices, as required in compliance criteria 3.2.1.c, 3.2.1.d, 3.6.2.c, and 3.6.2.e in the APS. This document intends to guide Certificate Holders on how to implement requirements and to help auditors verify requirements consistently. In doing so, the goal is to standardize the implementation of safety practices in indoor workplaces and in-scope buildings, including facilities and worker housing, across different regions and different models of production.
## Scope and Applicability

The requirements outlined in this guidance document are applicable to all producers certified under the APS, including all buildings considered in the scope of their Certificate\(^1\). This guidance document specifically pertains to APS criteria 3.2.1.c, 3.2.1.d, 3.6.2.c, and 3.6.2.e, cited from the APS for reference:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Compliance Criterion</th>
<th>Timeline</th>
<th>Intent and Clarification</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>SF MF LF</td>
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<tr>
<td>3.2.1.c</td>
<td>Machinery and equipment on the site as well as worker transportation are maintained and equipped with adequate safety devices.</td>
<td>C-Y0 C-Y0 C-Y0</td>
<td>Where legal regulations are applicable they are followed; where not, the site is in line with industry norms. This includes pesticide application equipment. Best practice is to have a process or plan in place to ensure regular maintenance of machinery and equipment.</td>
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<tr>
<td>3.2.1.d</td>
<td>Indoor workplaces and on-site buildings are maintained to be safe. This includes that: • Indoor workplaces have sufficient lighting, heating and ventilation; • Fire escapes, extinguishers, and exit routes are maintained, marked, and accessible, and workers know how to use them; and, • Electrical equipment, wiring, and outlets are placed, grounded, and inspected for overloading and leakage by a professional on a regular basis.</td>
<td>BP P-3 C-Y0</td>
<td>The definition of “accessible” exit routes includes that exit doors are neither locked nor obstructed. It is recommended that new workers receive an initial training, and all workers are given at least annual trainings in evacuation procedures pertinent to their working areas. Electrical equipment used in a very hot, very cold, or humid environment should be tested more frequently than equipment that is less likely to become damaged or unsafe. The frequency of inspections should be determined according to the manufacturers’ instructions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.6.2.c</td>
<td>In employer-provided housing, childcare facilities and schools, fire escapes, extinguishers, and routes are maintained, marked, and accessible, and residents/children know how to use them</td>
<td>BP C-Y0 C-Y0</td>
<td>Exit doors are not locked or obstructed. Residents of worker housing and children and employees in day-care or schools located on-site also receive training in evacuations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.6.2.e</td>
<td>Where workers are provided with housing, the conditions and infrastructure of the housing meet a basic minimum standards of sanitation and safety.</td>
<td>C-Y3 C-Y0 C-Y0</td>
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Guidance provided in this document should be considered in the context of the site to which it is to be applied. This means measures taken to achieve compliance may vary between operations.

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1 Note that the requirements in this guidance document do not apply to fields or fieldworkers, as they are specific to on-site buildings, facilities, worker housing, and other indoor workplaces.
Terms and Definitions

The following terms and definitions, cited from the *Fair Trade USA Glossary*², are key concepts for the understanding of this guidance document and are included here for reference:

**indoor workplace:** Any enclosed area or portion thereof where employees are engaged in work-related activities or are present as a condition of their employment. The opening of windows or doors, or the temporary removal of wall panels, does not convert an indoor area into an outdoor area.

**building:** Any structure, whether portable or fixed, which has the objective of providing shelter for persons, animals, machinery, equipment, or other property. A building may be fully enclosed (i.e., with a designated indoor area), partially enclosed (i.e., with some walls), or open (i.e., with overhead shelter but no walls). This includes, but is not limited to, indoor workplaces, worker housing, childcare facilities, schools, and storage facilities. This does not include vehicles, but would include mobile buildings used as temporary offices, housing, or other facilities.

Related Documents

- Fair Trade USA Agricultural Production Standard

1. Compliance with Local and National Laws

As noted in the Introduction of the APS, all Fair Trade Certified™ producers are expected to comply with all local and national laws and regulations. This expectation applies equally to machinery, equipment, and building safety requirements, including those detailed in compliance criteria 3.2.1.c, 3.2.1.d, 3.6.2.c, and 3.6.2.e in the APS. The requirements in the APS, including in this document, may be stricter, less strict, or equivalent to applicable laws. In the case that an applicable law or regulation is stricter than the requirements outlined in the APS, the law will prevail. In the case that the APS requirement is stricter, the requirements of the APS will prevail. The intent is that where laws and the APS requirements overlap, the strongest protections for farmers, workers, and communities prevail. This means that, where best practices and recommendations outlined in this document are required by law, they are also required to demonstrate compliance with the APS. Where best practices and recommendations outlined in this document are not required by law, they are strongly encouraged but will not be evaluated for compliance with the APS.

At a minimum, auditors must evaluate compliance with the requirements outlined in this document. In cases where the law goes beyond the requirements listed here, Fair Trade USA® does not expect auditors to evaluate line by line compliance with the law, but does allow auditors the discretion to do so, for example, if they have reason to believe legal requirements are not being met. Should non-compliance with the law be identified, a non-conformity would be raised against the relevant criterion.

2. Machinery & Equipment

This section expands upon requirements in 3.2.1.c for machinery and equipment to be maintained and equipped with adequate safety devices.

² Pending release of Version 1.3.0 of the Fair Trade USA Glossary
2.1. Safety Requirements

2.1.1. All machines have adequate and appropriate safeguards and safety devices as outlined in manufacturer instructions and/or local regulations, where applicable and according to the most protective measures. These safeguards include but are not limited to:

- Emergency power cut-off;
- Insulated cables;
- Grounding/earthing (three-prong plugs);
- Electric fan blade covers; and
- Safety covers for moving parts; etc.

2.1.2. As best practice, there are written and established safety procedures for the use of equipment and machinery which includes:

- Inventory of machines;
- Procedures for the safe use of machines; and,
- Procedures for maintenance.

3. Buildings and grounds

This section expands upon building safety requirements in 3.2.1.d and 3.6.2.e.

3.1. General safety

3.1.1. There is no indication of critical or immediate risks of severe injury or loss of life related to buildings and grounds. This includes structural safety and maintenance of installations.

3.2. Inspections, Maintenance, and Permits

3.2.1. Buildings do not exceed maximum occupancy, as defined by local law.

3.2.2. Buildings where applicable, possess valid operation and occupancy permits appropriate for the number of workers and work being done.

3.2.3. As best practice, and where applicable, valid permits are maintained for buildings and equipment, including, but not limited to:

- Boilers;
- Generators;
- Air pressure tanks;
- Liquid petroleum gas tanks;
- Pressure systems;
- Compressed air receivers; and
- Elevators.

3.2.4. As a best practice, buildings undergo maintenance and inspections for the following:

- Electrical systems;
- Emergency lights;
• Emergency alarm;
• Machines, equipment, and wiring;
• Water testing; and
• Air quality monitoring where hazardous chemicals are used; etc.

3.3. Ventilation & Lighting

3.3.1. With regards to ventilation, indoor workplaces and other indoor facilities accessed by individuals without appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) must abide by the following parameters:
• Fumes are not more than faintly noticeable;
• Dust/particulate is not more than moderately visible;
• Where there is a risk of noxious gases, continuous monitoring gas alarm systems are installed and operational; and,
• Fresh air is drawn into the area and circulated.

3.3.2. Temperatures of indoor workplaces accessed by individuals without appropriate PPE are maintained such that heat or cold does not interfere with workers' productivity or health.

3.3.2.1. See APS criterion 3.2.1.e for detailed requirements for work in hot places which applies both for indoor and outdoor workplaces.

3.3.3. Lighting is adequate for workers to safely perform the tasks they have been assigned.

3.4. Electrical Equipment

3.4.1. Measures are taken to ensure the safety of electrical equipment, including but not limited to:
• Wiring and electrical panel boxes are maintained in safe condition;
• Electrical cables and wires are safely placed and maintained in safe condition; and,
• Electrical equipment is regularly checked for damaged or exposed wiring that could be dangerous for workers or a fire hazard.

3.4.2. As best practice, the following additional safety measures are taken:
• Electrical systems and equipment are grounded; and
• Electrical systems and equipment are inspected for safety, including overloading and leakage, by a professional on a regular basis.

3.4.3. Electrical equipment used in more extreme conditions, including very hot, very cold, or humid environments, is tested more frequently and in accordance with manufacturers' instructions.

4. Fire Safety and Exit Routes

This section expands upon fire safety requirements in 3.2.1.d and 3.6.2.c.

4.1. Fire Extinguishers, Sprinklers, and Hydrants

4.1.1. Fire extinguishers are maintained, fully charged, clearly marked, visible, and accessible.

4.1.2. At least one worker trained in how to use a fire extinguisher is present and located in physical proximity to each fire extinguisher when workers are present.
4.1.3. As best practice, all workers are offered training in the use of fire extinguishers.

4.1.4. As best practice, fire extinguishers are fit for purpose, including:

- Appropriate to the potential fire risks in their respective areas;
- Within 75 feet (23 meters) of every worker;
- Stored in a dedicated location;
- Written instructions for use in a language workers understand;
- Inspected monthly; and,
- Serviced by qualified workers once a year, or per regulation, whichever is most strict.

4.1.5. Indoor workplaces, worker housing, childcare facilities, and schools are outfitted with an appropriate sprinkler and/or hydrant system to assist in the case of a fire.

4.2. Emergency Exits

4.2.1. Exit routes are maintained, marked, and accessible (not obstructed or blocked), and workers know how to use them.

4.2.2. Exits are unlocked when workers are present.

4.2.3. Exit doors swing out, not in.

4.2.4. Where vertical sliding doors are installed and cannot be replaced by swing-out/push-bar doors, they are tested and maintained at least annually to ensure they operate effectively at all times, and a locking mechanism is in place to ensure doors are locked in open position during working hours.

4.2.5. For exits with latches that require special operation, at least one worker trained in how to operate the latch is present and located in physical proximity to each relevant exit whenever workers are present.

4.2.6. Exits lead to a safe location outside the building.

4.2.7. As best practice, emergency exits in indoor workplaces, worker housing, childcare facilities, and schools include the following:

- Workplaces with up to 500 workers have at least two exits that provide 22 inches (0.55 meters) of exit width;
- Workplaces with over 500 workers have at least three exits that proved 22 inches (0.55 meters) of exit width;
- Exits are on opposite sides of the workplace floor;
- Each workstation is within 200 feet (61 meters) of an exit;
- Exits have latches that do not require special operation; and,
- Exit signs must be properly illuminated by a reliable light source.

4.3. Evacuation Routes & Procedures

4.3.1. Evacuation routes and emergency exits, including stairwells in multi-story buildings, are sufficient in number and capacity, identifiable, and designed to support evacuation of personnel.

4.3.2. Aisles are kept clear of equipment and materials at all times.

4.3.3. As best practice, emergency evacuation routes include the following:
• Aisles between workstations are wide enough for easy escape (approximately 44 inches or 112 centimeters);
• Evacuation routes are marked by lines and arrows;
• Updated maps of emergency exit routes are posted prominently throughout the factory in a language understood by workers; and,
• You Are Here markings on each map correspond the map’s actual location.

4.3.4. As best practice, indoor workplaces, worker housing, childcare facilities, and schools have an up-to-date Emergency Preparedness Plan that includes:
• Procedures for emergencies, including weather-related natural disasters;
• Type of evacuation and exit route assignments;
• Procedures on reporting emergencies;
• Procedures for employees who remain to operate critical operations before they evacuate;
• Designation of assembly location and procedures to account for all employees after evacuation;
• Procedures to be followed by employees performing rescue or medical duties; and,
• Floor plan that clearly identifies all exits and evacuation routes.

4.3.5. As best practice, fire and other evacuation drills are conducted at least twice per year at each indoor workplace, worker housing, childcare facility, and school. If workers work in multiple shifts a day, drills happen in each shift to ensure all workers have participated.

4.4. Fire Detection & Evacuation Alarms

4.4.1. Indoor workplaces, housing, and other facilities where there is a risk of fire are equipped with functioning fire/evacuation alarms and detection mechanisms that reach all workers within the structure in a timely manner.

4.4.2. Alarms can be set off from various locations throughout the building.

4.4.2.1. This includes visual alarms where ear protective equipment is used.

4.4.3. Working emergency lights, fire alarms, and fire detection mechanisms are backed-up with batteries or a secondary power source.

4.4.4. Emergency lights are installed on stairwells and other key locations to illuminate exit routes.

4.4.5. As best practice, alarm systems have documented maintenance records.

4.5. Fire Safety Plan

4.5.1. As best practice, indoor workplaces have an adequate Fire Safety Plan that includes:
• Lists of major workplace fire hazards and their proper handling and storage procedures;
• Potential ignition sources and their control procedures;
• Type of fire protection equipment or other systems that can control a fire involving different ignition sources; and,
• Procedures for maintenance of all fire safety equipment.