BRC global standards - Food

At a glance

This document provides an overview of the BRC global standards - Food standard system.

BRC global standards - Food is one of the several standard systems that are referenced in Standards Map, the interactive web-based tool on private standards developed by the T4SD program of ITC.

What is British Retailer Consortium (BRC) global standards

The BRC global standards is a private, for profit, membership-based association. It represents the whole range of retailers for the UK retail industry, from the large department stores through to independents.

Over the past thirteen years, BRC has developed the BRC global standards, a suite of four industry-leading Technical Standards that specify production, packaging, storage and distribution requirements to guarantee safe food and consumer products.
- Global standards for Food Safety
- Global standard for Consumer Products
- Global standard for Packaging and Packaging Materials
- Global standard for Storage and Distribution

Originally developed in response to the needs of UK members of the British Retail Consortium, the standards have gained usage world-wide and are specified by retailers and branded manufacturers in the EU, North America and elsewhere.

What products are covered by the standard system

To date, Standards Map offers info on the BRC global standards for food safety only. It is expected that information on Global standard for Consumer Products will be made available soon.

The Global standards are applicable to manufacturers producing all types of consumer goods such as toys, textiles, electrical items, kitchenware and do-it-yourself (DIY) items. A few products, however, are excluded from the scope (motor vehicles, bulk fuel, services, pharmaceuticals dispensed by doctors, vitamins & minerals, plants & flowers, live animals and pets).

What are the key features of the standard system

- No labels appear on BRC certified products as it is a business-to-business (B2B) standard.
- The BRC maintains a directory of certificated suppliers which enables manufactueres to advertise their achievement. The BRC is currently developing a web-based, fully interactive database of information about BRC certificated suppliers. The Global standards Directory will offer immediate access to audit reports, audit data, management reporting and notification of remedial actions.
- BRC standard full documents are accessible on their website bookshop.

BRC: facts and figures

- Over 13,000 Global standards certificated suppliers in over 100 countries through a network of over 80 accredited and BRC-recognised certification bodies.
- Over 100 approved training providers throughout the world offer accredited training courses in local languages.
- Companies looking for certification bodies to carry out their BRC audit can choose from around 100 approved certification bodies around the world. Those certification bodies are listed on the BRC Directory where they can be sorted by standard, country and accreditation status.
- The Global standards are available 10 languages.

Support

BRC provides access to information and documents, purchasable online, to help companies understand the BRC global standards program and what needs to be done to participate in the certification program. BRC Training courses have been designed to facilitate the understanding of the BRC global standards and the certification process. BRC organizes trainings both in-house and through the internet via webinars.

BRC Contact Details

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The BRC global standard system is applicable to producers in the following countries and regions

Detailed maps displaying countries where certification / verification is currently operational and countries where certified products / services are sold can be generated on ITC's Standards Map website.

145 countries

ASIA Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Brunei, Cambodia, China, India, Indonesia, Iran, Israel, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kuwait, Laos, Lebanon, Malaysia, Mongolia, Myanmar, Nepal, Oman, Pakistan, Palestine, Philippines, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, South Korea, Sri Lanka, Syria, Taiwan, Thailand, Turkey, Turkmenistan, United Arab Emirates, Uzbekistan, Vietnam **AFRICA** Algeria, Angola, Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Cote d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Djibouti, Egypt, Equatorial Guinea, Ethiopia, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Kenya, Liberia, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mauritania, Mauritius, Morocco, Mozambique, Niger, Nigeria, Republic of the Congo, Rwanda, Senegal, South Africa, Tanzania, Togo, Tunisia, Uganda, Zambia, Zimbabwe **AUSTRALIA & OCEANIA** Australia, New Zealand **CENTRAL AMERICA AND CARIBBEAN** Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Jamaica, Nicaragua, Panama, Trinidad and Tobago **EUROPE** Albania, Armenia, Austria, Belarus, Belgium, Bosnia, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Macedonia, Moldova, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russia, Serbia Montenegro, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Ukraine, United Kingdom **NORTH AMERICA** Canada, Mexico, United States of America **SOUTH AMERICA** Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Guyana, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay, Venezuela

How to become BRC certified

Step 1: Getting prepared: Order a copy of the Standard and assess the compliance of the site to its requirements. The BRC have published guidance documents on best practice and on the use of standards for some sectors which may also be of assistance. Moreover, to assist in the implementation of the BRC Global Standards, the BRC has developed a wide range of practical training courses. Click here for further information.

Step 2: Self assessment: Review the site's current systems and practices against the requirements of the standard in order to identify areas which may need further work before undertaking a full audit.

Step 3: Select a certification body: Select an accredited certification body to carry out the evaluation of the site. Only certification bodies that are registered by the BRC can undertake audits. Certification bodies can be selected by country by clicking here.

Step 4: Audit: A plan for the audit should be provided by the selected certification body to ensure that the applicant is properly prepared. It is important that the site is in production at the time of the audit otherwise a further audit will be required.

Step 5: Corrective actions: At the end of the audit the certification body should provide a written list of any areas which need improvement in order to gain certification, this will also be discussed at the closing meeting. Where non-compliance has been identified, the issues must be addressed and suitable evidence provided to the certification body for assessment within 28 days.

Step 6: Certification decision: The certification body will review the audit report from the auditor and corrective action documentation provided in order to make a certification decision.

Step 7: Issue of report and certificate (if applicable): The audit report and certificate (if applicable) should be issued within 42 days of the original audit date to the person who paid for the audit. A copy of the report is automatically sent to the BRC to allow quality control checking of the certification body undertaking the audit. Certified companies are invited to have site details placed on the BRC Directory website to advertise their achievements.

Step 8: Issue of report to customers: It is a principle of the BRC scheme that the audit report is owned by the company paying for the audit and copies can only be provided to other parties at the request of the company (a copy is provided to the BRC which is held confidentially). It is normal practice to authorize the release of a copy of the report and/or certificate for customers.

What areas does the BRC global standard - Food system cover

The following table provides an overview of BRC global standard - Food principles and requirements and related compliance policies covering social, environmental and economic areas applied in production, processing and trade.

Explanation of Standards Map's interpretation of compliance policies in the BRC global standard - Food standard system:
Immediate Requirement: The provisions of BRC Global Standards are presented in Standards Map as "Immediate requirements" with "pass/fail" compliance policy.

Environment

Immediate requirements

Chemicals
- Equipment and training on chemical use
- Storage/disposal/waste
- Management of chemicals

Waste
- Packaging of products in value chain
- Disposal of waste

Water
- Disposal of grey waters and run off

Social

Work/labor rights
- Conditions of work
  - Safety at work (ILO 184)
    - Training on safety issues
    - Safety equipments and emergency kits
    - Safe handling chemicals
  - Access to sanitary facilities at work
  - Access to medical assistance/insurance
  - Training requirements on site

Economic

Administration and management
- Organizational development
- Criteria for quality management
  - Quality management best practices
  - Product quality specifications
  - Helath and safety issues