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## **GLOBALG.A.P. streamlines food-safety audits, reduces fatigue**

By

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April 8, 2021

With the increasing importance of food safety, traceability, and social and environmental responsibility, produce shippers must look to integrated solutions to certify their operations. The time, energy, and associated costs of reaching and maintaining food-safety certification are overwhelming for many in the industry. GLOBALG.A.P. North America serves the unique needs of farmers and buyers in Canada and the United States to protect their brand and mitigate their risk. “We engage suppliers and buyers in the U.S. and around the world to define the most practical and relevant production criteria and audit systems, and deploy with the highest levels of integrity to meet market needs,” said Roberta Anderson, executive vice president of GLOBALG.A.P. North America.



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“With two GFSI recognized options for farm certification in North America, and with the recent addition of the Produce Handling Assurance (PHA) certification, farmers can now combine their farm and post-harvest handling audits, further reducing associated time and costs,” outlined Anderson, who said that GLOBALG.A.P. also offers group certification (known as “Option 2”), which allows farmers to work together under a management system with a single certificate. “This reduces the need for third-party audits of each location every year, while ensuring a robust internal audit system,” she explained. The result is significant cost savings to groups while maintaining the high level of assurance expected by the market.

Farmers and packers looking to get GLOBALG.A.P. certified should start by reaching out to a Certification Body. “In North America you can choose from a large pool of accredited Certification Bodies — at this time, GLOBALG.A.P. approves over 20 third-party organizations to operate in the U.S., nearly double the options available with other standards,” said Anderson.

The Certification Body will guide operators through the process of the application and audit. If producers need additional help preparing, GLOBALG.A.P. also works with a network of qualified consultants, known as Farm Assurers, who can, for a fee, provide operational support.

“All of GLOBALG.A.P.’s forms and documents are freely available to the public on our website,” she concluded, “and we aim to make the process as transparent and painless as possible.”

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