

Short introduction: Steps to Certification for Artisan C-Sink Managers and Networks

	Procedure	Applicant or client	CERES
1	Request	Commonly, applicants present a first general request, asking about requirements, procedures, prices for certification	The applicant receives from CERES a first package of information, by e-mail, often combined with individual additional information by phone. This package is composed of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • this present document, • a brief information concerning requirements of certification of Artisan C-sink Managers and Networks • a link to the application form.
2	Formal application	Client completes application form	CERES reviews application. If we can offer the requested service, the application is approved. CERES will request from CSI if the client has applied with CSI and the project plan has been agreed on
3	Offer		Based on the actual price list published on the website and the number and size of the networks to be certified, we calculate the inspection and certification fees. We submit the applicant a written offer. Normally this is an estimate not including travel costs and accommodation and other additional costs. Together with the offer, we submit a certification contract.
4	Contract	Once the applicant and CERES have agreed on the fees, the applicant signs the contract. By doing so, he/she is committed to fulfil the applicable standards and agrees with CERES General Terms of Business	CERES sends a counter-signed copy of the contract and the invoice to the client
5	Pre-payment	The client deposits the agreed advance payment.	CERES submits to the client a second package of information and forms related to the affected standards, including, among others: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • relevant CERES policies, • standard inspection program(s) • the management plan.
6	Farmer training	Participating farmers need to be trained concerning the production methods and basic rules	
7	Setting up an Internal Control System (ICS)	This involves: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • establishment of an internal regulation, • working out forms for internal inspections and for other procedures, • selection and training of internal inspectors. • in case of larger projects, with more than one internal inspector: an ICS 	

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		responsible must be identified, who supervises the internal inspectors.	
8	Farmer registration	All farmers need to be registered, with their names, addresses, fields, potential yield. A contract must be signed between the Network and each farmer.	
9	Internal inspections	The internal inspectors inspect 100% of farms each year, verifying compliance with the Artisan C-Sink standard. Where necessary, they agree on necessary corrective actions with the member farmers.	
10	Evaluation of internal reports, follow-up	The C-sink manager evaluates internal reports, making sure that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a provisionally approved farmers list is set up, including all members who comply with the rules • follow-up is given to the implementation of corrective actions, within a suitable timeframe • internal inspectors whose reports do not show the requested quality, receive additional training, or are replaced, in case they do not have the necessary skills. 	
11	Working out the management plan	The client fills in the management plan (MP). Going through the MP is also helpful for identification of any noncompliance and correcting it.	
12	MP Review		CERES reviews the MP and informs the client about the result of this review. Missing documents are requested or in case of insufficient information non-conformities are issued that need to be corrected.
13	Corrective actions	*If non-conformities are detected during the process of working out and reviewing the MP, these should be corrected even before the first inspection takes place. Example: Improvement of the internal control system.	CERES checks the corrected management plan
14	Scheduling inspection	Inspector and client schedule a date for the inspection	
15	Inspection	Responsible staff, including internal inspectors, must be present, records must be prepared. After inspection the inspection report is signed by the client or responsible person.	The CERES inspector evaluates the functioning of the ICS. A sample of farmers is inspected, internal inspectors' performance is assessed. Artisan Pro Farmers are inspected separately with additional requirements Besides the inspection of the Network also the C-Sink Manager is inspected
16	Inspection report	The client receives a copy of the non-conformities found during the inspection and countersigns.	For each C-sink Network inspected an inspection report is generated summarizing all findings of all inspected Artisan Pros and Artisan Farmers. Immediately after the

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			inspection, the inspector finishes his/her report and submits it to the CERES headquarter. (no later than 14 days)
17	Evaluation	The client receives a copy of the non-conformities	The report is reviewed by the responsible certification officer. Additional questions must be clarified with the inspector. In case additional non-conformities are raised by the certifier those are communicated to the client.
18	Final invoice	Payment of the remaining fees according to offer, plus travel cost.	Issues the invoice
19	Certification decision		CERES makes the certification decision, normally within 4 weeks after the inspection, maximum 6 weeks. There are basically three possibilities:
			a) Client complies with the standard → Certificate is issued and sent to client
		Client corrects non-conformities and sends evidence to CERES	b) Client has non-conformities, which need to be corrected. This may include missing documents, or more substantial things. → CERES issues Notice of Noncompliance. Certificate is issued once CERES has evidence of correction of non-conformities (in some cases, this may involve an additional inspection).
		c) Client has major non-conformities which cannot be corrected in the short term → CERES issues a Denial of Certification letter.	

Please be reminded that, in addition to this routine procedure, CERES may conduct unannounced inspections at any time. Clients for unannounced inspections may be selected risk based, or randomly. Since conducting such unannounced inspections is compulsory for CERES, the costs is charged to the client.

This whole procedure is apparently very long and complicated. Nevertheless, many steps, which are presented here one after the other, often take place at the same time. Clients can contribute to **acceleration** by:

- paying on time
- immediately filling in and thoroughly the necessary forms, contracts etc.
- immediately implementing necessary corrective actions.

Please be aware that C-Sink managers who want to trade their C-Sink potential need to request a Global C-Sink certificate for each production lot. This is issued by CERES

During the entire process from application trough certification and the annual renewal process, the client has the right to file complaints or appeals to CERES. They will be handled according to CERES internal rules and the client will be informed of the outcome of the complaint assessment.