
Use of Third Party Audit to Verify Sources from Farm to Supplier

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Agriculture and Food and Traceability
Conference

Des Moines Iowa

Novecta – New Direction in Agriculture

- Joint Venture company of the Iowa and Illinois Corn Growers
 - Formed in 2002
 - Provide implementation and auditing of quality management systems for grains and grain processing
 - Work throughout Canada, US and SE Asia
 - Work with all grains and crops
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A Changing Marketplace

⊕ Technology

- ⊕ Biotechnology
- ⊕ Internet
- ⊕ GPS



⊕ Consumer Demands

- ⊕ Country of Origin
- ⊕ Agronomic Practices
- ⊕ Trait Specific Needs



The logo is contained within a green rounded rectangle with a double border. It features the word 'QUALITY' in a large, bold, serif font, followed by 'PLUS' in a smaller, italicized, sans-serif font. Below this, the words 'MANAGEMENT STANDARD' are written in a smaller, bold, sans-serif font.

QUALITY *PLUS*

MANAGEMENT STANDARD

Purpose - To create a practical on-farm quality system that can be audited by third parties

Approved by USDA in 2007

The core team

- ⊕ Experienced with management systems applied to agricultural value chains
 - ⊕ AOSCA – the Association of Official Seed Certification Agencies
 - ⊕ Novecta, LLC – a joint venture of Iowa and Illinois Corn Grower Associations to help growers understand their role in value chains
 - ⊕ Dennis Strayer & Associates – consultants working with management systems applied in agricultural value chains
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Core team experience

- ⊕ ISO 9001

- ⊕ Implementation and auditing in agriculture applications

- ⊕ USDA Process Verification Program

- ⊕ Worked with USDA in program development and application (about 5 years)

- ⊕ ISO22006 (guidance document based on ISO9001:2000 applied to production agriculture)

- ⊕ All core team members have worked on the project since its inception (about 5 years)
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Lessons learned from this experience...

- ⊕ Existing Quality Systems are too complex for farm use
 - ⊕ They can be too time consuming
 - ⊕ One system is not broad enough to fit all
 - ⊕ They lack flexibility for cropping systems
 - ⊕ They do not meet the needs of production agriculture
 - ⊕ They are often expensive to implement and audit
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The market is ready for a new approach to producer certification...

- ⊕ The industry needs an innovative system
 - ⊕ Applying experience in production agriculture
 - ⊕ Assembling a design team with experience
 - ⊕ Include potential users in developing a system
 - ⊕ Producers
 - ⊕ End users (buyers)
 - ⊕ Other advisors to review and provide guidance
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Management systems at the farm level:

- ⊕ Provide management skills for producers
 - ⊕ Provide customers with assurances
 - ⊕ Provide transparency
 - ⊕ Provide support to members of value chains
 - ⊕ Provide third-party validation of production processes
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Goals of Quality Management systems for the farm.....

- ⊕ User-friendly
 - ⊕ Integrated
 - ⊕ ISO-based
 - ⊕ Economical
 - ⊕ Sensitive to size differences
 - ⊕ Collaborative
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Goal - User-friendly:

- ⊕ A concise, easily understood standard
 - ⊕ An implementation manual to provide specific guidance for each clause of standard
 - ⊕ Template documents that allow producers to quickly set up and use program reports
 - ⊕ System requiring minimal recordkeeping
 - ⊕ Third-party audits are cost-effective and easy
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Goal - Integrated:

- ⊕ ISO-based system centered on quality, but integrating five significant program areas:
 - ⊕ ISO 9001 Quality Systems
 - ⊕ ISO 22000 Traceability for Food Safety
 - ⊕ ISO 14000 Environmental Standards
 - ⊕ Worker Safety
 - ⊕ Product Security
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Goal - ISO-based:

- ⊕ Incorporating ISO structure and language for standards – international recognition
 - ⊕ Incorporating ISO management principles to benefit the users – internal and external value
 - ⊕ Incorporating ISO guidelines, so the standard can be audited
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Goal - Economical:

- ⊕ Requiring minimal time for program development, documentation, initiation, application, and certification
 - ⊕ Requiring little or no consultation time
 - ⊕ Easily audited by nearby auditors
 - ⊕ Cost is greatly reduced
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Goal - Sensitive to size difference:

- ⊕ Adaptable to any size of operation
 - ⊕ Can be applied to entire operation or only specific enterprises
 - ⊕ Costs should be proportional to complexity
 - ⊕ Adapted to most any crop
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Goals - Collaborative:

- ⊕ Provide buyers with assurances resulting from third-party audits
 - ⊕ Provide compliance assurances for all five program areas to other members of value chains
 - ⊕ Easily modified to provide documentation and records by paper trail or electronic trail
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The **QUALITY^{plus}** Management Standard

- ⊕ Recognized by the USDA
 - ⊕ Audited by organizations accredited under the USDA Guide 65 program
 - ⊕ Novecta website provides the Management Standard for downloading and is responsible for education and implementation at the farm level
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The **QUALITY^{plus}** Management Standard

- ⊕ Provides a structured decision-making platform for managing production agricultural businesses
 - ⊕ Provides a broad-based management system to include five significant program areas:
 - ⊕ Quality
 - ⊕ Traceability
 - ⊕ Environmental
 - ⊕ Farm and worker safety
 - ⊕ Farm and product security
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The **QUALITY^{plus}** Management Standard

- ⊕ Flexibility in developing a program specific to:
 - ⊕ The Producer
 - ⊕ Customers
 - ⊕ Regulatory Bodies and other Businesses
 - ⊕ Credible documentation of the producer's program
 - ⊕ An objective viewpoint through third-party auditing
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The **QUALITY^{plus}** Management Standard

- ⊕ QP Implementation Manual provides:
 - ⊕ Guidance on applying each of the management standard clauses to specific situations
 - ⊕ A user-friendly template to facilitate development of the producer's application documentation "program manual"
 - ⊕ Standardized forms for all program areas.
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Benefits

- ❖ Low cost “starter” quality system
 - ❖ Individual or group verification of a cropping system or practice
 - ❖ Farmer receives immediate, internal benefit from improving their operation
 - ❖ Possible cost reductions for inputs and services
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Benefits

- ❖ Provides a documented “track” record for value added products in the future
 - ❖ Can be implemented quickly if an event or customer’s need develops
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Applications

- ❖ Farm businesses that want to validate, brand, or contain an on-farm product
 - ❖ Food industry
 - ❖ Research
 - ❖ Seed company trials
 - ❖ Validate farming practices
 - ❖ Complete documented link from farm to fork
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The **QUALITY^{plus}** Management Standard

Establishing Quality Management Systems
for the Farm



QUALITY^{PLUS}
MANAGEMENT STANDARD

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What's it all about?

CONFIDENCE

Of Consumers

CONFIDENCE

Of Government Agencies

CONFIDENCE

Of Auditors

Thank You

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