

Sysco Sustainable/IPM Program

Auditor Frequently Asked Questions

General Questions

1. What is the scope of the Sysco Sustainable/IPM Program?

The program applies to all Sysco brand processed fruit and vegetable suppliers, both US and international, and to all crops grown for Sysco. Sysco suppliers (processors) are responsible for implementing the program with their supply chain (growers).

2. What is the scope of the audit?

The standard audit covers all of the questions in the current version of the Sysco Sustainable/IPM Audit document which is made available to you electronically on the Primus website. The standard audit covers both supplier and sub-supplier (grower) performance.

The modified audit covers the questions in the Sysco Sustainable/IPM Audit for processing facilities for suppliers participating in the Potato Sustainability Initiative (PSI), all of which are specific to supplier performance. Some suppliers have sub-suppliers that participate and are audited in the PSI. The supplier will inform you during scheduling if you will be auditing one of these facilities. The processor will share their sub-suppliers' average PSI survey score as a proxy for the sub-supplier portion of the Sysco audit. For these audits, you will not audit any growers. You will only audit the processing facility.

3. What is the audit frequency for Sysco suppliers?

Sysco brand processed fruit and vegetable suppliers are audited annually, unless they have been notified by Sysco that they have qualified for a reduced frequency by:

- a. Supplier must have submitted and received a minimum 70% score on a written program covering all processed fruit and vegetable products sold to Sysco.
- b. Supplier must have received a minimum 80% (pass) score on audits for three consecutive years.
- c. Supplier must have submitted timely and complete annual Environmental Indicator Reports for three consecutive years

4. How long should an audit take to perform?

The standard audit should typically require about a day to a day and a half to complete, including visits to grower locations.

The modified audit for PSI processing facilities should typically take about a half day to a day to complete, because it does not include visits to grower locations.

5. Who do I contact if the answer to my question is not listed in this document?

Contact your supervisor at your auditing agency. They can help pursue additional information from Sysco Quality Assurance if they are not able to answer your question.

Preliminaries

6. When listing growers (sub-suppliers) for the processor, do I list all growers or just those I will be visiting?

List only those growers visited during the audit.

7. Who selects sub-suppliers (growers) for me to visit as part of the audit?

The supplier selects growers to be spot-checked as part of the audit and will select growers located within a reasonable travel distance from the processing location.

8. If a grower is shared between processors, can the same grower be audited for more than one processor?

If a grower has already been audited for one processor, they should not be audited again for a second processor. A different grower should be selected for the second processor to avoid burdening the grower with multiple audits. This consideration should also be made for audits in subsequent years – avoid revisiting the same growers where feasible.

9. How do I calculate percent of production?

Use acres to calculate percent of production, not growers. For example, Supplier A has four growers and does not segregate production for Sysco. Grower One has 100 acres and the remaining three growers have 200 acres each. If Supplier A has implemented the Sysco Sustainable program with Grower One only, the maximum percent of production is 100 acres/700 acres, or 14% of total production.

In this case, if half of Grower One's production is certified organic, the correct percent of production for Question 1.01 would be 7%, or half of 14%

10. If I only visit three out of ten growers for a supplier, does that affect the percent of production?

Not necessarily. Grower visits are 'spot checks' on the information provided by the supplier during the audit. If the supplier informs you that environmental emergency plans are implemented for 75% of total acres of production for Sysco, use this percentage as a starting point regardless of how many acres are represented by the growers you plan to visit.

If the supplier has included the three growers you visit in the number of acres covered by environmental emergency plans and you find this not to be the case when you visit these growers, adjust the 75% as per your best estimate and note this discrepancy in your audit report.

11. What if the supplier segregates production for Sysco?

If the supplier segregates production for Sysco, then percent of production is based on acres of segregated production, not total production. For example, if the supplier in question two only uses production from grower one to supply Sysco, then the maximum percent of production would be 100%.

Segregated production is rare – most suppliers do not segregate. Those suppliers who do segregate are likely to realize benefits from implementing and documenting sustainable ag and IPM on all of their production, regardless of the buyer.

12. What about processing facilities?

Audits are generally processing-facility specific. If a supplier has more than one processing facility supplying Sysco, then a separate audit will be required for each facility.

Minimum Requirements

13. When scoring Minimum Requirements (2.01-2.05), if there are minor deficiencies, do I score the item as a Pass or a Fail?

Minimum Requirements must have 100% compliance – all elements on all acres – to be scored as a Pass. For example, if Supplier B keeps legible, well organized pesticide and nutrient application records for three years, but has not included wind speed and direction for pesticide applications, score the item as a Fail. Record the specifics about the deficiency in your notes.

It's expected that all suppliers will have room for improvement and can address those in their response to corrective actions generated by the audit, including plans and timelines for resolving deficiencies.

14. When the audit refers to keeping records for three years, is that for the land or the crop?

Pesticide and nutrient application records should be available for the past three years for crops processed by the supplier for Sysco, regardless of where they are produced. In addition, these records should be available for any piece of land where new production for Sysco is established, or where production for Sysco is returning as part of a crop rotation. The processor does not need to have these records on file – they may be with the grower or landowner. These records may not always be available or complete due to a change in ownership or inability of the supplier to control practices on that land when not in production for Sysco. If that's the case, rate the item as a Fail and explain the deficiency in your notes. Maintaining good records is an important stewardship practice and is a legal requirement in many locations, but legal requirements vary by location and extenuating circumstances will understandably occur.

Scored General Standards

15. Do all of the check box or radio button items listed under a question need to be in place to earn the maximum score?

No. The check box items are examples of what to ask about and look for. Some items may not be applicable and there may be additional items that are not included as a check box item.

For example, in Question 3.01-c1, the intent is to score the supplier on how adequately sensitive areas are protected, not on the number of protective measures in place.

Auditors are advised to use their own discretion and to score based on performance on meeting the intent of the question rather than the number of options implemented. If additional check box options or other potential practices are not needed to meet the intent of the question or are impractical for the specific supplier or sub-supplier, an auditor may award full points. Similarly, the auditor may award only partial points if the intent of the question is not met, regardless of how many practices are implemented. I.e., in the example above, if sensitive areas are being negatively impacted by ag operations and practical opportunities to reduce impacts are not in place, award partial points.

Crop-Specific Standards

16. Does a separate sustainable ag/IPM team need to be in place for each crop?

No. The supplier may use the same team for all crops. If so, the team should include experience in each crop to earn full points.