

The Bureau de normalisation du Québec now offers companies in the agri-food sector certifications recognized by Costco Wholesale Canada

Québec, June 28, 2023 — The Bureau de normalisation du Québec (BNQ) is now a certification body approved by Costco Canada to provide food safety certifications to companies. The BNQ can now assess the conformity of Costco Canada’s suppliers to approved international standards such as Safe Quality Food (SQF) and CanadaGAP as well as to Costco’s audit standards.

Food safety remains one of the main concerns for companies in the agri-food sector. They must act diligently to protect the health of consumers who buy their products. To achieve this, companies set up food safety management systems to improve the products quality and safety. Therefore, third-party certification is essential in this sector. Retailer chains, always seeking for the best suppliers, namely require their partners to implement safe practices that are assessed through formal audits and recognized certifications.

Costco is committed to providing safe and high-quality food products by requiring its suppliers to meet the industry’s highest food safety standards. To this end, a number of certification bodies capable of conducting food safety audits are officially recognized by Costco. Therefore, these organizations can conduct audits according to Costco’s requirements as defined in the document *Food Safety & Quality Audit Expectations for Costco Suppliers* Version 2.0 (effective April 1st, 2023). The BNQ, as a newly approved certification body by Costco Canada, can assess conformity to Costco’s audit standards of Costco Canada’s suppliers only.

The BNQ already offers worldwide-recognized programs by the Global Food Safety Initiative (GFSI). Among others, the BNQ certifies companies according to the CanadaGAP program intended for growers, packers, warehousemen as well as companies involved in repackaging, wholesale and brokers of fresh fruits and vegetables and greenhouse products; it also certifies according to the SQF program intended for companies covering the entire supply chain, from the farms to the retailers.

“This recognition of our organization as a qualified and recognized certification body by Costco Canada is beneficial for the companies in Quebec. It now enables a greater number of Quebec companies to benefit from our service offer in the agri-food sector: a turnkey third-party audit service offered in both of Canada’s official languages. Moreover, access to BNQ’s French-speaking auditors, who have many years of experience and valued qualifications in several fields of expertise, presents an undeniable advantage in terms of audit quality, communication with various actors and the improvement of certified companies’ food safety management systems.”

Isabelle Landry, Principal Director, Bureau de normalisation du Québec

Companies searching for a certification can learn more on the BNQ's service offer by consulting the BNQ's website. It should be noted that only Costco Canada's suppliers can request for assessment conformity to Costco's audit standards.

For the CanadaGAP certification:

<https://www.bnq.qc.ca/en/certification/agri-food/canadagap.html>

For the SQF certification:

<https://www.bnq.qc.ca/en/certification/agri-food/sqf.html>

About the BNQ

The Bureau de normalisation du Québec (BNQ), an administrative unit of Investissement Québec, is the reference organization for standardization and certification in Quebec. It develops consensus-based standards and certification programs in accordance with the rules of the International Organization for Standardization (ISO). The BNQ is accredited by the Standards Council of Canada (SCC).

For further information on the BNQ: bnq.qc.ca/en

-30-

Information:

Alexandrine Huot
Bureau de normalisation du Québec
medias@bnq.qc.ca