



NEW ZEALAND FARM ASSURANCE INCORPORATED (NZFAI)

Unite
against
COVID-19

COVID-19 AUDIT OPTIONS

**Applicable for any farmer at any time when a
Pandemic has been declared by the New Zealand
Government**

The following audit procedure options are available to farmers for their New Zealand Farm Assurance Programme (NZFAP) audits should their farm location be under restrictions to mitigate the impact of COVID-19.

AsureQuality (AQ) has been declared an essential service and can continue to operate the associated farm audits under strict operational guidelines. AsureQuality's operational guidelines may include a pre visit risk assessment, mandatory mask wearing, social distancing, strict hygiene protocols, and contact tracing.

The new procedures are designed to ensure the continued flow of farm assured product (livestock or wool) to NZFAI member companies, to enable new suppliers to join NZFAP, and allow existing suppliers to retain certification while avoiding on-farm visits.

OPTIONS FOR NEW AND EXISTING SUPPLIERS:

Option One: Business as usual audit

- New or existing suppliers can choose to undergo the business as usual audit. This will be carried out on farm under all Government and essential service requirements, including physical distancing rules between the auditor and farmer, and the use of masks and any other requirements to ensure spread of the pandemic is minimised.

Option Two: Interim Assurance Audit (Remote Audit)

- Suppliers both new and existing, will be required to undertake a remote audit (including the completion of a declaration) that will grant them respectively either an 'interim status of farm assured' or 'certification extension' for 12 months, but not longer.
- AsureQuality will undertake a risk assessment to determine the feasibility of conducting remote visual (video based) audit of the production/storage facilities prior to the audit. Where this is technologically not possible due to poor internet or mobile data coverage, the audit cannot progress for new suppliers, while for existing suppliers a roll-over extension may be considered.
- By the end of the interim period, a full BAU audit will need to be completed to 'obtain' (for new suppliers) or 'retain' (for previously existing suppliers) full NZFAP certification.

Option Three: Roll-over Extension (No Audit)

- Only existing suppliers who are not able to host an on-farm audit, and where a remote audit is technologically not capable due to poor internet and mobile data connections, may request a roll-over of their certification with the agreement and recommendation of the certification body. The certification body must be satisfied that there are no outstanding nonconformities and that there are no significant risks to the continued compliance with NZFAP requirements.
- This will extend the suppliers existing farm certification for a maximum period as set by the NZFAI Management Committee when agreeing to implementing the policy. After this period the certification body will determine whether the supplier would need to either:
 - Undergo a full in-person on farm audit to retain full NZFAP certification, or
 - Complete a Remote Audit by phone if site access continues not to be available. This would be valid for the balance of the 12 months from the original audit due date.