

## Information regarding VLOG-certification and licensing of businesses

Status: 30.12.19

### 1. Certification process

#### A. Individual certification

An individual certification is the certification of a legally independent business with one or more affiliated sites.

The following steps are necessary for individual certification (see Chapter A 3):

1. Enter into a **Standard Usage Agreement with VLOG**. The Agreement can be found at: <https://www.ohnegentechnik.org/standard001/> (Sub-item: Standard Usage Agreement). Fill out two copies of the Agreement and the attached master data sheet and send both signed original copies to VLOG. One of the copies will be countersigned by VLOG and sent back to you. The Agreement will contain your assigned VLOG ID which is a prerequisite for issuing the certificate. Processing time for Standard Usage Agreements is approx. 4 weeks for agreements that have been fully filled out. Processing of incomplete agreements can be significantly longer. We therefore advise you to submit the completely filled out agreement in good time.
2. Sign a **Certification Agreement with a VLOG-recognised certification body**. The list of recognised certification bodies can be found at: <https://www.ohnegentechnik.org/zertifizierer/>.
3. Set an **audit date** with the certification body.
4. An on-site **audit** will be conducted at the operation and all associated sites, which are to be included in the VLOG certification.
5. When the audit has been passed and the VLOG ID has been received, the certification body will issue a **VLOG certificate**, which will be valid until the end of the following year.
6. To renew the certification, there must be a successful **follow-up audit** of the operation before the certification expires.

#### B. Matrix certification for the Logistics and Feed Manufacturing Stages

Matrix certification involves combining multiple sites in the Feed Manufacturing and Logistics stages into a VLOG matrix. One or more legally independent businesses can participate in the matrix as **matrix members**. There is a **matrix organiser**, to which the VLOG certificate is issued, and at least two **matrix sites**. The matrix organiser undertakes various tasks for the matrix members and sites – for further details, see Part D of the VLOG Standard, Version 20.01.

The following steps are necessary to certify a matrix (see Chapter A 3, D 2.2 and D 2.3 of the VLOG Standard):

1. The matrix organiser enters into a **Standard Usage Agreement** with VLOG, which can be found at: <https://www.ohnegentechnik.org/standard001/> (Sub-item: Standard Usage Agreement). Fill out two copies of the Agreement and the attached master data sheet and send both signed original copies to VLOG. One of the copies will be countersigned by VLOG and sent back to you. The Agreement will contain your assigned VLOG ID which is a prerequisite for issuing the certificate. Processing time for Standard Usage Agreements is approx. 4 weeks for agreements that have been fully filled out. Processing of incomplete agreements can be significantly

longer. We therefore advise you to submit the completely filled out agreement well in advance. No Standard Usage Agreement is necessary for the individual businesses or sites.

2. The matrix organiser signs a **Certification Agreement** with a VLOG-recognised certification body. The list of recognised certification bodies can be found at: <https://www.ohnegentechnik.org/zertifizierer/>
3. The matrix organiser and the matrix sites set **audit dates** with the certification body.
4. If necessary, the matrix organiser engages in **self-monitoring** of all matrix sites (see Chapter D 2.2.2).
5. The certification body conducts **on-site audits** of the matrix organiser and the matrix sites (share, see Chapter D 2.2.2 and D 2.2.3) which are to be included in the VLOG certification.
6. When the audit has been passed and the VLOG ID has been received, the certification body will issue a **VLOG certificate**, which shall be valid until the end of the following year.
7. To renew the certification, there must be a successful **follow-up audit** of the matrix organiser before the certification expires. The matrix sites must be audited in accordance with their risk category's audit interval (see Chapter D 2.3) in order to remain in the matrix.

### C. Agricultural group certification

With a group certification, several associated agricultural operations are combined into one VLOG group. There is a **group organiser**, to which the VLOG certificate is issued, and several legally independent **group members** (each with one or more sites). The group organiser undertakes various tasks for the group members – for further details, see Part F of the VLOG Standard, Version 20.01.

The following steps are necessary to certify a group (see Chapter A 3, F 2.2 and F 2.3 of the VLOG Standard):

1. The group organiser enters into a **Standard Usage Agreement with VLOG**, which can be found at: <https://www.ohnegentechnik.org/standard001/> (Sub-item: Standard Usage Agreement). Fill out two copies of the Agreement and the attached master data sheet and send both signed original copies to VLOG. One of the copies will be countersigned by VLOG and sent back to you. The Agreement will contain your assigned VLOG ID which is a prerequisite for issuing the certificate. Processing time for Standard Usage Agreements is approx. 4 weeks for agreements that have been fully filled out. Processing of incomplete agreements can be significantly longer. We therefore advise you to submit the completely filled out agreement well in advance. No Standard Usage Agreement is necessary for the individual operations.
2. The group organiser signs a **Certification Agreement** with a VLOG-recognised certification body. The list of recognised certification bodies can be found at: <https://www.ohnegentechnik.org/zertifizierer/>
3. The group organiser and the group members set **audit dates** with the certification body.
4. If necessary, the group organiser engages in **self-monitoring** of all group members (see Chapter F 2.2.2).
5. The certification body conducts **on-site audits** of the group organiser and the group members (25% share, see Chapter F 2.2) at the associated sites, which are to be included in the VLOG certification.
6. When the audit has been passed and the VLOG ID has been received, the certification body will issue a **VLOG certificate**, which shall be valid until the end of the following year.
7. To renew the certification, there must be a successful **follow-up audit** of the group organiser before the certification expires. The group members must be audited in accordance with their risk category's audit interval (see Chapter F 2.4) in order to remain in the group.

#### D. Group certification Retail – sale of bulk food of animal origin

Group certification Retail is a group certification for retail chain businesses. There is a **group organiser**, to whom the VLOG certificate is issued and multiple chain locations that act as **retail group members**. The group organiser undertakes various tasks for the group members – for further details, see Part H of the VLOG Standard, Version 20.01.

The following steps are necessary to certify a group (see Chapter A 3, H 2.2 of the VLOG Standard):

1. The group organiser enters into a **Standard Usage Agreement with VLOG**, which can be found at: <https://www.ohnegentechnik.org/standard001/> (Sub-item: Standard Usage Agreement). Fill out two copies of the Agreement and the attached master data sheet and send both signed original copies to VLOG. One of the copies will be countersigned by VLOG and sent back to you. The Agreement will contain your assigned VLOG ID which is a prerequisite for issuing the certificate. Processing time for Standard Usage Agreements is approx. 4 weeks for agreements that have been fully filled out. Processing of incomplete agreements can be significantly longer. We therefore advise you to submit the completely filled out agreement well in advance. No Standard Usage Agreement is necessary for the individual branches.
2. The group organiser signs a **Certification Agreement** with a VLOG-recognised certification body. The list of recognised certification bodies can be found at: <https://www.ohnegentechnik.org/zertifizierer/>
3. Scheduling the **audit dates** for the group organiser and chain locations with the certification body; the share of chain locations is determined according to Chapter H 2.2.1 (min. 10% or 100%).
4. The certification body conducts **on-site audits** of the group organiser and the branches.
5. When the audit has been passed and the VLOG ID has been received, the certification body will issue a **VLOG certificate**, which shall be valid until the end of the following year.
6. To renew the certification, there must be a successful **follow-up audit** of the group organiser before the certification expires. The group members must be audited in accordance with their risk category's audit interval (min. 10% or 100%, see Chapter H 2.2.1) in order to remain in the group.

#### 2. Standards recognised as equivalent

A listing of the certification standards, which VLOG recognises as equivalent can be found at <https://www.ohnegentechnik.org/standard001/> (Sub-item: Additional documents/information sheets). Animals, feed and products that are certified under an appropriate standard do not need an additional VLOG certification. Notification of the relevant certificate (and any additional requirements listed in the document), and the appropriate labels on the shipping documents are sufficient in this case.

#### 3. VLOG requirements for businesses

The prerequisite for certification is compliance with the requirements of the VLOG Standard. The current version of the Standard is available at <https://www.ohnegentechnik.org/standard001/>.

It is divided into the following parts:

- A – General:** This part introduces the VLOG system and describes the certification procedure.
- B – Logistics:** This part contains the specific requirements for businesses in the Transport, Storage/Handling and Trading/Drop Shipping stages.
- C – Feed Manufacturing:** This part contains the specific requirements for businesses regarding Feed Manufacturing/Processing and Grinding and/or Mixing Facilities.

**D – Matrix Certification Process Logistics and Feed Manufacturing:** If matrix certification is sought, the requirements of Part D must be followed in addition to Part B and C.

**E – Agriculture:** This part details the specific requirements for agricultural operations, such as feeding, purchase of additional animals and frequency of analysis.

**F – Agricultural Group Organisation:** If group certification is sought, the requirements of Part F must be followed in addition to Part E.

**G – Food Processing/Preparation:** This part contains the specific requirements for businesses that manufacture or process food.

**H – Retail – Distribution of bulk goods of animal origin:** this part contains the relevant requirements for group certification sought in the area of bulk goods of animal origin.

**Requirements for Laboratories and Tests:** The [guideline for laboratories](#) details the relevant requirements for laboratories and testing procedures for any necessary analyses. VLOG analyses may only be conducted by VLOG-recognised laboratories.

Moreover, the aforementioned parts refer to the various annexes to the Standard, which are also relevant.

## 4. Use of the seal

Use of the seal is only permissible after both sides have signed the (sub)licensing agreement.

### A. "Ohne GenTechnik" for food

The uniform "Ohne GenTechnik" seal (green diamond) is a protected word-image mark owned by the Federal Government of Germany. VLOG is the exclusive grantor of licenses for use of the seal. The use of the seal is subject to an annual fee; please consult the VLOG Fee Schedule for Licensees at <https://www.ohnegentechnik.org/ohne-gentechnik-siegel/beantragung-des-siegels/>. A sublicense agreement with VLOG must be concluded to use the seal on your product labels. Sublicense applicants must credibly demonstrate that the statutory criteria governing the "Ohne Gentechnik" label (EC Genetic Engineering Implementation Act (EGGenTDurchfG)) are met. To do so, the business fills out the "Usage Authorisation Application for the 'Ohne GenTechnik' seal", the "List of foods to be labelled" and the "OG Seal Sales Estimate" and submits these documents to VLOG along with the VLOG certificate or a certificate from a recognised equivalent standard.

To proceed, please contact the VLOG head office at [info@ohnegentechnik.org](mailto:info@ohnegentechnik.org) or by phone at 030 2359 945 00.

### B. "VLOG geprüft" for feed

You also need a license to use the "VLOG geprüft" seal on feed. A licensee is only such distributor of VLOG-certified feed who is identified on documents and delivery bills as the business placing the product on the market. For the annual fee amount, please consult the Fee Schedule in the information package available at <https://www.ohnegentechnik.org/vlog-geprueft-siegel/beantragung-des-siegels/>.

A licensing agreement with VLOG is required if your business wants to use the "VLOG geprüft" seal. Sublicense applicants must credibly demonstrate that the statutory criteria governing the "Ohne Gentechnik" label (EC Genetic Engineering Implementation Act (EGGenTDurchfG)) are met. To do so, the business fills out the "Usage Authorisation Application for the 'VLOG geprüft' seal" and the "Scope of 'VLOG geprüft' Licensing" table and submits these documents to VLOG along with the VLOG certificate or a certificate from a recognised equivalent standard.

To proceed, please contact the VLOG head office at [info@ohnegentechnik.org](mailto:info@ohnegentechnik.org) or by phone at 030 2359 945 00.

## 6. Membership

We encourage you to become a member of VLOG. The additional cost, as compared to the simple use of the logo, is minimal. As a member, whether you are an agricultural producer, food manufacturer, or retail chain selling GMO-free food products, you know **your** commercial **interests** will be well represented. At the same time, you **strengthen** VLOG's profile not only among consumers and governmental authorities, as well as politically, but also in the eyes of other economic stakeholders.

In addition, VLOG offers a platform for **exchanging** information, knowledge and experience on the production and marketing of food without genetic engineering. As a participant in annual general meetings and other committees, you can **actively help shape** the direction of the Association. If you wish to become a member, please fill out the Membership Application - Verband Lebensmittel ohne Gentechnik (VLOG). You can find the annual membership fee amount and application for membership at <https://www.ohnegentechnik.org/der-verband/mitglied-werden/anmeldung/>. Note that it is possible to be a VLOG member even without using the seal or without certification.

Please contact us if you have questions or require further assistance.

*General questions regarding the certification process and agreements*

VLOG head office

Telephone: 030 2359 945 00

Email: [info@ohnegentechnik.org](mailto:info@ohnegentechnik.org)

*Specific questions regarding agriculture, logistics, feed production*

Franziska Kreitner

Telephone: 030 – 2359 945 23

Email: [f.kreitner@ohnegentechnik.org](mailto:f.kreitner@ohnegentechnik.org)

*Specific questions regarding food processing*

Christin Käbe

Telephone: 030 – 2359 945 22

Email: [c.kaebe@ohnegentechnik.org](mailto:c.kaebe@ohnegentechnik.org)

Carmen Brzoska

Telephone: 030 – 2359 945 21

Email: [c.brzoska@ohnegentechnik.org](mailto:c.brzoska@ohnegentechnik.org)