

BEVEG Vegan Certification Process



Apply for certification. The application is free. Go to beveg.com or contact us at info@beveg.com or by phone for assistance. Fill out all required sections on the online form and submit. After the application has been received, a custom quote will be generated.



Paperwork Process. Once the cost of certification is accepted, we ask for a deposit to begin the work. Products applied for will then go through the paperwork audit process. We ask for all ingredients, supplier statements, spec sheets, trade secrets, processing aids, and manufacturing facility information.



Audit Process. Once the paperwork process is complete, an on-site audit is scheduled and depending on the product, lab testing may also be required. The audit is typically conducted once per year, but arrangements may be made on a circumstantial basis for more or less frequent audits. A Pre-Audit Plan will be provided prior to the audit.



Certification & Contracts. After completion of the audit process and satisfaction of all non-conformities, the certification is finalized. All contracts, paperwork, and legal affidavits must be completed. The applicant will receive their certificates, logos for printing and for their website, copies of all contracts, and the audit report. The certification must be renewed annually.



Logo Approval. After the applicant has received the logos, an image displaying how the logo will appear on packaging must be sent to BeVeg and approved prior to the final printing. Once the logo use has been approved, the applicant is considered officially certified.





BeVeg VEGAN CERTIFICATION STEP BY STEP PROCESS

The Certification Process

Certification Scope

BeVeg certifies food, alcoholic and non-alcoholic and beverages, supplements, cosmetics, textiles, furniture, household products, personal products, and other consumable products. Certification may only be applied for by the Plant that makes the product and has control over packaging, or the vegan product brand owner who will market the product as certified vegan.

Choosing an Accredited Certification Body

The Plant, product or Brand Owner must choose a certification body that is recognized by BeVeg International. All certification bodies must be accredited to ISO/IEC 17065 - requirements for bodies certifying products, processes, and services. It is the responsibility of the certification body to ensure that all scheme requirements are fully complied with and accurate. Certification decisions must be made within 2 weeks of all audit nonconformity. Clients can change certification bodies at any time, provided they do not have any outstanding nonconformity violations, are not under threat of suspension, probation or withdrawal, and do not have any outstanding financial obligations.

Vegan Scheme Training

Prior to application for BeVeg Vegan Certification, the applicant must have a complete understanding of the concept of veganism and ensure the Plant meets all the requirements of the vegan scheme. Training is available through courses offered by BeVeg International. Proper training is critical to ensure core competency in implementation of a standardized vegan scheme.

Filling Out the Application

Filling out the application requires a thorough documentation of all the ingredients used in production as well as any product testing processes that are conducted. All raw materials used in production or as processing aids must be included, even if considered legally incidental or insignificant. Shared facility and dedicated facility information must be disclosed to assess the risk for cross-contamination. Specific descriptions of any testing processes before release must be disclosed to ensure no animal cruelty or animal exploitation.



Ingredient Research

Please check prior to submitting if the ingredient is vegan certified and submit the vegan certification. Before audit, inspection, and lab testing, it is important to gather a list of all ingredients involved in the production process, including supplier spec sheets, and any prior tests or certifications that have been carried out on the applied for product(s). This includes all ingredients, and ingredients of ingredients, inclusive of “insignificant” and “incidental” ingredients and processing aids, agents, and ingredients stored but not necessarily used in the same location. The Product must be listed by the same name as it appears on any packaging with the exact supplier used for all packaging. BeVeg will review and analyze the list.

The BeVeg Checklist

Ingredients and suppliers of ingredients must be approved before proceeding with the rest of the BeVeg vegan scheme checklist. On-site and laboratory audits are conducted using a checklist created by BeVeg. This ensures all applicants are audited using the same uniform criteria. All equipment and facilities must be in place during the audit, but the Plant need not be in active production. The audit report may not be shared with other parties without permission. If any discrepancies are found during the audit, the auditor will provide the Plant with a description of the non-compliance and where the requirement can be found in the manual. These must be addressed promptly within 10 days, and certification decided within 10 business days of resolution of non-conformities

On-site Audits

After the application paperwork submission and disclosure process passes initial ingredient assessment, auditors will be sent to audit the manufacturing process and methods to ensure compliance with all components of the accredited vegan standard, and as set out in this manual. Later disclosures of ingredients or processing changes may be submitted at any time, but are subject to subsequent approval and renewed certification status reflecting any and all changes. Remote assessment may be conducted via paperwork audit or a Zoom audit.

Lab Testing Analysis

After the application paperwork submission and disclosure process passes initial ingredient assessment, and as auditors are sent to audit the manufacturing process and methods to ensure compliance with all components of the accredited vegan standard as set out in this manual, the applied for products may be sent for scientific testing and analysis at an ISO/IEC 17025:2017 accredited lab. This is an extra precaution to confirm no incidental ingredient spillover or cross-contamination from the manufacturing process and to detect any trace animal protein that may be detectable in a lab from an ingredient of an ingredient.



The Certificate

Before the certification decision is made, BeVeg Vegan Certification appoints at least one staff member to review all information and results related to the audit. The review is carried out by the Certification and / or Certification Assistant, who is not involved in the audit process. If the Review and Certification decision was not made simultaneously by the same person, the recommendation based on the review is documented. If the applicant meets all of the requirements, meaning ingredient research, on-site auditing, and lab testing as required, then the certification body will issue a certificate along with digital copies of the BeVeg logo in high resolution for use on certified vegan products. BeVeg Vegan Certification gives the Client a certificate signed by the certifier, which identifies the Product name, the date of issuance, and the date of validity. BeVeg maintains the right to remove any product from the certification list if they are deemed ineligible for certification at any time. The certificate is issued only after or simultaneously with:

Decision to issue the certificate or to expand its scope; The certification requirements are met; Completion / signing of the certification agreement.

All companies and products are required to follow the procedures as set out in “logo use guidelines” completion of the final packet. The certification decision is made by the Certification Committee will take the certification, who is not involved in the audit process. The person (s) appointed by BeVeg Vegan Certification to make the certification decision are employed by BeVeg Vegan Certification. BeVeg Vegan Certification notifies the customer of the decision not to issue the Certificate and states the reasons for this decision. If the customer declares his wish to continue the Certification process, BeVeg Vegan Certification can restart the process.

BeVeg Vegan Certification maintains lists of products that have been certified including descriptions of the product, Brand Owner, and raw material suppliers. If there is a change in the list, it is updated in BeVeg’s internal system.

Private Labeling

A Private Label licensing agreement may be made between a BeVeg certified company and a third-party seller. Products that are produced by a certified company but labelled under the brand of a third party may have access to the BeVeg symbol through a private label agreement conducted by the manufacturer, Private Labeler, and BeVeg. This provides the third-party Brand Owner with a license to use the BeVeg logo and a vegan certificate in the name of the Private Label company. The private label is responsible for paying its own licensing fee. The private label will register in the BeVeg system using paperwork provided by the manufacturer, pay to license use of the trademark, then have access to all the benefits of certification.



Application Basics

BeVeg Vegan Certification for Application obtains all the necessary information to complete the Audit and Certification process in accordance with the relevant Audit and Certification program. BeVeg Vegan Certification requests an application form that has been formally completed and signed by the client of the applicant. At least the following information is included in this application form or its annexes:

- The product (s) to be certified;
- The standards and / or other normative documents required by the customer for Certification;
- General characteristics of the customer, including its name, address / addresses of its physical location (s), important aspects of its processes and processes (when required by the relevant Certification program) and any relevant legal obligations;
- Regarding the field of Certification where the application is made; general information about customers, such as customer activities, laboratories and / or auditing facilities, human and technical resources, and functions and links within a larger legal entity, if any,
- Information on all external processes that affect customer compliance and that are used by the customer; The Audit and Certification body may establish appropriate contractual control mechanisms on the relevant legal entity (s) if the customer has specified a legal entity (s) other than himself for the production of the certified product (s); If such contractual control mechanisms are necessary, they may be created before the certificate is issued,
- All other information within the framework of the relevant Certification requirements, such as information for initial control and surveillance activities (for example, the production locations of the certified product / products and the personnel to be contacted at these locations).

The Application Process

General Application Instructions

1. A completed application must be submitted. A late fee may be assessed for any applications that need to be returned to the applicant due to incompleteness. Please be advised that our review of the completed application may require contact with suppliers and manufacturers, or follow up discussion with the company for additional information.



2. A complete list of all ingredients, including the source of ingredients, manufactured ingredients, and genetically modified organism ingredients that may have involved animal genes or substances. Companies must also specifically list any incidental or “insignificant” ingredients, including, but not limited to, natural flavors and colors.
3. A written statement detailing all processing, filtration, de- acidification, and any other fining agent or methods used in the manufacturing process, or any process that may contain animal products or possible trace amounts of animal ingredients due to use of shared machinery cross- contamination is required. If shared machinery is used, please provide a brief explanation, including a detailed description of any cleaning methods used to prevent possible cross contamination. (Please note, use of shared machinery does not disqualify a product from certification, However, use of shared machinery must be explained to ensure that
 - a. measures are in place to ensure no cross contamination takes place, which will be confirmed upon audit.
4. All ingredients disclosed require supplier statements and or spec sheets to confirm no animal sub ingredients. For example, for products containing sugar, verification that the sugar has not been filtered through bone char, often disguised as natural charcoal, is required. Sugar companies will have this information on file, and this information must be included as part of the application.
5. A signed Affidavit certifying that no animal products or by products (including animal GMOs) are used in the product ingredients, or in the manufacturing process before packaging; and that there is no animal testing of the finished product by the company or a third party. The Affidavit certifies future intent to uphold the Vegan Standard, and that all information disclosed is accurate and true and disclosed in good faith.
6. Once the paperwork process is verified vegan, on-site auditing will be conducted to verify that the information submitted is true and accurate. Along with the on-site auditing will be sample lab testing with the possibility of surveillance sample testing.
7. Finally, BeVeg will engage in certification deliberations. If Certification is approved, BeVeg will issue an electronic, high resolution format of the logo for immediate use in production. With the exception of alterations to the logo’s color and size, the trademark logo may not be altered in any way. Companies must comply with all “logo use guidelines.” Unauthorized use of the certification logo is a violation of federal and international trademark laws. Companies may license the Certification for one 12- month period. After the 12- month period, the approved product(s) must be re- certified.



Review of the Application

BeVeg Vegan Certification reviews the application form made for audit and certification purposes and maintains the relevant records to provide the following:

- a. Customer and product information is sufficient to carry out the Audit and Certification process;
- b. Any known difference of understanding between the BeVeg Vegan Certification and the customer, including the agreement on the relevant standards or other normative documents, is resolved;
- c. The requested Certification scope is defined;
- d. There are tools available to carry out all of the audit activities;
- e. Reviewing the information obtained to ensure that BeVeg Vegan Certification has the necessary competence and facilities to perform the Audit and Certification activity. BeVeg Vegan Certification refuses to undertake a specific Certification request made for Certification activities where there is a lack of qualification or possibility. BeVeg Vegan Certification refers to existing activities in its records if it does not perform any activity by accepting existing Audit and
- f. Certification activities given to the customer or other customers. If requested by the customer, BeVeg Vegan Certification provides the reasons for not performing the activities.

Audit

BeVeg Vegan Certification has a plan for audit activities to enable the necessary regulations to be managed. Depending on the characteristics and product requirements of the certification program, the plan may be a general plan that is applicable to all activities, including an assessment of the quality management system when applicable, or a specific plan specific to a particular activity, or a combination of both.

BeVeg Vegan Certification appoints personnel to perform each audit task with internal resources. Outsourced tasks are usually completed by staff appointed by the external organization. These personnel are not normally assigned by BeVeg Vegan Certification. BeVeg Vegan Certification ensures that all information and / or documentation required to perform control tasks are available.

BeVeg Vegan Certification carries out the management of the audit activities it performs with its internal resources and the activities it transfers to the external resources it uses in accordance with the audit plan. The products are evaluated according to the conditions included in the scope of the Certification and other conditions specified in the Certification



program. BeVeg Vegan Certification, the audit results completed before the application regarding the Certification application; accepts responsibility for the results and when the organization performing the audit is satisfied that it fulfills the conditions of the certification program.

If one or more nonconformities have arisen and the customer declares his willingness to continue the Audit and Certification process, BeVeg Vegan Certification provides information on additional assessment tasks required to verify that these nonconformities have been corrected. If the customer agrees to complete the additional audit tasks, the process specified is repeated to complete the additional tasks. The results of all audit activities are documented prior to review.

Maintaining Certification

Certification is a Continuous Process

All requirements must be met as long as the the product or company marketing certified vegan with BeVeg has an active certification contract in effect. This includes approval of logo use, annual facility audits, lab tests, ingredient changes, and all information and paperwork being up to date and communicated to BeVeg immediately upon any change. Failure to meet these requirements may result in a penalty, or certification withdrawal.

Packaging and Logo Approval

A Proof of the vegan trademark must be sent to BeVeg for approval in order to ensure proper logo use before printing. Once certification is granted, the applicant will receive digital copies of the logo for use on certified Products. The logo must be used in accordance with BeVeg's "logo use guidelines" prior to use on certified Products. The applicant may request to receive the logos prior to certification in order to begin packaging design and approval. BeVeg is not responsible for any monetary loss if packaging is designed or printed prior to certification. Logos may be printed in any color to compliment product packaging or marketing.

Ongoing Auditing

Annual auditing will be conducted to ensure the facility is continually following the guidelines for the certified product(s). The auditor will ensure that the Product list held by the facility is the same as that held by BeVeg. The auditor will also look for evidence that the plant is following all manufacturing requirements and only using approved ingredients. Annual audits are required to ensure compliance and additional audits may be required for high risk plants.



Registration and Renewals

Registration and fees must be renewed annually, and there is a registration fee each year. Plant registrations must be renewed annually in order for products to be able to renew certified vegan status. Upon renewal, nonconformities must be remedied within 60 days to prevent certification suspension or withdrawal status.

Final Product Testing

Each company applying for BeVeg vegan certification is responsible for ensuring that finished product is tested and confirmed vegan per the scheme standard laboratory requirements. Sample tests must be completed at an ISO/IEC 17025:2017 accredited laboratory for quantitative testing using a BeVeg approved method. Testing frequency is determined by product risk for cross-contamination and past lab test results. Coordination with the supplier is important to determine if the lot is contaminated by trace animal protein. Lot specific testing in the lab may be required when results are inconsistent.

Food and Beverages

The Plant is responsible for obtaining and properly using the designated ELISA Food Safety Kits if instructed by BeVeg.

Casein ELISA Kit (DEIA289), Tropomyosin ELISA Kit (DEIA290), Bovine LALBA ELISA Set (DEIA606), Bovine LTF ELISA Kit (DEIA618), Lactoferrin Ab ELISA Kit (DEIA3849), Hydroxyproline ELISA Kit (DEIA3605), LTF Chicken ELISA Kit (DEIA3893), Pig lactoferrin (LF/LTF) ELISA Kit (DEIABL49).

Cosmetics and Personal Products

The certification body will look for evidence that no animal products are present in the cosmetics, toiletries, or other personal products. The product and its ingredients must be confirmed to never have undergone animal testing at any point in the manufacturing process. Lab tests may be conducted on facility equipment or surfaces to verify the absence animal testing. Recommended tests identify evidence left behind by mice, rats, rabbits, primates, etc. BeVeg may request a custom test specific to the facility.

Textiles

Materials will be examined by microscopic analysis, fiber analysis, or other test methods. Certified vegan textiles may not contain silk, wool, leather, pearl, feather, down, bone, skins, furs. Chemical suppliers must state that all process chemicals used in manufacturing the product are free from animal products. Tests may be conducted to ensure that the plant has properly used the designated kits for technical analysis. Tests may include TUV Vegan Test Kit or AMS Vegan Test Kit.



Note

The applicant and certifying body should note that some non-vegan ingredients are identifiable by several different names. For example, a common insect excretion used in foods and personal products may be referred to as shellac or resinous glaze. The applicant and certifying body should be familiar with all names when reviewing ingredient lists of approved products. Auditors should also look for hidden ingredients such as “Natural sources” when reviewing ingredient lists.

Non-Conforming Products and Product Recalls

If a product is found to include non-vegan ingredients or processes, the lab, facility, or brand owner must notify BeVeg immediately. BeVeg will assist in corrective actions, such as a recall, if necessary. General guidelines for corrective actions are as follows: If a test comes back positive for any animal derived ingredients in a finished certified Product, the manufacturer should perform a second test. If the second test also comes back positive, the manufacturer should contact BeVeg and ensure the product is not released. The Plant should then send additional samples to a different laboratory for testing. If the second test is negative, additional tests may be performed on other product packages at the same laboratory. If any are positive, the Plant should send additional samples to another designated laboratory. If all of the third-party results are positive for non-vegan materials, the manufacturer must recall all products from that lot that may have been released. That lot cannot display the BeVeg logo. If some results from the lab are positive and some negative, BeVeg will review the initial testing process and determine on a case-by-case basis whether the products are suitable for release or in need of recall.

Termination, Collapse, Suspension, or Withdrawal of Certification

BeVeg Vegan Certification will make adjustments regarding certification status in the case of nonconformities. This may include increased surveillance, narrowing the scope of the certification, suspension of the certification until the corrective actions are taken, or certification withdrawal.

If the certification is suspended or withdrawn, the BeVeg Vegan Certification takes measures to ensure that there is no indication that the certification of the product continues. This includes logo use and public information. If the scope of the certification is narrowed, BeVeg Certification makes all necessary changes in the certificates, public information, permissions given for the use of logos, etc. in order to ensure that the scope of the reduced Certification is clearly notified to the customer and clearly stated in the certificate and public information.

If the Certification is reinstated after suspension, BeVeg Vegan Certification makes all the necessary changes in certificates, public information, permissions for the use of logos, etc. to ensure that all available impressions are available. If it is decided to narrow the scope of the Certification as a condition for the reinstatement of the certification, BeVeg Vegan Certification makes all the necessary changes in certificates, public disclosure, usage powers, etc. in order to



ensure that the narrowed certification scope is clearly disclosed to the customer and clearly stated in the certification documentation and public information to operate.

Proficiency Testing

Brand Owners and Plants conducting testing at their own facility are required to complete Proficiency Testing administered by BeVeg or a third-party at least every four years. Proficiency Testing confirms the Plant or Brand Owner's ability to correctly perform and report test results. This is essential to ensuring the test results are valid. The Proficiency Testing lab must have ISO / IEC 17025 accreditation. Failed Proficiency Testing must be met with Corrective Actions. If the Plant or Brand Owner fails to achieve the expected results during proficiency testing, they must identify the error and take action to avoid future mistakes. Failed proficiency tests must include documentation of corrective actions taken, including root cause analysis and a proposed solution.

Proficiency testing works as follows:

1. The Plant receives a set of unknown samples with which they will conduct their normal vegan tests.
2. The participants receive detailed instructions specifying how to treat the samples and report the results.
3. Each participant submits their results by the deadline.
4. Results are analyzed and all participants receive a report revealing the contents of the sample along with individual results.
5. While applying proficiency test, ISO / IEC 17025:2017 standard requirements must be met

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