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to consider the certification in determining the admissibility of the article of food for which the certification was offered or in determining the importer's eligibility for participation in VQIP.

(f) *Public notice of revocation of recognition.* FDA will provide notice on the Web site described in § 1.690 of the issuance of the revocation of recognition of an accreditation body and will describe the basis for revocation.

[80 FR 74650, Nov. 27, 2015, as amended at 81 FR 90193, Dec. 14, 2016]

§ 1.635 What if I want to voluntarily relinquish recognition or do not want to renew recognition?

(a) *Notice to FDA of intent to relinquish or not to renew recognition.* A recognized accreditation body must notify FDA electronically, in English, at least 60 days before voluntarily relinquishing recognition or before allowing recognition to expire without seeking renewal. The recognized accreditation body must provide the name and contact information of the custodian who will maintain the records required under § 1.625(a) after the date of relinquishment or the date recognition expires, as applicable, and make them available to FDA as required by § 1.625(b). The contact information for the custodian must include, at a minimum, an email address and the physical address where the records required by § 1.625(a) will be located.

(b) *Notice to accredited third-party certification bodies of intent to relinquish or not to renew recognition.* No later than 15 business days after notifying FDA under paragraph (a) of this section, the recognized accreditation body must notify any currently accredited third-party certification body that it intends to relinquish recognition or to allow its recognition to expire, specifying the date on which relinquishment or expiration will occur. The recognized accreditation body must establish and maintain records of such notification under § 1.625.

(c)(1) *Effect of voluntary relinquishment or expiration of recognition on third-party certification bodies.* The accreditation of a third-party certification body issued prior to the relinquishment or expiration of its accreditation body's

recognition will remain in effect, so long as the third-party certification body:

(i) No later than 60 days after the date of relinquishment or the date of expiration of the recognition, conducts a self-assessment under § 1.655 and reports the results of the self-assessment to FDA under § 1.656(b); and

(ii) No later than 1 year after the date of relinquishment or the date of expiration of recognition, or the original date of the expiration of the accreditation, whichever comes first, becomes accredited by another recognized accreditation body or by FDA through direct accreditation.

(2) FDA may withdraw the accreditation of a third-party certification body whenever FDA determines there is good cause for withdrawal of accreditation under § 1.664(c).

(d) *Effect of voluntary relinquishment or expiration of recognition of an accreditation body on food or facility certifications issued to eligible entities.* A food or facility certification issued by a third-party certification body accredited by a recognized accreditation body prior to relinquishment or expiration of its recognition will remain in effect until the certification expires. If FDA has reason to believe that a certification issued for purposes of section 801(q) or 806 of the FD&C Act is not valid or reliable, FDA may refuse to consider the certification in determining the admissibility of the article of food for which the certification was offered or in determining the importer's eligibility for participation in VQIP.

(e) *Public notice of voluntary relinquishment or expiration of recognition.* FDA will provide notice on the Web site described in § 1.690 of the voluntary relinquishment or expiration of recognition of an accreditation body under this subpart.

§ 1.636 How do I request reinstatement of recognition?

(a) *Application following revocation.* An accreditation body that has had its recognition revoked may seek reinstatement by submitting a new application for recognition under § 1.630. The accreditation body must submit evidence that the grounds for revocation

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have been resolved, including evidence addressing the cause or conditions that were the basis for revocation and identifying measures that have been implemented to help ensure that such cause(s) or condition(s) are unlikely to recur.

(b) *Application following relinquishment.* An accreditation body that previously relinquished its recognition under § 1.635 may seek recognition by submitting a new application for recognition under § 1.630.

ACCREDITATION OF THIRD-PARTY CERTIFICATION BODIES UNDER THIS SUBPART

§ 1.640 Who is eligible to seek accreditation?

(a) A foreign government, agency of a foreign government, foreign cooperative, or any other third party may seek accreditation from a recognized accreditation body (or, where direct accreditation is appropriate, FDA) to conduct food safety audits and to issue food and facility certifications to eligible entities under this subpart. An accredited third-party certification body may use documentation of conformance with ISO/IEC 17021: 2011 or ISO/IEC 17065: 2012, supplemented as necessary, in meeting the applicable requirements of this subpart.

(b) A foreign government or an agency of a foreign government is eligible for accreditation if it can demonstrate that its food safety programs, systems, and standards meet the requirements of §§ 1.641 through 1.645.

(c) A foreign cooperative or other third party is eligible for accreditation if it can demonstrate that the training and qualifications of its agents used to conduct audits (or, in the case of a third-party certification body that is an individual, such individual) and its internal systems and standards meet the requirements of §§ 1.641 through 1.645.

§ 1.641 What legal authority must a third-party certification body have to qualify for accreditation?

(a) A third-party certification body seeking accreditation from a recognized accreditation body or from FDA must demonstrate that it has the authority (as a governmental entity or as

a legal entity with contractual rights) to perform such examinations of facilities, their process(es), and food(s) as are necessary to determine compliance with the applicable food safety requirements of the FD&C Act and FDA regulations, and conformance with applicable industry standards and practices and to issue certifications where appropriate based on a review of the findings of such examinations. This includes authority to:

- (1) Review any relevant records;
- (2) Conduct onsite audits of an eligible entity; and
- (3) Suspend or withdraw certification for failure to comply with applicable requirements.

(b) A third-party certification body seeking accreditation must demonstrate that it is capable of exerting the authority (as a governmental entity or as legal entity with contractual rights) necessary to meet the applicable requirements of accreditation under this subpart if accredited.

§ 1.642 What competency and capacity must a third-party certification body have to qualify for accreditation?

A third-party certification body seeking accreditation must demonstrate that it has:

(a) The resources necessary to fully implement its certification program, including:

(1) Adequate numbers of employees and other agents with relevant knowledge, skills, and experience to effectively examine for compliance with applicable FDA food safety requirements of the FD&C Act and FDA regulations, conformance with applicable industry standards and practices, and issuance of valid and reliable certifications; and

(2) Adequate financial resources for its operations; and

(b) The competency and capacity to meet the applicable requirements of this subpart, if accredited.

§ 1.643 What protections against conflicts of interest must a third-party certification body have to qualify for accreditation?

A third-party certification body must demonstrate that it has: