Barley Growers' Association

REGENERATIVE AGRICULTURE STANDARD

MALTING BARLEY

No. CSO SM 000240401

APPROVED

Head of the Barley Growers Association

Order No 2024/04/22-1, 22 April 2024

2024

Kaunas

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INTRODUCTION

Regenerative agriculture is the practice of traditional agriculture that aims to ensure the long-term health of soils, increase biological activity and diversity, maintain ecological balance and prevent land degradation, erosion, water pollution and climate change.

The Regenerative Agriculture Standard is designed to address soil health, soil nutrition and soil organic carbon content, which may or may not be partially covered and included from 1 January 2022. The provisions of Regulation (EU) No 2018/848 of the European Parliament and of the Council laying down the principles and rules for organic production, which has been implemented in Lithuania as well as in the whole of the European Union, or in Lithuanian legislation developed for its application.

This Standard specifies the maintenance of agricultural records and the use of proper identification and traceability.

This Regenerative Agriculture Standard is essentially in line with and complements the principles of sustainable agriculture.

Certification to the Regenerative Agriculture Standard indicates to domestic and international food processors, suppliers and consumers that the farmer/processor is following regenerative farming practices in the growing, processing and storage of malting barley and other crops.

The purpose of certification to this Standard is to demonstrate that products or produce have been grown or processed under the management of regenerative agricultural practices. A producer whose agricultural unit/field complies with the requirements of the Standard on regenerative agriculture shall be entered in the Register of Certified Producers of the Barley Growers Association. The buyer or processor may apply to the Barley Growers' Association for a certificate for regenerative agriculture production.

All the production grown in a field for which a certificate of regenerative agriculture has been issued shall be deemed to be certified and the purchaser of such production shall apply to the Barley Growers' Association for the issue of a certificate for that quantity, if required.

The provisions of this Standard are in line with and do not contradict the national food quality system established in Lithuania from 2022 and other legal acts regulating the activities of the European Union and Lithuanian agriculture.

The Regenerative Agriculture Standard was developed by a team of experts in soil science, farming and Standards compliance.

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The content of this Standard consists of three distinct components:

1. General principles: the principles that apply to certified regenerative agriculture. The general principles are informative and are intended to provide the grower with information and guidance as to what each point aims to achieve.

2. Standards: to which a certified regenerative farming/processing unit must adhere in order to meet the requirements of this Standard.

3. Exceptions: official permission to deviate from this Standard. A derogation may be granted when the situation is defined and therefore allows a temporary deviation from the Standard.

This Standard is the property of the Barley Growers Association. This Standard may not be copied or reproduced without the written permission of the Barley Growers Association.

Certification body:

Barley Growers Association

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1. OBJECTIVES OF THE STANDARD

The objectives of this Standard are:

(a) create a mechanism to enable a farming unit to switch to certified regenerative farming practices. This mechanism shall include the transition from industrial farming systems to regenerative farming.

(b) ensure that all stages of production, preparation and marketing meet or are brought into line with the minimum requirements of the Regenerative Agricultural Standard.

(c) to ensure fair conditions of competition on the market by distinguishing between products produced in accordance with the Regenerative Agriculture Standard and those produced by other means.

(d) to provide guidance on regenerative farming practices for farmers intending to move from industrial farming to regenerative farming. The introduction of a system of regenerative agriculture encourages farms to move towards certified regenerative agriculture.

1.3 Scope of the Standard

This Standard sets out the minimum criteria that growers must meet in order to ensure that cereals produced under the Regenerative Agriculture Standard meet the requirements of this Standard. A product meeting this Standard may be described by the terms 'Certified according to the Regenerative Agriculture Standard' on labels, in advertising and/or in commercial documents.

This Standard applies to the following products:

(a) malting barley and other non-processed grain;

(b) processed products derived mainly from the products referred to in point (a).

2. REGENERATIVE AGRICULTURE

2.1. Definition

Regenerative agriculture is a farming system that conserves soil and soil biota, increases the organic carbon content of the soil ecosystem, and increases the nutritional value of the soil and the agricultural products it produces.

This Regenerative Agriculture Standard is broadly in line with and complements the principles of sustainable agriculture (soil health - points 2.4 and 2.5, water management - point 3.6, biodiversity - point 3.6, climate - point 2.4 and 2.7).

Regenerative agriculture in malting barley production involves farming practices aimed at restoring and improving soil health, increasing the biodiversity of agricultural soils, improving the resilience of ecosystems by increasing the yield of malting barley, and achieving the highest quality of production to meet the requirements of the buyer.

2.2 Overview of certified regenerative agriculture

Implementing the requirements of this Standard for the technology of growing malting barley and other crops as members of the rotation and measuring and monitoring the four key components (soil organic carbon and soil humus, overall soil health, soil biodiversity, use of tertiary and plant protection products and their residues in the soil and in the produce) to make conventional agriculture a certified system of restorative agriculture.

The main objectives of certified regenerative agriculture are:

- Improving soil health and preserving its potential. Improve soil health by promoting soil organic matter accumulation and micro-organism diversity through the introduction of technologies to maintain and improve overall soil fertility. Healthy and biologically active soils are essential for maintaining the productivity and resistance to adverse environmental factors of malting barley crops.
- Growing safe raw materials for the food processing industry and feed.
- Work/operate in a closed system, minimizing the use of non-renewable resources.
- Avoiding pollution from plant production and processing.
- Coexistence with and protection of the environment. Synergy of malting barley production technologies with the environment, ensuring the safety of the environment and of the products produced.

2.3 Key parameters for regenerative agriculture

While there are many components of a regenerative agriculture system, this Standard focuses on measuring the four main components of regenerative agriculture. Measurements of these key components are necessary for the farm unit to comply with the principles of regenerative farming:

1. Soil organic carbon and humus.

2. Soil health.

3. Biodiversity.

4. Fertilizer and plant protection products and their residues in the soil and in the produce grown.

The above key parameters work together as a whole for sustainable plant production and development. The assessment of all four parameters will provide accurate information on the status of a farm or a specific field in relation to this Regenerative Agriculture Standard.

These parameters define the basic ecosystem services and allow the certified operator and the certification body to understand how the system, the farm and the soil are evolving. Once the grower/farmer has achieved the objectives related to these key parameters, as well as the parameters referred to in section 4, he/she may apply for an audit of the certification of the farm unit/field.

2.4 Soil organic carbon and humus

The organic carbon content of the soil has a major influence on plant development and soil properties. Organic carbon is a key component of soil organic matter, playing an important role in supporting plant growth and influencing soil properties. The amount of organic carbon compounds in the soil is used as one of the indicators of soil health.

Soil organic carbon is a food source for soil micro-organisms. By decomposing organic matter, micro-organisms release essential nutrients available to plants, such as nitrogen, phosphorus and sulphur. Sufficient organic carbon promotes nutrient cycling, so that plants are constantly supplied with nutrients for optimal growth and development.

It is important to restore and/or reintroduce sufficient organic matter to the soil to increase or at least maintain the existing humus content. Conservation of nutrients in the soil is a key objective of regenerative farming.

By incorporating regenerative farming practices into malting barley production, farmers can improve soil health, increase ecosystem resilience, reduce costs and produce high quality malting barley without harming the environment.

Any practice that destroys or reduces soil biota and biodiversity is not part of regenerative agriculture.

Soil organic carbon and humus content of soil and one of the indicators of soil health, which is in line with the soil health guiding principles of sustainable agriculture.

2.5. Soil health

Soil health is one of the foundations of agriculture. Vital soil allows plants and animals to grow and develop. To achieve this, the main objective is to improve soil health by increasing the activity of soil micro-organisms. This is the aim of regenerative agriculture.

Healthy soil is a prerequisite for healthy plants, animals and agricultural products. Maintaining healthy, microbiologically active soils, preserving soil structure, fertility and nutrients are at the heart of all these measures.

Increasing the biomass of micro-organisms is supported by sustainable, research-based farming practices.

Micro-organisms are an important indicator of soil vitality, as they are closely linked to the mineralization of organic matter and the inactivation of active substances in plant protection products.

Micro-organisms play an important role in the decomposition of organic matter in the soil. Processes such as mineralization convert organic nutrients into forms that can be taken up by plants. This helps to release nutrients from organic residues and mineralize organic nitrogen into forms such as ammonium and nitrate, making them available to plants and reducing dependence on synthetic fertilizers, which can have a negative impact on the quality of malting barley grain.

Enriching soils with macro and microorganisms and further preserving them from leaching is a key part of regenerative agriculture. Micro-organisms can play an important role in reducing nutrient losses from the soil through denitrification and their immobilization in compounds that are inaccessible to plants.

The cropping systems of regenerative agriculture are based on biodiversity, and therefore encourage crop rotation to maintain soil productivity and soil structure, through the cultivation of soil-improving and soil-depleting crop rotations, and the use of microbiological products to increase plant resistance to diseases and pests. This would allow sustainable protection of the crops grown against pests, weeds and diseases.

2.6. Biodiversity

Soil and ecosystem biodiversity must be taken into account when considering regenerative agriculture. Promoting and maintaining on-farm biodiversity is the third principle of certified regenerative agriculture, which is also in line with the biodiversity guiding principles of sustainable agriculture. This may include the use of cover-intercrops, the creation of new infrastructure, the maintenance of existing infrastructure, changes in farming practices, and the use of microbiological products.

The aim of regenerative agriculture is to respect the biodiversity of ecosystems. Promoting and maintaining biodiversity on the farm is the third component of certified regenerative agriculture. This may include post-harvest cropping.

2.7 Fertilizer and plant protection products and their residues in soil and produce

This Standard allows the use of all registered plant protection products and fertilizers necessary for malting barley production. The same requirements apply to barley pre-planting.

This Standard aims to reduce the use of chemicals, i.e. it is necessary to plan for the system to be fertilized based on a targeted need. This principle is in line with the guiding principles of climate-smart agriculture.

To protect the environment and to avoid potential threats to bees, non-target arthropods (beetles, spiders, insects, etc.), this Standard aims to reduce the use of plant protection products by substituting or combining them with microbiological products.

3. PRODUCTION REQUIREMENTS

3.1. Regenerative Agriculture Plan

The Regenerative Agriculture Plan is an important part of this Standard.

The Regenerative Agriculture Plan is drawn up for four years and reviewed annually. The drafted or updated Regenerative Agriculture Plan shall be submitted before each audit as part of the certification process.

The Regenerative Agriculture Plan must include a map of the farm/field where malting barley is to be grown and must indicate:

- A field is ticked, indicating the area to be certified.
- Water bodies, if such water bodies are adjacent to a field; in accordance with the requirements set out in the Protection Zones and Coastal Protection Zones for Surface Water Bodies in accordance with the Order of the Minister of the Environment of the Republic of Lithuania of 7 November 2001 No.540 (new wording in force as of 1 January 2023), where protection zones are established for the surface water bodies in a larger extent than those indicated in the labels of the PPP, it is obligatory to refer to the inventory;
- Woodlands.
- Location of buildings and dwellings.

The Regenerative Agriculture Plan must specify:

- Crops grown, including forecasted production.
- Details of the crop rotation(s).
- Tillage methods, with depth of tillage.
- Measures implemented to benefit and/or enhance biodiversity.
- Plant nutrient requirements and pH.
- Soil tests, if any, that show that the soil contains the nutrients needed by the plants.
- The NPK and nitrogen fertilizers used for malting barley and the fertilization rates are given.
- If used, information on known resistance to pesticides or fungicides.
- Detailed information on measures to protect water bodies and water sources.

3.2. Barley production technology for regenerative agriculture

The Barley Growers' Association's technology for the cultivation of regenerative barley is recommended for the cultivation of barley under this Standard.

3.3. Tillage methods

3.3.1. The minimum soil preparation allowed by this Standard is tillage to a depth of 10 cm.

3.3.2. The field must be left with stubble at least once every five years after harvest.

3.3.3. The field may be ploughed, if necessary, but not more frequently than once every five years.

3.3.4 Soil fertility and biological activity shall be maintained or enhanced by any combination of the following:

- Including leguminous plants in at least a four-row rotation, as well as post-harvest sowing of oilseed rape.
- Using biological products where possible or in combination with chemical plant protection products or mineral fertilizers.
- Use natural bio stimulants, phytohormones, amino acids, humic and fulvic acids to manage abiotic stress in plants.
- Tillage practices that maintain or improve soil structure and biological activity.

3.4. Chemical and synthetic materials

3.4.1. Apply a balanced fertilizer application, based on the estimated yield, taking into account the field studies.

3.4.2 Records/logs (i.e. source, quantity and use) must be kept of all chemicals used.

3.4.3 Only registered plant protection products according to the list of plant protection products published by the State Plant Protection Service of the Republic of Lithuania (https://vatis.vatzum.lt/aapSarasas) are allowed to be used in accordance with this Standard.

3.4.4 In accordance with this Standard, the use of plant protection products containing glyphosate for pre-harvest crop desiccation is prohibited.

3.4.5 The operator shall take into account the potential risks arising from previous operations and the consequences of external contamination with materials not permitted by this Standard. This may require

the installation of buffer zones and/or barriers and the removal of contaminated product and/or field from the area to be certified.

3.4.6. Malting barley which has been found to contain unauthorized residues of chemicals may not be marketed as a certified product of Regenerative Agriculture.

3.4.7. If the product has been contaminated with prohibited substances due to factors beyond the control of the certified operator, such as long-term contamination with residues, it is necessary to carry out tests on chemical residues in the soil and/or the product.

3.5. Water management

3.5.1. Where a water body or a stretch of a water body is regulated (a river or a stretch of a river channel is straightened, deepened and restructured to regulate the soil water regime and to drain excess water from the drained areas), the width of the riparian buffer strips of the water bodies shall not be less than 3 m measured from the top of slope. Where the water body or section thereof is not regulated, the minimum width of the riparian buffer strips of water bodies shall not be less than 5 m measured from the water's edge. Grazing or mulching shall not be prohibited in the riparian buffer strips of surface water bodies.

3.5.2. The requirements for the protection zones and coastal protection zones of surface water bodies established by Order of the Minister of the Environment of the Republic of Lithuania No 540 of 7 November 2001 (current consolidated version), which set the boundaries of the protection zones and coastal protection zones of water bodies higher than those indicated on the labels of the plant protection products, shall be observed.

3.5.3. Riparian zones and buffer strips shall be maintained in good condition and mowed as necessary. Cultivation is prohibited in these strips. Livestock grazing and mulching are allowed.

3.5.4 The riparian buffer strips of water bodies shall be optimized to ensure protection of the water bodies from the ingress of nutrients and plant protection products. The riparian buffer strips of water bodies shall be defined in the Regenerative Agriculture Plan.

3.6. Use of seed

3.6.1. At least 25 % certified seed shall be used for the production of malting barley varieties in accordance with this Standard.

3.6.2 Seed acquisition documents and certificates shall be kept on file and, if necessary, made available at the time of the certification audit.

3.7. Pest control measures

3.7.1. Plant protection products and measures to protect crops from pests:

- Maintain an appropriate crop rotation;
- Choose varieties of malting barley that are resistant to disease and wilting;
- Proper preparation of barley seed, determination of the weight and germination of 1 000 grains and, if possible, detection of infection of the seed by pathogens;
- The seed is treated with barley mordant. And with seed contamination data, the choice of seed treatment should be made for the control of the identified pathogens, avoiding the excessive use of some active substances;
- Early sowing of malting barley, when the soil can be properly prepared, promotes uniform barley development and optimum crop density, which reduces the risk of premature spread of certain foliar diseases (powdery mildew, reticular streak);
- Constant monitoring of the phytosanitary status of the barley crop is essential;
- Apply fungicides when the onset of disease is detected. In most cases, a single fungicide application is sufficient to protect spring malting barley against disease (if the seed has been properly drilled).
- Where to give preference when choosing biological plant protection products against pests;
- Use of mechanical weed control (harrowing) or in combination with authorized chemical weed control measures;
- to provide favorable conditions for bees, non-target arthropods (beetles, spiders, insects, etc.).

3.7.2. The use of non-woven plastic or synthetic fabrics or coatings for mulching is prohibited.

4. CERTIFICATION

Certification to the Regenerative Agriculture Standard indicates to domestic and international food processors, suppliers and consumers that the farmer/processor is following regenerative agriculture practices in the growing, processing and storage of malting barley and other crops.

The purpose of certification to this Standard is to demonstrate that the products or produce in the agricultural unit/field have been grown or processed, managed using regenerative agricultural practices and comply with the key parameters assessed in a certification audit as specified in Annex 1 to this Standard.

Certification audits may only be carried out by an auditor approved by the Barley Growers' Association in accordance with the audit procedures set out in Annex 2 to this Standard.

4.1. Steps in a certification audit

4.1.1 The following steps of a certification audit are identified:

Step 1. The grower or an authorized representative applies to the Barley Growers Association for certification of the agricultural unit/field. The application shall include: the control number of the parcel, the field number, the area in hectares, the type of crop, the seeds used, the time of sowing, Regenerative Agriculture Plan, and other data.

Step 2. The Barley growers' association evaluates the application and appoints an authorized representative/auditor to carry out the measurements, surveys and assessment of the compliance of the agricultural unit with the requirements of the Regenerative Agriculture Standard on the intended site, in accordance with the audit procedure set out in Annex 2.

Step 3. On completion of the audit, the auditor provides the producer whose agricultural unit/field has been audited with an audit report indicating the compliance/non-compliance with the requirements of the Regenerative Agriculture Standard.

Step 4. The producer whose agricultural unit/field meets the requirements of the Regenerative Agriculture Standard, according to the audit report, is included in the Register of Certified Producers of the Barley Growers' Association. The Register of Certified Producers of the Barley Growers' Association is publicly available on the Barley Growers' Association's website: http// www.mieziai.lt.

4.1.2. All the production from a field for which a certificate of regenerative agriculture has been issued shall be considered certified and the purchaser of the production from that field shall apply to the Barley Growers' Association for the issue of a certificate for that quantity of production, if required.

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THE DRAFTERS OF THE REGENERATIVE AGRICULTURE STANDARD:

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Ernestas Vaitkevičius, Head of the Barley Growers' Association

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Annex 1 to the Regenerative Agriculture Standard. Malting barley. No CSO SM 000240401

1. KEY PARAMETERS TO BE ASSESSED IN A CERTIFICATION AUDIT

	Study of tillage methods	**Evaluation of catch crops**	**Crop rotation assessment**	**Using certified seed**	**Use of plant protection products and chemical fertilizers**
Measurements, inspections	Three measurements at different field locations	Inspection of documentation	Inspection of documentation	Seed certificate, purchase documents checked	Inspection of documentation
Parameter to be tested	Tillage depth not more than 10 cm.	Number of days per year that the field under study is covered (pre-crop, crop, post-crop, seed, stubble).	1.At least three different crops within a five-year period; 2. Do not grow the same crop for two consecutive years.	At least 25 % certified seed is used	1. Balanced fertilization according to soil tests, if available. 2. Use of protection products in the assessment of harmful organisms harmful limits.
Method of investigation, measurement	Visual, Measuring device	Verification of documents	Verification of documents	Verification of documents	Verification of documents

1.1 During the certification audit, the auditor appointed by the Barley Growers' Association shall assess the compliance of the audited agricultural unit/field with the requirements of the Regenerative Agriculture Standard.

1.2 An agricultural unit/field will be considered as certified according to the requirements of the Regenerative Agriculture Standard if it fulfils all six key requirements listed in this Annex, and the auditor will note this in the Certification Audit Report.

1.3 If the auditor under the audit reveals that excess chemicals have been used in the field, the grower/agricultural unit must include a provision in the Regenerative Agriculture Plan to reduce the quantities in upcoming years.

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Annex 2 to the Regenerative Agriculture Standard. Malting barley. No CSO SM 000240401

CERTIFICATION UNDER THE REGENERATIVE AGRICULTURE STANDARD

AUDIT PROCEDURE RULES

1. Purpose

Ensure the quality of the audit processes for the certification of the Regenerative Agriculture Standard by the auditor appointed by the Barley Growers Association.

This audit procedure shall be reviewed at least once a year.

2. Terms and definitions

The Regenerative Agriculture Standard is a Standard developed by the Barley Growers' Association and a group of experts, which sets out the criteria to be met by cereals produced under the Regenerative Agriculture Standard.

A certification audit is a process whereby, at the application of the grower, an auditor appointed by the Barley Growers' Association, in accordance with the established audit procedures, carries out an audit and, on the spot, carries out measurements, surveys and evaluations of the agricultural unit and assesses its compliance with the requirements of the Regenerative Agricultural Standard, which results in the preparing of an audit report.

An audit report is a document drawn up by an auditor appointed by the Barley Growers' Association who, in accordance with the established audit procedures, carries out a documentary check and carries out measurements, surveys and evaluations of the agricultural unit on the intended site to assess its compliance with the requirements of the Regenerative Agriculture Standard, to identify any non-compliance and to provide for the necessary corrective actions.

The certificate of restorative agriculture is a document issued by the Barley Growers' Association, at the request of the grain buyer or processor, when the buyer or processor purchases malting barley from a producer who is listed in the Barley Growers' Association's register of certified producers and who has successfully passed a certification audit with no irregularities.

Auditor - a person appointed by the Barley Growers' Association who, in accordance with the established audit procedure, carries out on the spot, on a designated site, a documentary check of the agricultural unit and field measurements, surveys and tests and assesses its compliance with the requirements of the Regenerative Agriculture Standard.

Non-conformity - non-compliance of the parameters of the audited agricultural unit/field with the requirements set out in Annex 1 of the Regenerative Agriculture Standard.

Corrective action means an action to eliminate the cause of a non-conformity, defect or other undesirable event and to prevent its recurrence.

Note - minor, one-off non-compliance of the parameters of the audited agricultural unit/field with the requirements of the Regenerative Agriculture Standard.

Correction - a correction, reworking or adjustment to eliminate an existing non-conformity.

3. Related documents

PPIS (Information system for the reception of applications) declaration, field logbook, soil test reports, if any, seed certificates, other as requested by the auditor.

4. Responsibility

The organization, execution and control of these Audit Procedures shall be the responsibility of the Head of the Barley Growers' Association.

5. Guiding principles for auditors

1) Independence. The auditor can only carry out an audit if he or she is independent of the client, the customer and the audited entity;

2) Integrity and objectivity. The auditor must not intentionally misrepresent the facts and his/her opinion must not be influenced by the opinions of others;

3) Professional competence. The auditor must have the professional knowledge and skills to provide a professional service;

4) Confidentiality. The auditor shall keep confidential the information entrusted by the client and shall not disclose it to any third party.

6. Auditors

Certification audits may only be carried out by an auditor approved by the Barley Growers' Association and complying with the basic principles for auditors set out in these Rules.

7. Grower/Unit representative

Grower/agricultural unit representative:

- ensure that the conditions are in place for the audit to take place;
- is responsible for ensuring that timely corrective action is taken to address non-conformities identified during the audit;
- participate in field audits and, where appropriate, ensure the participation of staff relevant to the area being audited.

8. Actions to organize and conduct certification audits

8.1. Submission of an application

The grower/representative of the agricultural unit shall complete the Barley Growers Association Certification Audit Application, which shall include:

- Applicant's details (name, surname, company name, company/person code, address, contact details);
- the land parcel reference number (LPR);
- outdoor number;
- area in hectares;
- crop type;
- used seeds;
- sowing time;
- other data specified in the application.

The application shall also be accompanied by: Regenerative Agriculture Plan, the PPIS declaration data, the field logbook data, the results of soil tests, if any, seed certificates, acquisition documents and other relevant information.

8.2 Verification of documents

The grower/agricultural unit representative shall provide the auditor with the PPIS declaration data, the field logbook data, the results of soil tests, if any, and other relevant information, upon request from the auditor authorized by the Association of Barley Growers.

8.3. Field inspection, measurements

The grower/agricultural unit representative shall meet with an auditor authorized by the Barley Growers' Association at a pre-agreed time and place and the auditor shall carry out the scheduled field tests and measurements.

9. Audit report

On completion of the audit, the auditor shall provide the producer/agricultural unit representative whose agricultural unit/field has been audited with an audit report which, if found, shall indicate any non-compliance with the requirements of the Regenerative Agriculture Standard, observations and suggested corrective actions.

10. Analysis of audit results and corrective actions

The producer/agricultural unit representative whose agricultural unit/field has been audited and during the audit non-compliance with the requirements of the Regenerative Agriculture Standard or observations have been identified shall take the necessary steps to remedy the non-compliance as well as to carry out the corrective actions suggested by the auditor. In this case, the grower has the right to reapply to the Barley Growers' Association for a re-certification audit.