



CONNECTIONS

# Primary and Associate Grower Change

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External

1	Purpose .....	2
2	Definitions .....	2
3	Timing of requests .....	3
4	Change to Primary Grower .....	3
5	Addition of an Associate Grower .....	4
6	Removal of an Associate Grower .....	5

## 1 PURPOSE

- 1.1 The Board of Directors of GAP Connections (GAPC) has adopted this Primary and Associate Grower Change Policy (the “Policy”) to outline the process GAPC Grower Members should follow when requesting a change to the GAPC Grower Member listed as the Primary Grower.

## 2 DEFINITIONS.

- 2.1 **GAPC Grower Member:** A GAPC Grower Member holds a unique ID number assigned through the GAPC Grower System. A GAPC Grower Member has access to log in to their Grower Account to easily view, edit, and share their operation information and GAPC activities including training and compliance records. A GAPC Grower may or may not be listed on a Certification Application for their operation.
- 2.2 **Primary Grower:** A GAPC Grower Member listed as main point of contact for a GAPC Certification Application. The Primary Grower must agree to and follow all Terms and Conditions of the chosen GAPC Certification Program, be present at the Monitoring Visit, and meet all other requirements of the chosen GAPC Certification Program.
- 2.3 **Associate Grower:** An additional GAPC Grower Member listed on the application. The Associate Grower must meet the definition of an Associate Grower, as defined by GAPC, agree to and follow all Terms and Conditions of the chosen GAPC Certification Program, be present at the Monitoring Visit, and meet all other requirements of the chosen GAPC Certification Program. Associate Growers are reviewed and approved at time of application and verified at Monitoring Visit.
- 2.4 **Late Application Fee:** Fee charged for a GAPC Certification Application being submitted after the application period. Late applications will only be accepted if an approved Monitoring Firm has the capacity to add a Monitoring Visit to their schedule.
- 2.5 **Monitoring Visit:** Annual on-farm visit by a monitoring firm to verify compliance with GAPC Certification Standards.
  - 2.5.1 **Audit:** Monitoring visit that verifies Critical and Additional Standards and requires worker interviews of hired labor.
  - 2.5.2 **Site Visit:** Monitoring Visit that verifies Additional Standards. Only available to operations that have not had significant changes to management and that are operated by GAPC Grower Members that were GAPC Certified last year.

- 2.6 **Successor:** GAPC Grower Member who has been identified to replace the current Primary Grower listed on a GAPC Certification Application during a year with a Site Visit.

### **3 TIMING OF REQUESTS**

- 3.1 A request to change either the Primary or Associate Growers must be provided in a timely manner and is required prior to the Monitoring Visit being conducted by the Monitoring Firm. If the request is not made prior to the Monitoring Visit, a review of the extenuating circumstances preventing the timely request will be conducted to determine if a change can be made.

### **4 CHANGE TO PRIMARY GROWER**

#### **4.1 Change desired in year with an Audit**

- 4.1.1 Contact GAPC staff and request the change. GAPC staff will cancel any existing applications and request a new application be started by the new Primary Grower. If the change is being made after the application period is closed, a late application fee will be assessed.

#### **4.2 Change requested in year with a Site Visit.**

- 4.2.1 Contact GAPC staff and request the change. GAPC staff will cancel the existing application and request a new application be started by the new Primary Grower. Changes to the Primary Grower in a year with a Site Visit will result in the operation returning to an Audit. If the change is being made after the application period is closed, a late application fee will be assessed.

In the cases of death or significant illness of the current Primary Grower, the requesting GAPC Grower Member must follow the procedures in **Section 4.4**.

#### **4.3 Change requested in year with a Site Visit due to the death or significant illness of the current Primary Grower.**

- 4.3.1 The GAPC Grower Member who requests to be the Successor, must contact GAPC to disclose their preceding relationship with the Primary Grower and management of the operation. The GAPC Grower Member would only be considered as a Successor if the crop and labor management (sourcing, payroll, housing, etc.) practices would

not significantly change with the absence of the Primary Grower. If it is determined that the absence of the Primary Grower or the change in management would lead to significant changes to the crop and labor management (sourcing, payroll, housing, etc.) practices, a new application that requires an Audit will have to be made. If the application period is closed, a late application fee will be waived.

- 4.3.2 After the identification of a potential Successor, GAPC may request documentation and information from the Successor, including, but not limited to GAPC Records, entity documentation, FSA 578(s), wage statements, employee recruitment and training records. If determined that there would be no adverse or major changes to the farming operation or day-to-day practices the Successor would be approved by GAPC to become the Primary Grower on the application. Worker interviews will be required during the Site Visit, to verify there were no adverse effects to the management practices or employee relations.
- 4.3.3 Upon approval of a Successor, GAPC will make the needed changes to the GAPC Certification Application and in the GAPC Grower System. The new Primary Grower will be required to agree to and follow all Terms and Conditions of the chosen GAPC Certification Program. Primary and Associate Growers must participate in monitoring activities with honesty and respond to questions thoroughly and truthfully. If information or documents provided during the application process or during any audit, investigation, or other monitoring activity are inaccurate or untruthful, GAPC Certification may be denied or revoked.

## **5 ADDITION OF AN ASSOCIATE GROWER**

### **5.1 Addition requested in year with a Full Audit during the application period.**

- 5.1.1 The new Associate Grower can be added to an existing application if the new Associate Grower meets the GAPC Certification requirements for Associate Growers and is currently not listed as a Primary Grower on another submitted or approved application. If prior to the application being submitted, the Primary Grower can login and add the Associate Grower to the application. If after the application has been submitted, a link is provided to add Associate Growers and pay the Associated Grower fee.

**5.2 Addition requested in year with a Full Audit after the application period.**

5.2.1 The new Associate Grower can be added to an existing application by contacting GAPC. Any new Associated Growers will be charged the Associated Grower fee.

**5.3 Addition requested in year with a Site Visit.**

5.3.1 No additions of Associate Growers are allowed during a year with a Site Visit. If a Primary Grower wishes to add an Associate Grower in a year with a Site Visit, they must have an Audit conducted on their operation. The Primary Grower should notify GAPC that a new Associate Grower is being requested. GAPC will cancel the current application and have the Primary Grower begin a new application that requires an Audit. If the addition is being made after the application period is closed, the late application fee will be waived.

**6 REMOVAL OF AN ASSOCIATE GROWER**

**6.1 Removal requested in year with a Full Audit or Site Visit during the application period.**

6.1.1 If prior to the application being submitted, the Primary Grower can remove the Associated Grower by accessing their application and deleting the Associate Grower. If after the application has been submitted, the Primary Grower should contact GAPC and request the Associate Grower be removed from the application. There are no refunds for removed Associated Growers after the application has been approved.

**6.2 Removal requested in year with a Full Audit or Site Visit after the application period.**

6.2.1 The Primary Grower can request the Associate Grower be removed by contacting GAPC. There are no refunds for removed Associated Growers after the application has been approved.