



# AOECS Gluten-Free Addendum Audit Program

Knowledge Inspired,  
Quality Driven.

**AOECS**  
Association of European Coeliac Societies



**Gluten Free  
Alliance™**

**SGS**

# A simpler path to getting the trusted Crossed Grain symbol

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SGS has partnered with the Association of European Coeliac Societies (AOECS) to offer food manufacturers and retailers a new route to acquiring the gluten-free foods certification.

The new AOECS Gluten-Free Addendum Audit Program can be delivered alongside any Global Food Safety Initiative (GFSI) Benchmarked Food Safety Standard.

This means that if you are certified to any GFSI benchmarked Food Safety standard, you can enjoy the benefits of the Addendum Program without having to go through the process of a stand-alone AOECS audit.



# The Essentials

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AOECS is a not-for-profit umbrella organization representing a large number of European national coeliac societies.

AOECS owns and operates a gluten-free certification program recognized internationally by its Crossed Grain symbol. Brand owners are able to use this symbol in their pre-packaged food products if they source from manufacturers that meet the AOECS Standard for Gluten-free Foods, and if they meet the Crossed Grain symbol's licensing rules. All food products bearing the Crossed Grain symbol must comply with all AOECS Standard requirements, which include the following:

- End-products must contain 20 mg/kg (parts per million – or “ppm”) or less of gluten.
- Only products with multiple ingredients, or processed products (e.g. fruit bars), can be certified. This prevents products which are naturally gluten-free in their native state from using the Crossed Grain symbol.
- Facilities that manufacture AOECS-certified products must undergo annual audits.
- Manufacturers must use accredited laboratories to conduct finished product testing each year.



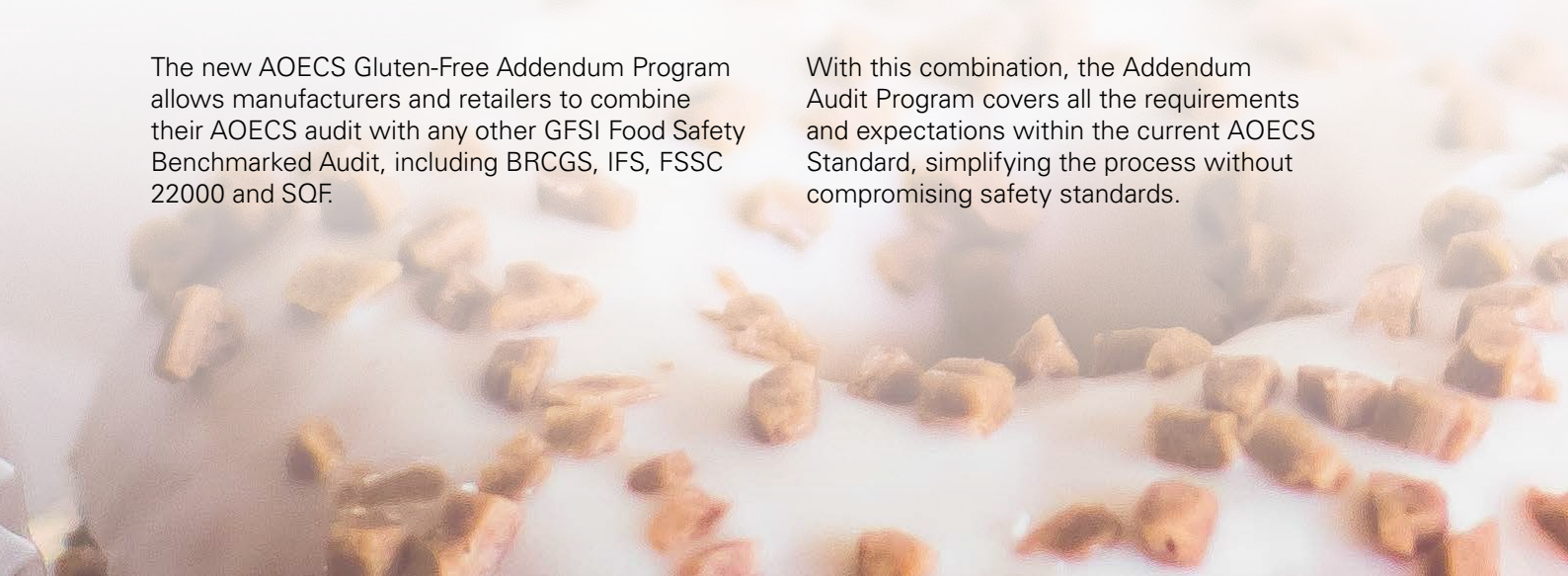
# The Addendum Program: A New Way to Get Certified

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As a long-standing and trusted partner, SGS has become the first globally approved independent Certification Body to provide this program, which will help manufacturers and retailers maximize efficiencies and avoid unnecessary duplication and costs.

The new AOECs Gluten-Free Addendum Program allows manufacturers and retailers to combine their AOECs audit with any other GFSI Food Safety Benchmarked Audit, including BRCGS, IFS, FSSC 22000 and SQF.

With this combination, the Addendum Audit Program covers all the requirements and expectations within the current AOECs Standard, simplifying the process without compromising safety standards.



# Gluten-Free Addendum Audit Program Benefits

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The Addendum Audit Program has been designed with manufacturers' and retailers' needs in mind. Specifically, it:



Reduces time on site, minimizing operational disturbance



Saves on costs



Ensures that AOECs audits are carried out by skilled and qualified auditors



Allows companies with sites certified to different GFSI benchmarked Food Safety standards to use a single Gluten-Free Addendum Program, improving operational efficiency

# Six Steps to Crossed Grain Certification

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The process is as follows:

1. Contact the relevant coeliac society ([www.aoecs.org](http://www.aoecs.org)), complete the Crossed Grain Symbol license application form and calculate your annual license fee.
2. Prepare your facility for an on-site audit by conducting a self-assessment or ask SGS to do this for you.
3. Book your audit to be combined with a GFSI Benchmarked Audit with SGS and arrange for your products to be tested for gluten content.
4. When you pass your audit, SGS will issue a certificate of compliance against the AOECS Standard.
5. Send your audit certificate to the coeliac society licensor to support your license application to use the Crossed Grain symbol.
6. Maintain your Crossed Grain symbol certification by planning for your facility's annual audits and conducting the necessary product testing.

# Additional SGS Services

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In addition to offering the AO ECS certification program, SGS offers a range of related services:



Auditing

SGS can deliver both the AO ECS Gluten-Free addendum and stand-alone AO ECS audits.

This allows companies that are not certified to any GFSI Benchmarked Standard to be certified under this scheme.



Testing

Thanks to SGS's Enzyme-Linked Immunosorbent Assay (ELISA) testing methodologies, you can increase the safety of your products by ensuring that even low levels of gluten are detected.



Training

SGS can train your employees on what the AO ECS Standard requires, and how to implement effective risk management.



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## Contact us

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WHEN YOU NEED TO BE SURE

**SGS**