The coordinator in the QS scheme

Status: March 2025

General Information

This is QS

Cross-level system

- Supported by the entire chain together
- Process controls in all companies
- Product controls at critical points
- Coordination of incidents and crises

Labelling with the QS certification mark

- Orientation for consumers
- Signal for safe food
- Identification within the chain

The QS scheme at a glance

QS stands for:

- Quality assurance – from farm to shop
- Certified quality assurance scheme during the production, processing and marketing of food

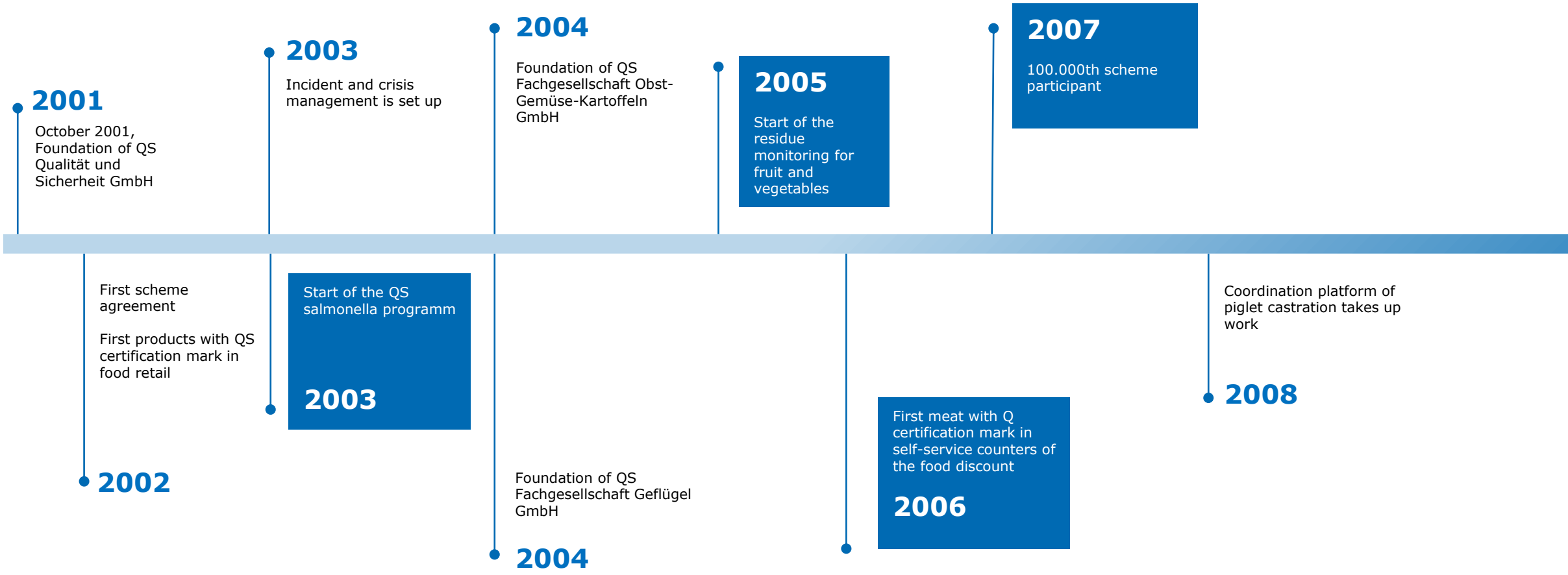
Milestones QS :

- 2001: Foundation of the QS scheme for the sector meat and meat products
- 2004: Foundation of QS Fachgesellschaft Obst-Gemüse-Kartoffeln

The Goal:

- Creation of a transparent and cross stage quality assurance scheme
- Products that have passed the entire chain obtain the certification mark

Milestones


2001
October 2001, Foundation of QS Qualität und Sicherheit GmbH
2002
First scheme agreement
First products with QS certification mark in food retail
2003
Incident and crisis management is set up
2003
Start of the QS salmonella programm
2004
Foundation of QS Fachgesellschaft Obst-Gemüse-Kartoffeln GmbH
2004
Foundation of QS Fachgesellschaft Geflügel GmbH
2005
Start of the residue monitoring for fruit and vegetables
2006
First meat with Q certification mark in self-service counters of the food discount
2007
100.000th scheme participant
2008
Coordination platform of piglet castration takes up work

Milestones

2012

Antibiotics database is online

Start of antibiotic monitoring for pig production farms

2012

2013

QS scheme integrity system extended by unannounced audits.

Ten years QS quality assurance for fruit, vegetables and potatoes.

Integration of breeding farms and hatcheries in the QS scheme

2014

2016

Coordination platform adopt key issue paper for renouncing piglet castration without anesthesia

New Stage Preparation/ Processing implemented in the supply chain fruit, vegetables, potatoes

2016

2017

New Stage Preparation/ Processing implemented in the supply chain fruit, vegetables, potatoes
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Range of products for fresh fruit and vegetables with QS certification extended in the food retail

QS-Gap standard: QS achieves Gold status for fruit and vegetable production

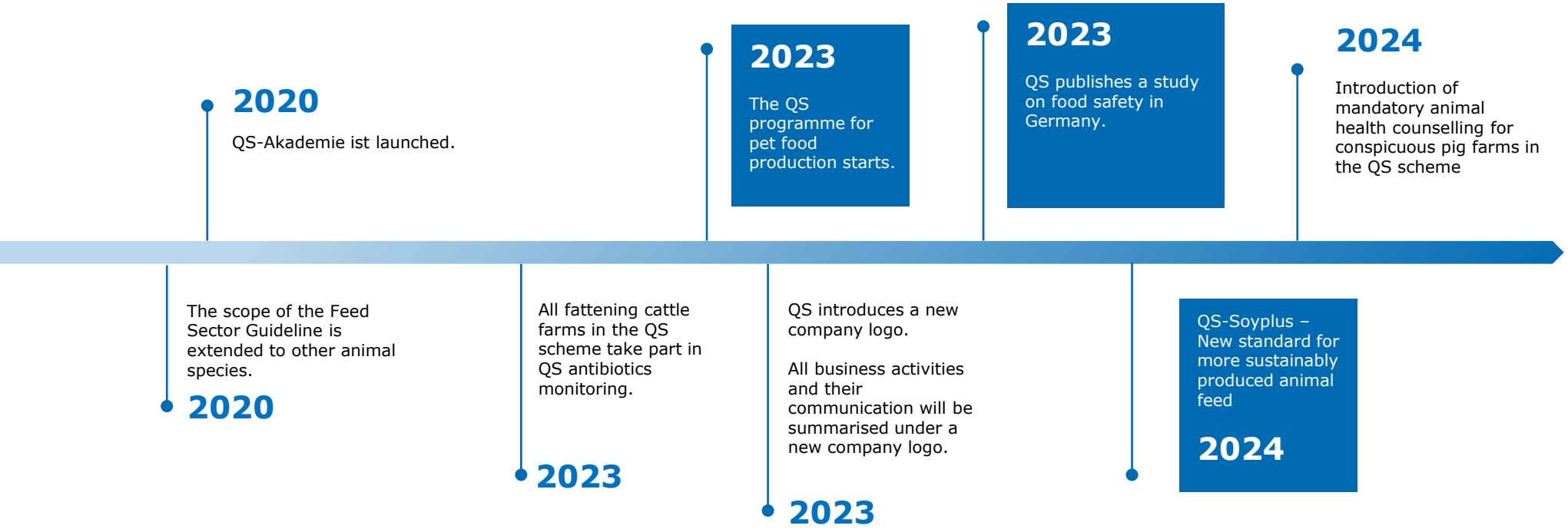
2018

2019

ASP- Risikoampel: Evaluation tool for disease prevention co developed by QS goes online

QS raises new indicies on biosecurity and livestock farming

Milestones


2020
QS-Akademie ist launched.
The scope of the Feed Sector Guideline is extended to other animal species.
2020
2023
The QS programme for pet food production starts.
All fattening cattle farms in the QS scheme take part in QS antibiotics monitoring.
2023
2023
QS publishes a study on food safety in Germany.
QS introduces a new company logo.
All business activities and their communication will be summarised under a new company logo.
2023
2024
Introduction of mandatory animal health counselling for conspicuous pig farms in the QS scheme
QS-Soyplus – New standard for more sustainably produced animal feed
2024

The QS scheme: the shareholders

Who is behind the QS scheme?

Feed Sector

drv

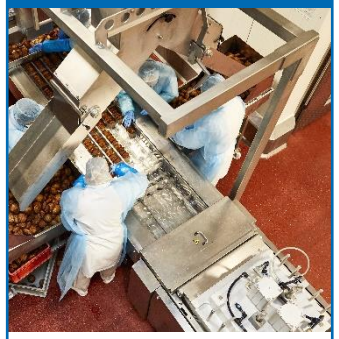
Agricultural Production

DBV

Slaughtering, Deboning

VDF

Processing



BVWS

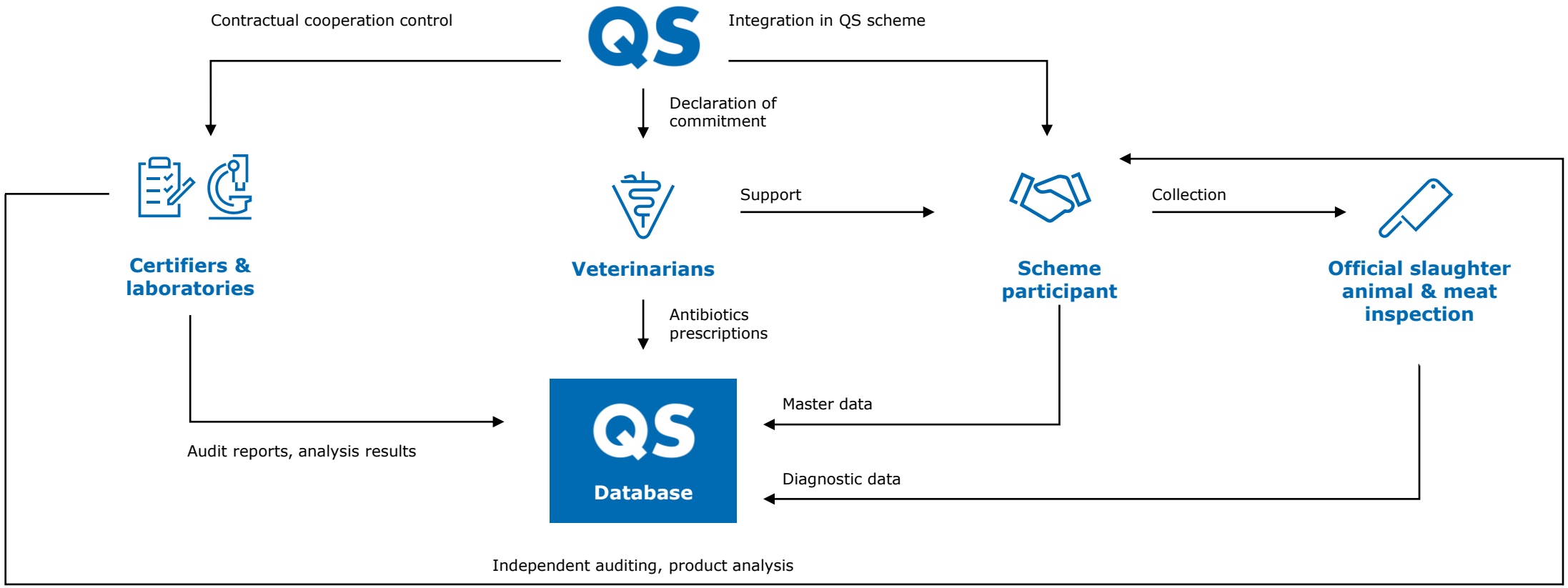
Food Retail

HfM

QS Qualität und Sicherheit GmbH

QS

Networking with scheme participants, certifiers, laboratories and veterinarians



Integration of the entire value chain

Only if the entire value chain - from the farmer to the shop counter - is certified in accordance with the QS requirements will the product ultimately be labelled with the blue QS certification mark.

The QS scheme - additional Product controls Monitoring programmes

Feed monitoring

Examination for compliance with limit and guidance values for mycotoxins, environmental toxins, plant protection products, heavy metals and microorganisms

Residue monitoring Fruit, vegetables, potatoes

Examination of maximum residue levels and limit values for plant protection products, post-harvest treatment products, growth regulators, pollutants, heavy metals as well as checking whether the products used have been approved.

Antibiotic and salmonella monitoring, Diagnostic data collection

Collection of antibiotic use in poultry and pig farms (transparency, obligatory involvement of farmers, veterinarians) Examination of salmonella contamination in abattoirs and agricultural companies. The results of official post-mortem inspections are passed on to the QS results database and evaluated in relation to the abattoir.

The plus for safe Food

The blue **QS certification mark** continues to label fresh meat and sausage products, ham, fresh fruit, vegetables, potatoes, which are produced and marketed in compliance with the binding quality requirements of QS.

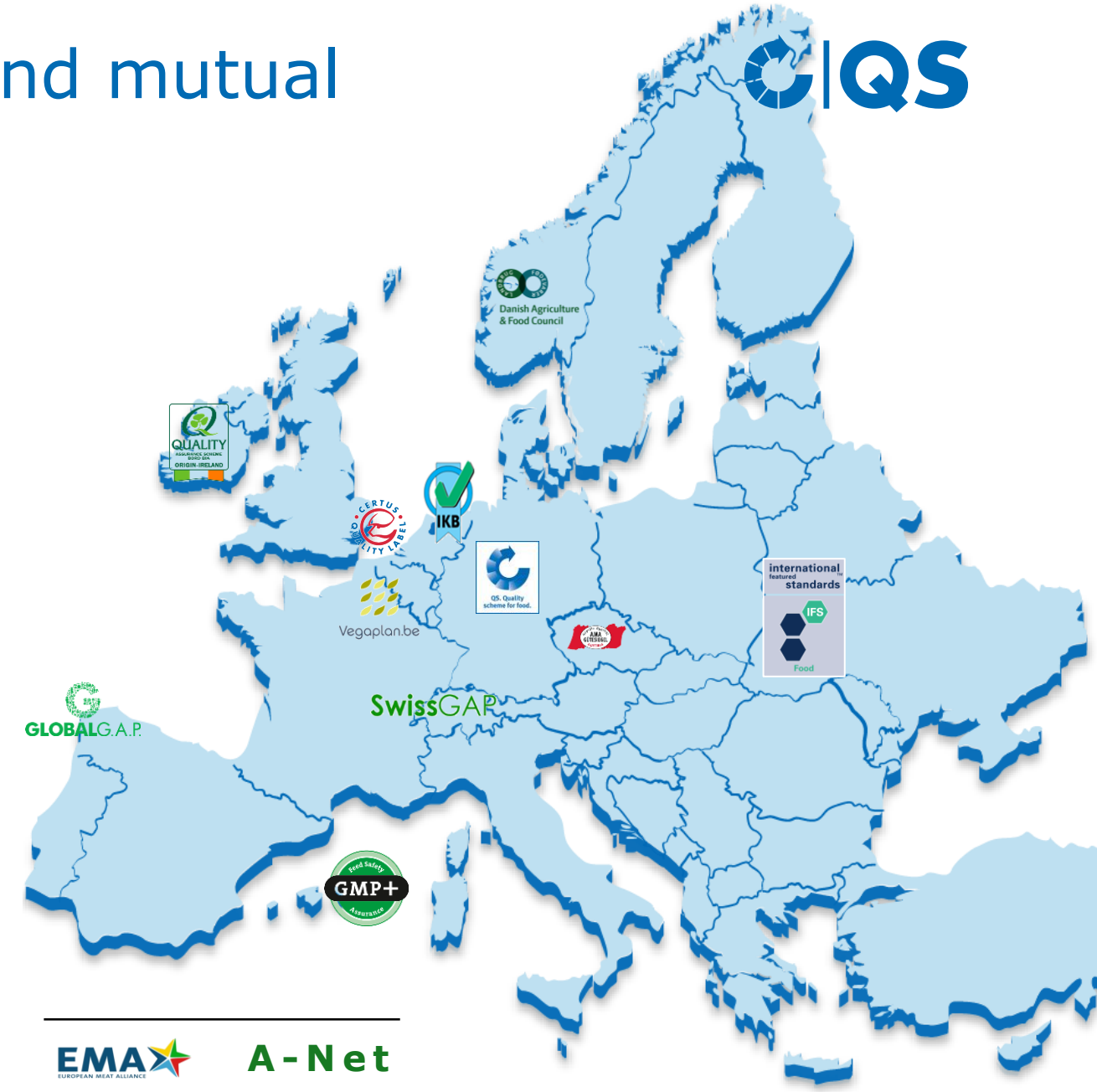
Since April 2023, the new **company logo** will be labelling the umbrella organisation QS, which, as a reliable and innovative industry platform, adapts the QS standard for quality assurance for the branch to current challenges, expands the QS scheme and also takes on other cross-industry tasks.

International cooperation and mutual recognition

Since 2004 Exchange of information and improvement of quality assurance at a uniformly high international level

- Country-specific and global quality regulations for
  - Feed
  - Livestock farming
  - Meat industry
  - Fruit and vegetable production
  - Trade

Agreements with various quality assurance standards for mutual recognition with the aim of equal food and feed safety at all stages of the QS value chain.



Agriculture Production Livestock Farming

Approved companies (status 2nd January 2025):

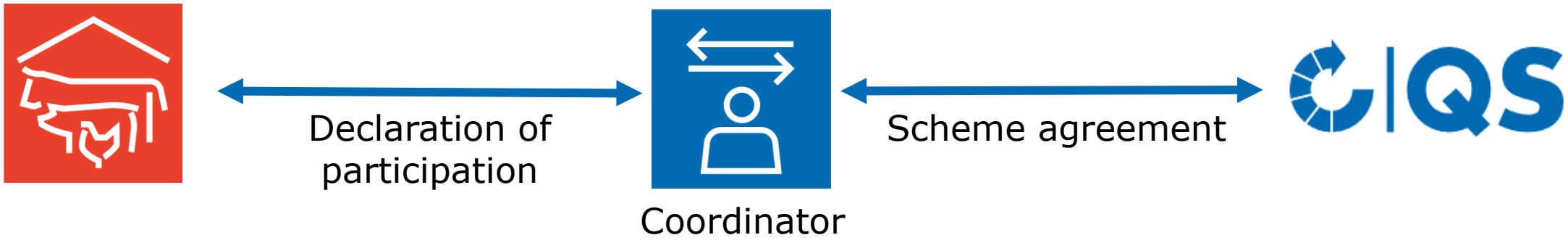
	total	108.474	
	Cattle farming	Pig farming	Poultry farming/ hatcheries
Germany	**66.493[1]**	**22.780**	**3.221**
Other countries, i.a.	**638**	**13.484**	**1.858**
Denmark	0	7.133	87
Belgium	0	3.635	13
Netherlands	77	2.576	122
Italy	0	0	690
Poland	9	0	671
Switzerland	263	0	0
Luxembourg	184	24	0
Austria	7	0	180
…	…	…	…

[1] Including 43.751 QM milk locations (Slaughter cows)

Responsibilities of the coordinator

Coordinators as the interface between the companies and QS

Any natural or legal person can become a coordinator that fulfills the requirements for coordinators e.g. producers' associations or federations, regional organisations, consulting providers or storage, processing and marketing businesses.

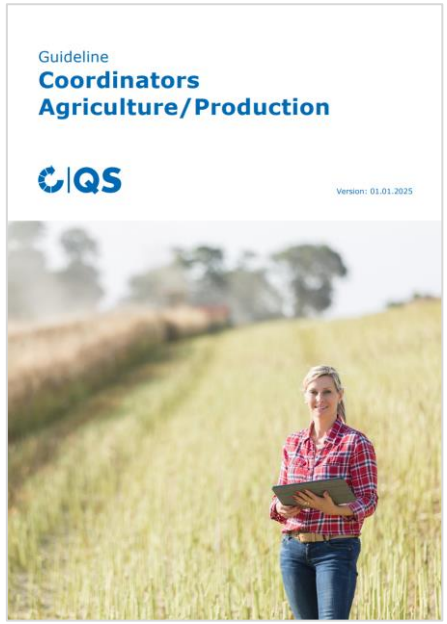


Responsibilities of the coordinator

- First point of contact
- Registration of the locations in the QS database (maintenance of master data)
- Organisation of the monitoring programmes (e.g. Feed monitoring, antibiotics monitoring)
- Ordering/Organisation of the audits / cooperation with certification bodies
- Organisation of QS-participation (e. g. declaration of participation)
- Organisation of participation in the additional module (e.g. VLOG)
- Sending of individual access data for the QS database
- Incident and crisis management

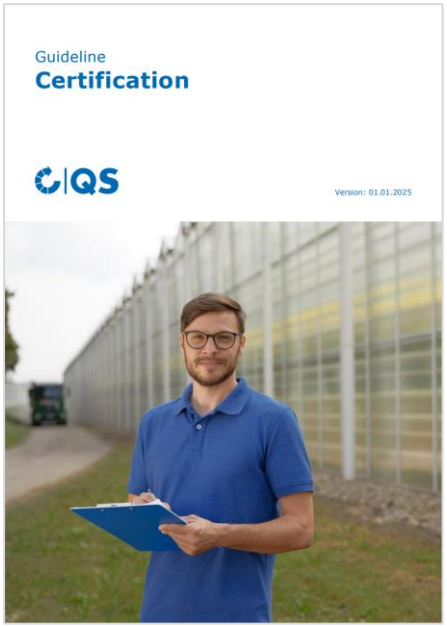
Documents for coordinators

The following documents, for example, are relevant for coordinators:

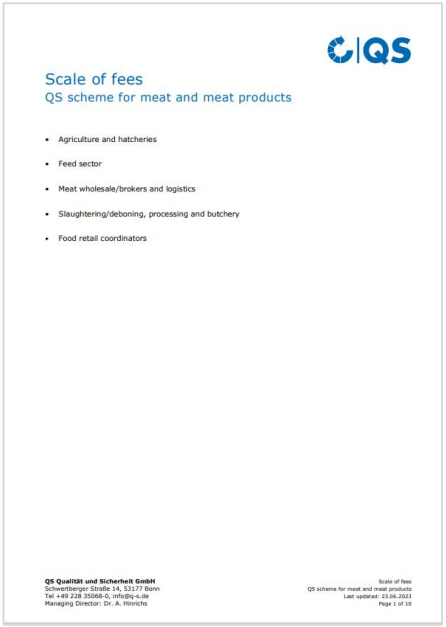


Guideline coordinators

General Regulations & Annexes 5.1 – 5.2



Guideline Certification



Scale of fees

Note: The documents of the monitoring programmes (feed, antibiotics, salmonella monitoring and diagnostic data) may also be relevant (see following pages).

The relevant requirements for livestock owners and transporters are published in the document centre under the rubrics *guidelines, checklists* and *other documents.*

Monitoringprogrammes – organisation and implementation (Coordinator)

Feed monitoring (on-farm mixer)

- Preparation of a feed control plan
- Commissioning of the sampler and inspection by QS-recognized laboratories
- Organisation/maintenance/review of the control plan data
- Forwarding the analysis results to the location
- Location assignment to the sampler in the database
- Notification of deviations in feed to QS

Monitoringprogrammes – organisation and implementation (Coordinator)

Salmonella Monitoring Pigs

- Recording and maintenance of data
  - Master data of livestock farmers in QS database
  - Entry of annual production or number of fattening places, production method
  - Entry of empty periods after notification by the livestock owner
- Forwarding of information letters or notifications

Monitoringprogrammes – organisation and implementation (Coordinator)

Antibiotics Monitoring (Fattening cattle, fattening and breeding poultry, pig production)

- Recording of specific data and entry into the antibiotics database
- Recording of mandatory data
- Assignment of veterinarians specified by the animal owner
- Forwarding of the therapy index and notification

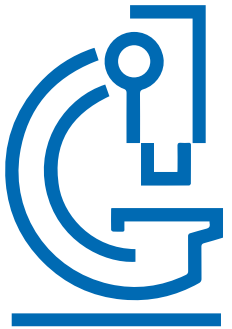
Monitoringprogrammes – Organisation and implementation (Coordinator)

Diagnostic data (pig production):

- forwarding of documented diagnostic data

Residue control programme (fattening cattle):

- Preparation of and compliance with the residue control plan



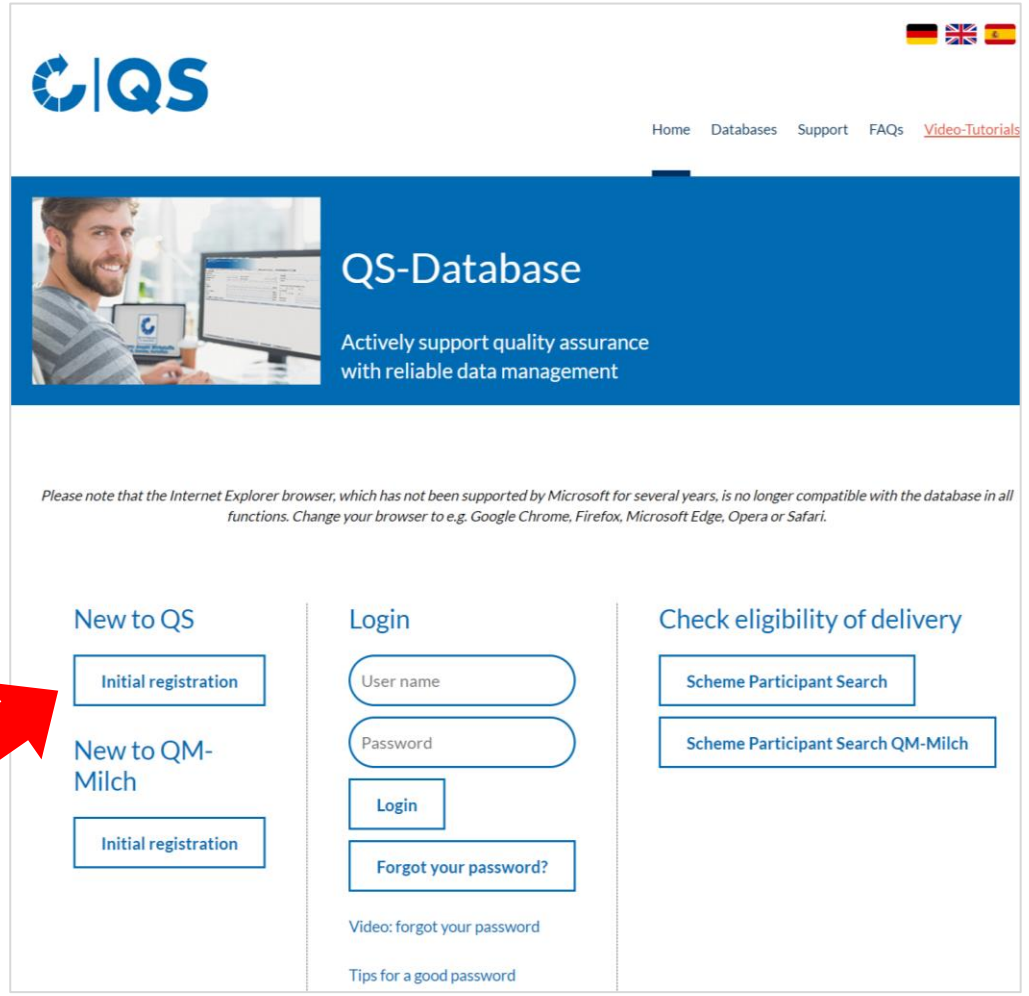
Info: Further information on monitoring can be found here.

The way into the QS scheme

Steps to become a system partner

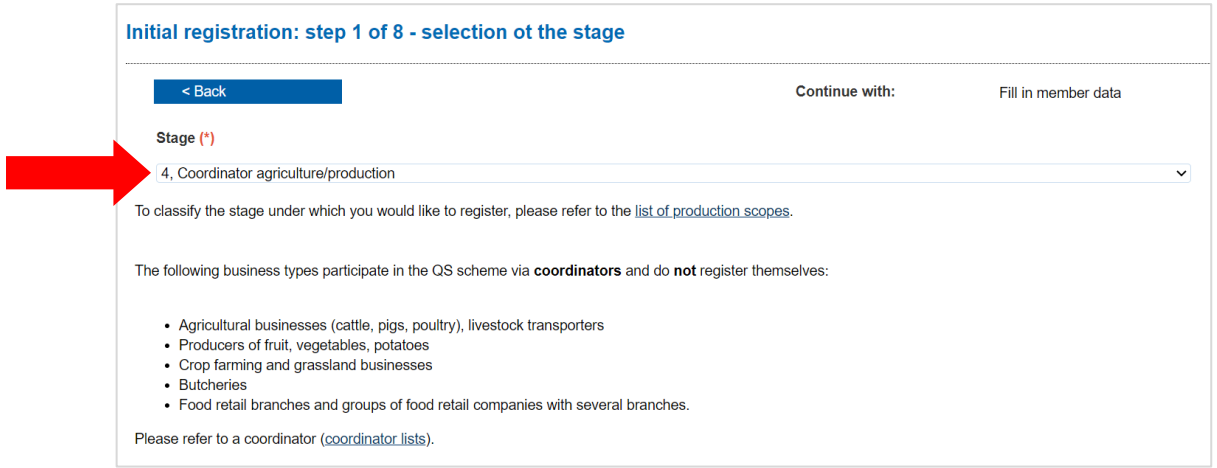
Registration in the QS database (system partner)

- At https://www.q-s.de/softwareplattform/en/ you can register in the QS scheme.
- Click on the button “Initial registration” to start the registration process.
- On the page that opens, you will find initial information on the new registration process.
- The following menu guides you through the new registration in the QS database in eight steps.
- We recommend clarifying the conditions for QS scheme participation with the certification body in advance.



Registration in the QS database (system partner)

- Once you have read the information on the initial registration and accepted the data privacy statement, click “Next” to begin the actual initial registration.
- In the first step, you select the stage “4 Coordinator agriculture production” and click “Next”
- In the following steps 2 to 8 you will be asked to provide further information.
- You will find a detailed description of the new registration on our website under **Support.**



Registration in the QS database (system partner)

- The following information has to be provided during the initial registration:
  - Address of your company
  - Contact data of the legal representative, the crisis manager and (not mandatory) the contact person
  - Data of the location of your company
- Then select the certification body, which is supposed to implement the independent inspection (audit) in your company and conclude a contract with the certification body.
- After the conclusion of the initial registration you will receive a confirmation of registration with access data by e-mail
- With this access data you can maintain your master data
- The certification body of your choice will be informed of your registration by e-mail

Data entry and maintenance of bundled locations

Registration of bundled locations and master data maintenance

- Log in to the QS database with your access data:
  Register and deregister of your bundled locations
  Note: You cannot bundle your own location, only other (external) locations. This does not apply to bundling activities for your own operations by producer groups, integrations, etc.
- Written agreement (declaration of participation and power of attorney) with each bundled location for the corresponding location.
- By signing the first declaration of participation, you must comply with all QS requirements.

Data entry and maintenance of bundled locations

Conclusion of the declaration of participation and power of attorney

- A separate declaration of participation and power of attorney must be completed for each legally independent location.
- Each location must have its own 15-digit registration number (ISO code + company number).
- If data is forwarded to third parties, the declaration of consent for further data use must be completed and signed by the legal representative of the location.

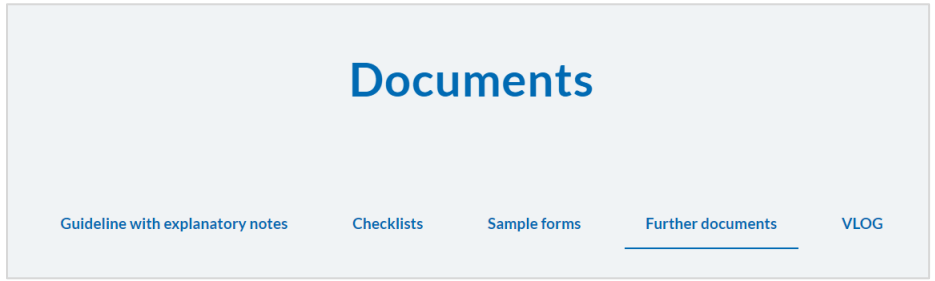
Info: The declaration of participation and power of attorney and the declaration of consent for further data use can be found **here**

Data entry and maintenance of bundled locations

Conclusion of the declaration of participation and power of attorney

- Each location has to indicate the relevant production scope(s) at the time of registration

Info: a list of the production scopes can be found **here**



Agriculture (To see the possible combinations of the product scopes, please klick on the arrow)	
20	agricultural coordinator
904	livestock transport
Production branch cattle farming	
1001	cattle production
1002	calf production
1004	calf breeding
1008	dairy farming
1016	suckling cow production
1320	cows (QM milk)
Production branch pig farming	
2001	pig production
2002	gilt and boar rearing
2004	sow and piglets production
2008	piglet rearing
Production branch poultry farming	
3001	broiler production
3002	turkey rearing
3004	turkey production
3008	peking duck rearing
3016	peking duck production
3032	laying hen farming
301	broiler breeder farming
304	turkey breeder farming

Auditing and certification of the bundled locations

Commissioning of audits on QS locations

- During the registration of bundled locations select a QS-approved certification body for the conduction of audits.
- You can also work with more than one certification body.
- You coordinate the audits for the location with the certification body and are responsible for timely planning.
- The certification body inspects the bundled location and enters the audit report into the QS database.

Info: If more than one certification body is commissioned, an overview needs to be available that shows the assignment of locations to the certification bodies.

Conclusion of contract with QS Qualität und Sicherheit GmbH

- As soon as the first location receives a certification after successful auditing, you receive a scheme agreement as well as a master data sheet for your company from QS.

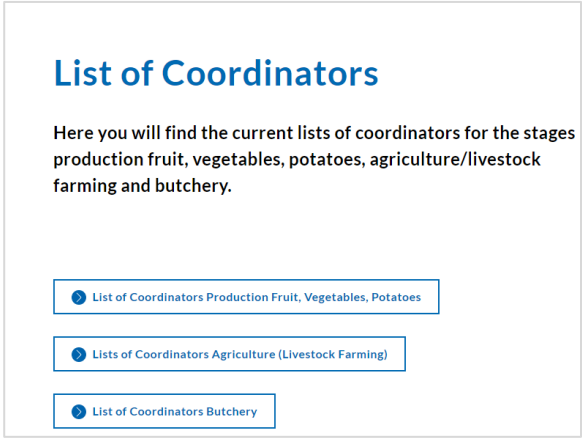
- Please sign the attached contract and fill in the master data sheet. Then send both documents back to **vertragswesen@q-s.de.**

- One example of the contract will be signed by QS and will be send back to you for your records by e-mail.

You did it!

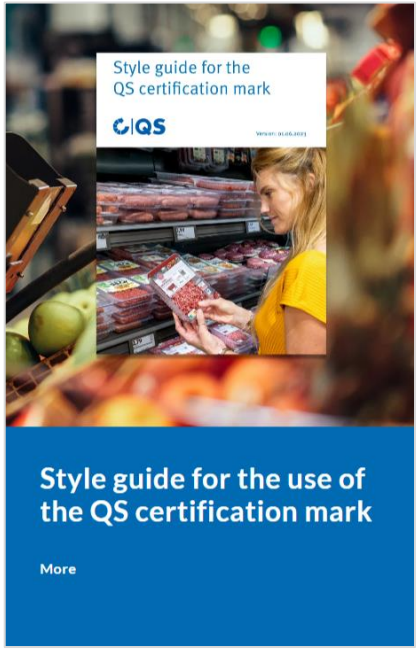
- As soon as the signed contracts and all information are completely present at QS, you are a scheme participant and you will be listed in the official list of QS-approved coordinators.
- The bundled locations receive the eligibility of delivery as soon as you are certified successfully.

Info: A list of all coordinators in the livestock farming sector can be found **here**



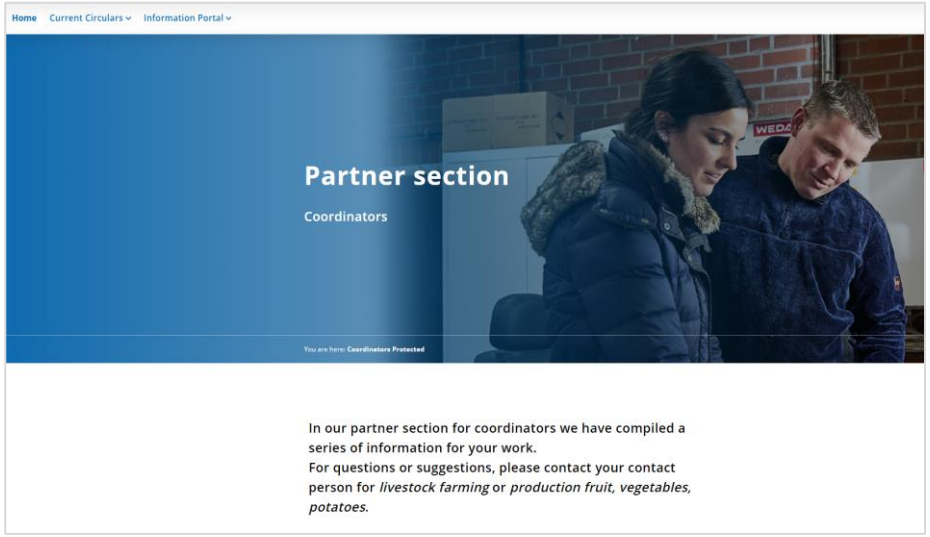
Use of certification mark

- With the conclusion of the contract you are furthermore entitled to use the QS certification mark (you can transfer rights of use to bundled locations).
- You receive an e-mail from us with the access data for the password-protected area "use of the certification mark".
- There you can find the printable file of the QS certification mark for download.
- You can find the rules of the QS certification mark in the style guide on the homepage under the following **links**



Partner section for coordinators

- In the information portal you will find further helpful information about the QS database, the QS monitoring programmes and additional modules as well as general information about the QS scheme and our published circulars of the last six months.
- To enter the partner section for coordinators, log in to the partner section on the homepage.



Info: The access data are identical to those of the password-protected area "usage of the certification mark".

Information, tips and Suggestions

Tips for a good start!

New registrations of locations/clarification before the audit

First contact with the location

- Does the location purchase QS feed?
- Are further preliminary stages QS eligible to deliver (e.g. sow production, piglet rearing, hatchery)
- After signing the declaration of participation and power of attorney:
  - Does the location have a contract with a veterinarian for the veterinary stock care?
  - Did the veterinarian already document a stock visit before the initial audit?

Monitoring programmes

- Does the newly registered location have to participate in the monitoring programmes (particularities of foreign companies)?
- If yes, have all relevant data been stored in the relevant database (e.g. veterinarian in the antibiotics database)?
- Antibiotics monitoring: Is the veterinarian already registered in the antibiotics database?
- Is the location an on-farm mixer (feed monitoring)?

Tips for a good start!

Correct registration

List of Production Scopes

- The production scope which is checked must also be registered in the database
- All relevant areas of the company that wish to participate in the QS scheme must be registered (rearing, fattening, …)

Agriculture (To see the possible combinations of the product scopes, please klick on the arrow)	
20	agricultural coordinator
904	livestock transport
Production branch cattle farming	
1001	cattle production
1002	calf production
1004	calf breeding
1008	dairy farming
1016	suckling cow production
1320	cows (QM milk)
Production branch pig farming	
2001	pig production
2002	gilt and boar rearing
2004	sow and piglets production
2008	piglet rearing
Production branch poultry farming	
3001	broiler production
3002	turkey rearing
3004	turkey production
3008	peking duck rearing
3016	peking duck production
301	broiler breeder farming
304	turkey breeder farming
Agriculture hatchery	
50	hatchery broiler chicks
51	hatchery turkey chicks
52	transport chicks own vehicles
53	transport chicks 1:1 contracted carriers

Tips for a good start!

Production scopes

Example 1

- A turkey farmer buying day-old chicks, who rears and fattens the turkey and sends them to the abattoir ready for slaughter must be registered and checked with 3006 (or 3002 + 3004)

Example 2

- A pig farmer who houses weaned piglets and rears, fattens and sends them to the abattoir ready for slaughter must be registered and checked with 2009 (or 2001 + 2008)

No.	Production Scope	Definition	QS-animals for sale
Stage agriculture			
Production branch poultry farming			
3001	broiler production	broiler production (light, medium, heavy fattening) as of arrival of the day-old chicks	broiler
3002	turkey rearing	turkey rearing as of arrival of the day-old chicks without fattening	rearing turkeys up to the age of 35 days
3004	turkey production	fattening of turkeys as of arrival of rearing animals	fattening turkeys as of the age of 35 days
3008	peking duck rearing	peking duck rearing as of arrival of the day-old chiks without	rearing peking ducks up to the age of 18 days
3016	peking duck production	fattening of peking ducks as of arrival of rearing animals	fattening peking ducks as of the age of 18 days
301	broiler breeder farming	breeder farming for the production of hatching eggs	breeder for slaughtering; (hatching eggs for the delivery to QS-hatcheries)
304	turkey breeder farming	breeder farming for the production of hatching eggs	breeder for slaughtering; (hatching eggs for the delivery to QS-hatcheries)

Production branch pig farming			
2001	pig production	pig production (first and final fattening from 25 kg), selection fattening	fattening pigs, sorted out breeding animals (gilts/entire males), sucking pigs
2002	gilt and boar rearing	rearing from 25 kg (without selection fattening)	breeding weaners, gilts and entire males for breeding
2004	sow and piglets production	piglets production and piglets breeding till weaning	sows, boars,piglets up to 10 kg
2008	piglet rearing	rearing of weaned piglets (incl. Baby piglet rearing)	weaned piglets (incl. baby piglets) up to 30 kg, sucking pigs
Recommendation: if the company keeps fattening pigs, the production scope 2001 should be selected additionally. This also applies to individual animals or selection fattening (see salmonella programme).			

Chain concept/clarification before the audit

Are the upstream stages eligible to deliver?

Pig production/Sow production/Piglet rearing:

- Feed sector
- Livestock transport (transport of piglets to the fattening location/transport of fattening pigs to the abattoir)
- Piglet production/rearing purchase of animals

Cattle farming

- Feed sector
- Livestock transport (transport of fattening animals to the abattoir)

Breeding poultry

- Feed sector

Poultry rearing/production:

- Feed sector
- Breeding poultry
- Hatchery
- Livestock transport (chicks for rearing/to the fattening location/transport of fattening animals to the abattoir)

Partner for the locations

Implementation of your responsibilities

Quarterly

- Salmonella/Antibiotics monitoring/diagnostic data: Sending of information letters

Annually

- Observance of the revision of the guidelines as of 1 January each year
- Informing locations about the revision
- Establishment of the self-assessment coordinator
- Establishment of and compliance with the feed control plan

Regularly

- Timely commissioning of audits
- Informing locations about follow-up audits
- Information transfer of relevant QS topics (e.g. from circulars)

If required

- Write to locations regarding sanction procedures
- Write to locations regarding open corrective actions

Neutral controls

Coordinator audit

- You will also be audited as a coordinator (cf. Guideline Certification and Guideline Coordinators Agriculture)
- The coordinator audit is carried out by an independent certification body
- The first audit of newly approved coordinators is conducted **at the earliest six months after the signing of the contract but at latest one year thereafter!**

Random sample audits (unannounced)

In the period between the periodically conducted regular audits, compliance with QS requirements is checked by means of random sample audits. Unless they contain K.O. evaluations, random sample audits do not have an effect on the frequency of regular audits or the QS status (as well as with the audit of special purpose).

Audits of special purpose (generally unannounced)

In suspected cases or in the event of imminent danger, QS immediately commissions audits of special purpose at the scheme participants

Neutral controls

Inspection of Auditors and certification bodies

Parallel audit

Parallel audits serve to verify the result of a previous regular audit. They are performed by QS within a maximum of six weeks after the regular audit.

Accompaniment of audit

Audits conducted in the QS scheme may be accompanied by QS or a person commissioned by QS.

Audit report inspection

Audit reports entered into the QS database by certification bodies are verified with regard to completeness, comprehensibility and correctness.

Special topics

No Certification of single cycles

- Permanent and uninterrupted compliance with all requirements after signing the declaration of participation and power of attorney for the entire location mandatory
- No change of QS- and Non-QS-cycles in the sheds/sties, and also not possible by shed/sty or compartment, entire location means location number and production scope
- If a location is deregistered and re-registered within six months: Carrying out a follow-up audit (including consideration of the period until re-registration)

Follow-up audits in a timely manner

- Locations are obliged to carry out follow-up audits, no implicit, quasi passive participation without certification
- Locations that do not (or do not want to) comply with the audit obligation and whose certificate has expired must be deregistered quickly.

Special Topics
Terms in the QS scheme

Eligible to deliver

- Authorization to deliver goods into the QS scheme, after passing the audit and audit report release.
- After expiry of the certification, the location is no longer eligible to deliver.

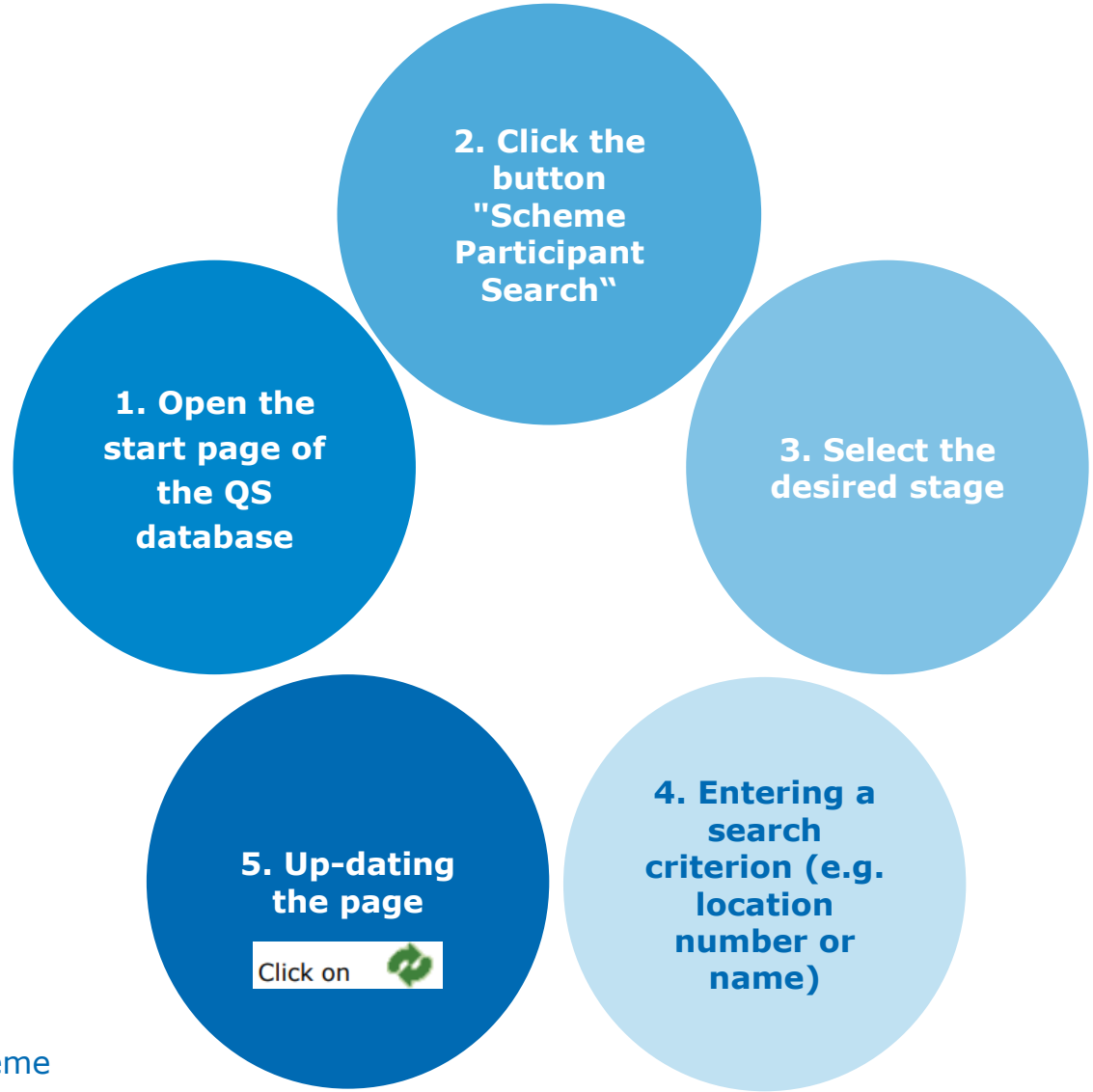
Blocked

- A block is placed "over" the eligibility of delivery. Meanwhile, it can no longer be delivered to the QS system.
- Possible causes for a blockage: Salmonella blockage, antibiotic blockage, no timely implementation of corrective actions

Inactive (Salmonella monitoring)

- Pig fattening locations, which have been scheme participants for at least six months and no sampling was conducted or
- which have been participating for some time but have not been sampled for more than one year.
- Exclusion from delivering into the QS scheme until a sample was taken and it can be proven in the salmonella database.

Query of the eligibility of delivery in the QS database



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