

ABR PROGRAM TECHNICAL COMPLIANCE GUIDE



Volume III:

AGRICULTURAL GOOD PRACTICES, ENVIRONMENT, AND UNIT MANAGEMENT | Criterion 9

This criterion addresses the way the Production Unit organizes, plans, and monitors its activities, ensuring that farm management is structured, efficient, and oriented toward continuous improvement. Good management is essential to support decision-making, promote the sustainability of the production system, and ensure compliance with commitments made under the ABR.

In this context, the farm is expected to adopt practices for planning, monitoring, and recording relevant information, strengthening transparency, traceability, and process consistency throughout the production cycle. Proper unit management contributes to the continuous evolution of the property's performance and the consolidation of responsible practices in cotton production.





CRITERION 9

UNIT MANAGEMENT

Sustainability Goals



9.1 Is the farm aware of national sustainability goals and implements them following an action and monitoring plan?

Interviews: With those responsible for the sectors to which the national goals refer, to evaluate if the auditees are aware of the themes and if such actions are being implemented in the units.

Comments:

Initially, three material themes were established for the ABR program:

1. Worker Health and Well-being.
2. Soil Health and Management.
3. Expansion of the use of biological products in replacement of chemicals. Therefore, the requested evidence must be directed toward these themes.

ABR  CMP 

BCI  CMP 

EXCLUSIVE BCI 

9.2 Is the PU aware of necessary measures to mitigate climate change effects and implements them according to an action and monitoring plan?

Interviews: With those responsible for the sectors to which the national goals refer, to evaluate if the auditees have knowledge of the themes and if such actions are being implemented in the units.

Comments: Encourage the interviewee to point out the good practices implemented on the farm aimed at mitigating the effects of climate change. Examples include: Rainfall control aiming to monitor the variable quantity, intensity, and frequency of precipitation; use of technologies that reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

ABR  CMP 

BCI  CMP 

EXCLUSIVE BCI 

CMP = Critério Mínimo de Produção (item obrigatório).

 Aplicável à certificação ABR ou licenciamento BCI.  Não aplicável à certificação ABR ou licenciamento BCI.



CRITERION 9

UNIT MANAGEMENT

Continuous
Improvement and
Records



9.3

Do 1st and 2nd-year farms follow continuous improvement guidelines through Corrective Action Plans (PCNC) proposed by the sustainability sectors of state associations? Do farms from the 3rd year onwards have an organizational system to implement monitoring activities for continuous improvement in sustainability areas?

Documentary Verification:

For 1st and 2nd-year farms:

1. Diagnostic Report from the State Association (VDP): Document showing that the association performed verification prior to the third-party audit; include the list of recommendations made by the association.
2. Corrective Action Plans: Documents containing actions proposed by the state associations' sustainability sectors; include progress indicators, established deadlines, and evidence of implementation (photos, field records, training sessions).

For 3rd-year farms onwards:

1. Organizational System Structure: Document or organizational chart showing who is responsible for sustainability monitoring.
2. Monitoring Records: Internal reports or spreadsheets demonstrating the follow-up of continuous improvements.

Comments:

For farms from the 4th harvest onwards, the auditor's assessment will be based on other sustainability indicators that the participating unit identifies as most relevant.

9.4

To meet BCI licensing requirements for Result Indicator Reports and Better Cotton sales receipts, does the Producer operate a data collection system and record management for the following information: production inputs (irrigation, nutrients, pesticides/chemicals), production outputs (e.g., harvested area, lint production) and Better Cotton sales receipts (with buyer name, date, volume)?

** Better Cotton sales receipts must be kept for at least one year.*

Interviews: With the farm representative or employees to determine if the farm operates a data collection and record management system for the following information: production inputs (irrigation, nutrients, pesticides/chemicals), production outputs (e.g., harvested area, lint production), and Better Cotton sales receipts (including buyer name, date, and volume).

Documentary Analysis: Verify the BCI Indicator Report from the previous harvest. Verify Better Cotton sales receipts, which must be maintained for at least one year.

9.5 Does the farm have a system to ensure that ABR/BCI cotton identification is maintained during and before the ginning process?

The production unit must adopt mechanisms that guarantee the correct identification of ABR/BCI cotton. This identification system must ensure:

- I. Physical segregation of ABR/BCI cotton from non-ABR/BCI cotton or cotton from other farms at all stages: intake, storage, ginning, and dispatch.
- II. Local volume recording, maintaining controls of quantities received (seed cotton) and dispatched (lint) in each unit.
- III. Bale traceability, ensuring the link between the incoming seed cotton and the lint bales produced.
- IV. When ginning is outsourced, the system must include:

A list of subcontractors with:

- i. Name, address, and contact of the outsourced gin;
- ii. Type of activity performed;
- iii. Frequency of service provision.

b. A contract with the ginnery ensuring that the subcontractor:

- i. Performs bale identification during services;
- ii. Maintains physical segregation of ABR/BCI cotton by farm;
- iii. Records volumes of intake (seed cotton), processing, and dispatch (lint).