



Verifier and Inspector Guidance Update

Update Number 20.0 – September 2025

Dear Verifiers and Inspectors,

This document summarizes the changes made in existing program documents. Please review them carefully and incorporate necessary changes into your operations.

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1. C.A.F.E. Practices Standard, Versions 4.1, 4.2, and 4.3

Minor language changes were made to improve indicator understanding and to correct indicator applicability (V4.1, V4.2). V4.3 was published with minor formatting changes.

2. Supplier Self Evaluation, Versions 1.0 and 1.1 of Standard V4

Self-Assessments allow interested parties to conduct evaluations on their entities against V4 of the C.A.F.E. Practices Standard. The document is available in Excel and contains a tab for each entity type. These documents are available in English, Spanish, and Portuguese. Indonesian and Mandarin versions are being prepared as well and will be published in the beginning of FY26.

3. C.A.F.E. Practices Indicator Guidance Reference, Version 1.0 of Standard V4

A revised version of the C.A.F.E. Practices Indicator Guidance Reference was released to accompany V4 of the C.A.F.E. Practices Standard. Guidance for new indicators was developed, and, for revised indicators, existing guidance was adjusted. The new format not only provides the guidance associated with each indicator; it also lists indicator type (Zero-Tolerance, Major, Minor), entity applicability, and documentation requirements.

The section, General Guidance, was revised and now explains detailed requirements for any “plan” that an indicator calls for and clarifies what the program understands “Community work exchange” to encompass.

4. C.A.F.E. Practices Field Notes, Version 1.1 of Standard V4

Version 1.1 of the Field Notes includes minor formatting revisions and no longer displays the field to insert GPS data on the coversheet for farms, per the change in requirements communicated on September 5, 2025. A fourth checkbox for the coffee type, “green”, was added to mill, warehouse and farm Field Notes. Version 1.0 of the Field Notes should no longer be used to avoid any confusion around the need to collect GPS data.

5. C.A.F.E. Practices List of Indicators that Require Documentation, Version 1.0 of Standard V4

A revised version of the List of Indicators that Require Documentation was developed to accompany V4 of the C.A.F.E. Practices Standard. The document accounts for new and revised indicator language as well as newly applicable documentation requirements, and provides revised examples of documentation

6. Child Labor Risk Assessment Tool, Version 1.0

This document was developed jointly by Verite and Starbucks, with SCS input, to provide guidance to support suppliers in developing child labor risk assessments and creating monitoring and risk mitigation plans, per the requirements of V4 of the C.A.F.E. Practices Standard.

7. C.A.F.E. Practices Operations Manual, Version 2.0 of Standard V4

V1.1 was modified to remove guidance and focus on verification procedures. Version 2.0 primarily reflects a restructuring of the document.

Key removals include:

- Volume guidance. This guidance can be found in the program document, C.A.F.E. Practices Volume Guidance 1.0, which has been republished to the C.A.F.E. Practices website.
- The information in Section 7.4.3, on opening meetings, was pared down and made more concise, to focus on the requirements of these meetings.
- The appendix on minimum evidence for Zero-Tolerance indicators. This information can be found, for each Zero-Tolerance indicator, in the C.A.F.E. Practices Indicator Guidance Reference document.
- Guidance on evaluations of SR-H1, including pay by productivity. This information can be found in the C.A.F.E. Practices Indicator Guidance Reference document.
- Guidance on qualifying Not Applicable evaluations. This information can be found, by indicator, in the C.A.F.E. Practices Indicator Guidance Reference document.
- Information on confirming GPS data. This program requirement was suspended.
- The information on the roles of guides and observers (Section 7.4.2) was reduced, as details can be found in a stand-alone document, Roles and Responsibilities of Observers in C.A.F.E. Practices Verifications and Audits V2.0 and the Verification Organization Approval Procedure V3.0.

Additions include:

- The section, C.A.F.E. Practices Program Terminology (Section 3.0), includes a definition for “Hazardous Waste”.
- A new section was added, Section 4: Governance and Responsibilities, to specify the responsibilities of different parties in the management and implementation of the C.A.F.E. Practices Standard.

8. C.A.F.E. Practices Verifier Reporting System (VRS) User Manual, Version 4.0

- The content of this document have been revised to cover the VRS workflows pertaining to reporting for V4 of the C.A.F.E. Practices Standard.