



Coffee Quality Institute®

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Overview of ICP Criteria, Responsibilities & Q Grading Protocols

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The **In-Country Partner**, hereafter referred to as the ICP, of CQI should be a neutral body to the local coffee industry and maintain integrity in its implementation of the Q Coffee System, promotion and protocols. This entity will have good communication skills, administrative and record keeping systems, and be respectful of the privacy and confidentiality of samples presented for Q Grading and the results of the evaluation.

ICP must be able to execute and abide by the Q Coffee System protocols set out below and be able to implement the Q Coffee Grading Lab Procedures. A more detailed procedure of how to realize a Q Coffee Grading Evaluation of a sample is found in the Q Coffee Grading Lab Procedures that reviews proper lab equipment, receiving and coding samples, sample preparation and weighing, cupping and physical evaluation, classification and result recording. The protocols found below are an overview of required criteria of the ICP to be able to become a designated local partner.

1. CONTACT: The ICP will designate a Q Grading Coordinator to oversee Q Grading activities and ensure the following protocols are followed and relay this contact information to CQI and update CQI if changes are made.

ICP ACTION ITEM: The ICP will provide CQI with contact information for the Q Grading Coordinator or coffee laboratory manager of Q Gradings.

2. LABORATORY: The ICP agrees to provide access to, maintain the equipment, and encourage an adequate environment for Q Grading of coffee samples (water boiling equipment, scales, roaster, grinder, cups, access to computer to input results, etc).

ICP ACTION ITEM: ICP will follow all standard SCAA Cupping Protocols in the preparation and during the realization of the evaluation of the samples. They will also assure equipment is calibrated and functioning at optimum capacity to carry out the grading with integrity.



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3. RECEIVING SAMPLES: A farmer, exporter, or other producer representative may submit coffee samples to the ICP for Q Grading. One sample per discrete exportable lot may be submitted. There is no minimum requirement of lot size. The maximum lot size is defined by a standard container for that country of export (250-300 bags; 50-70 kg bags, depending on the country). The owner must prepare the sample as a pre-shipment sample with parchment removed, and complete the Q Registration Form. The sample size must be 1-1.5kg of green coffee and packaged in a sturdy plastic bag free of odors and free of labeling. The ICP will weigh the sample upon receipt and review the registration form to assure it complies with the weight minimum and that all owner and lot information is complete. Along with the sample and the Q REGISTRATION FORM the owner is required to remit payment for the Q Grading Services. Should the sample be delivered to the ICP without the fee, proper weight, or a completed form, the ICP has the right to reject the sample prior to grading.

ICP ACTION ITEM: ICP must have the capacity to receive and weigh the sample, document the Q Registration Sample information and accept fee for sample evaluation.

4. CODIFICATION: The ICP or designated lab should have enough physical space to have a separate area for receiving samples. Samples must be received and codified by an impartial person (designated by the ICP) who is not directly involved in the grading of the sample. The designated coffee laboratory manager, responsible for overseeing the program, is permitted to accept and codify samples.

ICP ACTION ITEM: The ICP Q Grading Coordinator or coffee laboratory manager should provide CQI with an outline of the receiving and codification process. The codification process assigns a code to the sample that maintains the anonymity and privacy of the owner of the sample.

5. SCHEDULING A Q GRADING SESSION: Upon receipt of sample, payment and completed registration form, the ICP Q Grading Coordinator agrees to schedule a grading within five (5) business days at a qualified and designated lab. The coordinator will contact and schedule three (3) licensed coffee Q Graders who are certified by CQI, none of whom shall have known ownership interest in the coffees being graded and would be unbiased to the coffee to be graded.

ICP ACTION ITEM: The ICP will be responsible for scheduling and contacting the Q Graders and communicating with the partner lab to carry out the grading that will not conflict with the lab's schedule.



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6. SAMPLE PREPARATION AND WEIGHING: Once the coffee is received and codified the sample is weighed. The 1 – 1.5 kilo sample submitted will be divided into three parts, 350 grams for green grading, 300-450 grams for roasting and 350 grams to be kept for a reference sample. The reference sample will be filed and kept by the in-country partner lab for at least twelve months.

7. Q GRADING PROTOCOLS AND RECORDING RESULTS: The ICP, designated lab, and Q Graders will follow the SCAA protocols for green grading, roasting, and cupping. Please refer to the Q Coffee Grading Lab Procedures Manual that contains the protocols in full.

ICP ACTION ITEMS:

- The ICP will assure that all Q Grading Protocols will be followed in the green grading, roasting, and cupping process according to the Q Grading lab procedures.
- The ICP is to enter the count of beans of defects of the physical grading into the master Q Grading Report. The worksheet will automatically calculate the equivalent defects and assign a classification.
- The ICP enters the results of the cupping into the Q Grading Report. The worksheet will automatically calculate the average, assign a classification and produce a final Q Certificate or Technical Report.

8. CLASSIFICATION: Q Grade is synonymous with the term Specialty Coffee. To be considered a Q Certified Coffee, coffee must meet certain minimum requirements, as defined by the Specialty Coffee Association of America (SCAA). The SCAA recognizes two classifications within specialty grade, specialty and premium, and both are considered Q.

TYPE OF SCORE	Q GRADE / SPECIALTY	Q GRADE / PREMIUM	BELOW Q GRADE
CUP	85+	80 - 84.99	< 80
GREEN	Coffee has 0 Primary defects and no more than 5 Secondary defects	No more than 8 defects, including both Primary and Secondary defects	> 8 defects, including Primary and Secondary defects
ROASTED	0 Quakers	No more than 3 Quakers	> 3 Quakers



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9. RESULTS REPORTING: After entering the scores, the Q coordinator or the coffee laboratory manager will complete the Q Grading Report by entering in the registration information and inserting the Q Logo if the coffee has received a final classification of Q Grade.

- The ICP is responsible for saving the Q Certificate or Technical Report as a pdf file and releasing results to the owner of the coffee.
- The ICP should send the full Grading Report in Excel format to Lily Kubota at the Coffee Quality Institute, lkubota@scaa.org. ****The Excel format of the Q Certificate will only be accessible by the ICP Q Grading Coordinator and then released and distributed ONLY to CQI. This format cannot be sent as an electronic file to anyone else except CQI staff.**
- The ICP should also send the full Grading Report in an electronic pdf file or by fax to **562-624-4191** or by email to lkubota@scaa.org.
- The ICP is responsible for sending a completed Q certificate that includes all owner contact information, lot information (# of bags and bag size), and the ICO-exporter numbers. Should the Q certificate arrive incomplete CQI will consider the certificate unofficial and not distribute the information to potential buyers until all information is provided.

10. MAINTAINING RECORDS: The in-country partner will keep copies of all documents for a period of one year and upon request by CQI staff, must be able to show the electronic documents, database, and physical documents supporting the evaluations.

11. FEES AND PAYMENT: The ICP may establish fees based on what is considered reasonable and appropriate for services in the local country. CQI shall receive \$95 per sample, to cover ongoing costs of building and administering the grading system worldwide. Payments to CQI may be made on a quarterly basis. Wire transfer information will be provided separately. Fees range from \$150 to \$300 per sample, which includes fee for ICP Administration, fee for each Q Grader, fee for CQI (\$95).

12. CONTESTED RESULTS: If an owner disputes a posted score, they may elect to send a sample (500g) from the graded lot to the CQI office for re-evaluation. There will be a \$90 fee per sample for re-evaluation. One Licensed Q Grader will review the original grading forms and re-evaluate the coffee. If the Licensed Q Grader determines the coffee meets the 80 threshold, then the coffee will be re-graded at no additional charge.