CIRCULAR FOOD SYSTEMS FOR RWANDA

Certification Roadmap

Certification process for Organic Farming Inputs – SME Guide

WORLD RESOURCES INSTITUTE

IKEA Foundation

resonance
Igniting Opportunity. Advancing Global Good.

CLEANER PRODUCTION AND CLIMATE INNOVATION CENTRE

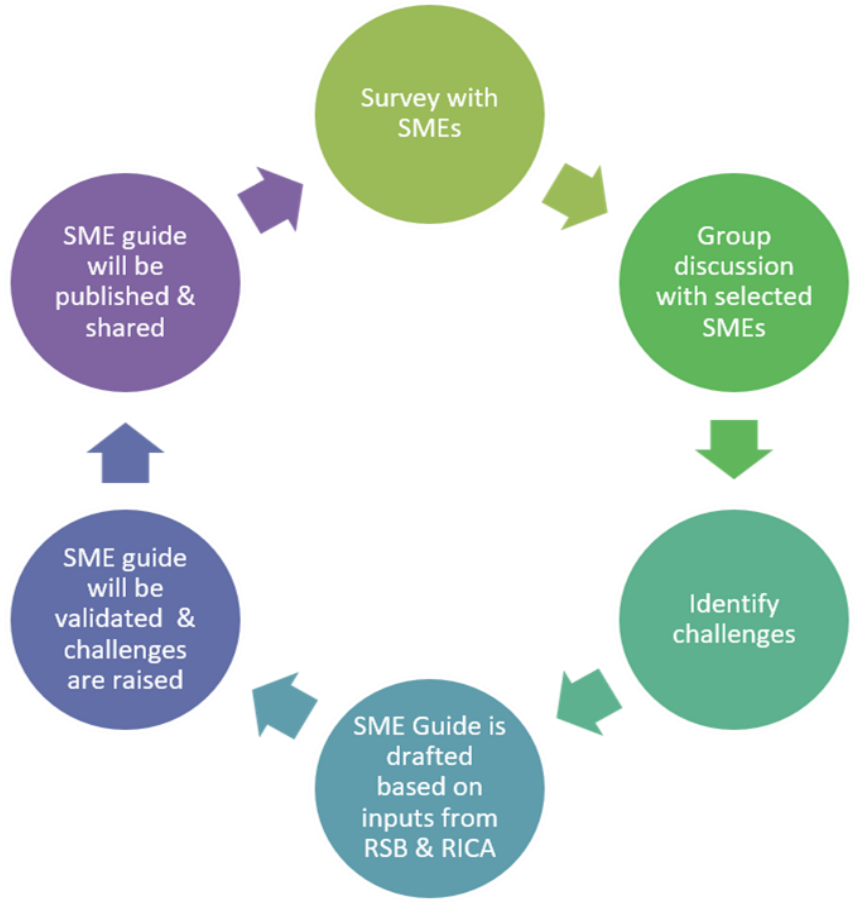
AFRICAN CIRCULAR ECONOMY NETWORK

Circular Food Systems for Rwanda (CIRF)

- The Circular Food Systems for Rwanda (CIRF) is a 5-year project funded by the IKEA Foundation and managed by a consortium of partners led by the **World Resources Institute** (WRI), in partnership with **African Circular Economy Network** (ACEN), **Resonance**, **African Circular Economy Alliance** (ACEA), and **Rwanda Cleaner Production and Climate Innovation Centre** (CPCIC).
- The program delivers Technical Assistance (TA) through interlinked activities: (1) Pipeline Development: increasing general market awareness of circular business practices, (2) TA Facility: offering tailored support to transition SMEs to more circular business models, (3) Market Linkages: building supply, offtake, investment, and infrastructure relationships to create more circular agri-food value chains (4) and business development support.
- This is followed by the policy workstream, which aims to create an enabling (policy) environment and collaboration between public, private and civil society players in advancing the circular economy for the agri-food sector in Rwanda.

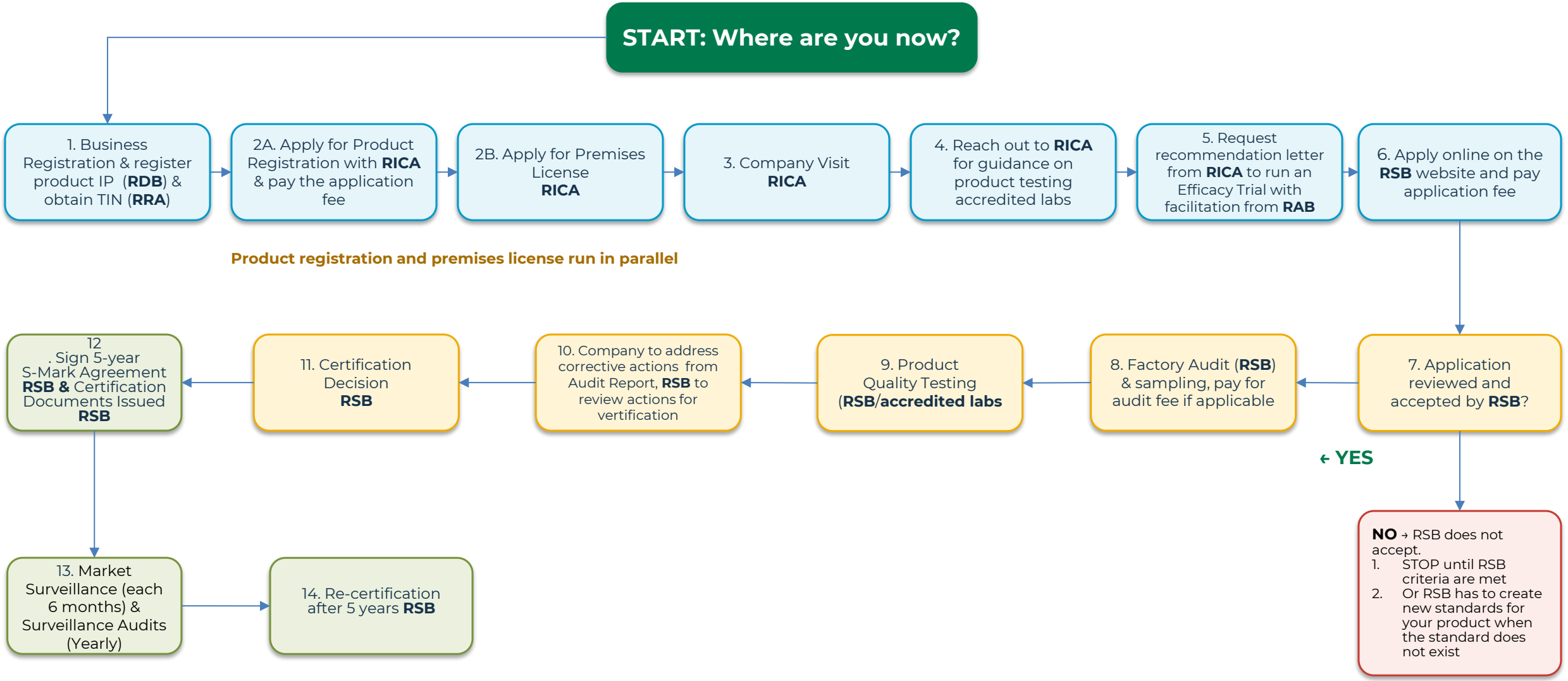
Introduction

- CIRF conducted a survey with SMEs of the CIRF programme on the status quo of certification and the remaining challenges.
- As a follow-up to the survey, we organised a group discussion with selected SMEs that are in the process of obtaining certification.
- One of the key challenges for SMEs is how to **navigate through the certification process between** different government authorities & understand what is expected from the company at each step.
- Therefore, we developed a **Certification Roadmap** that is developed based on inputs from government authorities to help SMEs navigate & guide them through the certification process for (organic) farming inputs. This document focuses on the process after harmonisation.



Organic Farm Input Certification in Rwanda — SME Guide

SME guide companies in the application process for certification for organic farm inputs after harmonisation, with a special focus on organic fertilisers.



Detailed Steps 1–4 — Preparation, Premise License & Product Registration

1 **RDB**

Business Registration

Register the company and obtain the business registration certificate/company registration number with RDB. Register the company product for an Intellectual Property Certificate (IP) with RDB. After company registration, obtain TIN number from RRA.

2A **RICA**

Product Registration

Apply for product registration on RICA's page on the IREMBO Website, and complete payment of the 10,000 RWF product registration fee.

2B **RICA**

Apply for Premise License

Apply for a premises license in parallel with Product Registration, free of charge on the Irembo website. It is completed within 14 days; the company fills in the information. RICA reviews and assesses the application.

3 **RICA**

Application review & Company visit

After reviewing application of the submitted documents (RDB registration, IP, chemical composition and intended use of the product), and the information of the premises license, RICA will conduct a company visit.

4 **RSB**

Testing

RICA to provide a list of the different tests (parameters). RICA requests the client to submit samples to an accredited lab, e.g. RSB, NAEB or other accredited labs.

RICA provides required test parameters and recommended labs; RSB can be used as a lab. Costs depends on the labs that will be used.

Detailed Steps 5–9 Efficacy trail, RSB application and Testing

5 **RICA/RAB**

Efficacy Trail

After product(s) are tested for quality by the accredited labs and passed the tests, RAB need to submit results (efficacy report) to RICA to get a recommendation letter, or RICA can connect the SME with RAB to conduct the Efficacy trial. RAB facilitates the SME with the RICA efficacy trial by running a field trial to demonstrate the performance of the product (compost). The company needs to sign MoU with RAB. Estimated time: 2 farming seasons, cost: 2300 USD*.

*Company has to pay 80% of the total expenses of the Efficiency Trial upfront; 20% will be paid after the trial is completed. This does not include input costs such as seeds; RAB only provide technical support to collect data and to provide recommendations. In case trail fails, it needs to be repeated, which is free of charge. Trails are required for all farming inputs, and the price is the same for all inputs.

6 **RSB**

Submit application and complete application fee payment

After successful completion of the Efficacy Trail, submit the certification application on the RSB website, and complete payment of the application fee. If needed, RSB can support the company with the application.

7 **RSB**

Review Application

RSB reviews application. If RSB does not accept the request, the certification process stops until the company meets RSB criteria or RSB has developed standards that are not yet in place. If RSB accepts the application, the company proceeds to step 8.

8 **RSB**

Factory Audit & Sampling

After payment of the application fee to RSB, an audit is conducted at the company premises, during the audit responsible certification bodies visit the company. Product sampling may be conducted during the audit or later, if samples are not available

9 **RSB/ Accredited labs**

Product Quality Testing

Samples are tested against parameters in the applicable standard. Non-ZU companies pay lab charges and may use accredited labs in or outside Rwanda. The auditor arranges the process to submit samples to RSB. It is recommended to check with RSB, whether they accept the results of third party and if they are accredited, before making use of the lab.

Companies that are part of the Zamukanubuziranenge Programme (ZU) programme are not charged for the first 4 tests (parameters). If companies exceed 4 tests (parameters), they are charged; costs depend on the product. If one parameter fails twice, the company has to pay for the costs of any subsequent testing.

Detailed Steps 10–14 — Corrective Actions, Compliance and Certification

10 RSB

Report & Corrective Actions

RSB issues the audit/testing report to the company based on the Audit & Testing results that include potential Non-Conformities (NCs). The company addresses NCs and provides effective corrective actions / corrective action report. The company needs to comply with a checklist to proceed. RSB (Certification Division), through the Auditor, ensures that NCs are fully resolved.

Proceed after NCs are fully resolved.

* National Certification Division under RSB is also responsible for audit, sample testing, and issuance of the certificate.

11 RSB

Certification Decision

RSB receives the efficacy trial report; the certification committee reviews the completed process and makes the final decision.

12 RSB

Sign S-mark agreement for 5 years

SME and RSB Director General sign the S-Mark agreement for 5-years. The SME will receive Product Registration Certificate. The agreement will include details about the Market surveillance and Surveillance audits to inspect whether the company abides by the contract.

13 RSB

Market Surveillance

Market Surveillance (each 6 months) and Surveillance audits (yearly).

14 RSB

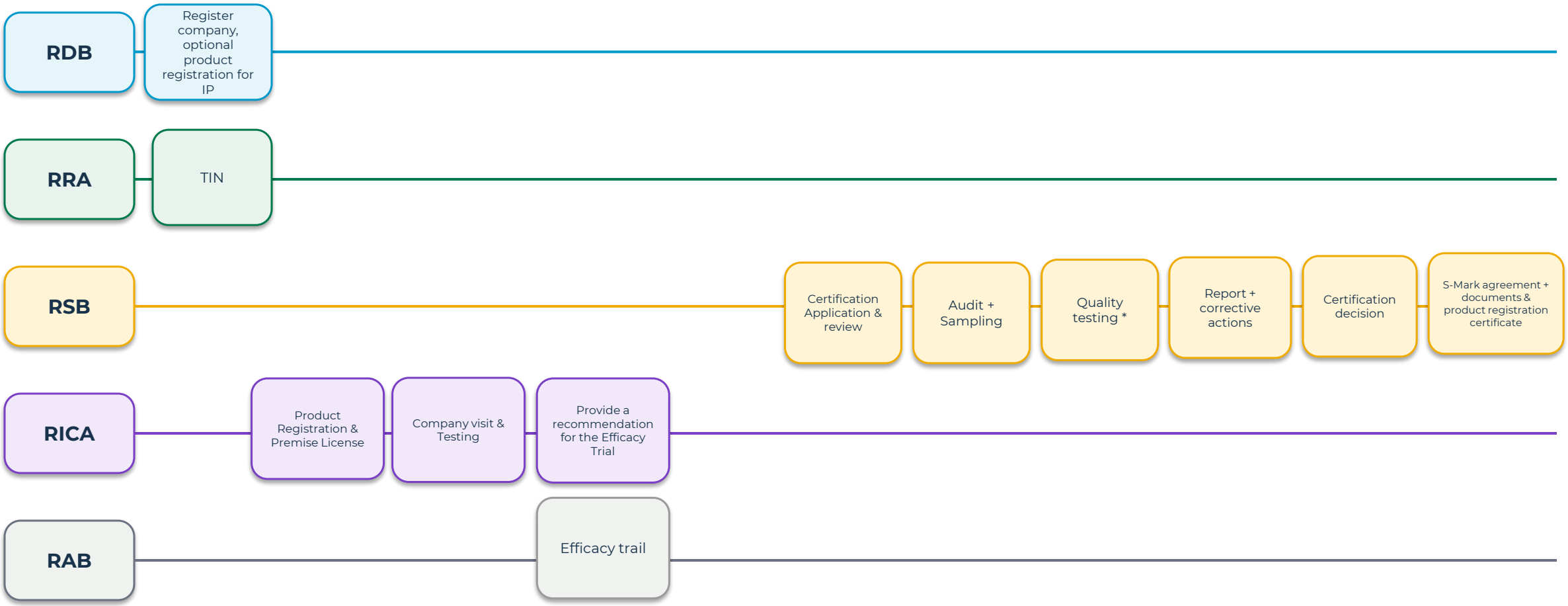
Re-certification

Re-apply for re-certification after they 5 year cycle with RSB.

Institutional Overview— Who Acts When?

Read from left to right. Each row groups actions under the responsible institution.

*Testing can also be conducted by third-party labs.



Cost overview

The table below provides the costs for companies to apply for certification for (organic) farming inputs, after harmonisation. Please note that applicable fees may be subject to change.

Application phase	Cost
Product registration with RICA	10,000 RWF
Premise License with RICA	Free of charge
Testing as part of the product registration with RICA	Costs depend on the parameters that need to be tested for the product and accredited labs that are used
Efficacy Trial facilitated by RAB	2300 USD for facilitation for RAB. These costs do not include input costs such as seeds; RAB only provides technical support to collect data and to provide recommendations
Simplified Certification fees with RSB	Companies listed on the (RRA) list of large taxpayers are charged RWF 100,000. Companies not listed on the RRA list of large taxpayers are exempt from the fee.
Factory Audit with RSB	There are no additional audit fees, as the audit costs are included in the simplified certification fees.
Testing as part of the certification process with RSB	SMEs are not included on the Rwanda Revenue Authority (RRA) list of large taxpayers are not charged for the initial submission of samples for testing. However, if any tested parameter fails, the company must conduct a root cause analysis and implement the necessary corrections and corrective actions. A fee of RWF 10,000 per failed parameter applies to subsequent testing. Companies listed by the RRA as large taxpayers are charged RWF 10,000 per parameter tested. However, the total testing fee for a single product shall not exceed RWF 100,000 per product. Companies participating in the ZU Programme are exempt from charges for the first four tests (parameters). Any testing beyond the first four parameters is chargeable, with fees varying depending on the product. If a parameter fails on two occasions, the company must pay for any subsequent testing of that parameter.

How an SME Can Use This Certification Guide

Find the first step you have NOT completed. → **Confirm the responsible institution and complete that action.** → **Follow the arrows until certification documents are issued.**

Key institutions

RDB	Business registration; IP registration.
RRA	TIN
RSB	Preliminary assessment, certification application, audit/testing decision and certification
RICA	Product registration/ premise license, testing guidance and efficacy process
RAB	Field efficacy trial facilitation for organic fertilisers and other farming inputs

CIRCULAR FOOD SYSTEMS FOR RWANDA

Disclaimer

This document was developed based on engagements with relevant government regulatory authorities, including RSB, RICA, and RAB, in the period June to September 2026. Please note that regulatory requirements, procedures, timelines, and applicable fees are subject to change. The information provided is intended solely as practical guidance to assist companies in understanding and navigating the applicable certification processes. CIRF project partners are not responsible for the certification process or changes in regulatory requirements and procedures.

We thank all stakeholders for their valuable insights, participation, time and feedback in developing the Certification Roadmap.

For any questions or comments, you can reach out:

Elke Nijman
ACEN - Circular Food Systems Lead
circularfoodsystems@acen.africa

RSB
National Certification Division
certification@rsb.gov.rw

AFRICAN CIRCULAR ECONOMY NETWORK