

SQF Food Safety Code for Primary Production

EDITION 8



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Suggestions for improvements to this Code are encouraged from all parties. Written comments are to be sent to SQFI at 2345 Crystal Drive, Suite 800, Arlington, VA, 22202, USA.

SQF Code, edition 8

The Safe Quality Food Institute's (SQFI) SQF Code, edition 8 has been updated and redesigned in 2017 for use by all sectors of the food industry from primary production to storage and distribution and now includes a food safety code for retailers. It replaces the SQF Code, edition 7.

The SQF Code is a site-specific, process and product certification standard with an emphasis on the systematic application of CODEX Alimentarius Commission HACCP principles and guidelines for control of food safety and food quality hazards.

Certification to the SQF Code supports industry- or company-branded product and offers benefits to certified sites and their customers. The implementation of an SQF System addresses a buyer's food safety and quality requirements and provides the solution for businesses supplying local and global food markets. Products produced and manufactured under SQF Code certification retain a high degree of acceptance in global markets.

First developed in Australia in 1994, the SQF program has been owned and managed by the Food Marketing Institute (FMI) since 2003, and was first recognized in 2004 by the Global Food Safety Initiative (GFSI)* as a standard that meets its benchmark requirements.

Certification of a site's SQF System by a Safe Quality Food Institute licensed certification body is not a statement of guarantee of the safety of the site's product, or that it meets all food safety regulations at all times. However, it is an assurance that the site's food safety plans have been implemented in accordance with the CODEX HACCP method as well as applicable regulatory requirements and that the System has been verified and determined effective to manage food safety. Further, it is a statement of the site's commitment to

1. produce safe, quality food,
2. comply with the requirements of the SQF Code, and
3. comply with applicable food legislation.

SQF Code, edition 8 is applicable to all certification and surveillance audits conducted after January 2, 2018. Those sites with an existing SQF certification will be required to upgrade their Systems to meet the requirements outlined in edition 8 by that date.

This reference document is published in English, but is also available in other languages. Where there is any divergence between the translated version and the reference document, the English reference document will prevail. For further definition of words used in this document, please refer to *Appendix 2: Glossary*.

**The Global Food Safety Initiative (GFSI) is an industry initiative established by the international trade association, the Consumer Goods Forum.*

Contents

SQF Code, edition 8	2
Part A: Implementing and Maintaining the SQF Food Safety Code for Primary Production	11
1. Preparing for Certification	11
1.1 Learn about the SQF Food Safety Code for Primary Production.....	12
1.2 Select the Relevant SQF Modules	12
1.3 Register on the SQF Assessment Database	13
1.4 Use of SQF Consultants	13
1.5 Designate an SQF Practitioner	13
1.6 SQF Implementation Training.....	13
1.7 Document and Implement the SQF Food Safety Code for Primary Production	14
1.8 SQF Guidance Documents	14
1.9 Select a Certification Body	14
1.10 Conduct a Pre-assessment Audit	14
2. The Initial Certification Process	15
2.1 Selection of the SQF Auditor(s)	15
2.2 Identifying the Scope of Certification.....	15
2.3 The Initial Certification Audit.....	15
2.4 Identifying the Scope of the Audit	16
2.5 Audit Duration Guide	16
2.6 The Desk Audit.....	17
2.7 The Farm Audit.....	17
2.8 Corporate Audits.....	17
2.9 Seasonal Production	18
2.10 System Elements	18
2.11 Non-conformities.....	19
2.12 The Audit Report	19
3. The Initial Certification Decision	20
3.1 Responsibility for the Certification Decision	20
3.2 Site Audit Corrective Actions	20
3.3 Audit Score and Rating.....	20
3.4 Granting Certification.....	21
3.5 Failure to Comply	21
4. Surveillance and Re-certification	22
4.1 Maintaining Certification	22
4.2 Surveillance Audit.....	22
4.3 Surveillance Audit – Seasonal Operations	22
4.4 Re-certification Audit	22
4.5 Re-certification Audit – Seasonal Operations	23
4.6 Variations to the Re-certification Process.....	23
4.7 Unannounced Re-certification Audit.....	23
4.8 Suspending Certification.....	24
4.9 Withdrawing Certification	25
5. Obligations of Sites and Certification Bodies	26
5.1 Changing the Scope of Certification	26

5.2	Changing the Certification Body	26
5.3	Notification of Product Recalls and Regulatory Infringements	26
5.4	Compliance and Integrity Program	26
5.5	Change of Ownership.....	27
5.6	Relocation of Premises	27
5.7	Use of a Technical Expert	27
5.8	Language	27
5.9	Conflict of Interest	28
5.10	Complaints, Appeals and Disputes	28
Part B: The SQF Code.....		29
Scope, References and Definitions		29
SQF System Elements for Primary Production		30
2.1	Management Commitment.....	30
2.1.1	Food Safety Policy (Mandatory).....	30
2.1.2	Management Responsibility (Mandatory).....	30
2.1.3	Management Review (Mandatory).....	31
2.1.4	Complaint Management (Mandatory).....	31
2.1.5	Crisis Management Planning	31
2.2	Document Control and Records.....	31
2.2.1	Food Safety Management System (Mandatory)	31
2.2.2	Document Control (Mandatory)	31
2.2.3	Records (Mandatory)	32
2.3	Specification and Product Development.....	32
2.3.1	Product Development and Realization.....	32
2.3.2	Raw and Packaging Materials.....	32
2.3.3	Contract Service Providers	32
2.3.4	Contract Farms/Producers.....	32
2.3.5	Finished Product Specifications.....	32
2.4	Food Safety System.....	33
2.4.1	Food Legislation (Mandatory).....	33
2.4.2	Good Agricultural/Aquaculture Practices (Mandatory)	33
2.4.3	Food Safety Plan	33
2.4.4	Approved Supplier Program (Mandatory)	34
2.4.5	Non-conforming Product or Equipment	35
2.5	SQF System Verification	35
2.5.1	Validation and Effectiveness (Mandatory).....	35
2.5.2	Verification Activities (Mandatory)	35
2.5.3	Corrective and Preventative Action (Mandatory).....	35
2.5.4	Product Sampling, Inspection and Analysis.....	35
2.5.5	Internal Audits (Mandatory)	36
2.6	Product Identification, Trace, Withdrawal and Recall	36
2.6.1	Product Identification (Mandatory).....	36
2.6.2	Product Trace (Mandatory)	36
2.6.3	Product Withdrawal and Recall (Mandatory).....	36
2.7	Food Defense and Food Fraud.....	37
2.7.1	Food Defense Plan (Mandatory).....	37
2.7.2	Food Fraud	37

2.8	Allergen Management	37
2.8.1	Allergen Management for Primary Production (Mandatory)	37
2.9	Training.....	37
2.9.1	Training Requirements	37
2.9.2	Training Program (Mandatory)	37
2.9.3	Instructions	38
2.9.4	HACCP Training Requirements	38
2.9.5	Language	38
2.9.6	Refresher Training	38
2.9.7	Training Skills Register	38
Module 5: Good Agricultural Practices for Farming of Animal Products (GFSI AI)		39
5.1	Site Requirements	39
5.1.1	Property Location	39
5.2	Secure Housing of Livestock and Feed	39
5.2.1	Site Access and Security	39
5.2.2	Pens and Yards	39
5.2.3	Intensive Housing System.....	39
5.2.4	Laneways, Races, Entrances, Exits and Loading/Unloading Ramps.....	40
5.2.5	Buildings for Storage of Feed, Agricultural Chemicals, and Equipment	40
5.2.6	Construction and Storage of Farm/Harvesting Machinery and Conveyors	40
5.2.7	Vehicles, Equipment and Utensils	40
5.2.8	Maintenance	40
5.2.9	Calibration of Equipment.....	40
5.2.10	Pest Prevention	40
5.2.11	Animal Control	41
5.2.12	Cleaning and Sanitation	41
5.3	Personal Hygiene and Welfare.....	41
5.3.1	Personnel Practices.....	41
5.3.2	Sanitary Facilities and Hand Washing	41
5.3.3	Protective Clothing	42
5.3.4	Jewelry and Personal Effects	42
5.3.5	Visitors.....	42
5.3.6	Amenities	42
5.4	Field and Animal Husbandry Practices	42
5.4.1	Field Handling Practices.....	42
5.4.2	Animal Husbandry Practices	42
5.5	Water Management.....	42
5.5.1	Water for Livestock Production	42
5.5.2	Treatment of Water for Livestock Production	43
5.5.3	Water Management Plan.....	43
5.5.4	Corrective Actions	43
5.6	Storage and Transport.....	43
5.6.1	Storage of Livestock, Animal Feed and Veterinary Medicines	43
5.6.2	Storage of Hazardous Chemicals, Toxic Substances, and Petroleum Products	43
5.6.3	Transport.....	44
5.7	Purchase and Use of Medications, Animal Feeds, and Agricultural Chemicals	44
5.7.1	Purchasing Vaccines, Medications and Vitamins	44
5.7.2	Application of Animal Medicines	44

5.7.3	Feed Management Plan	44
5.7.4	Agricultural Chemicals.....	45
5.8	Stock Identification and Traceability.....	45
5.8.1	Living Stock Records.....	45
5.8.2	Feed Identification and Traceability	45
5.9	Waste Disposal	45
5.9.1	Dry, Liquid Waste Disposal.....	45
5.9.2	Liquid Waste	45
Module 6: Good Aquaculture Practices for Farming of Seafood (GFSI All)		46
6.1	Location and Layout of Structures and Vessels.....	46
6.1.1	Aquaculture Sites.....	46
6.1.2	Vessels and Structures.....	46
6.2	Secure Housing of Seafood Stock, Feed, and Equipment.....	46
6.2.1	Site Access and Security.....	46
6.2.2	Storage of Feed, Chemicals, and Equipment.....	46
6.2.3	Construction and Storage of Machinery, Conveyors, Harvesting and Processing Equipment.....	47
6.2.4	Vehicles, Equipment and Utensils	47
6.2.5	Maintenance.....	47
6.2.6	Calibration of Equipment	47
6.2.7	Pest Prevention.....	47
6.2.8	Animal Control.....	47
6.2.9	Cleaning and Sanitation.....	48
6.3	Personal Hygiene.....	48
6.3.1	Personnel Practices.....	48
6.3.2	Sanitary Facilities and Hand Washing.....	48
6.3.3	Protective Clothing	48
6.3.4	Jewelry and Personal Effects	48
6.3.5	Visitors.....	49
6.3.6	Amenities	49
6.4	Aquaculture and Fish/Shellfish Handling Practices.....	49
6.4.1	Product Handling Practices.....	49
6.4.2	Aquaculture Practices.....	49
6.5	Water Management.....	49
6.5.1	Water for Aquaculture	49
6.5.2	Water Treatment.....	49
6.5.3	Water Management Plan.....	50
6.5.4	Corrective Actions	50
6.5.5	Water/Ice used In Cleaning, Storage, and Transport.....	50
6.6	Storage and Transport.....	50
6.6.1	Storage of Harvested Stock, Feed and Veterinary Medicines.....	50
6.6.2	Storage of Hazardous Chemicals, Toxic Substances, and Petroleum Products	50
6.6.3	Transport.....	51
6.7	Purchase and Use of Medications, Aquaculture Feeds, and Aquaculture Chemicals	51
6.7.1	Purchasing Medications	51
6.7.2	Application of Aquaculture Medicines	51
6.7.3	Feed Management Plan	51
6.7.4	Purchase and Use of Chemicals.....	52
6.8	Stock Identification and Traceability.....	52
6.8.1	Living Stock Records.....	52

6.8.2	Feed Identification and Traceability	52
6.8.3	Harvested Stock Records	52
6.9	Waste Disposal	52
6.9.1	Dry Waste Disposal	52
6.9.2	Liquid Waste	52
Module 7: Good Agricultural Practices for Farming of Plant Products (GFSI BI)		53
7.1	Site Requirements	53
7.1.1	Property Location	53
7.2	Product Handling, Storage and Equipment	53
7.2.1	Field and Storage Buildings	53
7.2.2	Greenhouses, Hydroponics and Mushrooms	53
7.2.3	Controlled Temperature and Atmosphere Storage	53
7.2.4	Storage of Dry Ingredient, Packaging and Utensils	54
7.2.5	Farm Machinery, Conveyors, Harvesting Rigs Construction and Storage	54
7.2.6	Vehicles, Equipment and Utensils	54
7.2.7	Maintenance	54
7.2.8	Calibration of Equipment	54
7.2.9	Pest Prevention	54
7.2.10	Animal Control	54
7.2.11	Cleaning and Sanitation	55
7.3	Personal Hygiene	55
7.3.1	Personnel Practices	55
7.3.2	Sanitary Facilities and Hand Washing	55
7.3.3	Protective Clothing	55
7.3.4	Jewelry and Personal Effects	56
7.3.5	Visitors	56
7.3.6	Amenities	56
7.4	Harvesting, Field Packaging and Product Handling Practices	56
7.4.1	Pre-Harvest Assessment	56
7.4.2	Foreign Matter and Glass Procedures	56
7.4.3	Field Packing Personal Practices	56
7.5	Water Management	57
7.5.1	Water Systems	57
7.5.2	Irrigation Water	57
7.5.3	Treatment of Irrigation Water	57
7.5.4	Water System Risk Assessment	57
7.5.5	Water Management Plan	57
7.5.6	Corrective Actions	57
7.5.7	Ice	57
7.5.8	Harvest Assessment Water/Ice	57
7.6	Storage and Transport	58
7.6.1	Storage of Hazardous Chemicals, Toxic Substances, and Petroleum Products	58
7.6.2	Transport	58
7.7	Soil Management	58
7.7.1	Fertilizer Management	58
7.7.2	Soil Amendments	58
7.7.3	Purchasing Chemicals	59
7.7.4	Agricultural Chemicals	59

7.8	Waste Disposal	59
7.8.1	Dry, Liquid and Unsanitary Waste Disposal	59
Module 7H: Food Safety Standard – Good Agricultural Practices for Farming of Plant Products (GFSI BI)		60
7H.1	Field Production	60
7H.1.1	Field History and Assessment	60
7H.1.2	Cold Storage and Air	60
7H.2	Worker Health/Hygiene and Toilet/Handwashing Facilities	60
7H.2.1	Toilet/Handwashing Facilities	60
7H.2.2	Protective Clothing.....	61
7H.2.3	Jewelry and Personnel Effects	61
7H.2.4	Amenities.....	61
7H.2.5	Personnel Practices	62
7H.2.6	First Aid.....	62
7H.3	Field Handling and Equipment	62
7H.3.1	Agricultural Chemicals/Plant Protection Products	62
7H.3.2	Animal Control	62
7H.3.3	Soil Amendments	63
7H.3.4	Vehicles, Equipment, Tools and Utensils	63
7H.3.5	Cleaning and Sanitation	63
7H.4	Water Used in Growing Activities	63
7H.4.1	Water System Description.....	63
7H.4.2	Water System Risk Assessment.....	64
7H.4.3	Water Management Plan	64
7H.5	Harvesting.....	64
7H.5.1	Preharvest Assessment.....	64
7H.5.2	Water/Ice Used in the Harvesting and Postharvest Operations	64
7H.5.3	Container, Bins and Packaging Materials	65
7H.5.4	Field Packaging and Handling.....	65
7H.5.5	Postharvest Handling and Storage	66
7H.6	Transportation (Field to Storage or Packinghouse)	66
7H.6.1	Equipment Sanitation and Maintenance	66
7H.6.2	Loading/Unloading	66
7H.7	Waste Management	66
7H.7.1	Waste Management	66
Module 8: Food Safety Fundamentals – Good Agricultural Practices for Farming of Grains and Pulses (GFSI BII).		67
8.1	Site Requirements	67
8.1.1	Property Location	67
8.2	Product Handling, Storage and Equipment	67
8.2.1	Field and Storage Buildings.....	67
8.2.2	Storage of dry ingredient, packaging and utensils	67
8.2.3	Construction and Storage of Farm/Harvesting Machinery and Conveyors	67
8.2.4	Vehicles, Equipment and Utensils	67
8.2.5	Maintenance.....	68
8.2.6	Calibration of Equipment	68
8.2.7	Pest Prevention.....	68
8.2.8	Animal Control	68
8.2.9	Cleaning and Sanitation.....	68

8.3	Personal Hygiene.....	69
8.3.1	Personnel Practices.....	69
8.3.2	Sanitary Facilities and Hand Washing.....	69
8.3.3	Protective Clothing	69
8.3.4	Jewelry and Personal Effects	69
8.3.5	Visitors.....	69
8.3.6	Amenities	69
8.4	Harvesting and Packaging/Handling Practices	70
8.4.1	Pre-Harvest Assessment.....	70
8.5	Water Management.....	70
8.5.1	Water System Description.....	70
8.5.2	Irrigation Water	70
8.5.3	Treatment of Irrigation Water.....	70
8.5.4	Water System Risk Assessment	70
8.5.5	Water Management Plan.....	70
8.5.6	Corrective Actions	70
8.6	Storage and Transport.....	71
8.6.1	Storage of Hazardous Chemicals, Toxic Substances, and Petroleum Products	71
8.6.2	Transport.....	71
8.7	Soil Management.....	71
8.7.1	Fertilizer Management.....	71
8.7.2	Soil Amendment	71
8.7.3	Purchasing Chemicals	72
8.7.4	Agricultural Chemicals.....	72
8.8	Waste Disposal	72
8.8.1	Dry, Liquid and Unsanitary Waste Disposal	72
Appendix 1: SQF Food Sector Categories		73
Appendix 2: Glossary.....		79
Appendix 3: SQF Logo Rules of Use.....		87
1.	Introduction	87
2.	Conditions for Use	87
3.	Reproduction	87
4.	Obligations of a Site.....	87
5.	Grounds for Suspending or Ceasing Use of the SQF Logo	87
6.	Disclaimer.....	88
SCHEDULE 1: REPRODUCTION REQUIREMENTS FOR THE SQF LOGO		89
Appendix 4: Requirements for SQF Multi-site Certification		90
1.	Scope	90
2.	Definitions.....	90
3.	Eligibility Criteria for the Multi-site Organization	90
4.	Internal Audits	91
5.	Internal Audit Personnel.....	91
6.	Auditing and Certifying the Multi-site Organization.....	91
7.	Audit Frequency	91
8.	Selecting the Sub-sites	92
9.	Determining the Size of the Sub-sites Sample.....	92
10.	Additional Sub-sites.....	93

11.	Non-Conformities	93
12.	Certificate Issued for a Multi-site Organization.....	93

Part A: Implementing and Maintaining the SQF Food Safety Code for Primary Production

SQF is a food safety code for all sectors of the food supply chain from primary production through to food retailing and the manufacture of food packaging. Edition 8 is now available in separate documents depending on the industry sector.

This document covers the food safety systems for primary production. Other documents are available for:

SQF Food Safety Fundamentals (for small farm businesses)

The SQF Food Safety Code for Manufacturing

The SQF Food Safety Code for Storage and Distribution

The SQF Food Safety Code for Manufacture of Food Packaging

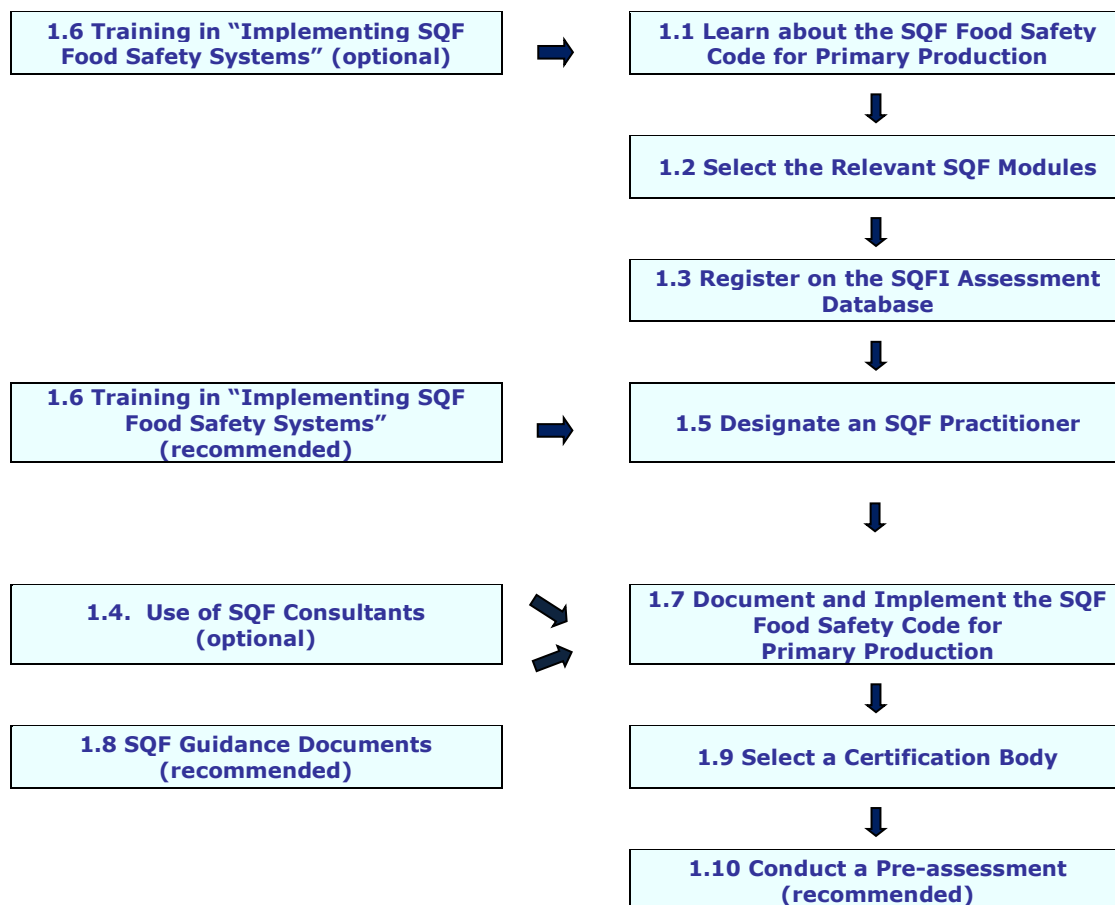
The SQF Food Safety Code for Retail

The SQF Quality Code

The term GAP can mean either Good Agricultural Practices or Good Aquaculture Practices as appropriate.

1. Preparing for Certification

Figure 1: Steps in Preparing for Certification



1.1 Learn about the SQF Food Safety Code for Primary Production

There are several ways to learn how to implement the SQF Food Safety Code for Primary Production within your site. The following options are available:

- Attend a training course “Implementing SQF Systems” (refer Part A, 1.6) through a licensed SQF training center (recommended);
- Take the online training course “Implementing SQF Systems” available from the SQFI website (sqfi.com);
- Train yourself by downloading the SQF Food Safety Code for Primary Production from the SQFI website (sqfi.com) free of charge, and read how to apply it to your industry sector.

1.2 Select the Relevant SQF Modules

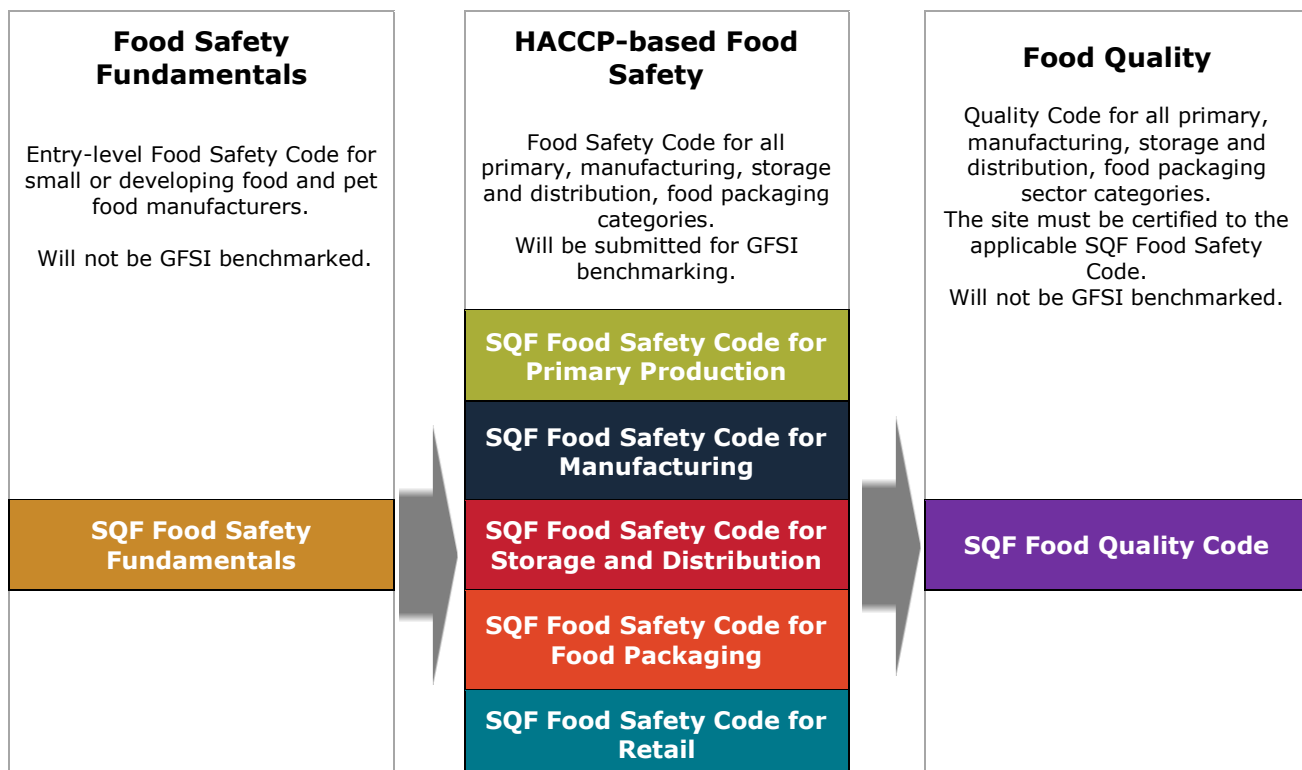
SQFI recognizes that food safety practices differ depending on the food safety risk to the product and the process, and has designed the SQF Food Safety Code for Primary Production to meet the individual requirements of each industry sector.

The SQF food sector categories and applicable modules are listed in full in Appendix 1. It includes a more detailed description with examples, level of risk, and the relationship with the Global Food Safety Initiative (GFSI) industry scopes outlined in the GFSI Requirements Document.

However, the following provides a guide to the SQF Codes and modules that apply to each primary production industry sector or groups of industry sectors.

This document contains the scheme management requirements (Part A) and the auditable modules for animal, plant, grains and aquaculture primary industry sectors (Part B).

All primary producers are required to implement the Primary Production System Elements plus the applicable Good Agricultural/Aquaculture Practices (GAP) Module.



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Table 1: SQF Food Safety Code for Primary Production		
FSC	Category	Applicable GAP Modules
1	Production, Capture and Harvesting of Livestock and Game Animals	Module 5: GAP for farming of animal products
2	Growing and Harvesting of Sprouted Seed Crops for Human Consumption	TBA
3	Growing and Production of Fresh Produce and Nuts	Module 7: GAP for farming of plant products (fruit, vegetables and nuts) Or Module 7H: GAP for farming of plant products
5	Extensive Broad Acre Agricultural Operations	Module 8: GAP for farming of grains and pulses
6	Harvest and Intensive Farming of Seafood	Module 6: GAP for farming of seafood

Where sites have vertically integrated processes operating on one site (e.g., growing and packaging of produce on one site; aquaculture and seafood processing on one site), the food sector categories of the listed finished products shall apply.

While the food sector category lists the finished product, the certification body shall provide SQF food safety auditors and/or technical experts that represent all the processes that are within the scope of certification.

1.3 Register on the SQF Assessment Database

To be considered for SQF certification, sites are required to register in the SQFI assessment database. The database can be accessed from the SQFI website (sqfi.com).

Registration is annual, and there is a fee per site payable at registration and renewal. The fee scale is dependent on the size of the site as determined by gross annual sales revenue. The fee scale is available on the SQFI website (sqfi.com).

Sites must register with SQFI prior to achieving certification, and must remain registered at all times to retain their certification. If the site fails to maintain registration, the certificate will be invalid until the site is properly registered in the SQFI assessment database.

1.4 Use of SQF Consultants

Sites can choose to develop and implement their SQF Food Safety System using their own qualified resources or they can utilize the services of a registered SQF consultant. All SQF consultants are registered by the SQFI to work in specific food sector categories (refer Table 1 and Appendix 1). They are issued with an identity card indicating the food sector categories in which they are registered. Sites are encouraged to confirm an SQF consultant's registration details on the SQFI website (sqfi.com) before engaging their services. The criteria outlining the requirements necessary to qualify as an SQF consultant and the application forms are available at on the SQFI website (sqfi.com). The SQF Consultant Code of Conduct outlines the practices expected of SQF consultants.

1.5 Designate an SQF Practitioner

Whether or not an SQF consultant is used, the SQF Food Safety Code for Primary Production requires that every site has a suitably qualified SQF practitioner to oversee the development, implementation, review and maintenance of the SQF System, including Good Agricultural Practices. The requirements for an SQF practitioner are described in the system elements, 2.1.2.4 and 2.1.2.5.

1.6 SQF Implementation Training

An "Implementing SQF Systems" training course is available through the SQFI network of licensed training centers. Employees who are responsible for designing, implementing and maintaining the requirements of the SQF Food Safety Code for Primary Production are encouraged to participate in a training course. Details about the training centers and the countries in which they operate are available on the SQFI website (sqfi.com). The dates and locations of the courses can be obtained by directly contacting the training centers.

The "Implementing SQF Systems" training course is not mandatory for SQF practitioners, but is strongly recommended.

The SQFI also has an "Implementing SQF Systems" online training course which can be accessed from the SQFI website (sqfi.com). The online training solution is a web-based education portal tool staff can enroll and complete SQF systems training in their own time and at their own pace.

Training in other food industry disciplines, such as HACCP, Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) and Internal Auditing may also be required and licensed SQF training centers can provide details of the other training courses they provide.

1.7 Document and Implement the SQF Food Safety Code for Primary Production

To achieve SQF food safety certification, the site must document and implement the system elements and the relevant GAP modules of the SQF Food Safety Code for Primary Production (refer Part A, 1.2). This requires a two stage process:

Document the SQF System – prepare policies, procedures, work instructions and specifications that meet the system elements and GAP Modules of the SQF Food Safety Code for Primary Production. In other words, "say what you do."

Implement the SQF System – implement the prepared policies, procedures, work instructions and specifications, and keep records to demonstrate compliance to the relevant modules of the SQF Food Safety Code for Primary Production. In other words, "do what you say." SQFI recommends that a minimum of two months of records be available before a site audit is conducted.

1.8 SQF Guidance Documents

Guidance documents are available for some SQF modules and food sector categories from the SQFI website (sqfi.com). These documents are available to help the site interpret the requirements of the SQF Food Safety Code for Primary Production and assist with documenting and implementing the SQF food safety System. The documents are developed with the assistance of food sector technical experts.

The guidance documents are available to assist the site, but are not auditable documents. Where there is a divergence between the guidance document and the SQF Food Safety Code for Primary Production, the SQF Code in English prevails.

1.9 Select a Certification Body

Certification bodies are licensed by SQFI to conduct SQF audits and issue the SQF certificate. SQFI licensed certification bodies are required to be accredited to the international standard ISO/IEC 17065:2012 (or subsequent versions as applicable) and be subject to annual assessments of their certification activities by SQFI licensed accreditation bodies.

The site is required to have an agreement with a certification body in place at all times which outlines the SQF audit and certification services provided. These include as a minimum:

- i. The scope of certification (refer Part A, 2.2);
- ii. The expected time to conduct and finalize the audit and the reporting requirements;
- iii. The certification body's fee structure;
- iv. The conditions under which the SQF certificate is issued, withdrawn or suspended; and
- v. The certification body's appeals, complaints and disputes procedure.

A current list of licensed certification bodies is available on the SQFI website (sqfi.com). Certification bodies are also listed in the SQFI assessment database and sites can request a quote or select a certification body online once they have registered.

Sites seeking to implement an SQF multi-site program (refer Appendix 4) must indicate this in their application to the certification body. The agreed multi-site program, including the identification of the central site and number and names of the sub-sites, must be included in the agreement with the certification body.

1.10 Conduct a Pre-assessment Audit

A pre-assessment audit is not mandatory, but is recommended to provide a "health check" of the site's implemented SQF food safety System. A pre-assessment audit can assist in identifying gaps in the site's SQF food safety System so that corrective action can occur before engaging the selected certification body for a full certification audit. It can be conducted using internal resources, a registered SQF consultant, or a registered SQF food safety auditor.

2. The Initial Certification Process

2.1 Selection of the SQF Auditor(s)

SQF food safety auditors must be employed by or contracted to an SQFI licensed certification body, and must be registered with the SQFI.

The certification body shall select the most appropriate qualified SQF auditor(s) for the site's SQF certification audit, including vertically integrated sites. The SQF food safety auditor must be registered for the same food sector category (ies) as the site's scope of certification (refer Part A, 2.2). The certification body shall ensure no SQF food safety auditor conducts audits of the same site for more than three consecutive certification cycles.

The certification body must advise the site of the name of the SQF food safety auditor at the time that the SQF audit is scheduled. The site may check the registration and food sector category (ies) of the SQF food safety auditor in the register on the SQFI website (sqfi.com).

2.2 Identifying the Scope of Certification

The scope of certification shall be clearly identified and agreed upon between the site and certification body prior to the initial certification audit and included in the scope of the initial certification audit and all subsequent audits (refer Part A, 2.4). The scope of certification shall determine the relevant system elements and GAP modules to be documented and implemented by the site and audited by the certification body, and cannot be changed during or immediately following a certification or re-certification audit. For requirements on changing the scope of certification, refer Part A, 5.1.

The scope of certification shall include:

The site. SQF certification is site specific. The entire site, including all premises, support buildings, silos, tanks, fields, ponds, barns, and external grounds must be included in the scope of certification. Where a site seeks to exempt part of the premises, the request for exemption must be submitted to the certification body in writing prior to the certification audit, detailing the reason for exemption. If approved by the certification body, exemptions shall be listed in the site description in the SQFI assessment database and in audit reports(s). However, all parts of the premises and operations that are involved with the production, handling, storage of products, animals or crops are included in the scope and cannot be exempted.

When activities are carried out in different locations but are overseen by the same senior, operational, and technical management, and are covered by the one SQF System, the site can be expanded to include those locations.

Exempted parts of the site must not be promoted as being covered by the certification. Instances where promotion of exempted equipment or areas of the site are identified and substantiated (either by regular audit or by other means) shall result in immediate withdrawal of the SQF certification.

The products. SQF certification is product specific. The food sector category (ies) and products grown and handled on site shall be identified and agreed in the scope of certification. Where a site seeks to exempt any products grown or handled on site, the request for exemption must be submitted to the certification body in writing prior to the certification audit, explaining the reason for exemption. If approved by the certification body, product exemptions shall be listed in the site description in the SQFI assessment database and in audit reports(s).

Exempted products must not be promoted as being covered by the certification. Instances where promotion of exempted products or processes are identified and substantiated (either by regular audit or by other means) shall result in immediate withdrawal of the SQF certificate. The scope of certification forms part of the certificate. It describes the location of the site, the food sector categories (refer Appendix 1) and the products grown and handled on that site.

All products produced, stored or handled on the site shall be included on the site's certificate, unless exempted by the site. The site must demonstrate that exemptions of part of the site or products from the scope of certification does not put certificated product at food safety risk.

2.3 The Initial Certification Audit

The SQF certification audit consists of two stages:

- i. The desk audit is undertaken to verify that the site's SQF System documentation meets the requirements of the SQF Food Safety Code for Primary Production.
- ii. The site audit is conducted on site and determines the effective implementation of the site's documented SQF Food Safety System.

Where a site operates under seasonal conditions (a period in which the major activity is conducted over five (5) consecutive months or less) the certification audit shall be completed within the season.

2.4 Identifying the Scope of the Audit

The site and the certification body shall agree on the audit scope before the certification audit begins. The scope of the audit shall include:

- The agreed scope of certification including any approved exemptions (refer Part A, 2.2);
- The version of the SQF Food Safety Code for Primary Production, and the applicable GAP Modules;
- The audit duration (refer Part A, 2.5);
- The designated registered SQF food safety auditor; and
- The certification body's fees structure including travel time, report writing, ancillary costs, and costs for close-out of non-conformities.

Once the audit scope is agreed between the site and the certification body, it cannot be changed once the audit has commenced.

2.5 Audit Duration Guide

Once the certification body and site have agreed on the scope of certification, the food sector categories, and the number of different processes and products produced and/or handled on the site, the certification body shall provide the site with an estimate of the time it will take to complete the certification audit. This shall be included in the audit scope (refer Part A, 2.4).

The audit times will vary according to the size and complexity of the site operations. Factors that can impact on the audit duration include:

- i. The scope of certification;
- ii. The scope of the audit;
- iii. The size of the site, including acreage and/or size of herds;
- iv. The number and complexity of commodities, crops, species;
- v. The complexity of the SQF System design and documentation;
- vi. The level of mechanization and labor intensiveness;
- vii. The ease of communication with company personnel (consider different languages spoken); and
- viii. The cooperation of the site's personnel.

Tables 2 and 3 provide a guide to the duration of an SQF certification audit. This is a guide only, and the certification body must determine the duration of each certification audit based on the scope of certification, the food safety risk, and the complexity of the processes.

Table 2: Desk Audit Duration Table

Code	Basic duration (days)
Primary Production business employing less than 10 people	0.25 days
All other farms or primary production business	.5 days

Table 3: Farm Audit Duration Table

Step 1	Step 2	Step 3
Code	Basic duration (days) (includes up to three HACCP plans/commodities/animal species)	Additional Days based on Number of employees
Primary Production business employing less than 10 people	.5	1 to 50 = 0 51 to 100 = 0.5 101 to 500 = 1.0 501 to 1000 = 1.5 1001 to 2500 = 2.0 2501 to 4000 = 2.5 > 4,000 = 3.0
All other primary production businesses	1.5	
Additional time for each HACCP plan(s) (<i>where there are multiple / different plans</i>)	0.5 day per additional 3 HACCP plans or 3 crops/commodities/animal species	

In addition to audit time, the certification body shall provide the site with the time and expected costs for planning, travel, report writing, and close out of non-conformities.

Where the audit scope includes the requirements for the SQF Food Safety Code for Manufacturers, audit duration will be affected as per the audit duration guideline for manufacturers and any SQF system element commonalities.

2.6 The Desk Audit

An independent desk audit is conducted by the certification body only for initial certification. The desk audit is conducted by the registered SQF food safety auditor appointed by the certification body, and ensures:

- An appropriately qualified SQF practitioner is designated;
- The food safety plan and the associated critical control point (CCP) determinations, validations and verifications are appropriately documented and endorsed by the SQF practitioner;
- The documented System is relevant to the scope of certification.

The certification body shall notify the site of corrections or corrective action, or any aspects of the SQF food safety system that requires improvement or adjustment. The certification body will also verify that all corrections or corrective action for all non-conformities have been addressed before proceeding with a site audit.

Desk audits are not scored or rated and the close out times indicated in Part A, 3.2 do not apply.

2.7 The Farm Audit

The farm audit is conducted on site by the SQF food safety auditor appointed by the certification body. It is conducted at a time agreed between the site and the certification body when the main processes (e.g. harvesting) are operating. The site audit must include a review of the entire location/site, including the inside and outside of premises, fields, ponds, etc. regardless of the scope of certification and agreed exemptions. The farm audit determines if the SQF System is effectively implemented as documented. It establishes and verifies the:

- Effectiveness of the SQF food safety System in its entirety;
- Effective identification and control of food safety hazards;
- Effective interaction between all elements of the SQF System; and
- Level of commitment demonstrated by the site to maintaining an effective SQF System and to meeting their food safety regulatory and customer requirements.

2.8 Corporate Audits

Where a site is part of a larger corporation and some food safety functions are conducted at a corporate head office (i.e. an office that does not harvest or handle products), an optional corporate audit can be conducted by the certification body of the Code elements managed by the corporate office. The decision on whether a separate corporate audit is required shall be made by mutual agreement between the certification body and site and communicated to sites managed by the corporate office.

Where a corporate audit is conducted, the audit evidence shall be reviewed and all identified non-conformities closed out before the site audits are conducted. Any open non-conformities shall be attributed to the site or sites.

The SQF food safety auditor shall also audit the application of the corporate functions relative to the site's scope of certification during the audit of each site managed by the corporate office. All mandatory and applicable elements of the SQF Food Safety Code shall be audited at each site irrespective of the findings of the corporate audit.

Corporate head office audits do not apply to designated central sites within an SQF multi-site program (refer Appendix 4).

2.9 Seasonal Production

Initial certification audits for sites involved in seasonal production (i.e. a period in which the major harvest activity is conducted over not more than five (5) consecutive months) shall be conducted during the peak operational part of the season.

Where sites seek to include products from more than one (1) season or commodity within their scope of certification, the site and certification body shall agree to conduct the initial certification audit during the highest risk and/or highest volume production operation. The scope of subsequent certification audits will include any remaining products and/or commodities. Documentation and records for other seasonal production shall be reviewed as part of the certification audit.

2.10 System Elements

All applicable system elements and the relevant GAP modules (s) shall be assessed as part of the certification audit. Where an element is not applicable and appropriately justified, it shall be stated as "not applicable" (N/A) by the SQF food safety auditor in the audit report.

Within the system elements, the elements listed below are mandatory elements that cannot be reported as "not applicable" or "exempt" and must be audited and compliance/non-compliance reported. The mandatory elements are:

- 2.1.1 Management Policy
- 2.1.2 Management Responsibility
- 2.1.4 Management Review
- 2.2.1 Food Safety Management System
- 2.2.2 Document Control
- 2.2.3 Records
- 2.4.1 Food Legislation
- 2.4.2 Good Agricultural/Aquacultural Practices
- 2.4.3.1 Food Safety Plan
- 2.4.4 Approved Supplier Program
- 2.4.8 Product Release
- 2.5.1 Validation and Effectiveness
- 2.5.2 Verification and Monitoring
- 2.5.3 Corrective and Preventative Action
- 2.5.5 Internal Audit
- 2.6.1 Product Identification
- 2.6.2 Product Trace
- 2.6.3 Product Withdrawal and Recall
- 2.7.1 Food Defense Plan
- 2.8.1 Allergen Management
- 2.9.2 Training Program

Mandatory elements are designated with "Mandatory" in the system elements in the SQF Food Safety Code for Primary Production.

2.11 Non-conformities

Where the SQF food safety auditor finds deviations from the requirements of relevant modules of the SQF Food Safety Code for Primary Production, the SQF food safety auditor shall advise the site of the number, description, and extent of the non-conformities. Non-conformities may also be referred to as non-conformances.

Non-conformities against the SQF Food Safety Code for Primary Production shall be graded as follows:

- A **minor non-conformity** is an omission or deficiency in the SQF System that produces unsatisfactory conditions that if not addressed may lead to a risk to food safety but not likely to cause a system element breakdown.
- A **major non-conformity** is an omission or deficiency in the SQF System producing unsatisfactory conditions that carry a food safety risk and are likely to result in a system element breakdown.
- A critical non-conformity is a breakdown of control(s) at a critical control point, a pre-requisite program, or other process step and judged likely to cause a significant public health risk and/or where product is contaminated.
- A **critical non-conformity** is also raised if the site fails to take effective corrective action within the timeframe agreed with the certification body, or if the certification body deems that there is systemic falsification of records relating to food safety controls and the SQF System.

Critical non-conformities cannot be raised at desk audits.

Timelines for the resolution of corrective actions are addressed in Part A, 3.2.

2.12 The Audit Report

The SQFI provides the certification body with the electronic audit checklist to be used by the SQF food safety auditors when conducting SQF food safety audits. The SQF food safety audit checklist is available from the SQFI assessment database and is customized for the relevant SQF industry sector. The SQF checklist is designed to ensure the uniform application of SQF food safety audit requirements. It is used by SQF food safety auditors to record their findings and determine the extent to which site operations comply with stated requirements.

Mandatory elements (refer Part A, 2.9) must be reported for the SQF food safety audit report to be submitted.

Non-conformities identified during the SQF food safety audit shall be accurately described in the SQF food safety audit report and shall fully describe the clause of the SQF Food Safety Code for Primary Production and the reason for the non-conformity. Non-conformity reports shall be left with the site by the SQF food safety auditor before the close of the site audit.

The electronic audit report must be completed by the SQF auditor and provided to the certification body for technical review.

The certification body shall review and approve the audit report and make it available to the site within ten (10) calendar days from the last day of the audit. A final audit report, with completed and approved corrective actions shall be made available to the site before the final certification decision is made forty-five (45) calendar days from the last day of the site audit (refer Part A, 3.4).

The SQF food safety audit report shall remain the property of the site and shall not be distributed to other parties without the permission of the site.

3. The Initial Certification Decision

3.1 Responsibility for the Certification Decision

It is the responsibility of the certification body to ensure that audits undertaken by their SQF food safety auditors are thorough, that all requirements are fulfilled, and the audit report is complete. The audit report is in draft form and the audit evidence is only recommended until technically reviewed and approved by the authorized certification manager of the certification body.

The certification decision shall be made by the certification body based on the evidence of compliance and non-conformity recommended by the SQF food safety auditor during the SQF audit. Although SQFI provides guidance on certification, the certification body is responsible for deciding whether or not certification is justified and granted based on the objective evidence provided by the SQF food safety auditor.

Any certification decisions that are made outside the scope of this clause require the certification body to provide written justification to SQFI.

3.2 Site Audit Corrective Actions

All non-conformities and their resolution shall be documented by the SQF food safety auditor.

The close out timeframe for non-conformities identified applies to the site audit only.

- **A minor non-conformity** shall be corrected, verified and closed out by the SQF food safety auditor within thirty (30) calendar days of the completion of the site audit. Extensions may be granted by the certification body where there is no immediate threat to product safety, and alternative, temporary methods of control are initiated. The site shall be advised of the extended timeframe. Where an extension is granted, the non-conformity shall still be closed out and the SQF food safety auditor shall document all details of justification of the extension, how the risk is being controlled, and the agreed completion date.
- **A major non-conformity** shall be corrected and appropriate corrective action verified and closed out within thirty (30) calendar days of the completion of the site audit.

In circumstances where the corrective action involves structural change or cannot be corrected due to seasonal conditions or installation lead times, this period can be extended provided the corrective action time frame is acceptable to the certification body and temporary action is taken by the site to mitigate the risk to product safety. However, in such cases, the non-conformity shall be closed out and the SQF food safety auditor shall document all details of justification of the extension, how the risk is being controlled, and the agreed completion date. A documented root cause analysis shall be submitted by the site as part of the corrective action evidence for every major non-conformity.

- If the SQF food safety auditor considers that a **critical non-conformity** exists during a certification audit, the SQF food safety auditor shall immediately advise the site and notify the certification body. A critical non-conformity raised at an initial certification audit results in an automatic failure of the audit, and the site must re-apply for certification (refer Part A, 3.5).

3.3 Audit Score and Rating

Based on the evidence collected by the SQF food safety auditor, each applicable aspect of the SQF certification food safety audit is automatically scored in the audit report. Desk audits are not scored.

The calculation uses the following factors:

0	aspect meets the criteria
1	aspect does not meet the criteria due to minor variations (minor non-conformity)
10	aspect does not meet the criteria (major non-conformity)
50	aspect does not meet the criteria (critical non-conformity)

A single rating is calculated for the site audit as $(100 - N)$ where N is the sum of the individual rating criteria allocated. The rating provides an indication of the overall condition of the site against the SQF Food Safety Code for Primary Production, and also provides a guideline on the required level of surveillance by the certification body. The audit frequency at each rating level is indicated as follows:

Score	Rating	Certification¹	Audit Frequency
96 - 100	E – Excellent	Certificate issued	12 monthly re-certification audit
86 - 95	G – Good	Certificate issued	12 monthly re-certification audit
70 - 85	C – Complies	Certificate issued	6 monthly surveillance audit
0 - 69	F – Fails to comply	No certificate issued	Considered to have failed the SQF audit

¹. Certification also requires that all major and minor non-conformities are closed out within thirty (30) calendar days.

3.4 Granting Certification

Certification of the SQF System shall be awarded to sites that achieve a “C - complies” audit rating or greater with no outstanding non-conformities. The certification decision shall be made within forty-five (45) calendar days of the last day of the site audit. Once SQF certification is granted, the SQFI issues a unique certification number which is specific to that site.

Within ten (10) calendar days of granting certification, the certification body shall provide an electronic and/or hard copy of the site’s certificate. The certificate is valid for seventy-five (75) days beyond the anniversary of the initial certification audit date.

The certificate shall be in a form approved by the SQFI and include:

- i. The name, address and logo of the certification body;
- ii. The logo of the accreditation body, and the certification body’s accreditation number;
- iii. The heading “certificate;”
- iv. The phrase “(site name) is registered as meeting the requirements of the SQF Food Safety Code for Primary Production, edition 8;”
- v. The scope of registration – SQF Food Safety Code for Primary Production, edition 8, food sector category (ies) and products;
- vi. Indication of unannounced re-certification audit (where applicable);
- vii. Dates of audit (last day), date of next re-certification audit, date of certification decision, and date of certificate expiry;
- viii. Signatures of the authorized officer and issuing officer; and
- ix. SQF logo.

Certified site information shall be posted to the SQFI website (sqfi.com).

3.5 Failure to Comply

Where a site achieves an “F – fails to comply” rating at a certification audit, the supplier is considered to have failed the SQF audit. The site must then re-apply for another site audit.

When the site’s re-application occurs within six (6) months of the last audit date, and with the same certification body, a site audit shall be scheduled but a desk audit is not required. If the re-application occurs after six (6) months from the last audit date, or with a new certification body, then a desk audit and site audit are required.

4 Surveillance and Re-certification

4.1 Maintaining Certification

To maintain SQF food safety certification, a site is required to attain a "C - complies" audit rating or greater at re-certification audits, ensure that surveillance and/or re-certification audits occur within the required timeframe, ensure that no critical non-conformities are raised at surveillance or re-certification audits, and that all major and minor non-conformities are corrected within the time frame specified. All re-certification audits shall be considered announced unless otherwise indicated as unannounced on the audit report and certificate.

4.2 Surveillance Audit

The surveillance audit is conducted when the site attains a "C - complies" rating at a certification audit or re-certification audit. The surveillance audit shall be conducted within thirty (30) calendar days either side of the six (6) month anniversary of the last day of the previous certification or re-certification audit.

A new score and rating is issued at the surveillance audit, however the re-certification audit date is not affected.

The surveillance audit is a full SQF site System audit. In particular, the surveillance audit is intended to:

- i. Verify the continued efficacy of corrections and corrective actions closed out at previous audits;
- ii. Verify that the SQF System continues to be implemented as documented;
- iii. Consider and take appropriate action where changes to the site's operations are made and the impact of those changes on the site's SQF System;
- iv. Confirm continued compliance with the requirements of the SQF Food Safety Code for Primary Production;
- v. Verify all critical steps remain under control; and
- vi. Contribute to continued improvement of the site's SQF System and business operation.

Major or minor non-conformities raised at the surveillance audit shall be closed out as indicated in Part A, 3.2.

4.3 Surveillance Audit – Seasonal Operations

Seasonal operations are sites whose major activity is conducted over not more than five (5) consecutive months in any calendar year.

Seasonal operations that attain a "C - complies" rating at a certification or re-certification audit are subject to a surveillance audit.

Where the due date of the surveillance audit falls within the operational season, the surveillance audit shall occur within thirty (30) days either side of the six (6) month anniversary of the last day of the previous certification or re-certification audit.

Where the due date of the surveillance audit falls outside the operational season, the certification body shall conduct a pre-operational audit no less than thirty (30) days prior to the next season. The pre-operational audit shall comprise a full review of corrective actions from the last audit, and preparedness for the next re-certification audit.

4.4 Re-certification Audit

The re-certification audit of the SQF System is undertaken to verify the continued effectiveness of the site's SQF System in its entirety.

The re-certification audit shall be conducted within thirty (30) calendar days either side of the anniversary of the last day of the initial certification audit.

The re-certification audit score is calculated in the same way as the initial certification audit, and the same rating applied (refer Part A, 3.3).

Written approval by the SQF Compliance Manager is required to issue a temporary extension to a site's re-certification audit timeframe and certificate expiry date including instances in extreme circumstances such as acts of nature or extreme weather. Seasonal sites shall refer to Part A, 4.5.

Situations that require a permanent change to the re-certification audit date require written approval by the SQF Compliance Manager and the site's new re-certification date may be moved earlier than the anniversary and the new re-certification date fixed as the new initial certification audit date.

All extension requests shall come from the certification body that issued the site's SQF certificate.

The purpose of the re-certification audit is to:

- i. Verify the continued efficacy of corrections and corrective actions closed out at previous audits;
- ii. Verify that the SQF food safety System continues to be implemented as documented;
- iii. Verify that internal audits, annual reviews of the crisis and food defense plans and recall system, and management reviews have been effectively completed;
- iv. Verify that corrective and preventative actions have been taken on all non-conformities;
- v. Consider and take appropriate action where changes to the site's operations are made and the impact of those changes on the site's SQF food safety System;
- vi. Verify all critical steps remain under control and the effective interaction between all elements of the SQF System;
- vii. Verify the overall effectiveness of the SQF System in its entirety in the light of changes in operations;
- viii. Verify that the site continues to demonstrate a commitment to maintaining the effectiveness of the SQF System and to meeting regulatory and customer requirements; and
- ix. Contribute to continued improvement of the site's SQF System and business operation.

4.5 Re-certification Audit – Seasonal Operations

The re-certification audit of seasonal operations shall follow the requirements of Part A, 4.4 above. However where there is a significant change in seasonal operations whereby the re-certification audit sixty (60) day window cannot be met, the certification body and site shall temporarily reset the re-certification audit date so that it falls during the peak operational part of the season.

If the site wishes to permanently change the re-certification audit date due to seasonal conditions, the request must be made to the SQF Compliance Manager in writing.

4.6 Variations to the Re-certification Process

The requirements for the re-certification audit are the same as those described in Part A, 2.1 – 3.4 for the certification audit, with the following exceptions:

- i. An independent desk audit is not required as part of a re-certification audit. However, an integrated desk and site audit shall be conducted at each re-certification. The site's documentation shall be reviewed as necessary as part of the site audit.
- ii. If the site fails to permit the re-certification or surveillance audit within the agreed timeframe, the certification body shall immediately suspend the site's certificate.
- iii. If the site receives an "F – fails to comply" rating at the re-certification or surveillance audit, the certification body shall immediately suspend the site's certificate.

If the site fails to close out non-conformities within the agreed timeframe, the certification body shall immediately suspend the site's certificate.

4.7 Unannounced Re-certification Audit

Within three (3) certification cycles the certification body shall conduct one (1) unannounced re-certification audit of the site. The unannounced food safety audit shall occur in the site's site within the sixty (60) day re-certification window (i.e., the anniversary date of the initial certification audit +/- thirty (30) days). SQF sites shall be required to undertake one (1) unannounced audit within the three (3) year certification cycle.

- i. The site's certification cycle begins with the initial certification audit date. Unannounced re-certification audits shall occur once in every three (3) certification cycles.
- ii. Unannounced audits shall not be conducted on the initial certification audit or on a surveillance audit.

- iii. If a site changes certification bodies, the site's unannounced re-certification audit schedule shall not change.
- iv. The unannounced re-certification audit shall follow the protocol under the SQF Code, Part A, 4.4, 4.5 and 4.6.
- v. Multi-site sites are exempted from unannounced audits.
- vi. The unannounced audit year shall be determined between the site and certification body.
- vii. The date of the unannounced audit shall be determined by the certification body within the 60 day re-certification audit window.
- viii. A defined blackout period shall be established by negotiation between the site and their certification body that prevents the unannounced re-certification audit from occurring out of season or when the site is not operating for legitimate business reasons.
- ix. Immediate suspension of the site certificate will occur in facilities that refuse entry to the SQF food safety auditor for an unannounced audit.
- x. Certificates issued following unannounced re-certification audits shall indicate that the audit was unannounced.

A site may forgo the three year certification cycle requirement and voluntarily elect to have annual unannounced re-certification audits. If annual unannounced re-certification audits are conducted by the site then the protocol outlined for the three year certification cycle audit shall be followed. Sites with annual unannounced re-certification audits shall be recognized on the SQFI Certificate as an "SQFI select site."

4.8 Suspending Certification

The certification body shall suspend the SQF certificate if the site:

- i. fails to permit the re-certification or surveillance audit,
- ii. receives an "F – fails to comply" rating,
- iii. fails to take corrective action within the timeframe specified for major non-conformities,
- iv. fails to permit an unannounced audit,
- v. fails to take corrective action within the timeframe specified in Part A, 3.2,
- vi. where in the opinion of the certification body, the site fails to maintain the requirements of the SQF Food Safety Code for Primary Production.

Where the site's certificate is suspended, the certification body shall immediately amend the site details on the SQFI database to a suspended status indicating the reason for the suspension and the date of effect; and in writing:

- i. inform the site of the reasons for the action taken and the date of effect;
- ii. copy the SQF Compliance Manager on the notice of suspension sent to the site,
- iii. request that the site provides to the certification body, within forty-eight (48) hours of receiving notice of the suspension, a detailed corrective action plan outlining the corrective action to be taken.

When the site's certificate is suspended, the certification body shall, upon receipt of the detailed corrective action, plan:

- i. Verify that the immediate correction has been taken by the means of an on-site visit within thirty (30) calendar days of receiving the corrective action plan;
- ii. When corrective action has been successfully implemented, re-instate the site status on the SQFI assessment database and give written notice to the site that their certificate is no longer suspended;
- iii. Not more than six (6) months after suspension, the certification body shall conduct a further unannounced site visit to verify the effective implementation of the corrective action plan and that the site's SQF System is achieving stated objectives, and
- iv. Copy SQFI on the notice indicating lifting of the suspension sent to the site.

When a certification body has suspended a site's SQF certificate, for the duration of suspension, the site shall not represent itself as holding an SQF certificate.

4.9 Withdrawing Certification

The certification body shall withdraw the certificate when the site:

- i. Has been placed under suspension and fails to submit approved corrective action plans as defined by the certification body within forty-eight (48) hours of receiving notice of the suspension, or fails to take approved corrective action as determined by the certification body within the time frames specified;
- ii. Has falsified its records;
- iii. Fails to maintain the integrity of the SQF certificate; or
- iv. Has an administrator, receiver, receiver and manager, official manager or provisional liquidator appointed over its assets or where an order is made or a resolution passed for the closure of the site (except for the purposes of amalgamation or reconstruction) or the site ceases to carry on business or becomes bankrupt, applies to take the benefit of any law for the relief of bankrupt or insolvent debtors or makes any arrangement or composition with its creditors.

When the site's certificate is withdrawn, the certification body shall immediately amend the site's details on the SQFI assessment database to a "withdrawn" status indicating the reason for the withdrawal and the date of effect; and in writing:

- i. Inform the site that the SQF certificate has been withdrawn, the reason for such action and the date of effect; and
- ii. Copy SQFI on the notice of withdrawal sent to the site,
- iii. Instruct the site to return the certificate within thirty (30) days of notification.

A site that has their certificate withdrawn must re-apply for certification.

A site that has their certificate withdrawn will not be permitted to apply for certification for twelve (12) months from the date the certificate was withdrawn by the SQFI certification body. The withdrawn site will be posted on the SQFI website (sqfi.com) for twelve (12) months.

5 Obligations of Sites and Certification Bodies

5.1 Changing the Scope of Certification

When a site wishes to add food sector categories or new crops or products to their scope of certification, the site may request the increased scope of certification in writing to the certification body.

The certification body shall conduct a site audit of the additional crops or products and shall either issue a new certificate, or advise the site in writing why the new certificate cannot be issued.

An audit for an increase in scope shall not change the re-certification date or certificate expiry date. When a new certificate is issued, the re-certification audit date and certificate expiry date shall remain as per the original certificate.

The certification body shall make the appropriate scope changes to the site record in the SQFI assessment database.

Where the scope change is a new process or a major change in product, or a significant change in personnel or materials, the certification body shall be advised in writing.

Where the request is received within thirty (30) days prior to the re-certification audit window, the certification body shall defer the scope extension to the next re-certification audit and shall advise the site. No new certificate shall be issued until after a successful re-certification audit.

5.2 Changing the Certification Body

A site can change its certification body after one (1) certification cycle and only when there has been closure of all outstanding non-conformities, provided that the certification is not suspended or under threat of suspension or withdrawal.

Sites that require a surveillance audit are permitted to change certification bodies only after the surveillance audit is conducted or by written approval from the SQFI Compliance Manager.

When a site changes certification bodies, the certificate issued by the former certification body remains valid until the expected expiration date.

The certification number and re-certification date are transferred with the site to the new certification body.

The new certification body shall undertake a pre-transfer review of the site's certification to:

- i. Confirm the certificate is current, valid and relates to the SQF System so certified;
- ii. Confirm the site's food sector category falls within the new certifier's scope of accreditation;
- iii. Confirm any complaints received are actioned;
- iv. Review the site's audit history (where the site can demonstrate such history to the satisfaction of the new certification body by way of copies of audit reports completed by any former certification body and the impact of any outstanding non-conformities);
- v. Confirm the stage of the current certification cycle.

When a site changes their certification body, the site shall make the last re-certification audit report and surveillance audit report (where applicable) available to the new certification body.

5.3 Notification of Product Recalls and Regulatory Infringements

Upon identification that a certified site initiates a food safety event that requires public notification (such as Class I or Class II recall, or the receipt of a regulatory warning letter), the site shall notify the certification body and the SQFI in writing at foodsafetycrisis@sqfi.com within twenty-four (24) hours of the event.

The site's selected certification body and the SQFI shall be listed in the site's essential contacts lists as defined in system element 2.6.3 of the SQF Food Safety Code for Primary Production.

The certification body shall notify the SQFI within a further forty-eight (48) hours of any action it intends to take to ensure the integrity of the certification.

5.4 Compliance and Integrity Program

To meet the requirements of SQFI's Compliance and Integrity Program, SQFI may from time to time monitor the activities of the certification bodies and their auditors. These monitoring techniques include but are not limited to

validation audits and/or witness audits. While conducting these additional monitoring activities, sites shall be required to allow additional SQF-authorized representatives, staff or auditors into their site during the audit or after the audit has taken place. The attendance of an SQFI representative shall not interfere with operations, or result in additional audit time or non-conformities, and will not increase the cost charged by the certification body for the audit.

5.5 Change of Ownership

When a certified site's business has been sold and the business name is retained, the new owner shall, within thirty (30) calendar days of the change of ownership, notify the certification body and apply to retain the SQF certification and the existing certification number. In cases where the ownership of a certified site changes but the staff with major responsibility for the management and oversight of the SQF food safety System has been retained, the certification body may retain the existing audit frequency status. In making this application, the certification body shall determine that staff with major responsibility for the management and oversight of the SQF System has been retained.

If there are significant changes in site management and personnel, the certification body shall complete a certification audit and issue a new certificate and a new certification number. The audit frequency applicable to a new certification shall apply.

5.6 Relocation of Premises

When a certified site relocates their business premises, the site's certification does not transfer to the new site. A successful certification of the new premises must be conducted. Although the site's certificate number shall remain the same, an initial certification audit of the new premise shall apply, i.e. a desk audit and site audit.

5.7 Use of a Technical Expert

Technical experts may be used to assist SQF food safety auditors in audits where the auditor is SQF registered but does not possess some or any site's food sector category (ies), or for high risk products/processes where the audit would benefit from expert technical advice.

The use of a technical expert to assist an SQF food safety auditor in the performance of an SQF audit is permitted provided the site has been notified before the audit and accepts their participation. The technical expert must sign a confidentiality agreement with the certification body.

Before the audit, the certification body must submit the technical qualifications of the technical expert and the justification for use of the technical expert to the SQF Compliance Manager.

Technical experts must:

- Hold a university degree in a discipline related to the food sector category for high risk sectors, or a higher education qualification for low risk categories;
- Have received HACCP training with certificate of attainment issued; and
- Have five years full-time experience in a technical, professional, or supervisory position related to the food sector category and specific products.

Technical experts are to be physically present during the farm audit.

5.8 Language

The certification body shall ensure that the SQF food safety auditor conducting the audit can competently communicate in the oral and written language of the site being audited.

In circumstances where a translator is required, the translator shall be provided by the certification body and shall have knowledge of the technical terms used during the audit; be independent of the site being audited and have no conflict of interest. The site shall be notified of any increase in audit duration and cost associated with the use of a translator.

For the purpose of resolving a conflict, the English version of the SQF Food Safety Code for Primary Production shall be the deciding reference.

5.9 Conflict of Interest

The certification body shall ensure that all certification activities are separately controlled and managed (including the development of policy and practices) from any consulting activity. It shall preclude any prospective SQF food safety auditor from undertaking any audit in relation to the certification of SQF System that constitute a conflict of interest as outlined below or any other condition that could lead to a conflict of interest.

SQF food safety auditors shall not audit anywhere they have participated in a consulting role involving the site in question, or anybody related to the site, within the last two (2) years (considered to be participating in an active and creative manner in the development of the SQF System to be audited, including the development of food safety plans). Consulting includes, but is not limited to, activities such as:

- i. Producing or preparing food safety plans, manuals, handbooks or procedures.
- ii. Participating in the decision making process regarding SQF System.
- iii. Giving advice – as a consultant or otherwise – toward the design, documentation, development, validation, verification, implementation or maintenance of SQF System; and
- iv. Deliver or participate in the delivery of an “in-house” food safety training service at which advice and instruction on the development and implementation of food safety plans and SQF System for eventual certification is provided.

The certification body shall ensure that an SQF food safety auditor discloses any existing, former or proposed link between themselves or their organization and the site.

The certification body shall ensure through organizational structure that no potential conflict of interest, consulting, or training occurs from auditors contracted or employed by the certification body to existing or potential site within the SQF program.

A site can refuse the service of an SQF food safety auditor when they consider the auditor has a conflict of interest, or for other reasons. In such circumstances the site shall outline the reasons in writing to the certification body.

5.10 Complaints, Appeals and Disputes

The certification body shall document, and provide to the site, its procedure for handling and resolving appeals, complaints and disputes made by a site, or made by another party about a site.

When a site has cause to register a complaint about a certification body’s activities, or appeals or disputes a decision made by a certification body, including the activities and decisions of its auditors, the certification body shall investigate and resolve these matters without delay and keep a record of all complaints, appeals and disputes and their resolution.

When a certification body receives a complaint about a site from other parties, the certification body is required to investigate and resolve the matter without delay and keep a record of all complaints, appeals and disputes and their resolution.

Appeals regarding decisions on the suspension and/or withdrawal of the SQF certification by a certification body shall not delay the decision to suspend or withdraw the certification.

When upon investigation of a complaint it is determined that there has been a substantiated breakdown of a site’s SQF System or any other condition not in accordance with the SQF Food Safety Code for Primary Production and/or other supporting documents, the certification body shall suspend certification as outlined in Part A, 4.8.

Where a complaint is registered about the conduct or behavior of an auditor or certification body personnel, the certification body shall investigate and resolve the complaint without delay and keep a record of all complaints and their resolution.

Records of complaints made to certification bodies and their investigations shall be available to the SQFI upon request. Where a complaint, appeal or dispute cannot be satisfactorily resolved between the site and the certification body, the matter shall be referred to the SQFI complaints and appeals procedure via the SQFI website (sqfi.com). Complaints and comments about the SQF Code, the SQF assessment database, SQF training centers and consultants can also be registered at this address.

Part B: The SQF Code

Part B is the auditable standard for the SQF Food Safety Code for Primary Production. It comprises the SQF System Elements for Primary Production, and the relevant Good Agricultural/Aquaculture Practices (GAP) modules for the applicable food sector categories (refer Part A, 1.2).

Scope, References and Definitions

Scope

SQF System Elements for Primary Production: The System Elements identify the food safety system elements for SQF sites whose primary function is the primary production of food (food sector categories 5 – 8 and 7H).

Modules 5, 6, 7, 7H, 8: The individual modules describe the Good Agricultural/Aquaculture Practices (GAP) requirements applicable to the various food industry sectors. The site must meet the requirements of the module or modules applicable to their food industry sector.

References

The SQF Food Safety Code for Primary Production refers to the current edition of the CODEX Alimentarius Commission Guidelines for the Application of the Hazard Analysis.

Definitions

For the purpose of this Code, the definitions outlined in *Appendix 2: Glossary* apply.

SQF System Elements for Primary Production

2.1 Management Commitment

2.1.1 Food Safety Policy (Mandatory)

2.1.1.1 The owner/senior site manager shall prepare and implement a policy statement that outlines as a minimum the:

- i. The site's commitment to supply safe food;
- ii. Methods used to comply with its customer and regulatory requirements and continually improve its food safety management system; and
- iii. The site's commitment to establish and review food safety objectives.

2.1.1.2 The policy statement shall be:

- i. Signed by senior site management;
- ii. Made available in language understood by all staff; and
- iii. Displayed in a prominent position and effectively communicated to all staff.

2.1.2 Management Responsibility (Mandatory)

2.1.2.1 The reporting structure describing those who have responsibility for food safety shall be identified and communicated within the organization.

2.1.2.2 The owner/senior site manager shall make provision to ensure fundamental food safety practices and all applicable requirements of the SQF System are adopted and maintained.

2.1.2.3 The owner/senior site manager shall ensure adequate resources are available to support the development, implementation, maintenance and ongoing improvement of the SQF System.

2.1.2.4 The owner/senior site manager shall designate an SQF practitioner for each site with responsibility and authority to:

- i. Oversee the development, implementation, review and maintenance of the SQF System, include Good Agricultural/Aquacultural Practices outline in 2.4.2 and the food safety plan outlined in 2.4.3;
- ii. Take appropriate action to ensure the integrity of the SQF System; and
- iii. Communicate to relevant personnel all information essential to ensure the effective implementation and maintenance of the SQF System.

2.1.2.5 The SQF practitioner shall:

- i. Be employed by the site as a company employee on a full-time basis;
- ii. Have completed a HACCP-based training course;
- iii. Be competent to implement and maintain Good Agricultural/Aquacultural Practices; and
- iv. Have an understanding of the SQF Code and the requirements to implement and maintain SQF System relevant to the site's scope of certification.

2.1.2.6 Senior site management shall ensure the training needs of the site are resourced, implemented and meet the requirements outlined in 2.9, and that site personnel have met the required competencies to carry out those functions affecting the legality and safety of food products.

2.1.2.7 The owner/senior site manager shall inform all staff, including temporary or seasonal workers, of their food safety and regulatory responsibilities, of their role in meeting the requirements of the SQF Code, and of their responsibility to report food safety problems to personnel with authority to initiate action.

2.1.2.8 Job tasks for those responsible for food safety shall be listed and communicated to personnel including provisions to cover for the absence of key personnel.

2.1.2.9 The senior site management shall establish processes to improve the effectiveness of the SQF System to demonstrate continuous improvement.

2.1.2.10 The owner/senior site manager shall ensure the integrity and continued operation of the food safety system in the event of organizational or personnel changes within the farm/company or associated locations.

2.1.2.11 The owner/senior site manager shall designate defined blackout periods that prevent unannounced re-certification audits from occurring out of season or when the facility is not operating for legitimate business reasons. The list of blackout dates and their justification shall be submitted to the certification body a minimum of one month before the sixty (60) day re-certification window for the agreed unannounced audit.

2.1.3 Management Review (Mandatory)

2.1.3.1 The owner/senior site manager shall be responsible for reviewing the SQF System and documenting the review procedure. Reviews shall include the policy manual, internal and external audit findings, corrective actions and their investigations and resolution, customer complaints and their resolution and investigation.

2.1.3.2 The SQF practitioner(s) shall update senior site management on a (minimum) monthly basis on matters impacting the implementation and maintenance of the SQF System. The updates and management responses shall be documented. The SQF System in its entirety shall be reviewed at least annually.

2.1.3.3 Food Safety Plans, Good Agricultural/Aquaculture Practices and other aspects of the SQF System shall be reviewed and updated as needed when any potential changes implemented have an impact on the site's ability to deliver safe food.

2.1.3.4 Records of all management reviews and updates shall be maintained.

2.1.4 Complaint Management (Mandatory)

2.1.4.1 The methods and responsibility for handling and investigating the cause and resolution (corrective actions) of complaints from customers and authorities shall be documented and implemented.

2.1.4.2 Trends of customer complaint data shall be investigated and analyzed by personnel knowledgeable about the incidents.

2.1.4.3 Corrective action shall be implemented commensurate with the seriousness of the incident and as outlined in 2.5.5.

2.1.4.4 Records of customer complaints and their investigations shall be maintained.

2.1.5 Crisis Management Planning

2.1.5.1 A crisis management plan that is based on the understanding of known potential dangers (e.g. flood, drought, fire, tsunami, or other severe weather or regional events such as warfare or civil unrest) that can impact the site's ability to deliver safe food, shall be documented by the owner/senior site management outlining the methods and responsibility the site shall implement to cope with such a business crisis.

2.1.5.2 The crisis management plan shall be reviewed, tested and verified at least annually. Records of reviews of the crisis management plan shall be maintained.

2.2 Document Control and Records

2.2.1 Food Safety Management System (Mandatory)

2.2.1.1 A food safety management system shall be documented, maintained in either electronic and/or hard copy form, and made available to relevant staff and include:

- i. The policy statement and organization chart;
- ii. The scope of the certification;
- iii. A list of the products covered under the scope of certification; and
- iv. Include or reference the written procedures (Good Agricultural Practices, Good Aquacultural Practices and/or Good Production Practices) and other documentation necessary to support the development, implementation, maintenance and control of the SQF System.

2.2.1.2 All changes made to Food Safety Plans, Good Agricultural/Aquacultural Practices and other aspects of the SQF System shall be validated or justified.

2.2.2 Document Control (Mandatory)

2.2.2.1 The methods and responsibility for maintaining document control and ensuring staff have access to current documents shall be documented and implemented.

2.2.2.2 A register of current SQF System documents and amendments to documents shall be maintained.

2.2.2.3 Documents shall be safely stored and readily accessible.

2.2.3 Records (Mandatory)

2.2.3.1 The methods and responsibility for undertaking monitoring activities, verifying, maintaining and retaining records shall be documented and implemented.

2.2.3.2 All records shall be legible and suitably authorized by those undertaking monitoring activities that demonstrate inspections, analyses and other essential activities have been completed.

2.2.3.3 Records shall be readily accessible, retrievable, securely stored to prevent damage and deterioration and shall be retained in accordance with periods specified by a customer or regulations.

2.3 Specification and Product Development

2.3.1 Product Development and Realization

2.3.1.1 The methods and responsibility for designing, developing and converting product concepts (e.g. new crops, animal species) to commercial realization shall be documented and implemented.

2.3.1.2 New products shall be validated for shelf life, Maximum Residue Limits (MRLs) and customer requirements.

2.3.1.3 Records for new products validation, shelf life and final approvals shall be maintained.

2.3.2 Raw and Packaging Materials

2.3.2.1 Specifications for food contact packaging and agricultural/aquaculture inputs shall be documented and kept current.

2.3.2.2 All food contact packaging and agricultural/aquaculture inputs shall comply with the relevant legislation.

2.3.2.3 Food contact packaging and agricultural/aquaculture input specification development and approval shall be documented.

2.3.2.4 Food contact packaging and agricultural/aquaculture inputs shall be verified to ensure product safety is not compromised and the material is fit for its intended purpose. Verification shall include certificates of conformance; or certificate of analysis; or sampling and testing.

2.3.2.5 Verification of packaging materials shall include:

- i. Certification that all packaging that comes into direct contact with food meets either regulatory acceptance or approval criteria. Documentation shall either be in the form of a declaration of continued guarantee of compliance, a certificate of conformance, or a certificate from the applicable regulatory agency; and
- ii. In the absence of a certificate of conformance, certificate of analysis, or letter of guarantee, tests and analyses to confirm the absence of potential chemical migration from the packaging to the food contents shall be conducted and records maintained.

2.3.2.6 Finished product labels shall be accurate, comply with the relevant legislation and be approved by qualified company personnel.

2.3.2.7 A register of current packaging materials and agricultural input specifications and labels shall be maintained.

2.3.3 Contract Service Providers

2.3.3.1 Specifications/agreements for contract services that have an impact on finished product safety shall be documented, current, include a full description of the service to be provided and detail relevant training requirements of contract personnel (e.g. sprayers, portable toilets, temporary labor).

2.3.3.2 A register of all contract service specifications shall be maintained and kept current.

2.3.4 Contract Farms/Producers

2.3.4.1 The methods and responsibility for ensuring all agreements relating to food safety, customers product requirements and its realization and delivery are specified and agreed shall be documented and implemented.

2.3.4.2 The site shall:

- i. Verify compliance with the SQF Food Safety Code and that all customer requirements are being met at all times; and
- ii. Ensure changes to contractual agreements are approved by both parties and communicated to relevant personnel.

2.3.5 Finished Product Specifications

2.3.5.1 Finished product specifications shall be documented, current, approved by the farm/producer and their customer where applicable, accessible to relevant staff and may include:

- i. Microbiological and agricultural chemical limits;
- ii. Maximum Residue Limits (MRL's) for pesticides and/or veterinary drugs; and
- iii. Labeling and packaging requirements.

2.3.5.2 A register of finished product specifications shall be maintained.

2.4 Food Safety System

2.4.1 Food Legislation (Mandatory)

2.4.1.1 The owner/senior site manager shall ensure that, at the time of delivery to its customer, the food supplied shall comply with the legislation that applies to the food and its production in the country of use or sale, if known.

2.4.1.2 The methods and responsibility for ensuring the organization is kept informed of changes to relevant legislation, scientific and technical developments, emerging food safety issues, and relevant industry codes of practice shall be documented and implemented.

2.4.1.3 SQFI and the certification body shall be notified in writing within twenty-four (24) hours in the event of a regulatory warning. Notification to SQFI shall be by email to foodsafetycrisis@sqfi.com.

2.4.2 Good Agricultural/Aquaculture Practices (Mandatory)

2.4.2.1 The site shall ensure that Good Agricultural Practices described in Module 7, or other relevant applicable module of this Code, are applied, or exempted according to a written risk analysis outlining the justification for exemption or evidence of the effectiveness of alternative control measures to ensure that food safety is not compromised.

2.4.3 Food Safety Plan

2.4.3.1 A HACCP-based reference Food Safety plan, developed by a responsible authority shall be implemented by the organization in the absence of a specifically developed food safety plan for the organization. The organization shall:

- i. Maintain a current record indicating that it has reviewed the food safety plan and ensure its scope of risk assessment covers all products sold by the organization; and
- ii. Document where changes in the food safety plan have impacted their Good Agricultural/Aquaculture Practices.

2.4.3.2 Where an organization has developed its own food safety plan, either by choice or due to product(s) not included within the scope of a HACCP-Based model as per 2.4.3.1, it shall be implemented and maintained and outline the means by which the organization controls and assures food safety of the products or product groups included in the scope of the SQF certification and their associated processes. More than one HACCP food safety plan may be required to cover all products included in the scope of certification.

2.4.3.3 The food safety plan or plans shall be developed and maintained by a multidisciplinary team that includes the SQF Practitioner and those site personnel with technical, production, and engineering knowledge of the relevant products and associated processes. Where the relevant expertise is not available on site, advice may be obtained from other sources to assist the food safety team.

2.4.3.4 The scope of each food safety plan shall be developed and documented including the start and end-point of the processes under consideration and all relevant inputs and outputs.

2.4.3.5 Product descriptions shall be developed and documented for all products included in the scope of the food safety plans. This shall reference the finished product specifications plus any additional information relevant to product safety, such as pH, Aw, composition.

2.4.3.6 The intended use of each product shall be determined and documented by the food safety team. This shall include target consumer groups, the potential for consumption by vulnerable groups of the population, requirements for further processing if applicable, and potential alternative use of the product.

2.4.3.7 The food safety team shall develop and document a flow diagram covering the scope of each food safety plan. The flow diagram shall include every step in the process of primary production, all agricultural inputs, packaging material, and service inputs (e.g. water, steam, gasses as appropriate), process delays, and all process outputs including feed, waste and rework. Each flow diagram shall be confirmed by the food safety team during all stages and hours of operation.

2.4.3.8 The food safety team shall identify and document all food safety hazards that can reasonably be expected to occur at each step in the processes, including agricultural/aquaculture inputs.

2.4.3.9 The food safety team shall conduct a hazard analysis for every identified hazard, to identify which hazards are significant, i.e. their elimination or reduction to an acceptable level is necessary to ensure food safety. The

methodology for determining hazard significance shall be documented and used consistently to assess all potential hazards.

2.4.3.10 The food safety team shall determine and document the control measures that must be applied to all significant hazards. More than one control measure may be required to control an identified hazard, and more than one significant hazard may be controlled by a specific control measure.

2.4.3.11 Based on the results of the hazard analysis (refer to 2.4.3.9), the food safety team shall identify the steps in the process where control must be applied to eliminate a significant hazard or reduce it to an acceptable level (a critical control point or CCP). In instances where a significant hazard has been identified at a step in the process, but no control measure exists, the food safety team shall modify the process to include an appropriate control measure.

2.4.3.12 For each identified CCP, the food safety team shall identify and document the limits that separate safe from unsafe product. The food safety team shall validate the critical limits to ensure the designated level of control of the identified food safety hazard(s) and that all critical limits and control measures individually or in combination effectively provide the level of control required (refer to 2.5.2.1)

2.4.3.13 The food safety team shall develop and document procedures to monitor CCPs to ensure they remain within the established limits (2.4.3.12). Monitoring procedures shall identify the personnel assigned to conduct testing, the sampling and test methods, and the test frequency.

2.4.3.14 The food safety team shall develop and document deviation procedures that identify the disposition of affected product when monitoring indicates a loss of control at a CCP. The procedures shall also prescribe actions to correct the process step to prevent recurrence of the safety failure.

2.4.3.15 The documented and approved food safety plan(s) shall be implemented in full. The effective implementation shall be monitored by the food safety team, and a full review of the documented and implemented plans shall be conducted at least annually, or when changes to the process, equipment, inputs or other changes affecting product safety occur.

2.4.3.16 Implemented food safety plans shall be verified as part of SQF System verification (refer to 2.5).

2.4.3.17 Where food safety regulations in the country of production and destination (if known) prescribe a food safety control methodology other than the Codex Alimentarius Commission HACCP guidelines, the food safety team shall implement food safety plans that meet both Codex and food regulatory requirements.

2.4.4 Approved Supplier Program (Mandatory)

2.4.4.1 Agricultural/aquaculture inputs, harvested product, pre-market ready livestock, market ready product and packaging materials that impact on finished product food safety shall be supplied by an approved supplier.

2.4.4.2 The receipt of agricultural/aquaculture inputs, harvested product, pre-market ready livestock, market ready product and packaging materials received from non-approved suppliers shall be acceptable in an emergency situation provided they are inspected or analyzed before use.

2.4.4.3 The responsibility and procedure for selecting, evaluating, approving and monitoring an approved supplier shall be documented and implemented.

2.4.4.4 The site's food defense plan (refer to 2.7.1.1) shall include measures to secure incoming materials and ingredients and protect them from deliberate acts of sabotage or terrorist-like incidents.

2.4.4.5 The site's food fraud vulnerability assessment (refer to 2.7.2.1) shall include the site's susceptibility to raw material or ingredient substitution, mislabeling, dilution and counterfeiting which may adversely impact food safety.

2.4.4.6 The food fraud mitigation plan (refer to 2.7.2.2) shall include methods by which the identified vulnerabilities from ingredients and materials shall be controlled.

2.4.4.7 Agricultural/aquaculture inputs, harvested product, pre-market ready livestock, market ready product and packaging materials received from other facilities under the same corporate ownership, shall be subject to the same specification requirements (refer to 2.3.2) and approved supplier requirements as all other material providers.

2.4.4.8 The approved supplier program shall be based on the prior performance of a supplier and the risk level of received goods and shall contain as a minimum:

- i. Agreed specifications;
- ii. Reference to the rating of the level of risk applied to the approved supplier;
- iii. A summary of the food safety controls implemented by the approved supplier;
- iv. Methods for granting approved supplier status;
- v. Methods and frequency of monitoring approved suppliers;
- vi. Details of the certificates of conformance if required, and

- vii. Methods and frequency of reviewing approved supplier performance and status.

2.4.4.9 Supplier audits shall be based on risk and shall be conducted by individuals knowledgeable of applicable regulatory and food safety requirements risk and trained in auditing techniques.

2.4.4.10 A register of approved supplier and records of inspections and audits of approved suppliers shall be maintained.

2.4.5 Non-conforming Product or Equipment

2.4.5.1 Non-conforming product, agricultural/aquaculture inputs, packaging or equipment shall be quarantined, handled, re-worked or disposed of in a manner that minimizes the risk of inadvertent use, improper use or risk to the integrity of finished product.

2.4.5.2 Records of the handling and disposal of non-conforming product shall be maintained, minimally including grower/producer name, farm location, quantity and final disposition.

2.5 SQF System Verification

2.5.1 Validation and Effectiveness (Mandatory)

2.5.1.1 The methods, responsibility and criteria for ensuring the effectiveness of Good Agricultural/Aquaculture Practices and production programs, and validating critical food safety limits to ensure they achieve their intended purpose shall be documented and implemented. The methods applied shall ensure that:

- i. Good Agricultural/Aquaculture Practices are confirmed to ensure they achieve the required result;
- ii. Critical food safety limits are validated, and re-validated annually;
- iii. Changes to the processes or procedures are assessed to ensure controls are still effective.

2.5.1.2 Records of all validation activities shall be maintained.

2.5.2 Verification Activities (Mandatory)

2.5.2.1 A verification schedule outlining the verification activities, their frequency of completion and the person responsible for each activity shall be prepared and implemented.

2.5.2.2 The methods, responsibility and criteria for verifying monitoring of Good Agricultural/Aquaculture Practices, critical control points and other food safety controls, and the legality of certified products, shall be documented and implemented. The methods applied shall ensure that personnel with responsibility for verifying monitoring activities authorize each verified record.

2.5.2.3 Records of the verification of monitoring activities shall be maintained.

2.5.3 Corrective and Preventative Action (Mandatory)

2.5.3.1 The responsibility and methods outlining how corrections and corrective actions are determined, implemented and verified, including the identification of the root cause and resolution of non-compliance of critical food safety limits, and deviations from food safety requirements, shall be documented and implemented.

2.5.3.2 Records of all investigation and resolution of non-conformities including their corrections and corrective action shall be maintained.

2.5.4 Product Sampling, Inspection and Analysis

2.5.4.1 The sampling, inspecting and/or analyzing and release of finished product shall be documented and implemented. The procedures applied shall ensure:

- i. Inspections and analyses are completed at regular intervals as required and to agreed specification (e.g. MRL's as per 2.3.5) and regulatory and labeling requirements;
- ii. All analyses are conducted to nationally recognized methods or alternative methods which are validated as equivalent to the nationally recognized methods;
- iii. Release of products to customers is approved by authorized personnel.

2.5.4.2 On-site personnel that conduct product testing shall participate in an applicable proficiency testing program at least annually to ensure accuracy of results.

2.5.4.3 Where external laboratories are utilized to conduct input or product analysis, the laboratories shall be accredited to ISO 17025 or an equivalent national standard, and shall be included on the site's contract service specifications register (refer to 2.3.3.1)

2.5.5 Internal Audits (Mandatory)

2.5.5.1 The methods and responsibility for scheduling and conducting internal audits to verify the effectiveness of the SQF System shall be documented and implemented. Internal audits shall be conducted at least annually. The methods applied shall ensure:

- i. All applicable requirements of the SQF Food Safety Code are audited as per the SQF Audit Checklist or equivalent tool;
- ii. Correction and corrective action of deficiencies identified during the internal audits are undertaken;
- iii. Audit results are communicated to relevant management personnel and staff responsible for implementing and verifying corrective actions; and
- iv. Records of internal audits and any corrections and corrective action taken as a result of internal audits shall be maintained.

2.5.5.2 Staff conducting internal audits shall be trained and competent in internal audit procedures.

2.5.5.3 Regular inspections of the facility and equipment shall be planned and carried out to verify Good Agricultural Practices and building/equipment maintenance is compliant to the SQF Food Safety Code. The supplier shall:

- i. Take correction or corrective and preventative action; and
- ii. Maintain records of inspections and any corrective action taken.

2.5.5.4 Where practical staff conducting internal audits shall be independent of the function being audited.

2.6 Product Identification, Trace, Withdrawal and Recall**2.6.1 Product Identification (Mandatory)**

2.6.1.1 A product identification system shall be implemented to ensure:

- i. Agricultural/Aquaculture inputs, work in progress and finished product are clearly identified during all stages of receipt, operations, storage, shipping and transportation and dispatch; and
- ii. Finished product is labeled to the customer specification and/or regulatory requirements.

2.6.1.2 Product identification records shall be maintained.

2.6.2 Product Trace (Mandatory)

2.6.2.1 The responsibility and methods used to trace product shall be documented and implemented to ensure:

- i. Finished product is traceable to the customer (one up) and provides traceability through the process to the agricultural input supplier and date of receipt of raw materials, food contact packaging and materials and other inputs (one back);
- ii. Traceability is maintained where product is reworked; and
- iii. The effectiveness of the product trace system shall be reviewed at least annually as part of the product recall and withdrawal review (refer to 2.6.3.3).

2.6.2.2 Records of agricultural/aquaculture inputs and packaging material receipt and use, and product shipping and transportation shall be maintained.

2.6.3 Product Withdrawal and Recall (Mandatory)

2.6.3.1 The responsibility and methods used to withdraw or recall product shall be documented and implemented. The procedure shall:

- i. Identify those responsible for initiating, managing and investigating a product withdrawal or recall;
- ii. Describe the procedures to be implemented by site management;
- iii. Outline a communication plan to inform customers, consumers, authorities and other essential bodies in a timely manner appropriate to the nature of the incident; and
- iv. Ensure that SQFI and the certification body are listed as an essential body for notification of a recall or withdrawal.

2.6.3.2 Investigation shall be undertaken to determine the cause of a withdrawal, mock recall or recall and details of investigations and any action taken shall be documented.

2.6.3.3 The product withdrawal and recall system shall be reviewed, tested and verified as effective at least annually and include the traceability requirement of 2.6.2.1.

2.6.3.4 SQFI and the certification body shall be notified in writing within twenty-four (24) hours upon identification of a food safety event that requires public notification. SQFI shall be notified at foodsafetycrisis@sqfi.com.

2.7 Food Defense and Food Fraud

2.7.1 Food Defense Plan (Mandatory)

2.7.1.1 The methods, responsibility and criteria for preventing food adulteration caused by a deliberate act of sabotage or terrorist-like incident shall be documented, implemented and maintained.

2.7.1.2 A food defense plan shall include:

- i. The name of the senior site management person responsible for food defense;
- ii. The methods implemented to ensure only authorized personnel have access to equipment, vehicles, operations and storage areas through designated access points;
- iii. The methods implemented to protect sensitive operational points from intentional adulteration;
- iv. The measures taken to ensure the secure receipt and storage of Agricultural/aquaculture inputs, packaging, equipment and hazardous chemicals;
- v. The measures implemented to ensure agricultural/aquaculture inputs, packaging materials, work-in progress and finished products are held under secure storage and transportation conditions; and
- vi. The methods implemented to record and control access to the premises by employees, contractors, and visitors.

2.7.1.3 The food defense plan shall be reviewed and challenged at least annually and appropriately documented.

2.7.2 Food Fraud

2.7.2.1 The methods, responsibility and criteria for identifying the site's vulnerability to food fraud shall be documented, implemented and maintained. The food fraud vulnerability assessment shall include the site's susceptibility to product substitution, mislabeling, dilution and counterfeiting or stolen goods which may adversely impact food safety.

2.7.2.2 A food fraud mitigation plan shall be developed and implemented which specifies the methods by which the identified food fraud vulnerabilities shall be controlled.

2.7.2.3 The food fraud vulnerability assessment and mitigation plan shall be reviewed and verified at least annually.

2.7.2.4 Records of reviews of the food fraud vulnerability assessment and mitigation plan shall be maintained.

2.8 Allergen Management

2.8.1 Allergen Management for Primary Production (Mandatory)

2.8.2.1 The responsibility and methods used to control allergens and to prevent sources of allergens from contaminating product shall be documented and implemented. The allergen management program shall include:

- i. A risk analysis of those Agricultural/aquaculture inputs and processing aids, including food grade lubricants, that contain food allergens;
- ii. An assessment of workplace-related food allergens from locker rooms, vending machines, lunch rooms, visitors;
- iii. A list of allergens which is accessible by relevant staff; and
- iv. The hazards associated with allergens and their control incorporated into the food safety plan.

2.8.2.2 Product labeling, in accordance with regulatory requirements, shall include allergens where risks from cross contamination have been documented.

2.9 Training

2.9.1 Training Requirements

2.9.1.1 Appropriate training shall be provided for personnel carrying out the tasks essential to the effective implementation of the SQF System and the maintenance of food safety and regulatory requirements.

2.9.2 Training Program (Mandatory)

2.9.2.1 An employee training program shall be documented and implemented. It shall outline the necessary competencies for specific duties and the training methods to be applied for those staff carrying out tasks associated with:

- i. Developing and applying Good Agricultural Practices, Good Production Practices or Good Aquaculture Practices; and

- ii. Applying food regulatory requirements.

2.9.3 Instructions

2.9.3.1 Instructions shall be available in the languages relevant to the staff, explaining how all tasks critical to meeting regulatory compliance, the maintenance of food safety and process efficiency are to be performed.

2.9.4 HACCP Training Requirements

2.9.4.1 Where a HACCP-based model or Group/Multi-site program is not used then HACCP training shall be provided for staff involved in developing and maintaining food safety plans.

2.9.5 Language

2.9.5.1 Training materials and the delivery of training shall be provided in language understood by staff.

2.9.6 Refresher Training

2.9.6.1 The training program shall include provision for identifying and implementing the refresher training needs of the organization.

2.9.7 Training Skills Register

2.9.7.1 A training skills register describing who has been trained in relevant skills shall be maintained.

Module 5: Good Agricultural Practices for Farming of Animal Products (GFSI AI)

This Module covers the Good Agricultural Practices requirements for the production and management of animals (other than fish or seafood) used for meat production, egg production or milk production.

Sites implementing this module must also meet the requirements of SQF System Elements for Primary Production.

Applicable food sector categories (FSCs) are:

FSC 1: Production, capture, and harvesting of livestock and game animals

FSC1A: Free range animal production

FSC 1B: Intensive animal production

FSC 1C: Dairy farming

FSC 1D: Game animals

FSC 1E: Egg Production

All applicable elements of Module 5 shall be implemented. Where an element is not applicable a request for exemption must be appropriately justified, and submitted to the certification body in writing before the audit.

5.1 Site Requirements

5.1.1 Property Location

5.1.1.1 The farm and facilities shall be such that adjacent and adjoining buildings, operations and land use do not interfere with safe and hygienic operations on the property.

5.1.1.2 Production and growing sites shall have a risk assessment conducted to evaluate and document the risk to crops due to prior land use, adjacent land use, and other environmental factors including structures and equipment. Consideration shall be given to the following:

- i. History of land use;
- ii. Topography;
- iii. Adjacent land use; and
- iv. Other factors that may impact on the ability to supply safe products.

5.1.1.3 The risk assessment shall be re-evaluated in the event of any circumstance or change that may impact on the production of safe product.

5.1.1.4 Where risks are identified, control measures shall be implemented to reduce the identified hazards to an acceptable level.

5.2 Secure Housing of Livestock and Feed

5.2.1 Site Access and Security

5.2.1.1 Fields, yards, and other open areas where livestock are housed shall be fenced. The site or building(s) entry point shall prevent entry by unauthorized visitors either by a lock or other control entry devices.

5.2.1.2 Where electric fences are employed, they shall be controlled to avoid stress or discomfort to fenced livestock.

5.2.2 Pens and Yards

5.2.2.1 Pens and yards shall be designed, located, constructed and maintained so as to minimize stress, injury or disease and have minimal impact on the surrounding area and natural resources.

5.2.2.2 Where animals are held for extended periods in pens and yards, adequate supplies of water and food shall be provided.

5.2.2.3 Fences, gates, and other surfaces in pens and yards shall be free from paints, dips, sanitizers and other materials that are likely to cause contamination through ingestion, inhalation, or contact.

5.2.3 Intensive Housing System

5.2.3.1 The design, location and construction of intensive housing system shall be fit for purpose and protect the animals in expected extremes of climate. The housing and design shall also provide sufficient space to enable the animals to lie down, allow freedom of movement, have minimal impact on the surrounding area and natural resources and meet regulatory or industry/national codes of practice.

5.2.3.2 Buildings used to house animals shall have signs posted or other forms of controlled entry (see also 5.2.1.1) that controls entry of unauthorized persons.

5.2.3.3 Buildings used to house animals shall be adequately ventilated to promote a satisfactory living environment and designed to enable effective drainage and a firm footing.

5.2.4 Laneways, Races, Entrances, Exits and Loading/Unloading Ramps

5.2.4.1 Laneways, races, entrances, exits and loading/unloading ramps shall be designed to take advantage of the social behavior and movement of the species and maintained to prevent any potential injury points to animals. All flooring shall be non-slip to prevent slips and falls.

5.2.4.2 Laneways, races, entrances, exits, and loading/unloading ramps shall be designed, constructed, and maintained of materials that do not contaminate animals through ingestion, inhalation, or contact, and shall be free from sharp objects that may damage animals.

5.2.5 Buildings for Storage of Feed, Agricultural Chemicals, and Equipment

5.2.5.1 All buildings used to store equipment, veterinary and agricultural chemicals, or animal feed shall be designed and constructed so as to permit compliance to good hygiene practices and avoid product contamination. They shall be kept clean.

5.2.5.2 Silos used to store feed shall be constructed of approved materials and designed to remain dry, clean and free from any dirt residues, so they remain fit for purpose, in an acceptable condition, enable safe fumigation practices and prevent the invasion of pests.

5.2.5.3 Storage rooms shall be designed and constructed to allow for the separate hygienic storage of feedstuffs, veterinary chemicals, and containers and equipment used to dispense feed and veterinary chemicals. Items shall be kept separate from farm machinery, hazardous chemicals and other toxic substances.

5.2.5.4 Veterinary medicines and medical equipment shall be stored in a secure area and accessed only by authorized personnel.

5.2.6 Construction and Storage of Farm/Harvesting Machinery and Conveyors

5.2.6.1 Product contact surfaces on conveyors and harvesting equipment shall be designed and constructed to allow for the efficient handling of products and those surfaces in direct contact with products shall be constructed of materials that will not contribute a food or feed safety risk.

5.2.6.2 Provisions shall be made for the cleaning and storage of equipment, conveyors, totes, trays containers and utensils.

5.2.6.3 Provisions shall be made to store farm machinery separate from feed conveyors and harvesting equipment.

5.2.7 Vehicles, Equipment and Utensils

5.2.7.1 Equipment, tools and utensils used for animal health shall be suitable for use, non-toxic, kept clean and sanitized, and stored in such a way as to avoid contamination.

5.2.7.2 Equipment, tools, utensils and other items or materials that are used for feeding of livestock or animal health shall be kept in good repair, kept clean, and stored in such a way as to avoid contamination.

5.2.7.3 Veterinary equipment, including disposable medical items, shall be fit for purpose and maintained in a clean and serviceable condition, and stored in a clean, safe, and secure location.

5.2.7.4 Water tanks and troughs shall be cleaned at a sufficient frequency, as per 5.2.12, so as not be a source of contamination.

5.2.7.5 The methods and responsibility for the inspection of forage harvest containers and pallets shall be documented and implemented. The type and construction of harvest containers shall be stated.

5.2.7.6 The use of harvest containers for non-harvest purposes shall be clearly identified and not returned to use for harvest without thorough cleaning and inspection.

5.2.7.7 Vehicles used for the transport of feedstuffs shall be fit for purpose and shall not be used to carry waste materials, manure, chemicals or other hazardous substances that could cause feed contamination without thorough cleaning and inspection.

5.2.7.8 Entry and exit points to the site shall be equipped for cleaning and sanitizing of vehicle wheels to prevent cross contamination and disease outbreak.

5.2.8 Maintenance

5.2.8.1 The methods and responsibility for maintenance of equipment and buildings shall be documented and implemented in a manner that prevents any risk of contamination of products or equipment.

5.2.9 Calibration of Equipment

5.2.9.1 The methods and responsibility for the calibration of application, measuring, test and inspection equipment used for feed application, chemical application, and veterinary medicines shall be documented and implemented.

5.2.9.2 Equipment shall be calibrated against national or international reference standards, methods and schedules. In cases where such standards are not available, the producer shall indicate and provide evidence to support the calibration reference method applied.

5.2.9.3 Calibration records shall be maintained.

5.2.10 Pest Prevention

5.2.10.1 The methods and responsibility for pest prevention on the site or facilities shall be documented and implemented. The property, animal housing facilities, storage facilities, machinery and equipment shall be kept free of waste or accumulated debris so as not to attract pests and vermin.

5.2.10.2 The pest prevention program shall:

- i. Describe the methods and responsibility for the development, implementation and maintenance of the pest prevention program;
- ii. Identify the target pests for each pesticide application;
- iii. Outline the methods used to prevent pest problems;
- iv. Outline the methods used to eliminate pests when found;
- v. Outline the frequency with which pest status is to be checked;
- vi. Include on a site map the identification, location, number and type of traps and bait stations set;
- vii. List the chemicals used (they are required to be approved by the relevant authority and their Safety Data Sheets (SDS) made available);
- viii. Outline the methods to make employees aware of the bait control program and the measures to take when they come into contact with a bait station and;
- ix. Outline the requirements for employee awareness and training in the use of pest and vermin control chemicals and baits.

5.2.10.3 Records of pest inspections and pest applications shall be maintained.

5.2.11 Animal Control

5.2.11.1 The operation shall have a written risk assessment on animal activity in and around the production of feed or food crops that has been implemented and monitored.

5.2.11.2 Measures shall be in place to exclude domestic and wild animals from feed cultivation and from production animals.

5.2.11.3 Where working dogs are used to muster production animals, the producer shall maintain and monitor the health of the working dogs.

5.2.12 Cleaning and Sanitation

5.2.12.1 The methods and responsibility for the cleaning of animal housing, pens, yards, lairages, feed contact equipment, animal health equipment, and sanitary facilities shall be documented and implemented. Consideration shall be given to:

- i. What is to be cleaned;
- ii. How it is to be cleaned;
- iii. When it is to be cleaned;
- iv. Who is responsible for the cleaning, and
- v. Who is responsible for the evaluation of the cleaning.

5.2.12.2 A verification schedule shall be prepared indicating the frequency of verifying the effectiveness the cleaning of animal housing, pens, yards, lairages, feed contact equipment, animal health equipment, and sanitary facilities, and indicating who is responsible for completing the verification activities.

5.2.12.3 The effectiveness of cleaning and sanitation programs shall be regularly reviewed and adapted as needed based on environmental factors or disease risk.

5.2.12.4 A record of cleaning and sanitation activities shall be maintained.

5.3 Personal Hygiene and Welfare

5.3.1 Personnel Practices

5.3.1.1 Personnel engaged in the handling of livestock and feedstuffs shall observe appropriate personal practices. Corrective actions shall be implemented for personnel who violate food safety practices.

5.3.1.2 Personnel suffering from, or are carriers of, an infectious zoonotic disease shall not engage in handling of livestock or feedstuffs.

5.3.1.3 A medical screening procedure shall be in place for all employees, and will also be applicable to all visitors and contractors.

5.3.1.4 A written policy shall be in place that specifies the procedures for handling livestock feed, and feed contact surfaces that have been in contact with blood or other bodily fluids.

5.3.2 Sanitary Facilities and Hand Washing

5.3.2.1 Toilet facilities shall be provided and designed, constructed and located in a manner that minimizes the potential risk for product contamination.

- i. Toilets shall cater for the maximum number of employees and be constructed so that they can be easily cleaned and maintained;
- ii. Hand wash basins with clean/potable water, hand soap, disposable towels or effective hand drying device, waste bins and a tank that captures used hand wash water for disposal(if not connected to a drain) shall be provided inside or adjacent to toilet facilities;
- iii. Signage in appropriate languages shall be provided adjacent to hand wash basins instructing people to wash their hands after each toilet visit;
- iv. Racks for protective clothing used by farm employees shall be provided;

- v. Toilets shall be located so as to provide easy access for farm workers;
 - vi. Toilet and wash stations shall be maintained in a clean and sanitary condition.
- 5.3.2.2 Personnel shall have clean hands and hands shall be washed by all personnel:
- i. After each visit to a toilet;
 - ii. After handling dirty or contaminated material; and
 - iii. After smoking, eating or drinking.

5.3.3 Protective Clothing

- 5.3.3.1 Protective clothing shall be effectively, maintained, stored, laundered and worn so as to protect products from risk of contamination.
- 5.3.3.2 Where applicable, clothing, including footwear, shall be effectively cleaned and sanitized, and worn so as to protect products from risk of contamination.
- 5.3.3.3 If rubber or disposable gloves are used, the operation shall have a glove use policy and personnel shall adhere to the hand washing practices outlined above.
- 5.3.3.4 Entry annex points of the buildings shall be equipped with materials for cleaning and sanitizing footwear.

5.3.4 Jewelry and Personal Effects

- 5.3.4.1 Jewelry and other loose objects that pose a threat to livestock safety shall not be worn or taken onto any livestock handling or feed storage operations.

5.3.5 Visitors

- 5.3.5.1 All visitors and employees shall be required to remove jewelry and other loose objects and wear suitable protective clothing.
- 5.3.5.2 Visitors exhibiting visible signs of illness that can potentially be transmitted to livestock shall be prevented from entering any livestock handling, feed storage, or field operations.
- 5.3.5.3 Visitors must follow all personnel practices as designated by company for employees within fields, pens, yards, sheds, or storage locations.
- 5.3.5.4 Children and other family members shall follow all visitor requirements and shall be supervised at all times.

5.3.6 Amenities

- 5.3.6.1 Provisions shall be made to store employee personal belongings away from livestock, crops, harvesting, field operations and equipment.
- 5.3.6.2 Areas for meal breaks shall be designated and located away from animal or feed contact/handling zones and equipment.
- 5.3.6.3 Potable drinking water shall be available to all field employees.

5.4 Field and Animal Husbandry Practices

5.4.1 Field Handling Practices

- 5.4.1.1 Measures shall be implemented to prevent cross-contamination of livestock or feed product from chemicals, oils and lubricants, and /or personnel.

5.4.2 Animal Husbandry Practices

- 5.4.2.1 The producer shall apply good animal husbandry practices for the type of animal under their care and shall ensure that the basic needs of animals, whether held under an extensive grazing, close confinement or intensive housing conditions, are maintained.
- 5.4.2.2 Employees responsible for the care and management of animals shall be trained and competent in animal handling and welfare. They shall be able to recognize the early signs of distress and disease and ensure stress to animals is minimized.
- 5.4.2.3 A written procedure regarding the handling of livestock shall be implemented and maintained. The procedure shall indicate that employees handling livestock ensure that:
- i. Animals have an adequate source of clean feed and uncontaminated water at all times;
 - ii. Animals are herded and housed in such a way as to avoid damage or stress to the animals;
 - iii. Animal manure and contaminated yard water is regularly removed and stored;
 - iv. Measures to inspect for physical hazards and procedures to remove physical hazards are in place;
 - v. Diseased or medicated animals are segregated from healthy animals; and
 - vi. Personnel dealing with or treating diseased animals do not come into contact with healthy animals.
- 5.4.2.4 Materials and equipment that comes in contact with production animals shall be clean and in good repair.

5.5 Water Management

5.5.1 Water for Livestock Production

- 5.5.1.1 Water for livestock production shall be drawn from a known clean source or treated to make it suitable for use.

5.5.1.2 The producer shall conduct an analysis of the hazards to the water supply from source through to application, establish acceptance criteria for the monitoring of water and validate and verify the integrity of the water used to ensure it is fit for the purpose.

5.5.1.3 Where water for livestock production is stored in tanks or troughs, the producer shall ensure that the tanks or troughs are not a source of contamination.

5.5.1.4 Waste system intended to convey human or animal waste shall be separated from conveyances utilized to deliver water for livestock production.

5.5.2 Treatment of Water for Livestock Production

5.5.2.1 In circumstances where water for livestock production is treated to render it acceptable, the water, after treatment shall conform to the microbiological standards as outlined in element 5.5.3.

5.5.3 Water Management Plan

5.5.3.1 Water used for livestock production, mixing feeds, cleaning feed and veterinary equipment, and mixing sanitizer solutions shall comply with potable water microbiological and chemical standards in the country of production. Separate criteria shall be established for irrigation and other agricultural water, as applicable, based on a risk assessment and any application legislation, if applicable.

The water management plan shall include the following:

- i. Risk assessment (hazard analysis)
- ii. Preventive controls;
- iii. Monitoring and verification procedures
- iv. Corrective actions
- v. Documentation

5.5.3.2 Where necessary, water testing shall be part of the water management plan, as directed by the water risk assessment and current industry standards or regulations for the commodity being produced. Water analysis, if applicable, shall be undertaken by an approved laboratory accredited to ISO 17025 or equivalent.

5.5.3.3 Water quality shall be monitored to verify it complies with the established standard or criteria. A verification schedule shall be prepared indicating the location and frequency of monitoring, which shall be decided by the risk assessment, or applicable legislation.

5.5.4 Corrective Actions

5.5.4.1 When monitoring shows that water for livestock production (or other uses identified under element 5.5.3.1) does not meet established criteria or standard, the producer shall have a corrective action plan developed which may include additional treatment for water, additional sources for water, livestock identification and disposition or other alternative actions to adequately control the identified hazards.

5.6 Storage and Transport

5.6.1 Storage of Livestock, Animal Feed and Veterinary Medicines

5.6.1.1 Livestock shall be housed and transported under conditions that minimize the risk of microbiological or chemical contamination, physical damage, or distress.

5.6.1.2 The producer shall implement measures to prevent cross-contamination of livestock, animal feed or feeding utensils from agricultural chemicals, cleaning agents, waste materials, or personnel.

5.6.1.3 Animal feed shall be stored securely in clean, dry silos or sheds and handled separately from waste materials, animal medication, and hazardous chemicals.

5.6.1.4 Animal feed sourced from different species, growers or manufacturers shall be properly segregated and identified.

5.6.1.5 Animal feed shall be checked regularly for cleanliness, temperature, suitability, and freedom from molds and fungus. A record shall be maintained of feed checks.

5.6.1.6 Veterinary vaccines and medications shall be stored in secure, lockable storage, and in accordance with regulatory requirements or, in the absence of regulatory requirements, manufacturer's instructions.

5.6.2 Storage of Hazardous Chemicals, Toxic Substances, and Petroleum Products

5.6.2.1 Hazardous chemicals, toxic substances, and petroleum products shall be specifically identified and stored so as not to present a hazard to employees, products, product handling equipment or areas in which livestock or feed is handled, stored or transported.

5.6.2.2 Product contact chemicals such as pesticides and herbicides; rodenticides, fumigants and insecticides; sanitizers and detergents shall be stored separately and in their original containers.

5.6.2.3 Chemical storage sheds shall:

- i. Be compliant with national and local legislation and designed such that there is no cross-contamination between chemicals;
- ii. Be ventilated to the exterior;
- iii. Be provided with appropriate signage indicating the area is a hazardous storage area;

- iv. Be secure and lockable to restrict access only to those personnel with formal training in the handling and use of chemicals;
- v. Have instructions on the safe handling of hazardous chemicals readily accessible to employees;
- vi. Be equipped with a detailed and up-to-date inventory of all chemicals contained in the storage facility;
- vii. Have suitable first aid equipment and protective clothing available in the storage area;
- viii. Have emergency shower and/or wash facilities available in the event of an accidental spill; and
- ix. In the event of a hazardous spill, be designed such that spillage and drainage from the area is contained; and
- x. Be equipped with spillage kits and cleaning equipment.

5.6.2.4 Petroleum fuels, oils, grease and other lubricants shall be stored separate from other storage areas.

5.6.3 Transport

5.6.3.1 The methods and responsibility for loading, transport and unloading of livestock shall be documented, implemented and designed to minimize damage and distress.

5.6.3.2 Employees involved in loading, transport and unloading livestock shall be appropriately trained.

5.7 Purchase and Use of Medications, Animal Feeds, and Agricultural Chemicals

5.7.1 Purchasing Vaccines, Medications and Vitamins

5.7.1.1 Vaccines, medications, vitamins and dietary supplements shall be purchased from an approved supplier in accordance with applicable legislation, and be correctly labeled by the manufacturer.

5.7.1.2 An inventory of all animal medications, vitamins and dietary supplements purchased and used shall be maintained, including in-feed medications. The producer shall provide proof of purchase for all animal medications included in the inventory and used within the facility.

5.7.2 Application of Animal Medicines

5.7.2.1 The methods and responsibilities indicating the use of a vaccine or medication for a target disease shall be documented and implemented (i.e. animal health plan). All vaccines and medicines must be used in accordance to label instructions, including withholding periods.

5.7.2.2 Off label use of medications shall be approved and documented by a registered veterinarian.

5.7.2.3 The person making decisions on administering a vaccination medication shall:

- i. Demonstrate knowledge of, and access to, information regarding medications and the maximum residue levels allowable in destination markets;
- ii. Demonstrate competence and knowledge of the various methods of administering medications and compliance with withholding periods; and
- iii. Maintain a current medication register and keep records of all medication purchased and used.

5.7.2.4 Where veterinary medication is required to be dispensed in feed, medicated feed shall be separately identified and stored.

5.7.2.5 Where veterinary medication is required to be dispensed in water, medicated water shall be separately identified and stored.

5.7.2.6 The producer shall dispose of unused animal medications, expired medications, empty containers and disposable instruments in accordance with regulatory requirements and ensure that empty containers, used needles and disposable instruments are not re-used; and are isolated and securely stored while awaiting disposal.

5.7.2.7 Where some or all of the living stock are found to be infected with a notifiable disease, the producer shall have a system in place to quarantine the affected stock and take appropriate action to treat or dispose of the affected stock.

5.7.3 Feed Management Plan

5.7.3.1 Animal feed, when not sourced internally, shall be purchased from an approved supplier in accordance with applicable legislation and an agreed specification. A record of all animal feed purchased shall be maintained.

5.7.3.2 The methods and responsibilities to maintain the safety and integrity of all animal feed whether purchased, or produced on site shall be documented and implemented (i.e. feed management plan). Animal feed shall meet regulatory requirements and be managed to minimize the potential for microbiological or chemical contamination.

The feed management plan shall include the following:

- i. Risk assessment (hazard analysis);
- ii. Preventive controls;
- iii. Monitoring and verification procedures;
- iv. Corrective actions; and
- v. Documentation.

5.7.3.3 Feed quality shall be tested to verify that it complies with the established microbiological and chemical standard or criteria. Feed analysis shall be undertaken by an approved laboratory accredited to ISO 17025 or equivalent.

5.7.3.4 Where animal feed is found to be contaminated or otherwise unsuitable for use, the producer shall have a process in place to contain and remove the contaminated feed so as not to pose a food safety risk to livestock and other farm products, and to clean and sanitize contaminated silos and equipment.

5.7.4 Agricultural Chemicals

5.7.4.1 Chemicals shall be purchased from an approved supplier in accordance with applicable legislation. An inventory of all chemicals purchased and used shall be maintained.

5.7.4.2 A feed crop protection action plan indicating the applications used for a target pest or disease and the threshold levels that initiate application shall be prepared and implemented.

5.7.4.3 If the product is intended for export, agricultural chemical use shall consider requirements in the intended country of destination.

5.7.4.4 The person making decisions on chemical application shall:

- i. Demonstrate knowledge of, and access to, information regarding chemical applications and the maximum residue limits allowable in destination markets;
- ii. Use only chemicals approved for use in the intended market;
- iii. Demonstrate competence and knowledge of chemical application and crop withholding periods;
- iv. Ensure crop applications and application rates for target pests and diseases comply with label recommendations;
- v. Demonstrate the timing between chemical application and harvest complies with the approved harvest interval for the chemical applied; and
- vi. Maintain a current chemical register and keep records of all chemicals use.

5.7.4.5 The producer shall dispose of chemical waste and empty containers in accordance with regulatory requirements and ensure that:

- i. Empty chemical containers are not re-used;
- ii. Empty containers are labeled, isolated and securely stored while awaiting collection; and
- iii. Unused and obsolete chemicals are stored under secure conditions while waiting authorized disposal by an approved vendor.

5.8 Stock Identification and Traceability

5.8.1 Living Stock Records

5.8.1.1 All livestock shall be identified by an individual or batch identification system, and be traceable back to the farm of birth as per Primary Production system elements 2.6.1 and 2.6.2.

5.8.1.2 The producer shall maintain a living stock record which includes current living stock on farm, stock movement, stock transactions, and stock losses.

5.8.1.3 Records shall be maintained of living stock treated with approved veterinary medications and shall include the application date and the withholding period for that medication.

5.8.2 Feed Identification and Traceability

5.8.2.1 All animal feed and feed additives shall be identified by a batch identification system and be traceable back to the source, including name and address of the supplier and the batch number or manufacturer's identification mark as per Primary Production system elements 2.6.1 and 2.6.2.

5.8.2.2 The producer shall maintain records of the use of feed and feed additives.

5.9 Waste Disposal

5.9.1 Dry, Liquid Waste Disposal

5.9.1.1 Waste materials shall be regularly removed from the farm, field, pens, yards, livestock housing sheds and the surrounding areas so as not to pose a food safety risk to livestock and other farm products.

5.9.1.2 The methods and responsibility for the effective and efficient disposal of all solid waste including inedible material and disused packaging, and liquid and unsanitary waste shall be documented and implemented.

5.9.1.3 Areas where solid farm waste materials are stored shall be kept clean.

5.9.1.4 Animal carcasses for disposal shall be stored outside production areas. Carcass disposal companies shall not pass through the production facilities to remove carcasses.

5.9.2 Liquid Waste

5.9.2.1 Drainage and waste disposal areas shall be designed and constructed so as to avoid contamination of water sources and neighboring properties.

5.9.2.2 Untreated waste water and slurry from sewage handling operations shall be contained so that it does not contaminate animal holding areas, pasture, crop cultivation, and water courses.

5.9.2.3 Liquid manure shall be stored in specially designed and constructed watertight containers/reservoir, so as not to pose a food safety risk to livestock and other farm products.

Module 6: Good Aquaculture Practices for Farming of Seafood (GFSI All)

This Module covers the Good Aquaculture Practices requirements for the production of fish and/or seafood used for food production.

Sites implementing this module must also meet the requirements of the SQF System Elements for Primary Production.

Applicable food sector categories (FSCs) are:

FSC 6: Harvest and intensive farming of seafood

FSC 6A: Wild caught fish/shellfish

FSC 6B: Aquaculture and RTE seafood

(e.g. tuna, salmon, snapper, bass, catfish and other finfish spp. and oysters, mussels, shrimp, lobster, crab, and other shellfish spp.)

All applicable elements of Module 6 shall be implemented. Where an element is not applicable a request for exemption must be appropriately justified and submitted to the certification body in writing before the audit.

6.1 Location and Layout of Structures and Vessels

6.1.1 Aquaculture Sites

6.1.1.1 Aquaculture farms shall comply with local and national regulations and demonstrate legal authority for land use, water use and effluent discharge.

6.1.1.2 Aquaculture farms shall be such that adjacent and adjoining buildings, operations and land use do not interfere with the safe and hygienic operations on the property.

6.1.1.3 A risk assessment shall be conducted to evaluate and document the risk to products associated with prior land use, adjacent land use, and other environmental factors including structures and equipment. Consideration shall be given to the following:

- i. History of land use;
- ii. Topography;
- iii. Adjacent land use;
- iv. Soil permeability; and
- v. Other factors that may impact on the ability to supply safe products.

6.1.1.4 The risk assessment shall be re-evaluated in the event of any circumstance or change that may impact on the production of safe products.

6.1.1.5 Where risks are identified, control measures shall be implemented to reduce the identified hazards to an acceptable level.

6.1.2 Vessels and Structures

6.1.2.1 Vessels, catch landing areas and land structures shall be designed and constructed to ensure that adjacent buildings or operations do not interfere with their safe and hygienic operation.

6.1.2.2 Vessels, catch landing areas and land structures shall be designed and constructed so as to facilitate cleaning and pest control, and be free of oil, grease or other contaminants.

6.2 Secure Housing of Seafood Stock, Feed, and Equipment

6.2.1 Site Access and Security

6.2.1.1 Aquaculture farms shall be fenced and the entry points controlled by a lock or other control entry devices. Only authorized persons may gain entry to aquaculture farms and access to products, feedstock, and water supply.

6.2.1.2 Wild catch harvest, both on vessel and landed, are to be held in clean containers and protected from unauthorized access or contamination sources.

6.2.2 Storage of Feed, Chemicals, and Equipment

6.2.2.1 All buildings used to store equipment, veterinary and aquaculture chemicals, or feedstock shall be designed and constructed so as to permit compliance to good hygiene practices and avoid product contamination.

6.2.2.2 Buildings designated to store equipment, veterinary and aquaculture chemicals, or feedstock shall be kept clean.

6.2.2.3 Silos, bins or other storage containers used to store feed shall be constructed of approved materials and designed to remain dry, clean and free from any dirt residues. They shall remain fit for the purpose, in an acceptable condition, enabling safe fumigation practices and prevention of pest and vermin infestation.

6.2.2.4 Storage rooms shall be designed and constructed to allow for the separate, hygienic storage of feedstuffs, veterinary chemicals, containers and equipment. Items used to dispense feed and veterinary chemicals shall be kept away from machinery, hazardous chemicals and other toxic substances.

6.2.3 Construction and Storage of Machinery, Conveyors, Harvesting and Processing Equipment

6.2.3.1 Product contact surfaces on conveyors, harvesting and processing equipment on vessels or on aquaculture farms shall be designed and constructed to allow for the efficient handling of products. Surfaces in direct contact with products shall be constructed of materials that will not contribute a food or feed safety risk.

6.2.3.2 Provisions shall be made for the washing and storage of harvesting and processing equipment, conveyors, totes, trays containers and utensils.

6.2.3.3 Provisions shall be made to store nonfood-contact equipment separately from harvesting and processing equipment.

6.2.4 Vehicles, Equipment and Utensils

6.2.4.1 Feed processing equipment including knives, totes, trays, conveyors, containers and other equipment, including equipment used for fish or shellfish health, shall be suitable for use and constructed from materials that are non-toxic, smooth, impervious and easily cleaned and sanitized.

6.2.4.2 Equipment, tools, utensils and other items or materials that are used for feeding or health of fish/shellfish shall be kept in good repair, kept clean and sanitized, and stored in such a way as to avoid contamination.

6.2.4.3 Veterinary equipment, including disposable medical items, shall be fit for purpose and maintained in a clean and serviceable condition, and stored in a clean, safe, and secure store.

6.2.4.4 Water tanks shall be cleaned at a sufficient frequency so as not be a source of contamination.

6.2.4.5 Vehicles used for the transport of fish/shellfish, feedstuffs, and ice shall be fit for purpose and shall not be used to carry waste materials, chemicals or other hazardous substances that could cause contamination without thorough cleaning and inspection.

6.2.5 Maintenance

6.2.5.1 The methods and responsibility for maintenance of vessels, equipment and buildings shall be planned, scheduled and carried out in a manner that prevents any risk of contamination of products or equipment.

6.2.6 Calibration of Equipment

6.2.6.1 The methods and responsibility for the calibration and re-calibration of application, measuring, test and inspection equipment used for measuring and monitoring feed application, chemical application, and veterinary medicines shall be documented and implemented.

6.2.6.2 Equipment shall be calibrated against national or international reference standards, methods and schedules. In cases where such standards are not available, the site shall indicate and provide evidence to support the calibration reference method applied.

6.2.6.3 Calibration records shall be maintained.

6.2.7 Pest Prevention

6.2.7.1 The methods and responsibilities for pest prevention on the vessel, site or facilities shall be documented and implemented. The property, storage facilities, machinery and equipment shall be kept free of waste or accumulated debris so as not to attract pests and vermin.

6.2.7.2 The pest prevention program shall:

- i. Describe the methods and responsibility for the development, implementation and maintenance of the pest prevention program;
- ii. Identify the target pests for each pesticide application;
- iii. Outline the methods used to prevent pest problems;
- iv. Outline the methods used to eliminate pests when found;
- v. Outline the frequency with which pest status is to be checked;
- vi. Include on a site map the identification, location, number and type of traps and bait stations set;
- vii. List the chemicals used (they are required to be approved by the relevant authority and their Safety Data Sheets (SDS) made available);
- viii. Outline the methods to make employees aware of the bait control program and the measures to take when they come into contact with a bait station and;
- ix. Outline the requirements for employee awareness and training in the use of pest and vermin control chemicals and baits.

6.2.7.3 Records of pest inspections and pest applications shall be maintained.

6.2.8 Animal Control

6.2.8.1 The operation shall have a written risk assessment on animal activity in and around the production of feed, living stock, or wild catch that has been implemented and monitored.

6.2.9 Cleaning and Sanitation

6.2.9.1 The methods and responsibility for the cleaning of vessels, containers, fish/shellfish contact equipment, animal health equipment, and sanitary facilities shall be documented and implemented. Consideration shall be given to:

- i. What is to be cleaned;
- ii. How it is to be cleaned;
- iii. When it is to be cleaned;
- iv. Who is responsible for the cleaning; and
- v. Who is responsible for the evaluation of the cleaning.

6.2.9.2 A verification schedule shall be prepared indicating the frequency of verifying the effectiveness of the cleaning of vessels, containers, fish/shellfish contact equipment, animal health equipment, and sanitary facilities, and indicating who is responsible for completing verification activities.

6.2.9.3 The effectiveness of cleaning and sanitation programs shall be regularly reviewed and adapted as needed based on environmental factors or disease risk.

6.2.9.4 A record of cleaning and sanitation activities shall be maintained.

6.3 Personal Hygiene

6.3.1 Personnel Practices

6.3.1.1 Personnel engaged in the handling of living stock, wild catch and feedstuffs shall observe appropriate personal practices. Corrective actions shall be implemented for personnel who violate food safety practices.

6.3.1.2 Personnel suffering from, or are carriers of, an infectious disease which can be carried with food as a vehicle shall not engage in handling of living stock, wild catch and feedstuffs.

6.3.1.3 A medical screening procedure shall be in place for all employees, and will also be applicable to all visitors and contractors.

6.3.1.4 Personnel with exposed cuts, sores or lesions shall not be engaged in handling or processing of product. Minor cuts or abrasions on exposed parts of the body shall be covered with a suitable waterproof dressing.

6.3.1.5 Smoking, chewing, eating, drinking (except for water), spitting is not permitted in any product or feed handling areas.

6.3.2 Sanitary Facilities and Hand Washing

6.3.2.1 Toilet facilities shall be provided and designed, constructed and located in a manner that minimizes the potential risk for product contamination.

- i. Toilets shall cater for the maximum number of employees and be constructed so that they can be easily cleaned and maintained;
- ii. Hand wash basins with clean/potable water, hand soap, disposable towels or effective hand drying device, waste bins and a tank that captures used hand wash water for disposal (if not connected to a drain) shall be provided inside or adjacent to toilet facilities;
- iii. Signage in appropriate languages shall be provided adjacent to hand wash basins instructing people to wash their hands after each toilet visit;
- iv. Racks for protective clothing used by employees shall be provided;
- v. Toilets shall be located so as to provide easy access for workers; and
- vi. Toilet and wash stations shall be maintained in a clean and sanitary condition.

6.3.2.2 Personnel shall have clean hands and hands shall be washed by all personnel:

- i. Before handling living stock, wild catch or feed;
- ii. After each visit to a toilet;
- iii. After using a handkerchief;
- iv. After handling dirty or contaminated material; and
- v. After smoking, eating or drinking.

6.3.3 Protective Clothing

6.3.3.1 Protective clothing shall be effectively maintained, stored, laundered and worn so as to protect product from risk of contamination.

6.3.3.2 Where applicable, clothing including footwear shall be effectively maintained, cleaned and sanitized, and worn so as to protect product from risk of contamination.

6.3.3.3 If rubber or disposable gloves are used, the operation shall have a glove use policy and personnel shall adhere to the hand washing practices outlined above.

6.3.4 Jewelry and Personal Effects

6.3.4.1 Jewelry and other loose objects that pose a threat to the safety of living stock shall not be worn or taken onto any product handling or feed storage operations.

6.3.5 Visitors

6.3.5.1 All visitors and employees shall be required to remove jewelry and other loose objects and wear suitable protective clothing.

6.3.5.2 Visitors exhibiting visible signs of illness shall be prevented from entering any living stock, wild catch or feed handling areas.

6.3.5.3 Visitors must follow all personnel practices as designated by company for employees within aquaculture farms and or wild catch landing, storage and or handling areas.

6.3.6 Amenities

6.3.6.1 Provision shall be made to store employee personal belongings away from living stock, wild catch or feed handling areas.

6.3.6.2 On-board accommodation for vessel employees shall meet regulatory requirements (where applicable) and shall be clean and dry.

6.3.6.3 Areas for meal breaks shall be designated and located away from living stock, wild catch or feed handling areas.

6.3.6.4 Potable drinking water shall be available to all employees.

6.4 Aquaculture and Fish/Shellfish Handling Practices

6.4.1 Product Handling Practices

6.4.1.1 Appropriate personnel practices shall be employed by employees working in feed handling, living stock or wild catch areas which include:

- i. Aprons and gloves shall be kept clean;
- ii. Aprons and gloves shall not be left on product, work surfaces, equipment or packaging material but hung on apron and glove racks provided;
- iii. All product and packaging material shall be kept off the ground and the floor of the vessel, holding area or transport vehicle; and
- iv. Waste shall be contained in the bins identified for this purpose. Waste shall not come in contact with product and be removed on a regular basis and not left to accumulate.

6.4.1.2 Measures shall be implemented to prevent cross-contamination of living or harvested product from feed, chemicals, oils and lubricants, and /or personnel.

6.4.2 Aquaculture Practices

6.4.2.1 The site shall apply good husbandry practices for the living stock under its care and shall ensure that the basic needs of the species under its control are maintained.

6.4.2.2 Employees responsible for the care and management of living stock shall be trained and competent in aquaculture practices. They shall be able to recognize the early signs of distress and disease and ensure stress to living stock is minimized.

6.4.2.3 A written procedure regarding the handling of living stock shall be implemented and maintained. The procedure shall assure that employees handling living stock ensure that:

- i. Living stock has an adequate source of clean feed and uncontaminated water at all times;
- ii. Measures to inspect for physical hazards and procedures to remove physical hazards are in place;
- iii. Diseased or medicated stock is segregated from healthy living stock; and
- iv. Personnel dealing with or treating diseased stock do not come into contact with healthy stock.

6.4.2.4 Materials and equipment that comes in contact with living stock shall be clean and in good repair.

6.5 Water Management

6.5.1 Water for Aquaculture

6.5.1.1 Water for production of living stock shall be drawn from a known clean source or treated to make it suitable for use.

6.5.1.2 Water for aquaculture shall be sourced from a location and in a manner that is compliant with prevailing regulations.

6.5.1.3 The site shall conduct an analysis of the hazards to the water supply from source through to application, establish acceptance criteria for the monitoring of water and validate and verify the integrity of the water used to ensure it is fit for the purpose.

6.5.1.4 Where water for production of living stock is stored in tanks, the site shall ensure that the tanks are not a source of contamination.

6.5.1.5 Waste system intended to convey human or animal waste shall be separated from conveyances utilized to deliver water for the production of living stock, cleaning of equipment, or ice production.

6.5.2 Water Treatment

6.5.2.1 In circumstances where water for production of living stock is treated to render it acceptable, the water, after treatment shall conform to the microbiological standards as outlined in element 6.5.3.

6.5.3 Water Management Plan

6.5.3.1 Water used for production of living stock, mixing feeds, cleaning feed and veterinary equipment, and production of ice shall comply with potable water microbiological and chemical standards in the country of production. Where necessary, water used for aquaculture shall also be tested for heavy metals and polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs).

The water management plan shall include the following:

- i. Risk assessment (hazard analysis);
- ii. Preventive controls;
- iii. Monitoring and verification procedures;
- iv. Corrective actions; and
- v. Documentation.

6.5.3.2 Water and ice testing shall be part of the water management plan, as directed by the water risk assessment and current industry standards or regulations for the commodity being produced. Water analysis shall be undertaken by an approved laboratory accredited to ISO 17025 or equivalent.

6.5.3.3 Water and ice quality shall be monitored to verify it complies with the established water microbiological and chemical standard or criteria established. A verification schedule shall be prepared indicating the location and frequency of monitoring, which shall be decided by the risk assessment, best practices within country of production, or applicable legislation.

6.5.4 Corrective Actions

6.5.4.1 When monitoring shows that water for the production of living stock (or other uses identified under 6.5.3.1) does not meet established criteria or standard, the site shall have a corrective action plan developed which may include additional treatment for water, additional sources for water, living stock identification and disposition or other alternative actions to adequately control the identified hazards.

6.5.5 Water/Ice used In Cleaning, Storage, and Transport

6.5.5.1 Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) shall be developed for all uses of water during wild catch, cleaning, and ice production. The SOPs shall address:

- i. The microbial quality of water or ice that directly contacts the product, is used on product contact surfaces;
- ii. The treatment of re-circulated water, if used;
- iii. The condition and maintenance of water-delivery system;
- iv. The control of wash water temperature.

6.5.5.2 A standard operating procedure that includes water-change schedules shall be developed for all uses of water during harvesting.

6.6 Storage and Transport

6.6.1 Storage of Harvested Stock, Feed and Veterinary Medicines

6.6.1.1 Harvested stock shall be housed and transported under conditions that minimize the risk of microbiological or chemical contamination or physical damage.

6.6.1.2 The site shall implement measures to prevent cross-contamination of living stock, wild catch, or feedstock from chemicals, cleaning agents, oils and grease, other chemicals, waste materials, or personnel.

6.6.1.3 Feed shall be stored securely in clean, dry silos or containers and handled separately from waste materials, animal medication, and hazardous chemicals.

6.6.1.4 Feed sourced from different species, growers or manufacturers shall be stored separately by using separate silos or storage areas.

6.6.1.5 Aquaculture feed shall be checked regularly for cleanliness, temperature, suitability, and freedom from molds and fungus. A record shall be maintained of feed checks.

6.6.1.6 Veterinary vaccines and medications shall be stored in secure, lockable storage, and in accordance with regulatory requirements or, in the absence of regulatory requirements, manufacturer's instructions.

6.6.2 Storage of Hazardous Chemicals, Toxic Substances, and Petroleum Products

6.6.2.1 Hazardous chemicals, toxic substances, and petroleum products shall be specifically identified and stored so as not to present a hazard to employees, products, product handling equipment or areas in which harvest product is handled, stored or transported.

6.6.2.2 Product contact chemicals such as pesticides and herbicides; rodenticides, fumigants and insecticides; sanitizers and detergents shall be stored separately and in their original containers.

6.6.2.3 Chemical storage rooms or sheds shall:

- i. Be compliant with national and local legislation and designed such that there is no cross-contamination between chemicals;
- ii. Be ventilated to the exterior;

- iii. Be provided with appropriate signage indicating the area is a hazardous storage area;
- iv. Be secure and lockable to restrict access only to those personnel with formal training in the handling and use of chemicals;
- v. Have instructions on the safe handling of hazardous chemicals readily accessible to employees;
- vi. Be equipped with a detailed and up-to-date inventory of all chemicals contained in the storage facility;
- vii. Have suitable first aid equipment and protective clothing available in the storage area;
- viii. Have emergency shower and/or wash facilities available in the event of an accidental spill;
- ix. In the event of a hazardous spill, be designed such that spillage and drainage from the area is contained; and
- x. Be equipped with spillage kits and cleaning equipment.

6.6.2.4 Petroleum fuels, oils, grease and other lubricants shall be stored separate from other storage areas.

6.6.3 Transport

6.6.3.1 The methods and responsibility for loading, transport and unloading of harvested stock shall be documented and implemented.

6.6.3.2 Employees involved in loading, transport and unloading of harvested stock shall be appropriately trained.

6.7 Purchase and Use of Medications, Aquaculture Feeds, and Aquaculture Chemicals

6.7.1 Purchasing Medications

6.7.1.1 Vaccines and medications shall be purchased from an approved supplier in accordance with applicable legislation, and be correctly labeled by the manufacturer.

6.7.1.2 No medications shall be purchased or used with the purpose of promoting growth.

6.7.1.3 An inventory of all aquaculture medications purchased and used shall be maintained, including in-feed medications. The site shall provide proof of purchase for all medications included in the inventory and used within the facility.

6.7.2 Application of Aquaculture Medicines

6.7.2.1 The methods and responsibilities indicating the use of a medication for a target disease shall be documented and implemented (i.e. animal health plan). All vaccines and medicines must be used in accordance to label instructions, including withholding periods.

6.7.2.2 Off label use of medications shall be approved and documented by a registered veterinarian.

6.7.2.3 The person making decisions on administering a vaccination medication shall:

- i. Demonstrate knowledge of, and access to, information regarding medications and the maximum residue levels allowable in destination markets;
- ii. Demonstrate competence and knowledge of the various methods of administering medications and compliance with withholding periods; and
- iii. Maintain a current medication register and keep records of all medication purchased and used.

6.7.2.4 Where veterinary medication is required to be dispensed in feed, feed shall be separately identified and stored.

6.7.2.5 Where veterinary medication is required to be dispensed in water, medicated water shall be separately identified and stored.

6.7.2.6 The site shall dispose of unused animal medications, expired medications, empty containers and disposable instruments in accordance with regulatory requirements and ensure that they are not re-used; and are isolated and securely stored while awaiting disposal.

6.7.2.7 Where some or all of the living stock are found to be infected with a notifiable disease, the site shall have a system in place to quarantine the affected stock and take appropriate action to treat or dispose of the affected stock.

6.7.3 Feed Management Plan

6.7.3.1 Aquaculture feed shall be purchased from an approved supplier in accordance with applicable legislation and an agreed specification. A record of all aquaculture feed purchased shall be maintained.

6.7.3.2 The methods and responsibilities to maintain the safety and integrity of all aquaculture feed, whether purchased, or produced on site shall be documented and implemented (i.e. feed management plan). Aquaculture feed shall meet regulatory requirements and be managed to minimize the potential for microbiological or chemical contamination.

The feed management plan shall include the following:

- i. Risk assessment (hazard analysis);
- ii. Preventive controls;
- iii. Monitoring and verification procedures;
- iv. Corrective actions; and

v. Documentation.

6.7.3.3 Feed quality shall be tested to verify that it complies with the established microbiological and chemical standard or criteria. Feed analysis shall be undertaken by an approved laboratory accredited to ISO 17025 or equivalent.

6.7.3.4 Where aquaculture feed is found to be contaminated or otherwise unsuitable for use, the site shall have a process in place to contain and remove the contaminated feed so as not to pose a food safety risk to living or harvested stock, and to clean and sanitize contaminated silos and equipment.

6.7.4 Purchase and Use of Chemicals

6.7.4.1 Chemicals shall be purchased from an approved supplier in accordance with applicable legislation. An inventory of all chemicals purchased and used shall be maintained.

6.7.4.2 The site shall dispose of chemical waste and empty containers in accordance with regulatory requirements and ensure that:

- i. Empty chemical containers are not re-used;
- ii. Empty containers are labeled, isolated and securely stored while awaiting collection;
- iii. Unused and obsolete chemicals are stored under secure conditions while waiting authorized disposal by an approved vendor.

6.8 Stock Identification and Traceability

6.8.1 Living Stock Records

6.8.1.1 The site shall maintain a living stock record which includes current living stock on farm, stock movement, stock transactions, and stock losses. as per Primary Production system elements 2.6.1 and 2.6.2.

6.8.1.2 The site shall maintain records of living stock purchased.

6.8.1.3 Records shall be maintained of living stock treated with approved veterinary medications and shall include the application date and the withholding period for that medication.

6.8.2 Feed Identification and Traceability

6.8.2.1 All animal feed and feed additives shall be identified by a batch identification system and be traceable back to the source, including name and address of the supplier and the batch number or manufacturer's identification mark. as per Primary Production system elements 2.6.1 and 2.6.2.

6.8.2.2 The site shall maintain records of the use of feed and feed additives.

6.8.3 Harvested Stock Records

6.8.3.1 Records shall be maintained of all harvested fishery products, including the delivery destination, vendor, species, lot or batch number, and date of production.

6.9 Waste Disposal

6.9.1 Dry Waste Disposal

6.9.1.1 Waste materials shall be regularly removed from the farm, vessel, catch landing areas and surrounding fishery storage areas so as not to pose a food safety risk to living stock and other farm products.

6.9.1.2 The methods and responsibility for the effective and efficient disposal of all solid waste including inedible material and disused packaging, and liquid and unsanitary waste shall be documented and implemented.

6.9.1.3 Areas where solid waste materials are stored shall be kept clean.

6.9.1.4 Dead fish/seafood shall be stored outside production areas. Disposal companies shall not pass through the production facilities as part of the removal process.

6.9.2 Liquid Waste

6.9.2.1 Waste water and slurry from ponds shall be disposed of legally to avoid contamination of water sources and neighboring properties.

6.9.2.2 Untreated waste water and slurry from sewage handling operations shall be contained so that it does not contaminate farm ponds and water sources.

6.9.2.3 Liquid waste shall be stored in specially designed and constructed watertight containers or reservoirs, so as not to pose a food safety risk to living stock and other farm products.

Module 7: Good Agricultural Practices for Farming of Plant Products (GFSI BI)

This module covers the Good Agricultural Practices requirements for the growing and harvesting of fruits, vegetables and nuts.

Sites implementing this module must also meet the requirements of the SQF System Elements for Primary Production.

Applicable food sector categories (FSCs) are:

FSC 3: Growing and production of fresh produce and nuts

All applicable elements of Module 7 shall be implemented. Where an element is not applicable a request for exemption must be appropriately justified and submitted to the certification body in writing before the audit.

7.1 Site Requirements

7.1.1 Property Location

7.1.1.1 The farm and facilities shall be such that adjacent and adjoining buildings, operations and land use do not interfere with the safe and hygienic operations on the property.

7.1.1.2 Production and growing sites shall have a risk assessment conducted to evaluate and document the risk to crops due to prior land use, adjacent land use, and other environmental factors including structures and equipment. Consideration shall be given to the following:

- i. History of land use;
- ii. Topography;
- iii. Adjacent land use; and
- iv. Other factors that may impact on the ability to supply safe product.

7.1.1.3 The analysis shall be re-evaluated in the event of any circumstance or change that may impact on the production of safe product.

7.1.1.4 Where risks are identified, control measures shall be implemented to reduce the identified hazards to an acceptable level.

7.2 Product Handling, Storage and Equipment

7.2.1 Field and Storage Buildings

7.2.1.1 All buildings used to store equipment, field chemicals, field packaging materials or field product shall be designed and constructed so as to permit compliance to good hygiene practices and avoid product contamination.

7.2.1.2 Buildings designated to store field product or field product packaging materials shall be of durable construction. Internal surfaces shall be smooth and impervious with a light colored finish and shall be kept clean.

7.2.2 Greenhouses, Hydroponics and Mushrooms

7.2.2.1 Sites that grow produce indoors shall be designed so that there is no food safety risk to the product.

7.2.2.2 A procedure for handling of glass or hard plastic breakages in greenhouses shall be documented and implemented (refer to 7.8.2).

7.2.3 Controlled Temperature and Atmosphere Storage

7.2.3.1 The producer shall ensure any chilling, cold storage and controlled atmosphere facility is of suitable size, construction and design and is capable of effective operational performance.

7.2.3.2 Floors shall be constructed of smooth, dense impact resistant material that is impervious to liquid and easily cleaned. Floors shall be effectively graded, to allow the effective removal of all overflow or waste water under normal conditions.

7.2.3.3 Wall, ceilings, doors, frames and hatches shall be of a solid construction. Internal surfaces shall be smooth and impervious with a light colored finish.

7.2.3.4 Lighting shall be shatter-proof or provided with protective covers.

7.2.3.5 Sufficient refrigeration and controlled atmosphere capacity shall be available to chill or store the maximum anticipated throughput of product with allowance for periodic cleaning of storage rooms.

7.2.3.6 Discharge from defrost and condensate lines shall be controlled and discharged to the drainage system.

7.2.3.7 Chilling, cold storage and controlled atmosphere facilities shall be fitted with temperature monitoring equipment or suitable temperature monitoring device that is located so as to monitor the warmest part of the room and is fitted with a temperature gauge that is easily readable and accessible.

7.2.3.8 Chill, cold storage and controlled atmosphere loading dock areas shall be appropriately sealed, drained and graded.

7.2.4 Storage of Dry Ingredient, Packaging and Utensils

7.2.4.1 Storage rooms shall be designed and constructed to allow for the separate, hygienic storage of harvesting and packing utensils away from farm machinery and hazardous chemicals and toxic substances.

7.2.5 Farm Machinery, Conveyors, Harvesting Rigs Construction and Storage

7.2.5.1 Product contact surfaces on conveyors and harvesting rigs shall be designed and constructed to allow for the efficient handling of product and those surfaces in direct contact with product shall be constructed of materials that will not contribute a food or feed safety risk.

7.2.5.2 Food handling equipment including knives, totes, trays, conveyors, containers and other equipment shall be constructed of materials that are non-toxic, smooth, impervious and easily cleaned.

7.2.5.3 Provision shall be made for the washing and storage of harvesting rigs, equipment, conveyors, totes, trays containers and utensils.

7.2.5.4 Provision shall be made to store farm machinery separate from food conveyors, harvesting and processing rigs.

7.2.6 Vehicles, Equipment and Utensils

7.2.6.1 Equipment, vehicles, tools, utensils and other items or materials used in farming operations that may contact produce are identified and are in good repair, kept clean and sanitized, and stored in such a way as to avoid contamination.

7.2.6.2 Water tanks shall be cleaned at a sufficient frequency so as not be a source of contamination.

7.2.6.3 Food contact harvest containers and pallets shall be inspected prior to and during harvesting. A documented and implemented procedure shall include the type and construction of harvest and packing containers.

7.2.6.4 The use of harvest containers for non-harvest purposes will be clearly identified and not returned to use for harvest.

7.2.6.5 Vehicles used for the transport of produce shall be adequate for its purpose and shall not be used to carry waste materials, manure, chemicals or other hazardous substances that could cause produce contamination without thorough cleaning and inspection.

7.2.6.6 Tractors, harvesters, field packing equipment and machinery driven over ground crops shall be fitted with drip trays to prevent contamination of the crop by lubricants and oils.

7.2.7 Maintenance

7.2.7.1 The maintenance of equipment and buildings shall be planned, scheduled and carried out in a manner that prevents any risk of contamination of product or equipment.

7.2.8 Calibration of Equipment

7.2.8.1 The calibration and re-calibration of chemical application, measuring, test and inspection equipment used in the growing and harvesting process shall be documented and implemented.

7.2.8.2 Equipment shall be calibrated against manufacturer, national or international reference standards, methods and schedules. In cases where such standards are not available the producer shall indicate and provide evidence to support the calibration reference method applied.

7.2.8.3 Calibration records shall be maintained.

7.2.9 Pest Prevention

7.2.9.1 The property adjacent to buildings, storage facilities, machinery and equipment shall be kept free of waste or accumulated debris so as not to attract pests and vermin. Harvested products and food contact packaging materials shall be free of evidence of pest and vermin infestation.

7.2.9.2 The pest prevention program shall:

- i. Describe the methods and responsibility for the development, implementation and maintenance of the pest prevention program;
- ii. Record pest sightings and trend the frequency of pest activity to target pesticide applications;
- iii. Outline the methods used to prevent pest problems;
- iv. Outline the methods used to eliminate pests when found;
- v. Outline the frequency with which pest status is to be checked;
- vi. Include on a site map the identification, location, number and type of bait stations set;
- vii. List the chemicals used (they are required to be approved by the relevant authority and their Safety Data Sheets (SDS) made available);
- viii. Outline the methods used to make employees aware of the bait control program and the measures to take when they come into contact with a bait station; and
- ix. Outline the requirements for employee awareness and training in the use of pest and vermin control chemicals and baits.

7.2.9.3 Records of pest inspections and pest applications shall be maintained.

7.2.10 Animal Control

7.2.10.1 The operation shall have a written risk assessment on animal activity in and around the production of produce that has been implemented and monitored.

7.2.10.2 Measures shall be in place that control domestic and wild animals in the growing fields and does not allow the presence of domestic or wild animals in greenhouses and all storage and product handling areas.

7.2.11 Cleaning and Sanitation

7.2.11.1 The cleaning of product contact surfaces, field harvesting equipment and sanitary facilities shall be documented and implemented. Consideration shall be given to:

- i. What is to be cleaned;
- ii. How it is to be cleaned;
- iii. When it is to be cleaned;
- iv. Who is responsible for the cleaning, and
- v. Who is responsible for the evaluation of cleaning activities.

7.2.11.2 A schedule shall be prepared indicating the frequency of verifying the effectiveness of the cleaning of product contact surfaces, field harvesting equipment and sanitary facilities and indicating who is responsible for completing verification activities.

7.2.11.3 A record of cleaning and sanitation activities shall be maintained.

7.3 Personal Hygiene

7.3.1 Personnel Practices

7.3.1.1 Personnel engaged in the handling of product shall observe appropriate personal practices. Corrective actions shall be implemented for personnel who violate food safety practices.

7.3.1.2 Personnel suffering from, or are carriers of, an infectious disease, which can be carried with food as a vehicle, shall not engage in growing, product handling or field harvesting operations.

7.3.1.3 A medical screening procedure shall be in place for all employees who handle product or food contact materials, and will also be applicable to all visitors and contractors.

7.3.1.4 Personnel with exposed cuts, sores or lesions shall not be engaged in handling product or food contact materials. Minor cuts or abrasions on exposed parts of the body shall be covered with a suitable waterproof dressing.

7.3.1.5 A written policy shall be in place that specifies the procedures for handling product or product contact surfaces that have been in contact with blood or other bodily fluids.

7.3.1.6 Smoking, chewing, eating, drinking (except for water) or spitting is not permitted in any growing areas including on field harvesting rigs and during harvesting and packing operations.

7.3.2 Sanitary Facilities and Hand Washing

7.3.2.1 Toilet facilities shall be provided and designed, constructed and located in a manner that minimizes the potential risk for product contamination.

- i. Toilets shall cater for the maximum number of employees and be constructed so that they can be easily cleaned and maintained;
- ii. Hand wash basins with clean, potable water, hand soap, disposable towels or effective hand drying device, waste bins and a tank that captures used hand wash water for disposal (if not connect to drains) shall be provided inside or adjacent to toilet facilities;
- iii. Signage in appropriate languages shall be provided adjacent to hand wash basins instructing people to wash their hands after each toilet visit;
- iv. Racks for protective clothing used by farm employees shall be provided;
- v. Toilets shall be located so as to provide easy access for farm workers;
- vi. Toilet and wash stations shall be maintained in a clean and sanitary condition.

7.3.2.2 Personnel shall have clean hands and hands shall be washed by all personnel:

- i. Before handling product;
- ii. Before putting on gloves;
- iii. After each visit to a toilet;
- iv. After using a handkerchief, handling dirty or contaminated material; and
- v. After smoking, eating or drinking.

7.3.3 Protective Clothing

7.3.3.1 Protective clothing shall be effectively maintained, stored, laundered and worn so as to protect product from risk of contamination.

7.3.3.2 Where applicable, clothing, including footwear, shall be effectively maintained, cleaned and sanitized, and worn so as to protect product from risk of contamination.

7.3.3.3 If rubber or disposable gloves are used, the operation shall have a glove use policy and personnel shall adhere to the hand washing practices outlined above.

7.3.4 Jewelry and Personal Effects

7.3.4.1 Jewelry and other loose objects that pose a threat to the safety of the product shall not be worn or taken onto any growing, product handling or storage operations.

7.3.5 Visitors

7.3.5.1 All visitors (including management and maintenance employees) shall be required to remove jewelry and other loose objects and wear suitable protective clothing around product growing, harvesting, or storage areas.

7.3.5.2 Visitors exhibiting visible signs of illness shall be prevented from entering any growing or product handling or field harvesting operation.

7.3.5.3 Visitors must follow all personnel practices as designated by the site for employees within various areas of fields, sheds, packing facilities or storage locations.

7.3.5.4 Unsupervised children shall not be permitted to enter any harvesting, packing, or food storage areas.

7.3.6 Amenities

7.3.6.1 Provision shall be made to store employee personal belongings away from crops, harvesting, field and packing operations, and harvesting equipment.

7.3.6.2 Areas for meal breaks shall be designated and located away from a food contact/handling zones and harvesting equipment.

7.3.6.3 Drinking water shall be available to all field employees.

7.4 Harvesting, Field Packaging and Product Handling Practices

7.4.1 Pre-Harvest Assessment

7.4.1.1 A pre-harvest risk assessment procedure shall be documented and implemented and describes when the assessment is performed and identifies those conditions that may be reasonably likely to result in physical, chemical, or biological contamination.

7.4.1.2 Knives and cutting instruments used in harvesting operations shall be controlled, and kept clean and well maintained.

7.4.1.3 A written procedure shall be documented and implemented that describes the use and storage of harvesting containers.

7.4.2 Foreign Matter and Glass Procedures

7.4.2.1 A written procedure shall be documented and implemented that describes the prevention of foreign matter and glass contamination.

7.4.2.2 Containers, equipment and other utensils made of glass, porcelain, ceramics, brittle plastic or other like material shall not be permitted where exposed product is handled unless an effective foreign material and glass protocol is documented and implemented.

7.4.2.3 Regular inspections shall be conducted to ensure food handling/contact zones areas are free of glass and brittle plastic and employees are to be made aware of their responsibility to adhere to the organization's foreign matter and glass protocol.

7.4.2.4 Glass covered instrument dial covers, where required, shall be checked at the end of each shift to ensure their covers have not been damaged.

7.4.3 Field Packing Personal Practices

7.4.3.1 Appropriate personnel practices shall be employed by field packing employees which include:

- i. Fingernail polish, artificial nails, and long nails, shall not be permitted where product is handled with bare hands;
- ii. False eyelashes and eyelash extensions shall not be permitted;
- iii. Aprons and gloves shall be kept clean;
- iv. Aprons and gloves shall not be left on product, work surfaces, equipment or packaging material but hung on apron and glove racks provided;
- v. All product and packaging material shall be kept off the ground and the floor of the transport vehicle;
- vi. Waste shall be contained in the bins identified for this purpose. Waste shall not come in contact with produce and be removed on a regular basis and not left to accumulate.

7.4.3.2 A written policy regarding the handling and field packaging of produce, specific to the commodity, shall be implemented and maintained. The policy shall assure that:

- i. Damaged or decayed produce is not harvested or culled;
- ii. Product that contacts the ground shall not be harvested (unless that product typically contacts the ground);
- iii. Measures to inspect for physical hazards and procedures to remove physical hazards are in place; and
- iv. iii. Cloths, towels, or other cleaning materials that pose a risk of cross-contamination shall not be used to wipe produce.

7.4.3.3 Packaging materials shall be appropriate for their intended use and stored in a manner that prevents contamination. A written policy shall be in place that identifies how packing materials are permitted in direct contact with soil.

7.4.3.4 Materials that come in contact with the produce shall be clean and in good repair.

7.5 Water Management

7.5.1 Water Systems

7.5.1.1 A water description plan shall be prepared that describes the water sources and the production blocks they serve, and shall include one or more of the following: maps, photographs, drawings, or other means to communicate the location of the water sources, permanent fixtures and the flow of the water system. The plan shall be kept current and revised when changes occur.

7.5.1.2 Agricultural water shall be sourced from a location and in a manner that is compliant with prevailing regulations.

7.5.1.3 Water system intended to convey untreated human or animal waste shall be separated from conveyances utilized to deliver agricultural water.

7.5.2 Irrigation Water

7.5.2.1 Agricultural water shall be drawn from a known clean source or treated to make it suitable for use. The producer shall conduct an analysis of the hazards to the irrigation water supply from source through to application, establish acceptance criteria for the monitoring of water and validate and verify the integrity of the water used to ensure it is fit for the purpose.

7.5.3 Treatment of Irrigation Water

7.5.3.1 In circumstances where irrigation water is treated to render it acceptable, the water, after treatment shall conform to the microbiological standards as outlined in element 7.5.5.

7.5.4 Water System Risk Assessment

7.5.4.1 An initial risk assessment shall be performed and documented that takes into consideration the historical testing results of the water source, water system control and protection, the characteristics of the crop, the stage of the crop, and the method of application.

7.5.5 Water Management Plan

7.5.5.1 Water used for washing and treating product, cleaning food contact surfaces, mixing sanitizer solutions and washing hands shall comply with potable water microbiological and chemical standards in the country of production and destination. Separate criteria will be established for irrigation water, frost control, humidifying, pesticide application, etc. as applicable, based on the hazard analysis, best practices within country of production and any applicable legislation.

The water management plan shall include the following:

- i. Preventive controls;
- ii. Monitoring and verification procedures;
- iii. Corrective actions; and
- iv. Documentation.

Water testing shall be part of the water management plan, as directed by the water risk assessment and current industry standards or regulations for the commodity being grown.

7.5.5.2 Water quality shall be monitored to verify it complies with the established water microbiological and chemical standard or criteria established. A verification schedule shall be prepared indicating the location and frequency of monitoring, which shall be decided by the risk assessment, best practices within country of production, or applicable legislation. Water analysis shall be undertaken by an approved laboratory accredited to ISO 17025 or equivalent.

7.5.5.3 Water used for hydroponics culture shall be frequently changed and procedures shall be implemented that minimizes microbial or chemical contamination. Delivery systems shall be designed so they can be maintained and cleaned.

7.5.6 Corrective Actions

7.5.6.1 A corrective action plan shall be developed when monitoring shows that water does not meet established criteria or standards. The plan can include additional treatment for water, additional sources for water, product identification and disposition or other alternative actions to adequately control the identified hazards.

7.5.7 Ice

7.5.7.1 The producer shall verify that any ice used is made from water that meets the microbiological and quality standards as specified in element 7.5.5.

7.5.8 Harvest Assessment Water/Ice

7.5.8.1 Written procedures shall be developed for all uses of water during harvesting of food or feed products. The procedures shall address:

- i. The microbial quality of water or ice that directly contacts the harvested crop, is used on food contact surfaces or used to deliver agricultural chemicals;
- ii. The treatment of re-circulated water, if used;
- iii. The condition and maintenance of water-delivery system; and
- iv. The control of wash water temperature.

7.5.8.2 A written procedure that includes water-change schedules shall be developed for all uses of water during harvesting.

7.6 Storage and Transport

7.6.1 Storage of Hazardous Chemicals, Toxic Substances, and Petroleum Products

7.6.1.1 Hazardous chemicals, toxic substances, and petroleum products shall be stored so as not to present a hazard to employees, product, product handling equipment or areas in which product is handled, stored or transported.

7.6.1.2 Product contact chemicals such as pesticides and herbicides; rodenticides, fumigants and insecticides; sanitizers and detergents shall be stored separately and in their original containers.

7.6.1.3 Chemical storage sheds shall:

- i. Be compliant with national and local legislation and designed such that there is no cross-contamination between chemicals;
- ii. Be ventilated to the exterior;
- iii. Be provided with appropriate signage indicating the area is a hazardous storage area;
- iv. Be secure and lockable to restrict access only to those personnel with formal training in the handling and use of chemicals;
- v. Have instructions on the safe handling of hazardous chemicals readily accessible to employees;
- vi. Be equipped with a detailed and up-to-date inventory of all chemicals contained in the storage facility;
- vii. Have suitable first aid equipment and protective clothing available in the storage area;
- viii. Have emergency shower and/or wash facilities available in the event of an accidental spill;
- ix. Be designed such that spillage and drainage from the area is contained in the event of a hazardous spill; and
- x. Be equipped with spillage kits and cleaning equipment.

7.6.1.4 Petroleum fuels, oils, grease and other lubricants shall be stored separate from other storage areas.

7.6.1.5 The storage of hazardous chemicals, toxic substances and petroleum products in areas (separate lockable or otherwise contained) shall not occur inside food handling areas, product and packaging storage rooms.

7.6.2 Transport

7.6.2.1 The loading, transport and unloading of crops shall ensure that product integrity is maintained. Documented and implemented practices include:

- i. Verification of cleanliness and functionality of shipping units;
- ii. Appropriate storage conditions during transportation to final destination;
- iii. Prevention of cross contamination with other hazards and spoilage; and
- iv. Appropriate stock rotation practices.

7.6.2.2 Employees involved in loading, transport and unloading events shall be appropriately trained.

7.7 Soil Management

7.7.1 Fertilizer Management

7.7.1.1 Inorganic (chemical) and organic (manure) soil amendments shall be isolated and stored separately so as not to pose a food safety risk.

7.7.1.2 Provision shall be made for the storage of concentrated and diluted liquid soil amendments in tanks designed to retain at least 110% of total volume or as per local regulations.

7.7.1.3 Soil amendments shall be stored separate from crop, field or irrigation water sources such that contamination from run off is avoided either by locating of the soil amendment a suitable distance from the crop or by the utilization of other physical barriers.

7.7.1.4 A current inventory of all organic and inorganic soil amendment storage and use shall be maintained.

7.7.2 Soil Amendments

7.7.2.1 A soil amendment policy shall be documented, implemented and designed to prevent contamination of product. The policy shall outline the methods used to treat manure and other untreated organic fertilizers ensuring:

- i. The treatment methods applied inactivate pathogens in organic soil amendments;
- ii. No raw untreated manure is used;
- iii. A hazard analysis of organic soil amendments treatment methods is conducted before use;
- iv. Treatments and application methods are validated and treatment of organic soil amendments are verified as being in compliance with the approved or recommended methods applied;
- v. Records of the validation and approvals and verification of organic soil amendment treatments are maintained.

7.7.2.2 Soil amendment protocols shall outline the methods to ensure organic soil amendment applications are timed to pose minimum risk to product safety and human health including:

- i. All applications of soil amendments are in accordance with national or local guidelines best practices and codes of Good Agricultural Practice;
- ii. Equipment used for soil amendment application is maintained in good condition and calibrated to ensure accurate application;
- iii. Records of all equipment maintenance and calibration are maintained;
- iv. Signage complies with national and local codes of practice; and
- v. Sufficient data is recorded to provide a detailed record of soil amendment applications.

7.7.3 Purchasing Chemicals

7.7.3.1 Only chemicals approved for use in the country of production and the country of destination shall be purchased. Purchased chemicals shall be labeled with the active ingredient(s), applicable dosage rates, and application instructions. Where no regulations or partial regulations govern the use of chemicals, the supplier shall have a documented risk assessment on the justification for use of non-regulated chemicals.

7.7.3.2 Chemicals that are specifically banned for use in the country of production or the country of destination shall not be purchased or stored.

7.7.3.3 A current inventory of all chemicals purchased and used shall be maintained.

7.7.4 Agricultural Chemicals

7.7.4.1 A spray or crop protection program indicating the applications used for a target pest or disease and the threshold levels that initiate application shall be prepared and implemented.

7.7.4.2 The person making decisions on chemical application shall:

- i. Demonstrate knowledge of, and access to, information regarding chemical applications and the maximum residue limits allowable in destination markets;
- ii. Use only chemicals approved for cultivation of the specified products, and approved for use in the intended market;
- iii. Demonstrate competence and knowledge of chemical application and crop withholding periods;

7.7.4.3 Records of all chemical applications shall be maintained and include:

- i. A current chemical register of all chemical use;
- ii. The chemical used;
- iii. The crop sprayed;
- iv. The concentration;
- v. The date, method and frequency of application; and
- vi. Evidence that the timing between chemical application and harvest complies with the approved harvest interval for the chemical application.

7.7.4.4 Biological controls that are approved for the cultivation of the specified products shall be used, and in accordance with instructions or as per expert recommendations.

7.7.4.5 The site shall dispose of chemical waste and empty containers in accordance with regulatory requirements and ensure that:

- i. Empty chemical containers are not re-used;
- ii. Empty containers are labeled or rendered unusable, isolated and securely stored while awaiting collection;
- iii. Unused and obsolete chemicals are stored under secure conditions while waiting authorized disposal by an approved vendor.

7.8 Waste Disposal

7.8.1 Dry, Liquid and Unsanitary Waste Disposal

7.8.1.1 Waste shall be regularly removed from the farm, field, packing facility and the surrounds so as not to pose a food safety risk to finished product or growing, harvesting and packing operations.

7.8.1.2 A written procedure shall be documented and implemented that describes the effective and efficient disposal of all solid waste, including inedible material, unusable packaging, including trademarked material, and liquid and unsanitary waste.

7.8.1.3 Inedible waste designated for animal feed shall be stored and handled so as to not cause a risk to the animal or further processing for human consumption.

Module 7H: Food Safety Standard – Good Agricultural Practices for Farming of Plant Products (GFSI BI)

This module incorporates the Harmonized Produce Standards whose development was facilitated by United Fresh and includes those elements developed by the Harmonized Produce technical committee for produce food safety, for those growers who wish to provide customers product produced under these Standards.

Suppliers implementing this module must also meet the requirements of the SQF System Elements for Primary Production.

Applicable food sector categories (FSCs) are:

FSC3: Growing and production of fresh produce

7H.1 Field Production

7H.1.1 Field History and Assessment

7H.1.1.1 The food safety plan shall, initially and at least annually thereafter, evaluate and document the risks associated with land use history and adjacent land use including equipment and structures.

7H.1.1.2 When land use history or adjacent land use indicates a possibility of physical, chemical or biological contamination, preventive controls shall be performed and documented to mitigate food safety risk.

7H.1.1.3 The assessment is re-performed, and documented, at least annually for environmental conditions or risk awareness that has changed since the last assessment. The assessment shall include indoor growing facilities and structures such as green houses and hydroponics.

7H.1.1.4 For indoor growing and field storage facilities, building, buildings shall be designed, constructed and maintained in a manner that prevents contamination of produce.

7H.1.1.5 Facility and equipment structures and surfaces (e.g. floors, walls, ceilings, doors, frames, hatches, etc) shall be constructed in a manner that facilitates cleaning and sanitation and does not serve as harborage for contaminants or pests.

7H.1.1.6 Sewage or septic systems are maintained so as not to be a source of contamination. After a significant event (e.g. flooding or earthquake) that could negatively impact a sewage or septic system, operation takes appropriate steps to ensure that sewage and septic systems continue to operate in a manner that does not contaminate produce, food contact surfaces, areas used for produce handling, water sources, or water distribution systems.

7H.1.2 Cold Storage and Air

7H.1.2.1 Chill and cold storage loading dock areas shall be appropriately sealed, drained and graded. Fixtures, ducts, pipes and overhead structures shall be installed and maintained so that drips and condensation do not contaminate produce, raw materials or food contact surfaces. Water from refrigeration drip pans shall be drained and disposed of away from product and product contact surfaces.

7H.1.2.2 Drip pans and drains shall be designed to assure condensate does not become a source of contamination.

7H.1.2.3 Air intakes shall not be located near potential sources of contamination.

7H.2 Worker Health/Hygiene and Toilet/Handwashing Facilities

7H.2.1 Toilet/Handwashing Facilities

7H.2.1.1 Operation shall have a policy for toilet, hygiene, and health. Each operation shall establish written policies for their specific operations, which shall be compliance with prevailing regulations for Worker Health and Hygiene Practices.

7H.2.1.2 Employees and visitors shall be made aware of and follow all personal hygiene practices as designated by the operation.

7H.2.1.3 Operation's hygiene policies shall apply to all employees, contractors, visitors, buyers, product inspectors, auditors, and other personnel in the field.

7H.2.1.4 The operation shall designate competent supervisory personnel to ensure compliance by all workers, visitors, and field personnel with the requirements in this section.

7H.2.1.5 Toilet facilities shall be designed, constructed, and located in a manner that minimizes the potential risk for product contamination and are directly accessible for servicing.

7H.2.1.6 Toilet and handwashing facilities are situated during operation and servicing, and maintained so as not to pose a hazard to the produce or other opportunity for contamination.

7H.2.1.7 Toilet facilities shall be of adequate number, easily accessible to employees and visitors and in compliance with applicable regulation. The operation will have verification that the number of toilet facilities and their location relative to employees meets the more stringent of federal, state or local regulations.

7H.2.1.8 Toilet and wash stations shall be maintained in a clean and sanitary condition. Toilet paper shall be available in toilet facility. Wash stations shall be located with the field sanitation units and include:

- i. Hand wash facilities with water that meets the microbial standard for drinking water,

- ii. Hand soap, disposable towels or other hand drying device,
- iii. Towel disposal container, and
- iv. A tank that captures used hand wash water for disposal.

These stations shall be provided inside or adjacent to toilet facilities.

7H.2.1.9 Personnel shall wash their hands at any time when their hands may be a source of contamination. Personnel shall wash their hands:

- i. Prior to start of work,
- ii. After each visit to a toilet,
- iii. After using a handkerchief/tissue,
- iv. After handling contaminated material,
- v. After smoking, eating, or drinking,
- vi. After breaks and prior to returning to work,
- vii. After touching animals or waste; and
- viii. Any other time when their hands may have become a source of contamination.

7H.2.1.10 Antiseptic hand rubs may not be used as a substitute for soap (or other surfactant) and water.

7H.2.1.11 Signage requiring handwashing is posted. Signage in applicable languages and/or pictures shall be provided adjacent to hand wash facilities requiring people to wash their hands after each toilet visit.

7H.2.2 Protective Clothing

7H.2.2.1 Clothing, including footwear, shall be effectively maintained and worn so as to protect product from risk of contamination. Operation shall have a policy that employee clothing shall be clean at the start of the day and appropriate for the operation.

7H.2.2.2 If gloves are used, the operation shall have a glove use policy. If rubber, disposable, cloth or other gloves are used in contact with product, the operation shall have a glove use policy that specifies how and when gloves are to be used, cleaned, replaced and stored. Hands must be washed before putting on gloves. Policy shall be in compliance with current industry practices or regulatory requirements for that commodity.

7H.2.2.3 Protective clothing, when required, shall be maintained, stored, laundered and worn so as to protect product from risk of contamination. If protective clothing is used in proximity to product, the operation shall have a policy or procedures for how and when protective clothing are to be used, cleaned, replaced and stored. Policy shall be in compliance with current industry practices or regulatory requirements for that commodity.

7H.2.2.4 When appropriate, racks and/or storage containers or designated storage areas for protective clothing and tools used by employees shall be provided. When employees wear protective clothing, such as aprons and gloves, the Operation shall have a policy for how the clothing and tool shall be stored when not in use so as to avoid potential contamination.

7H.3.3 Jewelry and Personnel Effects

7H.2.3.1 The wearing of jewelry, body piercing and other loose objects (e.g. false nails) shall be in compliance to company policy and applicable regulation. Operation shall have a policy that personal effects such as jewelry, watches or other items shall not be worn or brought into fresh fruit and vegetable production areas if they pose a threat to the safety and suitability of the food. Policy shall be in compliance with current industry practices or regulatory requirements for that commodity.

7H.2.3.2 The use of hair coverings shall be in compliance to company policy and applicable regulation.

7H.2.3.3 The Operation shall have a policy that addresses use of hair coverings (e.g., hair nets, beard nets, caps), which is in compliance with prevailing regulation.

7H.2.3.4 Employee's personal belongings shall be stored in designated areas. Operation shall have a policy for when and how employee's personal belongings shall be stored so as not to be a source of product contamination.

7H.2.3.5 Smoking, chewing, eating, drinking (other than water), urinating, defecating or spitting is not permitted in any growing areas.

7H.2.3.6 Operation shall have policy prohibiting smoking, eating, chewing gum or tobacco, drinking other than water except in designated areas. Such areas shall be designated so as not to provide a source of contamination.

7H.2.3.7 Operation shall have policy prohibiting urinating or defecating in any growing area.

7H.2.4 Amenities

7H.2.4.1 Operation shall have a written policy that break areas are located so as not to be a source of product contamination.

7H.2.4.2 Break areas shall be designated and located away from food contact/handling zones and production equipment.

7H.2.4.3 Drinking water shall be available to all field employees. Drinking water, which meets drinking water standards, shall be easily accessible to field personnel and in compliance with applicable regulation.

7H.2.4.4 Bottled water or potable drinking water stations with single-use cups and a trash receptacle shall be available to all field employees.

7H.2.5 Personnel Practices

7H.2.5.1 Workers and field personnel who show signs of illness shall be restricted from direct contact with product of food contact surfaces. Operation shall have a written policy that restricts personnel who show signs of illness (e.g., vomiting, jaundice, and diarrhea) from contact with product or food contact surfaces. Policy shall require that any person so affected immediately report illness or symptoms of illness to the management.

7H.2.5.2 Personnel with exposed cuts, sores or lesions shall not be engaged in handling product.

7H.2.5.3 Minor cuts or abrasions on exposed parts of the body are acceptable if covered with a non-permeable covering, bandage or glove. Bandages on hands shall be covered with gloves in compliance with operation's glove policy.

7H.2.5.4 Operation shall have a blood and bodily fluids policy. There shall be a written policy specifying the procedures for the handling/disposition of food or product contact surfaces that have been in contact with blood or other bodily fluids.

7H.2.6 First Aid

7H.2.6.1 First aid kits shall be accessible to all personnel. The kits shall be readily available in the vicinity of field work and maintained in accordance with prevailing regulation. The kit materials shall be kept in a sanitary and usable condition.

7H.3 Field Handling and Equipment

7H.3.1 Agricultural Chemicals/Plant Protection Products

7H.3.1.1 Use of agricultural chemicals shall comply with label directions and prevailing regulation. Agricultural chemicals, including post-harvest chemicals such as biocides, waxes and plant protection products, must be registered for such use as required by prevailing regulation, and used in accordance with label directions including:

- i. Application rates,
- ii. Worker protection standards,
- iii. Personal protection equipment,
- iv. Container disposal,
- v. Storage, and
- vi. All requirements specified for the chemical or compound.

Records of agricultural use are maintained.

7H.3.1.2 If product is intended for export, agricultural chemical use, including post-harvest chemicals, shall consider requirements in the intended country of destination. The operation shall have procedures, such as pre-harvest interval and application rate, sufficient to meet the MRL entry requirements of the country (ies) in which the product is intended to be traded, if known during production.

7H.3.1.3 Agricultural chemicals shall be applied by trained, licensed or certified application personnel, as required by prevailing regulation.

7H.3.1.4 Operation maintains records demonstrating that all personnel responsible for chemical applications are trained and/or licensed personnel, in compliance with prevailing regulation.

7H.3.1.5 Water used with agricultural chemicals shall not be a source of product or field contamination. Water used to dilute or deliver agricultural chemicals shall be from a source in compliance with the water system risk assessment and water management plan, consistent with current industry practices or regulatory requirements for that commodity.

7H.3.1.6 Agricultural chemical disposal shall not be a source of product or field contamination. Operation shall have procedures for disposal of waste agricultural chemicals and for cleaning of application equipment that protects against contamination of product and growing areas.

7H.3.2 Animal Control

7H.3.2.1 The operation has a written risk assessment on animal activity in and around the production area. There shall be a written assessment of the growing fields and adjacent land, prior to each growing season, focusing on domestic and wild animal activity including grazing and feeding operations, noting crop characteristics, type and approximate number of animals, proximity to the growing field, water sources, and other relevant factors.

7H.3.2.2 The operation routinely monitors for animal activity in and around the growing area during the growing season.

7H.3.2.3 There shall be scheduled monitoring of growing fields and adjacent land for evidence of animal activity. A frequency of monitoring and assessment shall be established based on production factors, such as the crop, geography, and other conditions.

7H.3.2.4 Based on the risk assessment, there shall be measures to prevent or minimize the potential for contamination from animals, including domesticated animals used in farming operation. The operation shall have risk-appropriate actions to prevent or minimize the potential for contamination of produce with pathogens from animal feces, including from domesticated animals used in farming operations.

7H.3.2.5 There shall be a written record of any mitigation or corrective actions. Preventive measures and corrective actions shall comply with all local, state and federal regulations concerning animal control and natural resource conservation.

7H.3.3 Soil Amendments

7H.3.3.1 The food safety plan shall address soil amendment risk, preparation use, and storage.

7H.3.3.2 If animal-based soil amendments or bio solids are used, records of composition, dates of treatment, methods utilized and application dates must be documented. Evidence of processing adequate to eliminate pathogens of human concern shall be documented, such as

- i. Letter of guarantee,
- ii. Certificate of analysis (COA) or any test results, or
- iii. Verification data (e.g., time and temperature) demonstrating compliance with process, or
- iv. Microbial standards.

Such soil amendments must be produced and applied in accordance with applicable federal, state, or local regulations.

7H.3.3.3 If a soil amendment containing raw or incompletely treated manure is used, it shall be used in a manner so as not to serve as a source of contamination of produce. If such a product is used, there shall be documentation of the composition, and time and method of application. Such use will be consistent with current industry practices or regulatory restrictions for that commodity. Human waste shall not be used.

7H.3.4 Vehicles, Equipment, Tools and Utensils

7H.3.4.1 Equipment, vehicles, tools utensils and other items or materials used in farming operations that may contact produce are identified. Operation maintains a list of equipment, vehicles, tools, utensils and other items or materials that may pose a risk of produce contamination during normal use.

7H.3.4.2 Equipment, vehicles, tools and utensils used in farming operations which come into contact with product are in good repair, and are not a source of contamination of produce. The operation shall develop, implement, and schedule repair, cleaning, sanitizing, storage and handling procedures of all food contact surfaces to reduce and control the potential for contamination. Records must include the date and method of cleaning and sanitizing equipment. As necessary for food safety, vehicles and equipment shall be properly calibrated, operated, maintained, and used as intended.

7H.3.4.3 Equipment traffic flow is prevented from traveling through an untreated manure area into the harvesting field. These procedures shall be documented.

7H.3.4.4 Product contact tools, utensils and equipment shall be made of materials that can be cleaned and sanitized. Procedures include equipment and vehicles that are in the field infrequently.

7H.3.4.5 Vehicles, equipment, tools and utensils shall be controlled so as not to be

- i. A source of chemical hazards, and/or
- ii. A source of physical hazards.

Operation shall have:

- i. A written procedure to address the spills and leaks (fuel, oil, hydraulic fluids) which might occur during equipment operation in the field, and/or
- ii. A glass and brittle plastic policy that addresses glass on production equipment and in growing area.

7H.3.4.6 Inspections performed in compliance with the policy shall be documented.

7H.3.5 Cleaning and Sanitation

7H.3.5.1 Cleaning and sanitizing procedures do not pose a risk of product contamination.

7H.3.5.2 Equipment cleaning and sanitizing operations shall be conducted away from the product and other equipment to reduce the potential for contamination.

7H.3.5.3 Water used for cleaning and sanitizing shall meet the microbial standards for drinking water

7H.3.5.4 Water tanks are cleaned at a sufficient frequency so as not to be a source of contamination. There shall be a written procedure for cleaning water tanks, such as those used for dust control, the water from which may contact produce in the field.

7H.4 Water Used in Growing Activities

7H.4.1 Water System Description

7H.4.1.1 A water system description shall be available for review.

7H.4.1.2 Water sources and the production blocks they may serve shall be documented and current. The description shall include one or more of the following:

- i. Maps,
- ii. Photographs,
- iii. Drawings (hand drawings are acceptable), or other means to communicate the location of water sources,
- iv. Permanent fixtures and the flow of the water system (including holding systems, reservoirs or any water captured for re-use). Permanent fixtures include wells, gates, reservoirs, valves returns and other above ground features that make up a complete irrigation system shall be documented in such a manner as to enable location in the field or in hydroponic, aeroponic or aquaponics operation.

7H.4.1.3 The water source shall be in compliance with prevailing regulations. Water shall be sourced from a location and in a manner that is compliant with prevailing regulations.

7H.4.1.4 Water systems shall not be cross-connected with human or animal waste systems.

7H.4.1.5 Water systems intended to convey untreated human or animal waste shall be separated from conveyances utilized to deliver water.

7H.4.2 Water System Risk Assessment

7H.4.2.1 An initial risk assessment shall be performed and documented that takes into consideration:

- i. The historical testing results of the water source,
- ii. The characteristics of the crop,
- iii. The stage of the crop, and
- iv. The method of application.

7H.4.2.2 A review or new assessment shall be conducted seasonally and any time there is a change made to the system or a saturation occurs that could introduce an opportunity to contaminate the system. The risk assessment shall address potential physical, chemical, and biological hazards and hazard control procedures for the water distribution system.

7H.4.3 Water Management Plan

7H.4.3.1 There shall be a water management plan to mitigate risks associated with the water system on an ongoing basis. The water management plan shall include the following:

- i. Preventive controls,
- ii. Monitoring and verification procedures,
- iii. Corrective actions, and
- iv. Documentation.

The plan shall be reviewed following any changes made to the water system risk assessment and adjusted accordingly to incorporate such changes.

7H.4.3.2 Training and/or retraining of personnel having oversight or performance duties shall be documented.

7H.4.3.3 Water testing shall be part of the water management plan, as directed by the water risk assessment and current industry standards or prevailing regulations for the commodities being grown.

7H.4.3.4 As required, there shall be a written procedure for water testing during the production and harvest season, which includes frequency of sampling, who is taking the samples, where samples is taken, how the sample is collected, type of test and acceptance criteria.

7H.4.3.5 If all water is sourced from a municipal source, the municipal testing shall suffice. The frequency of testing and point of water sampling shall be determined based on the risk assessment and current industry standards or prevailing regulations for commodities being produced.

7H.4.3.6 The testing program shall be implemented consistent with the water management plan. Testing shall be performed and documented according to procedures described in the water management plan.

7H.4.3.7 If water is treated to meet microbiological criteria, the treatment is approved and effective for its intended use, and is appropriately monitored. Treatment is approved for its intended use (e.g., EPA-registered antimicrobial pesticide) and is delivered in a manner to ensure that the treated water is consistently safe and of adequate sanitary quality for its intended use and/or consistently meets the relevant microbial quality criteria. Treatment is monitored at a frequency adequate to ensure that the treated water is consistently safe and of adequate sanitary quality for its intended use and/or consistently meets the relevant microbial quality criteria.

7H.4.3.8 If post-harvest handling is used to achieve microbial criteria, Operation has documentation supporting its use. If die-off or removal rates or other methods (e.g., commercial washing) are used to achieve microbial criteria of water used during growing, Operation has scientific data or information used to support its effectiveness. Documentation includes the specific time interval or log reduction applied, how the time interval or log reduction was determined, and the dates of corresponding activities such as the dates of last irrigation and harvest, the dates of harvest and end of storage, and/or the dates of activities such as commercial washing.

7H.4.3.9 If Operation uses an alternative approach to regulatory microbiological testing, Operation has scientific data or information to support the alternative. If Operation uses an alternative testing method, frequency or criteria to regulatory requirements, Operation has documentation supporting the alternative.

7H.5 Harvesting

7H.5.1 Preharvest Assessment

7H.5.1.1 A preharvest risk assessment shall be performed. The Operation shall have a preharvest assessment procedure, which describes when the assessment is performed and that it includes an evaluation of conditions that may be reasonably likely to result in physical, chemical, or biological contamination of the produce, and demonstrates that the operation is in compliance with the food safety plan.

7H.5.1.2 Results of the evaluation shall be documented.

7H.5.2 Water/Ice Used in the Harvesting and Postharvest Operations

7H.5.2.1 The operation has procedures for water used in contact with product or food contact surfaces. Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs), including water-change schedules, shall be developed for all uses of water.

7H.5.2.2 Microbial and/or physical/chemical (e.g., test strips) testing shall be performed, as appropriate to the specific operation, to demonstrate that acceptance criteria have been met.

7H.5.2.3 Water use SOPs address the microbial quality of water or ice that directly contacts the harvested crop or is used on food-contact surfaces. If water or ice directly contacts the harvested crop or is used on food-contact surfaces, such as in the field, as the final wash step prior to consumer packaging, or as a cooling aid in a consumer package, operation's water use SOP requires that water or ice when applied meets the microbial standards meets the microbial standards for drinking water, as defined by prevailing regulation.

7H.5.2.4 Water may be treated (e.g., with chlorine) to achieve the microbial standards or to prevent cross-contamination. Ice and water shall be sourced/manufactured, transported, and stored under sanitary conditions.

7H.5.2.5 Special considerations or variances may be appropriate for some crops, e.g. cranberries and watercress, where deliberate flooding of the field is part of production and harvest practices.

7H.5.2.6 Water use SOPs shall:

- i. Address treatment of re-circulated water, if used.
- ii. Require re-circulated water to be treated using an approved antimicrobial to prevent it from becoming a source of contamination, according to prevailing regulation or industry specific standards for the commodity.
- iii. Address condition and maintenance of water-delivery system, which shall be maintained so as not to serve as a source of contamination of produce, water suppliers or equipment with pathogens, or to create an unsanitary condition.
- iv. Control of wash water temperature, if applicable.

7H.5.2.7 For produce demonstrated as being susceptible to microbial infiltration from wash water, wash water temperature differentials during immersion shall be considered.

7H.5.3 Container, Bins and Packaging Materials

7H.5.3.1 Operation has written policy regarding:

- i. Storage of harvesting containers
- ii. Inspection of food contact containers prior to use
- iii. Acceptable harvesting containers
- iv. Prohibiting use of harvest containers for non-harvest purpose

7H.5.3.2 Harvesting containers shall be stored in a manner so as not to serve as a source of contamination to the extent feasible and appropriate.

7H.5.3.3 Food-contact totes, bins, packing materials, other harvest containers, and pallets shall be visually inspected, clean, intact and free of any foreign materials prior to use. Containers shall be sufficiently maintained so as not to become a source of contamination.

7H.5.3.4 Food-contact totes, bins and other harvest containers designated for harvesting shall not be used for other purposes unless clearly marked or labeled for that purpose.

7H.5.3.5 The types and construction of harvest containers and packing materials shall be appropriate to the commodity being harvested and suited for their intended purpose.

7H.5.4 Field Packaging and Handling

7H.5.4.1 Operation shall have a written policy that visibly contaminated, damaged or decayed produce is not harvested, or is culled.

7H.5.4.2 Employees are trained that only sound produce appropriate for the intended use is harvested, and that produce that has been visibly contaminated or otherwise damaged to an extent that it poses a microbial food safety hazard is not harvested or is culled.

7H.5.4.3 Product that contacts the ground shall not be harvested unless the product normally grows in contact with the ground. Operation has considered and developed written policies regarding produce that comes in contact with the soil (e.g., drops) and to avoid, to the degree practicable, contact of cut surfaces of harvest produce with soil. Policy shall be consistent with industry standards or prevailing regulations.

7H.5.4.4 Harvest procedures shall include measures to inspect for and remove physical hazards. Operation shall have procedure to detect glass/plastic breakage and remove possible physical contamination such as glass, metal, rocks, or other hazardous items, during harvesting operations.

7H.5.4.5 Cloths, towels, or other cleaning materials that pose a risk of cross-contamination shall not be used to wipe product. Operation shall not use cloths or other cleaning materials to clean produce, unless there is a procedure to prevent cross-contamination.

7H.5.4.6 Packaging materials shall be appropriate for their intended use. The product contact packaging shall be:

- i. Appropriate to the commodity being harvested and suited for its intended purpose,
- ii. Stored in a manner that prevents contamination.

Packaging storage shall be designed to maintain packaging dry, clean and free from dirt or residues so it remains fit for the purpose.

7H.5.4.7 Particular care shall be taken to prevent packaging from becoming a harborage for rodents and other vermin. Packaging shall be stored separately from hazardous chemicals, toxic substances and other sources of contamination.

7H.5.4.8 Operation has written policy regarding whether packing materials are permitted in direct contact with the soil. If produce is packed in field, operation has considered and developed written policies regarding placement of

packing materials directly on the soil, or whether a physical buffer (e.g., buffer bin or slip sheet) is required. Policy shall be consistent with industry standards.

7H.5.5 Postharvest Handling and Storage

7H.5.5.1 Harvested produce is handled in a manner such that it is not likely to become contaminated. Operation has a policy, in compliance with current industry practices or regulatory requirements for that commodity, regarding handling, walking, stepping, or lying on harvested produce, food contact surfaces or packaging materials, or coming in contact with produce that has not been handled in compliance with these standards, or that may otherwise result in contamination.

7H.5.5.2 Materials that come in contact with the produce shall be clean and in good repair. Operation has a policy that pallets, produce bins, totes and materials that come in contact with the produce or the containers during handling or storage shall be cleaned, if practicable, sanitized sufficient so as not to be a source of contamination.

7H.5.5.3 Harvested produce shall be stored separately from chemicals which may pose a food safety hazard. Chemicals, including cleaning and maintenance compounds shall be stored in an area separate from harvested produce.

7H.6 Transportation (Field to Storage or Packinghouse)

7H.6.1 Equipment Sanitation and Maintenance

7H.6.1.1 The operation shall have a policy, written procedures, and a checklist to verify cleanliness and functionality of shipping units (e.g., trailer).

7H.6.1.2 Shipping units shall be clean, functional and free of objectionable odors before loading, in compliance with current industry practices or regulatory requirements for that commodity.

7H.6.1.3 Refrigeration units, if used, must be in working order.

7H.6.2 Loading/Unloading

7H.6.2.1 Loading/unloading procedures and equipment shall minimize damage to and prevent contamination of produce. Personnel responsible for the loading and unloading of produce shall take steps to minimize the potential of physical damage to produce, which can introduce and/or promote the growth of pathogens.

7H.6.2.2 Loading/unloading equipment shall be clean and well maintained and of suitable type to avoid contamination of produce.

7H.6.2.3 Trash shall not come in contact with produce. The operation shall have a procedure describing how trash shall be handled and transported out of the field in a manner that does not pose a food safety risk.

7H.7 Waste Management

7H.7.1 Waste Management

7H.7.1.1 Operation has implemented a waste management plan. Operation implements procedures for the control, storage and disposal of trash, litter, and waste in areas used for produce handling activities. Such procedures minimize the potential for trash, litter, or waste to attract or harbor pests and protect against contamination of produce, food contact surfaces, areas used for produce handling activities, water sources, and water distribution systems. Waste treatment and disposal systems operate so that they do not constitute a potential source of contamination in produce handling areas.

7H.7.1.2 Trash shall not come in contact with produce. The operation shall have a procedure describing how trash shall be handled and transported out of the field in a manner that does not pose a food safety risk.

Module 8: Food Safety Fundamentals – Good Agricultural Practices for Farming of Grains and Pulses (GFSI BII)

This module covers the Good Agricultural Practices requirements for the production, harvesting, preparation, transport and storage of broad-acre crops including pulses, cereal and other grains. Also includes growing and harvesting of animal feed crops.

Sites implementing this module must also meet the requirements of the SQF System Elements for Primary Production.

Applicable food sector categories (FSCs) are:

FSC 5: Extensive broad acre Agricultural operations

(e.g. All grain and cereal varieties for human consumption and animal feed including but not limited to wheat, oats, pulse crops, soy, legumes, maize, corn, cotton, pasture, silage and hay.)

All applicable elements of Module 8 shall be implemented. Where an element is not applicable a request for exemption must be appropriately justified and submitted to the certification body in writing before the audit.

8.1 Site Requirements

8.1.1 Property Location

8.1.1.1 The farm and facilities shall be such that adjacent and adjoining buildings, operations and land use do not interfere with the safe and hygienic operations on the property.

8.1.1.2 Production and growing sites shall have a risk assessment conducted to evaluate and document the risk to crops due to prior land use, adjacent land use, and other environmental factors including structures and equipment. Consideration shall be given to the following:

- i. History of land use;
- ii. Topography;
- iii. Adjacent land use; and
- iv. Other factors that may impact on the ability to supply safe product.

8.1.1.3 The analysis shall be re-evaluated in the event of any circumstance or change that may impact on the production of safe product.

8.1.1.4 Where risks are identified, control measures shall be implemented to reduce the identified hazards to an acceptable level.

8.2 Product Handling, Storage and Equipment

8.2.1 Field and Storage Buildings

8.2.1.1 All buildings used to store equipment, field chemicals or field product shall be designed and constructed so as to permit compliance to good hygiene practices and avoid product contamination.

8.2.1.2 Buildings designated to store field product shall be of durable construction. Internal surfaces shall be smooth and impervious with a light colored finish and shall be kept clean.

8.2.2 Storage of dry ingredient, packaging and utensils

8.2.2.1 Silos or bins used to store seed or food crops shall be constructed of approved materials and designed to remain dry, clean and free from any dirt residues, so they remain fit for the purpose, in an acceptable condition, enable safe fumigation practices and prevent the invasion of pests.

8.2.2.2 Storage rooms shall be designed and constructed to allow for the separate, hygienic storage of harvesting and packing utensils and packaging materials (e.g. bulk bags) away from farm machinery and hazardous chemicals and toxic substances.

8.2.3 Construction and Storage of Farm/Harvesting Machinery and Conveyors

8.2.3.1 Product contact surfaces on conveyors and harvesting equipment and utensils shall be designed and constructed to allow for the efficient handling of product. Surfaces in direct contact with product shall be constructed of materials that will not contribute a food or feed safety risk and are non-toxic, smooth, impervious and easily cleaned.

8.2.3.2 Provisions shall be made for the washing and storage of equipment, conveyors, totes, trays containers and utensils.

8.2.3.3 Provisions shall be made to store farm machinery separate from feed conveyors and harvesting equipment.

8.2.4 Vehicles, Equipment and Utensils

8.2.4.1 Equipment, vehicles, tools, utensils and other items or materials used in farming operations that may contact produce are identified and are in good repair, kept clean and sanitized, and stored in such a way as to avoid contamination.

8.2.4.2 Water tanks shall be cleaned at a sufficient frequency so as not be a source of contamination.

8.2.4.3 The methods and responsibilities for the inspection of food contact harvest containers and pallets shall be documented and implemented. The type and construction of harvest containers and packing materials shall be stated.

8.2.4.4 The use of harvest containers for non-harvest purposes will be clearly identified and not returned to use for harvest.

8.2.4.5 Vehicles used for the transport of seed, food and feed shall be fit for purpose and shall not be used to carry waste materials, manure, chemicals or other hazardous substances that could cause feed or food contamination without thorough cleaning and inspection.

8.2.4.6 Tractors, harvesters and machinery driven over ground crops shall be fitted with drip trays to prevent contamination of the crop by lubricants and oils.

8.2.5 Maintenance

8.2.5.1 The methods and responsibility for maintenance of equipment and buildings shall be planned, scheduled and carried out in a manner that prevents any risk of contamination of product or equipment.

8.2.6 Calibration of Equipment

8.2.6.1 The methods and responsibility for the calibration and re-calibration of chemical application, measuring, test and inspection equipment used for monitoring Good Agricultural Practices and other operational controls shall be documented and implemented.

8.2.6.2 Equipment shall be calibrated against national or international reference standards, methods and schedules. In cases where such standards are not available, the site shall indicate and provide evidence to support the calibration reference method applied.

8.2.6.3 Calibration records shall be maintained.

8.2.7 Pest Prevention

8.2.7.1 The methods and responsibilities for pest prevention on the site or facilities shall be documented and implemented. The property, storage facilities, machinery and equipment shall be kept free of waste or accumulated debris so as not to attract pests and vermin.

8.2.7.2 The pest prevention program shall:

- i. Describe the methods and responsibility for the development, implementation and maintenance of the pest prevention program;
- ii. Identify the target pests for each pesticide application;
- iii. Outline the methods used to prevent pest problems;
- iv. Outline the methods used to eliminate pests when found;
- v. Outline the frequency with which pest status is to be checked;
- vi. Include on a site map the identification, location, number and type of traps and bait stations set;
- vii. List the chemicals used (they are required to be approved by the relevant authority and their Safety Data Sheets (SDS) made available);
- viii. Outline the methods to make employees aware of the bait control program and the measures to take when they come into contact with a bait station and;
- ix. Outline the requirements for employee awareness and training in the use of pest and vermin control chemicals and baits.

8.2.7.3 Records of pest inspections and pest applications shall be maintained.

8.2.8 Animal Control

8.2.8.1 The operation shall have a written risk assessment on animal activity in and around the production of food or feed crops that has been implemented and monitored.

8.2.8.2 Measures shall be in place to exclude domestic and wild animals from crop fields and all storage areas.

8.2.9 Cleaning and Sanitation

8.2.9.1 The cleaning of product contact surfaces, field harvesting equipment and sanitary facilities shall be documented and implemented. Consideration shall be given to:

- i. What is to be cleaned;
- ii. How it is to be cleaned;
- iii. When it is to be cleaned;
- iv. Who is responsible for the cleaning, and
- v. Who is responsible for the evaluation of the cleaning practices.

8.2.9.2 A schedule shall be prepared indicating the frequency of verifying the effectiveness of the cleaning of product contact surfaces, harvesting equipment and sanitary facilities and indicating who is responsible for completing verification activities.

8.2.9.3 A record of cleaning and sanitation activities shall be maintained.

8.3 Personal Hygiene

8.3.1 Personnel Practices

8.3.1.1 Personnel engaged in the handling of product shall observe appropriate personal practices. Corrective actions shall be implemented for personnel who violate food safety practices.

8.3.1.2 Personnel suffering from, or are carriers of, an infectious disease which can be transmitted by food shall not engage in growing or product handling or field processing operation.

8.3.1.3 A medical screening procedure shall be in place for all employees, and will also be applicable to all visitors and contractors.

8.3.1.4 Personnel with exposed cuts, sores or lesions shall not be engaged in handling product or product contact materials. Minor cuts or abrasions on exposed parts of the body shall be covered with a suitable waterproof dressing.

8.3.1.5 A written policy shall be in place that specifies the procedures for handling product or product contact surfaces that have been in contact with blood or other bodily fluids.

8.3.1.6 Smoking, chewing, eating, drinking (except for water), spitting is not permitted in any growing areas including on field processing rigs and during harvesting and packing operations.

8.3.2 Sanitary Facilities and Hand Washing

8.3.2.1 Toilet facilities shall be provided and designed, constructed and located in a manner that minimizes the potential risk for product contamination.

- i. Toilets shall cater for the maximum number of employees and be constructed so that they can be easily cleaned and maintained;
- ii. Hand wash basins with potable water, hand soap, disposable towels or effective hand drying device, waste bins and a tank that captures used hand wash water for disposal (if not connected to a drain) shall be provided inside or adjacent to toilet facilities;
- iii. Signage in appropriate languages shall be provided adjacent to hand wash basins instructing people to wash their hands after each toilet visit;
- iv. Racks for protective clothing used by farm employees shall be provided;
- v. Toilets shall be located so as to provide easy access for field workers;
- vi. Toilet and wash stations shall be maintained in a clean and sanitary condition.

8.3.2.2 Personnel shall have clean hands and hands shall be washed by all personnel:

- i. Before handling product;
- ii. After each visit to a toilet;
- iii. After using a handkerchief;
- iv. After handling dirty or contaminated material; and
- v. After smoking, eating or drinking.

8.3.3 Protective Clothing

8.3.3.1 Protective clothing shall be effectively maintained, stored, laundered and worn so as to protect product from risk of contamination.

8.3.3.2 Where applicable, clothing, including footwear, shall be effectively maintained, cleaned and sanitized, and worn so as to protect product from risk of contamination.

8.3.3.3 If rubber or disposable gloves are used, the operation shall have a glove use policy and personnel shall adhere to the hand washing practices outlined above.

8.3.4 Jewelry and Personal Effects

8.3.4.1 Jewelry and other loose objects that pose a threat to the safety of the product shall not be worn or taken onto any growing, product handling or storage operations.

8.3.5 Visitors

8.3.5.1 All visitors and employees shall be required to remove jewelry and other loose objects and wear suitable protective clothing.

8.3.5.2 Visitors exhibiting visible signs of illness shall be prevented from entering any growing or product handling or field harvesting operation.

8.3.5.3 Visitors must follow all personnel practices as designated by company for employees within various areas of fields, sheds, packing facilities or storage locations.

8.3.5.4 Unsupervised children shall not be permitted to enter any harvesting, packing, or food storage areas.

8.3.6 Amenities

8.3.6.1 Provision shall be made to store employee personal belongings away from crops, harvesting, field and packing operations, and harvesting equipment.

8.3.6.2 Areas for meal breaks shall be designated and located away from a food contact/handling zones and harvesting equipment.

8.3.6.3 Drinking water shall be available to all field employees.

8.4 Harvesting and Packaging/Handling Practices

8.4.1 Pre-Harvest Assessment

8.4.1.1 The methods and responsibilities for pre-harvest risk assessments shall be documented and implemented. It shall describe when the assessments are performed and identifies those conditions that may be reasonably likely to result in physical, chemical, or biological contamination.

8.4.1.2 The methods and responsibilities for the handling and packaging of crops, where applicable, shall be documented and implemented. It shall ensure:

- i. Inspection and removal of physical hazards ;
- ii. Damaged or decayed product is not harvested or culled; and
- iii. Materials that come in contact with products are clean and in good repair;
- iv. Packaging materials are used and stored during use in a manner that prevents product contamination.

8.5 Water Management

8.5.1 Water System Description

8.5.1.1 A water description plan shall be prepared that describes the water sources and the production blocks they serve, and shall include one or more of the following: maps, photographs, drawings, or other means to communicate the location of the water sources, permanent fixtures and the flow of the water system.

8.5.1.2 Agricultural water shall be sourced from a location and in a manner that is compliant with prevailing regulations.

8.5.1.3 Waste System intended to convey untreated human or animal waste shall be separated from conveyances utilized to deliver agricultural water.

8.5.2 Irrigation Water

8.5.2.1 Agricultural water shall be drawn from a known clean source or treated to make it suitable for use. The producer shall conduct an analysis of the hazards to the irrigation water supply from source through to application, establish acceptance criteria for the monitoring of water and validate and verify the integrity of the water used to ensure it is fit for the purpose.

8.5.3 Treatment of Irrigation Water

8.5.3.1 In circumstances where irrigation water is treated to render it acceptable, the water, after treatment shall conform to the microbiological standards as outlined in element 8.5.5.

8.5.4 Water System Risk Assessment

8.5.4.1 An initial risk assessment shall be performed and documented that takes into consideration the historical testing results of the water source, water system control and protection, the characteristics of the crop, the stage of the crop, and the method of application.

8.5.5 Water Management Plan

8.5.5.1 Water used for washing and treating product, cleaning food contact surfaces and mixing sanitizer solutions shall comply with potable water microbiological and chemical standards in the country of production and destination. Separate criteria will be established for irrigation water, frost control, humidifying, pesticide application, etc. as applicable, based on the risk assessment, best practices within country of production and any applicable legislation.

The water management plan shall include the following:

- i. Preventive controls;
- ii. Monitoring and verification procedures;
- iii. Corrective actions; and
- iv. Documentation.

Water testing shall be part of the water management plan, as directed by the water risk assessment and current industry standards or regulations for the commodity being grown.

8.5.5.2 Water quality shall be monitored to verify it complies with the established water microbiological and chemical standard or criteria established. A verification schedule shall be prepared indicating the location and frequency of monitoring, which shall be decided by the hazard analysis, best practices within country of production, or applicable legislation. Water analysis shall be undertaken by an approved laboratory accredited to ISO 17025 or equivalent.

8.5.6 Corrective Actions

8.5.6.1 A corrective action plan shall be developed when monitoring shows that water does not meet established criteria or standards. The plan can include additional treatment for water, additional sources for water, product identification and disposition or other alternative actions to adequately control the identified hazards.

8.6 Storage and Transport

8.6.1 Storage of Hazardous Chemicals, Toxic Substances, and Petroleum Products

8.6.1.1 Hazardous chemicals, toxic substances, and petroleum products shall be stored so as not to present a hazard to employees, product, product handling equipment or areas in which product is handled, stored or transported.

8.6.1.2 Product contact chemicals such as pesticides and herbicides; rodenticides, fumigants and insecticides; sanitizers and detergents shall be stored separately and in their original containers.

8.6.1.3 Chemical storage sheds shall:

- i. Be compliant with national and local legislation and designed such that there is no cross-contamination between chemicals;
- ii. Be ventilated to the exterior;
- iii. Be provided with appropriate signage indicating the area is a hazardous storage area;
- iv. Be secure and lockable to restrict access only to those personnel with formal training in the handling and use of chemicals;
- v. Have instructions on the safe handling of hazardous chemicals readily accessible to employees;
- vi. Be equipped with a detailed and up-to-date inventory of all chemicals contained in the storage facility;
- vii. Have suitable first aid equipment and protective clothing available in the storage area;
- viii. Have emergency shower and/or wash facilities available in the event of an accidental spill; and
- ix. In the event of a hazardous spill, be designed such that spillage and drainage from the area is contained; and
- x. Be equipped with spillage kits and cleaning equipment.

8.6.1.4 Petroleum fuels, oils, grease and other lubricants shall be stored separate from other storage areas.

8.6.1.5 The storage of hazardous chemicals, toxic substances and petroleum products in areas (separate lockable or otherwise contained) shall not occur inside food handling areas, product and ingredient and packaging storage rooms.

8.6.2 Transport

8.6.2.1 The methods and responsibilities for loading, transport and unloading of crops shall be documented and implemented. Product integrity is maintained and practices include:

- i. Verification of cleanliness and functionality of shipping units;
- ii. Appropriate storage conditions during transportation to final destination;
- iii. Prevention of cross contamination with other hazards and spoilage, and
- iv. Appropriate stock rotation practices.

8.6.2.2 Employees involved in loading, transport and unloading events shall be appropriately trained.

8.7 Soil Management

8.7.1 Fertilizer Management

8.7.1.1 Inorganic (chemical) and organic (manure) soil amendments shall be isolated and stored separately so as not to pose a food safety risk.

8.7.1.2 Provision shall be made for the storage of concentrated and diluted liquid soil amendments in tanks designed to retain at least 110% of total volume or as per local regulations.

8.7.1.3 Soil amendments shall be stored separate from crop, field or irrigation water sources such that contamination from run off is avoided either by locating of the soil amendment a suitable distance from the crop or by the utilization of other physical barriers.

8.7.1.4 A current inventory of all organic and inorganic soil amendment storage and use shall be maintained.

8.7.2 Soil Amendment

8.7.2.1 A soil amendment policy shall be documented, implemented and designed to prevent contamination of product. The policy shall outline the methods used to treat manure and other untreated organic fertilizers ensuring:

- i. The treatment methods applied inactivate pathogens in organic soil amendments;
- ii. No raw untreated manure is used;
- iii. A risk assessment of organic soil amendments treatment methods is conducted before use;
- iv. Treatments and application methods are validated and treatment of organic soil amendments are verified as being in compliance with the approved or recommended methods applied; and
- v. Records of the validation, approvals and verification of organic soil amendment treatments are maintained.

8.7.2.2 Soil amendment protocols shall outline the methods to ensure organic soil amendment applications are timed to pose minimum risk to product safety and human health including:

- i. All applications of soil amendments are in accordance with national or local guidelines, best practices and codes of Good Agricultural Practice;
- ii. Equipment used for soil amendment application is maintained in good condition and calibrated to ensure accurate application;
- iii. Records of all equipment maintenance and calibration are maintained;
- iv. Signage complies with national and local codes of practice; and
- v. Sufficient data is recorded to provide a detailed record of soil amendment applications.

8.7.3 Purchasing Chemicals

8.7.3.1 Chemicals shall be purchased from an approved supplier in accordance with applicable legislation. A current inventory of all chemicals purchased and used shall be maintained.

8.7.4 Agricultural Chemicals

8.7.4.1 A spray or crop protection action plan indicating the applications used for a target pest or disease and the threshold levels that initiate application shall be prepared and implemented.

8.7.4.2 The person making decisions on chemical application shall:

- i. Demonstrate knowledge of, and access to, information regarding chemical applications and the maximum residue limits allowable in destination markets;
- ii. Use only chemicals approved for cultivation of specific crops and approved for use in the intended market or country of destination.
- iii. Demonstrate competence and knowledge of chemical application and crop withholding periods.

8.7.4.3 Records of all chemical applications shall be maintained and include:

- i. A current chemical register of all chemical use;
- ii. The chemical used;
- iii. The crop sprayed;
- iv. The concentration;
- v. The date, method and frequency of application; and
- vi. Evidence that the timing between chemical application and harvest complies with the approved harvest interval for the chemical application.

8.7.4.4 Biological controls that are approved for the cultivation of the specific crops shall be used, and in accordance with instructions or as per expert recommendations.

8.7.4.5 The producer shall dispose of chemical waste and empty containers in accordance with regulatory requirements and ensure that:

- i. Empty chemical containers are not re-used;
- ii. Empty containers are labeled or rendered unusable, isolated and securely stored while awaiting collection;
- iii. Unused and obsolete chemicals are stored under secure conditions while waiting authorized disposal by an approved vendor.

8.8 Waste Disposal

8.8.1 Dry, Liquid and Unsanitary Waste Disposal

8.8.1.1 Waste shall be regularly removed from the farm, field, packing facility and the surrounds so as not to pose a food safety risk to finished product or growing, harvesting and packing operations.

8.8.1.2 The methods and responsibility for the effective and efficient disposal of all solid waste, including inedible material and disused packaging, including trademarked material, and liquid and unsanitary waste shall be documented and implemented.

Appendix 1: SQF Food Sector Categories

FSC	Category (Site Scope of Certification)	GFSI Industry Scopes	Applicable SQF Code Modules	Description	Example of Products	Level of Risk
1	Production, Capture and Harvesting of Livestock and Game Animals: Free Range Animal Production Intensive Animal Production Dairy farming Game Animals Egg Production	AI: Farming of Animals	System elements Module 5: GAP for farming of animal products	Applies to the capture, transport, holding, intensive animal husbandry and free range farming of animals, but does not include seafood.	Includes: Deer, cattle, goats, sheep, pigs, poultry, ostrich, emu, etc. Cattle, veal, lamb, pigs, poultry, eggs Cattle, sheep and goats Buffalo, wild pigs, emu	Low risk
2	Not in use					
3	Growing and Production of Fresh Produce and Nuts: Fresh fruit, vegetables and nuts Ready-to-Eat (RTE) Produce and nuts	BI: Farming of Plant Products	System elements Module 7: GAP for farming of plant products	Applies to the production, harvesting, preparation, field packing, transport and controlled temperature storage of fresh whole fruit, vegetables and nuts. Includes all products grown under broad acre and intensive horticulture production system, including orchards, viticulture, and hydroponics production and nursery operations.	All fruit and vegetable and nut varieties including: Tropical and temperate tree fruits, carrots, beets, potatoes, wine grapes Table grapes, strawberries, raspberries, blueberries, all forms of leafy greens, spring mix, tomatoes, peppers, herbs and spices and tomatoes, green onions, baby spinach, lettuce, melons, etc.	Generally low risk. Some products are classified as high risk
4	Fresh Produce and Nuts Pack house Operations	D: Pre-processing of Plant Products	System elements Module 10: GMP for pre-processing of plant products	Applies to the cleaning, shelling, packing, sorting, grading, controlled atmosphere temperature storage and transport of fresh and pre-packaged whole unprocessed fruits, vegetables and nuts for retail sale or further processing.	Includes all fruit, vegetable and nut varieties which are packed in pack houses and which may undergo controlled atmosphere storage and transport.	Low risk
5	Extensive Broad Acre Agricultural Operations	BI1: Farming of Grains and Pulses	System elements Module 8: GAP for farming of grains and pulses	Applies to the production, harvesting, preparation, transport and storage of broad-acre crops including pulses, cereal and other grains. Also includes growing and harvesting of animal feed crops.	All grain and cereal varieties for human consumption and animal feed including but not limited to wheat, oats, pulse crops, soy, legumes, maize, corn, cotton, pasture, silage and hay.	Generally low risk, although some products and processes are classified as high risk.

FSC	Category (Site Scope of Certification)	GFSI Industry Scopes	Applicable SQF Code Modules	Description	Example of Products	Level of Risk
6	Harvest and Intensive Farming of Seafood Wild Caught Fish Aquaculture and RTE seafood.	All: Farming of Fish and Seafood	System elements Module 6: GAP for farming of seafood	Applies to the harvest and wild capture and intensive farming of freshwater and marine fishes and shellfish, including purification, transport and storage and extends to gilling, gutting, shucking and chilling operations at sea.	All fresh and salt water fish and shellfish species including: Tuna, salmon, snapper, bass, catfish and fish spp. Oysters, mussels, shrimp, lobster, crab, and other shellfish spp.	Generally low risk, although some products and processes are classified as high risk.
7	Slaughterhouse, Boning and Butchery Operations: Red Meat Poultry Meat	C: pre-process handling of animal products	System elements Module 9: GMP for pre-processing of animal products	Applies to the slaughtering, dressing, processing, transport, storage, chilling, freezing and wholesaling of all animal species and game animals for consumption and extends to all meat cuts.	Includes uncooked poultry, pork and red meat animal species prepared in retail butcher shops, boning rooms and meat wholesale markets, including ground (minced) meats. Bone in and whole muscle fillet for pork and red meat species including ground (minced) red meat. Bone in and whole muscle poultry fillet and ground (minced) poultry meat.	Low risk
8	Processing of Manufactured Meats and Poultry	EI: Processing of Perishable Animal Products	System elements Module 11: GMP for processing of food products	Applies to the processing, manufacture, transport and storage operations where meat (all red meat species and poultry) is the major ingredient including all value-adding operations (i.e. cook-chill, crumbing, curing, smoking, cooking, drying, fermenting and vacuum packing) and chilling and freezing operations, but not canning of meat or poultry product.	Includes poultry, pork and red meats blends and raw heat-treated and fermented poultry, pork and red meats including salami, hot dogs, sausages, bacon, pepperoni, and meat pastes etc.	High risk product and process knowledge required
9	Seafood Processing: Raw seafood and seafood products Uncooked RTE seafood Cooked RTE seafood	EI: Processing of Perishable Animal Products	System elements Module 11: GMP for processing of food products	Applies to the processing, manufacture, transport and storage of all fish and seafood species and extends to value-adding operations including dismembering, fermenting, crumbing, smoking, cooking freezing, chilling, drying and vacuum packing, but not canning of seafood product.	Includes: Whole fish, fish fillets, reformed fish cakes, coated fish portions uncooked fish product. sashimi, sushi and raw uncooked shellfish such as oyster and mussels, surimi smoked cooked fish products chilled or frozen that require no further cooking prior to consumption.	Some products are classified high risk. Uncooked RTE product is high risk and process knowledge required
10	Dairy Food Processing	EI: Processing of Perishable Animal Products	System elements Module 11: GMP for processing of food products	Applies to the processing, transport and storage of food products from all species used for milk collection and extends to all value-adding operations including freezing, pasteurizing, ultra-filtration, evaporation/concentration, fermentation, clarification, culturing and spray drying of milk but not UHT operations. (refer to FSC	Includes all milk collection and includes milk and cream, butter, cottage cheese, sour cream, all forms of cheese, yogurt, ice cream and dried milk. Also includes milk substitutes such as soymilk and tofu, and infant formula.	High risk product and process knowledge required

FSC	Category (Site Scope of Certification)	GFSI Industry Scopes	Applicable SQF Code Modules	Description	Example of Products	Level of Risk
				15). Includes milk substitutes where the technology is essentially the same.		
11	Apiculture and Honey Processing	EI: Processing of Perishable Animal Products	System elements Module 11: GMP for processing of food products	Applies to apiculture and the processing, transport and storage of food products from all species used for honey collection including value-added operations. Includes clarifying and treatment operations.	Includes apiculture, honey, honeycomb; pollen and royal jelly.	Some high risk process knowledge required
12	Egg Processing	EI: Processing of Perishable Animal Products	System elements Module 11: GMP for processing of food products	Applies to the, grading, cleaning, processing, transport and storage of food products from all species used for egg collection and processing.	Fresh shell eggs including value-added products where egg is the major ingredient.	High risk product; Generally low risk process
13	Bakery and Snack Food Processing	EIV: Processing of Ambient Stable Products	System elements Module 11: GMP for processing of food products	Applies to the processing, transport and storage of extruded snack foods and cake mix formulations and extends to all bakery operations.	Includes baked items such as meat pies, custard pies, bread, cookies, cakes and mixes and all varieties of snack food.	Some high risk process knowledge required
14	Fruit, Vegetable and Nut Processing, and Fruit Juices	EII: Processing or Perishable Plant Products	System elements Module 11: GMP for processing of food products	Applies to the processing, transport, storage and distribution of all processed fruit and vegetable varieties including freezing, fermenting drying, slicing, dicing, cutting, and modified atmosphere processing of all fruits and vegetables, and the roasting, drying, and cutting of nuts. Does not include canning of fruits and vegetables.	Includes frozen, fermented, dried, sliced, diced, cut, and modified atmosphere packaged (MAP) fruit, vegetable and nut products including prepared and deli salads. Includes fresh and pasteurized fruit and vegetable juices.	Some high risk process knowledge required
15	Canning, UHT and Aseptic Operations	EIV: Processing of Ambient Stable Products	System elements Module 11: GMP for processing of food products	Applies to the processing, of low acid canned foods, and sterilization (retorting) UHT, or other high temperature or high pressure processes (HPP) not covered elsewhere and the manufacture of the associated hermetically sealed containers.	Includes: The commercial sterilization of fish, meats, fruits and vegetables and other low acid soups and sauces in metal or glass containers or retort pouches. Does not include pasteurization of dairy, fruit or vegetable juices, but does include UHT treatment of <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pasteurized canned and chilled crab meat; Milk or milk products; or Egg or egg products; or Fruit or vegetable juices. Canned pet food 	High risk product and process knowledge required
16	Ice, Drink and Beverage Processing	EIV: Processing of Ambient Stable Products	System elements Module 11: GMP for processing of	Applies to fermentation, concentration aseptic filling or drying operations processes. Does not include powdered milk and	Includes carbonated soft drinks, carbonated and non-carbonated waters, mineral water, ice, wine, beer	Some high risk process knowledge required

FSC	Category (Site Scope of Certification)	GFSI Industry Scopes	Applicable SQF Code Modules	Description	Example of Products	Level of Risk
			food products	pasteurization and UHT treatment of milk or milk products or fruit and vegetable juicing operations. Does not apply to dry beverage ingredients (e.g. tea, coffee).	and other alcoholic beverages.	
17	Confectionary Manufacturing	EIV: Processing of Ambient Stable Products	System elements Module 11: GMP for processing of food products	Applies to the preparation, transport and storage of all types of confectionary and extends to all chocolate and imitation chocolate-based processing.	Includes all confectionary products which undergo refining, conching, starch molding, compression, extrusion and vacuum cooking.	Some high risk process knowledge required
18	Preserved Foods Manufacture	EIV: Processing of Ambient Stable Products	System elements Module 11: GMP for processing of food products	Applies to the processing, transport and storage of all foods preserved under high temperature processes not covered elsewhere, compositionally preserved foods that are not high temperature processed or other alternative acceptable methods not covered elsewhere.	Includes dressings, mayonnaise, sauces, marinades, pickled foods, peanut butter, mustards, jams and fillings.	Some high risk process knowledge required
19	Food Ingredient Manufacture	L: Production of Bio-chemicals	System elements Module 11: GMP for processing of food products	Applies to the processing, blending, re-packaging transport and storage of dry food ingredients, cultures and yeast, but does not include dairy products, fermented meats or other fermented products mentioned elsewhere.	Includes starter cultures used in cheese, yogurt and wine manufacture and cultures used in the baking industry and other products such as vinegar used for the preservation of foods. Other additional products include additives, preservatives, flavorings, colorings, soup mixes, sauces, dehydrated culinary products, salt, sugar, spices and other condiments. Applies to dried tea and coffee products.	Some high risk process knowledge required
20	Recipe Meals Manufacture	EIII: Processing of Perishable Animal and Plant Products	System elements Module 11: GMP for processing of food products	Applies to the processing, receipt, controlled temperature storage and transport of foods prepared from a range of ingredients (mixed foods) that require cooking, heating, freezing, or refrigerated storage prior to serving. Includes sandwiches, wraps, and high-risk desserts for distribution to food service (If they are made on site and RTE, then fsc 23 applies).	Includes RTE chilled meals and deserts, frozen meals, pizza, frozen pasta, soups, and meal solutions, sous vide products, and freeze-dried and dehydrated meals. Includes sandwiches, wraps, and high-risk desserts for distribution to food service.	High risk product and process knowledge required
21	Oils, Fats, and the Manufacture of oil or fat-based spreads	EIII: Processing of Perishable Animal and Plant Products	System elements Module 11: GMP for processing of food products	Applies to the manufacture of all animal and vegetable oils and fats and to the manufacture of margarine. Includes clarifying and refining processes.	Includes shortening (animal and vegetable), oils (olive, peanut, corn, vegetable, sunflower, safflower, canola, nut, seed), and oil-based spreads such as margarine and oil based spreads.	Low risk
22	Processing of	EII: Processing or	System elements	Applies to the processing of cereals of all	Includes wheat, maize, rice, barley,	Some high risk

FSC	Category (Site Scope of Certification)	GFSI Industry Scopes	Applicable SQF Code Modules	Description	Example of Products	Level of Risk
	Cereal Grains	Perishable Plant Products	Module 11: GMP for processing of food products	varieties, including sorting, grading, picking, handling of bulk grains, milling, and extruding.	oats, millet, pasta, breakfast cereals.	process knowledge required
23	Food Catering and Food Service Operations	G: Catering	System Elements Module 15: GRP for Retail	Applies to all on-site food preparation and service activities, including transport, storage, and distribution undertaken with mixed foods that are ready-to-eat and do not require further treatment or processing by the consumer. Only applies to products prepared on site that are RTE.	Includes food service caterers, retail delicatessen/self-serve facilities, restaurants, fast food outlets, delicatessens, school cafeterias (canteens), hospital/institution meal services, childcare centers, and mobile and home delivery food services. Includes sandwiches, wraps, and high-risk desserts that are prepared on site and are RTE.	High risk product and process knowledge required
24	Food Retailing	H: Retail/Wholesale	System Elements Module 15: GRP for Retail	Applies to the receipt, handling, storage and display at retail level of stable or pre-processed and packaged foods and/or food intended for further preparation by the consumer. Retailers that prepare RTE foods shall include fsc 23 as well.	Includes all foods distributed and sold through retail outlets. Does not include foods that are prepared on site and are RTE.	Low risk
25	Repackaging of products not manufactured on site.	EIV: Processing of Ambient Stable Products	System elements Module 11: GMP for processing of food products	Assembling of whole produce and packaged products (e.g. nuts, hard candy, dried fruit, and beef jerky) that are manufactured elsewhere (e.g. gift baskets, etc.). Applies to products not covered elsewhere.	Includes gift baskets, Christmas hampers, and presentation packs.	Low risk
26	Food Storage and Distribution	JII: Provision of Transport and Storage Services – Ambient Stable Food and Feed	System elements Module 12: GDP for transport and distribution of food products	Applies to the receipt, storage, display, consolidation and distribution of perishable fresh produce and general food lines including chilled, frozen, dry goods, stable or pre-processed and packaged foods and/or food intended for further preparation by the consumer at wholesale level.	Includes all transportation, storage and delivery of perishable and shelf-stable foods sold through markets, retail and foodservice facilities.. Includes transportation, storage and delivery of all varieties of fresh unprocessed fruit, vegetable and nut products.	Low risk
27	Manufacture of Food Packaging Materials	M: Production of Food Packaging	System elements Module 13: GMP for manufacture of food packaging	Applies to the manufacture, storage and transport of food sector packaging materials. Includes items that may be used in food manufacturing or food service facilities, including paper towel, napkins, disposable food containers, straws, stirrers.	Includes all food-grade packaging materials including flexible films, paperboard based containers, metal containers, flexible pouches, glass containers, plastic and foam containers (PET, polystyrene, etc.), and single-use foodservice products (eg paper towel, napkins, disposable food containers, straws, stirrers).	Low risk
28	Not in use					

FSC	Category (Site Scope of Certification)	GFSI Industry Scopes	Applicable SQF Code Modules	Description	Example of Products	Level of Risk
29	Not in use					
30	Not in use					
31	Manufacture of Dietary Supplements	L: Production of Bio-chemicals	System elements Module 11: GMP for processing of food products	Applies to the manufacture, blending, transport and storage of dietary supplements.	Includes vitamins, probiotics and label supplements.	High risk product and process knowledge required
32	Manufacture of Pet Food	FI: Production of Compound Feed	System elements Module 4: GMP for processing of pet food products	Applies to the manufacture, of pet food intended for consumption by domestic animals and specialty pets.	Includes dry and moist pet foods and treats, semi-raw, chilled, or frozen product. Does not include canned pet food.	Some high risk process knowledge required
33	Manufacture of Food Processing Aides	L: Production of Bio-chemicals	System elements Module 11: GMP for processing of food products	Applies to the manufacture, storage and transport of chemicals and aides used in the food processing sectors.	Includes food grade lubricants, processing aides, and chemicals for clean-in-place systems.	Low risk
34	Manufacture of Animal Feed	FI: Production of Single Ingredient Feed	System elements Module 3: GMP for animal feed production	Applies to the manufacture, blending, transport and storage of animal feeds.	Includes compounded and medicated feeds.	Some high risk process knowledge required
35	Not in use					

Appendix 2: Glossary

Accreditation	Approved by an accreditation body confirming that the management system of a certification body complies with the ISO/IEC 17065:2012 and the Criteria for SQF Certification Bodies requirements and that the certification body is suitable to be granted a license by SQFI to provide the service in the licensed territory (ies).
Airlock	A space which permits the passage of people between one environment and another with two doors in series which do not open simultaneously, and thus minimizes the transfer of pests, dust, odors, or air from one area to the other.
Approved Supplier (s)	Suppliers that have been assessed and approved by a site based on risk assessment as capable of meeting the sites food safety and quality requirements for goods and services supplied.
Audit	A systematic and independent examination of a site's SQF food safety and/or quality System by an SQF food safety and/or quality auditor to determine whether food safety, quality systems, hygiene and management activities are undertaken in accordance with that system documentation and comply with the requirements of the SQF food safety and/or quality Code, as appropriate, and to verify whether these arrangements are implemented effectively.
Audit Checklist	The list of SQF food safety and/or quality Code elements, customized for the site's audit scope, and available for use by the SQF food safety and/or quality auditor when conducting an SQF food safety and/or quality audit.
Auditor	A person registered by the SQFI to audit a site's SQF food safety and/or quality System. An auditor must work on behalf of a licensed certification body. The terms "SQF auditor" and "SQF sub-contract auditor" shall have the same meaning.
Central Site	An SQF certified site at which activities are planned to control and manage a network of SQF certified sub-sites within an SQF multi-site program (refer to SQFI's multi-site program requirements).
Certificate	A certificate which includes a registration schedule (in a format approved by the SQFI), issued to a site by a licensed certification body following the successful completion of an SQF food safety and/or quality certification audit and/or a re-certification audit.
Certification	Certification by a licensed SQF certification body of a site's SQF food safety and/or quality System as complying with the SQF food safety and/or quality Code, as appropriate, following a certification audit or re-certification audit. The terms, "certify," "certifies" and "certified" shall have a corresponding meaning under the SQF Program.
Certification Audit	An audit of a site's whole SQF System, including a desk audit, where the site's SQF System: <ul style="list-style-type: none">a) has not been previously certified; orb) has been previously certified but requires certification as the earlier certification has been revoked or voluntarily discontinued by the site.
Certification Body	An entity which has entered into a license agreement with the SQFI authorizing it to certify a site's SQF System in accordance with the ISO / IEC 17065:2012 and the Criteria for SQF Certification Bodies.
Certification Cycle	The annual period between a site's certification/re-certification audits.
Certification Number	A unique numerical provided by the SQFI and included on the certificate, issued to a site that has successfully completed an SQF Food Safety or Quality certification audit.
Children	Children are defined under the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child as "human beings below the age of 18 years unless majority is attained earlier under the applicable laws of a given country."
Codex Alimentarius Commission	The internationally recognized entity whose purpose is to guide and promote the elaboration and establishment of definitions, standards and requirements for foods, and to assist in their harmonization and, in doing so, to facilitate international trade. The Commission Secretariat comprises staff from the Food and Agriculture Organization and the World Health Organization. The Codex Alimentarius Commission adopted the principles of the Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP)

	system in 1997.
Contract Manufacturer (or co-man, co-manufacturer)	Facilities that are contracted by the SQF certified site to produce, process, pack and /or store part of or all of one or more products included in the site's SQF scope of certification. In some cases, a product may be manufactured interchangeably at the certified site and by the contract manufacturer. In other cases, a contract manufacturer may only be used intermittently to fulfill or supplement the certified site's production. Contract manufacturers must follow the requirements outlined in the SQF Food Safety Code.
Corporate	An entity that does not manufacture or handle product but oversees and contributes to the food safety and/or quality management system at an SQF certified site.
Correction	Action to eliminate a detected non-conformity. Shall have the same meaning as "corrected."
Corrective Action	<p>Action to eliminate the cause of a detected non-conformity or other undesirable situation. Corrective action shall include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Determine / document any immediate action required / taken <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Determine the cause of the problem ii. Evaluate action needed on the identified cause iii. Determine if the problem exists elsewhere in the system and implement actions needed b) Document the actions taken and the results of the action taken. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Review/verify and document effectiveness of action taken with objective evidence.
Crisis Management	The process by which a site manages an event (e.g., a flood, a drought, a fire, etc.) that adversely affects the site's ability to provide continuity of supply of safe, quality food, and requires the implementation of a crisis management plan.
Customer	A buyer or person that purchases goods or services from the SQF certified site.
Desk Audit	A review of the site's SQF System documentation, forming part of and being the initial stage of the certification audit to ensure the System documentation substantially meets the requirements of the SQF Food Safety and/or Quality Code, as appropriate.
Deviation	<p>A non-conformity raised against the SQF Quality Code. Deviations are graded as follows:</p> <p>A minor quality deviation is an omission or deficiency in the quality system that produces unsatisfactory conditions that if not addressed may lead to a quality threat but not likely to cause a system element breakdown.</p> <p>A major quality deviation is an omission or deficiency in the quality system producing unsatisfactory conditions that carry a significant quality threat and are likely to result in a system element breakdown. No critical deviations are raised at a quality systems audit.</p> <p>Timelines for the resolution of corrective actions are addressed in Part A, 3.2.</p>
Environmental Monitoring Program (EMP)	A program which includes pathogen or indicator swabbing as appropriate to detect risk in the sanitary conditions in the processing environment. A verification of the effectiveness of the pathogen controls that a management facility has in place for high risk foods.
Exempt	<p>A term applied to elements of the SQF Food Safety and Quality Code that the site does not wish to be included in the SQF System audit, and has submitted a written request to the certification body to exclude, prior to commencement of any scheduled audit activity.</p> <p>In the SQF Food Safety Code, mandatory elements of the system elements cannot be exempted. The certification body will confirm the reasons for exemption as part of the site audit.</p> <p>The term also applies to products, processes or areas of the site that the site wishes to exclude from the audit. A request is to be submitted to the certification body in writing prior to the audit activity, and shall be listed in the site description in the SQFI assessment database.</p>
Facility	The site's premises at its street address. The production, manufacturing, or storage area where product is produced, processed, packaged, and/or stored, and includes

	the processes, equipment, environment, materials and personnel involved. The facility must be managed and supervised under the same operational management. The facility is the site audited during an on-site audit (refer to "site").
Feed	Any single or multiple materials, whether processed, semi-processes, or raw, which is intended to be fed directly to food-producing animals.
Feed Safety	The principles and practices applied to feed production and manufacturing to ensure that feed does not cause harm to animals or humans.
Food	Any substance, usually of animal or plant origin, intentionally consumed by humans, whether processed, partially processed or unprocessed. May include water, alcoholic and non-alcoholic drinks, materials included in a processed food product and any other substance identified by regulation (legislation) as a food.
Food Defense	As defined by the US Food and Drug administration, the efforts to prevent intentional food contamination by biological, physical, chemical or radiological hazards that are not reasonably likely to occur in the food supply.
Food Fraud	As defined by Michigan State University, a collective term used to encompass the deliberate and intentional substitution, addition, tampering, or misrepresentation of food, food ingredients, or food packaging; or false or misleading statements made about a product, for economic gain.
FMI	The Food Marketing Institute, a not-for-profit corporation, having its principal offices at 2345 Crystal Drive, Suite 800, Arlington, VA 22202, United States of America.
Food Packaging	The finished article used to package food.
Food Quality Plan	As described in the SQF Quality Code. It shall be based on the CODEX HACCP method, include process controls at quality points in production to monitor product quality, identify deviations from control parameters and define corrections necessary to keep the process under control.
Food Safety Certification Program Owner	As defined by the Global Food Safety Initiative, a systematic plan which has been developed, implemented and maintained for the scope of food safety. It consists of a standard and food safety system in relation to specified processes or a food safety service to which the same particular plan applies. The food safety program should contain at least a standard, a clearly defined scope, and a food safety system.
Food Safety Fundamentals	An entry level Code for new and developing businesses that covers basic Good Agricultural or Aquaculture Practices (GAPs), Good Manufacturing Practices (GMPs), or Good Distribution Practices (GDPs) and defines the essential elements that must be implemented to meet relevant legislative and customer food safety requirements. Sites that comply with the SQF Code certification requirements for the Food Safety Fundamentals Code receive an accredited certificate from an SQFI licensed certification body.
Food Safety Plan	As described in the SQF Food Safety Code. The plan shall be prepared based on the CODEX HACCP method, include process controls at control points in production to monitor product safety, identify deviations from control parameters and define corrections necessary to keep the process under control.
Food Sector Category (FSC)	A classification scheme established to assist in a uniform approach to management of the SQF Program and means those food industry, manufacturing, production, processing, storage, wholesaling, distribution, retailing and food service activities and other food sector services and auditor and consultant registration as defined by the SQFI.
General Requirements	The current edition of the document entitled "Criteria for SQF Certification Bodies: SQF Guidance on the Application of ISO/IEC 17065:2012, General Requirements for Certification Bodies," published by The SQFI.
Good Agricultural Practices (GAPs)	Practices on farms which define the essential elements for the development of best-practice for production, incorporating integrated crop management, integrated pest management, and integrated agricultural hygienic practices.
Good Aquaculture Practices (GAPs)	Practices on aquaculture farms and wild catch fisheries which define the essential elements for the development of best-practice for production, incorporating integrated water quality, veterinary and growth practices, and handling and hygienic practices.

Good Manufacturing Practices (GMPs)	The combination of management and manufacturing practices designed to ensure food products are consistently produced to meet relevant legislative and customer specifications.
HACCP	The Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point (HACCP) system and refers to the HACCP guidelines developed and managed by the Food and Agriculture Organization's CODEX Alimentarius Commission. Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) System and Guidelines for its Application – Annex to CAC/RCP 1 – 1969, Rev. 4-2003), – “A system, which identifies, evaluates and controls hazards which are significant for food safety.”
HACCP Method	The implementation of pre-requisite programs and the application of HACCP principles in the logical sequence of the twelve steps as described in the current edition of the CODEX Alimentarius Commission Guidelines. The SQF Food Safety and Quality Codes utilize the HACCP method to control food safety hazards and quality threats in the segment of the food chain under consideration..
HACCP Plan	A document prepared in accordance with the CODEX HACCP method to ensure control of hazards which are significant for food safety or the identification of quality threats for the product under consideration.
HACCP Training	Training that meets the guidelines outlined in the Food and Agriculture Organization's CODEX Alimentarius Commission. Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) System and Guidelines for its Application – Annex to CAC/RCP 1 – 1969, Rev. 4-2003), – “A system, which identifies, evaluates and controls hazards which are significant for food safety.” And this training shall be: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Recognized as a HACCP training course used extensively in a country. 2. Administered and delivered by an institution recognized as a food safety training center of excellence. 3. A minimum of two days (16 hours) in duration, or equivalent. 4. The acquired knowledge of the candidate shall be assessed as part of the training program.
Hazardous Chemicals and Toxic Substances	Solids, liquids or gasses that are radioactive, flammable, explosive, corrosive, oxidizing, asphyxiating, pathogenic, or allergenic, including but not restricted to detergents, sanitizers, pest control chemicals, lubricants, paints, processing aids, bio-chemical additives, which if used or handled incorrectly or in increased dosage may cause harm to the handler and/or consumer. Hazardous or toxic chemicals may be prescribed by regulation as “dangerous goods” and may carry a “poison,” “Hazmat” or “Hazchem” label depending on the jurisdiction.
High Risk Area	A segregated room or area where high risk food processes are performed, and which require a higher level of hygienic practice is required to prevent contamination of high risk food by pathogenic organisms.
High Risk Food	Food or food product with known attributes for microbiological growth, physical or chemical contamination, or which due to a process type may allow for the survival of pathogenic microbial flora or other contamination which, if not controlled, may contribute to illness of the consumer. It may also apply to a food that is deemed high risk by a customer, declared high risk by the relevant food regulation or has caused a major foodborne illness outbreak.
High Risk Food Process(es)	A process that requires specific controls and/or a higher level of hygienic practice to prevent food contamination from pathogens.
Industry Code of Practice	Industry norms, rules or protocols established by industry groups which provide practical, industry specific guidelines on meeting regulations while meeting industry needs.
Inspection Area	A designated station close to the process for the purpose of monitoring food safety and/or quality attributes and parameters.
Legality	Legality refers to national federal, state and local regulations applicable to the certified product in the country of manufacture and intended markets.
Licensed Certification Body (LCB)	An entity which has entered into a license agreement with the SQFI authorizing it to manage the auditing and certification of site's SQF System.
Low Risk Food	A food containing high acid that is not known to support the growth of pathogens; a

	food that is subject to a full cook prior to consumption.
Mandatory Elements	System elements that must be implemented and audited for a site to achieve SQF certification; system elements that cannot be exempted during a certification/re-certification audit.
Maximum Residue Limits (MRLs)	Generally set by local regulation or CODEX Alimentarius Commission, and applies to maximum allowable trace levels of agricultural and veterinary chemicals in agricultural produce, particularly produce entering the food chain.
Multi-site Certification	Multi-site certification involves the designation and certification of a central site (i.e. manufacturer, packer, warehouse) into which a network of certified sub-sites all performing the same function feed into. The central site and all sub-sites are all located in the one country and operate under the same food safety legislation (refer to SQFI's multi-site program requirements).
Multi-site Program	An SQF multi-site program is comprised of a central-SQF certified site under which activities are planned to manage and control the food safety management systems of a network of sub-sites under a legal or contractual link (refer to SQFI's multi-site program requirements).
Multi-site Sampling Program	As defined by the Global Food Safety Initiative Requirements Document, a program of sub-site audits defined by the certification program owner, but will be determined by the certification body based upon specified criteria.
Non conformity (or Non-conformance)	<p>Refers to the following definitions:</p> <p>A minor non-conformity is an omission or deficiency in the SQF System that produces unsatisfactory conditions that if not addressed may lead to a risk to food safety and/or quality but not likely to cause a system element breakdown.</p> <p>A major non-conformity is an omission or deficiency in the SQF System producing unsatisfactory conditions that carry a food safety and/or quality risk and likely to result in a system element breakdown.</p> <p>A critical non-conformity is a breakdown of control (s) at a critical control point, a pre-requisite program, or other process step and judged likely to cause a significant public health risk and/or where product is contaminated.</p> <p>A critical non-conformity is also raised if the site fails to take effective corrective action within the timeframe agreed with the certification body, or if the certification body deems that there is systemic falsification of records relating to food safety controls and the SQF System.</p> <p>Critical non-conformities cannot be raised at desk audits.</p>
N/A	<p>Stands for "not applicable" and may be reported during the SQF food safety and/or quality audit by the food safety and/or quality auditor when an element does not apply immediately but the site is still responsible for the element.</p> <p>N/A may also be reported to avoid double debiting, for example where a non-conformity has been raised against a similar, but more appropriate element. In this case, the element will be reported as "N/A."</p>
On-site Laboratories	A designated and enclosed area in the site in which chemical, microbiological and other product testing is conducted and if not controlled could lead to contamination and requires the use of good laboratory practices.
Pests	Vermin, including birds, rodents, insects, or other unwanted species that can carry disease and pose a risk to packaging, feed or food.
Pet Food	Any substance intended for consumption by domestic animals and specialty pets. It includes dry and moist pet foods and treats, semi-raw, canned, chilled, or frozen product.
Plan	As defined by ISO 9001, a document(s) used to establish the objectives and processes necessary to deliver results in accordance with customer requirements and the organization's policies. (refer to Food Safety Plan, Food Quality Plan).
Potable	Water that is safe to drink.
Pre-requisite Program	A procedural measure that when implemented reduces the likelihood of a food safety hazard or a food quality threat occurring, but one that may not be directly related to activities taking place during production.

Primary Producer or Producer	A sole entity involved in the pre-farm gate production, field packing, storage and supply of food produced and/or harvested under their exclusive control.
Processing	The processing of food through one or more steps in which the nature of the food is changed. Processing includes but is not limited to repacking, over bagging and re-labeling of food, slaughtering, dismembering, sorting, grading, cleaning, treating, drying, salting, smoking, cooking, canning, purifying and the pasteurization of food.
Product	Those products that apply to a specific food sector category as defined by the SQFI.
Program	A plan(s) used to establish the objectives and processes necessary to deliver results in accordance with customer requirements and the organization's policies." Examples include allergen management program or an environmental monitoring program.
Purity	The absence of contaminants that could cause a food safety hazard.
Quality	A measure of exceeding customer or corporate expectations and a state of being free from defects, deficiencies and significant variation.
Quality Threat	See threat.
Re-certification	A re-certification by a certification body of a site's SQF food safety or quality System as a result of a re-certification audit, and re-certified shall have a corresponding meaning.
Re-certification Audit	An audit of the site's SQF food safety or quality System within thirty (30) calendar days of the anniversary of certification.
Recoup	Product that is intact and requires no further processing or handling but is repackaged for distribution. For example, mixing of partial cases to build one complete case. May also be referred to as "repack."
Registration Schedule	The portion of the certificate setting out the scope of and the nature and extent of the rights of use of the quality shield granted to the site.
Rework	Food, materials, and ingredients, including work in progress that has left the normal product flow and requires action to be taken on it before it is acceptable for release and is suitable for reuse within the process.
Rules of Use	The rules and procedures contained in SQF Logo and/or Quality Shield Rules of Use and includes the certificate schedule and any modification, variation or replacement of the SQF trademark rules of use.
Scope of Certification	The food sector categories and those products to be covered by the certificate.
Season or Seasonal	A period in which the major activity is conducted over not more than five consecutive months in a calendar year; for example, harvesting and packing during the apple season.
SQFI Select Site	Recognition stated on the SQFI certificate for sites who have undergone an annual unannounced re-certification audit.
Senior Site Management	Individuals at the highest level on site responsible for the business operation and implementation and improvement of the food safety and quality management system.
Site	Any food business involved in the production, manufacture, processing, transport, storage, distribution or sale of food, beverages, packaging, animal feed, or pet food, or providing support services to the food sector and run by a person, company, cooperative, partnership, joint venture, business or other organization who has, or agrees to have, a licensed SQF certification body carry out audits and certification of its SQF System.
Site Audit	The second part of a certification audit that reviews the site's products and processes on-site to determine the effective implementation of the site's documented SQF food safety or quality System.
SQF Auditor	The same meaning as auditor.
SQF Consultant	A person who is registered by the SQFI to assist in the development, validation, verification, implementation and maintenance of SQF System on behalf of client site in the food industry categories appropriate to their scope of registration.

SQF Logo	Means the SQF logo depicted in SQF Logo Rules of Use.
SQF Practitioner	<p>An individual designated by a site to oversee the development, implementation, review and maintenance that site's own SQF System. The SQF practitioner qualification details will be verified by the SQF food safety or quality auditor during the certification/re-certification audit as meeting the following requirements:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">Oversee the development, implementation, review and maintenance of the SQF System, including food safety fundamentals outlined in 2.4.2, and the food safety plan outlined in 2.4.3.Take appropriate action to ensure the integrity of the SQF food safety and/or quality System.Communicate to relevant personnel all information essential to ensure the effective implementation and maintenance of the SQF food safety and/or quality System.Ensure that site personnel have the required competencies to carry out those functions affecting products, legality, and safety. <p>The SQF quality practitioner shall also have responsibility and authority to oversee the development, implementation, review and maintenance of the SQF Quality Code, including the food quality plan.</p>
SQF Program	The SQF Food Safety and/or Quality Code and all associated System, rules, quality shield, intellectual property and documents.
SQF Quality Shield	Means the SQF shield depicted in SQF Quality Shield Rules of Use.
SQF System	A risk management and preventive system that includes a food safety plan or food quality plan implemented and operated by a site to assure food safety or quality. It is implemented and maintained by an SQF practitioner, audited by an SQF food safety or quality auditor and certified by a licensed certification body as meeting the requirements relevant to the SQF Food Safety or Quality Code.
SQF Trainer	An individual contracted to a licensed SQF training center that has applied and met the requirements listed in the "Criteria for SQF Trainers" published by SQFI and, upon approval, is registered under the SQFI to provide consistent training on the SQF Program.
SQFI	The SQF Institute, a division of the Food Marketing Institute (FMI).
SQFI Assessment Database	The online database used by the SQFI to manage site registration, site audits, close out of corrective actions, and site certification.
System Elements	The SQF food safety management requirements applied by all sites throughout the supply chain for SQF certification.
Standard	A normative document and other defined normative documents, established by consensus and approved by a body that provide, for common and repeated use, rules, guidelines or characteristics for activities or their results, aimed at the achievement of the optimum degree of order in a given context.
Sub-site	An SQF certified site which operates under a contractual link to an SQF certified central site within an SQF multi-site program (refer to SQFI's multi-site program requirements).
Supplier	The entity that provides a product or service to the SQF certified site.
Surveillance Audit	A six (6) monthly audit (or more frequently as determined by the certification body) of part of a site's SQF System where that system has previously been certified or re-certified and whose certification is current. Multi-site certification requires surveillance audits every six (6) months at a minimum.
Technical Expert	An individual engaged by a licensed SQF certification body to provide a high level of technical support to the certification audit team. The technical expert shall be approved by the SQFI prior to the certification/re-certification audit, demonstrate a high degree of expertise and technical competence in the food sector category under study, a sound knowledge and understanding of the HACCP method and where possible be registered as an SQF consultant.

Threat	An identified risk that has the potential, if not controlled, to affect the quality of a product.
Trademarks	A recognizable label, logo, or mark which identifies a raw material or finished product with a particular producer, manufacturer, or retailer.
Training Center	An entity which has entered into a license agreement with the SQFI to deliver SQFI-licensed training courses, including the "Implementing SQF Systems," "Quality Systems for Manufacturing" and "Advanced SQF Practitioner" training courses.
Unannounced Audit	A re-certification audit that is conducted once at a minimum within every three (3) certification cycles and thirty (30) days on either side the initial certification anniversary date without prior notice to the SQF certified site. A site may forgo the three-year certification cycle requirement and voluntarily elect to have annual unannounced re-certification audits. Sites with annual unannounced re-certification audits shall be recognized on the SQFI certificate as an "SQFI select site."
Validation	As defined in the Food and Agriculture Organization's CODEX Alimentarius Commission. Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) System and Guidelines for its Application – Annex to CAC/RCP 1 – 1969, Rev. 4-2003), – "A system, which identifies, evaluates and controls hazards which are significant for food safety. Essentially validation as applied to control limits seeks to prove that the intended result was achieved and that it actually worked.
Verification	As defined in the Food and Agriculture Organization's CODEX Alimentarius Commission. Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) System and Guidelines for its Application – Annex to CAC/RCP 1 – 1969, Rev. 4-2003), – "A system, which identifies, evaluates and controls hazards which are significant for food safety. Essentially verification as applied to control measures seeks to prove that the control measure was done according to its design.
Verification Schedule	A schedule outlining the frequency and responsibility for carrying out the methods, procedures or tests additional to those used in monitoring, to determine that the HACCP study was completed correctly, that the relevant SQF System is compliant with the relevant food safety and/or food quality plan and that it continues to be effective.
Vision and Mission Statement	A statement issued by senior site management outlining the site's quality goals and objectives. It may be combined with, or separate from the site's food safety policy.
Water Treatment	The microbiological, chemical, and/or physical treatment of water for use in processing or cleaning, to ensure its potability and suitability for use.

Appendix 3: SQF Logo Rules of Use

1 Introduction

- 1.1 The SQF logo is owned by SQFI.
- 1.2 Sites at all levels of certification will have the right to use the SQF logo upon and for the duration of certification. There will be no fee payable by sites for the right to use the SQF logo, other than fees payable to obtain and maintain certification.
- 1.3 Sites obtain no property in the SQF logo.
- 1.4 Sites may only use the SQF logo in accordance with these rules of use, which are designed to protect the integrity and enhance the value of the SQF logo.
- 1.5 SQFI delegates any or all of its functions described herein to a SQFI licensed certification body (CB).
- 1.6 These rules of use regulate the use of the SQF logo by certified sites only. These rules of use do not regulate the use of the SQF logo by SQFI, CBs or other entities licensed by SQFI to use them, unless otherwise provided for in this or another instrument.

2 Conditions for Use

- 2.1 A site shall, for the duration of its certification, prove to the satisfaction of SQFI and the CB that its SQF System satisfies the requirements set forth in the current edition of the SQF Food Safety and/or Quality Code or that it meets the requirements spelled out in the SQF Food Safety Fundamentals; and
- 2.2 A site must only use the SQF logo in accordance with its certificate and these rules of use.

3 Reproduction

- 3.1 If a site wishes to reproduce the SQF logo it must do so strictly in accordance with the requirements and specifications set out in Schedule 2.

4 Obligations of a Site

- 4.1 A site must:
 - a) comply fully with these rules of use;
 - b) direct any queries regarding their intended use of the SQF logo to the certifying CB who issued the certificate;
 - c) discontinue any use of the SQF logo to which SQFI or the certifying CB reasonably objects;
 - d) operate entirely within the scope of its certificate, including the certification schedule. Subsidiary companies and site addresses not included on the certificate of registration are not certified to use the SQF logo;
 - e) give SQFI, a CB and/or their agents access to examine publicity material and all other such items bearing or indicating the SQF logo for the purpose of confirming compliance with these rules of use and the certificate; and
 - f) pay within the specified time any fees set by SQFI.

5 Grounds for Suspending or Ceasing Use of the SQF Logo

- 5.1 The permission for a site to use the SQF logo will:
 - a) be suspended if the site's certification is suspended; all efforts must be made to suspend in the manufacturing process of the use of the SQF logo upon certificate suspension;
 - b) cease to be used within the operation if the site's certification is withdrawn, relinquished or not renewed.
- 5.2 Conditions for suspending or ceasing a site's permission to use the SQF logo, to be notified by the certifying CB, include (but are not necessarily limited to):
 - a) suspended if the site breaches or fails to comply with these rules of use;
 - b) suspended if the site fails to use the SQF logo in accordance with its certificate, including the certification schedule;
 - c) ceased if the site uses the SQF logo in a way that, in the opinion of SQFI or the CB, is detrimental to the SQF logo or the SQF program as a whole, is misleading to the public or otherwise contrary to law; or

- d) ceased if the site has an administrator, receiver, receiver and manager, official manager or provisional liquidator appointed over its assets or where an order is made or a resolution passed for the winding up of the site (except for the purpose of amalgamation or reconstruction) or the site ceases to carry on business or becomes bankrupt, applies to take the benefit of any law for the relief of bankrupt or insolvent debtors or makes any arrangement or composition with its creditors.

6 Disclaimer

- 6.1 SQFI may from time to time alter these rules of use or make new rules but no such alteration or new rule shall affect the use of the SQF logo by a site until six (6) months have expired from the date the alteration or new rules of use are first published by SQFI on its website (sqfi.com) unless specified by SQFI.

SCHEDULE 1: REPRODUCTION REQUIREMENTS FOR THE SQF LOGO

Introduction

Sites who achieve and maintain certification to the SQF Food Safety Fundamentals or the SQF Food Safety Code and/or the SQF Quality Code are granted permission by their certifying CB to use the SQF logo, subject to the rules of use and the conditions set out hereunder per site.



Electronic SQF logo files are to be obtained from the certifying CB.

Color Format	For Use On
Full Color Reproduction: see PMS color format set out at Schedule 2 Clause 2.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">brochures, flyers, advertisements, press releases, company website, email signature linesinternal documents and training materials
Single Color Reproduction: black and white.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">brochures, flyers, advertisements, press releases, company website, email signature linesinternal documents and training materials

Color Reproduction of the SQF Logo

Reproduction of the SQF logo is to be clear, precise and of the highest standard. The following guidelines govern full color reproduction.



PMS 3005C
CMYK: C=100, M=34, Y=0, K=2

Dimensions

To ensure readability, do not reproduce the SQF logo smaller than indicated below. Larger variation to these dimensions is permitted provided that any such variation is proportional to the dimensions given below.



Special Cases

Where it is demonstrated that alternative reproduction of the SQF logo enhances the status of the SQF logo and/or SQFI, then the alternative is permitted provided it is approved by the certifying CB. All requests must be provided in writing **per certified site** to the certifying CB and SQFI.

Appendix 4: Requirements for SQF Multi-site Certification

1 Scope

- 1.1 This appendix outlines the requirements for establishing and maintaining certification of a multi-site program that is managed by an SQF certified central site that is engaged in low risk activities.
- 1.2 The multi-site program involves a central packinghouse, manufacturer of primary products, warehouse or distribution center and the number of sub-sites shall be a minimum of twenty (20).

2 Definitions

- 2.1 A SQF multi-site program is comprised of a central site under which activities are planned to manage and control the food safety and quality management systems of a network of sub-sites under a legal or contractual link.
- 2.2 For the purpose of this Code the definitions outlined in Appendix 2: Glossary and the following definitions apply.
- 2.3 The central-site is an entity certified to a SQF Food Safety Code (i.e. manufacturing/packhouse or distribution center) or eligible for such certification, has a network of primary supplier sub-sites that are eligible for certification to an appropriate SQF Food Safety Code and are all involved in similar activities as per 3.7 below. The central site and all sub-sites are all located in the one country and operate under the same food safety legislation.

3 Eligibility Criteria for the Multi-site Organization

- 3.1 The central site is the entity responsible for the SQF multi-site program.
- 3.2 Sub-sites shall be linked to the central site by a legal or contractual arrangement.
- 3.3 The central site and not any sub-site shall be contracted with the certification body. The central site and all sub-sites in the multi-site program shall be audited by one certification body.
- 3.4 Central sites shall implement an SQF System that includes management of the sub-sites and internal audit of the sub-sites. The central site and the sub-sites shall be certified to a SQF Food Safety Code. Central sites can be certified to the SQF Quality Code however, sub-sites are not eligible for certification to the SQF Quality Code.
- 3.5 Sub-sites shall implement an SQF System which is subject to continuous surveillance by the central site.
- 3.6 The central site shall have authoritative control of the food safety management system of all subsites, including implementation of corrective actions when needed in any sub-site, and shall retain all relevant documentation associated with the sub-sites. These shall be included in the agreement between the central site and the sub-sites.
- 3.7 The product(s) or service(s) provided by each of the sub-sites shall be substantially of the same kind and produced according to the same fundamental methods and procedures. The size and/or complexity of each of the sub-sites shall be similar.
- 3.8 The central site shall establish and maintain SQF certification for the duration of the SQF multi-site program.
- 3.9 The central site's SQF management system shall be administered under a centrally controlled plan and be subject to central management review.
- 3.10 The central site shall demonstrate an ability to collect and analyze data from all sites, including the central site, and have the authority and ability to initiate organizational change if required.
- 3.11 The central administration function and the sub-sites shall be subject to the central site's internal audit program and shall be audited in accordance with that program. Internal audits shall be conducted at sub-sites, prior to the central site certification audit, in a quantity sufficient to allow

the certification body to access whether the site is in compliance and apply to sub-site sample selection (see 8.0 below). All sub-sites are required, within a calendar year or season, to have an internal audit as per 4.2 below.

4. Internal Audits

- 4.1 The central site shall document its internal audit procedure which shall include an internal audit schedule and outline the method of conducting audits of sub-sites and the central site administrative function.
- 4.2 An internal audit, which includes all relevant elements of a SQF Food Safety Code, and the Good Agriculture/Aquaculture Practices (GAP), Good Manufacturing Practices (GMP) or Good Distribution Practices (GDP) module(s) applicable to the food sector category, shall be conducted at least once per year, and during periods of peak activity at all sub-sites included in the multi-site certification.

5. Internal Audit Personnel

- 5.1 Personnel conducting internal audits shall:
 - i. Successfully complete the Implementing SQF Systems training course.
 - ii. Successfully complete internal auditor training.
 - iii. Have competence in the same food sector category as the internal audit.
- 5.2 Personnel reviewing the internal audits of the multi-site organization and evaluating the results of those internal audits shall:
 - i. Be separate from personnel conducting the internal audits;
 - ii. Complete Internal Auditing Training; and
 - iii. Meet the criteria of an SQF practitioner
- 5.3 Where the internal audits are contracted out:
 - i. The contractor shall be a registered SQF Auditor or Consultant,
 - ii. The central site shall be accountable for the actions and effectiveness of the work completed by the contractor; and
 - iii. Contract arrangements shall comply with 2.3.3 of the applicable SQF Food Safety Code.

6. Auditing and Certifying the Multi-site Organization

- 6.1 The Audits and certification of an SQF multi-site organization shall be completed by a SQF licensed and accredited certification body. The audit includes:
 - i. The certification audit (including initial desk audit of the central site only and site audit);
 - ii. Surveillance audits; and
 - iii. Re-certification audits.
- 6.2 The initial certification audit and subsequent surveillance and re-certification audits of the multi-site organization shall be centered on the central site, its internal audit function and a sample of the sub-sites. Record reviews for sub-sites will be completed at the sub-site site audit.

7. Audit Frequency

- 7.1 The certification audit of the central site and a sample (refer to 8.0) of sub-sites are conducted every twelve months.
- 7.2 Re-certification audits for the central site is conducted on the anniversary of the last day of the initial certification audit, plus or minus 30 calendar days. For seasonal operations timing for sub-sites should be guided by the harvesting dates, that may be weather dependent, as well as time required for the central site to adequately complete the Internal Audit Program.
- 7.3 Within each certification and re-certification audit cycle, the central site shall be audited before the majority of the sample of sub-sites. It is recognized that for seasonal operations harvesting dates and having product available to the central site may require some sub-sites audits being conducted prior to the central site audit.

- 7.4 Surveillance audits are conducted for any site in the multi-site program that receives a 'C-Complies' rating. Surveillance audits are conducted six (6) months from the last day of the last certification audit, plus or minus thirty (30) calendar days or as per Part A 4.3 for seasonal operations. Where a sub-site is subject to a surveillance audit due to a "C - Complies" rating, the internal audit of that sub-site by the central site shall also be reviewed. If the sub-site is not in operational within the six (6) month time frame for the surveillance audit then it shall be audited within the first two (2) weeks of the subsequent harvest and automatically be included in the sub-site sampling calculation (refer to 9.0).
- 7.5 If the central site or any one of the sampled sub-sites is identified as having a critical non-conformity at an audit, or otherwise achieves only an "F – Fails to comply" rating, the certificates for the central site and ALL sub-sites shall be suspended until such time as a "C – Complies" rating or better is achieved at a further round of audits at the central site and a sample of sub-sites. The sub-site(s) that receives the "F – Fails to comply" rating shall be included in the sub-site selection process (refer to 8.0) for the next audit cycle.

8. Selecting the Sub-sites

- 8.1 The selection of the sample is the responsibility of the certification body.
- 8.2 The sample is partly selective based on the factors set out below and partly non-selective, and shall result in a range of different sub-sites being selected, without excluding the random element of sampling. At least twenty-five (25) percent of the sub-sites selected shall be based on random selection.
- 8.3 The sample of sub-sites shall be selected so that the differences among the selected sub-sites, over the period of validity of the certificate, are as large as possible.
- 8.4 The sub-site selection criteria shall include among others the following aspects:
- i. Results of internal audits or previous certification assessments;
 - ii. Records of complaints and other relevant aspects of correction and corrective action;
 - iii. Significant variations in the size of the sub-sites;
 - iv. Variations in the work procedures;
 - v. Modifications since the last certification assessment;
 - vi. Geographical dispersion; and
 - vii. New suppliers added into the program (refer to 10.0).
- 8.5 The certification body shall inform the central site of the sub-sites that will comprise the sample and in a timely manner that will allow the central site adequate time to prepare for the audits.
- 8.6 The central site shall ensure that all sub-sites listed as being included in the sub-site audit selection process are registered with SQF (Part A, 1.3). The central site shall also ensure that the SQF database is updated to reflect any sub-sites being removed from the previous year multi-site program.

9. Determining the Size of the Sub-sites Sample

- 9.1 The certification body shall record the justification for applying a sample size outside that described in this clause.
- 9.2 The minimum number of sub-sites to be audited at a certification audit or re-certification audit is the square root of the number of sub-sites with 1.5 as a co-efficient ($y=1.5\sqrt{x}$), rounded to the higher whole number. As per 1.2 above a minimum of twenty (20) sub-sites are required.
- 9.3 Where a primary sub-site has 4 or more secondary sites (e.g. growing areas), the primary location shall be audited and 50% of the secondary sites. More than fifty (50) percent can be audited if there is evidence that there are grounds to justify the further audit time.
- 9.4 The size of sample shall be increased where the certification body's risk analysis of the activity covered by the management system subject to certification indicates special circumstances in respect of factors like:
- i. Major variations in processes undertaken at each sub-site;
 - ii. Records of complaints and other relevant aspects of correction and corrective action;
 - iii. Indication of an overall breakdown of food safety controls; or

- iv. Inadequate internal audits or action arising from internal audit findings.

10. Additional Sub-sites

- 10.1 On the application of a new sub-site or group of sub-sites to join an already certified SQF multi-site program, each new sub-site or group of sub-sites shall be included in the audit sample for the next re-certification audit. The new sub-sites shall be added to the existing sites for determining the sample size for future re-certification audits. Sub-sites transferring from another multi-site group or from a stand-alone certification are not classified as "new" and are not subject to being included in the sub-site audit sample unless part of the random selection process or due to auditor/Certification Body discretion.
- 10.2 New sub-sites shall not be added to the sub-site list once the list has been verified and agreed to by the central site and the certification body during the annual sample site selection process. These sites can have their SQF systems components (SQF Food Safety system elements) managed by the central site but will be certified as a stand-alone operation and subject to initial certification requirements, including desk and site audits.

11. Non-Conformities

- 11.1 When non-conformities are found at any individual sub-site through the central site's internal auditing, investigation by the central site shall take place to determine whether the other sub-sites may be affected. The certification body shall require evidence that the central site has taken action to rectify all non-conformities found during internal audits and that all non-conformities are reviewed to determine whether they indicate an overall system deficiency applicable to all sub-sites or not. If they are found to do so, appropriate corrective action shall be taken both at the central site and at the individual sub-sites. The central site shall demonstrate to the certification body the justification for all follow-up action.
- 11.2 When non-conformities are found at the central site or at any individual sub-site through auditing by the certification body, action shall be taken by the certification body as outlined in Part A, 3.2.
- 11.3 When non-conformities for system elements are found at the central site, the certification body shall increase its sampling frequency until it is satisfied that control has been re-established by the central site.
- 11.4 At the time of the initial certification and subsequent re-certification a certificate shall not be issued to the central site and sub-sites until satisfactory corrective action is taken to close out all non-conformities.
- 11.5 It shall not be admissible that, in order to overcome the obstacle raised by the existence of non-conformity at a single sub-site, the central site seeks to exempt from the scope of certification the "problematic" sub-site during the certification, surveillance or re-certification audit.

12. Certificate Issued for a Multi-site Organization

- 12.1 A certificate shall be issued to the central site and all sub-sites within the SQF multi-site program. The central site's certificate shall include an appendix listing all sub-sites participating in the multi-site program. The sub-site certification shall state within its scope of certification that it is part of a multi-site certification and shall list all primary and secondary sub-sites. Products listed on sub-site certificates may vary from the central site certificate, provided the scope of operations meets requirements of 3.7 and the certification body has conducted an on-site audit during harvesting activities of those products not included in the Multi-site program.
- 12.2 The certification date for the central site and sub-sites shall be the date of the last audit conducted in that certification cycle. The certificate expiry date shall be based on the certificate decision of the last date of the sub-site audit.
- 12.3 The certificate for all sites in the multi-site program will be withdrawn, if the central site or any of the sub-sites do not fulfill the necessary criteria for maintaining their certificate.
- 12.4 The list of sub-sites shall be kept updated by the central site. The central site shall inform the certification body about the closure of any of the sub-sites or the addition of new sub-sites. Failure to provide such information will be considered by the certification body as a misuse of the certificate, and the multi-site organization's certificate shall be suspended until the matter is corrected to the satisfaction of the certification body.