

# SQF Food Safety Code for Food Retail

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.

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## **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*

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## Part A: Implementing and Maintaining the SQF Food Safety Code for Retail

The SQF Code 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 system for food and pet food manufacturing and the manufacture of animal feed. Other documents are available for:

SQF Food Safety Fundamentals (for small and developing businesses)

The SQF Food Safety Code for Primary Production

The SQF Food Safety Code for Manufacturing

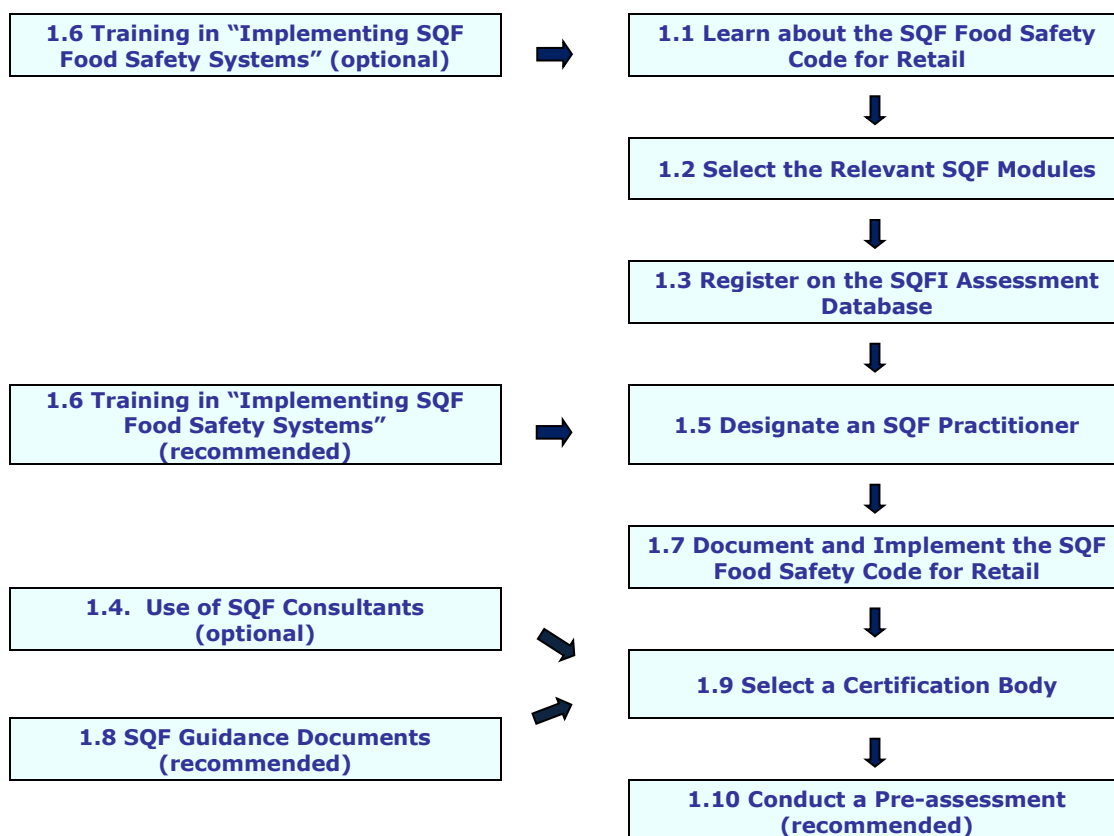
The SQF Food Safety Code for Storage and Distribution

The SQF Food Safety Code for Manufacture of Food Packaging

The SQF Quality Code

### 1. Preparing for Certification

Figure 1: Steps for Certification



### 1.1 Learn about the SQF Food Safety Code for Retail

There are several ways to learn how to implement the SQF Food Safety Code for Retail within your food business. The following options are available:

- Attend an "Implementing SQF Systems" training course (refer to 1.6) through a licensed SQF Training Center (recommended);
- Take the online "Implementing SQF Systems" training course available from the SQFI website (sqfi.com);
- Train yourself by downloading the SQF Food Safety Code for Retail from the SQFI website (sqfi.com) free of charge, and read how to apply it to your organization.

### 1.2 Select the Relevant SQF Modules

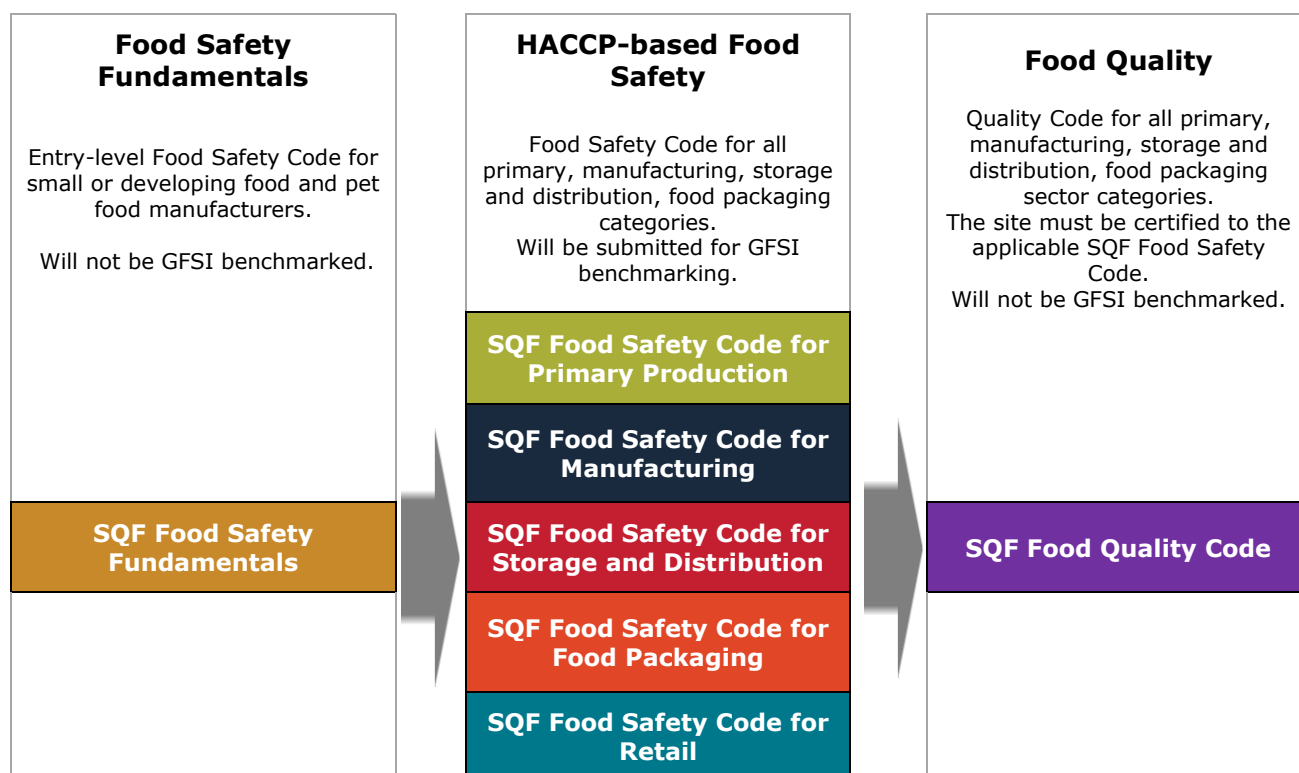
The SQFI recognizes that food safety practices differ depending on the food safety risk to the product and the process, and has designed the SQF Food Safety Code for Retail to meet the individual requirements of the retail industry sector.

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 module that applies to the food retail industry sector.

This document contains the certification program owner management requirements (Part A), the system elements, and Good Retail Practices (GRP) modules for food retail.

All manufacturers are required to implement the retail system elements plus the applicable Good Retail Practices (GRP) module:



SQF Food Safety Code for Retail		
Fsc	Category	Applicable GRP Modules
24	Food Retailing	Module 15: GRP for retail

### 1.3 Register on the SQF Database

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

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

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

### 1.4 Use of SQF Consultants

Organizations can choose to develop and implement their SQF food safety System using their own qualified resources or they can utilize the services of a SQF consultant. All SQF consultants are registered by the SQFI to work in the Retail sector. They are issued an identity card indicating the Retail food sector category in which they are registered. Organizations are encouraged to confirm an SQF consultant's registration details at 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 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 Retail requires that every organization have a suitably qualified SQF practitioner to oversee the development, implementation, review and maintenance of the SQF food safety System, including the Good Retail Practices (GRPs) and food safety plans. The requirements for an SQF practitioner are described in 2.1.6.2 and 2.1.6.3 of the SQF Food Safety Code for Retail. Some companies may choose to have more than one SQF practitioner to meet operational requirements.

### 1.6 SQF Implementation Training

A two-day "Implementing Food Safety Systems for Retail" 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 Retail are encouraged to participate in a training course. Details about the training centers and the countries in which they operate are available at sqfi.com. The dates and locations of the courses can be obtained by contacting the training centers listed on the SQFI website (sqfi.com).

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

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

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### 1.7 Document and Implement the SQF Food Safety Code for Retail

To achieve SQF certification, the organization must document and implement the relevant system elements and module 15 (GRPs) of the SQF Food Safety Code for Retail.

This requires a two stage process:

Document the SQF food safety System – Prepare policies, procedures, work instructions and specifications that meet the relevant modules of the SQF Food Safety Code for Retail. In other words, "say what you do."

Implement the SQF food safety 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 Retail. In other words, "do what you say." SQFI recommends that a minimum of two (2) months of records be available before a company office and store audit is conducted.

### 1.8 SQF Guidance Documents

Guidance documents are available for SQF Systems from the SQFI website (sqfi.com). These documents are available to help the organization interpret the requirements of the SQF Food Safety Code for Retail and assist with documenting and implementing an SQF System. The documents are developed with the assistance of food sector technical experts.

The guidance documents are available to assist the organization, but are not auditable documents. Where there is a divergence between the guidance document and the SQF Food Safety Code for Retail, the SQF Food Safety Code for Retail 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 organizations can request a quote or select a certification body online once they have registered.

Organizations seeking to implement an SQF Multi-Store sampling program (refer to Appendix 1) must indicate this in their application to the certification body. The agreed Multi-Store sampling program, including the identification of the central site (s) and number and names of the sub-sites (stores), 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 organization's implemented SQF Retail System. A pre-assessment audit can assist in identifying gaps in the organization's SQF 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, SQF consultant, or 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 selects the most appropriate qualified SQF food safety auditor(s) for the organization's SQF Retail certification audit. The SQF food safety auditor must be registered for the same food sector category (ies) as the organization. The certification body shall ensure no SQF food safety auditor conducts audits of the same organization for more than three (3) consecutive certification cycles.

The certification body must advise the organization of the name of the SQF food safety auditor at the time that the SQF audit is scheduled. The organization 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

SQF food safety certification is specific. When retail activities are carried out in different brands/banners/franchises but are overseen by the same senior, operational, and technical management, and are covered by the one SQF System, the certification can be expanded to include all brands/banners/franchises for the organization. All brands/banners/franchises must be listed in the store(s) description in the SQF assessment database.

The scope of certification forms part of the certificate. It describes the organization and store(s), the food sector category (refer to Appendix 1) and the risk levels. The certificate outlines the location of the corporate office(s), store(s), and nature and extent of the SQF certification.

The scope of certification, including corporate office(s), brands(s), banner(s), franchise(s), store(s), food sector category and risk levels must be clearly identified and agreed upon between the organization 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 products covered by the SQF Food Safety Code for Retail include all food products for sale to the customer and/or consumer, raw materials processed in-store, finished products and pet foods for domestic animals.

The entire corporate office(s), brand(s), banner(s), franchise(s), store(s) (including all premises, support buildings, silos, tanks, loading and unloading bays and external grounds) must be included in the scope of certification. Where an organization seeks to exempt part of the store(s) for any reason, the request for exemption must be submitted to the certification body in writing and shall be listed in the store(s) description in the SQF assessment database. Exclusions that are permitted: nonfood products and commissary, warehouse and distribution operations that are covered by alternative certifications. Exclusions that are not permitted: individual departments or food categories, in-store processing that is dedicated to that store, and specific stores due to performance. The organization shall select the risk level(s) that best describes their store(s).

#### Low Risk

- Pre-packaged foods only sold as ambient stable, refrigerated, frozen or combinations of these
- Bulk whole Produce
- Home delivery of ambient stable food

#### High Risk

- Display of unpackaged foods excluding bulk produce
- On-site food preparation
- Restaurant with food preparation
- Cut produce
- Off-site food preparation
- Home delivery of refrigerated, frozen or hot food

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### 2.3 The Initial Certification Audit

The SQF certification audit consists of two stages:

- i. The corporate office audit(s) is undertaken to verify that the organization's SQF System documentation, policies and procedures meets the requirements of the SQF Food Safety Code for Retail.
- ii. The store audit is conducted at selected store location(s) and determines the effective implementation of the organization's documented SQF System.

Where an organization 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 thirty (30) days from the start of the season.

### 2.4 Identifying the Scope of the Audit

The organization and the certification body shall agree on the audit scope before the certification audit begins. The scope of the audit shall cover the food sector category, and the risk level listed under the scope of certification for the store(s). The audit scope shall cover all processes under the control of the organization including from raw material receipt to sale and delivery of purchased product.

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

### 2.5 Audit Duration Guide

Once the certification body and organization have agreed on the scope of certification, the certification body shall provide the organization with an estimate of the time it will take to complete the certification audit. The audit times will vary according to the size and complexity of the store operations. Factors that can impact the audit duration include:

- i. The scope of the audit;
- ii. The size and number of corporate office(s), brand(s), banner(s), franchises, store(s) and number of departments within each store;
- iii. The number and complexity of product lines and the overall processes;
- iv. The number of high or low risk store(s);
- 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);
- viii. The cooperation of the organization's personnel.

Tables 2 and 3 provide a guide to the duration of an SQF certification audit. Justification is required if the certification body deviates from this guide by greater than thirty (30) percent.

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)
SQF Food Safety Code for Retail	2 days/ corporate office location (this includes brand, banner and franchise office that need to be audited)

**Table 3: Site Audit Duration Table**

Step 1	Step 2	Step 3	
Risk Categories	Basic duration (days)	Additional Days based on Size of Facility	Additional days based on complexity of product lines and overall processes
Low Risk	.5 days/store	0 – 30,999 ft <sup>2</sup> = 0 31,000 – 75,999 ft <sup>2</sup> = 0.5	Canning, Fermenting, smoking for Preservation, ROP, Brining or Pickling
High Risk	1 day/store	76,000 – 150,000 ft <sup>2</sup> = 1.0	

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.

## **2.6 The Corporate Office Audit**

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

- i. An appropriately qualified SQF practitioner is designated;
- ii. The food safety plan and the associated Risk Management, Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (CCP) determinations, validations and verifications are appropriately documented and endorsed by the SQF practitioner;
- iii. The documented system is relevant to the scope of certification, the products processed, stored, sold and delivered thereunder.

The certification body shall notify the organization of required corrections or corrective actions, or any aspects of the SQF System that require improvement or adjustment. The certification body will verify that all corrections or corrective actions for major and minor non-conformances have been addressed before proceeding store audit(s). Organizations that meet the multi-site requirements should refer to Appendix 1.

## **2.7 The Store Audit**

The store audit is conducted on-site by the SQF food safety auditor appointed by the certification body. It is conducted at a time agreed upon between the organization and the certification body, when the main processes are operating; one-third (1/3) of the store audits will be unannounced. The store audit must include a review of the entire facility, including the inside and outside of the building, regardless of the scope of certification. The store audit determines if the SQF System is effectively implemented as documented. It establishes and verifies the:

- i. Effectiveness of the SQF System in its entirety;
- ii. Food safety hazards are effectively identified and controlled;
- iii. Effective interaction between all elements of the SQF System; and
- iv. Level of commitment demonstrated by the organization to maintaining an effective SQF System and to meeting their food safety regulatory and customer requirements.

## 2.8 Seasonal Operations

Initial certification audits for organizations involved in seasonal operation (i.e. a period in which the business activity is conducted over not more than five consecutive months) shall be conducted during the peak business of the season.

## 2.9 System Elements

All applicable elements of the System Elements and the relevant elements of the Good Retail Practices (GRP) module shall be checked 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 Food Safety Management General Requirements
- 2.1.2 Food Safety Policy
- 2.1.3 Food Safety and Quality Management System
- 2.1.4 Management Responsibility
- 2.1.5 Management Review
- 2.1.6 Resource Management
- 2.2.1 Document Control
- 2.2.2 Records
- 2.4.1 Food Safety Plan
- 2.4.3 Hazard & Risk Management System
- 2.5.1 Internal Audit
- 2.5.2 Corrective Action
- 2.5.3 Control of Measuring and Monitoring Devices
- 2.6.1 Product Identification
- 2.6.2 Product Trace
- 2.6.3.2 Product Withdrawal and Recall
- 2.7.1 Food Defense
- 2.8.2 Training Program

Mandatory elements are designated with "Mandatory" in the system elements of the SQF Food Safety Code for Retail.

## 2.10 Non-conformities

Where the SQF food safety auditor finds deviations from the requirements of relevant modules of the SQF Food Safety Code for Retail, the auditor shall advise the organization 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 Retail 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 corporate office audits.

Timelines for the resolution of corrective actions are addressed in Part A: 3.2 – Store Corrective Actions

### **2.11 Audit Evidence Record and 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 retail audits. The audit checklist is available from the SQFI assessment database and is customized for SQF retail sector. The SQF Food Safety Code for Retail checklist is designed to ensure the uniform application of SQF retail 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 (i.e. the audit evidence record)

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

Non-conformity identified during the SQF Retail audit shall be accurately described in the SQF retail audit report and shall fully describe the clause of the SQF Food Safety Code for Retail 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 facility audit.

The electronic audit evidence record shall be completed by the SQF auditor and provided to the certification body for technical review.

The certification body shall review and approve the audit evidence record 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 (45) calendar days from the last day of the facility audit (refer Part A, 3.4).

The SQF retail audit reports shall remain the property of the organization and shall not be distributed to other parties without the permission of the organization.

### 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 that the audit report is complete. The certification decision shall be taken by the certification body based on the evidence of compliance and non-conformity collected by the SQF food safety auditor during the SQF retail audit. Although SQFI provides guidance on certification, the certification body is responsible for deciding whether or not certification is justified and granted.

Any certification decisions that are made outside the scope of this Section 3: The Initial Certification Decision requires the certification body to provide written justification to SQFI.

#### 3.2 Store Audit Corrective Actions

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

A **minor non-conformity** shall be corrected, verified and closed out in the SQF assessment database within thirty (30) calendar days of the completion of the store 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 organization shall be advised of the extended timeframe. Extended timeframes for close out of minor non-conformities shall not impede and delay certificate issuance.

A **major non-conformity** shall be corrected and appropriate corrective action verified and closed out in the SQF assessment database within thirty (30) calendar days of the completion of the store 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 organization to mitigate the risk to product safety. However, in such cases, the non-conformity must still be verified and closed within the SQF assessment database and the auditor shall document all details of justification of the extension, how the risk is being controlled, and the agreed completion date.

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

#### 3.3 Audit Score and Rating

Based on the evidence collected by the SQF food safety auditor, each applicable aspect of the SQF retail store audit is automatically scored when the audit report is uploaded to the SQF assessment database. Corporate office 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 store 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 organization's store against the SQF Food Safety Code for Retail, 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	Certification <sup>1</sup>	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

<sup>1</sup>. Certification also requires that all major non-conformities are closed out within thirty (30) calendar days and minor non-conformities within thirty (30) calendar days (see 3.2 for extended time frame).

### 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 Retail, edition 8;”
- v. The scope of registration – food sector category (ies) and products;
- vi. Dates of audit (last day), date of next re-certification audit, date of certification decision, and date of certificate expiry;
- vii. Indication of unannounced re-certification audit (where applicable);
- viii. Signatures of the authorized officer and issuing officer;
- ix. The SQF logo.

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

### 3.5 Failure to Comply

Where an organization’s store achieves an “F – fails to comply” rating at a certification audit, the organization is considered to have failed the SQF food safety audit. The organization must then re-apply for another audit.

When the organization’s re-application occurs within six (6) months of the last audit date, and with the same certification body, a store audit shall be scheduled but a corporate office 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 corporate office audit and store audit are required.

## 4. Surveillance and Re-certification

### 4.1 Maintaining Certification

To maintain SQF retail certification, an organization's store(s) 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 organization's store(s) 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 store 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 food safety System continues to be implemented as documented;
- iii. Consider and take appropriate action where changes to the organization's operations are made and the impact of those changes on the organization's SQF System;
- iv. Confirm continued compliance with the requirements of the SQF Food Safety Code for Retail;
- v. Verify all critical steps remain under control; and
- vi. Contribute to continued improvement of the organization'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 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 surveillance audit date 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 organization'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 an organization's store's re-certification audit timeframe and certificate expiry date including instances in extreme circumstances such as acts of nature or extreme weather. Seasonal organization's store(s) shall refer to section 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 organization's store'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 organization's store's SQF retail 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 store's SQF System and business operation

#### 4.5 Re-certification Audit – Seasonal Operations

The re-certification audit of a seasonal operation shall follow the requirements of Part A, 4.3. 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 organization shall temporarily reset the re-certification audit date so that it falls during the peak business of the season.

If the organization's store wishes to permanently change the re-certification audit date due to seasonal conditions, the request must be made to SQFI 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 corporate office audit is required as part of a re-certification audit. The organization's documentation shall be reviewed as necessary as part of the store audit.
- ii. If the organization fails to permit the re-certification or surveillance audit within the agreed timeframe, the certification body shall immediately suspend the organization's store's certificate.
- iii. If the organization's store receives an "F – fails to comply" rating at the re-certification or surveillance audit, the certification body shall immediately suspend the organization's store's certificate.
- iv. If the organization's store fails to close out non-conformities within the agreed timeframe, the certification body shall immediately suspend the organization's store's certificate.

#### 4.7 Unannounced Re-certification Audit

Within each certification cycle the certification body shall conduct one third (1/3) unannounced re-certification store audits of the organization. The unannounced store audits shall occur in the organization's store(s) within the sixty (60) day re-certification window (i.e., the anniversary date of the initial certification audit +/- thirty (30) days).

- i. The organization's store's certification cycle begins with the initial certification audit date. Unannounced re-certification store audits shall occur every certification cycle.

- ii. Unannounced store audits shall be conducted on the initial certification audit but not on surveillance store audits.
- iii. If an organization changes certification bodies, the organization's unannounced re-certification store audit schedule shall not change.
- iv. The unannounced re-certification store audit shall follow the protocol under the SQF Food Safety Code for Retail, Part A, 4.4, 4.6 and 4.6.
- v. Multi-Store Sampling Program Retail Companies are not exempted from unannounced store audits.
- vi. The date of the unannounced store audit shall be determined by the certification body within the sixty (60) day re-certification audit window.
- vii. A defined blackout period shall be established by negotiation between the organization and their certification body that prevents the unannounced re-certification store audits from occurring out of season, during holidays or when the store(s) is not operating for legitimate business reasons. Blackout dates shall not exceed 20 days within each calendar year.
- viii. Immediate suspension of the organization's store's certificate will occur if a store(s) refuses entry to the auditor for an unannounced store audit.

#### 4.8 Suspending Certification

The certification body shall suspend the SQF retail certificate if the organization or the store

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

When the organization's store's certificate is suspended, the certification body shall immediately amend the organization's store's 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 organization of the reasons for the action taken and the date of effect;
- ii. copy the Compliance Manager of SQFI on the notice of suspension sent to the organization,
- iii. request that the organization 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 organization's store'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 store audit and within thirty (30) calendar days of receiving the corrective action plan;
- ii. When corrective action has been successfully implemented, re-instate the organization's store's status on the SQFI database and give written notice to the organization that their store's certificate is no longer suspended;
- iii. Not more than six (6) months after suspension, the certification body shall conduct a further unannounced store visit to verify the effective implementation of the corrective action plan and that the organization's SQF System is achieving stated objectives, and
- iv. Copy SQFI on the notice indicating lifting of the suspension sent to the organization.

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

Organizations must comply with Reference Appendix 3: SQF Logo Rules of Use.

#### **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 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 Risk Level of Certification

When an organization's store desires to change risk levels to their scope of certification, the organization's store shall request the changed scope of certification in writing to the certification body.

The certification body shall determine whether or not an audit of the additional corporate office documentation and store process is required. This will depend on the product risk, similarities to existing processes and products, and proximity to the next scheduled audit date.

Based on this determination, the certification body shall either issue a new certificate, or advise the organization in writing why the new certificate cannot be issued.

When a new certificate is issued, the certification body shall make the appropriate changes to the organization's store's record on the SQFI assessment database.

### 5.2 Changing the Certification Body

An organization can change its certification body after one 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.

Organization's store's 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 an organization changes certification bodies, the store's certificate issued by the old certification body remains valid until the expected expiration date. The certification number and re-certification date are transferred with the organization's store(s) to the new certification body.

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

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

### 5.3 Notification of Product Recalls and Regulatory Infringements

Upon identification that a certified organization's store(s) initiates a food safety event that requires public notification for in-store produced products (such as Class I or Class II recall, or the receipt of a regulatory warning letter), the organization shall notify the certification body and the SQFI in writing at [foodsafetycrisis@sqfi.com](mailto:foodsafetycrisis@sqfi.com) within twenty-four (24) hours of the event. The organization's selected certification body and the SQFI shall be listed in the organization's essential contacts lists as defined in the system elements, element 2.6.3.2 of the SQF Food Safety Code for Retail.

The certification body shall notify the SQFI within forty-eight (48) hours of any action they intend 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, organizations shall be required to allow additional SQF authorized staff or auditors into their store(s) during or after their audit has taken place.



## 5.5 Change of Ownership

When a certified organization's business or its store(s) 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 retail certification and the existing certification number. In cases where the ownership of a certified store changes but the staff with major responsibility for the management and oversight of the SQF 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 the organization's management and personnel, the certification body shall complete corporate office and store 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 organization relocates the store(s) business premises, for non-multi-store sample program certificate, the organization's store's certificate is no longer valid until a successful re-certification of the new premises is conducted.

## 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 not in the organization's food sector category, or in high risk audits 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 retail audit is permitted provided the organization 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 Compliance Manager, SQFI. Technical experts are to be present during the store(s) 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 organization's corporate office(s) and store(s) being audited.

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

For the purpose of resolving a conflict, the English version of the SQF Food Safety Code for Retail 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 organization in question, or anybody related to the organization, 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” 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 and the organization.

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

An organization 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 organization shall outline the reasons in writing to the certification body.

#### **5.10 Complaints, Appeals and Disputes**

The certification body shall document its procedure for handling and resolving appeals, complaints and disputes made by an organization, or made by another party about an organization.

When an organization 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 an organization 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 retail 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 an organization’s SQF System or any other condition not in accordance with the SQF Food Safety Code for Retail and/or other supporting documents, the certification body shall suspend certification as outlined in section 4.6 above.

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 and investigations shall be available to the SQFI upon request. Where a complaint, appeal or dispute cannot be satisfactorily resolved between the organization and the certification body, the matter shall be referred to the SQFI complaints and appeals procedure.

## Part B: The SQF Food Safety Code for Retail

Part B is the auditable standard for the SQF Food Safety Code for Retail. It comprises the SQF System Elements for retail, and the relevant Good Retail Practices (GRP) modules for the applicable food sector categories (refer Part A, 1.2).

### Scope, References and Definitions

#### Scope

**SQF System Elements for Retail:** This module identifies the food safety system elements for SQF sites whose primary function is the food retail (food sector category 24).

**Module 15:** Describes the GRP requirements applicable to the retail industry sector. Organization/stores must meet the requirements of the module or modules applicable to their food industry sector.

#### References

The SQF Food Safety Code for Manufacturing 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 Retail

## 2.1 Management Commitment

### 2.1.1 Food Safety Management General Requirements (Mandatory)

2.1.1.1 The organization shall provide evidence of its commitment to document, implement and maintain an effective SQF System and to support its ongoing improvement. The system shall:

- i. Identify the processes needed for the food safety management system;
- ii. Determine the sequence and interaction of these processes;
- iii. Determine the criteria and methods required to ensure that effective implementation, operation and control of these processes;
- iv. Ensure the availability of information necessary to support the operation and monitoring of these processes;
- v. Measure, monitor and analyze these processes and implement actions necessary to achieve planned results and continuous improvement.

### 2.1.2 Food Safety Policy (Mandatory)

2.1.2.1 Senior management shall prepare and implement a policy statement that outlines as a minimum the:

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

2.1.2.2 The policy statement shall be:

- i. Signed by senior management;
- ii. Made available in language understood by all staff;
- iii. Displayed in a prominent position and effectively communicated to all staff; and
- iv. Reviewed annually for accuracy or when changes occur to operations or regulations.

### 2.1.3 Food Safety Management System (Mandatory)

2.1.3.1 A food safety manual shall be documented and maintained in either electronic and/or hard copy form. It shall outline the methods the organization will use to meet the requirements of this Standard, be made available to staff and include:

- i. A summary of the organization's food safety policies and the methods it will apply to meet the requirements of this standard;
- ii. The policy statement and organization chart;
- iii. Risk level of store(s);
- iv. A list of the nature of the products (pre-packaged foods only sold as ambient stable, refrigerated, frozen or combinations of these, bulk whole produce, home delivery of ambient stable food, display of unpackaged foods excluding bulk produce, on-site food preparation, restaurant with food preparation, cut produce, off-site food preparation, home delivery of refrigerated, frozen or hot food, etc.);
- v. A list of the in-store processes conducted (e.g. cook, chill, reheat, thaw, grind, wash, assemble, mix, cut, chop, "crisping", smoking for preservation, canning, juicing, fermentation, Reduced Oxygen Packaging (ROP), growing of produce, live animal/seafood for slaughter, etc.); and
- vi. A list of the departments covered and risk level under the scope of certification. (e.g. deli, bakery, butchery, seafood, confectionary, perishable prepackaged, shelf stable prepackaged, foodservice, catering, delivery, etc.).

2.1.3.2 A food safety manual shall be documented, maintained, made available to relevant staff and include or reference the written procedures, pre-requisite programs, preventive controls, food safety plans and other documentation necessary to support the development and the implementation, maintenance and control of the SQF System.

#### **2.1.4 Management Responsibility (Mandatory)**

2.1.4.1 The organizational reporting structure describing those who have responsibility for food safety shall be defined and communicated within the organization. This includes the relationship between the corporate office, brand(s), banner(s), franchise(s) and store(s) and the responsibility for food safety.

2.1.4.2 The senior site management shall make provision to ensure fundamental food safety practices are adopted and maintained.

2.1.4.3 The responsibility for establishing and implementing the training needs of the organization's personnel to ensure they have the required competencies to carry out those functions affecting products, legality, and safety shall be defined and documented.

2.1.4.4 All staff shall be informed of their responsibility to report food safety problems to personnel with authority to initiate action.

2.1.4.5 Job descriptions for those responsible for oversight of food safety program shall be documented and include provision to cover for the absence of key personnel.

#### **2.1.5 Management Review (Mandatory)**

2.1.5.1 The senior management shall be responsible for reviewing the SQF System and documenting the review procedure. Reviews shall include:

- i. The Food Safety manual;
- ii. Internal and external and regulatory audit findings;
- iii. Corrective actions and their investigations and resolution;
- iv. Customer and/or consumer complaints and their investigations and resolution; and
- v. Supplier performance.

2.1.5.2 The SQF System in its entirety shall be reviewed at least annually.

2.1.5.3 Food safety fundamentals and food safety plans shall be reviewed when any changes implemented have an impact on the organization's ability to deliver safe food.

2.1.5.4 Changes to food safety fundamentals and food safety plans that have an impact on the organization's ability to deliver safe food are to be validated.

2.1.5.5 Records of all reviews and reasons for amending documents, validations and changes to the SQF System shall be maintained and communicated.

#### **2.1.6 Resource Management (Mandatory)**

2.1.6.1 The senior site management shall ensure adequate resources are available to achieve food safety objectives and support the development, implementation, maintenance and ongoing improvement of the SQF System.

2.1.6.2 The senior site management shall designate an SQF practitioner with responsibility and authority to:

- i. Oversee the development, implementation, review and maintenance of the SQF System, including food safety fundamentals and the food safety plan outlined in 2.4, 2.1.4 and GRPs.
- 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.

2.1.6.3 The SQF practitioner shall:

- i. Be employed by the organization as a company employee on a full-time basis;
- ii. Hold a position of responsibility in relation to the management of the organization's SQF System;
- iii. Have completed a HACCP training course;
- iv. Be competent to implement and maintain HACCP based food safety plans;
- v. Have an understanding of the SQF Retail Code and the requirements to implement and maintain SQF System relevant to the organization's scope of certification; and
- vi. Hold monthly meetings with senior site management to update on the state of food safety.

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

### **2.1.7 Complaint Management**

2.1.7.1 The methods and responsibility for handling and investigating the cause and resolution of complaints from customers, consumers and authorities related to food safety shall be documented and implemented.

2.1.7.2 A method for transfer of complaint data to suppliers, agents, brokers and vendors shall be documented and implemented.

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

2.1.7.4 Corrective action shall be implemented commensurate with the seriousness of the incident and as outlined under 2.5.2.

2.1.7.5 Records of customer and consumer complaints and their investigations shall be maintained.

## **2.2 Document Control and Records**

### **2.2.1 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.

### **2.2.2 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 organization's own policies, a customer or regulations.

## **2.3 Specification and Products**

### **2.3.1 Contract Service Providers**

2.3.1.1 Specifications for contract services that have an impact on food safety shall be documented, current, include a full description of the service to be provided and detail relevant training requirements of contract personnel (examples include, but not limited to: in-store demo company, pest control, maintenance, sanitation, water purification, external auditing, etc.).

2.3.1.2 A register of all contract service specifications shall be maintained.

### **2.3.2 Third Party Operators**

2.3.2.1 Specifications for third party operators that have an impact on food safety shall be documented, current, include a full description of the product or service to be provided and describe relevant training requirements for contract personnel (examples include, but not limited to: sushi, butchery, confectionary, bakery, deli, foodservice, etc.).

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

2.3.2.3 The organization shall:

- i. Verify compliance that the federal, state and local food safety requirements are being met at. Products and/or processes of in-store vendors that are considered high risk shall be required to undergo an audit by the organization or other third party agency to confirm compliance to the SQF Code and agreed arrangements; and
- ii. Ensure changes to contractual agreements are approved by both parties and communicated to relevant personnel.

2.3.2.4 Records of all contract reviews and changes to contractual agreements and their approvals shall be maintained.

### 2.3.3 Purchasing

2.3.3.1 A buying standard shall be in place for all externally sourced product that meets the corporate office food safety requirements and comply with the relevant legislation.

2.3.3.2 Raw materials, ingredients, packaging materials, services and pre-packaged food that impact food safety shall be supplied by an approved supplier (this includes agent, broker, distributor and vendor).

2.3.3.3 In the event that emergency sourcing is necessary, a procedure shall be developed that requires the supplier to meet the organization's food safety requirements and that defines how the store conducts inspection or evaluation before use.

### 2.3.4 Supplier Approval & Performance

2.3.4.1 Pre-packaged foods, raw materials, ingredients, packaging materials, and services that impact on finished product safety shall be supplied by an approved supplier (this includes agent, broker, distributor and vendor).

2.3.4.2 The receipt of pre-packaged foods, raw materials, ingredients, and packaging materials received from non-approved supplier shall be acceptable in an emergency situation provided they are inspected or analyzed before use.

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

2.3.4.4 The approved supplier program shall be based on the prior performance of a supplier and the risk level of the pre-packaged foods, raw materials ingredients, packaging materials, and services supplied, and shall contain as a minimum:

- i. Agreed specifications;
- ii. Reference to the rating of the level of risk applied to products, raw material ingredients, packaging materials and services and the approved supplier;
- iii. A summary of the food safety controls implemented by the approved supplier;
- iv. Methods for granting approved supplier status (including regulation, recall and specification);
- 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.

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

2.3.4.6 Priority of supplier performance:

- i. The supplier performance shall be based on the risk of the food, packaging materials and service along with the prior historical performance of the supplier,
- ii. The results of evaluations, investigations and follow-up actions shall be recorded.

## 2.4 Attaining Food Safety

### 2.4.1 Food Safety Plan (Mandatory)

2.4.1.1 Food safety plan shall be developed, effectively implemented, and maintained and outline the means by which the organization controls and assures food safety. Food safety plan shall:

- i. Include a hazard and risk management system that includes prerequisite programs. Prerequisite programs may include but are not limited to:
  - Sanitation
  - Pest Control
  - Facility and Maintenance
  - Personal Hygiene

- Training
  - Purchasing
  - Transportation
- ii. Allergen Control
  - iii. Be prepared using a HACCP based system or another Hazard and Risk Management System that covers the Codex Alimentarius HACCP Principles.
  - iv. Cover a product or product group and the associated processes. Process HACCP methods may be used.
  - v. Describe the methodology and results of a hazard analysis conducted to identify food safety hazards associated with all inputs and process steps including rework, food recovery and food donation.
  - vi. Prescribe those measures taken to apply the controls implemented that are critical to assuring, monitoring and maintaining food safety.
  - vii. Include process controls at control points in production to monitor product safety, identify when a process is deviating from set parameters and make corrections to keep a process under control; and
  - viii. Include documented Preventive Controls, Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs), Standard Sanitation Operating Procedures (SSOPs) and Work Instructions (WI) applicable to the organization's store's scope of certification.

2.4.1.2 The organization shall ensure that, at the time of sale to its customer and/or consumer, the food sold shall comply with the legislation that applies to the food and its production in the country of its origin and destination. This includes compliance with legislative requirements applicable to maximum residue limits, food safety, packaging, product description, nutritional, allergen and additive labeling, and to relevant established industry codes of practice.

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

2.4.1.4 The property, buildings and equipment shall be located, constructed, designed and maintained to facilitate the hygienic production, handling, storage, sale and/or delivery of safe food.

2.4.1.5 The organization shall ensure the food safety fundamentals described in the relevant modules of this Code are applied, or exempted according to a risk analysis outlining the justification for exclusion or evidence of the effectiveness of alternative control measures to ensure that food safety is not compromised.

2.4.1.6 Those pre-requisite programs applicable to the scope of certification that outline the means by which food safety is controlled and assured shall be documented and implemented.

2.4.1.7 The effectiveness of the pre-requisite programs shall be verified as described in 2.4.3.5.

## **2.4.2 Control of Non Conformity**

2.4.2.1 The responsibility and methods outlining how non-conforming product, raw material, ingredient, work-in-progress, re-work, packaging or equipment detected during receipt, storage, processing, handling, offering for sale or delivery is handled shall be documented and implemented. The methods applied shall ensure:

- i. Non-conforming product or equipment is repaired or disposed of in a manner that minimizes the risk of inadvertent use, improper use and is clearly controlled to prevent unintended offering for sale, use or delivery.
- ii. The responsibility and methods outlining how the product is reworked (recycled or recouped) shall be documented and implemented.
- iii. Appropriate reporting procedures to and from corporate office, brand(s), banner(s), franchise(s) and store(s).

## **2.4.3 Hazard and Risk Management System (Mandatory)**

### **2.4.3.1 Hazard and Risk Management System**

2.4.3.1.1 The organization shall have a hazard and risk management system in place including a prerequisite program. The organization's system shall follow food safety procedures as outlined in 2.4.



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**2.4.3.2 Responsibility, Frequency and Methods of Hazard and Risk Management System**

2.4.3.2.1 Validation and verification activities shall be conducted.

2.4.3.2.2 The frequency and methods used to validate and verify food safety fundamentals, critical limits, and other food safety controls identified in food safety plans shall be documented and implemented and meet their intended purpose.

2.4.3.2.3 Records of all verification activities shall be maintained.

**2.4.3.3 Validation and Effectiveness**

2.4.3.3.1 The methods, responsibility and criteria for ensuring the effectiveness of pre-requisite 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. Pre-requisite programs are confirmed to ensure they achieve the required result.
- ii. Critical limits are selected to achieve the designated level of control of the identified food safety hazard(s); and
- iii. All critical limits and control measures individually or in combination effectively provide the level of control required.
- iv. Changes to the processes or procedures are assessed to ensure controls are still effective.
- v. Critical food safety limits are re-validated at least annually.

2.4.3.3.2 Records of all validation activities shall be maintained.

**2.4.3.4 Verification Schedule**

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

**2.4.3.5 Verification of Monitoring Activities**

2.4.3.5.1 The methods, responsibility and criteria for verifying the effectiveness of monitoring pre-requisite programs, critical control points and other food safety controls identified shall be documented and implemented. The methods applied shall ensure that personnel with responsibility for verifying monitoring activities authorize each record verified.

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

**2.4.3.6 Method of Monitoring and Verifying Temperature of Cold Holding Food for Safety Activities**

2.4.3.6.1 Organization shall have a method in place for sites to monitor and verify cold holding temperatures of foods for safety. Records of monitoring and verification of monitoring activities shall be maintained.

**2.4.3.7 Method of Monitoring and Verifying Temperature of Cooking Food for Safety Activities**

2.4.3.7.1 Organization shall have a method in place for sites to monitor and verify cooking temperatures of foods for safety. Records of monitoring and verification of monitoring activities shall be maintained.

**2.4.3.8 Method of Monitoring and Verifying Temperature of Hot Holding Food for Safety Activities**

2.4.3.8.1 Organization shall have a method in place for sites to monitor and verify hot holding temperatures of foods for safety. Records of monitoring and verification of monitoring activities shall be maintained.

**2.4.3.9 Method of Monitoring and Verifying Temperature of Cooling Food for Safety Activities**

2.4.3.9.1 Organization shall have a method in place for sites to monitor and verify cooling temperatures of foods for safety. Records of monitoring and verification of monitoring activities shall be maintained.

**2.4.3.10 Method of Monitoring and Verifying pH of Food for Safety Activities**

2.4.3.10.1 Organization shall have a method in place for sites to monitor and verify pH of foods for safety. Records of monitoring and verification of monitoring activities shall be maintained.

**2.4.3.11 Method of Monitoring and Verifying Salinity of Food for Safety Activities**

2.4.3.11.1 Organization shall have a method in place for sites to monitor and verify salinity of foods for safety. Records of monitoring and verification of monitoring activities shall be maintained.

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**2.4.3.12 Method of Monitoring and Verifying On-site Grinding of Raw Meats, Poultry and/or Seafood for Safety Activities**

2.4.3.12.1 Organization shall have a method in place for sites to monitor and verify on-site grinding of meats, poultry and/or seafood for safety activities. Records of monitoring and verification of monitoring activities shall be maintained.

**2.5 SQF System Verification****2.5.1 Internal Audit (Mandatory)**

2.5.1.1 The methods and responsibility for scheduling and conducting internal audits to verify the effectiveness of the SQF System including facility and equipment inspections, pre-requisite programs, food safety plans and legislative controls shall be documented and implemented. The methods applied shall ensure:

- i. An internal audit schedule is prepared detailing the scope and frequency of internal audits with a minimum frequency of one hundred (100) percent of store(s) audited annually;
- ii. In-store vendors of food production services must be included in the internal audit program;
- iii. Corrections and corrective actions of deficiencies identified during the internal audits are undertaken;
- iv. Audit results are communicated to relevant management personnel and staff responsible for implementing and verifying corrective actions; and
- v. Records of internal audits and any corrections and corrective actions taken as a result of internal audits shall be maintained.

2.5.1.2 Personnel conducting internal audits shall be trained in internal audit procedures.

2.5.1.3 Where possible, personnel conducting internal Audits shall be independent of the function being audited. A 3rd party may be used to conduct an organization's internal audit program.

**2.5.2 Corrective Action (Mandatory)**

2.5.2.1 The responsibility and methods outlining how corrections and corrective actions are determined, implemented and verified in the event of any significant non conformity relating to food safety shall be documented and implemented, including the identification of a root cause and resolution of non-compliance of critical food safety limits, and deviations from food safety requirements. Records of all investigation and resolution of corrections and corrective action shall be maintained.

**2.5.3 Control of Measuring and Monitoring Devices (Mandatory)**

2.5.3.1 The methods and responsibility for the calibration and re-calibration of measuring, test and inspection of equipment used for monitoring activities outlined in pre-requisite program, food safety plans and other process controls, shall be documented and implemented. Evidence of appropriate calibration shall be determined.

2.5.3.2 Procedures shall be documented and implemented to address the disposition of potentially affected products should measuring, test and inspection equipment be found to be out of calibration state.

2.5.3.3 Calibrated measuring, test and inspected equipment shall be protected from damage and unauthorized adjustment.

2.5.3.4 Equipment shall be calibrated against national or international reference standards and methods or to accuracy appropriate to its use. In cases where standards are not available, the organization shall provide evidence to support the calibration reference method applied.

2.5.3.5 Calibration shall be performed according to regulatory requirements and/or to the equipment manufacturers' recommendations.

**2.6 Product Information, Trace, Serious Incident Management****2.6.1 Product Information (Mandatory)****2.6.1.1 Product Identification**

2.6.1.1.1 The methods and responsibility for identifying products during all stages of production, storage and offering for sale shall be documented and implemented. The product identification system shall be implemented to ensure:

- i. Raw materials, work in progress and finished product (in-store produced and pre-packaged products) are clearly identified during all stages of receipt, production, storage, offering for sale and delivery; and
- ii. Finished product is labeled to regulatory requirements.

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- iii. 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 in-store prepared product and pre-packaged product is traceable to the customer and consumer when known (one stage forward) and provides traceability through the process to the supplier, agent, broker and vendor and date of receipt of products, raw materials, food contact packaging and materials and other inputs (one stage back);
- ii. Traceability is maintained where product is reworked; and
- iii. The effectiveness of the product trace system shall be tested at least annually.

2.6.2.2 Records of raw and packaging material receipt and use, and product sold to customer and/or consumer shall be maintained.

## **2.6.3 Serious Incident Management**

### **2.6.3.1 Crisis Communication Plan**

2.6.3.1.1 A crisis communication plan based on the understanding of known food safety threats to a business shall be prepared by senior management outlining the methods and responsibility the organization will implement to cope with a business crisis that may have an impact on the ability of the organization to provide safe food.

2.6.3.1.2 The business continuity plan shall include as a minimum:

- i. A senior manager responsible for decision making, oversight and initiating actions arising from a crisis management incident;
- ii. The selection and training of a crisis management team;
- iii. The controls implemented to ensure a response does not compromise product safety;
- iv. The measures to isolate and identify product affected by a response to a crisis;
- v. The measures taken to verify the acceptability of food prior to release for sale;
- vi. The preparation and maintenance of a current crisis alert contact list;
- vii. Sources of legal and expert advice; and
- viii. The responsibility for internal communications and communicating with authorities, external organizations, customer, consumer and media.

2.6.3.1.3 The crisis communication plan shall be reviewed, tested and verified at least annually.

2.6.3.1.4 Records of reviews and verification of the crisis communication plan shall be maintained.

### **2.6.3.2 Product Withdrawal and Recall (Mandatory)**

2.6.3.2.1 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 management procedures to be implemented including sources of legal and expert advice; and
- 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.
- iv. SQFI and the certification body shall be listed as an essential body and notified in instances of a food safety incident of a public nature, or product recall for any on-site produced products.

2.6.3.2.2 An Investigation shall be undertaken to determine the root cause of an on-site produced product withdrawal or recall and details of investigations and any action taken shall be documented.

2.6.3.2.3 The product withdrawal and recall system shall be reviewed, tested and verified as effective at least annually.

2.6.3.2.4 Records of all product withdrawals, recalls and mock recalls shall be maintained.

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2.6.3.2.5 SQFI and the certification body shall be notified in writing within 24 hours upon identification of a food safety event that requires public notification of on-site produced food products (e.g. receipt of a regulatory warning letter).

## 2.7 Food Defense

### 2.7.1 Food Defense (Mandatory)

2.7.1.1 The methods, responsibility and criteria for preventing food adulteration caused by a deliberate act of sabotage shall be documented, implemented and maintained. The plan shall include the likelihood of occurrence, the ability to control and good retail practices.

2.7.1.2 A food defense protocol shall be prepared and include:

- i. The name of senior management person responsible for food defense;
- ii. The measures taken to ensure the secure storage of products, raw materials, packaging, equipment and hazardous chemicals;
- iii. The methods implemented to help prevent access to sensitive points of the premises by employees, contractors, and customers and consumers.

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

2.7.1.4 Records of reviews of the food defense plan shall be maintained.

## 2.8 Training

### 2.8.1 Training Requirements

2.8.1.1 Appropriate training shall be provided for personnel carrying out the tasks critical to the effective implementation of the SQF Food Safety Code for Retail and the maintenance of food safety and regulatory requirements.

### 2.8.2 Training Program (Mandatory)

2.8.2.1 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 Retail Practices (as appropriate);
- ii. Applying food regulatory requirements;
- iii. Steps identified by the hazard analysis and/or other instructions as critical to effective implementation of the food safety plan and the maintenance of food safety; and
- iv. Tasks identified as critical to meeting the effective implementation and maintenance of the SQF System.

### 2.8.3 Training Requirement

2.8.3.1 HACCP training shall be provided for staff involved in developing and maintaining food safety plans and procedures.

### 2.8.4 Language

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

### 2.8.5 Refresher Training

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

### 2.8.6 Training Skills Register

2.8.6.1 A training skills register describing who has been trained in relevant skills shall be maintained. The register shall indicate the:

- i. Participant name;
- ii. Skills description;
- iii. Description of the training provided;

- iv. Date training completed;
- v. Trainer or training provider; and
- vi. Supervisor's verification the training was completed and that the trainee is competent to complete the required tasks.

## Module 15: Good Retail Practices for Retail (GFSI G, H)

This module covers the Good Retail Practices requirements for Retail operations. Companies implementing this module must also meet the requirements of the system elements: SQF Food Safety Code for Retail. Applicable food categories (FSCs) are:

FSC 24: Food Retail

### 15.1 Site Requirements and Approval

#### 15.1.1 Facility Environment

15.1.1.1 The location of the organization's store(s) shall be such that adjacent and adjoining buildings, operations and land use do not interfere with safe and hygienic operations and shall adhere to all regulatory requirements.

15.1.1.2 Measures shall be established to maintain a suitable external environment, and the effectiveness of the established measures shall be monitored and periodically reviewed.

#### 15.1.2 Local Environment

15.1.2.1 The grounds and area surrounding the premises shall be maintained to minimize dust and be kept free of waste or accumulated debris so as not to attract pests and vermin.

15.1.2.2 Paths, roadways and loading and unloading areas shall be maintained so as not to present a hazard to the food safety operation of the premises.

15.1.2.3 Surroundings shall be kept neat and tidy and not present a hazard to the hygienic and sanitary operation of the premises.

#### 15.1.3 Facility Design, Construction, Layout and Product flow

15.1.3.1 The design, construction, layout, product flow and ongoing operation of the premises of organization's store(s) shall be maintained both externally and internally to:

- i. control the risk of product contamination;
- ii. control the risk of cross-contact;
- iii. implement proper security and protection, and
- iv. be approved and abide by the relevant legislation and regulatory authority.

### 15.2 Construction, Control of Product Handling and Storage Areas

#### 15.2.1 Fabrication (Input and Material Handling, Preparation, Product Handling, Packing, Storage and Sales Areas)

##### 15.2.1.1 Materials and Surfaces

15.2.1.1.1 Product contact surfaces and those surfaces not in direct contact with food in food handling areas, raw material storage, packaging material storage, cold and hot holding storage and sales areas shall be constructed of materials that will not contribute a food safety risk.

##### 15.2.1.2 Floors, Drains and Waste Traps

15.2.1.2.1 Floors shall be constructed of smooth, dense impact resistant material that can be effectively graded, drained, impervious to liquid and easily cleaned.

15.2.1.2.2 Floors shall be sloped to floor drains at gradients suitable to allow the effective removal of all overflow or waste water under normal working conditions.

15.2.1.2.3 Drains shall be constructed and located so they can be easily cleaned and not present a hazard.

15.2.1.2.4 Waste trap system shall be contained to prevent cross-contamination or located away from any food handling area or entrance to the premises.

##### 15.2.1.3 Walls, Partitions, Ceilings and Doors

15.2.1.3.1 Walls, partitions, ceilings and doors shall be of durable construction. Internal surfaces shall be smooth and impervious, and shall be kept clean (refer to 15.2.5).

15.2.1.3.2 Wall to wall and wall to floor junctions shall be designed and maintained to be easily cleaned and sealed to prevent the accumulation of food debris.

15.2.1.3.3 Ducting, conduit and pipes that convey services such as steam or water shall be designed and constructed so as to allow ease of cleaning.

15.2.1.3.4 Doors, hatches and windows and their frames shall be of a material and construction which meets the same functional requirements for internal walls and partitions.

- i. Doors and hatches shall be of solid construction; and
- ii. Windows shall be made of shatterproof glass or similar material.

15.2.1.3.5 Food shall be processed and handled in areas that are fitted with a ceiling or other acceptable structure that is constructed and maintained to prevent the contamination of products.

15.2.1.3.6 Drop ceilings shall be additionally constructed to enable monitoring for pest activity, facilitate cleaning and provide access to utilities.

15.2.1.3.7 Stairs, catwalks and platforms in food processing and handling areas shall be designed and constructed so as not to present a product contamination risk, and shall be kept clean (refer to 15.2.5).

#### **15.2.1.4 Lighting and Light Fittings**

15.2.1.4.1 Lighting in food processing and handling areas shall be of appropriate intensity to enable the staff to carry out their tasks efficiently and effectively.

15.2.1.4.2 Light fittings in processing areas, ingredient and packaging storage areas, and all areas where the product is exposed shall be shatterproof, manufactured with a shatterproof covering or fitted with protective covers and recessed into or fitted flush with the ceiling. Where fittings cannot be recessed, structures must be protected from accidental breakage, manufactured from cleanable materials and addressed in the cleaning and sanitation program.

15.2.1.4.3 Light fittings in storage and other areas where the product is protected shall be designed such as to prevent breakage and product contamination.

#### **15.2.1.5 Dust, Insect and Vermin Proofing**

15.2.1.5.1 All external windows, ventilation openings, doors and other openings shall be effectively sealed when closed, pest and insect proofed and provide adequate dust control.

15.2.1.5.2 External doors, including overhead dock doors in food handling areas, used for product, pedestrian or truck access shall be pest-proofed by at least one or a combination of the following methods:

- i. A self-closing device;
- ii. An effective air curtain;
- iii. A pest-proof screen;
- iv. A pest-proof annex;
- v. Adequate sealing around trucks in docking areas; or
- vi. Other means to help prevent or minimize insect entry.

15.2.1.5.3 Electric insect control devices, pheromone or other traps and baits shall be located so as not to present a contamination risk to the product, packaging, containers or processing equipment. Poison bait shall not be used inside ingredient or food storage areas or processing areas.

#### **15.2.1.6 Ventilation**

15.2.1.6.1 Adequate ventilation shall be provided in enclosed processing and food handling areas.

15.2.1.6.2 Extractor fans and canopies shall be provided in areas where cooking operations are carried out or a large amount of steam is generated and shall have the following features:

- i. Capture velocities shall be sufficient to prevent condensation build up and to evacuate all heat, fumes and other aerosols to the exterior via an exhaust hood positioned over cooker;
- ii. Fans and exhaust vents shall be pest proofed and located so as not to pose a contamination risk; and
- iii. Where appropriate, positive air-pressure system shall be installed to prevent airborne contamination.

### **15.2.2 Equipment**

15.2.2.1 Equipment and utensils shall be designed, constructed, installed, operated and maintained so as not to pose a contamination threat to products.

15.2.2.2 All food processing equipment shall be hygienically designed and located for appropriate cleaning. Equipment surfaces shall be smooth, impervious and free from cracks or crevices.

15.2.2.3 Product containers, tubs, bins for edible and inedible material shall be constructed of materials that are non-toxic, smooth, impervious and readily cleaned. Bins used for inedible material shall be clearly identified.

15.2.2.4 Waste and overflow water from tubs, tanks, sinks, condenser units and other equipment shall be discharged to the floor drainage system.

15.2.2.5 All wash down hoses shall be stored on hose racks after use and not left on the floor.

15.2.2.6 All display equipment shall be maintained to protect product offered for sale.

### **15.2.3 Maintenance**

15.2.3.1 The methods and responsibility for the maintenance and repair of equipment and buildings shall be documented, planned and carried out in a manner that minimizes the risk of product, packaging or equipment contamination.

15.2.3.2 Maintenance staff and contractors shall observe the following practices when undertaking maintenance and repairs in any food processing, handling, storage or sale areas:

- i. Routine maintenance of building and equipment shall be performed according to a maintenance-control schedule and recorded;
- ii. Failures of facility and equipment shall be documented, reviewed and their repair incorporated into the maintenance control schedule;
- iii. Compliance with the personnel and process hygiene requirements (refer to 15.2.5) by maintenance staff and contractors;
- iv. Inform the site supervisor if any repairs or maintenance pose a potential threat to product safety (i.e. pieces of electrical wire, damaged light fittings, and loose overhead fittings). When possible, maintenance and active store renovations shall be conducted outside food processing or handling times;
- v. Remove all tools and debris from any maintenance activity once it has been completed and inform the area supervisor so appropriate hygiene and sanitation can be completed prior to the commencement of food processing or handling occurs.

15.2.3.3 The maintenance schedule shall be prepared to cover building, equipment and other areas of the premises critical to the maintenance of product safety and quality.

15.2.3.4 Equipment located over product or product conveyors shall be lubricated with food grade lubricants and their use controlled so as to minimize the contamination of the product.

15.2.3.5 Paint used in a food handling or contact zone shall be suitable for use and in good condition and shall not be used on any product contact surface.

### **15.2.4 Pest Control**

15.2.4.1 The methods and responsibility for integrated pest management shall be documented and effectively implemented. The premises, its surrounding areas, storage facilities, machinery and equipment shall be kept free of waste or accumulated debris so as not to attract pests.

15.2.4.2 The pest management program shall:

- i. Describe the methods and responsibility for the development, implementation and maintenance of the pest management program;
- ii. Identify the target pests for each pesticide application;
- iii. Outline the methods used to prevent pest problems;
- iv. Outline the pest elimination methods;
- v. Outline the frequency with which pest status is to be checked;
- vi. Include on a store 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 staff aware of the bait control program and the measures to take when they come in contact with a bait station;
- ix. Outline the requirements for staff awareness of pest control and when applicable, training in the use of pest control chemicals and baits; and
- x. Measure the effectiveness of the program to verify the elimination of applicable pests.

15.2.4.3 Inspections for pest activity shall be undertaken on a regular basis by trained personnel or licensed Pest Control Operator (PCO) and the appropriate action taken if pests are present.

15.2.4.4 Records of all pest control applications shall be maintained.

15.2.4.5 Pesticides and other toxic chemicals shall be clearly labeled and stored as described in element 15.4.1.4 and handled and applied by properly trained personnel. They shall be used by or under the direct supervision of trained personnel with a thorough understanding of the hazards involved, including the potential for the contamination of food and food contact surfaces.

15.2.4.6 Pest Control Service Provider shall be:

- i. Licensed and approved by the local relevant authority;
- ii. Use only trained and qualified operators who comply with regulatory requirements;
- iii. Use only approved chemicals;
- iv. Provide a pest control management plan (refer to 2.3.1) which will include a store map indicating the location of bait stations and traps;
- v. Report to a responsible authorized person on entering the premises and after the completion of inspections or treatments; and
- vi. Provide a written report of their findings and the inspections and treatments applied.

15.2.4.7 The organization's store(s) shall dispose of unused pest control chemicals and empty containers in accordance with regulatory requirements and ensure that:

- i. Empty chemical containers are not reused;
- 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.

### **15.2.5 Housekeeping, Cleaning and Hygiene**

15.2.5.1 The methods and responsibility for the cleaning and frequency of cleaning of the food handling and processing equipment and environment, storage areas and storage equipment, staff amenities and toilet facilities, and sales displays 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;
- v. Methods used to confirm the correct concentrations of detergents and sanitizers; and
- vi. The responsibility and methods used to verify the effectiveness of the cleaning and sanitation program.

15.2.5.2 Provision shall be made for the effective cleaning of; processing, storage and sales equipment, utensils, cleaning tools and protective clothing.

15.2.5.3 Suitably equipped areas shall be designated for cleaning product containers, knives, cutting boards and other utensils, cleaning tools and for cleaning of protective clothing used by staff when applicable. These cleaning operations shall be controlled so as not to interfere with processing operations, equipment or product. Racks and containers for storing cleaned utensils and protective clothing, if applicable, shall be provided as required.

15.2.5.4 Pre-operational hygiene and sanitation inspections shall be conducted by qualified personnel to ensure food processing areas, product contact surfaces, equipment, staff amenities and sanitary facilities and other essential areas are clean before the commencement of production.

15.2.5.5 The responsibility and methods used to verify the effectiveness of the cleaning procedures shall be documented and implemented. A verification schedule shall be prepared.

15.2.5.6 Detergents and sanitizers shall be suitable for use in a food processing environment, and purchased in accordance with applicable legislation.

The organization shall ensure:

- i. Detergents and sanitizers are stored as outlined in element 15.4.1.4;
- ii. Safety Data Sheets (SDS) are provided for all detergents and sanitizers purchased; and
- iii. Only trained staff handles sanitizers and detergents.

15.2.5.7 The organization's store(s) shall dispose of unused detergents and sanitizers and empty containers in accordance with regulatory requirements and ensure that:

- i. Empty detergent and sanitizer containers are appropriately cleaned, treated and labeled before use;
- ii. Empty detergent and sanitizer containers are labeled, isolated and securely stored while awaiting collection; and
- iii. Unused and obsolete detergents and sanitizers are stored under secure conditions while waiting authorized disposal by an approved vendor.

15.2.5.8 A record of pre-operational hygiene inspections, cleaning and sanitation activities, and verification activities shall be maintained.

15.2.5.9 The organization shall have a procedure for bodily fluid clean-up.

## **15.3 Personnel Hygiene, Welfare & Personnel Processing Practices**

### **15.3.1 Staff and Public Facilities**

#### **15.3.1.1 Toilet Rooms**

15.3.1.1.1 Toilet rooms shall be:

- i. Designed and constructed so that they are accessible to staff, customers and consumers and separate from any processing and food handling operations;
- ii. Accessed from the processing area via an airlock vented to the exterior or through an adjoining room;
- iii. Sufficient in number for the maximum number of staff, customers and consumers;
- iv. Constructed so that they can be easily cleaned and maintained; and
- v. Kept clean and tidy.

15.3.1.1.2 Sanitary drainage shall not be connected to any other drains within the premises and shall be directed to a septic tank or a sewerage system.

15.3.1.1.3 Hand wash basins shall be provided immediately outside or inside the toilet room and designed as outlined in 15.3.2.2.

#### **15.3.1.2 Staff Amenities**

15.3.1.2.1 Staff amenities supplied with appropriate lighting and ventilation shall be made available for the use of all persons engaged in the handling and processing of product.

15.3.1.2.2 Provision shall be made for staff to store their street clothing and personal items separate from food contact zones, food and packaging storage, and sales areas.

#### **15.3.1.3 Break/Lunch Rooms**

15.3.1.3.1 Separate break/lunch room facilities shall be provided away from a food contact/handling zone.

15.3.1.3.2 Break/Lunch room facilities shall be:

- i. Ventilated and well lit; and

- ii. Kept clean and free from waste materials and pests.

15.3.1.3.3 Signage in appropriate languages instructing people to wash their hands upon entering the food processing areas shall be provided.

#### **15.3.1.4 Bodily Fluid Clean Up Procedures**

15.3.1.4.1 Bodily fluid clean up procedures, properly trained employees and proper materials shall be provided to safely clean up bodily fluid spillage events.

### **15.3.2 Personal Hygiene, Protective Clothing and Health Standards**

#### **15.3.2.1 Personnel**

15.3.2.1.1 Personnel suffering from infectious diseases or are carriers of any infectious disease shall not engage in product handling or processing operation.

15.3.2.1.2 Personnel with exposed cuts, sores or lesions shall not be engaged in handling or processing products or handling primary packaging materials or food contact surfaces. Minor cuts or abrasions on exposed parts of the body shall be covered with a waterproof bandage with bandaged area on hands or arms covered using protective sleeve, disposable gloves, etc.

15.3.2.1.3 Smoking, chewing, eating, drinking or spitting is not permitted in any food processing or food handling areas.

#### **15.3.2.2 Handwashing**

15.3.2.2.1 Hand wash basins shall be conveniently located and in accessible locations throughout food handling and processing areas as required.

15.3.2.2.2 Hand wash basins shall be constructed of stainless steel or similar non-corrosive material and as a minimum supplied with:

- i. A potable water supply at an appropriate temperature;
- ii. Liquid soap contained within a dispenser;
- iii. Paper towels in a dispenser; and
- iv. A means of containing used paper towels.

15.3.2.2.3 A sign instructing people to wash their hands, and in appropriate languages, shall be provided in a prominent position.

15.3.2.2.4 Personnel shall have clean hands and hands shall be washed by all personnel, including staff, contractors and visitors:

- i. On entering food handling or processing areas;
- ii. After each visit to a toilet;
- iii. After coughing, sneezing, using a handkerchief or disposable tissue, smoking, eating, or drinking;
- iv. During food preparation, as often as necessary to remove soil and contamination and to prevent cross contamination when changing tasks;
- v. When switching between working with raw food and working with ready-to-eat food;
- vi. Before donning gloves to initiate a task that involves working with food;
- vii. After handling soiled equipment or utensils; and
- viii. After engaging in other activities that may contaminate the hands.

15.3.2.2.5 When gloves are used, personnel shall maintain the hand washing practices outlined above.

#### **15.3.2.3 Clothing**

15.3.2.3.1 Clothing worn by staff engaged in handling food shall be cleaned, stored, laundered and worn so as not to present a contamination risk to products.

15.3.2.3.2 Staff engaged in high risk areas shall don clean protective outerwear when entering high risk areas.

15.3.2.3.3 Clothing including shoes shall be clean and maintained in a serviceable condition. Excessively soiled clothing shall be changed where they present a product contamination risk.

15.3.2.3.4 Disposable gloves and aprons shall be changed as needed to prevent cross contamination. Non-disposable aprons and gloves shall be cleaned as required.

**15.3.2.4 Jewelry**

15.3.2.4.1 Jewelry and other loose objects worn on hands and arms shall not be worn or taken into a food handling or processing operation or any area where food is exposed. The wearing of plain bands with no stones and medical alert bracelets that cannot be removed can be permitted, however the store will need to consider the applicable food legislation.

**15.3.2.5 Visitors**

15.3.2.5.1 All visitors, including management and maintenance staff, shall wear suitable clothing and footwear when entering any food processing or handling area.

15.3.2.5.2 Visitors exhibiting visible signs of illness shall be prevented from entering areas in which food is handled or processed.

15.3.2.5.3 Visitors shall enter and exit food handling areas through the proper staff entrance points and comply with all hand washing and personnel practice requirements.

**15.3.2.6 Personnel Processing Practices**

15.3.2.6.1 All personnel engaged in any food handling, preparation or processing operations shall ensure that products and materials are handled and stored in such a way as to prevent damage or product contamination. They shall comply with the following processing practices:

- i. Personnel entry to processing areas shall be through the personnel access only;
- ii. When handling food, personnel shall keep their fingernails trimmed, filed, and maintained so the edges and surfaces are cleanable and not rough;
- iii. Unless wearing intact gloves in good repair, the wearing of false fingernails or fingernail polish is not permitted when handling food;
- iv. Packaging material, product, and ingredients shall be kept in appropriate containers as required and off the floor;
- v. Load limit and maximum capacity lines shall be adhered to in open temperature controlled display units;
- vi. Waste shall be contained in the bins identified for this purpose and removed from the processing area on a regular basis and not left to accumulate;
- vii. Staff shall not eat or taste any product being processed in the food handling/contact zone, except as noted in section 15.3.2.6.2

15.3.2.6.2 In circumstances where it is necessary to undertake sensory evaluations in a food handling/contact zone the site shall implement proper controls and procedures to ensure:

- i. Food safety is not compromised;
- ii. Sensory evaluations are conducted by authorized personnel;
- iii. A high standard of personal hygiene is practiced by personnel conducting sensory evaluations;
- iv. Sensory evaluations are conducted in areas equipped for the purpose; and
- v. Equipment used for sensory evaluations is sanitized, maintained and stored separate from processing equipment.

## **15.4 Storage, Transport & Separation of Functions**

### **15.4.1 Physical, Chemical and Biological Product Contamination Risk**

#### **15.4.1.1 Cold Storage, Freezing, Chilling and Hot Holding of Foods**

15.4.1.1.1 The site shall provide confirmation of the effective operational performance of freezing, chilling, cold and hot holding storage equipment. Coolers, Freezers, blast freezers and hot holding equipment shall be:

- i. Designed and constructed to allow for the hygienic and efficient temperature control for safety of food;
- ii. Load limits and maximum capacity clearly marked and adhered to; and
- iii. Easily accessible for inspection and cleaning.

15.4.1.1.2 Sufficient capacity shall be available to chill, freeze, store chilled, store frozen or hold hot the maximum anticipated throughput of product with allowance for periodic cleaning of equipment areas.

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

15.4.1.1.4 Freezing, chilling, cold and hot holding equipment shall be fitted with temperature monitoring equipment using temperature measurement device that is easily readable and accessible.

15.4.1.1.5 Loading, transporting and unloading dock areas shall be designed to protect the product during loading transporting and unloading.

#### **15.4.1.2 Storage of Dry Ingredients, Packaging and Shelf Stable Packaged Goods**

15.4.1.2.1 Rooms used for the storage (including sales display) of products, raw materials, ingredients, packaging, and other dry goods shall be located away from wet areas and constructed to protect the product from contamination and deterioration.

15.4.1.2.2 Racks provided for the storage of packaging shall be constructed of impervious materials and designed to enable cleaning of the floors and the storage room. Storage areas shall be constructed to prevent packaging from becoming a harborage for pests.

15.4.2.1.3 Vehicles used in food contact, handling or processing zones or in cold storage rooms shall be designed and operated so as not to present a food safety hazard.

#### **15.4.1.3 Storage of Equipment and Containers**

15.4.1.3.1 Storage rooms shall be designed and constructed to allow for the hygienic and efficient storage of equipment and containers.

#### **15.4.1.4 Storage of Hazardous Chemicals and Toxic Substances**

15.4.1.4.1 Hazardous chemicals and toxic substances with the potential for food contamination shall be stored so as not to present a hazard to staff, product, packaging, product handling equipment or areas in which the product is handled, stored, sold or transported.

15.4.1.4.2 Processing utensils and packaging shall be stored as not to allow for cross-contamination by hazardous chemicals and toxic substances.

15.4.1.4.3 Daily supplies of chemical used for continuous sanitizing of water or as a processing aid, or for emergency cleaning of food processing equipment or surfaces in food contact zones, may be stored within or in close proximity to a processing area provided access to the chemical storage facility is restricted to authorized personnel.

15.4.1.4.4 Pesticides, rodenticides, fumigants and insecticides shall be stored separate from sanitizers and detergents. All chemicals shall be stored in properly labeled containers.

15.4.1.4.5 Hazardous chemical and toxic substance storage facilities shall:

- i. Be compliant with national and local legislation and designed such that there is no cross-contamination between chemicals;
- ii. Be adequately ventilated;
- iii. Be provided with appropriate signage indicating the area is a hazardous storage area;
- iv. Be secure and restrict access only to authorized personnel;
- v. Have appropriate safety data sheets (SDS) available;

- vi. Have instructions on the safe handling of hazardous chemicals and toxic substances readily accessible to staff;
- vii. Have suitable first aid equipment and protective clothing available in close proximity to the storage area;
- viii. In the event of a hazardous spill, be designed such that spillage and drainage from the area is contained; and
- ix. Be equipped with spillage kits and cleaning equipment.

15.4.1.4.6 Hazardous chemicals and toxic substances offered for sale shall be handled, stored, displayed and delivered to prevent risk of cross-contamination and cross-contact of food products.

#### **15.4.1.5 Alternative Storage and Handling of Goods**

15.4.1.5.1 Where goods described in 15.4.1.1, 15.4.1.2 and 15.4.1.3 are held under temporary or overflow conditions that are not designed for the safe storage of goods, a risk analysis shall be undertaken to ensure there is no risk to the integrity of those goods or contamination or adverse effect on food safety and quality.

#### **15.4.1.6 On-Site Laboratories**

15.4.1.6.1 On-site laboratories shall be located separate from any food processing or handling activity and designed to limit access only to authorized personnel.

15.4.1.6.2 Provisions shall be made to isolate and contain all laboratory waste held on the premises and manage it separately from food waste. Laboratory waste water outlet shall as a minimum be down stream of drains that service food processing and handling areas.

15.4.1.6.3 Signage shall be displayed identifying the laboratory area as a restricted area accessible only by authorized personnel.

### **15.4.2 Segregation and Cross-contamination**

#### **15.4.2.1 Process Flow**

15.4.2.1.1 The process flow shall be designed to prevent and/or minimize cross contamination and organized so there is a continuous flow of product through the process. The flow of personnel shall be managed such that the potential for contamination is minimized.

#### **15.4.2.2 Receiving Products**

15.4.2.2.1 Dry ingredients and pre-packaged foods, and packaging shall be received and stored separately from frozen and chilled raw materials and pre-packaged foods to ensure there is no cross contamination. Unprocessed raw materials shall be received and segregated to ensure there is no cross contamination.

#### **15.4.2.3 Thawing of Food**

15.4.2.3.1 Thawing of food shall be undertaken in equipment and rooms appropriate for the purpose.

15.4.2.3.2 Equipment for water thawing shall be continuous flow to ensure the water exchange rate and temperature does not contribute to product deterioration or contamination. Water overflow shall be directed into the floor drainage system and not onto the floor.

15.4.2.3.3 Air thawing equipment shall be designed to thaw food under controlled conditions at a rate and temperature that does not contribute to product deterioration or contamination.

15.4.2.3.4 Provision is to be made for the containment and regular disposal of used cartons and packaging from thawed product so that there is no risk to the product.

#### **15.4.2.4 High Risk Processing**

15.4.2.4.1 The processing of high risk food shall be conducted under controlled conditions such that:

- i. Sensitive areas in which high risk food has undergone a "kill" step, a "food safety intervention" or is subject to post process handling, are protected/segregated from other processes, raw materials or staff who handle raw materials to ensure cross contamination is minimized;
- ii. Areas in which high risk processes are conducted are serviced by staff dedicated to that function;
- iii. Staff access points are located, designed and equipped to enable staff to practice a high standard of personal hygiene to prevent product contamination;
- iv. Processes are in place to reduce or eliminate the risk of cross contamination.

#### **15.4.2.5 Control of Foreign Matter Contamination**

15.4.2.5.1 The responsibility and methods used to prevent foreign matter contamination of the product shall be documented, implemented and communicated to all staff.

15.4.2.5.2 Inspections shall be performed to ensure facility and equipment remains in good condition and potential contaminants have not detached or become damaged or deteriorated.

15.4.2.5.3 The use of temporary fasteners such as string, wire or tape to fix or hold equipment shall not be permitted.

15.4.2.5.4 The following preventative measures shall be implemented where applicable to prevent glass contamination:

- i. Containers, equipment and other utensils made of glass, porcelain, ceramics, laboratory glassware or other like material (except where the product is contained in packaging made from these materials, or measurement instruments with glass dial covers or MIG thermometers required under regulation) shall not be permitted in food processing/contact zones;
- ii. Staples, paperclips, tacks and other metal objects shall not be permitted in food processing/contact zones;
- iii. Conduct regular inspections of food handling/contact zones to ensure they are free of glass or other like material; and
- iv. Inspect all glass, porcelain, ceramics, plastics or other like material used for food display are in good condition and to ensure that they are free of chips and/or cracks that pose a risk to food safety; and
- v. Inspect all glass instrument dial covers on processing equipment and MIG thermometers at the start and finish of each shift to confirm they have not been damaged.

15.4.2.5.5 Wooden pallets and other wooden utensils used in food handling/contact zones shall be clean and maintained in good order. Their condition is subject to regular inspection.

15.4.2.5.6 Loose metal objects on equipment, equipment covers and overhead structures shall be removed or tightly fixed so as not to present a hazard.

15.4.2.5.7 Knives and cutting instruments used in processing and packaging operations shall be controlled, and kept clean and well maintained.

#### **15.4.2.6 Detection of Foreign Objects**

15.4.2.6.1 The responsibility, methods and frequency for monitoring, maintaining, calibrating and using screens, sieves, filters or other technologies to remove or detect foreign matter shall be documented and implemented.

15.4.2.6.2 If used, metal detectors or other physical contaminant detection technologies shall be routinely monitored, validated and verified for operational effectiveness. The equipment shall be designed to isolate defective product and indicate when it is rejected.

15.4.2.6.3 Records shall be maintained of the inspection by foreign object detection devices, and their verification per regulatory requirement.

#### **15.4.2.7 Managing Foreign Matter Contamination Incidents**

15.4.2.7.1 In all cases of foreign matter contamination the affected batch or item shall be isolated, inspected, reworked or disposed of.

15.4.2.7.2 In circumstances where glass or similar material breakage occurs, the affected area is to be isolated, cleaned and thoroughly inspected (including cleaning equipment and footwear) and cleared by a suitably responsible person prior to the commencement of operations.

#### **15.4.2.8 Air Quality**

15.4.2.8.1 Compressed air that contacts food or food contact surfaces shall be clean and present no risk to food safety.

15.4.2.8.2 Compressed air systems used in the processing process shall be maintained and regularly monitored for purity.

#### **15.4.2.9 Loading, Transport and Unloading Practices**

15.4.2.9.1 The practices applied during loading, transport and unloading of food shall be documented, implemented and designed to maintain appropriate storage conditions and product integrity. Foods shall be loaded, transported and unloaded under conditions suitable to prevent cross contamination.

#### **15.4.2.10 In-Store Sampling**

15.4.2.10.1 The organization shall have a policy for in-store sampling of food products and shall be documented, implemented and designed to maintain food safety and regulatory compliance.

#### **15.4.3 Allergen Management**

15.4.3.1 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 raw materials, ingredients and processing aids, including food grade lubricants, that contain allergens;
- ii. A register of allergens which is applicable in the country of processing and the country (ies) of known destination;
- iii. A list of allergens which is accessible by relevant staff;
- iv. The hazards associated with allergens and their control incorporated into the food safety plan
- v. A system to verify accurate information is provided to the consumer via the product labels;
- vi. Training for management and retail food employees on the essentials of allergy awareness;
- vii. Where allergenic material may be intentionally or unintentionally present, cleaning and sanitation of product contact surfaces between product changeovers shall be effective, appropriate to the risk and legal requirements, and sufficient to remove all potential target allergens from product contact surfaces to prevent cross contact;
- viii. Based on risk assessment, the effectiveness of the cleaning and sanitation of areas and equipment in which allergens are used shall be effectively implemented.

15.4.3.2 The product identification system shall make provision for clear identification and labeling in accordance with regulatory requirements of those products produced on equipment on which foods containing allergens were processed.

#### **15.4.4 Stock Management**

15.4.4.1 The responsibility and methods for ensuring effective stock rotation principles (using first in first out (FIFO)) are applied shall be documented and implemented.

15.4.4.2 Procedures are in place to ensure that all ingredients, materials, work-in-progress, rework and finished product are utilized within their designated shelf-life.

### **15.5 Water & Ice**

#### **15.5.1 Water Quality and Utility Management (Including Ice)**

##### **15.5.1.1 Water Supply**

15.5.1.1.1 Adequate supplies of potable water drawn from a known clean source shall be provided for use during processing operations, as an ingredient and for cleaning the premises, equipment and handwashing.

15.5.1.1.2 Supplies of hot and cold water shall be provided as required to enable the effective cleaning of the premises, equipment and hand washing.

##### **15.5.1.2 Monitoring Water Microbiology and Quality**

15.5.1.2.1 Water used for

- i. washing, thawing and treating food;
- ii. an ingredient or food processing aid;
- iii. cleaning food contact surfaces;
- iv. the manufacture of ice;
- v. the manufacture of mist;
- vi. the manufacture of steam that will come in contact with food or used to heat water that will come in contact with food;
- vii. consumer bulk water filling stations.

Shall comply with local, national or internationally recognized potable water microbiological and quality standards as required.



### **15.5.1.3 Water Delivery**

15.5.1.3.1 The delivery of water within the premises shall ensure potable water is not contaminated.

15.5.1.3.2 The use of non-potable water shall be controlled such that:

- i. There is no cross contamination between potable and non-potable water lines;
- ii. Non-potable water piping and outlets are clearly identified.

### **15.5.1.4 Water Treatment**

15.5.1.4.1 Water treatment methods, equipment and materials (including consumer bulk water filling stations) shall be designed, installed and operated to ensure water receives an effective treatment.

15.5.1.4.2 Water treatment equipment shall be monitored regularly to ensure it remains serviceable.

15.5.1.4.3 Treated water shall be regularly monitored to ensure it meets the indicators specified.

### **15.5.1.5 Ice Supply**

15.5.1.5.1 Ice provided for use during processing operations or as a processing aid or an ingredient or for customer and consumer purchase for consumption shall comply with 15.5.1.2.

15.5.1.5.2 Ice rooms and receptacles shall be constructed of materials as outlined in elements 15.2.1 and designed to minimize contamination of the ice during storage, distribution, sale and use.

### **15.5.1.6 Analysis**

15.5.1.6.1 Microbiological analysis of the water and ice supply shall be conducted, per regulatory requirement, to verify the cleanliness of the supply, the monitoring activities and the effectiveness of the treatment measures implemented.

15.5.1.6.2 Water and ice shall be analyzed using nationally recognized methods standards or alternative methods which are validated as equivalent to the nationally recognized methods. Where external laboratories are utilized to conduct input or product analysis, the laboratories shall be accredited to ISO 17025 or an equivalent national standard.

15.5.1.6.3 Records of all analyses shall be maintained.

## **15.6 Waste Disposal**

### **15.6.1 Waste Management**

15.6.1.1 The responsibility and methods used to collect and handle dry, wet and liquid waste and store prior to removal from the premises shall be documented and implemented.

15.6.1.2 Waste shall be removed on a regular basis and not build up in food handling or processing areas. Designated waste accumulation areas shall be maintained in a clean and tidy condition until such time as external waste collection is undertaken.

15.6.1.3 Trolleys, vehicles, waste disposal equipment, collection bins and storage areas shall be maintained in a serviceable condition and cleaned and sanitized regularly so as not to attract pests and other vermin.

15.6.1.4 Adequate provision shall be made for the disposal of all solid processing waste including trimmings, inedible material and used packaging. Waste held on site prior to disposal shall be stored in a separate storage facility and suitably insect proofed and contained so as not to present a hazard.

15.6.1.5 Adequate provision shall be made for the disposal of all liquid waste from processing and food handling areas. Liquid waste shall be either removed from the processing environment continuously or held in a designated storage area in lidded containers prior to disposal so as not to present a hazard.

15.6.1.6 Waste that is to be used for animal feed shall follow regulatory requirements for proper handling, disposal, transport and pick-up.

### **15.6.2 Salvage Operations/Reclamation**

15.6.2.1 The responsibility and methods outlining how product is disposed, donated, resold, restocked or reused shall be documented and implemented. The methods applied shall ensure:

- i. operations are supervised by qualified personnel;
- ii. product is clearly identified and labeled; and
- iii. processes follow regulatory requirements to ensure safety and integrity of food is maintained.

### **15.6.3 Product Damage or Returns**

15.6.3.1 System shall be in place to maintain product safety when determining future use or disposal of products that are found to be damaged and/or returned to the store(s) by customer and consumer.

## **15.7 Receiving & Transportation**

### **15.7.1 Transport**

#### **15.7.1.1 Loading**

15.7.1.1.1 Vehicles (e.g. trucks/vans/containers) used for transporting food shall be inspected prior to loading to ensure they are clean, in good repair, suitable for the purpose and free from odors or other conditions that may impact negatively on the product.

15.7.1.1.2 Loading practices shall be designed to minimize unnecessary exposure of the product to conditions detrimental to maintaining the product and package integrity.

#### **15.7.1.2 Transport**

15.7.1.2.1 Refrigerated and hot holding units shall maintain the food at required temperatures and the unit's temperature settings shall be set, checked and recorded before loading and core product temperatures recorded at regular intervals during loading as appropriate.

15.7.1.2.2 The refrigeration and hot holding units shall be operational at all times and checks completed of the unit's operation, the door seals and the storage temperature checked at regular intervals during transit.

#### **15.7.1.3 Delivery**

15.7.1.3.1 Delivery of food off site to customer or consumer should not present a risk to food safety or security.

### **15.7.2 Receiving Products**

15.7.2.1 Prior to opening the doors, the refrigeration unit's storage temperature settings and operating temperature shall be checked and recorded. Unloading shall be completed efficiently and product temperatures shall be recorded at the commencement of unloading and at regular intervals during unloading.

15.7.2.2 Unloading practices shall be designed to minimize unnecessary exposure of the product to conditions detrimental to maintaining the product and package integrity.

## 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	<b>Production, Capture and Harvesting of Livestock and Game Animals:</b> 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	<b>Not in use</b>					
3	<b>Growing and Production of Fresh Produce and Nuts:</b> 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	<b>Fresh Produce and Nuts Pack house Operations</b>	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	<b>Extensive Broad Acre Agriculture Operations</b>	BII: 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	<b>Harvest and Intensive Farming of Seafood</b> 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 other 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	<b>Slaughterhouse, Boning and Butchery Operations:</b> 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	<b>Processing of Manufactured Meats and Poultry</b>	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	<b>Seafood Processing:</b> 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	<b>Dairy Food Processing</b>	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	<b>Apiculture and Honey Processing</b>	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	<b>Egg Processing</b>	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	<b>Bakery and Snack Food Processing</b>	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	<b>Fruit, Vegetable and Nut Processing, and Fruit Juices</b>	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	<b>Canning, UHT and Aseptic Operations</b>	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"> <li>Pasteurized canned and chilled crab meat;</li> <li>Milk or milk products; or</li> <li>Egg or egg products; or</li> <li>Fruit or vegetable juices.</li> <li>Canned pet food</li> </ul>	High risk product and process knowledge required
16	<b>Ice, Drink and Beverage Processing</b>	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	<b>Confectionary Manufacturing</b>	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	<b>Preserved Foods Manufacture</b>	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	<b>Food Ingredient Manufacture</b>	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	<b>Recipe Meals Manufacture</b>	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 desserts, 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	<b>Oils, Fats, and the Manufacture of oil or fat-based spreads</b>	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

FSC	Category (Site Scope of Certification)	GFSI Industry Scopes	Applicable SQF Code Modules	Description	Example of Products	Level of Risk
22	<b>Processing of Cereal Grains</b>	EII: Processing or Perishable Plant Products	System elements Module 11: GMP for processing of food products	Applies to the processing of cereals of all varieties, including sorting, grading, picking, handling of bulk grains, milling, and extruding.	Includes wheat, maize, rice, barley, oats, millet, pasta, breakfast cereals.	Some high risk process knowledge required
23	<b>Food Catering and Food Service Operations</b>	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	<b>Food Retailing</b>	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	<b>Repackaging of products not manufactured on site.</b>	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	<b>Food Storage and Distribution</b>	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	<b>Manufacture of Food Packaging</b>	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

FSC	Category (Site Scope of Certification)	GFSI Industry Scopes	Applicable SQF Code Modules	Description	Example of Products	Level of Risk
28	Not in use					
29	Not in use					
30	Not in use					
31	<b>Manufacture of Dietary Supplements</b>	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	<b>Manufacture of Pet Food</b>	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	<b>Manufacture of Food Processing Aides</b>	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	<b>Manufacture of Animal Feed</b>	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

<b>Accreditation</b>	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).
<b>Airlock</b>	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.
<b>Approved Supplier(s)</b>	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.
<b>Audit</b>	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.
<b>Audit Checklist</b>	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.
<b>Auditor</b>	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.
<b>Banner</b>	A branch of an organization that bears a different symbol or logo than the corporate office.
<b>Brand</b>	A branch of an organization that bears a different symbol or logo than the corporate office.
<b>Central Site</b>	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).
<b>Certificate</b>	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.
<b>Certification</b>	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.
<b>Certification Audit</b>	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"><li>a) has not been previously certified; or</li><li>b) has been previously certified but requires certification as the earlier certification has been revoked or voluntarily discontinued by the site.</li></ul>
<b>Certification Body</b>	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.
<b>Certification Cycle</b>	The annual period between a site's certification/re-certification audits.
<b>Certification Number</b>	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.
<b>Children</b>	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."
<b>Codex Alimentarius Commission</b>	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.
<b>Contract Manufacturer (or</b>	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.

<b>co-man, co-manufacturer)</b>	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.
<b>Corporate</b>	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.
<b>Correction</b>	Action to eliminate a detected non-conformity. Shall have the same meaning as "corrected."
<b>Corrective Action</b>	<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"> <li>a) Determine / document any immediate action required / taken <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Determine the cause of the problem</li> <li>ii. Evaluate action needed on the identified cause</li> <li>iii. Determine if the problem exists elsewhere in the system and implement actions needed</li> </ul> </li> <li>b) Document the actions taken and the results of the action taken. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Review/verify and document effectiveness of action taken with objective evidence.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>Crisis Management</b>	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.
<b>Customer</b>	A buyer or person that purchases goods or services from the SQF certified site.
<b>Desk Audit</b>	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.
<b>Deviation</b>	<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>
<b>Environmental Monitoring Program (EMP)</b>	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.
<b>Exempt</b>	<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 facility audit.</p> <p>The term also applies to products, processes or areas of the facility 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 facility description in the SQFI assessment database.</p>
<b>Facility</b>	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").
<b>Feed</b>	Any single or multiple materials, whether processed, semi-processes, or raw, which is intended to be fed directly to food-producing animals.
<b>Feed Safety</b>	The principles and practices applied to feed production and manufacturing to ensure that feed does not cause harm to animals or humans.
<b>Food</b>	<p>Any substance, usually of animal or plant origin, intentionally consumed by humans, whether processed, partially processed or unprocessed.</p> <p>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.</p>

<b>Food Defense</b>	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.
<b>Food Fraud</b>	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.
<b>FMI</b>	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.
<b>Food Packaging</b>	The finished article used to package food.
<b>Food Quality Plan</b>	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.
<b>Food Safety Certification Program Owner</b>	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 certification program owner should contain at least a standard, a clearly defined scope, and a food safety system.
<b>Food Safety Fundamentals</b>	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.
<b>Food Safety Plan</b>	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.
<b>Food Sector Category (FSC)</b>	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.
<b>Franchise</b>	An authorization granted by a company to an individual or group enabling them to carry out specified commercial activities and providing services for a company's products. The Franchisee has the right to use an organization's business model and brand for a contracted period of time with a direct stake and responsibility in the business.
<b>General Requirements</b>	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.
<b>Good Agricultural Practices (GAPs)</b>	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.
<b>Good Aquaculture Practices (GAPs)</b>	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.
<b>Good Manufacturing Practices (GMPs)</b>	The combination of management and manufacturing practices designed to ensure food products are consistently produced to meet relevant legislative and customer specifications.
<b>HACCP</b>	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."
<b>HACCP Method</b>	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..

<b>HACCP Plan</b>	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.
<b>HACCP Training</b>	<p>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:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Recognized as a HACCP training course used extensively in a country.</li> <li>2. Administered and delivered by an institution recognized as a food safety training center of excellence.</li> <li>3. A minimum of two days (16 hours) in duration, or equivalent.</li> <li>4. The acquired knowledge of the candidate shall be assessed as part of the training program.</li> </ol>
<b>Hazardous Chemicals and Toxic Substances</b>	Solids, liquids or gases 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.
<b>High Risk Area</b>	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.
<b>High Risk Food</b>	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.
<b>High Risk Food Process(es)</b>	A process that requires specific controls and/or a higher level of hygienic practice to prevent food contamination from pathogens.
<b>In-store Prepared</b>	The processing of food at the store location 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, cooling, cutting, chopping, slicing, dicing, purifying and the pasteurization of food.
<b>In-store Vendor</b>	A separate business entity from the organization that holds residency within the organization's store(s) producing products and/or offering for sale under the store name or vendor's name.
<b>Industry Code of Practice</b>	Industry norms, rules or protocols established by industry groups which provide practical, industry specific guidelines on meeting regulations while meeting industry needs.
<b>Inspection Area</b>	A designated station close to the process for the purpose of monitoring food safety and/or quality attributes and parameters.
<b>Legality</b>	Legality refers to national federal, state and local regulations applicable to the certified product in the country of manufacture and intended markets.
<b>Licensed Certification Body (LCB)</b>	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.
<b>Low Risk Food</b>	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.
<b>Mandatory Elements</b>	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.
<b>Maximum Residue Limits (MRLs)</b>	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.
<b>Multi-site Certification</b>	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).
<b>Multi-site Program</b>	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).
<b>Multi-site Sampling Program</b>	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.
<b>Non conformity (or Non-conformance)</b>	<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>
<b>N/A</b>	<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>
<b>On-site Laboratories</b>	A designated and enclosed area in the facility 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.
<b>Organization</b>	Any Retail business involved in the production, processing, transport, storage, distribution and offering for sale of food, beverages, domestic pet food, and has, or agrees to have, a certification body carry out audits and certification of its SQF System.
<b>Pests</b>	Vermin, including birds, rodents, insects, or other unwanted species that can carry disease and pose a risk to packaging, feed or food.
<b>Pet Food</b>	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.
<b>Plan</b>	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)
<b>Potable</b>	Water that is safe to drink.
<b>Pre-requisite Program</b>	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.
<b>Pre-Packaged</b>	Finished products that are delivered to the organization's store(s) that are packaged and ready to be displayed for sale.
<b>Primary Producer or Producer</b>	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.
<b>Processing</b>	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.
<b>Product</b>	Those products that apply to a specific food sector category as defined by the SQFI.
<b>Program</b>	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.
<b>Purity</b>	The absence of contaminants that could cause a food safety hazard.
<b>Quality</b>	A measure of exceeding customer or corporate expectations and a state of being free from defects, deficiencies and significant variation.
<b>Quality Threat</b>	See threat.
<b>Re-certification</b>	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.
<b>Re-certification Audit</b>	An audit of the site's SQF food safety or quality System within thirty (30) calendar days of the anniversary of certification.
<b>Recoup</b>	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."
<b>Registration Schedule</b>	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.
<b>Rework</b>	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.
<b>Rules of Use</b>	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.
<b>Scope of Certification</b>	The food sector categories and those products to be covered by the certificate.
<b>Season or Seasonal</b>	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.
<b>SQFI Select Site</b>	Recognition stated on the SQFI certificate for sites who have undergone an annual unannounced re-certification audit.
<b>Senior Site Management</b>	Individuals at the highest level on site responsible for the business operation and implementation and improvement of the food safety and quality management system.
<b>Site</b>	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.
<b>Site Audit</b>	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.
<b>SQF Auditor</b>	The same meaning as auditor.
<b>SQF Consultant</b>	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.
<b>SQF Logo</b>	Means the SQF logo depicted in SQF Logo Rules of Use.
<b>SQF Practitioner</b>	<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"> <li>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.</li> <li>Take appropriate action to ensure the integrity of the SQF food safety and/or quality System.</li> <li>Communicate to relevant personnel all information essential to ensure the effective implementation and maintenance of the SQF food safety and/or quality System.</li> <li>Ensure that site personnel have the required competencies to carry out those functions affecting products, legality, and safety.</li> </ol> <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>

<b>SQF Program</b>	The SQF Food Safety and/or Quality Code and all associated System, rules, quality shield, intellectual property and documents.
<b>SQF Quality Shield</b>	Means the SQF shield depicted in SQF Quality Shield Rules of Use.
<b>SQF System</b>	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.
<b>SQF Trainer</b>	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.
<b>SQFI</b>	The SQF Institute, a division of the Food Marketing Institute (FMI).
<b>SQFI Assessment Database</b>	The online database used by the SQFI to manage site registration, site audits, close out of corrective actions, and site certification.
<b>System Elements</b>	The SQF food safety management requirements applied by all sites throughout the supply chain for SQF certification.
<b>Standard</b>	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.
<b>Sub-site</b>	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).
<b>Supplier</b>	The entity that provides a product or service to the SQF certified site.
<b>Surveillance Audit</b>	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.
<b>Technical Expert</b>	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.
<b>Threat</b>	An identified risk that has the potential, if not controlled, to affect the quality of a product.
<b>Trademarks</b>	All certification and service marks filed or registered in the name of FMI and the licensor in relation to the SQF Program.
<b>Training Center</b>	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.
<b>Unannounced Audit</b>	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."
<b>Validation</b>	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.
<b>Verification</b>	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.
<b>Verification</b>	A schedule outlining the frequency and responsibility for carrying out the methods,

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<b>Schedule</b>	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.
<b>Vision and Mission Statement</b>	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.
<b>Water Treatment</b>	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"><li>brochures, flyers, advertisements, press releases, company website, email signature lines</li><li>internal documents and training materials</li></ul>
Single Color Reproduction: black and white.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>brochures, flyers, advertisements, press releases, company website, email signature lines</li><li>internal documents and training materials</li></ul>

### 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 Retail Multi-Store Certification**

### **1. Scope**

- 1.1 This module outlines the requirements for establishing and maintaining certification of a multi-store sampling program that is managed by an SQF Retail certified corporate office. This program would be used in the case where all of the organization's stores cannot be certified every year. The organization would work with the certification body on implementing the multi-store sampling program in order to manage the risk.
- 1.2 Where the retail multi-store sampling program involves a number of stores, there shall be a minimum of twenty (20) stores.

### **2. Definitions**

- 2.1 An SQF Retail multi-store sampling program is comprised of a corporate office(s) under which activities are planned to manage and control the food safety and quality management systems of a network of stores under a legal or contractual link.
- 2.2 For the purpose of this Code the definitions outlined in Appendix 2: Glossary of Terms and the following definitions apply.
- 2.3 The corporate office is an entity that has stores certified to the SQF Food Safety Code for Retail or eligible for such certification, that has a network of primary stores that are eligible for certification to the SQF Food safety Code for Retail. The corporate office may have several offices (brands, banners, franchises) that oversee a specified number of stores. The corporate office and all stores are all located in the one country and operate under the same food safety legislation.

### **3. Eligibility Criteria for the Multi-store Sampling Program Organization**

- 3.1 The corporate office is the entity responsible for the SQF Retail multi-store sampling program.
- 3.2 Sub-offices and stores shall be linked to the corporate office by a legal or contractual arrangement.
- 3.3 The corporate office, sub-offices and stores shall be listed in the agreement with the certification body. The corporate office, sub-offices and all stores in the multi-site program shall be audited by one certification body.
- 3.4 Corporate office, sub-offices shall implement a SQF food safety System that includes management of the stores and internal audit of the stores.
- 3.5 Stores shall implement a common, SQF food safety System which is subject to continuous surveillance by the corporate office and sub-offices.
- 3.6 The corporate office shall implement corrective actions when needed in any stores. This shall be laid down in the agreement between the corporate office, sub-offices and the stores.
- 3.7 The corporate office shall establish and maintain SQF certification for the duration of the SQF multi-site program.
- 3.8 The corporate office's SQF management system shall be administered under a centrally controlled plan and be subject to management review.
- 3.9 The corporate office shall demonstrate an ability to collect and analyze data from all sub-offices and stores, and have the authority and ability to initiate organizational change if required.
- 3.10 The corporate office administration function, sub-offices and the stores shall be subject to the corporate office's internal audit program and shall be audited at least once per year in accordance with SQF Food Safety Code for Retail requirements and prior to the certification audit.

### **4. Internal Audits**

- 4.1 The corporate office shall document its internal audit procedure which shall include an internal audit schedule and outline the method of conducting audits of all stores and the corporate office's administrative function.
- 4.2 An internal audit which includes all relevant elements of the system elements, and 15 shall be conducted at least once per year, and during periods of peak activity.

### **5. Internal Audit Personnel**

- 5.1 Personnel conducting internal audits shall:
- Successfully complete the "Implementing SQF Food Safety Systems for Retail" training course.
  - Successfully complete internal auditor training.
  - Have competence in the Retail sector category as the internal audit.
- 5.2 Personnel reviewing the internal audits of the multi-store sampling program organization and evaluating the results of those internal audits shall be separate from personnel conducting the internal audits and be trained in internal audit procedures and be registered as an SQF consultant or an SQF food safety auditor.

5.3 It is acceptable for the corporate office to contract out the internal audit function provided the contractor is registered as an SQF consultant or an SQF food safety auditor.

5.4 Where the internal audit function is contracted out, the corporate office shall be accountable for the actions and effectiveness of the work completed by the contractor.

5.5 Contract arrangements shall comply with 2.3.1 of the SQF Code.

## **6. Auditing and Certifying the Multi-Store Sampling Program Organization**

6.1 Audits and certification of an SQF multi-store sampling program organization shall be completed by SQF licensed and accredited certification bodies. The third party audit involves:

- i. The certification audit (including corporate office, sub-offices and store 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-store sampling program organization shall be centered on the organization's corporate office, sub-offices, the corporate office's internal audit function and a sample of the stores.

## **7. Audit Frequency**

7.1 The certification audit of the corporate office, sub-offices and a sample (refer to element 10) of stores are conducted every twelve months. All stores shall be audited on a time cycle agreed upon by the organization and the certification body (two years, three years, five years, etc.).

7.2 Time cycled multi-store sample audits are conducted on the anniversary of the last day of the initial certification audit, plus or minus thirty (30) calendar days.

7.3 Within each certification and re-certification audit cycle, the corporate office and sub-offices shall be audited before the sample of stores.

7.4 Surveillance audits are conducted for any store in the multi-store sampling 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. Where a store is subject to a surveillance audit due to a "C-Complies" rating, the internal audit of that store by the corporate office shall also be reviewed.

7.5 The store that receives the "F – Fails to comply" rating shall be included in the sample for the next audit cycle.

## **8. Selecting the Stores**

8.1 The selection of the sample is the responsibility of the organization and the certification body.

8.2 The sample is selective based on the factors set out below and shall result in a range of different stores being selected.

8.3 The sample of stores shall be selected so that the differences among the selected stores 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 stores;
- iv. Variations in the Risk Levels;
- v. Modifications since the last certification assessment; and
- vi. Geographical dispersion.
- vii. New stores added into the program

8.5 The corporate office shall be informed of the stores that will comprise the sample and be allowed adequate time to prepare for the audit.

8.6 The corporate office's SQF System, including its store internal audit procedure, shall be assessed during the multi-store sample program certification audits and each surveillance (if applicable) and rotation through the time cycle multi-store sample audits.

## **9. Determining the Size of the Store Sample**

9.1 The certification body shall record the justification for applying a sample size outside that which is described in this clause.

9.2 The minimum number of stores to be audited at a multi-store sample certification audits or time cycle sample audits is the square root of the number of stores with 1.5 as a co-efficient ( $y=1.5\sqrt{x}$ ), rounded to the higher whole number.

## **10. Additional Stores**

10.1 On the application of a new store or group of stores to join an already certified SQF multi-store sample program, a sample of new stores shall be included in the audit sample for the next time cycle sample audits. The new stores shall be added to the existing stores for determining the sample size for future time cycle sample certification audits.

## **11. Dealing with Non-conformities**

11.1 When non-conformities are found at any individual store through the corporate office's internal auditing, investigation by the corporate office shall take place to determine whether the other stores may be affected. The certification body shall require evidence that the corporate office 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 stores or not. If they are found to do so, appropriate corrective action shall be taken both at the corporate office and at the individual store(s). The corporate office shall demonstrate to the certification body the justification for all follow-up action.

11.2 When non-conformities are found at any individual sample store through auditing by the certification body, action shall be taken by the certification body as outlined in Part A, 3.2.

11.3 At the time of the certification a certificate shall not be issued to the individual sample store until satisfactory corrective action is taken to close out all Non-conformances.

## **12. Certificate Issued for a Multi-Store Sample Program Organization**

12.1 A certificate shall be issued to the corporate office and all stores within the SQF multi-store sampling program. The corporate office's certificate shall include an appendix listing all stores participating in the multi-store sampling program. The store certificate shall state within its scope of certification that it is part of a multi-store sampling program certification. The corporate office's certificate appendix shall be updated annually with time cycle sample stores.

12.2 The certification date for the corporate office and stores 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 sample store audit.

12.3 The certificate for sample stores in the multi-store sample program will be withdrawn, if the corporate office or any of the sample stores do not fulfill the necessary criteria for maintaining of the certificate.

12.4 The list of stores shall be kept updated by the corporate office. The corporate office shall inform the certification body about the closure of any of the stores or the addition of new stores. Failure to provide such information will be considered by the certification body as a misuse of the certificate, and the Retail multi-store sample program organization's certificate shall be suspended until the matter is corrected to the satisfaction of the certification body.

12.5 Additional stores shall be added to an existing certification as the result of surveillance audits.

12.6 Surveillance audits are only required if a store receives a "C – Complies" rating.