

CONTENT

1.	CERTIFICATION PROCEDURE	2
1.1.	General Requirements	2
1.2.	Audit Preparation	3
1.3.	Certification audit	3
1.4.	Language Used During the Audit	4
1.5.	Corporate Audits	4
1.6.	Seasonal Production	5
1.7.	Non-conformances	5
1.8.	Audit Report	6
1.9.	Issue of the certificate	6
1.10.	Failure to comply	6
1.11.	Surveillance Audit	6
1.12.	Re-certification audit	7
1.13.	Unannounced audits	7
2.	CHANGING THE CERTIFICATION BODY	8
3.	RELOCATION OF PREMISES	8
4.	CHANGE OF BUSINESS OWNERSHIP	8
5.	CERTIFICATE SUSPENSION AND WITHDRAWAL	8
6.	THE SQFI COMPLIANCE AND INTEGRITY PROGRAM	9
7.	SPECIAL VISITS	10
8.	NOTIFICATION OF RECALLS AND REGULATORY INFRINGEMENTS	10
9.	COMMUNICATION WITH YOUR CERTIFICATION BODY	10
10.	SQF LOGO RULES OF USE	11

If you should require any further information then please do not hesitate to contact us. We will be please to help you.

Please contact us via mail to info.tncert@tuev-nord.de or by telephone 0800 245 74 57 (Free-phone from within Germany) or +49 511 9986-1222 from abroad.

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This document has been approved according to CERT-401-VA-007. Details are available from the QM-Department.

The rules and performance description regarding certification according to the Safe Quality Food Institute (hereinafter referred to as SQFI) form an integral part of this offer. They are valid alongside the General Conditions of Certification.

The SQF Code as well as other applicable documents and rules are available on the SQFI website (www.sqfi.com)

This performance description covers the following certification systems:

1. Primary Animal Production; FSC 1
2. Primary Plant Production; FSC 2, 3, 4, 5
3. Aquaculture; FSC 6
4. Animal Product Manufacturing; FSC 7, 8, 9
5. Food Manufacturing; FSC 10~22, 25, 33
6. Dietary Supplements; FSC 34
7. Pet Food; FSC 32
8. Animal Feed; FSC 31
9. Storage & Distribution; FSC 26
10. Food Packaging; FSC 27

and:

- SQF Quality Code, edition 9.0 (standalone or as Addendum to a GFSI-benchmarked program audit or other Food Safety Management Standards including HACCP certification and ISO 22000)
- As well as the unchanged:
 - SQF Food Safety for Fundamentals for Manufacturing Edition 1
 - SQF Food Safety Code for Food Retail – Edition 8
 - SQF Food Safety Code for Foodservice – Edition 8

1. CERTIFICATION PROCEDURE

1.1. General Requirements

The SQF System requires the application of Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP), built upon a sound foundation of Good Practice elements such as Good Manufacturing Practices(GMP), Good Production Practices (GPP) or Good Agriculture Practices (GAP) to document and control critical food safety and quality criteria during production in order to deliver a safe, quality product as specified. The SQF Codes, guidance documents, Criteria for SQF Auditors and Technical Reviewers, Criteria for SQF Training Centers and Training Courses, Criteria for SQF Trainers, Criteria for SQF Consultants and audit reporting formats outline the purpose and the minimum requirements of audit by a certification body (TUV NORD CERT).

Certified clients are obligated during the term of this Agreement to (i) use Certification Trademarks only (A) during the period that the Client is Certified, (B) for purposes of demonstrating Certification, and (C) in accordance with the latest published version of "SQF Code Appendix 3: SQF Logo Rules of Use," and (ii) permit TUV NORD CERT GmbH (the Certification Body) Auditor to audit and inspect the use of the Certification Trademarks to ensure compliance with the foregoing and permit to participate in any such

audit or inspection. The Certification Body shall, in collaboration with SQFI, enforce such obligations against Clients that are in breach thereof.

Furthermore:

- The site must within 24 hours of any food safety prosecution, a situation in which there is a reasonable probability that the use of or exposure to a violative product will cause serious adverse health consequences or death, or any product recall relating to food safety contact TÜV NORD CERT at:
tncert-food-recall@tuev-nord.de
- The sites/clients are prohibited to market or sell the SQF Code, SQF Program, TÜV NORD CERT Audit Materials or Service Product to any other person.

1.2. Audit Preparation

If desired, a voluntary pre-assessment audit can be carried out. It is not mandatory, but recommended to provide a “health check” of the client’s implemented SQF system. A pre-assessment audit can assist in identifying gaps in the client’s SQF system so that corrective action can occur before engaging TÜV NORD CERT for a full certification audit. It can be conducted using internal resources, an SQF consultant, or an SQF auditor.

Before the certification audit begins, the client (site) registers with SQFI through the SQF Assessment Database :

<https://www.sqfi.com/directories/sqf-assessment-database>

This registration sends an email to the selected Certification Body notifying them that the client has registered and has selected them.

The client and TÜV NORD CERT shall agree on the audit scope. The scope of the audit shall cover the relevant SQF Code(s), the food sector categories, and the products listed under the scope of certification for a site. The audit scope shall cover all processes under the control of the client including from raw material receipt to shipment of finished product. The details for food sector categories can be found in each Food Safety Code.

Once the audit scope is agreed between the client and TÜV NORD CERT, it cannot be changed once the audit has commenced.

1.3. Certification audit

The initial SQF certification audit is conducted by the SQF food safety auditor(s) appointed by TÜV NORD CERT.

Part of the audit may be conducted remotely using information and communication technology (ICT), but at least half of the allocated audit duration must be onsite. Remote activities can only be conducted by agreement between a client and TÜV NORD CERT as your certification body, and are dependent on your ICT capability and information security requirements. The audits will include changes to the certification requirements, any new SQF Code edition, or criteria released by the SQFI and any amendments to existing documentation.

The audit is conducted at date(s) agreed between the client and TÜV NORD CERT, when the main processes are operating. The on-site audit must include a visit of the entire facility, including the inside

and outside of the building, regardless of the scope of certification. The on-site audit determines if the SQF System is effectively implemented as documented. It establishes and verifies the:

- Effectiveness of the SQF System in its entirety, including HACCP based on the guidelines developed and managed by CODEX Alimentarius Commission. Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) System and Guidelines for its Application – Annex to CAC/RCP 1 – 1969, Rev. 5 (2020)
- Food safety hazards and food quality hazards are effectively identified and controlled.
- Effective interaction between all elements of the SQF System;
- Level of commitment demonstrated by the client to maintaining an effective SQF System ant to meeting their food safety regulatory and costumer requirements and
- The exempted products or areas of the site do not pose a food safety risk to the products covered under certification.
- The audit shall also cover the SQFI rules of use SQF logo as described in the SQF Food Safety Codes, Edition 9, Appendix 3.
- The rules for use of the SQF quality shield are described in the SQF Quality Code, Edition 9, Appendix 4.

1.4. Language Used During the Audit

In circumstances where a translator is required, the translator must be provided by the certification body (TÜV NORD CERT) and be independent of the site being audited, and have no conflict of interest. The site will be notified of any increase in audit duration and cost associated with the use of a translator. If there is a conflict, the English version of the SQF Food Safety Code: Food Manufacturing prevails

1.5. Corporate Audits

If your site is part of a larger corporation and some food safety functions are conducted at a corporate head office (i.e., an office that does not process or handle products), an optional corporate audit of the Code elements managed by that office can be conducted by the certification body. This part of the assessment may also be conducted remotely using ICT.

The decision on whether a separate corporate audit should be conducted is made by agreement between the certification body and the corporation and communicated by the corporate office to SQF certified sites managed by the corporate office.

When a corporate audit is conducted, the audit evidence shall be reviewed and all identified corporate non-conformances must be closed out before the site audits are conducted. Any open non-conformances, which are not closed out, are attributed to the site or sites.

The SQF food safety auditor audits the application of the corporate functions relative to the site's scope of certification during the audit of each site managed by the corporate office. All mandatory and applicable elements of the SQF Food Safety Code: Food Manufacturing are audited at each site regardless of the findings of the corporate audit..

1.6. Seasonal Production

If your site is involved in seasonal production (i.e., the major production activities are conducted over a shorter time duration that does not exceed more than five consecutive months in any calendar year), your initial certification audit will need to be conducted during the peak operational part of the season (i.e., when your processes are operating).

If you are seeking to include products from more than one season within your scope of certification, you need to agree with TN CERT that it will conduct the initial certification audit during the highest risk and/or highest volume production operation.

Documentation and records for other seasonal production are reviewed as part of the certification audit.

Additional information/details and cross references can be found in the respective Food Safety Code.

1.7. Non-conformances

Where the SQF food safety auditor(s) find deviations from the requirements of relevant modules of the SQF Food Safety Code-in-subject, the SQF food safety auditor(s) advises you of the number, description, and extent of the non-conformances. Nonconformances are also referred to as non-conformities.

Non-conformances against the SQF Food Safety Code-in-subject are graded as follows:

- A minor non-conformance is evidence of a random or infrequent failure to maintain compliance with a requirement but does not indicate a breakdown in the food safety management system or that food safety is compromised. It is evidence of an incomplete or inappropriate implementation of SQF requirements, which, if not corrected, could lead to system element breakdown.
- A major non-conformance is a failure of a system element, a systemic breakdown in the food safety management system, a serious deviation from the requirements, and/or absence of evidence demonstrating compliance to an applicable system element or Good Manufacturing Practices. It is evidence of a food safety risk to products included in the scope of certification.
- A critical non-conformance is a breakdown of control(s) at a critical control point, a prerequisite program, or other process steps and judged likely to cause a significant public health risk and/or product contamination.

A critical non-conformance is also raised if the certification body deems that there is systemic falsification of records relating to food safety controls and the SQF System.

If the SQF food safety auditor considers that a critical non-conformance exists during a certification audit, the SQF food safety auditor is required to immediately advise you and notify the TÜV NORD CERT.

A critical non-conformance raised at an initial certification audit results in an automatic failure of the audit, and your site is required to re-apply for certification.

Non-conformances determine the audit score as detailed in the SQF Code.

Each non-conformance must be responded by the client/site with appropriate corrections, corrective and preventive actions based on the root cause analysis (RCA) of each non-conformance, along with the evidence of closures. The corrective and preventive actions, based on the evidence sent is then approved by the Auditor/TNC at or before the Day 30 after the audit.

1.8. Audit Report

SQFI provides the certification body with the tools for electronic audit checklist to be used by SQF food safety auditors when conducting your SQF food safety audit. It is customized as per the SQF food sector category. The checklist used for your audit is specific to your site.

The SQF checklist is designed to ensure the uniform application of SQF food safety audit requirements. It is used by SQF food safety auditors to record their findings and determine the extent to which your site operations comply with SQF requirements.

The audit report is in draft form until technically reviewed and approved by the authorized certification manager of the certification body.

Final audit report is sent to the client within the prescribed timelines. The SQF food safety audit report is the property of the site and is not distributed to other parties without your site's permission

1.9. Issue of the certificate

The TÜV NORD CERT makes the certification decision based on the evidence of compliance and non-compliance recommended by the SQF food safety auditor during the SQF audit. Although SQFI provides guidance on certification, the certification body is responsible for deciding if certification is justified and granted, based on the objective evidence provided by the SQF food safety auditor.

Certification of the SQF System will be awarded to clients that achieve a "C - complies" audit rating or greater with no outstanding non-conformities. The certificate is valid for 75 days from the anniversary of the initial certification audit date (last audit date).

1.10. Failure to comply

If your site receives an "F – fails to comply" rating at an initial food safety certification audit or fails to correct identified non-conformances within the required timeframe, your site is considered to have failed the SQF food safety audit and must then re-apply for another certification audit.

1.11. Surveillance Audit

A surveillance audit is conducted if your site attains a "C - complies" rating at a certification audit or re-certification audit.

The surveillance audit is conducted within thirty (30) calendar days on either side of the six (6) month anniversary of the last day of the last certification or re-certification audit.

A new score and rating are issued at the surveillance audit, but the site's re-certification audit date is not affected.

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

- Verify the continued efficacy of corrections and corrective actions closed out at your previous audits;
- Verify that your SQF System continues to be implemented as documented;
- Verify you have taken appropriate action where changes to your site's operations have been made that impact the site's SQF Food Safety System;
- Confirm continued compliance with the requirements of the SQF Food Safety Code: Food Manufacturing;

- Verify all critical steps remain under control; and
- Contribute to continued improvement of your site's SQF System and business operation.
- Major or minor non-conformities raised at the surveillance audit are required to be closed out.

1.12. Re-certification audit

The re-certification audit is conducted within thirty (30) calendar days either side of the anniversary of the last day of the initial certification audit. It is conducted to verify the continued effectiveness of your site's SQF System.

The re-certification audits are full audits and, as agreed, may be partially-remote (using ICT) or Unannounced audit protocol.

The purpose of the re-certification audit is to:

- Verify the continued efficacy of corrections and corrective actions closed out at your previous audits;
- Verify that your SQF Food Safety System continues to be implemented as documented;
- Verify that your internal audits, annual reviews of the crisis and food defense plans and recall system, and management reviews have been effectively completed;
- Verify that corrective and preventative actions have been taken on all non-conformities;
- Ensure you have taken appropriate action where changes to your site's operations have been made that impact the site's SQF Food Safety System;
- Verify all critical steps and the effective interactions among all elements of your SQF System remain under control;
- Verify the overall effectiveness of the SQF System in its entirety in light of changes within your operations;
- Verify that you continue to demonstrate a commitment to maintaining the effectiveness of your SQF System and to meeting regulatory and customer requirements; and
- Ensure contribution to the continued improvement of your site's SQF System and business operation.

The variations from the Initial Certification Process:

- your site fails to permit the re-certification audit within the agreed timeframe, the certification body is required to immediately suspend your site's certificate.
- If your site receives an "F – fails to comply" rating at the re-certification audit, the certification body is required to immediately suspend your site's certificate.
- If your site fails TÜV NORD CERT to closeout non-conformities within thirty (30) days, the certification body is required to immediately suspend your site's certificate

1.13. Unannounced audits

The certification body is required to conduct an unannounced audit of your site once every three years. Your first three-year cycle commences with your initial certification audit date. Within the first three years of certification, you are required to have one unannounced audit. Thereafter, you will have an unannounced audit every three years. The unannounced food safety audit occurs within the sixty (60) day re-certification window (i.e., the anniversary date of the initial certification audit +/- thirty (30) days). If you change certification bodies, the site's unannounced re-certification audit schedule does not change. Unannounced audits are on-site audits. Remote activities using ICT do not apply to

unannounced audits.

If you refuse entry to an SQF food safety auditor for an unannounced audit, the certification body is required to immediately suspend your certificate.

Additional information/details can be found in the respective Food Safety Code.

2. CHANGING THE CERTIFICATION BODY

You can change to another SQF licensed certification body after one certification cycle and only after closure of all outstanding non-conformances and as long as the certification is not suspended or under threat of suspension or withdrawal.

If your site requires a surveillance audit, you can change certification bodies only after the surveillance audit is conducted.

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

Your certification number and re-certification date are transferred with your site to the new certification body.:

If you are transferring from another certification body, you need to make the last three (3) re-certification audit reports and surveillance audit report (if applicable) available to TÜV NORD CERT.

3. RELOCATION OF PREMISES

SQF certification is site specific (refer to SQF Code-in-subject), so if you relocate your business premises, your site's certification does not transfer to the new site.

A successful certification of the new premises is required. An initial certification audit must be completed for the new facility.

4. CHANGE OF BUSINESS OWNERSHIP

If the ownership of a certified site changes (e.g., the site's business has been sold), within thirty (30) calendar days of the change of ownership the new owner is required to notify the certification body and apply to retain the SQF certification and the existing certification number; failure to do so may result the site's certificate being subject to WITHDRAWAL.

If the staff with major responsibility for the management and oversight of the SQF Food Safety System has been retained, the certification body may retain the existing audit frequency status.

If there are significant changes in site management and personnel, the certification body is required to complete an initial certification audit and issue a new certificate and a new certification number.

The audit frequency applicable to a new certification applies.

5. CERTIFICATE SUSPENSION AND WITHDRAWAL

TÜV NORD CERT is the owner of the SQF certificates and can suspend or withdraw them at any time. The certification body is required to suspend your SQF certificate if your site:

- Fails to permit the re-certification or surveillance audit within the audit window;
- Fails to take corrective action within the timeframe specified (refer to 9.4);

- Fails to permit an unannounced audit or refuses entry to an SQF food safety auditor for an unannounced audit; or
- Receives an “F – fails to comply” rating at a surveillance or re-certification audit.
- Your site does not maintain the requirements of the applicable SQF Food Safety Code(s): e.g.: if the food safety auditor is in the opinion that and is supported by the technical reviewer that the site fails to maintain the requirements of the applicable SQF Food Safety Code(s).

The certification body withdraws the certificate if your site:

- Has been placed under suspension and fails to follow the suspension protocol, as defined by the certification body in your notice of suspension;
- Fails to take approved corrective action within the timeframes specified, as determined by the certification body;
- Has intentionally and systemically falsified its records;
- Fails to maintain the integrity of the SQF certificate; or
- 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 your site (except for the purposes of amalgamation or reconstruction) or the site ceases to carry on business or becomes bankrupt or 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..

If your site’s certificate is withdrawn, the certification body immediately amends your site’s details on the SQFI assessment database to a “withdrawn” status, indicating the reason for the withdrawal, and the effective date. The certification body also:

- Informs you in writing that the SQF certificate has been withdrawn, the reason for such action, and the effective date. Acknowledgment of receipt of the withdrawal notification is required.
- Notifies SQFI about the withdrawal using the online change and notification form; and
- Instructs you to return the certificate within thirty (30) days of notification.

If your certificate is withdrawn, you are not permitted to re-apply for certification for twelve (12) months from the date the certificate was withdrawn by the certification body. The withdrawn site is posted on sqfi.com for twelve (12) months.

Important: SQF Codes have very detailed Suspension & Withdrawal procedures. All relevant additional information can be found in the respective SQF Food Safety Code or in the SQF Quality Code.

6. THE SQFI COMPLIANCE AND INTEGRITY PROGRAM

To meet the requirements of SQFI’s Compliance and Integrity Program, SQFI may randomly monitor the activities of the certification bodies and their auditors through techniques that include but are not limited to validation and/or witness audits.

While conducting these additional monitoring activities, your site is required to allow SQFI authorized representatives into the site during or after the audit has taken place.

The attendance of an SQFI representative does not interfere with the site's operations or result in additional audit time or non-conformances, and it will not increase the cost charged by the certification body for the audit.

7. SPECIAL VISITS

TN CERT holds the right to a visit (unannounced or with a short notice) of a certified site in case of a complaint about the site, or any other reason that might appear to jeopardize the integrity of the certificate issued. Such visits may or may not be initiated by SQF asking TÜV NORD CERT to investigate.

These visits may be 0.5 to 1.0 day in duration and the expenses incurred may be charged to the certified site.

Similarly, TÜV NORD CERT for the purposes of meeting the requirements to requalify auditors, or qualify new auditors, may send observer(s) to the regular audits. In these cases, these visitors are not part of the Audit Team.

8. NOTIFICATION OF RECALLS AND REGULATORY INFRINGEMENTS

You are obliged to contact and inform TÜV NORD CERT within twenty-four (24) hours of any food safety prosecution, a situation in which there is a reasonable probability that the use of or exposure to a violative product will cause serious adverse health consequences or death, or any product recall relating to food safety:

- You must notify your certification body at:
TNCert-Food-Recall@tuev-nord.de
- And SQFI in writing at:
foodsafetycrisis@sqfi.com
- within twenty-four (24) hours of the event.

Important: Your certification body and SQFI are required to be listed in your essential contacts lists as defined in system element of the respective SQF Food Safety Code.

Your certification body is required to notify SQFI within a twenty-four (24) hours of any action it intends to take to ensure the integrity of the certification.

9. COMMUNICATION WITH YOUR CERTIFICATION BODY

The certified client is required to be in communication with the Certification Body (TÜV NORD CERT) to communicate any changes to:

- Change of address of the site
- Change of ownership of the certified site
- Changes to size and/or configuration of the site,
- Addition or removal of new products, categories or any production lines
- Seasonal sites: change of raw material availability
- Change in number of employees

- Penalties, shut-downs resulting from a regulatory visit
- In case of any crisis affecting the site's capabilities

Please communicate with your TUV NORD contact and/or below email:

FSD-Americas@tuv-nord.com

10. SQF LOGO RULES OF USE

The rules of use for the SQF logo are described in the Appendix 3 of each SQF Food Safety Code and the Quality Code.

- The SQF logo is owned by SQFI. Sites obtain no property in the SQF logo.
- SQFI delegates any or all of its functions regarding "QSF Logo Rules of Use" to the certification body (TUV NORD CERT).
- 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 other entities licensed by SQFI to use them.
- Sites who achieve and maintain certification to the SQF Food Safety Fundamentals, the SQF Food Safety Code and/or the SQF Quality Code are granted permission by their CB to use the SQF logo. Electronic SQF logo files are to be obtained from the CB.
- Subsidiary companies and site addresses not included on the certificate of registration are not certified to use the SQF logo.
- 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.:
- Obligations of a Site: a site must:
 - a. Direct any queries regarding their intended use of the SQF logo to the CB who issued their certificate;
 - b. Discontinue any use of the SQF logo to which SQFI or the CB reasonably objects;
 - c. Operate entirely within the scope of its certificate, including the certification schedule;
 - d. Give SQFI, their CB and/or their agents access to examine all items bearing or indicating the SQF logo for the purpose of confirming compliance with these rules of use and the certificate.
- Grounds for Ceasing Use of the SQF Logo: Permission for a site to use the SQF logo will be suspended and/or withdrawn:
 - e. If the site's certification is suspended, withdrawn, relinquished or not renewed;
- f. If the site breaches or fails to comply with these rules of use;
 - g. 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
 - h. 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.

- The site shall be notified by their CB in writing if their use of the SQF Logo has been suspended or withdrawn..

11. OTHER RULES AND REGULATIONS

The client gives his agreement to the following:

- Participation of assessors from the accreditation organisations,
- Audit or visit by SQFI in response to complaints or as part of the routine SQFI compliance activity announced or unannounced.
- Witness audits by the SQFI/ certification body or by a specifier where a specifier-specific additional audit module is included
- Participation of auditors in training.

Certification status may be affected in the event that access to any parts of the site or process or requests to these points above is unreasonably refused.

Within the framework of the quality assurance measures, the SQFI can contact the client directly in order to gain information regarding the certification status of the company, the performance of TÜV NORD CERT or the content of their reports.

SQFI offers further audit modules which can be carried out in addition to an SQFI audit and which are audited in accordance with the requirements of these modules. The information gained during the audit is handled with equal confidentiality by TÜV NORD CERT.