# TUV USA – Certification according to SQF Code, Edition 7.2

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The SQF Code is a process and product certification standard which is applicable for all sectors of the food industry from primary production to transport and distribution. The main feature of the SQF Code is its emphasis on the systematic application of HACCP for control of food quality hazards as well as food safety. The implementation of an SQF management system addresses a buyer's food safety and quality require-ments and provides the solution for business supply-ing local and global food markets.

## SQFI standards

In addition to the SQF Code, SQFI standards include an ethical sourcing code and management system, as well as a joint program with the American Feed Industry Association (AFIA) that promotes safe animal feed and food production. The following are the current programs:

### SQF Code

- **Safe Feed/ Safe Food** – a certified program designed for the total feed industry.
- **Ethical Sourcing** – a supplement for SQF Certificate holders wanting to demonstrate their food has been grown and processed in a manner that meets stan-dards of social and environmental responsibility

## Advantages

Certification of an SQF System is an assurance that the supplier's food safety plans have been implemented in accordance with the HACCP method and applicable regulatory requirements and that they have been verified and determined effective to manage food safety. It is also a statement of the supplier's commitment to

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

## Audit Scopes

SQFI recognizes that food safety practices differ depend-ing on the food safety risk of the product and the process, and has designed the Code to meet the individual require-ments of each industry sector. There are 35 different food sector categories which are listed in the attachment. The scope of the audit shall cover the required level of certifi-cation, 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 supplier including from raw material receipt to shipment of finished product.

## Certification Levels

The supplier must choose one of two levels of certifica-tion, based on the needs of their customer and the stage of development of the supplier's food safety and quality management system. Apart from that, there is a separate "quality" addendum.

## Level 1
### Food Safety Fundamentals

An entry level for new and developing businesses covering only GAP/GMP/GDP requirements and basic food safety elements.

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### Level 2
### Certified HACCP Based Food Safety Plans (GFSI-recognized)
Incorporates all Level 1 system requirements and additionally requires that a food safety risk analysis of the product and its associated processes has been completed to identify the hazards and the action taken to eliminate, prevent or reduce their occurrence.

### "Quality" addendum Comprehensive Food Safety and Quality Management System
Incorporates all Level 1 and Level 2 system elements and indicates that a food quality risk analysis of the product and its associated processes has been completed, that the actions taken to prevent the incidence of poor quality have been implemented.

### Non-conformities
Non-conformities against the SQF Code 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 and quality 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 or quality risk and 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 supplier fails to take effective corrective action within the timeframe agreed with the certification body, or if the certification body deems that there is systemic falsification of records relating to food safety controls and the SQF System. Critical non-conformities cannot be raised at desk audits.

### Audit Duration
Desk Audit Duration

| Standard | Basic duration (days) |
| --- | --- |
| SQF Level 1 | 0.5 days |
| SQF Level 2 | 1.0 days |
| SQF Level 3 | 1.0 days |

## Facility Audit Duration

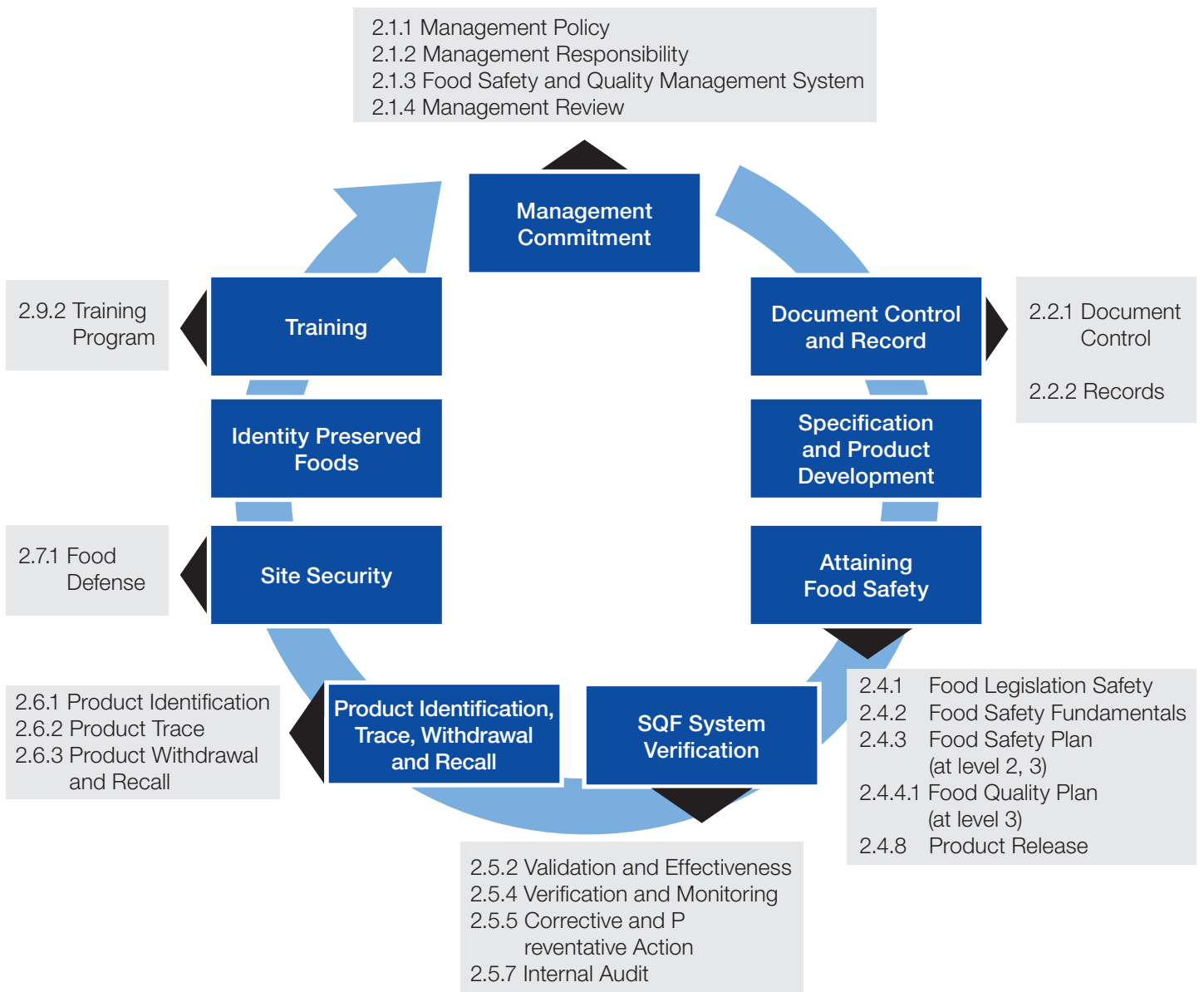| | Standard | SQF Level 1 | SQF Level 2 | SQF Level 3 |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Step 1 | Basic duration (days) (includes three HACCP plans) | 1.0 | 1.5 | 2.0 |
| Step 2 | Additional time for each HACCP plan (where there are multiple/ different plans) | 0.5 per additional 3 HACCP plans or 3 additional production/manufacturing processes | | |
| Step 3 | Additional days based on number of employees | 1 to 200 = 0 | | |
| | | 201 to 400 = 0.5 | | |
| | | 401 to 600 = 1.0 | | |
| | | 601 to 1000 = 1.5 | | |
| | | 1001 to 2500 = 2.0 | | |
| | | 2501 to 4000 = 2.5 | | |
| | | > 4000 = 3.0 | | |
| | Additional days based on size of facility | $0 - 200,000 \text{ ft}^2 = 0$ | | |
| | | $200,000 - 300,000 \text{ ft}^2 = 0.5$ | | |
| | | $300,000 - 500,000 \text{ ft}^2 = 1.0$ | | |

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## Requirements

The SQF Code is divided into modules that must be met, commensurate with the producer or food supplier's food industry sector.

**Module 2:** SQF System Elements: This module defines the food safety management requirements for all suppliers throughout the supply chain. Module 2 can be certified at three levels (see Certification levels)
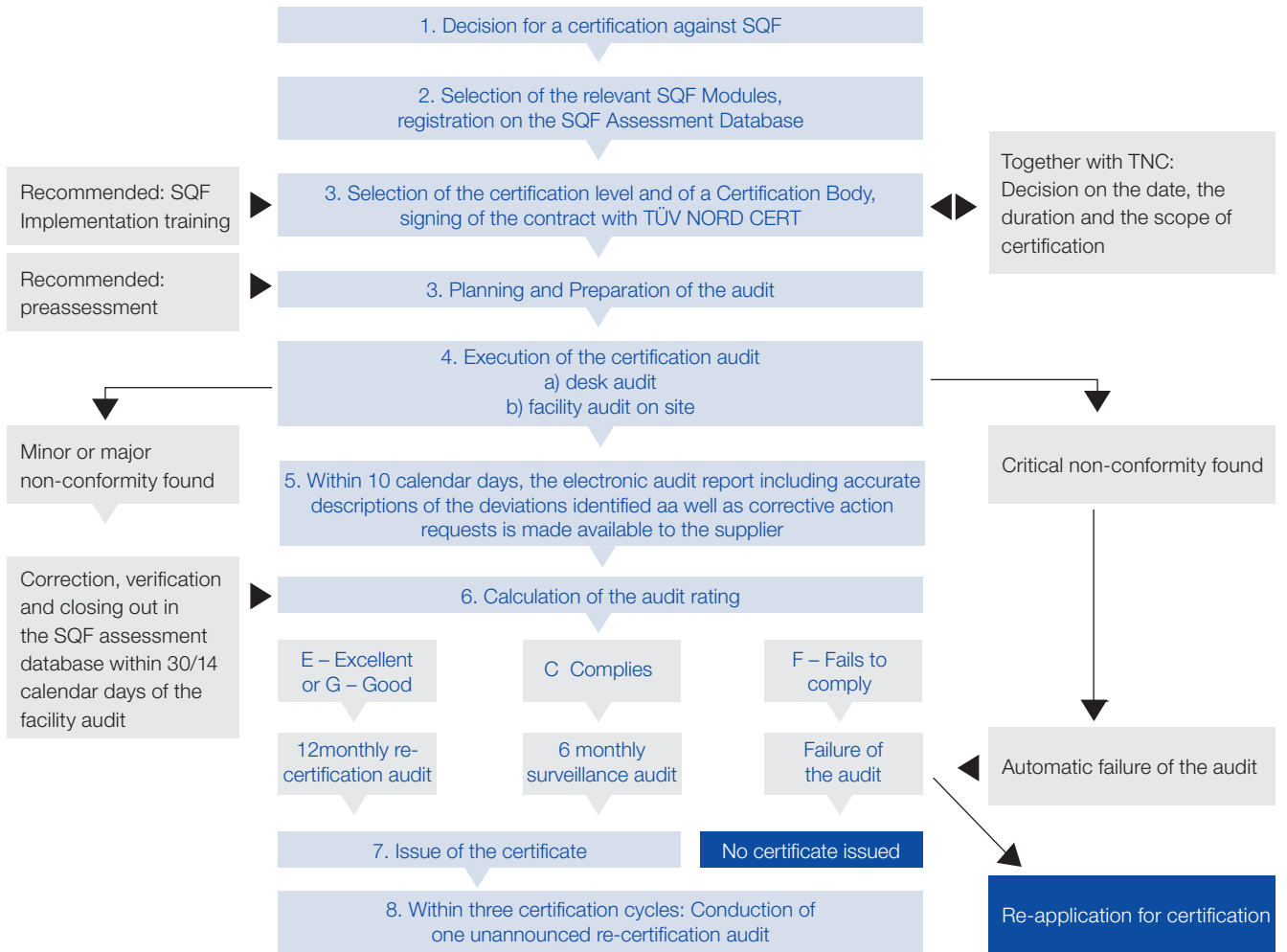
**Module 3 – 15:** GAP/GMP/GDP requirements applicable to various food industry sectors. Producer/supplier must meet the requirements of the module or modules applicable to their food industry sector.

**Module 16** defines the requirements for SQF multi-site programs managed by a central site.

All applicable elements of Module 2 (SQF System Elements) and the relevant GAP/GMP module(s) shall be checked as part of the certification audit. Within module 2 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 per chapter are:

2.1.1 Management Policy
2.1.2 Management Responsibility
2.1.3 Food Safety and Quality Management System
2.1.4 Management Review

**Management Commitment**

**Training**

2.9.2 Training Program

**Identity Preserved Foods**

**Document Control and Record**

2.2.1 Document Control

2.2.2 Records

**Specification and Product Development**

**Site Security**

2.7.1 Food Defense

**Attaining Food Safety**

**Product Identification, Trace, Withdrawal and Recall**

2.6.1 Product Identification
2.6.2 Product Trace
2.6.3 Product Withdrawal and Recall

**SQF System Verification**

2.4.1    Food Legislation Safety
2.4.2    Food Safety Fundamentals
2.4.3    Food Safety Plan (at level 2, 3)
2.4.4.1 Food Quality Plan (at level 3)
2.4.8    Product Release

2.5.2 Validation and Effectiveness
2.5.4 Verification and Monitoring
2.5.5 Corrective and Preventative Action
2.5.7 Internal Audit

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## Certification procedure

1. Decision for a certification against SQF

2. Selection of the relevant SQF Modules, registration on the SQF Assessment Database

Recommended: SQF Implementation training ▶ 3. Selection of the certification level and of a Certification Body, signing of the contract with TÜV NORD CERT ◀▶ Together with TNC: Decision on the date, the duration and the scope of certification

Recommended: preassessment ▶ 3. Planning and Preparation of the audit

4. Execution of the certification audit
a) desk audit
b) facility audit on site

Minor or major non-conformity found

Critical non-conformity found

5. Within 10 calendar days, the electronic audit report including accurate descriptions of the deviations identified aa well as corrective action requests is made available to the supplier

Correction, verification and closing out in the SQF assessment database within 30/14 calendar days of the facility audit ▶ 6. Calculation of the audit rating

E – Excellent or G – Good

C  Complies

F – Fails to comply

12monthly re-certification audit

6 monthly surveillance audit

Failure of the audit

Automatic failure of the audit

7. Issue of the certificate

No certificate issued

Re-application for certification

8. Within three certification cycles: Conduction of one unannounced re-certification audit

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## Attachment: Audit scopes

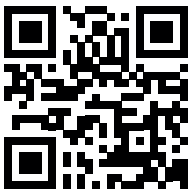| SQF, Food Sector, Category | Category (Supplier Scope of Certification) | ApplicableSQF Code Modules |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | Production, Capture and Harvesting of Livestock and Game Animals | Module 2: System elements<br>Module 5: GAP for farming of animal products |
| 2 | Growing and Harvesting of Animal Feeds | Module 2: System elements<br>Module 3: GMP for animal feed production |
| 3 | Growing and Production of Fresh Produce | Module 2: System elements<br>Module 7: GAP for farming of plant producs (fruits and vegetables)<br>Or Module 7H: GAP for farming of plant products |
| 4 | Fresh Produce Packhouse Operations | Module 2: System elements<br>Module 10: GMP for pre-processing of plant products |
| 5 | Extensive Broad Acre Agriculture Operations | Module 2: System elements<br>Module 8: GAP for farming of grains and pulses |
| 6 | Harvest and Intensive Farming of Fish | Module 2: System elements<br>Module 6: GAP for farming of fish |
| 7 | Slaughterhouse, Boning and Butchery Operations | Module 2: System elements<br>Module 9: GMP for pre-processing of animal products |
| 8 | Processing of Manufactured Meats and Poultry | Module 2: System elements<br>Module 11: GMP for processing of food products |
| 9 | Seafood Processing | Module 2: System elements<br>Module 11: GMP for processing of food products |
| 10 | Dairy Food Processing | Module 2: System elements<br>Module 11: GMP for processing of food products |
| 11 | Honey Processing | Module 2: System elements<br>Module 11: GMP for processing of food products |
| 12 | Egg Processing | Module 2: System elements<br>Module 11: GMP for processing of food products |
| 13 | Bakery and Snack Food Processing | Module 2: System elements<br>Module 11: GMP for processing of food products |
| 14 | Fruit and Vegetable Processing | Module 2: System elements<br>Module 11: GMP for processing of food products |
| 15 | Canning, Pasteurizing (except dairy), UHT and Aseptic Operations | Module 2: System elements<br>Module 11: GMP for processing of food products |

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| SQF, Food Sector, Category | Category (Supplier Scope of Certification) | ApplicableSQF Code Modules |
|---|---|---|
| 16 | Ice, Drink and Beverage Processing | Module 2:   System elements<br>Module 11: GMP for processing of food products |
| 17 | Confectionary Manufacturing | Module 2:   System elements<br>Module 11: GMP for processing of food products |
| 18 | Preserved Foods Manufacture | Module 2:   System elements<br>Module 11: GMP for processing of food products |
| 19 | Food Ingredient Manufacture | Module 2:   System elements<br>Module 11: GMP for processing of food products |
| 20 | Recipe Meals Manufacture | Module 2:   System elements<br>Module 11: GMP for processing of food products |
| 21 | Oils, Fats, and the Manufacture of Oil or Fat-based Spreads | Module 2:   System elements<br>Module 11: GMP for processing of food products |
| 22 | Processing of Cereal Grains and Nuts | Module 2:   System elements<br>Module 11: GMP for processing of food products |
| 23 | Food Catering and Food Service Operations | Not available |
| 24 | Food Retailing | Not available |
| 25 | Fresh Produce Wholesaling and Distribution | Module 2:   System elements<br>Module 12: GMP for transport and distribution of food products |
| 26 | Food Wholesaling and Distribution | Module 2:   System elements<br>Module 12: GMP for transport and distribution of food products |
| 27 | Manufacture of Food Sector Packaging Materials | Module 2:   System elements<br>Module 12: GMP for transport and distribution of food products |
| 28 | Provision of Crop Spray Services | Module 2:   System elements<br>Module 12: GMP for transport and distribution of food products |
| 29 | Provision of Field Harvest Services | Not available |
| 30 | Provision of Sanitation and Hygiene Services | Not available |
| 31 | Manufacture of Dietary Supplements | Not available |

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| SQF, Food Sector, Category | Category (Supplier Scope of Certification) | ApplicableSQF Code Modules |
|---|---|---|
| 32 | Manufacture of Pet Food | Module 2: System elements<br>Module 4: GMP for processing of pet food products |
| 33 | Manufacture of Agricultural Chemicals and Food Processing Aldes | Module 2: System elements<br>Module 11: GMP for processing of food products |
| 34 | Manufacture of Animal Feeds | Module 2: System elements<br>Module 3: GMP for animal feed production |
| 35 | Broker or Agent | Module 2: System elements<br>Module 14: GMP for brokers or agents |

**Further information**

In case of further question, please contact TUV USA.

*http://www.tuv-nord.com/us/*

If you have any further questions,
please contact TUV USA directly.

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