



Globally Trusted Food Safety and Quality Certification

What Differentiates SQF From Other Food Safety Certification Programs?

Trust and Consistency

The SQF Program has many unique features that ensure trust and consistency in the auditing process as well as greater oversight of auditing activities conducted by companies and individuals operating on behalf of the SQF Institute (SQFI).

- Certification Bodies that are licensed by SQFI to perform SQF audits are subject to regular assessments of their certification and audit activities by internationally recognized Accreditation Bodies (AB) licensed by SQFI. By selectively limiting the number of ABs with whom we do business (currently two), we can work more closely with them on Certification Body criteria and standardization of the accreditation services that they conduct on our behalf.
- The SQF Institute has issued licenses to a carefully selected number of Certification Bodies (currently 13). By controlling the number of Certification Bodies operating on our behalf, we can develop closer partnerships, gain greater oversight of their activities and address their individual business needs. In 2009, SQFI will conduct annual witness audits with each Certification Body to ensure auditor consistency.
- Training of SQF Auditors is conducted either directly by or under the tutelage of the SQF Institute. This ensures consistency of the auditor training program and greater oversight of the message delivery.
- Prospective SQF Auditors are subject to a thorough application review process that ensures they meet the strict criteria required to audit SQF systems. Auditors are only permitted to perform audits in the food industry sectors for which they have been registered and in which they have extensive expertise and experience.

Globally Accepted and Locally Based

SQF is a globally trusted and accepted food safety and quality program. However, it is the only such program, recognized by the Global Food Safety Initiative (GFSI), that is headquartered outside of Europe. SQFI provides a comprehensive service to the North American food industry. At the same time, buyers and suppliers from all over the world, including Australia, Asia, Europe and Africa have benefitted from adopting a program that is truly global in nature.

Complimentary Code and Practical Guidance

The SQF Program offers wide-ranging documentary support to its stakeholders, most of which is provided on a complimentary basis or at minimal cost. The SQF Codes are available for download free of charge on the SQF website. Complimentary practical guidance is provided to assist suppliers in the development, implementation and maintenance of their SQF systems. In addition to a general guidance document for both the SQF 1000 and SQF 2000 codes, the Program provides additional guidance documents on the application of the standards within specific food sector categories, such as egg processing and fresh produce pack house operations. These guidance documents are developed with the assistance of Technical Advisory Council (TAC) Subcommittees drawn from a field of external technical experts in the relevant food sectors, thus maintaining the integrity and independence of the SQF Program.





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Program Enhancement: Quality Certification

SQF is designed primarily as a food safety program, however it is the only standard, recognized by GFSI, that incorporates a QUALITY certification component at Level Three. This allows suppliers to provide assurances that the food they produce, handle, prepare, process and distribute is of the highest quality, in addition to adhering to the strictest food safety standards. Assuring consistent quality and meeting buyer specifications are important aspects of the buyer-supplier relationship

One Solution for the Entire Supply Chain

The SQF Program is the only GFSI recognized standard that can offer a seamless farm to fork food safety and quality certification solution by providing supply chain management for both primary production (SQF 1000) and food manufacturing and distribution (SQF 2000).

Innovative Technology Solutions

In early 2009, SQFI will unveil an innovative and unique audit management and data capture solution that provides significant benefits and service upgrades to the entire food industry involved in food safety and quality certification. SQF Quickfire, as it is known, allows auditors to capture and upload audit data electronically, thus improving the efficiency, consistency and effectiveness of SQF audits while containing costs. Suppliers will gain greater control of managing their corrective actions and will be able to market their certification status to current and potential buyers. In addition, retail and foodservice buyers will gain detailed access to their supplier's certification status and audit results and benefit from more accurate and timely audit data and a clearer understanding and management of the supply chain certification process.

Competency Via Comprehensive Training

The SQF Institute provides a comprehensive and consistent training program. This ensures that SQF Practitioners, Auditors and Consultants meet the required competency levels to develop, implement, maintain and audit SQF Systems and uphold the integrity of the SQF Program.

We work closely with a carefully selected number of Training Centers that meet our requirements as a recognized center of excellence providing training to the food industry. By offering standardized training materials and requiring registration of all SQF trainers, we are able to ensure consistency in the delivery and content of the educational message.

In addition, our online training program, which will be released in Spring, 2009 offers a cost-effective alternative to traditional classroom training and improves accessibility to educational programs offered by the SQF Institute.

