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SQFI or designee may conduct a validation audit of SQF certified sites as part of the monitoring activities of the Integrity Program.

### **Pre-Audit Activities**

The compliance team will select the certified site and provide notification to the site's certification body. The certification body will inform the site that they have been selected for a validation audit.

The compliance team will ensure that a conflict of interest does not exist between the assessor and the site. The site's last audit report will be made available to the assessor for review. An audit plan will be developed with input from SQFI.

The date of the audit will be coordinated with the certification body, the certified site and the assessor. The certification body may choose to have a representative present during the validation audit. Validation audits may be unannounced.

### **Validation Audit Process**

The process used by the assessor to conduct the validation audit is defined as follows:

- a) The opening meeting: after introductions, the validation audit objective and process will be discussed. The assessor will answer any site questions regarding the process. Any changes made by the facility since the CB certification audit will be discussed and noted. The audit plan will be shared with the site's management staff and the site's food safety plan will be requested at that time for review by the assessor.
- b) A facility inspection: a walk-through that mirrors the previous CB certification audit path, with emphasis on those areas where NCRs were noted by CB Auditor(s) and those areas where it will be necessary to confirm the conformance to the clauses (SQF requirements) selected for review in the validation audit plan. Additional documents and records may be requested at that time. The assessor may choose to inspect any areas that were not in the previous audit path.
- c) The closing meeting: at the closing meeting, the assessor will discuss further any observations that were identified during the review of the food safety plan or during the facility inspection.

### **Post Audit Activities**

At the completion of the audit the assessor will document the results of the validation audit in a format provided by SQFI. SQFI will schedule a call to discuss the findings of the validation audit with the certification body and/or auditor. The results of the audit, including non-conformances identified, will be shared with the certified site following this call.