Storage and Distribution of Food Products
SQF Code Modules 2 and 12
Food Sector Categories 25 and 26

A HACCP-Based Supplier Assurance Code for the food industry
Benchmarked to GFSI December 2014

Edition 7.2
July 2014
Introduction to Edition 7.2

Welcome to edition 7.2 of the SQF Code. Version 7.2 was released to all SQF stakeholders on March 10, 2014 for implementation on July 3, 2014.
Key additions to the SQF Code found in edition 7.2 include:

- Requirements for seasonal suppliers
- Inclusion of all products produced on site in the scope of certification
- Updated criteria for multi-site operations
- A protocol for unannounced re-certification audits
- Scored surveillance audits

Other edits and changes are summarized in the document, Summary of Code Changes, edition 7.2 available on the SQFI website (sqfi.com).

SQF Code, edition 7.2 is applicable to all certification and recertification audits conducted after July 3, 2014. Those suppliers with an existing SQF certification will be required to upgrade their Systems to meet the requirements of Edition 7.2 for certifications or re-certifications on or after that date.

Edition 7 of the SQF Code

The SQF Code was redesigned in 2012 for use by all sectors of the food industry from primary production to transport and distribution. It replaced the SQF 2000 Code edition 6 and the SQF 1000 Code edition 5.

The SQF Code is a process and product certification standard. It is a Hazard Analysis Critical Control Points (HACCP)-based food safety and quality management system that utilizes the National Advisory Committee on Microbiological Criteria for Food (NACMCF) and the CODEX Alimentarius Commission HACCP principles and guidelines, and is intended to support industry or company branded product and to offer benefits to suppliers and their customers. Products produced and manufactured under the 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 recognized (at level 2) in 2004 by the Global Food Safety Initiative (GFSI)* as a standard that meets its benchmark requirements. The SQF Code level 3 exceeds the requirements of the GFSI benchmark documents.

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 requirements and provides the solution for businesses supplying local and global food markets.

Certification of an SQF System by a certification body licensed by the Safe Quality Food Institute (SQFI) is not a statement that the certification body guarantees the safety of a supplier’s food or service, or meets all food safety regulations at all times. However, it 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.

Edition 7 of the SQF Code is applicable to all certification and surveillance audits conducted after June 30, 2012. Those suppliers with an existing SQF certification will be required to upgrade their systems to meet the requirements of Edition 7 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 reference document will prevail.

For further definition of words used in this document, please refer to Appendix 2: Glossary.
Edition 7.1

The SQF Code was updated to edition 7.1 and released April 1, 2013 to be implemented July 1, 2013. Key additions to the SQF Code found in edition 7.1 included:

- Module 4: Food Safety Fundamentals – Good Manufacturing Practices for Processing of Pet Food Products, for those facilities seeking certification for pet food operations.
- Module 7H: Food Safety Standard – Good Agriculture Practices for Farming of Plant Products (the United Fresh Harmonized Produce Standard), incorporates those elements developed by the Harmonized Produce technical committee for produce food safety for use by those growers who desire to provide product to customers produced under these Standards.

Other edits and changes are summarized in the document, Summary of Code Changes, edition 7.1 available on the SQFI website (sqfi.com).

SQF Code edition 7.1 was applicable to all certification and recertification audits conducted after July 1, 2013.

*The Global Food Safety Initiative (GFSI) is a private organization established by the international trade association, the Consumer Goods Forum. The GFSI maintains a scheme to benchmark food safety standards for manufacturers as well as farm assurance standards.*
Contents

Introduction to Edition 7.2 ........................................................................................................ 1
Edition 7 of the SQF Code ........................................................................................................ 1
Edition 7.1 .................................................................................................................................. 2

Part A: Implementing and Maintaining the SQF Code ......................................................... 9

1. Preparing for SQF Certification .............................................................................................. 9
   1.1 Learn about the SQF Code ................................................................................................. 9
   1.2 Select the Relevant SQF Modules .................................................................................. 10
   1.3 Register in the SQF Assessment Database ...................................................................... 12
   1.4 Use of SQF Consultants .................................................................................................. 12
   1.5 Designate an SQF Practitioner ........................................................................................ 12
   1.6 SQF Implementation Training ......................................................................................... 12
   1.7 Select the Certification Level .......................................................................................... 13
   1.8 Document and Implement the SQF Code ....................................................................... 13
   1.9 SQF Guidance Documents ............................................................................................. 13
   1.10 Select a Certification Body ............................................................................................. 13
   1.11 Conduct a Pre-assessment Audit ................................................................................. 13

2. The Initial Certification Process ............................................................................................ 14
   2.1 Selection of the SQF Auditor(s) ...................................................................................... 14
   2.2 Identifying the Scope of Certification ............................................................................ 14
   2.3 The Certification Audit .................................................................................................... 14
   2.4 Identifying the Scope of the Audit .................................................................................. 15
   2.5 Audit Duration Guide ...................................................................................................... 15
   2.6 The Desk Audit ............................................................................................................... 16
   2.7 The Facility Audit ........................................................................................................... 16
   2.8 Seasonal Production ...................................................................................................... 16
   2.9 System Elements ............................................................................................................ 16
   2.10 Non-conformities .......................................................................................................... 17
   2.11 Opportunities for Improvement .................................................................................... 17
   2.12 The Audit Report ......................................................................................................... 17

3. The Initial Certification Decision ........................................................................................... 18
   3.1 Responsibility for the Certification Decision ................................................................... 18
   3.2 Facility Audit Corrective Actions .................................................................................... 18
   3.3 Audit Score and Rating ................................................................................................... 18
   3.4 Granting Certification ...................................................................................................... 19
   3.5 Failure to Comply ............................................................................................................ 19

4. Surveillance and Recertification ............................................................................................ 20
   4.1 Maintaining Certification ................................................................................................. 20
Part A: Implementing and Maintaining the SQF Code

Module 2: SQF System Elements

2.1 Management Commitment
   2.1.1 Management Policy (M)
   2.1.2 Management Responsibility (M)
   2.1.3 Food Safety Management System (M)
   2.1.4 Management Review (M)
   2.1.5 Complaint Management
   2.1.6 Business Continuity Planning

2.2 Document Control and Records
   2.2.1 Document Control (M)
   2.2.2 Records (M)

2.3 Specification and Product Development
   2.3.1 Product Development and Realization
   2.3.2 Raw and Packaging Materials
   2.3.3 Contract Service Providers
   2.3.4 Contract Manufacturers
   2.3.5 Finished Product

Part B: The SQF Code

5 Obligations of Suppliers and Certification Bodies
   5.1 Changing the Scope of Certification
   5.2 Changing the Certification Body
   5.3 Notification of Product Recalls and Regulatory Infringements
   5.4 Change of Ownership
   5.5 Relocation of Premises
   5.6 Use of a Technical Expert
   5.7 Language
   5.8 Conflict of Interest
   5.9 Complaints, Appeals and Disputes

Module 1: Scope, References and Definitions

a) Scope
b) References
   c) Definitions
Module 12: Food Safety Fundamentals — Good Distribution Practices for Transport and Distribution of Food Products (GFSI Jl, and Jll) 54

12.1 Site Requirements and Approval ........................................... 54
12.1.1 Premises Location ......................................................... 54
12.1.2 Construction and Operational Approval ................................. 54
12.2 Construction and Control of Product Handling and Storage Areas ....... 54
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12.2.1</td>
<td>Materials and Surfaces</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.2.2</td>
<td>Floors, Drains and Waste Traps</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.2.3</td>
<td>Walls, Partitions, Doors and Ceilings</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.2.4</td>
<td>Lighting and Light Fittings</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.2.5</td>
<td>Dust, Fly and Vermin Proofing</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.2.6</td>
<td>Ventilation</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.2.7</td>
<td>Premises and Equipment Maintenance</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.2.8</td>
<td>Calibration</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.2.9</td>
<td>Management of Pests and Vermin</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.2.10</td>
<td>Equipment, Utensils and Protective Clothing</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.2.11</td>
<td>Cleaning and Sanitation</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.3</td>
<td>Personnel Hygiene and Welfare</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.3.1</td>
<td>Personnel</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.3.2</td>
<td>Hand Washing</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.3.3</td>
<td>Clothing</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.3.4</td>
<td>Jewelry and Personal Effects</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.3.5</td>
<td>Visitors</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.3.6</td>
<td>Staff Amenities</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.3.7</td>
<td>Change Rooms</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.3.8</td>
<td>Sanitary Facilities</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.3.9</td>
<td>Lunch Rooms</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.3.10</td>
<td>First Aid</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.4</td>
<td>Personnel Processing Practices</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.4.1</td>
<td>Staff Engaged in Food Handling Operations</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.5</td>
<td>Water, Ice and Air Supply</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.5.1</td>
<td>Water Supply</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.5.2</td>
<td>Monitoring Water Microbiology and Quality</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.5.3</td>
<td>Water Delivery</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.5.4</td>
<td>Ice Supply</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.5.5</td>
<td>Analysis</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.5.6</td>
<td>Air Quality</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.6</td>
<td>Storage and Transport</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.6.1</td>
<td>Cold and Chilled Storage</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.6.2</td>
<td>Storage of Shelf Stable Packaged Goods</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.6.3</td>
<td>Storage of Equipment and Containers</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.6.4</td>
<td>Storage of Hazardous Chemicals and Toxic Substances</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.6.5</td>
<td>Alternative Storage and Handling of Goods</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.6.6</td>
<td>Loading, Transport and Unloading Practices</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.6.7</td>
<td>Loading</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.6.8</td>
<td>Transport</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Module 16: Requirements for SQF Multi-site Programs Managed by a Central Site ......................................................... 62

16.1 Scope ........................................................................... 62
16.2 Definitions .................................................................... 62
16.3 Eligibility Criteria for the Multi-site Organization .......... 62
16.4 Internal Audits ............................................................... 62
16.5 Internal Audit Personnel ................................................. 62
16.6 Auditing and Certifying the Multi-site Organization ...... 63
16.7 Audit Frequency ............................................................. 63
16.8 Selecting the Sub-site ..................................................... 63
16.9 Determining the Size of the Sub-sites Sample ............... 63
16.10 Additional Sub-sites ....................................................... 64
16.11 Dealing with Non-conformities .................................... 64
16.12 Certificate Issued for a Multi-site Organization .......... 64

Appendix 1: SQF Food Sector Categories ............................ 65

Appendix 2: Glossary of Terms .......................................... 71

Appendix 3: SQF Quality Shield and Logo Rules of Use ........ 77

SQF Quality Shield ............................................................. 77
  1 Introduction ................................................................ 77
  2 Conditions for Use ....................................................... 77
  3 Reproduction .............................................................. 77
  4 Obligations of a Supplier for Use .................................. 77
  5 Suspension or Withdrawal of Approval to Use the SQF Quality Shield ............................................................ 78
  6 Withdrawn Certification ................................................ 78
  7 Corporate Quality Shield .............................................. 78
  8 Quality Shield Issued for a Multi-site Organization .......... 79
  9 Disclaimer .................................................................... 79

SCHEDULE 1: REPRODUCTION REQUIREMENTS FOR THE SQF QUALITY SHIELD ...................................................... 80

SQF Logo .......................................................................... 83
  1 Introduction ................................................................ 83
  2 Conditions for Use ....................................................... 83
  3 Reproduction .............................................................. 83
  4 Obligations of a Supplier .............................................. 83
  5 Grounds for Suspending or Ceasing Use of the SQF Logo .. 84
6 Disclaimer ........................................................................................................................................84
SCHEDULE 2: REPRODUCTION REQUIREMENTS FOR THE SQF LOGO......................85
Part A: Implementing and Maintaining the SQF Code

1. Preparing for SQF Certification

Figure 1: Steps in Preparing for SQF Certification

1.1 Learn about the SQF Code

1.2 Select the Relevant SQF Modules

1.3 Register on the SQF Assessment Database

1.4 Use of SQF Consultants (optional)

1.5 Designate an SQF Practitioner

1.6 SQF Implementation Training (optional)

1.7 Select the Certification level

1.8 Document and Implement the SQF Code

1.9 SQF Guidance Documents (recommended)

1.10 Select a Certification Body

1.11 Conduct a Pre-assessment (recommended)

1.6 SQF Implementation Training (recommended)

1.1 Learn about the SQF Code

There are several ways to learn how to implement the SQF Code 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 sqfi.com;
- Train yourself by downloading the SQF Code from sqfi.com free of charge, and read how to apply it to your industry sector;
- and/or demonstrate knowledge of the Code by taking the Implementing SQF Systems online exam.
### 1.2 Select the Relevant SQF Modules

SQFI recognizes that food safety practices differ depending on the food safety risk to the product and the process, and has designed the Code to meet the individual requirements of each industry sector. The supplier can select the relevant modules by visiting the SQF website (sqfi.com), and selecting the most current version of the SQF Code, Ed. 7 and choose the relevant industry sector(s). Note that Module 2: SQF System Elements applies to all industry sectors.

The SQF food sector categories and applicable modules are listed in Table 1. A more detailed list with description, examples, level of risk, and the relationship with the GFSI industry scopes, is provided in Appendix 1.

**Table 1: SQF Food Sector Categories and Applicable Modules**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SQF Food Sector Category (FSC)</th>
<th>Category (Supplier Scope of Certification)</th>
<th>Applicable SQF Code Modules</th>
<th>GFSI Benchmarked</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1                             | Production, Capture and Harvesting of Livestock and Game Animals | Module 2: System elements  
Module 5: GAP for farming of animal products | YES |
| 2                             | Growing and Harvesting of Animal Feeds | Module 2: System elements  
Module 3: GMP for animal feed production | YES |
| 3                             | Growing and Production of Fresh Produce | Module 2: System elements  
Module 7: GAP for farming of plant products (fruit and vegetables)  
Or Module 7H: GAP for farming of plant products | YES  
7H NO |
| 4                             | Fresh Produce Packhouse Operations | Module 2: System elements  
Module 10: GMP for pre-processing of plant products | YES |
| 5                             | Extensive Broad Acre Agriculture Operations | Module 2: System elements  
Module 8: GAP for farming of grains and pulses | NO |
| 6                             | Harvest and Intensive Farming of Fish | Module 2: System elements  
Module 6: GAP for farming of fish | NO |
| 7                             | Slaughterhouse, Boning and Butchery Operations | Module 2: System elements  
Module 9: GMP for pre-processing of animal products | YES |
| 8                             | Processing of Manufactured Meats and Poultry | Module 2: System elements  
Module 11: GMP for processing of food products | YES |
| 9                             | Seafood Processing | Module 2: System elements  
Module 11: GMP for processing of food products | YES |
| 10                            | Dairy Food Processing | Module 2: System elements  
Module 11: GMP for processing of food products | YES |
| 11                            | Honey Processing | Module 2: System elements  
Module 11: GMP for processing of food products | YES |
| 12                            | Egg Processing | Module 2: System elements  
Module 11: GMP for processing of food products | YES |
| 13                            | Bakery and Snack Food Processing | Module 2: System elements  
Module 11: GMP for processing of food products | YES |
| 14                            | Fruit and Vegetable Processing | Module 2: System elements  
Module 11: GMP for processing of food products | YES |
| 15                            | Canning, Pasteurizing (except dairy), UHT and Aseptic Operations | Module 2: System elements  
Module 11: GMP for processing of food products | YES |
| 16                            | Ice, Drink and Beverage Processing | Module 2: System elements  
Module 11: GMP for processing of food products | YES |
| 17                            | Confectionary Manufacturing | Module 2: System elements  
Module 11: GMP for processing of food products | YES |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SQF Food Sector Category (FSC)</th>
<th>Category (Supplier Scope of Certification)</th>
<th>Applicable SQF Code Modules</th>
<th>GFSI Benchmarked</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Preserved Foods Manufacture</td>
<td>Module 2: System elements</td>
<td>YES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Module 11: GMP for processing of food products</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Food Ingredient Manufacture</td>
<td>Module 2: System elements</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>Module 11: GMP for processing of food products</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Recipe Meals Manufacture</td>
<td>Module 2: System elements</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Module 11: GMP for processing of food products</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Oils, Fats, and the Manufacture of Oil or Fat-based Spreads</td>
<td>Module 2: System elements</td>
<td>YES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Module 11: GMP for processing of food products</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>Processing of Cereal Grains and Nuts</td>
<td>Module 2: System elements</td>
<td>YES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Module 11: GMP for processing of food products</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>Food Catering and Food Service Operations</td>
<td>Not available¹</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>Food Retailing</td>
<td>Not available¹</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>Fresh Produce Wholesaling and Distribution</td>
<td>Module 2: System elements</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Module 12: GMP for transport and distribution of food products²</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>Food Wholesaling and Distribution</td>
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<td>YES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td></td>
<td>Module 12: GMP for transport and distribution of food products²</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>Manufacture of Food Sector Packaging Materials</td>
<td>Module 2: System elements</td>
<td>YES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Module 13: GMP for production of food packaging</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>Provision of Crop Spray Services</td>
<td>Not available¹</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>Provision of Field Harvest Services</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>Provision of Sanitation and Hygiene Services</td>
<td>Not available¹</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31</td>
<td>Manufacture of Dietary Supplements</td>
<td>Module 2: System elements</td>
<td>YES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Module 11: GMP for processing of food products</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32</td>
<td>Manufacture of Pet Food</td>
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<td>YES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Module 11: GMP for processing of food products</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33</td>
<td>Manufacture of Agricultural Chemicals and Food Processing Aides</td>
<td>Module 2: System elements</td>
<td>YES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Module 11: GMP for processing of food products</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34</td>
<td>Manufacture of Animal Feeds</td>
<td>Module 2: System elements</td>
<td>YES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Module 3: GMP for animal feed production</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35</td>
<td>Broker or Agent</td>
<td>Module 2: System elements</td>
<td>NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Module 14: GMP for brokers or agents</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

¹. These modules will be completed when the GFSI Guidance becomes available.
². While FSC's 25 and 26 were not GFSI benchmarked when edition 7.2 was published in July 2014, GFSI approval for Storage and Distribution was granted in December 2014.
Some suppliers are vertically integrated businesses and may include primary production and processing. For example, aquaculture sites that both produce and process seafood, would select FSC 6, and 9, and be required to implement the following modules if they require certification across the entire process:

Module 2: System elements  
Module 6: GAP for farming of fish  
Module 11: GMP for processing of food products

However if the supplier is only processing seafood, FSC 9 is the relevant industry sector, and the site will implement the requirements of the following modules:

Module 2: System elements  
Module 11: GMP for processing of food products

### 1.3 Register in the SQF Assessment Database

To be considered for SQF certification, suppliers 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 supplier site payable at registration and renewal. The fee scale is dependent on the size of the site as determined by gross annual sales revenue. The fee scale is available on sqfi.com.

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

### 1.4 Use of SQF Consultants

Suppliers can choose to develop and implement their SQF System using their own qualified resources or they can utilize the services of an SQF consultant. All SQF consultants are registered by the SQFI to work in specific food sector categories (refer Table 1 and Appendix 1). They are issued with an identity card indicating the food sector categories in which they are registered. Suppliers 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 Practice outlines the practices expected of SQF consultants.

### 1.5 Designate an SQF Practitioner

Whether or not an SQF consultant is used, the SQF Code requires that every supplier have a suitably qualified SQF practitioner on site to oversee the development, implementation, review and maintenance of the SQF System, including the food safety fundamentals, food safety plans (at level 2) and food quality plans (at level 3). The requirements for an SQF practitioner are described in 2.1.2.4 and 2.1.2.5 of the SQF Code. Some sites may choose to have more than one SQF practitioner to meet shift and operational requirements.

### 1.6 SQF Implementation Training

A two-day “Implementing SQF Systems” 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 Code 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 on sqfi.com.

The “Implementing SQF Systems” training course is not mandatory for SQF practitioners, but is strongly recommended.

The SQFI also has an “Implementing SQF Systems” online training course which can be accessed from the SQFI website (sqfi.com). The online training solution is a web-based education portal where staff can enroll and complete SQF Systems training in their own time and at their own pace.

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

The supplier must choose one of three levels of certification, based on the needs of their customer and the stage of development of the supplier’s food safety and quality management system. The three levels of certification are:

Level 1  Food Safety Fundamentals: An entry level for new and developing businesses covering only GAP/GMP/GDP requirements and basic food safety elements (Module 2);

Level 2  Certified HACCP Based Food Safety Plans: 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. System elements in Module 2 at level 2 are required;

Level 3  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 process has been completed, that the actions taken to prevent the incidence of poor quality have been implemented. System elements in Module 2 at level 3 are required.

1.8 Document and Implement the SQF Code

To achieve SQF certification, the supplier must document and implement the relevant modules of the SQF Code, at the level required (refer to 1.7). This requires a two stage process:

Document the SQF System – prepare policies, procedures, work instructions and specifications that meet the relevant modules of the SQF Code. In other words, “say what you do.”

Implement the SQF System – implement the prepared policies, procedures, work instructions and specifications, and keep records to demonstrate compliance to the relevant modules of the SQF Code. In other words, “do what you say.” SQFI recommends that a minimum of two months of records be available before a site audit is conducted.

1.9 SQF Guidance Documents

Guidance documents are available for some SQF modules and food sector categories from the SQFI website (sqfi.com). These documents are available to help the supplier interpret the requirements of the SQF Code 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 supplier, but are not auditable documents. Where there is a divergence between the guidance document and the SQF Code, the SQF Code (English) prevails.

1.10 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 and be subject to annual assessments of their certification activities by SQFI licensed accreditation bodies.

The supplier 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 the audit and expected time to conduct and finalize the audit and the reporting requirements;

ii. The certification body’s fee structure;

iii. The conditions under which the SQF certificate is issued, withdrawn or suspended; and

iv. The certification body’s appeals, complaints and disputes procedure.

A current list of licensed certification bodies is available on the SQFI website (sqfi.com) and includes their countries of operation. Certification bodies are also listed in the SQF assessment database and suppliers can request a quote or select a certification body online once they have registered.

Suppliers seeking to implement an SQF multi-site program (refer module 16) must indicate this in their application to the certification body. The agreed multi-site program, including the identification of the central site and number and names of the sub-sites, must be included in the agreement with the certification body.

1.11 Conduct a Pre-assessment Audit

A pre-assessment audit is not mandatory, but is recommended to provide a ‘health check’ of the supplier’s implemented SQF System. A pre-assessment audit can assist in identifying gaps in the supplier’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, an SQF consultant, or an SQF auditor.

2. The Initial Certification Process

2.1 Selection of the SQF Auditor(s)

SQF 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 auditor for the supplier’s SQF certification audit. The SQF auditor must be registered for the same food sector category (ies) as the supplier. The certification body shall ensure no SQF auditor conducts audits of the same supplier for more than three consecutive certification cycles.

The certification body must advise the supplier of the name of the SQF auditor at the time that the SQF audit is scheduled. The supplier may check the registration and food sector category (ies) of the SQF auditor on the register at sqfi.com.

2.2 Identifying the Scope of Certification

SQF certification is site and product specific. When activities are carried out in different premises but are overseen by the same senior, operational, and technical management, and are covered by the one SQF System, the site can be expanded to include those premises.

The scope of certification forms part of the certificate. It describes the site, the food sector categories (refer Appendix 1) and the products processed and handled on that site. The certificate outlines the location of the site and nature and extent of the supplier SQF certification.

The scope of certification, including site, food sector categories and products must be clearly identified and agreed upon between the supplier and certification body prior to the initial certification audit and included in the scope of the initial certification audit and all subsequent audits (refer 2.4).

The entire site, including all premises, support buildings, silos, tanks, loading and unloading bays and external grounds must be included in the scope of certification. Where a supplier seeks to exempt part of the site for any reason, the request for exemption must be submitted to the certification body in writing and shall be listed in the facility description in the SQF assessment database. However all parts of the premises and process that are involved with the production, processing and storage of products included in the scope cannot be exempted.

When activities are carried out in different premises but are overseen by the same senior, operational, and technical management, and are covered by the one SQF System, the site can be expanded to include those premises (e.g. off-site product warehouse). All premises must be listed in the facility description in the SQF assessment database.

All products produced, stored or processed on the site shall be included on the supplier certificate, unless exempted by the supplier.

If the supplier elects to exempt processes, products or areas of the site from the scope of certification, the request must be submitted to the certification body in writing prior to the audit, and shall be listed in the facility description in the SQF assessment database. Exempted products shall not be listed on the certificate, and must not be promoted as being covered by the certification. Instances where promotion of exempted products or processes are identified and substantiated (either by regular audit or by other means) shall result in immediate withdrawal of the SQF certification.

For requirements on changing the scope of certification, refer Part A, 5.1.

2.3 The Certification Audit

The SQF certification audit consists of two stages:

i. The desk audit is undertaken to verify that the supplier’s SQF System documentation meets the requirements of the SQF Code.

ii. The facility audit is conducted on site and determines the effective implementation of the supplier’s documented SQF System.

Where a supplier 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 supplier and the certification body shall agree on the audit scope before the certification audit begins. The scope of the audit shall cover the required level of certification (refer to Module 2), 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.

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

2.5 Audit Duration Guide

Once the certification body and supplier have agreed on the scope of certification, the number of different processes and products manufactured and handled on the site, the certification body shall provide the supplier 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 site operations. Factors that can impact on the audit duration includes:

i. The scope of the audit;
ii. The size of the site and the design of product and people flows;
iii. The number and complexity of product lines and the overall process;
iv. Whether the product is high or low risk;
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 supplier’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.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Standard</th>
<th>Basic duration (days)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SQF Level 1</td>
<td>0.5 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SQF Level 2</td>
<td>1.0 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SQF Level 3</td>
<td>1.0 days</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step 1</th>
<th>Step 2</th>
<th>Step 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Standard</td>
<td>Basic duration (days) (includes three HACCP plans)</td>
<td>Additional Days based on Number of employee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SQF Level 1</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>1 to 200 = 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>201 to 400 = 0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>401 to 600 = 1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>601 to 1000 = 1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1001 to 2500 = 2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2501 to 4000 = 2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>&gt; 4,000 = 3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SQF Level 2</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SQF Level 3</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In addition to audit time, the certification body shall provide the supplier with the time and expected costs for planning, travel, report writing, and close out of non-conformities.

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.
2.6 The Desk Audit
An independent desk audit is conducted by the certification body for initial certification. The desk audit is conducted by a registered SQF auditor appointed by the certification body, and ensures:

i. An appropriately qualified SQF practitioner is designated;
ii. The food safety plan (at level 2) and the associated Critical Control Point (CCP) determinations, validations and verifications are appropriately documented and endorsed by the SQF practitioner;
iii. The food quality plan (at level 3) and the associated Critical Quality Point (CQP) determinations, validations and verifications are appropriately documented and endorsed by the SQF practitioner;
iv. The documented system is relevant to the scope of certification and the products processed there under.

The certification body shall notify the supplier of corrections or corrective action, or any aspects of the SQF System that require improvement or adjustment. The certification body will also verify that all corrections or corrective action for major and minor non-conformances have been addressed before proceeding with a facility audit.

2.7 The Facility Audit
The facility audit is conducted on site by the SQF auditor appointed by the certification body. It is conducted at a time agreed between the supplier and the certification body, when the main processes are operating. The facility audit must include a review of the entire facility, including the inside and outside of the building, regardless of the scope of certification. The facility 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 (level 2) and food quality hazards (level 3) are effectively identified and controlled;
iii. Effective interaction between all elements of the SQF System; and
iv. Level of commitment demonstrated by the supplier to maintaining an effective SQF System and to meeting their food safety regulatory and customer requirements.

2.8 Seasonal Production
Initial certification audits for suppliers involved in seasonal production (i.e. a period in which the major production activity is conducted over not more than five consecutive months) shall be conducted during the peak operational part of the season.

Where suppliers seek to include products from more than one season within their scope of certification, the supplier and certification body shall agree to conduct the initial certification audit during the highest risk and/or highest volume production operation. Documentation and records for other seasonal production shall be reviewed as part of the certification audit.

2.9 System Elements
All applicable elements of Module 2 and the relevant GAP/GMP module(s) shall be checked as part of the certification audit. Where an element is not applicable and appropriately justified, it shall be stated so by the auditor in the audit report.

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 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
2.2.1 Document Control
2.2.2 Records
2.4.1 Food Legislation
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
2.6.1 Product Identification  
2.6.2 Product Trace  
2.6.3 Product Withdrawal and Recall  
2.7.1 Food Defense  
2.9.2 Training Program

Mandatory elements are designated with an "M" in Module 2 of the SQF Code.

### 2.10 Non-conformities

Where the SQF auditor finds deviations from the requirements of relevant modules of the SQF Code, the auditor shall advise the number, description, and extent of the non-conformities. Non-conformities may also be referred to as non-conformances. 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 may be addressed to prevent 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 is systemic falsification of records relating to food safety controls and the SQF System.

Critical non-conformities cannot be raised at desk audits.

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

### 2.11 Opportunities for Improvement

Opportunities for improvement are observations made by the auditor during a facility audit that identify issues that are non-conformances but recognize that the practices conducted by the supplier are not industry best practice. They do not require a corrective action response by the supplier, but provide the supplier with an opportunity to improve their SQF System.

### 2.12 The Audit Report

The SQFI provides the certification body with the electronic audit checklist to be used by the SQF auditors when conducting SQF audits. The audit checklist is available from the SQF assessment database and is customized for SQF level and industry sector. The SQF checklist is designed to ensure the uniform application of SQF audit requirements. It is used by SQF auditors to record their findings and determine the extent to which supplier operations comply with stated requirements.

Mandatory elements (refer to 2.9 above) must be reported for the audit report to be submitted.

Deviations identified during the SQF audit shall be accurately described in the audit report and corrective action requests raised which fully describe the clause of the SQF Code and the reason for the non-conformity.

The electronic audit report must be completed by the SQF auditor and uploaded to the certification body for technical review.

The certification body shall make the audit report available to the supplier within ten (10) calendar days from the last day of the audit.

The SQF audit report shall remain the property of the certification body's client (the supplier) and shall not be distributed to other parties without the permission of that client.
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 auditors are thorough, that all requirements are fulfilled, and 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 auditor during the SQF 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 Facility Audit Corrective Actions

All non-conformities and their resolution shall be documented by the SQF 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 facility audit. Extensions may be granted by the certification body where there is no immediate threat to product safety and quality, and alternative, temporary methods of control are initiated. The supplier 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 fourteen (14) calendar days of the completion of the facility 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 supplier to mitigate the risk to product safety or quality. However, in such cases, the non-conformity must still be closed out on 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 auditor considers that a critical non-conformity exists during a facility audit, the auditor shall immediately advise the supplier and notify the certification body. A critical non-conformity raised at a certification audit results in an automatic failure of the audit, and the supplier must re-apply for certification (refer to 3.5 below).

3.3 Audit Score and Rating

Based on the evidence collected by the SQF auditor, each applicable aspect of the SQF facility audit is automatically scored when the audit report is uploaded to the SQF assessment database. Desk 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 facility 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 supplier’s site against the SQF Code, 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:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Score</th>
<th>Rating</th>
<th>Certification</th>
<th>Audit Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>96 - 100</td>
<td>E - Excellent</td>
<td>Certificate issued</td>
<td>12 monthly re-certification audit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>86 - 95</td>
<td>G - Good</td>
<td>Certificate issued</td>
<td>12 monthly re-certification audit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70 – 85</td>
<td>C - Complies</td>
<td>Certificate issued</td>
<td>6 monthly surveillance audit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0 - 69</td>
<td>F - Fails to comply</td>
<td>No certificate issued</td>
<td>Considered to have failed the SQF audit</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. Certification also requires that all major non-conformities are closed out within fourteen (14) calendar days and minor non-conformities within thirty (30) calendar days.
3.4 Granting Certification

Certification of the SQF System shall be awarded to suppliers 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 facility audit. Once SQF certification is granted, the SQFI issues a unique certification number which is specific to that supplier’s site.

Within ten (10) calendar days of granting certification, the certification body shall provide an electronic and/or hard copy of the supplier's certificate to the supplier. The certificate is valid for 75 days from the anniversary of the initial certification audit date and shall be in a form approved by the SQFI.

The certificate shall 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 “(Supplier name) is registered as meeting the requirements of the SQF Code, edition 7;”
v. The level of certification and the description;
vi. The scope of registration – food sector category (ies) and products;
vii. Dates of audit (last day), date of next re-certification audit, date of certification decision, and date of certificate expiry;
viii. Signatures of the authorized officer and issuing officer;
ix. SQF quality shield (level 3) and logo.

For level 3 suppliers, the certification body shall provide an electronic copy of the SQF quality shield containing the certification body name and the supplier certification number.

3.5 Failure to Comply

Where a supplier achieves an "F - fails to comply" rating at a certification audit, the supplier is considered to have failed the SQF audit. The supplier must then re-apply for another facility audit.

When the supplier's re-application occurs within six (6) months of the last audit date, and with the same certification body, a facility audit shall be scheduled but a desk 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 desk audit and facility audit are required.
4 Surveillance and Recertification

4.1 Maintaining Certification

To maintain SQF certification, a supplier 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.

4.2 Surveillance Audit

The surveillance audit is conducted when the supplier 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 purpose of the surveillance audit is to:

i. Verify the continued efficacy of corrections and corrective actions closed out at previous audits;
ii. Verify that the SQF System continues to be implemented as documented;
iii. Consider and take appropriate action where changes to the supplier’s operations are made and the impact of those changes on the supplier’s SQF System;
iv. Confirm continued compliance with the requirements of the SQF Code;
v. Verify all critical steps remain under control; and
vi. Contribute to continued improvement of the supplier’s SQF System and business operation.

Major or minor non-conformities raised at the surveillance audit shall be closed out as indicated in section 3.2. The supplier’s certificate shall be suspended by the certification body if:

i. The supplier fails to permit the surveillance audit within the required timeframe;
ii. A critical non-conformity is raised at the surveillance audit, or
iii. The supplier fails to close out major or minor non-conformities within the agreed timeframe.

4.3 Recertification Audit

The re-certification audit of the SQF System is undertaken to verify the continued effectiveness of the supplier’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 to 3.3 above).

Written approval by the SQF senior technical director is required to issue a temporary extension to a supplier’s re-certification audit timeframe and certificate expiry date including instances in extreme circumstances such as acts of nature or extreme weather. Season suppliers shall refer to section Part A, section 4.9.

Situations that require a permanent change to the re-certification audit date require written approval by the SQF senior technical director and the supplier’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 supplier’s SQF 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 System continues to be implemented as documented;
iii. Consider and take appropriate action where changes to the supplier’s operations are made and the impact of those changes on the supplier’s SQF System;
iv. Verify all critical steps remain under control and the effective inter-action between all elements of the SQF System;
v. Verify the overall effectiveness of the SQF System in its entirety in the light of changes in operations;
vi. Verify that the supplier continues to demonstrate a commitment to maintaining the effectiveness of the SQF System and to meeting regulatory and customer requirements; and
vii. Contribute to continued improvement of the supplier’s SQF System and business operation.
4.4 Variations to the Re-certification Process

The requirements for the re-certification audit are the same as those described in sections 2.1 – 3.4 for the certification audit, with the following exceptions:

i. An independent desk audit is not required as part of a re-certification audit. However an integrated desk and facility audit shall be conducted at each re-certification. The supplier’s documentation shall be reviewed as necessary as part of the facility audit.

ii. If the supplier fails to permit the re-certification or surveillance audit within the agreed timeframe, the certification body shall immediately suspend the supplier’s certificate.

iii. If the supplier receives an “F – fails to comply” rating at the re-certification or surveillance audit, the certification body shall immediately suspend the supplier’s certificate.

If the supplier fails to close out non-conformities within the agreed timeframe, the certification body shall immediately suspend the supplier’s certificate.

4.5 Unannounced Re-certification Audit

Within three (3) certification cycles the certification body shall conduct one (1) unannounced re-certification audit of the supplier. The unannounced audit shall occur in the supplier’s facility within the sixty (60) day re-certification window (i.e., the anniversary date of the initial certification audit +/- thirty (30) days). Currently certified SQF suppliers shall be required to undertake one (1) unannounced audit within the three (3) year certification cycle.

i. The supplier’s certification cycle begins with the initial certification audit date. Unannounced re-certification audits shall occur once in every three (3) certification cycles.

ii. Unannounced audits shall not be conducted on the initial certification audit or on a surveillance audit.

iii. If a supplier changes certification bodies, the supplier’s unannounced re-certification audit schedule shall not change.

iv. The unannounced re-certification audit shall follow the protocol under the SQF Code, Part A, section 4.3 and 4.4.

v. Multi-site suppliers are exempted from unannounced audits.

vi. The date of the unannounced audit shall be determined by the certification body within the 60 day re-certification audit window. The unannounced audit year shall be determined between the supplier and certification body.

vii. A defined blackout period shall be established by negotiation between the supplier and their certification body that prevents the unannounced re-certification audit from occurring out of season or when the facility is not operating for legitimate business reasons.

viii. Immediate suspension of the supplier certificate will occur in facilities that refuse entry to the auditor for an unannounced audit.

4.6 Suspending Certification

The certification body shall suspend the SQF certificate if the supplier

i. fails to permit the re-certification or surveillance audit,

ii. receives an “F – fails to comply” rating,

iii. fails to take corrective action,

iv. fails to permit an unannounced audit,

v. fails to take corrective action within the timeframe specified, or

vi. where in the opinion of the CB, fails to maintain the requirements of the SQF Code.

Where the supplier’s certificate is suspended, the certification body shall immediately amend the supplier 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 supplier of the reasons for the action taken and the date of effect;

ii. copy the senior technical director of SQFI on the notice of suspension sent to the supplier;

iii. request that the supplier 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 supplier’s certificate is suspended, the certification body shall upon receipt of the detailed corrective action plan:

iv. Verify that the immediate correction has been taken by the means of an on-site audit and within thirty (30) calendar days of receiving the corrective action plan;

v. When corrective action has been successfully implemented, re-instate the supplier status on the SQFI database and give written notice to the supplier that their certificate is no longer suspended;

vi. Not more than six (6) months after suspension, the certification body shall conduct a surveillance audit to verify the effective implementation of the corrective action plan and that the supplier SQF System is achieving stated objectives, and

vii. Copy SQFI on the notice indicating lifting of the suspension sent to the supplier.

When a certification body has suspended a supplier’s SQF certificate, for the duration of suspension, the supplier shall not represent itself as holding an SQF certificate.

Level 3 suppliers must comply with Reference Appendix 3: SQF Quality Shield and Logo Rules of Use.

4.7 Withdrawing Certification

The certification body shall withdraw the certificate when the supplier:

i. Has been placed under suspension and fails to submit approved corrective action plans as defined by the certification body, or 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 supplier (except for the purposes of amalgamation or reconstruction) or the supplier 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.

In addition, a level 3 supplier shall comply with Appendix 3: SQF Quality Shield and Logo Rules of Use.

When the supplier’s certificate is withdrawn, the certification body shall immediately amend the supplier’s details on the SQF assessment database to a “withdrawn” status indicating the reason for the withdrawal and the date of effect; and in writing:

i. Inform the supplier 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 supplier,

iii. Instruct the supplier to return the certificate;

In addition, for level 3 suppliers, the certification body must comply with Appendix 3: SQF Quality Shield and Logo Rules of Use.

A supplier that has their certificate withdrawn must re-apply for certification.

4.8 Surveillance Audit - Seasonal Suppliers

Seasonal suppliers that attain a “C” rating at a certification or re-certification audit are subject to a surveillance audit 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 surveillance audit date falls within the operational season, the conditions of Part A, 4.2 apply. Where the due date of the surveillance audit falls outside the operational season, the surveillance audit shall comprise a full review of corrective actions from the last audit, to ensure preparedness for the next re-certification audit.
4.9 Re-certification Audit - Seasonal Suppliers

The re-certification audit of seasonal suppliers 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 supplier shall temporarily reset the re-certification audit date so that it falls during the peak operational part of the season.

If the supplier wishes to permanently change the re-certification audit date due to seasonal conditions, the request must be made to SQFI in writing.
5 Obligations of Suppliers and Certification Bodies

5.1 Changing the Scope of Certification

When a supplier desires to add food sector categories or products to their scope of certification, the supplier shall request the increased scope of certification in writing to the certification body. The certification body shall determine whether or not an audit of the additional process or products 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 supplier 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 supplier record on the SQFI assessment database.

Suppliers moving to a different level (e.g., from level 2 to level 3 or from level 3 to level 2) must wait until their next re-certification audit date.

5.2 Changing the Certification Body

A supplier 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.

Suppliers 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 senior technical director.

When a supplier changes certification bodies, the 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 supplier to the new certification body.

The new certification body shall undertake a pre-transfer review of the supplier’s certification to:

i. Confirm the certificate is current, valid and relates to the SQF System so certified.
ii. Confirm the supplier’s food sector category falls within the new certifier’s scope of accreditation.
iii. Confirm any complaints received are actioned;
iv. Review the supplier’s audit history (where the supplier 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 supplier initiates a food safety event that requires public notification (such as Class I or Class II recall, or the receipt of a regulatory warning letter), the supplier shall notify the certification body and the SQFI in writing at foodsafetycrisis@sqfi.com within twenty-four (24) hours of the event. The supplier’s selected certification body and the SQFI shall be listed in the supplier’s essential contacts lists as defined in Module 2, element 2.6.3 of the SQF Code.

The certification body shall notify the SQFI within a further forty-eight (48) hours of any action they intend to take to ensure the integrity of the certification.

5.4 Change of Ownership

When a certified supplier’s business 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 certification and the existing certification number. In cases where the ownership of a certified supplier 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 site management and personnel, the certification body shall complete a certification audit and issue a new certificate and a new certification number. The audit frequency applicable to a new certification shall apply.
5.5 Relocation of Premises

When a certified supplier relocates the business premises, the supplier’s certificate is no longer valid until a successful re-certification of the new premises is conducted.

5.6 Use of a Technical Expert

Technical experts may be used to assist SQF auditors in audits where the auditor is SQF registered but not in the supplier’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 auditor in the performance of an SQF audit is permitted provided the supplier 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 senior technical director, SQFI.

5.7 Language

The certification body shall ensure that the SQF auditor conducting the audit can competently communicate in the oral and written language of the supplier being audited.

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

For the purpose of resolving a conflict, the English version of the SQF Code shall be the deciding reference.

5.8 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 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 auditors shall not audit anywhere they have participated in a consulting role involving the supplier in question, or anybody related to the supplier, 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, food quality 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 auditor discloses any existing, former or proposed link between themselves or their organization and the supplier.

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

A supplier can refuse the service of an SQF auditor when they consider the auditor has a conflict of interest, or for other reasons. In such circumstances the supplier shall outline the reasons in writing to the certification body.

5.9 Complaints, Appeals and Disputes

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

When a supplier 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 a supplier 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 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 a supplier’s SQF System or any other condition not in accordance with the SQF Code and/or other supporting documents, the certification body shall suspend certification as outlined in section 4.4 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 supplier and the certification body, the matter shall be referred to the SQFI complaints and appeals procedure.
Part B: The SQF Code

Module 1: Scope, References and Definitions

a) Scope

The SQF Code outlines the requirements for a supplier involved in the primary production, manufacture, processing, transport, storage, distribution or retailing of food products and food-contact packaging.

The SQF Code describes the auditable requirements that must be met by the supplier to achieve certification to the SQF Code. It 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 by SQFI licensed certification bodies accredited to ISO 17065:2011. The levels are:

- **Level 1** is an entry level for new and developing businesses. Covering only GAP/GMP/GDP requirements and basic food safety elements, suppliers that comply with the SQF Code certification requirements at level 1 receive an accredited certificate from an SQFI licensed certification body.

- **Level 2** recognizes suppliers that have implemented a HACCP food safety plan in addition to food safety fundamentals. Suppliers that comply with the SQF Code certification requirements at level 2 receive an accredited certificate from an SQFI licensed certification body.

- **Level 3** recognizes suppliers that have implemented a HACCP food quality plan in addition to a food safety plan and food safety fundamentals. Suppliers that comply with the SQF Code certification requirements at level 3 receive an accredited certificate from an SQFI licensed certification body.

Modules 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.

b) References


c) Definitions

For the purpose of this Code the definitions outlined in Appendix 2: Glossary of Terms apply.
Module 2: SQF System Elements

(M) indicates mandatory elements (refer Part A: 2.9)

“Food” can also be taken to mean “feed,” “pet food,” or “food contact packaging materials.” “Food safety” can be taken to mean “feed safety,” or “pet food safety.” “Food safety plan” can be taken to mean “feed safety plan” or “pet food safety plan” and “food quality plan” can also mean “feed quality plan,” or “pet food quality plan.”

2.1 Management Commitment

The producer/supplier shall provide evidence of its commitment to implement and maintain an effective SQF System and to support its ongoing improvement.

2.1.1 Management Policy (M)

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

i. Organization’s commitment to supply safe food;
ii. Methods used to comply with its customer and regulatory requirements, and
iii. Organizations commitment to establish and review food safety objectives.

2.1.1.2 The policy statement shall be:

i. Signed by senior management;
ii. Made available in language understood by all staff; and
iii. Displayed in a prominent position and effectively communicated to all staff.

2.1.2 Management Responsibility (M)

2.1.2.1 The organizational reporting structure describing those who have responsibility for food

LEVEL 1 Food Safety Fundamentals
(accredited certification)

LEVEL 2 Food Safety Plan
(accredited certification, GFSI recognition)

LEVEL 3 Food Quality Plan
(accredited certification, GFSI + Quality Management)
| **LEVEL 1 Food Safety Fundamentals**  
( accredited certification) | **LEVEL 2 Food Safety Plan**  
( accredited certification, GFSI recognition) | **LEVEL 3 Food Quality Plan**  
( accredited certification, GFSI + Quality Management) |
|---|---|---|
| safety shall be defined and communicated within the organization.  
2.1.2.2 The senior management shall make provision to ensure fundamental food safety practices are adopted and maintained.  
2.1.2.3 The senior management shall ensure adequate resources are available to support the development, implementation, maintenance and ongoing improvement of the SQF System.  
2.1.2.4 The senior management shall designate an SQF practitioner for each site with responsibility and authority to:  
- Lead the development and implementation of food safety fundamentals outlined in 2.4.2.  
- Oversee the development, implementation, review, and maintenance of the SQF System;  
- Take appropriate action to ensure the integrity of the SQF System.  
2.1.2.5 The SQF practitioner shall:  
- Be employed by the supplier as a company employee on a full-time basis;  
- Hold a position of responsibility in relation to the management of the supplier’s SQF System;  
- Have completed a HACCP-based training course;  
- Be competent to implement and maintain food safety fundamentals;  
- Have an understanding of the SQF Code level 1 and the requirements to implement and maintain SQF System relevant to the supplier scope of certification.  
2.1.2.6 The responsibility for establishing and implementing the training needs of the organization shall be defined and documented.  
2.1.2.7 All staff shall be informed of their responsibility to report food safety problems to personnel with authority to initiate action.  
| safety shall be defined and communicated within the organization.  
2.1.2.2 The senior management shall make provision to ensure fundamental food safety practices are adopted and maintained.  
2.1.2.3 The senior 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.  
2.1.2.4 The senior management shall designate an SQF practitioner for each site with responsibility and authority to:  
- 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.  
- Take appropriate action to ensure the integrity of the SQF System; and  
- Communicate to relevant personnel all information essential to ensure the effective implementation and maintenance of the SQF System.  
2.1.2.5 The SQF practitioner shall:  
- Be employed by the supplier as a company employee on a full-time basis;  
- Hold a position of responsibility in relation to the management of the supplier’s SQF System;  
- Have completed a HACCP training course;  
- Be competent to implement and maintain HACCP based food safety plans; and  
- Have an understanding of the SQF Code level 2 and the requirements to implement and maintain SQF System relevant to the supplier scope of certification.  
2.1.2.6 The responsibility for establishing and implementing the training needs of the organization’s personnel to ensure they have the required knowledge and skills to perform their job functions effectively and safely shall be defined and communicated within the organization.  
2.1.2.7 All staff shall be informed of their responsibility to report food safety problems to personnel with authority to initiate action.  
| safety and quality and their interrelationship shall be defined and communicated within the organization.  
2.1.2.2 The senior management shall make provision to ensure fundamental food safety and quality practices are adopted and maintained.  
2.1.2.3 The senior management shall ensure adequate resources are available to achieve food safety and quality objectives and to support the development, implementation and maintenance and ongoing improvement of the SQF System.  
2.1.2.4 The senior management shall designate an SQF practitioner for each site with responsibility and authority to:  
- Oversee the development, implementation, review and maintenance of the SQF System, including food safety fundamentals outlined in 2.4.2, the food safety plan outlined in 2.4.3 and the food quality plan outlined in 2.4.4;  
- Take appropriate action to maintain the integrity of the SQF System; and  
- Communicate to relevant personnel all information essential to ensure the effective implementation and maintenance of the SQF System.  
2.1.2.5 The SQF practitioner shall:  
- Be employed by the supplier as a company employee on a full-time basis;  
- Hold a position of responsibility in relation to the management of the supplier’s SQF System;  
- Have completed a HACCP training course;  
- Be competent to implement and maintain HACCP based food safety plans and food quality plans; and  
- Have an understanding of the SQF Code level 3 and the requirements to implement and maintain SQF System relevant to the supplier scope of certification.  

SQF Code edition 7.2  
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| **LEVEL 1 Food Safety Fundamentals**  
* (accredited certification) | **LEVEL 2 Food Safety Plan**  
* (accredited certification, GFSI recognition) | **LEVEL 3 Food Quality Plan**  
* (accredited certification, GFSI + Quality Management) |
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| required competencies to carry out those functions affecting products, legality, and safety shall be defined and documented.  
2.1.2.7 All staff shall be informed of their responsibility to report food safety problems to personnel with authority to initiate action.  
2.1.2.8 Job descriptions for those responsible for food safety shall be documented and include provision to cover for the absence of key personnel.  
2.1.2.9 The senior management shall establish processes to improve the effectiveness of the SQF System to demonstrate continuous improvement. | 2.1.2.6 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 product, legality, safety, and quality shall be defined and documented.  
2.1.2.7 All staff shall be informed of their responsibility to report food safety and quality problems to personnel with authority to initiate action.  
2.1.2.8 Job descriptions for those responsible for food safety and quality shall be documented and include provision to cover for the absence of key personnel.  
2.1.2.9 The senior management shall establish processes to improve the effectiveness of the SQF System to demonstrate continuous improvement. | 2.1.3.1 A food safety and quality 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 and quality policies and the methods it will apply to meet the requirements of this standard;  
  ii. The policy statement and organization chart;  
  iii. The scope of the certification; and  
  iv. A list of the products covered under the scope of certification.  
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, food safety plans and other documentation necessary to support the development and the implementation, maintenance, and control of the SQF System. | 2.1.3.1 A food safety and quality 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 and quality policies and the methods it will apply to meet the requirements of this standard;  
  ii. The policy statement and organization chart;  
  iii. The scope of the certification; and  
  iv. A list of the products covered under the scope of certification.  
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, food safety plans and other documentation necessary to support the development and the implementation, maintenance, and control of the SQF System. |
### LEVEL 1 Food Safety Fundamentals (accredited certification)

- **2.1.1** Overview of SQF System
- **2.1.2** Food Safety Fundamentals
- **2.1.3** Principles
- **2.1.4** Management Review (M)
  - **2.1.4.1** The senior management shall be responsible for reviewing the SQF System including the policy statement.
  - **2.1.4.2** The SQF System in its entirety shall be reviewed at least annually.
  - **2.1.4.3** Food safety fundamentals shall be reviewed when any changes implemented have an impact on the supplier’s ability to deliver safe food.
  - **2.1.4.4** Changes to food safety fundamentals that have an impact on the supplier’s ability to deliver safe food are to be validated.
  - **2.1.4.5** Records of all reviews, validations and changes to the SQF System shall be maintained.

### LEVEL 2 Food Safety Plan (accredited certification, GFSI recognition)

- **2.1.5** Complaint Management
  - **2.1.5.1** The methods and responsibility for handling and investigating the cause and resolution

### LEVEL 3 Food Quality Plan (accredited certification, GFSI + Quality Management)

- **2.1.6** Complaint Management
  - **2.1.6.1** The methods and responsibility for handling and investigating the cause and resolution

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**Supporting text:**

- 2.1.3.3 A quality manual shall be documented, maintained, made available to relevant staff and include or reference the written procedures, standard operating practices, work instructions, and food quality plans and other documentation necessary to support the development and the implementation, maintenance and control of the SQF System. The quality manual may be combined and integrated with the food safety manual.
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<th>LEVEL 1 Food Safety Fundamentals (accredited certification)</th>
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<td>of complaints from customers and authorities shall be documented and implemented.</td>
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<td>2.1.5.2 Trends of customer complaint data shall be investigated and analyzed by personnel knowledgeable about the incidents.</td>
<td>2.1.5.3 Corrective action shall be implemented commensurate with the seriousness of the incident and as outlined under 2.5.5.</td>
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**2.1.6 Business Continuity Planning**

This clause is not applied at level 1.

2.1.6.1 A business continuity 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 impact on the ability of the supplier to deliver safe food.

2.1.6.2 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 nomination 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;
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 and |

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iii. The controls implemented to ensure a response does not compromise product safety and quality;
iv. The measures to isolate and identify product affected by a response to a crisis;
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<tr>
<td>This clause is not applied at level 1.</td>
<td>2.3.1.1 The methods and responsibility for designing, developing and converting product concepts to commercial realization shall be documented and implemented.</td>
<td>2.3.1.1 The methods and responsibility for designing, developing and converting product concepts to commercial realization shall be documented and implemented.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2.3.1.2 Product formulation, manufacturing processes and the fulfillment of product requirements shall be validated by facility trials, shelf life trials and product testing.</td>
<td>2.3.1.2 Product formulation, manufacturing processes and the fulfillment of product requirements shall be validated by facility trials, shelf life trials and product testing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2.3.1.3 shelf life trials where necessary shall be conducted to establish and validate a product’s:</td>
<td>2.3.1.3 shelf life trials where necessary shall be conducted to establish and validate a product’s:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>i. Handling, storage requirements including the establishment of “use by” or “best before dates”;</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ii. Microbiological criteria; and</td>
<td>ii. Microbiological criteria; and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>iii. Consumer preparation, storage and handling requirements.</td>
<td>iii. Consumer preparation, storage and handling requirements.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2.3.1.4 A food safety plan shall be validated and verified for each new product and its associated process through conversion to commercial production and distribution, or where a change to ingredients, process, or packaging occurs that may impact food safety.</td>
<td>2.3.1.4 A food safety plan and food quality plan shall be validated and verified for each new product and its associated process through conversion to commercial production and distribution, or where a change to ingredients, process, or packaging occurs that may impact food safety or quality.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2.3.1.5 Records of all product design, process development, shelf life trials and approvals shall be maintained.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3.2 Raw and Packaging Materials</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3.2.1 Specifications for raw materials and packaging materials including, but not limited to ingredients, additives, hazardous chemicals and processing aids, that impact on finished product safety shall be documented, comply with relevant legislation, and kept current.</td>
<td>2.3.2.1 Specifications for all raw and packaging materials, including, but not limited to ingredients, additives, hazardous chemicals and processing aids that impact on finished product safety shall be documented and kept current.</td>
<td>2.3.2.1 Specifications for all raw and packaging materials, including, but not limited to ingredients, additives, hazardous chemicals and processing aids that impact on finished product safety and quality shall be documented and kept current.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2.3.2.2 All raw and packaging materials and ingredients shall comply with the relevant legislation.</td>
<td>2.3.2.2 All raw and packaging materials and ingredients shall comply with the relevant legislation.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2.3.2.3 The methods and responsibility for developing and approving detailed raw material, ingredient, and packaging specifications shall be documented.

2.3.2.4 Raw and packaging materials and ingredients shall be validated to ensure product safety and quality is not compromised and the material is fit for its intended purpose. Validation of raw materials and ingredients shall include Certificate of conformance; or certificate of analysis; or sampling and testing.

2.3.2.5 Validation of packaging materials shall include:

i. Certification that all packaging that comes into direct contact with food meets either regulatory acceptance or approval criteria. Documentation shall either be in the form of a declaration of continued guarantee of compliance, a certificate of conformance, or a certificate from the applicable regulatory agency.

ii. In the absence of a certificate of conformance, certificate of analysis, or letter of guarantee, tests and analyses to confirm the absence of potential chemical migration from the packaging to the food contents shall be conducted and records maintained.

2.3.2.6 Product labels shall be accurate, comply with the relevant legislation and be approved by qualified company personnel.

2.3.2.7 A register of raw and packaging material specifications and labels shall be maintained and kept current.

2.3.3 Contract Service Providers

This clause is not applied at level 1.

2.3.3.1 Specifications for contract services that have an impact on finished product safety and quality shall be documented, current, include a full description of the service to be provided and detail relevant training requirements of contract personnel.
2.3.3.2 A register of all contract service specifications shall be maintained.

2.3.4 Contract Manufacturers

This clause is not applied at level 1.

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

2.3.4.2 The supplier shall:

i. Verify compliance with the SQF Code and that all customer requirements are being met at all times. Products and/or processes of co-manufacturers that are considered high risk shall be required to undergo an audit by the supplier 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.

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

2.3.5 Finished Product

2.3.5.1 Finished product specifications shall be documented, current, approved by the supplier and their customer, accessible to relevant staff and may include:

i. Microbiological and chemical limits; and

ii. Labeling and packaging requirements.

2.3.5.2 A register of finished product specifications shall be maintained.

2.3.5.3 Records of finished product specifications shall be maintained.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LEVEL 1 Food Safety Fundamentals (accredited certification)</th>
<th>LEVEL 2 Food Safety Plan (accredited certification, GFSI recognition)</th>
<th>LEVEL 3 Food Quality Plan (accredited certification, GFSI + Quality Management)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>2.4 Attaining Food Safety</strong></td>
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<td><strong>2.4.1 Food Legislation (Regulation) (M)</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>2.4.1.1 The organization shall ensure that, at the time of delivery to its customer, the food supplied 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 food safety, packaging, product description and nutritional and additive labeling, and to relevant established industry codes of practice.</td>
<td>2.4.1.1 The organization shall ensure that, at the time of delivery to its customer, the food supplied 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.</td>
<td>2.4.1.1 The organization shall ensure that, at the time of delivery to its customer, the food supplied 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, trade weights and measures, packaging, product description, nutritional, allergen and additive labeling, and to relevant established Industry codes of practice.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.4.1.2 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.</td>
<td>2.4.1.2 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.</td>
<td>2.4.1.3 SQFI and the certification body shall be notified in writing within 24 hours upon identification of a food safety event that requires public notification (e.g. receipt of a regulatory warning letter).</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.4.2.1 The premises, buildings and equipment shall be located, constructed, designed and maintained to facilitate the hygienic manufacture, handling, storage and/or delivery of safe food.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2.4.2.2 The supplier shall ensure the food safety fundamentals described in the relevant subsequent modules of this Code (i.e. modules 3 – 15) 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.</td>
<td>2.4.2.2 The supplier shall ensure the food safety fundamentals described in the relevant subsequent modules of this Code (i.e. modules 3 – 15) 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.</td>
<td>2.4.2.2 The supplier shall ensure the food safety fundamentals described in the relevant subsequent modules of this Code (i.e. modules 3 – 15) 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 and quality are not compromised.</td>
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<td>------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>the scope of certification that outline the means by which food safety is controlled and assured shall be documented and implemented.</td>
<td>2.4.2.3 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.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2.4.2.4 The effectiveness of the pre-requisite programs shall be verified as described in 2.5.4.</td>
<td>2.4.2.4 The effectiveness of the pre-requisite programs shall be verified as described in 2.5.4.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 2.4.3 Food Safety Plan

This clause is not applied at level 1.

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

i. Be prepared in accordance with the steps identified in the Codex Alimentarius Commission or NACMCF HACCP guidelines. Primary producers and feed manufacturers may utilize a HACCP-based reference food safety plan developed by a responsible authority.

ii. Cover a product or product group and the associated processes.

iii. Describe the methodology and results of a hazard analysis conducted to identify food safety hazards associated with all inputs and process steps including rework. Animal feed and pet food safety plans must include hazards associated with animal safety as well as the safety of consumers of animal products.

iv. Prescribe those measures taken to apply the controls implemented that are critical to assuring, monitoring and maintaining food safety.

v. 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

vi. Include documented Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) and Work Instructions
<table>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Procedures (SOPs) and Work Instructions (WI) applicable to the organization’s scope of certification.</td>
<td></td>
<td>(WI) applicable to the organization’s scope of certification.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 2.4.4 Food Quality Plan

This clause is not applied at level 1.

This clause is not applied at level 2.

2.4.4.1 **(M)** A food quality plan shall be developed, effectively implemented, and maintained in accordance with the HACCP method to outline the means by which the organization controls and assures food quality and legality. The food quality plan shall:

i. Outline the results of a food quality risk analysis conducted to identify threats to achieving and maintaining product and process quality.

ii. Prescribe those measures taken to apply the controls implemented that are critical to assuring, monitoring and maintaining food quality.

iii. Include process controls at quality points in production to monitor product quality, identify when a process is deviating from set parameters and make corrections to keep a process under control;

iv. Cover a food or food group and the associated processes; and

v. Include documented Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) and Work Instructions (WI) applicable to the organization’s scope of certification.

2.4.4.2 Use of the SQF quality shield shall follow the requirements outlined in Appendix 3: SQF Quality Shield and Logo Rules of Use.

### 2.4.5 Incoming Goods and Services

2.4.5.1 Raw materials, ingredients, packaging materials, and services that impact on finished product safety shall be supplied by an approved supplier.

2.4.5.1 Raw materials, ingredients, packaging materials, and services that impact on finished product safety shall be supplied by an approved supplier.

2.4.5.1 Raw materials, ingredients, packaging materials, and services that impact on finished product safety and quality shall be supplied by an approved supplier.

2.4.5.2 The receipt of raw materials, ingredients, and packaging materials received from non-approved suppliers shall be promptly and thoroughly inspected and analyzed.

2.4.5.2 The receipt of raw materials, ingredients, and packaging materials received from non-approved suppliers shall be promptly and thoroughly inspected and analyzed.
### LEVEL 1 Food Safety Fundamentals

(credited certification)

2.4.5.3 Records of inspections and analyses shall be maintained.

#### LEVEL 2 Food Safety Plan

(credited certification, GFSI recognition)

- approved supplier shall be acceptable in an emergency situation provided they are inspected or analyzed before use.
- 2.4.5.3 The responsibility for selecting, evaluating, approving and monitoring an approved supplier shall be documented and implemented.
- 2.4.5.4 The approved supplier program shall be based on the prior performance of a supplier and the risk level of the raw materials ingredients, packaging materials, and services supplied, and shall contain as a minimum:
  1. Agreed specifications;
  2. Reference to the rating of the level of risk applied to a raw material ingredients, packaging materials and services and the approved supplier;
  3. A summary of the food safety controls implemented by the approved supplier;
  4. Methods for granting approved supplier status;
  5. Methods and frequency of monitoring approved suppliers;
  6. Details of the certificates of conformance if required, and
  7. Methods and frequency of reviewing approved supplier performance and status.
- 2.4.5.5 A register of approved supplier and records of inspections and audits of approved suppliers shall be maintained.

#### LEVEL 3 Food Quality Plan

(credited certification, GFSI + Quality Management)

- approved supplier shall be acceptable in an emergency situation provided they are inspected or analyzed before use.
- 2.4.5.3 The responsibility for selecting, evaluating, approving and monitoring an approved supplier shall be documented and implemented.
- 2.4.5.4 The approved supplier program shall be based on the prior performance of a supplier and the risk level of the raw materials ingredients, packaging materials, and services supplied, and shall contain as a minimum:
  1. Agreed specifications;
  2. Reference to the rating of the level of risk applied to a raw material ingredients, packaging materials and services and the approved supplier;
  3. A summary of the food safety and quality controls implemented by the approved supplier;
  4. Methods for granting approved supplier status;
  5. Methods and frequency of monitoring approved suppliers;
  6. Details of the certificates of conformance if required; and
  7. Methods and frequency of reviewing approved supplier performance and status.
- 2.4.5.5 A register of approved supplier and records of inspections and audits of approved suppliers shall be maintained.

### 2.4.6 Non-conforming Product or Equipment

2.4.6.1 Non-conforming product, raw material, ingredient, work-in-progress, packaging or equipment shall be quarantined, handled and disposed of in a manner that minimizes the risk of inadvertent use, improper use or risk to the integrity of finished product.

2.4.6.1 The responsibility and methods outlining how non-conforming product, raw material, ingredient, work-in-progress, packaging or equipment detected during receipt, storage, processing, handling or delivery is handled shall be documented and implemented. The methods...
## Module 2: SQF System Elements

### LEVEL 1 Food Safety Fundamentals (accredited certification)

2.4.6.2 Records of the handling and disposal of non-conforming product shall be maintained.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2.4.6.2</th>
<th>Records of the handling and disposal of non-conforming product shall be maintained.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>i.</td>
<td>Non-conforming product is quarantined, identified, handled and disposed of in a manner that minimizes the risk of inadvertent use, improper use or risk to the integrity of finished product; and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ii.</td>
<td>Non-conforming equipment is effectively repaired or disposed of in a manner that minimizes the risk of inadvertent use, improper use or risk to the integrity of finished product; and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iii.</td>
<td>All relevant staff is aware of the organization’s quarantine and release requirements applicable to equipment or product placed under quarantine status.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iv.</td>
<td>For producers, the procedure must document the grower, field name, quantity and final disposition of the unacceptable materials when applicable.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### LEVEL 2 Food Safety Plan (accredited certification, GFSI recognition)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2.4.6.2</th>
<th>Quarantine records, and records of the handling, corrective action, or disposal of non-conforming product or equipment shall be maintained.</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>i.</td>
<td>Non-conforming product is quarantined, identified, handled and disposed of in a manner that minimizes the risk of inadvertent use, improper use or risk to the integrity of finished product; and</td>
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<td>ii.</td>
<td>Non-conforming equipment is effectively repaired or disposed of in a manner that minimizes the risk of inadvertent use, improper use or risk to the integrity of finished product; and</td>
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<td>iii.</td>
<td>All relevant staff is aware of the organization’s quarantine and release requirements applicable to equipment or product placed under quarantine status.</td>
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<tr>
<td>iv.</td>
<td>For producers, the procedure must document the grower, field name, quantity and final disposition of the unacceptable materials when applicable.</td>
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### LEVEL 3 Food Quality Plan (accredited certification, GFSI + Quality Management)

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<td>All relevant staff is aware of the organization’s quarantine and release requirements applicable to equipment or product placed under quarantine status.</td>
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<tr>
<td>iv.</td>
<td>For producers, the procedure must document the grower, field name, quantity and final disposition of the unacceptable materials when applicable.</td>
</tr>
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</table>

### 2.4.7 Product Rework

2.4.7.1 Rework (recycle or recoup) activities shall be controlled and traceability ensured.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2.4.7.1</th>
<th>The responsibility and methods outlining how the product is reworked (recycled or recouped) shall be documented and implemented. The methods applied shall ensure:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>i.</td>
<td>Reworking operations are supervised by qualified personnel;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ii.</td>
<td>Reworked product is clearly identified and traceable;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iii.</td>
<td>Each batch of reworked product is inspected or analyzed as required before release;</td>
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<tr>
<td>iv.</td>
<td>Inspections and analyses shall conform to the requirements outlined in element 2.5.6; and</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>v. Release of reworked product shall conform to element 2.4.8.</td>
<td>2.4.7.2 Records of all reworking operations shall be maintained.</td>
<td>v. Release of reworked product shall conform to element 2.4.8.</td>
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<td>2.4.7.2 Records of all reworking operations shall be maintained.</td>
<td></td>
<td>2.4.7.2 Records of all reworking operations shall be maintained.</td>
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</table>

### 2.4.8 Product Release (M)

This clause is not applied at level 1.

**2.4.8.1** The responsibility and methods for releasing products shall be documented and implemented. The methods applied shall ensure the product is released:

i. By authorized personnel; and

ii. Once all inspections and analyses are successfully completed and documented to verify legislative and other established food safety controls have been met.

**2.4.8.2** Records of all product release shall be maintained.

### 2.4.9 Stock Rotation

**2.4.9.1** Effective stock rotation principles shall be applied.

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

### 2.5 SQF System Verification

**2.5.1 Responsibility, Frequency and Methods**

- **2.5.1.1** Validation and verification activities shall be conducted.
- **2.5.1.2** The frequency and methods used to validate...
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LEVEL 1 Food Safety Fundamentals (accredited certification)</th>
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</table>
| validate and verify critical limits established for those hazards associated with the source, storage and use of production inputs, and the application of pre-requisite programs shall be documented and implemented.  
2.5.1.3 Records of all verification activities shall be maintained. | 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.  
2.5.1.3 Records of all verification activities shall be maintained. | validate and verify food safety fundamentals, critical limits, and other food safety and quality controls identified in food safety plans and food quality plans shall be documented and implemented and meet their intended purpose.  
2.5.1.3 Records of all verification activities shall be maintained. |

2.5.2 Validation & Effectiveness (M)

2.5.2.1 The methods, responsibility and criteria for ensuring the effectiveness of pre-requisite programs to ensure they achieve their intended purpose shall be documented and implemented.

2.5.2 Validation & Effectiveness (M)

2.5.2.1 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.

2.5.2.2 Records of all validation activities shall be maintained.

2.5.2 Validation & Effectiveness (M)

2.5.2.1 The methods, responsibility and criteria for ensuring the effectiveness of pre-requisite programs, and validating critical food safety and quality 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) or threat to the achievement of food quality; 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 and quality limits are re-validated at least annually.

2.5.2.2 Records of all validation activities shall be maintained.

2.5.3 Verification Schedule

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

2.5.3 Verification Schedule

2.5.3.1 A verification schedule outlining the verification activities, their frequency of completion and the person responsible for each activity shall be prepared and implemented.
| **LEVEL 1 Food Safety Fundamentals**  
| (accredited certification) | **LEVEL 2 Food Safety Plan**  
| (accredited certification, GFSI recognition) | **LEVEL 3 Food Quality Plan**  
| (accredited certification, GFSI + Quality Management) |

### 2.5.4 Verification of Monitoring Activities (M)

2.5.4.1 Monitoring activities associated with pre-requisite programs and other food safety controls shall be verified.

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

### 2.5.5 Corrective and Preventative Action (M)

2.5.5.1 Corrective action shall be undertaken to resolve non-compliance.

2.5.5.2 Records of corrective action shall be maintained.

### 2.5.6 Product Sampling, Inspection and Analysis

This clause is not applied at level 1.

2.5.6.1 The methods, responsibility and criteria for sampling, inspecting and/or analyzing raw materials, finished product and work in progress shall be documented and implemented. The methods applied shall ensure:

i. Inspections and analyses are completed at regular intervals as required and to agreed specification and legal requirements;

ii. Inspections are conducted to ensure raw materials, work in process and finished products comply with the relevant specification and legal requirements;

iii. Inspections and analyses are completed at regular intervals as required and to agreed specification and legal requirements;

iv. Inspections are conducted to ensure raw materials, work in process and finished products comply with the relevant specification and legal requirements.

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SQF Code edition 7.2
44
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<tr>
<td>specification, regulatory requirements and are true to label; and</td>
<td>iii. All analyses are conducted to nationally recognized methods or alternative methods which are validated as equivalent to the nationally recognized methods. iv. Where external laboratories are utilized to conduct input or product analysis, the laboratories shall be accredited to ISO 17025 or an equivalent national standard. 2.5.6.2 Records of all inspections and analyses shall be maintained.</td>
<td>specification, regulatory requirements, are true to label and comply with weights and measure requirements after shelf life trials are completed; and iii. All analyses are conducted to nationally recognized methods or alternative methods which are validated as equivalent to the nationally recognized methods. iv. Where external laboratories are utilized to conduct input or product analysis, the laboratories shall be accredited to ISO 17025 or an equivalent national standard. v. Sensory analysis and evaluations are completed after shelf life trials, as appropriate, and at intervals designed to demonstrate the products sensory characteristics are consistently being achieved; vi. Sensory evaluations comply with the relevant product sensory attributes specified by the customer; and vii. Sensory evaluations are conducted by trained personnel in accordance with established methods or as specified by the customer. 2.5.6.2 Records of all inspections, analyses, sensory evaluations and actions arising from inspections, analyses and sensory evaluations shall be maintained.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2.5.7 Internal Audits (M)

2.5.7.1 Regular inspections of the facility and equipment shall be planned and carried out to verify the effectiveness of the SQF System. The supplier shall:

   i. Take correction and corrective action; and  
   ii. Maintain records of inspections and any corrective action taken.

2.5.7 Internal Audits (M)

2.5.7.1 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;
   ii. Correction and corrective action of deficiencies identified during the internal

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45
| LEVEL 1 Food Safety Fundamentals  
(credited certification) | LEVEL 2 Food Safety Plan  
(credited certification, GFSI recognition) | LEVEL 3 Food Quality Plan  
(credited certification, GFSI + Quality Management) |
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<tr>
<td>2.6 Product Identification, Trace, Withdrawal and Recall</td>
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<tr>
<td>2.6.1.1 A product identification system shall be implemented to ensure:</td>
<td>2.6.1.1 The methods and responsibility for identifying products during all stages of production and storage shall be documented and implemented.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>i. Product is clearly identified during all stages of receipt, production, storage and dispatch; and</td>
<td>i. Raw materials, work in progress and finished product are clearly identified during all stages of receipt, production, storage and dispatch; and</td>
<td>i. Raw materials, work in progress and finished product are clearly identified during all stages of receipt, production, storage and dispatch; and</td>
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<td>ii. Finished product is labeled to the customer specification and/or regulatory requirements.</td>
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<td>2.6.2.1 A product trace system shall be implemented to ensure:</td>
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<tr>
<td>i. Finished product is traceable to the</td>
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### LEVEL 1 Food Safety Fundamentals (accredited certification)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Customer (one up) and provides traceability through the process to raw materials, food contact packaging and materials and other inputs (one back);</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ii. Traceability is maintained where product is reworked; and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iii. The effectiveness of the product trace system shall be tested at least annually.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

2.6.2.2 Records of raw and packaging material receipt and use, and product dispatch and destination shall be maintained.

### LEVEL 2 Food Safety Plan (accredited certification, GFSI recognition)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ii. Finished product is traceable to the customer (one up) and provides traceability through the process to the supplier and date of receipt of raw materials, food contact packaging and materials and other inputs (one back);</th>
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<tr>
<td>iii. Traceability is maintained where product is reworked; and</td>
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<td>iii. The effectiveness of the product trace system shall be tested at least annually.</td>
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2.6.2.2 Records of raw and packaging material receipt and use, and product dispatch and destination shall be maintained.

### LEVEL 3 Food Quality Plan (accredited certification, GFSI + Quality Management)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>i. Finished product is traceable to the customer (one up) and provides traceability through the process to the supplier and date of receipt of raw materials, food contact packaging and materials and other inputs (one back);</th>
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<tr>
<td>ii. Traceability is maintained where product is reworked; and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iii. The effectiveness of the product trace system shall be tested at least annually.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2.6.2.2 Records of raw and packaging material receipt and use, and product dispatch and destination shall be maintained.

### 2.6.3 Product Withdrawal and Recall (M)

2.6.3.1 The supplier shall outline the methods and responsibility for notifying their customers and other essential bodies where circumstances arise that require product to be withdrawn or recalled from distribution.

2.6.3.1 The responsibility and methods used to withdraw or recall product shall be documented and implemented. The procedure shall:

1. Identify those responsible for initiating, managing and investigating a product withdrawal or recall;
2. Describe the management procedures to be implemented including sources of legal and expert advice; and
3. Outline a communication plan to inform customers, consumers, authorities and other essential bodies in a timely manner appropriate to the nature of the incident.
4. 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 reason.

2.6.3.2 Investigation shall be undertaken to determine the root cause of a withdrawal or recall and details of investigations and any action taken shall be documented.
2.6.3.3 The product withdrawal and recall system shall be reviewed, tested and verified as effective at least annually.
2.6.3.4 Records of all product withdrawals, recalls
LEVEL 1 Food Safety Fundamentals (accredited certification) | LEVEL 2 Food Safety Plan (accredited certification, GFSI recognition) | LEVEL 3 Food Quality Plan (accredited certification, GFSI + Quality Management)
---|---|---
2.6.3.4 Records of all product withdrawals, recalls and mock recalls shall be maintained.

### 2.7 Site Security

#### 2.7.1 Food Defense (M)

- **2.7.1.1** The methods, responsibility and criteria for preventing food adulteration caused by a deliberate act of sabotage or terrorist-like incident shall be documented, implemented and maintained.
- **2.7.1.2** A food defense protocol shall be prepared and include:
  - i. The name of the senior management person responsible for food defense;
  - ii. The methods implemented to ensure only authorized personnel have access to crops, production equipment and vehicles, manufacturing and storage areas through designated access points;
  - iii. The methods implemented to protect sensitive processing points from intentional adulteration;
  - iv. The measures taken to ensure the secure storage of raw materials, packaging, equipment and hazardous chemicals;
  - v. The measures implemented to ensure harvested crop and/or finished product is held under secure storage and transportation conditions; and
  - vi. The methods implemented to record and control access to the premises by employees, contractors, and visitors.

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### LEVEL 1 Food Safety Fundamentals
(credited certification)

### LEVEL 2 Food Safety Plan
(credited certification, GFSI recognition)

### LEVEL 3 Food Quality Plan
(credited certification, GFSI + Quality Management)

#### 2.8 Identity Preserved Foods

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2.8.1 General Requirements for Identity Preserved Foods</th>
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<tr>
<td>This clause is not applied at level 1.</td>
<td>This clause is not applied at level 2.</td>
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</table>

2.8.1.1 The methods and responsibility for the identification and processing of Kosher, HALAL, organic, Genetically Modified Organisms (GMO) food and other products requiring the preservation of their identity preserved status shall be documented and implemented.

2.8.1.2 Identification shall include a statement of the product’s identity preserved status of all ingredients, including additives, preservatives, processing aids and flavorings.

2.8.1.3 Raw material and ingredient specifications to identity preserved foods shall include requirements for their handling, transport, storage and delivery prior to use.

2.8.1.4 Assurances concerning the raw material or ingredient’s identity preserved status shall be by agreement with the supplier.

2.8.1.5 The process description shall allow for a product’s identity preserved status to be maintained during manufacturing.

2.8.1.6 The processing of identity preserved foods shall be conducted under controlled conditions such that:

i. Ingredients are physically separated from ingredients identified as incompatible with the identity preserved food;

ii. Processing is completed in separate rooms; or scheduled as the first production run; or carried out after the completion of a thorough sanitation of the area and equipment; and

iii. Finished product is stored and transported in separate units or isolated by a physical barrier from non-specialty product.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LEVEL 1 Food Safety Fundamentals (accredited certification)</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>2.8.2 Allergen Management</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>2.8.2.1 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:</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>i. A risk analysis of those raw materials, ingredients and processing aids, including food grade lubricants, that contain allergens;</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>ii. A register of allergens which is applicable in the country of manufacture and the country(ies) of destination;</td>
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<tr>
<td>iii. A list of allergens which is accessible by relevant staff.</td>
<td>iii. A list of allergens which is accessible by relevant staff.</td>
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<tr>
<td>iv. The hazards associated with allergens and their control shall be identified</td>
<td>iv. The hazards associated with allergens and their control incorporated into the food safety plan.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>v. Instructions on how to identify, handle, store and segregate raw materials containing allergens provided to staff responsible for receiving those target raw materials.</td>
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<td>vi. Provision to clearly identify and segregate foods that contain allergens</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>vii. Cleaning and sanitation of product contact surfaces between line changeovers shall be effective, appropriate to the risk and legal requirements, and sufficient to remove all potential allergens from product contact surfaces, including aerosols as appropriate, to prevent cross contact.</td>
<td>vii. Cleaning and sanitation of product contact surfaces between line changeovers shall be effective, appropriate to the risk and legal requirements, and sufficient to remove all potential target allergens from product contact surfaces, including aerosols as appropriate, to prevent cross</td>
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The SQF Code, Edition 7.2
First published May 1995

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<tr>
<td>verification of the effectiveness of the cleaning and sanitation of areas and equipment in which allergens are used shall be effectively implemented.</td>
<td>vii. Based on risk assessment, procedures for validation and verification of the effectiveness of the cleaning and sanitation of areas and equipment in which allergens are used shall be effectively implemented.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>ix. Separate handling and production equipment where satisfactory line hygiene and clean-up or segregation is not possible.</td>
<td>viii. Based on risk assessment, procedures for validation and verification of the effectiveness of the cleaning and sanitation of areas and equipment in which allergens are used shall be effectively implemented.</td>
<td>ix. Separate handling and production equipment where satisfactory line hygiene and clean-up or segregation is not possible.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.8.2.2 The product identification system shall make provision for clear identification and labeling in accordance with regulatory requirements of those products produced on production lines and equipment on which foods containing allergens were manufactured.</td>
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</tr>
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<td>2.8.2.3 The product trace system shall take into consideration the conditions under which allergen containing foods are manufactured and ensure full trace back of all ingredients used.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.8.2.4 Re-working of product containing allergen causing agents shall be conducted under conditions that ensure product safety and integrity is maintained. Re-worked product containing allergens shall be clearly identified and traceable.</td>
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### 2.9 Training

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2.9.1.1 Appropriate training shall be provided for personnel carrying out the tasks critical to the effective implementation of the SQF level 1 System and the maintenance of food safety and regulatory requirements.</td>
<td>2.9.1.1 Appropriate training shall be provided for personnel carrying out the tasks critical to the effective implementation of the SQF level 2 System and the maintenance of food safety and regulatory requirements.</td>
<td>2.9.1.1 Appropriate training shall be provided for personnel carrying out the tasks critical to the effective implementation of the SQF level 3 System and the maintenance of food safety, regulatory requirements, and quality.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2.9.2 Training Program (M)</td>
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<td>2.9.2.1 An employee training program shall be documented and implemented. It shall outline the necessary competencies for specific duties and the</td>
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(credited certification) | **LEVEL 2 Food Safety Plan**  
(credited certification, GFSI recognition) | **LEVEL 3 Food Quality Plan**  
(credited certification, GFSI + Quality Management) |
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| training methods to be applied for those staff carrying out tasks associated with:  
  i. Developing and applying Good Agricultural Practices, Good Aquaculture Practices, or Good Manufacturing Practices (as appropriate).  
  ii. Applying food regulatory requirements; | training methods to be applied for those staff carrying out tasks associated with:  
  i. Developing and applying Good Agricultural Practices, Good Aquaculture Practices, or Good Manufacturing 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;  
  iv. Tasks identified as critical to meeting the effective implementation and maintenance of the SQF System. | training methods to be applied for those staff carrying out tasks associated with:  
  i. Developing and applying Good Agricultural Practices, Good Aquaculture Practices, or Good Manufacturing Practices (as appropriate).  
  ii. Applying food regulatory requirements;  
  iii. Steps identified by the hazard analysis and other instructions as critical to effective implementation of the food safety plan and the maintenance of food safety;  
  iv. Steps identified as critical to effective implementation of the food quality plan and the maintenance of food quality; and  
  v. Tasks identified as critical to meeting the effective implementation and maintenance of the SQF System. |

**2.9.3 Instructions**  
2.9.3.1 Instructions shall be available explaining how all tasks related to food safety and regulatory compliance are to be performed.  
2.9.3.1 Instructions shall be available explaining how all tasks critical to meeting regulatory compliance, the maintenance of food safety and process efficiency are to be performed.  
2.9.3.1 Instructions shall be available explaining how all tasks critical to meeting customer specifications, regulatory compliance, the maintenance of food safety, quality and process efficiency are to be performed.  

**2.9.4 HACCP Training Requirement**  
This clause is not applied at level 1.  
2.9.4.1 HACCP training shall be provided for staff involved in developing and maintaining food safety plans.  
2.9.4.1 HACCP training shall be provided for staff involved in developing and maintaining food safety plans and food quality plans.  

**2.9.5 Language**  
2.9.5.1 Training materials and the delivery of training shall be provided in language understood by staff.  
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**2.9.6 Refresher Training**  
2.9.6.1 The training program shall include provision for identifying and implementing the refresher training needs of the organization.  
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2.9.7 Training Skills Register

2.9.7.1 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 12: Food Safety Fundamentals – Good Distribution Practices for Transport and Distribution of Food Products (GFSI J1, and JII)

This module covers the Good Distribution Practice requirements for the transport and storage of perishable and non-perishable food and feed products.

Suppliers implementing this module must also meet the requirements of Module 2: SQF System Elements.

Module 12 is for distribution facilities that do not process or repackage. Those facilities that process food such as slicing, dicing, relabeling, and repackaging of products (i.e. a case of cucumbers that is received and repackaged and relabeled into smaller cases) must use the applicable module (i.e. module 10).

Applicable food sector categories (FSCs) are:

- FSC 25: Fresh produce wholesaling and distribution
- FSC 26: Food wholesaling and distribution

12.1 Site Requirements and Approval

12.1.1 Premises Location
The location of the premises shall be such that adjacent and adjoining buildings, operations and land use do not interfere with safe and hygienic operations.

12.1.2 Construction and Operational Approval
The construction and ongoing operation of the premises on the site shall be approved by the relevant authority.

12.2 Construction and Control of Product Handling and Storage Areas

12.2.1 Materials and Surfaces
In warehouses where food products are recouped or exposed, product contact surfaces shall be constructed of materials that will not contribute a food safety risk.

12.2.2 Floors, Drains and Waste Traps
12.2.2.1 Floors shall be constructed of smooth, dense impact resistant material that can be effectively graded, drained, impervious to liquid and easily cleaned.

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

12.2.3 Walls, Partitions, Doors and Ceilings
12.2.3.1 Walls, partitions, ceilings and doors shall be of durable construction. Internal surfaces shall be smooth and impervious, and shall be kept clean (refer to element 12.2.11.1)

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

12.2.3.3 Doors shall be of solid construction; and windows shall be made of shatterproof glass or similar material.

12.2.4 Lighting and Light Fittings
12.2.4.1 Lighting in warehouses where food product is recouped or exposed shall be of appropriate intensity to enable the staff to carry out their tasks efficiently and effectively.

12.2.4.2 Light fittings in areas where food product is recouped or exposed shall be shatterproof, manufactured with a shatterproof covering or fitted with protective covers and recessed into or fitted flush with the ceiling.

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

12.2.5 Dust, Fly and Vermin Proofing
12.2.5.1 All external windows, ventilation openings, doors and other openings shall be effectively sealed when closed and proofed against dust, vermin and flies.

12.2.5.2 Personnel access doors shall be provided. They shall be effectively fly-proofed and fitted with a self-closing device.

12.2.5.3 External doors, including overhead dock doors, used for product, pedestrian or truck access shall be fly-proofed by at least one or a combination of the following methods:

i. A self-closing device;

ii. An effective air curtain;

iii. A fly-proof screen; and


v. Adequate sealing around trucks in docking areas
12.2.5.4 Electric insect control devices, pheromone or other traps and baits shall be located so as not to present a contamination risk to product, packaging, containers or processing equipment.

12.2.6 Ventilation

12.2.6.1 Adequate ventilation shall be provided in enclosed storage and food handling areas.

12.2.7 Premises and Equipment Maintenance

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

12.2.7.2 Maintenance staff and contractors shall observe the following practices when undertaking maintenance and repairs in any handling or storage area:

i. Routine maintenance of food storage areas 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 elements 12.3.1, 12.3.2, 12.3.3, 12.3.4) by maintenance staff and contractors;

iv. Ensure warehouse supervisors are notified when maintenance or repairs are to be undertaken in any food handling area;

v. Inform the maintenance supervisor and the facility 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 is to be conducted outside processing times;

vi. Remove all tools and debris from any maintenance activity once it has been completed and inform the area supervisor and maintenance supervisor so appropriate hygiene and sanitation can be completed prior to the commencement of facility operations.

12.2.7.3 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.

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

12.2.7.5 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.

12.2.8 Calibration

12.2.8.1 The methods and responsibility for the calibration and re-calibration of measuring, test and inspection equipment used for monitoring activities outlined in the pre-requisite program, food safety plans and food quality plans and other process controls, or to demonstrate compliance with customer specifications shall be documented and implemented.

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

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

12.2.8.4 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 supplier shall provide evidence to support the calibration reference method applied.

12.2.8.5 Calibration shall be performed according to regulatory requirements and/or to the equipment manufacturers recommended schedule.

12.2.8.6 Calibration records shall be maintained.

12.2.9 Management of Pests and Vermin

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

12.2.9.2 The pest and vermin management program shall:

i. Describe the methods and responsibility for the development, implementation and maintenance of the pest and vermin 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 site 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 and training in the use of pest and vermin control chemicals and baits; and

x. Measure the effectiveness of the program to verify the elimination of applicable pests.

12.2.9.3 Inspections for pest activity shall be undertaken on a regular basis by trained personnel and the appropriate action taken if pests are present.

12.2.9.4 Records of all pest control applications shall be maintained.

12.2.9.5 Pesticides and other toxic chemicals shall be clearly labeled and stored as described in element 12.5.4 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.

12.2.9.6 Pest control contractors 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 (see Contract Services 2.3.3) which will include a site map indicating the location of bait stations and traps;

v. Report to a responsible senior management 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.

12.2.9.7 The supplier 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.

12.2.10 Equipment, Utensils and Protective Clothing

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

12.2.10.2 Protective clothing in areas where food product is recouped or exposed shall be manufactured from material that is not liable to contaminate food and easily cleaned.

12.2.10.3 In areas where food product is recouped or exposed, racks shall be provided for the temporary storage of protective clothing when staff leaves the processing area and shall be provided in close proximity or adjacent to the personnel access doorways and hand washing facilities.

12.2.11 Cleaning and Sanitation

12.2.11.1 The methods and responsibility for the cleaning of the food handling and storage areas, staff amenities and toilet facilities 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; and

v. The responsibility and methods used to verify the effectiveness of the cleaning and sanitation program.

12.2.11.2 Provision shall be made for the effective cleaning of equipment, utensils and protective clothing.

12.2.11.3 Suitably equipped areas shall be designated for cleaning product containers, utensils and protective clothing that are used by cleaning staff in cleaning, sanitizing, and maintaining the facility. Racks and containers for storing cleaned utensils and protective clothing shall be provided as required.

12.2.11.4 Pre-operational hygiene and sanitation inspections shall be conducted by qualified personnel to ensure food handling and storage areas, staff amenities and sanitary facilities and other essential areas are clean.

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

12.2.11.6 Detergents and sanitizers that are used to clean, sanitize and maintain the facility shall be purchased in accordance with applicable legislation. The organization shall ensure:

i. An inventory of all chemicals purchased and used shall be maintained;
ii. Detergents and chemicals are stored as outlined in 12.5.4;
iii. Safety Data Sheets (SDS) are provided for all detergents and sanitizers purchased; and
iv. Only trained staff handles sanitizers and detergents.

12.2.11.7 The supplier 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.

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

12.3 Personnel Hygiene and Welfare

12.3.1 Personnel
12.3.1.1 Personnel suffering from infectious diseases or are carriers of, any infectious disease are not permitted to work in the distribution center or in the transportation of food, and shall not engage in food handling operations, or be permitted access to storage areas where the product is exposed.
12.3.1.2 Personnel with exposed cuts, sores or lesions shall not be engaged in handling exposed product or handling packaging materials or food contact surfaces. Minor cuts or abrasions on exposed parts of the body shall be covered with colored bandage, or an alternative suitable waterproof and colored dressing.
12.3.1.3 Smoking, chewing, eating, drinking or spitting is not permitted in any food handling or storage areas where the product is exposed.

12.3.2 Hand Washing
12.3.2.1 Hand wash basins shall be provided, and in accessible locations throughout the facility as required.
12.3.2.2 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 fixed dispenser;
   iii. Paper towels or effective hand dryer; and
   iv. A means of containing used paper towels.
12.3.2.3 A sign instructing people to wash their hands, and in appropriate languages, shall be provided in a prominent position adjacent to hand wash stations.
12.3.2.4 Personnel shall have clean hands and hands shall be washed by all personnel, including staff, contractors and visitors:
   i. After each visit to a toilet;
   ii. After smoking, eating or drinking; and
   iii. After handling wash down hoses or contaminated material.
12.3.2.5 When gloves are used, personnel shall maintain the hand washing practices outlined above.

12.3.3 Clothing
12.3.3.1 Clothing worn by staff engaged in handling food shall be maintained, stored, laundered and worn so as not to present a contamination risk to product.
12.3.3.2 Clothing shall be clean at the commencement of each shift and maintained in a serviceable condition.

12.3.4 Jewelry and Personal Effects
12.3.4.1 Jewelry and other loose objects shall not be worn or taken into a food handling area or any area where food is recouped. The wearing of plain bands with no stones and medical alert bracelets that cannot be removed can be permitted, however the supplier will need to consider their customer requirements and the applicable food legislation.

12.3.5 Visitors
12.3.5.1 All visitors, including management and maintenance staff, shall wear suitable clothing and footwear when entering any food handling area.
12.3.5.2 All visitors shall be required to remove jewelry and other loose objects.
12.3.5.3 Visitors exhibiting visible signs of illness shall be prevented from entering areas in which food is handled or exposed.
12.3.5.4 Visitors shall enter and exit food handling areas through the proper staff entrance points and comply with all hand washing and personal practice requirements.
12.3.6 Staff Amenities
12.3.6.1 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.

12.3.7 Change Rooms
12.3.7.1 Facilities shall be provided to enable staff and visitors to change into and out of protective clothing as required.
12.3.7.2 Provision shall be made for staff to store their street clothing and personal items separate from food contact zones and food and packaging storage areas.

12.3.8 Sanitary Facilities
12.3.8.1 Toilet rooms shall be:
   i. Designed and constructed so that they are accessible to staff and separate from any food handling operations;
   ii. Accessed from the warehouse or product handling area via an airlock vented to the exterior or through an adjoining room;
   iii. Sufficient in number for the maximum number of staff;
   iv. Constructed so that they can be easily cleaned and maintained; and
   v. Kept clean and tidy.
12.3.8.2 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. Procedure shall be documented and implemented to properly manage sewage back-ups in order to minimize the potential for contamination.
12.3.8.4 Hand wash basins shall be provided immediately outside or inside the toilet room and designed as outlined in 12.3.2.2.

12.3.9 Lunch Rooms
12.3.9.1 Separate lunch room facilities shall be provided away from a food handling or storage areas. Lunch rooms shall be kept clean and tidy and free from waste materials and pests.
12.3.9.2 Signage in appropriate languages instructing people to wash their hands before entering the food processing areas shall be provided in a prominent position in lunch rooms and at lunch room exits.

12.3.10 First Aid
12.3.10.1 First aid facilities shall be provided to treat minor injuries and suitable arrangements shall be provided in circumstances when a patient requires more specialized care.

12.4 Personnel Processing Practices
12.4.1 Staff Engaged in Food Handling Operations
12.4.1.1 All personnel engaged in the direct handling of exposed food shall comply with the following practices:
   i. Personnel entry to food handling areas shall be through the personnel access doors only;
   ii. All doors are to be kept closed. Doors shall not be left open for extended periods when access for waste removal or stock transfer;
   iii. 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. 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;
   vi. Staff shall not eat or taste any product being processed in the food handling/contact zone.
12.4.1.2 All personnel engaged in storage, transport and handling of packaged products and materials shall ensure that products and materials are handled and stored in such a way as to prevent damage or product contamination.

12.5 Water, Ice and Air Supply
12.5.1 Water Supply
12.5.1.1 Adequate supplies of water drawn from a known clean source shall be provided for use during holding or storage and for cleaning the premises and equipment.
12.5.1.2 Supplies of hot and cold water shall be provided as required to enable the effective cleaning of the premises and equipment.
12.5.2 Monitoring Water Microbiology and Quality
12.5.2.1 Water used for
   i. Product contact or food packaging materials;
   ii. Cleaning food contact surfaces; and
12.5.3 Water Delivery

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

12.5.3.2 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.

12.5.4 Ice Supply

12.5.4.1 Ice provided to maintain product temperature shall comply with 12.5.2.

12.5.4.2 Ice rooms and receptacles shall be constructed of materials as outlined in elements 12.2.1, 12.2.2 and 12.2.3 and designed to minimize contamination of the ice during storage and distribution.

12.5.5 Analysis

12.5.5.1 Microbiological analysis of the water and ice supply identified in 12.5 shall be conducted to verify the cleanliness of the supply, the monitoring activities and the effectiveness of the treatment measures implemented.

12.5.5.2 Water and ice shall be analyzed using reference standards and methods.

12.5.6 Air Quality

12.5.6.1 Air, including compressed air that contacts food or food contact surfaces shall be clean and present no risk to product safety.

12.5.6.2 Air systems used in the facility shall be maintained and regularly monitored for environmental contaminants.

12.6 Storage and Transport

12.6.1 Cold and Chilled Storage

12.6.1.1 The supplier shall provide confirmation of the effective operational performance of cold and chilled storage facilities. Cold and chilled storage rooms shall be:
   i. Designed and constructed to allow for the hygienic and efficient refrigeration of food; and
   ii. Easily accessible for inspection and cleaning.

12.6.1.2 Sufficient refrigeration capacity shall be available to store chilled or frozen food at the maximum anticipated throughput of product with allowance for periodic cleaning of refrigerated areas.

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

12.6.1.4 Cold and chilled storage rooms shall be fitted with temperature monitoring equipment and located so as to monitor the warmest part of the room and be fitted with a temperature measurement device that is easily readable and accessible.

12.6.1.5 Loading and unloading docks shall be designed to protect product during loading and unloading.

12.6.2 Storage of Shelf Stable Packaged Goods

12.6.2.1 Rooms used for the storage of dry goods shall be located away from wet areas and constructed to protect the product from contamination and deterioration.

12.6.2.2 Racks provided for the storage of food products 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 food products becoming a harborage for pests or vermin.

12.6.2.3 Vehicles used in storage rooms shall be designed and operated so as not to present a food safety hazard.

12.6.3 Storage of Equipment and Containers

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

12.6.4 Storage of Hazardous Chemicals and Toxic Substances

12.6.4.1 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 or transported.

12.6.5 Alternative Storage and Handling of Goods

12.6.5.1 Where goods described in 12.5.1 to 12.5.4 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.

12.6.6 Loading, Transport and Unloading Practices

12.6.6.1 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.
12.6.7 Loading
12.6.7.1 Vehicles (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.
12.6.7.2 Loading practices shall be designed to minimize unnecessary exposure of the product to conditions detrimental to maintaining product integrity.

12.6.8 Transport
12.6.8.1 Refrigerated 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.
12.6.8.2 The refrigeration unit 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.
12.6.8.3 The refrigeration unit shall be monitored for environmental contaminants.

12.6.9 Unloading
12.6.9.1 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.
12.6.9.2 Unloading practices shall be designed to minimize unnecessary exposure of the product to conditions detrimental to maintaining product and package integrity.

12.7 Control of Foreign Matter Contamination

12.7.1 Control of Foreign Matter
12.7.1.1 The responsibility and methods used to prevent foreign matter contamination of product shall be documented, implemented and communicated to all staff.
12.7.1.2 Inspections shall be performed to ensure plant and equipment remains in good condition and potential contaminants have not detached or become damaged or deteriorated. The use of temporary fasteners such as string, wire or tape to fix or hold equipment shall not be permitted.
12.7.1.3 The following preventative measures shall be implemented where applicable to prevent glass contamination:
   i. All glass objects or similar material in food handling/contact zones shall be listed in a glass register including details of their location;
   ii. Containers, equipment and other utensils made of glass, porcelain, ceramics, laboratory glassware or other like material (except where 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;
   iii. Conduct regular inspections of food handling/contact zones to ensure they are free of glass or other like material and to establish no changes to the condition of the objects listed in the glass register; and
   iv. Inspect 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.
12.7.1.4 Wooden pallets and other wooden utensils used in food handling and storage shall be dedicated for that purpose, clean, maintained in good order and their condition subject to regular inspection.
12.7.1.5 Loose metal objects on equipment, equipment covers and overhead structures shall be removed or tightly fixed so as not to present a hazard.

12.7.2 Managing Foreign Matter Contamination Incidents
12.7.2.1 In all cases of foreign matter contamination the affected batch or item shall be isolated, inspected, reworked or disposed of.
12.7.2.2 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.

12.8 Waste Disposal

12.8.1 Dry and Liquid Waste Disposal
12.8.1.1 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.
12.8.1.2 Waste shall be removed on a regular basis and not build up in food handling or storage areas. Designated waste accumulation areas shall be maintained in a clean and tidy condition until such time as external waste collection is undertaken.
12.8.1.3 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.
12.8.1.4 Reviews of the effectiveness of waste management will form part of daily hygiene inspections and the results of these inspections shall be included in the relevant hygiene reports.

12.9 Exterior

12.9.1 Grounds and Roadways

12.9.1.1 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.

12.9.1.2 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.

12.9.1.3 Surroundings shall be kept neat and tidy and not present a hazard to the hygienic and sanitary operation of the premises.
Module 16: Requirements for SQF Multi-site Programs Managed by a Central Site

16.1 Scope

16.1.1 This module outlines the requirements for establishing and maintaining certification of a multi-site program that is managed by an SQF certified central site.

16.1.2 Where the multi-site program involves a central warehouse or distribution center and a number of satellite warehouses (sub-sites), there shall be a minimum of twenty (20) sub-sites.

16.2 Definitions

16.2.1 An SQF multi-site program is comprised of a central site under which activities are planned to manage and control the food safety and quality management systems of a network of sub-sites under a legal or contractual link.

16.2.2 For the purpose of this Code the definitions outlined in Appendix 2: Glossary of Terms and the following definitions apply.

16.2.3 The central-site is an entity certified to the SQF Code (i.e. manufacturer, packer, warehouse), or eligible for such certification, that has a network of primary supplier sub-sites that are eligible for certification to the SQF Code and are all involved in the same low risk activity. The central site and all sub-sites are all located in the one country and operate under the same food safety legislation.

16.3 Eligibility Criteria for the Multi-site Organization

16.3.1 The central site is the entity responsible for the SQF multi-site program.

16.3.2 Sub-sites shall be linked to the central site by a legal or contractual arrangement.

16.3.3 The central site and sub-sites shall be listed in the agreement with the certification body. The central site and all sub-sites in the multi-site program shall be audited by one certification body.

16.3.4 Central sites shall implement an SQF System that includes management of the sub-sites and internal audit of the sub-sites. The central site shall be at the same SQF certification level (refer Part B, Module 1) as the sub-sites, or a higher level.

16.3.5 Sub-sites shall implement a common, SQF System which is subject to continuous surveillance by the central site. All sub-sites shall be at the same level.

16.3.6 The central site shall implement corrective actions when needed in any sub-site. This shall be laid down in the agreement between the central site and the sub-sites.

16.3.7 The product(s) or service(s) provided by each of the sub-sites shall be substantially of the same kind and produced according to the same fundamental methods and procedures. The size of each of the sub-sites and employee numbers shall be similar.

16.3.8 The central site shall establish and maintain SQF Certification for the duration of the SQF multi-site program.

16.3.9 The central site’s SQF management system shall be administered under a centrally controlled plan and be subject to central management review.

16.3.10 The central site shall demonstrate an ability to collect and analyze data from all sites, including the central site, and have the authority and ability to initiate organizational change if required.

16.3.11 The central administration function and the sub-sites shall be subject to the central site’s internal audit program and shall be audited in accordance with that program and prior to the certification audit.

16.4 Internal Audits

16.4.1 The central site shall document its internal audit procedure which shall include an internal audit schedule and outline the method of conducting audits of sub-sites and the central site administrative function.

16.4.2 An internal audit which includes all relevant elements of module 2, and the GAP or GMP module(s) applicable to the food sector category, shall be conducted at least once per year, and during periods of peak activity.

16.5 Internal Audit Personnel

16.5.1 Personnel conducting internal audits shall:

i Successfully complete the Implementing SQF Systems training course.

ii Successfully complete internal auditor training.

iii Have competence in the same food sector category as the internal audit.
16.5.2 Personnel reviewing the internal audits of the multi-site 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 auditor.

16.5.3 It is acceptable for the central site to contract out the internal audit function provided the contractor is registered as an SQF consultant or an SQF auditor.

16.5.4 Where the internal audit function is contracted out the central site shall be accountable for the actions and effectiveness of the work completed by the contractor.

16.5.5 Contract arrangements shall comply with 2.3.3 of the SQF Code.

**16.6 Auditing and Certifying the Multi-site Organization**

16.6.1 Audits and certification of an SQF multi-site organization shall be completed by SQF licensed and accredited certification bodies. The third party audit involves:

   iv. The certification audit (including desk and facility audit);
   v. Surveillance audits; and
   vi. Re-certification audits.

16.6.2 The initial certification audit and subsequent surveillance and re-certification audits of the multi-site organization shall be centered on the SQF central site, the central site’s internal audit function and a sample of the sub-sites.

**16.7 Audit Frequency**

16.7.1 The certification audit of the central site and a sample (refer to element 16.10) of sub-sites are conducted every twelve months.

16.7.2 Re-certification audits for each site are conducted on the anniversary of the last day of the initial certification audit, plus or minus 30 calendar days.

16.7.3 Within each certification and re-certification audit cycle, the central site shall be audited before the sample of sub-sites.

16.7.4 Surveillance audits are conducted for any site in the multi-site 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 sub-site is subject to a surveillance audit due to a “C-Complies: rating, the internal audit of that sub-site by the central site shall also be reviewed.

16.7.5 If the central site or any one of the sampled sub-sites is identified as having a critical non-conformity at audit, or otherwise achieves only an “F – Fails to comply” rating, the certificates for the central site and all sub-sites shall be suspended until such time as a “C – Complies” rating or better is achieved at a further round of audits at the central site and a sample of sub-sites. The site that receives the “F – Fails to comply” rating shall be included in the sample for the next audit cycle.

**16.8 Selecting the Sub-site**

16.8.1 The selection of the sample is the responsibility of the certification body.

16.8.2 The sample is partly selective based on the factors set out below and partly non-selective, and shall result in a range of different sub-sites being selected, without excluding the random element of sampling. At least 25% of the sub-sites selected shall be based on random selection.

16.8.3 The sample of sub-sites shall be selected so that the differences among the selected sub-sites over the period of validity of the certificate are as large as possible.

16.8.4 The sub-site selection criteria shall include among others the following aspects:

   i. Records of internal audits or previous certification assessments;
   ii. Significant variations in the size of the sub-sites;
   iii. Variations in the work procedures;
   iv. Modifications since the last certification assessment; and
   v. Geographical dispersion.

16.8.5 The central site shall be informed of the sub-sites that will comprise the sample and be allowed adequate time to prepare for the audit.

16.8.6 The central site’s SQF System, including its sub-site internal audit procedure, shall be assessed during the certification audit and each surveillance (if applicable) and re-certification audit.

**16.9 Determining the Size of the Sub-sites Sample**

16.9.1 The certification body shall record the justification for applying a sample size outside that described in this clause.
16.9.2 The minimum number of sub-sites to be audited at a certification audit or re-certification audit is the square root of the number of sub-sites with 1.5 as a co-efficient ($y=1.5\sqrt{x}$), rounded to the higher whole number.

16.9.3 The size of sample shall be increased where the certification body’s risk analysis of the activity covered by the management system subject to certification indicates special circumstances in respect of factors like:

i. Major variations in processes undertaken at each sub-site;
ii. Records of complaints and other relevant aspects of correction and corrective action;
iii. Indication of an overall breakdown of food safety controls; or
iv. Inadequate internal audits or action arising from internal audit findings.

16.10 Additional Sub-sites

16.10.1 On the application of a new sub-site or group of sub-sites to join an already certified SQF multi-site program, each new sub-site or group of sub-sites shall be included in the audit sample for the next re-certification audit. The new sub-sites shall be added to the existing sites for determining the sample size for future re-certification audits.

16.11 Dealing with Non-conformities

16.11.1 When non-conformities are found at any individual sub-site through the central site’s internal auditing, investigation by the central site shall take place to determine whether the other sub-sites may be affected. The certification body shall require evidence that the central site 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 sub-sites or not. If they are found to do so, appropriate corrective action shall be taken both at the central site and at the individual sub-sites. The central site shall demonstrate to the certification body the justification for all follow-up action.

16.11.2 When non-conformities are found at the central site or at any individual sub-site through auditing by the certification body, action shall be taken by the certification body as outlined in Part A, 3.2.

16.11.3 When non-conformities are found at the central site, the certification body shall increase its sampling frequency until it is satisfied that control has been re-established by the central site.

16.11.4 At the time of the initial certification and subsequent re-certification a certificate shall not be issued to the central site and sub-sites until satisfactory corrective action is taken to close out all Non-conformances.

16.11.5 It shall not be admissible that, in order to overcome the obstacle raised by the existence of non-conformity at a single sub-site, the central site seeks to exempt from the scope of certification the "problematic" sub-site during the certification, surveillance or re-certification audit.

16.12 Certificate Issued for a Multi-site Organization

16.12.1 A certificate shall be issued to the central site and all sub-sites within the SQF multi-site program. The central site’s certificate shall include an appendix listing all sub-sites participating in the multi-site program. The sub-site certificate shall state within its scope of certification that it is part of a multi-site certification.

16.12.2 The certification date for the central site and sub-sites 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 sub-site audit.

16.12.3 The certificate for all sites in the multi-site program will be withdrawn, if the central site or any of the sub-sites do not fulfill the necessary criteria for the maintaining of the certificate.

16.12.4 The list of sub-sites shall be kept updated by the central site. The central site shall inform the certification body about the closure of any of the sub-sites or the addition of new sub-sites. Failure to provide such information will be considered by the certification body as a misuse of the certificate, and the multi-site organization’s certificate shall be suspended until the matter is corrected to the satisfaction of the certification body.

16.12.5 Additional sub-sites shall be added to an existing certification as the result of surveillance or re-certification audits.

16.12.6 Where a primary sub-site has 4 or more secondary sites (e.g. growing areas), the primary location shall be audited and 50% of the secondary sites. More than 50% can be audited if there is evidence that there are grounds to justify the further audit time.

16.12.7 Surveillance audits are only required if a central site receives a "C – Complies" rating. If any sub-site fails the audit, all certificates, including the central-site certificate, will be withheld or suspended/withdrawn if already issued. Suspension or withdrawal would remain in effect until all sub-sites within the group are certified.
## Appendix 1: SQF Food Sector Categories

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Category (Supplier Scope of Certification)</th>
<th>GFSI Industry Scopes</th>
<th>Applicable SQF Code Modules</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Example of Products</th>
<th>Level of Risk</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Production, Capture and Harvesting of Livestock and Game Animals:</td>
<td>Al: Farming of Animals</td>
<td>Module 2: System elements Module 5: GAP for farming of animal products</td>
<td>Applies to the capture, transport, holding, intensive animal husbandry and free range farming of animals, but does not include fish.</td>
<td>Includes: Deer, cattle, goats, sheep, pigs, poultry, ostrich, emu, egg, etc. Cattle, veal, lamb, pigs, poultry, eggs Cattle, sheep and goats Buffalo, wild pigs, emu Bees</td>
<td>Low risk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Growing and Harvesting of Animal Feeds</td>
<td>Fl: Production of Single Ingredient Feed</td>
<td>Module 2: System elements Module 3: GMP for animal feed production</td>
<td>Applies to the production, harvesting, transport and storage of all non-processed sources of animal feeds. Does not include manufactured animal feed.</td>
<td>Includes pasture, silage and hay.</td>
<td>Low risk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Growing and Production of Fresh Produce: Fresh produce that will undergo further processing Ready-to-Eat (RTE) Produce</td>
<td>Bl: Farming of Plant Products</td>
<td>Module 2: System elements Module 7: GAP for farming of fruit and vegetable products</td>
<td>Applies to the production, harvesting, preparation, field packing, transport and controlled temperature storage of fresh whole fruit and vegetables. Includes all products grown under broad acre and intensive horticulture production System, including orchards, viticulture, and hydroponics production and nursery operations.</td>
<td>All fruit and vegetable 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.</td>
<td>Generally low risk. Some products are classified as high risk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Fresh Produce Pack house Operations</td>
<td>D: Pre-processing of Plant Products</td>
<td>Module 2: System elements Module 10: GMP for pre-processing of plant products</td>
<td>Applies to the packing, sorting, grading, cleaning, controlled atmosphere temperature storage and transport of fresh and pre-packaged whole unprocessed fruits and vegetables for retail sale or further processing.</td>
<td>Includes all fruit and vegetable varieties which are packed in pack houses and which may undergo controlled atmosphere storage and transport.</td>
<td>Low risk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Extensive Broad Acre Agriculture Operations and Seed Production</td>
<td>Bll: Farming of Grains and Pulses</td>
<td>Module 2: System elements Module 8: GAP for farming of grains and pulses</td>
<td>Applies to the production, harvesting, preparation, transport and storage of cereal and other grains.</td>
<td>All grain and cereal varieties including but not limited to wheat, oats, pulse crops, soy, legumes, maize, corn and cotton Mung bean seeds, alfalfa seeds, Watercress seeds.</td>
<td>Generally low risk, although some products and processes are classified as high risk.</td>
</tr>
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<td>No.</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Harvest and Intensive Farming of Fish</td>
<td>All: Farming of Fish and Seafood</td>
<td>Module 2: System elements Module 6: GAP for farming of fish</td>
<td>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.</td>
<td>All fresh and salt water fish and shellfish species including: Tuna, abalone, lobster, shrimp, salmon, snapper and other finfish spp.</td>
<td>Generally low risk, although some products and processes are classified as high risk.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Slaughterhouse, Boning and Butchery Operations: Red Meat Poultry Meat</td>
<td>C: pre-process handling of animal products</td>
<td>Module 2: System elements Module 9: GMP for pre-processing of animal products</td>
<td>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.</td>
<td>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.</td>
<td>Low risk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Processing of Manufactured Meats and Poultry</td>
<td>EI: Processing of Perishable Animal Products</td>
<td>Module 2: System elements Module 11: GMP for processing of food products</td>
<td>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.</td>
<td>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.</td>
<td>High risk product and process knowledge required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Seafood Processing: Raw fish and fishery products Uncooked RTE Fish Cooked RTE Fish</td>
<td>EI: Processing of Perishable Animal Products</td>
<td>Module 2: System elements Module 11: GMP for processing of food products</td>
<td>Applies to the processing, manufacture, transport and storage of all fish species and extends to value-adding operations including dismembering, fermenting, crumbing, smoking, cooking freezing, chilling, drying and vacuum packing, but not canning of fish product.</td>
<td>Includes: Whole fish, fish fillets, reformatted fish cakes, coated fish portions uncooked fish product Sashimi, sushi and raw uncooked shellfish such as oyster and mussels Includes, surimi smoked cooked fish products chilled or frozen that require no further cooking prior to consumption.</td>
<td>Some products are classified high risk. Uncoked RTE product is high risk and process knowledge required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Dairy Food Processing</td>
<td>EI: Processing of Perishable Animal Products</td>
<td>Module 2: System elements Module 11: GMP for processing of food products</td>
<td>Applies to the processing, transport and storage of food products from all species used for milk collection and extends to all value-adding and operations including freezing, pasteurizing, ultra filtration, evaporation/concentration, fermentation, clarification, culturing and spray drying of milk but not UHT operations. (refer FSC</td>
<td>Includes all milk collection and includes milk and cream, butter, cottage cheese, sour cream, all forms of cheese, yogurt, ice cream and dried milk. Includes milk substitutes such as soymilk and tofu (where the process and technology is essentially the same). Also includes</td>
<td>High risk product and process knowledge required</td>
</tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Honey Processing</td>
<td>EI: Processing of Perishable Animal Products</td>
<td>Module 2: System elements Module 11: GMP for processing of food products</td>
<td>Applies to the processing, transport and storage of food products from all species used for honey collection including value-added operations. Includes clarifying and treatment operations.</td>
<td>Includes honeycomb; pollen and royal jelly</td>
<td>Some high risk process knowledge required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Egg Processing</td>
<td>EI: Processing of Perishable Animal Products</td>
<td>Module 2: System elements Module 11: GMP for processing of food products</td>
<td>Applies to the processing, transport and storage of food products from all species used for egg collection and processing.</td>
<td>Fresh shell eggs including value-added products where egg is the major ingredient.</td>
<td>High risk product; Generally low risk process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Bakery and Snack Food Processing</td>
<td>EIV: Processing of Ambient Stable Products</td>
<td>Module 2: System elements Module 11: GMP for processing of food products</td>
<td>Applies to the processing, transport and storage of extruded snack foods and cake mix formulations and extends to all bakery operations.</td>
<td>Includes baked items such as meat pies, custard pies, bread, cookies, cakes and mixes and all varieties of snack food.</td>
<td>Some high risk process knowledge required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Fruit and Vegetable Processing</td>
<td>EI: Processing or Perishable Plant Products</td>
<td>Module 2: System elements Module 11: GMP for processing of food products</td>
<td>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. Does not include fruit or vegetable juice manufacture or the canning of fruits and vegetables.</td>
<td>Includes frozen. Fermented, dried, sliced, diced, cut, and modified atmosphere packaged (MAP) fruit and vegetable products including prepared and deli salads.</td>
<td>Some high risk process knowledge required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Canning (except dairy), Pasteurizing, UHT and Aseptic Operations</td>
<td>EIV: Processing of Ambient Stable Products</td>
<td>Module 2: System elements Module 11: GMP for processing of food products</td>
<td>Applies to the processing, transport and storage of low acid canned foods, and sterilization (retorting) UHT, or other high temperature processes not covered elsewhere and the manufacture of the associated hermetically sealed containers.</td>
<td>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. Pasteurized juice. The UHT treatment of: • Pasteurized canned and chilled crab meat; • Milk or milk products; or • Egg or egg products; or • Fruit or vegetable juices.</td>
<td>High risk product and process knowledge required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Ice, Drink and Beverage Processing</td>
<td>EIV: Processing of Ambient Stable Products</td>
<td>Module 2: System elements Module 11: GMP for processing of food products</td>
<td>Applies to fermentation, concentration aseptic filling or drying operations processes. Does not include powdered milk and pasteurization and UHT treatment of milk or milk products or fruit and vegetable juicing operations.</td>
<td>Includes unpasteurized fruit or vegetable juice cordial, carbonated soft drinks, carbonated and non-carbonated waters, mineral water, ice, wine, beer and other alcoholic beverages, powdered beverage formulations and tea and coffee products.</td>
<td>Some high risk process knowledge required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Confectionary</td>
<td>EIV: Processing of</td>
<td>Module 2: System elements</td>
<td>Applies to the preparation, transport and</td>
<td>Includes all confectionary products</td>
<td>Some high risk</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Appendix 1: Food Sector Categories

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Category (Supplier Scope of Certification)</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Manufacturing</td>
<td>Ambient Stable Products</td>
<td>Module 11: GMP for processing of food products</td>
<td>storage of all types of confectionary and extends to all chocolate and imitation chocolate-based processing.</td>
<td>which undergo refining, conching, starch molding, compression, extrusion and vacuum cooking.</td>
<td>process knowledge required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Preserved Foods Manufacture</td>
<td>EIV: Processing of Ambient Stable Products</td>
<td>Module 2: System elements Module 11: GMP for processing of food products</td>
<td>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.</td>
<td>Includes dressings, mayonnaise, sauces, marinades, pickled foods, peanut butter, mustards, jams and fillings.</td>
<td>Some high risk process knowledge required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Food Ingredient Manufacture</td>
<td>L: Production of Bio-chemicals</td>
<td>Module 2: System elements Module 11: GMP for processing of food products</td>
<td>Applies to the processing, blending, re-packaging transport and storage of dry food ingredients including cultures and yeast, but does not include dairy products, fermented meats or other fermented products mentioned elsewhere.</td>
<td>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.</td>
<td>Some high risk process knowledge required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Recipe Meals Manufacture</td>
<td>EIII: Processing of Perishable Animal and Plant Products</td>
<td>Module 2: System elements Module 11: GMP for processing of food products</td>
<td>Applies to the processing, receipt, controlled temperature storage and transport of foods prepared from a range of ingredients (mixed foods) that require cooking or heating prior to serving.</td>
<td>Includes RTE chilled meals and desserts, frozen meals, pizza, frozen pasta, soups, and meal solutions, sous vide products, and freeze-dried and dehydrated meals.</td>
<td>High risk product and process knowledge required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Oils, Fats, and the Manufacture of oil or fat-based spreads</td>
<td>EIII: Processing of Perishable Animal and Plant Products</td>
<td>Module 2: System elements Module 11: GMP for processing of food products</td>
<td>Applies to the manufacture of all animal and vegetable oils and fats and to the manufacture of margarine. Includes clarifying and refining processes.</td>
<td>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.</td>
<td>Low risk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>Processing of Cereal Grains and Nuts</td>
<td>EII: Processing or Perishable Plant Products</td>
<td>Module 2: System elements Module 11: GMP for processing of food products</td>
<td>Applies to the processing of cereals and nuts of all varieties, including sorting, grading, picking, handling of bulk grains, milling, and extruding and the roasting, drying, cutting, and grinding processing of nuts.</td>
<td>Includes wheat, maize, rice, barley, oats, millet, nut butters/pastes, pasta, breakfast cereals, and sliced, chopped, and ground nuts.</td>
<td>Some high risk process knowledge required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>Food Catering and Food Service Operations</td>
<td>G: Catering</td>
<td>Not applicable at this time</td>
<td>Applies to all food preparation and service activities, including transport, storage, and distribution undertaken with of prepared mixed foods that are ready to eat and do not require further treatment or processing by the consumer.</td>
<td>Includes food service caterers, retail delicatessen/self-serve facilities, restaurants, fast food outlets, school cafeterias (canteens), hospital/institution meal services, childcare centers, and mobile and home delivery food services.</td>
<td>High risk product and process knowledge required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>Food Retailing</td>
<td>H: Retail/Wholesale</td>
<td>Not applicable at this time</td>
<td>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.</td>
<td>Includes all foods distributed and sold through retail outlets that are not considered high-risk foods.</td>
<td>Low risk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>Fresh Produce Wholesaling and Distribution</td>
<td>J: Provision of Transport and Storage Services – Perishable Food and Feed</td>
<td>Module 2: System elements Module 12: GDP for transport and distribution of food products</td>
<td>Applies to the receipt, controlled temperature storage, display, consolidation and distribution of all perishable fresh produce at wholesale level.</td>
<td>Includes transportation, storage and delivery of all varieties of fresh unprocessed fruits and vegetables and repacking of protected (i.e. skin-on) product but not repacking of exposed product or any processing operations.</td>
<td>Low risk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>Food Wholesaling and Distribution</td>
<td>JI: Provision of Transport and Storage Services – Ambient Stable Food and Feed</td>
<td>Module 2: System elements Module 12: GDP for transport and distribution of food products</td>
<td>Applies to the receipt, storage, display, consolidation and distribution of 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.</td>
<td>Includes all transportation, storage and delivery of all foods sold through retail and foodservice facilities that are low and high-risk foods and recouping or repacking of outer (secondary) packaging, but not repacking of exposed product or any processing operations.</td>
<td>Low risk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>Manufacture of Food Sector Packaging Materials</td>
<td>M: Production of Food Packaging</td>
<td>Module 2: System elements Module 13: GMP for production of food packaging</td>
<td>Applies to the manufacture, storage and transport of food sector packaging materials.</td>
<td>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,</td>
<td>Low risk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>Provision of Crop Spray Services</td>
<td>I: Provision of Food Safety Services</td>
<td>Not applicable at this time</td>
<td>Applies to the provision of a spray service on field crops.</td>
<td>Includes pesticides and fertilizers administered dry or in aqueous solution.</td>
<td>High risk activity depending on the method and time of application.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>Provision of Field Harvest Services</td>
<td>I: Provision of Food Safety Services</td>
<td>Not applicable at this time</td>
<td>Applies to the provision of manual labor and equipment to provide a field harvesting service.</td>
<td>Includes fresh fruit and vegetable pickers, rice-pickers, and nut pickers.</td>
<td>High risk activity for some crops.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>Provision of Sanitation and Hygiene Services</td>
<td>I: Provision of Food Safety Services</td>
<td>Not applicable at this time</td>
<td>Applies to the provision of sanitation and hygiene facilities and the servicing and maintenance of these facilities on site or in the field.</td>
<td>Includes stationary and portable lavatories, hand-washing stations, and foot baths and contract cleaning services.</td>
<td>Low risk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31</td>
<td>Manufacture of Dietary Supplements</td>
<td>L: Production of Bio-chemicals</td>
<td>Module 2: System elements Module 11: GMP for processing of food products</td>
<td>Applies to the manufacture, blending, transport and storage of dietary supplements.</td>
<td>Includes vitamins, probiotics and label supplements.</td>
<td>High risk product and knowledge required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32</td>
<td>Manufacture of Food Packaging Materials</td>
<td>FII: Production of Food Packaging</td>
<td>Module 2: System elements</td>
<td>Applies to the manufacture, of pet food intended for consumption by domestic</td>
<td>Includes dry and moist pet foods and treats, semi-rum, canned and some high risk process knowledge.</td>
<td>Some high risk process knowledge</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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69
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<td>33</td>
<td>Manufacture of Agricultural Chemicals and Food Processing Aides</td>
<td>L: Production of Bio-chemicals, Module 2: System elements, Module 11: GMP for processing of food products</td>
<td>Pet Food</td>
<td>Module 4: GMP for processing of pet food products</td>
<td>animals and specialty pets.</td>
<td>chilled, or frozen product.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34</td>
<td>Manufacture of Animal Feed</td>
<td>Fl: Production of Single Ingredient Feed, Module 3: GMP for animal feed production</td>
<td></td>
<td>Applies to the manufacture, storage and transport of chemicals and aids used in the agricultural and processing sectors.</td>
<td>Includes food grade lubricants, post-harvest waxes and spray treatments and chemicals for clean-in-place systems.</td>
<td>Low risk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35</td>
<td>Broker or Agent</td>
<td>N: Broker or Agent, Module 14: GMP for brokers or agents</td>
<td></td>
<td>Applies to entities that source all types of food through domestic and import channels; procuring and assembling consignments according to a buyer specification. The broker/agent acts as a link between the producer/manufacturer and the buyer. In some instances a broker/agent may never see or handle the product.</td>
<td>All foods and beverages</td>
<td>Low risk</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix 2: Glossary of Terms

Accreditation
Verification by an accreditation body confirming that the management system of a certification body complies with the ISO/IEC Guide 65: 1996 and the general requirements and that the certification body is suitable to be granted a license to provide the service in the territory and that the certification body is suitable to continue to provide the service.

Airlock
A space which permits the passage of people between one environment and another with two doors in series which do not open simultaneously, thus minimizes the transfer of pests, dust, odors, or air from one area to another.

Approved Supplier(s)
An entity that has implemented a management system, approved by its customer. The management system shall document the controls, verification procedures and product analysis, and include all records necessary to satisfy the customer’s food safety and quality requirements.

Audit
A systematic and independent examination of a supplier’s SQF System by an SQF auditor to determine whether food safety, hygiene and management activities are undertaken in accordance with that system documentation and comply with the requirements of the SQF Code, as appropriate, and to verify whether these arrangements are implemented effectively.

Audit Checklist
The list of audit questions, customized by SQF level and audit scope, downloaded for the SQF auditor to use when conducting an SQF audit.

Auditor
A person registered by the SQFI to audit a supplier’s SQF System. An auditor must work for a licensed certification body. SQF auditor and SQF sub-contract auditor shall have the same meaning.

Broker
Suppliers that source all types of food through domestic and import channels; procuring consignments according to a buyer specification, but do not sight or handle the product. Brokers may also be referred to as “agents.” Brokers/agents do not manufacture, transport, or store products in their own facilities.

Business Crisis
An event (e.g., a flood, a drought, a fire, etc.) that adversely affects the supplier’s ability to provide continuity of supply of safe, quality food, and requires a crisis management (business continuity) plan.

Central Site
An SQF certified supplier at which activities are planned to control and manage a network of sub-site SQF certified supplier within an SQF multi-site program (refer to module 16).

Certificate
A certificate which includes a registration schedule (in a format provided by the SQFI), issued to a supplier by a licensed certification body following the successful completion of a certification audit and/or a re-certification audit.

Certification
Certification by a certification body of a supplier’s SQF System as complying with the SQF Code, as appropriate, following a certification audit or re-certification audit. Certify, certifies and certified shall have a corresponding meaning under the SQF program.

Certification Audit
An audit of a supplier’s whole SQF System, including a desk audit, where the supplier’s SQF System:

a) has not been previously certified; or

b) has been previously certified but requires certification as the earlier certification has been revoked or voluntarily discontinued by the supplier.

Certification Body
An entity which has entered into a license agreement with the FMI SQFI authorizing it to certify its supplier’s SQF System in accordance with the ISO / IEC Guide 65: 1996 and general requirements.

Certification Cycle
The annual period between certification audits.

Certification Number
A unique numerical number provided by the SQFI and included on the certificate and issued to a supplier that has successfully completed a certification audit.

Children
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.”

Codex Alimentarius Commission
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.

Contract
Facilities that are contracted by the SQF certified supplier to produce, process, pack and
**Manufacturer (or co-man, co-manufacturer)** /or store part of or all of one or more products included in the supplier’s SQF scope of certification. In some cases, a product may be manufactured interchangeably at the supplier’s site and by the contract manufacturer. In other cases, a contract manufacturer may only be used intermittently to fulfill or supplement the certified supplier’s production. Contract manufacturers must follow the requirements outlined in the SQF Code.

**Correction** Action to eliminate a detected non-conformity. Shall have the same meaning as “corrected.”

**Corrective Action** Action to eliminate the cause of a detected non-conformity or other undesirable situation. Corrective action shall include:

a) Determine / document any immediate action required / taken
   i. Determine the cause of the problem
   ii. Evaluate action needed on the identified cause
   iii. Determine if the problem exists elsewhere in the system and implement actions needed

b) Document the results of the action taken
   i. Review/verify and document effectiveness of action taken with objective evidence.

**Customer** A buyer or person that purchases goods or services from the certified supplier.

**Desk Audit** A review of the supplier’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 Code, as appropriate.

**Environmental Monitoring Program** A program which includes pathogen swabbing 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.

**Exempt** A term applied to elements of the SQF Code that the supplier 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. Mandatory elements in Module 2 cannot be exempted. The certification body may confirm the reasons for exemption during the facility audit.

The term also applies to products, processes or areas of the facility that the supplier wishes to exclude from the audit. A request must be submitted to the certification body in writing prior to the audit activity, and shall be listed in the facility description in the SQF assessment database.

**Facility Audit** The second part of a certification audit that reviews the supplier’s products and processes on-site to determine the effective implementation of the supplier’s documented SQF System.

**Facility** The supplier’s premises. 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 “site”).

**Feed** Any single or multiple materials, whether processed, semi-processes, or raw, which is intended to be fed directly to food producing animals.

**Feed Safety** The principles and practices applied to feed production and manufacturing to ensure that feed does not cause harm to animals or humans.

**Food** Any substance, usually of animal or plant origin, intentionally consumed by humans, whether processed, partially processed or unprocessed. May include water, alcoholic and non-alcoholic drinks, chewing gum, non-prescription medicines (i.e., over-the-counter drugs), materials included in a processed food product and any other substance identified by regulation (legislation) as a food.

**FMI** 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.

**Food Quality Plan** As described in level 3 of the relevant SQF Code. It shall be based on the 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.

**Food Safety Fundamentals** Good Agricultural or Aquaculture Practices (GAPs), Good Manufacturing Practices (GMPs). Or Good Distribution Practices (GDPs) that define the essential elements that must be
implemented to meet relevant legislative and customer food safety requirements.

Food Safety Plan
A described in the SQF Code. It shall be prepared based on the 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.

Food Sector Category
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 as defined by the SQFI.

General Requirements

Good Agricultural Practices (GAPs)
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.

Good Aquaculture Practices
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.

Good Manufacturing Practices (GMPs)
The combination of management and manufacturing practices designed to ensure food products are consistently produced to meet relevant legislative and customer specifications.

HACCP
The Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point and refers to the following two universally accepted guidelines and definitions contained therein:

a) 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 guidelines developed and managed by the National Advisory Committee on Microbiological Criteria for Foods (NACMCF). Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point Principles and application Guidelines, Adopted August 14, 1997. “A systematic approach to the identification, evaluation, and control of food safety hazards” together referred to as the HACCP Guidelines.

HACCP Method
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, or the current edition of the HACCP guidelines developed and managed by the NACMCF. The SQF Code utilizes the HACCP method to control food safety hazards and other quality threats in the segment of the food chain under consideration.

HACCP Plan
A document prepared in accordance with the HACCP method to ensure control of hazards which are significant for food safety in the segment of the food chain under consideration.

HACCP Training

1. Recognized as a HACCP training course used extensively in a country.
2. Administered and delivered by an institution recognized as a food safety training center of excellence.
3. Shall be a minimum of two days (16 hrs.) in duration, or equivalent.
4. Shall be examinable.

Hazardous Chemicals and Toxic Substances
Solids, liquids or gasses 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.’
### High Risk Area
A segregated room or area where high risk food processes are performed, and which require a higher level of hygienic practice to prevent contamination of high risk food by pathogenic organisms.

### High Risk Food
Food or food product with known attributes for microbiological growth, physical or chemical contamination or a known food allergen, 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.

### High Risk Food Process(es)
A facility or segregated room or area that requires specific controls and/or a higher level of hygienic practice to prevent food contamination.

### Industry Code of Practice
Industry norms, rules or protocols established by industry groups which provide practical, industry specific guidelines on meeting regulations whilst meeting industry needs.

### Legality
Legality refers to national federal, state and local regulations in the country of manufacture and intended markets.

### Licensed Certification Body (LCB)
An entity which has entered into a license agreement with FMI authorizing it to manage the auditing and certification of SQF System.

### Low Risk Food
A food that is not classified as high risk.

### Mandatory Elements
Elements of module 2 that must be applied and audited for a supplier to achieve SQF certification.

### Maximum Residue Limits
Or MRLs, 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.

### Multi-site Program
Multi-site certification involves an entity certified to the SQF Code (i.e. manufacturer, packer, warehouse), or eligible for such certification, that has a network of primary supplier sub-sites that are eligible for certification to the SQF Code and are all involved in the same low risk activity. The central site and all sub-sites are all located in the one country and operate under the same food safety legislation.

### Multi-site Program
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 and quality management systems of a network of sub-sites under a legal or contractual link (refer to module 16).

### NACMCF
The National Advisory Committee on Microbiological Criteria for Foods of the United States of America.

### Non conformity (or Non-conformance)
Refers to the following definitions:

- **Critical non-conformity** includes but is not limited to:
  1. A break-down of control(s) at a critical control point, pre-requisite program or other process step and judged likely to cause a significant public health risk whereby product safety is compromised and judged likely to result in a Class 1 or Class 2 recall and effective corrective action is not taken.
  2. Falsification of records relating to food safety controls and the SQF System.

- **Major non-conformity** means a lack 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.

- **Minor non-conformity** means a lack 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.

### N/A
Stands for 'not applicable' and may be reported during the audit by the auditor when an element does not apply automatically but the facility is still responsible for the element.

N/A may also be reported to avoid double debiting, e.g. 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.”

### Onsite Laboratories
A designated and enclosed area in the facility in which microbiological and other product testing is conducted and if not controlled could lead to contamination and requires the use of good laboratory practices.

### Opportunity for Improvement
An observation made by the auditor during a site audit that identifies an issue that is not a non-conformity but recognizes that the practices conducted by the supplier are not...
industry best practice. It does not require a corrective action response by the supplier, but provides the supplier with an opportunity to improve their SQF System.

**Pet Food**
Any substance intended for consumption by domestic animals and specialty pets. It includes dry and moist pet foods and treats, semi-rain, canned, chilled, or frozen product.

**Pre-requisite Program**
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.

**Primary Producer or Producer**
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.

**Processing**
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.

**Product**
Those products that apply to a specific food sector category as defined by the SQFI.

**Purity**
The absence of contaminants that could cause a food safety hazard.

**Re-certification**
A re-certification by a certification body of a supplier’s SQF System as a result of a re-certification audit, and re-certified shall have a corresponding meaning.

**Recoup**
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.’

**Registration Schedule**
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 supplier.

**Rework**
Food, materials, and ingredients, including work in progress, that is clean, unadulterated and 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.

**Rules**
The rules and procedures contained in this document, and include the schedule and any modification, variation or replacement of this document.

**Rules of Use**
The rules and procedures contained in the Reference Appendix 3: SQF Quality Shield and Logo Rules of Use and includes the Certificate Schedule and any modification, variation or replacement of the SQF Trademark Rules of Use.

**Sampling Program**
A program of site audits defined by the scheme owner, but will be determined by the certification body based upon specified criteria. (from GFSI Guidance Document v 6.3)

**Scope of Certification**
The food sector categories and those products to be covered by the certificate.

**Season or Seasonal**
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.

**Site**
The actual street address of the supplier’s premises.

**SQF Auditor**
The same meaning as auditor.

**SQF Logo**
Means the SQF Code and the logo depicted in Schedule 2 in the Reference Appendix 3: SQF Quality Shield and Logo Rules of Use.

**SQF Quality Shield**
Means the SQF Code and the shield depicted in Schedule 1 in the Reference Appendix 3: SQF Quality Shield and Logo Rules of Use.

**SQF System**
A risk management and preventive system that includes a food safety plan and food quality plan at level 3 implemented and operated by a supplier to assure food safety and quality (level 3). It is developed by an SQF practitioner with the assistance of an SQF consultant if so desired, audited by an SQF auditor and certified by a licensed certification body as meeting the requirements relevant to the SQF Code.

**SQF Consultant**
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 supplier and in the food industry categories appropriate to their scope of registration.

**SQF Practitioner**
An individual, designated by a producer/supplier to develop, validate, verify, implement and maintain that producer’s/supplier’s own SQF System. The SQF practitioner shall be verified by the SQF auditor as meeting the following requirements:

i. Be employed by the company as a permanent full time employee and hold a...
position of responsibility in regard to the management of the company’s SQF System;
ii. Have completed a HACCP training course and be experienced and competent to implement and maintain HACCP-based food safety plans;
iii. Have an understanding of the SQF Code and the requirements to implement and maintain SQF System relevant to the company’s scope of certification. Successful completion of the “Implementing SQF System Training Course Exam” would meet this requirement.

**SQF Program**
The SQF Code and all associated System, rules, quality shield, intellectual property and documents.

**SQFI**
The SQF Institute, a division of the Food Marketing Institute (FMI).

**SQF Trainer**
An individual contracted to an SQF licensed training center that has applied and met the requirements listed in the “Application for SQF Trainers” published by FMI SQFI and upon approval is registered under the SQFI to provide a consistent available source of training on the SQF program.

**Sub-site**
An SQF certified supplier which operates under a contractual link to an SQF certified central site within an SQF multi-site program (refer to module 16).

**Supplier**
Any food business involved in the production, manufacture, processing, transport, storage, distribution or sale of food, beverages, packaging or fiber, 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 certification body carry out audits and certification of its SQF System.

**Supplier Assessment Database**
The online databases, accessed via the SQF website, which is used to manage supplier registrations, supplier audits, close out of corrective actions, and supplier certification.

**Surveillance Audit**
A six monthly audit (or more frequently as determined by the certification body) of part of a supplier’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 months at a minimum.

**Technical Expert**
An individual engaged by a certification body to provide a high level of technical support to the audit team. The technical expert shall 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.

**Trademarks**
All certification and service marks filed or registered in the name of FMI and the licensor in relation to the SQF program.

**Training Center**
An entity which has entered into a license agreement with the SQFI to deliver the Implementing SQF System training course.

**Unannounced Audit**
A re-certification audit that is conducted once within every three (3) certification cycles and thirty (30) days on either side the recertification audit date without prior notice to the SQF certified facility.

**Validation**
As defined in the NACMCF Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point Principles and Application Guidelines, Adopted August 14, 1997 as amended from time to time and the Food and Agriculture CODEX Alimentarius Commission Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) – Guidelines for Implementation and Use, ALINORM 97/13A as amended from time to time. Essentially validation as applied to control limits seeks to prove that the intended result was achieved and that it actually worked.

**Verification**
As defined in the NACMCF Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point Principles and Application Guidelines, Adopted August 14, 1997 as amended from time to time and the Food and Agriculture CODEX Alimentarius Commission Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) – Guidelines for Implementation and Use, ALINORM 97/13A as amended from time to time. Essentially verification as applied to control measures seeks to prove that the control measure was done according to its design.

**Verification Schedule**
A schedule outlining the frequency and responsibility for carrying out the methods, 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 food quality plan and that it continues to be effective.

**Water Treatment**
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 Quality Shield and Logo Rules of Use

SQF Quality Shield

1 Introduction
1.1 The SQF quality shield is owned by SQFI.

1.2 Suppliers will have the right to use the SQF quality shield upon and for the duration of certification. There will be no fee payable by Suppliers for the right to use the SQF quality shield, other than fees payable to obtain and maintain certification.

1.3 Suppliers obtain no property rights in the SQF quality shield.

1.4 Suppliers may only use the SQF quality shield in accordance with these rules of use, which are designed to protect the integrity and enhance the value of the SQF quality shield.

1.5 SQFI delegates any or all of its functions described herein to a licensed Certification Body (CB) as stipulated in the "SAFE QUALITY FOOD INSTITUTE CERTIFICATION BODY LICENSE AGREEMENT, 2012-2014 Term, Section 4, Subsection 4.1 clause (s)."

1.6 These rules of use regulate the use of the SQF quality shield by suppliers only. These rules of use do not regulate the use of the SQF quality shield 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 supplier shall, for the duration of its certification, prove to the satisfaction of SQFI and the CB that its quality system satisfies the requirements set forth in the current edition of the SQF Code, at level 3; and

2.2 A supplier must only use the SQF quality shield in accordance with its certificate and these rules of use.

3 Reproduction

3.1 If a supplier wishes to reproduce the SQF quality shield, it must do so strictly in accordance with the requirements and specifications set out in Schedule 1.

4 Obligations of a Supplier for Use

4.1 A supplier must:

   a) comply fully with these rules of use;

   b) where it deals with both certified and uncertified goods, must ensure that the SQF quality shield is only used in respect to certified goods and that certified goods are clearly distinguished from uncertified goods. For example, if a certified market agent or retailer receives uncertified packaged apples from supplier A and certified packaged apples from supplier B, these must be clearly distinguished at the point of sale;

   c) direct any queries regarding their intended use of the SQF quality shield to the CB who issued the certificate;

   d) discontinue any use of the SQF quality shield to which SQFI or certifying CB who issued the certificate reasonably objects;
e) operate entirely within the scope of its certificate, including the certification schedule. Subsidiary companies and site addresses not included on the certificate are not certified to use the SQF quality shield;

f) give SQFI, a CB and/or their agents access to examine the goods, products, wraps, packaging, containers, stationery, publicity material and all other such items bearing or indicating the SQF quality shield for the purpose of confirming compliance with these rules of use and the certificate; and

g) pay within the specified time any fees set by SQFI.

5 Suspension or Withdrawal of Approval to Use the SQF Quality Shield

5.1 The permission for a supplier to use the SQF quality shield shall be:

a) suspended if the supplier’s certification is suspended; all use of the SQF quality shield in the manufacturing process must cease upon certificate suspension.

b) withdrawn if the supplier’s certification is withdrawn, relinquished or not renewed.

5.2 A supplier’s permission to use the SQF quality shield may be withdrawn or suspended at SQFI’s sole discretion for the following reasons:

a) if the Supplier fails to comply with these rules of use;

b) if the supplier fails to use the SQF quality shield in accordance with its certificate, including the certification schedule;

c) if the supplier uses the SQF quality shield in a way that, in the opinion of SQFI or the certification body, is detrimental to the SQF quality shield or the SQF program as a whole, is misleading to the public or contrary to law; or

d) if the supplier ceases to carry on business or has an administrator, receiver, receiver manager or liquidator appointed over its assets for the purpose of the winding up of the Supplier’s assets.

6 Withdrawn Certification

6.1 A supplier whose certificate has been withdrawn must:

a. submit and receive permission from SQFI to use up product in commerce that has the SQF quality shield; and

b. conceal the SQF quality shield logo on remaining SQF quality shield packaging supplies, products and all other printed materials. In lieu of concealing the SQF quality shield, a withdrawn supplier may destroy all remaining SQF quality shield supplies.

7 Corporate Quality Shield

7.1 Large corporations with multiple individually SQF certified facilities may opt to use a single corporate Quality Shield instead of individual site shields. A corporate quality shield may be issued as long as the following protocols are in place to ensure that the integrity of the shield and the SQFI brand is not diminished in any way.

7.2 All facilities within the corporation that are eligible for SQF certification must be certified to level 3, and maintain that certification.

7.3 All SQF certified facilities within the corporation must be certified by the same certification body.

7.4 The corporate shield shall contain the name of the certification body, and a unique identifier comprising a three letter corporate identity issued by SQFI (e.g. “FMI”
indicating the corporate name, "Food Marketing Institute"), and the year of issue of the corporate shield (e.g. "2014").

7.5 Each facility must maintain its level 3 status at all times in order to use the corporate Quality Shield.

7.6 Where the corporation wishes to print the corporate shield on product packaging, each facility must maintain a supply of packaging that does not include the printed shield, to be placed immediately into production in the event the facility, or any of the facilities, is placed under suspension. The plain packaging must remain in use until the certification body lifts the suspension and level 3 certification is reinstated.

7.7 A letter from the President or senior representative of the company must be sent to all facility management teams outlining these procedures and a management system must be in place prior to the use of any packaging displaying the shield at each facility. This system shall be reviewable by the auditor during the annual recertification audit at each facility.

7.8 If any site within the corporation has their certificate suspended or withdrawn, all certified sites within the corporation must comply with clause 5 and 6 of this quality shield appendix.

8. Quality Shield Issued for a Multi-site Organization

8.1 The SQF quality shield is issued by the certification body to level 3 certified multi-sites. The central site and all sub-sites will be issued with a quality shield referencing the central site’s certification number.

8.2 If any site within the multi-site has their certificate suspended or withdrawn, all sites within the multi-site must comply with clause 5 and 6 of these SQF Quality Shield and Logo Rules of Use.

9 Disclaimer

9.1 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 quality shield by a supplier until twelve (12) months have expired from the date the alteration or new rules of use are first published by SQFI website sqfi.com unless specified by SQFI.
SCHEDULE 1: REPRODUCTION REQUIREMENTS FOR THE SQF QUALITY SHIELD

Introduction

Suppliers who achieve and maintain level 3 certification are granted permission by their certifying certification body to use the SQF quality shield, subject to the rules of use and the conditions set out hereunder per level 3 certified site.

The certification body name and certificate number must be identified in conjunction with the logo in the following form. The certification body name or certificate number does not need to be included on the shield when on the SQF certificate.

Electronic SQF quality shield logo files are to be obtained from the supplier’s certifying certification body.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Color Format</th>
<th>For Use On</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Full Color Reproduction: see PMS color format set out at Schedule 1 Clause 2.</td>
<td>• brochures, advertisements, press releases, company website and/or</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• stationery including business cards and letterheads, signage, flags and vehicles associated with SQF certified services such as transport and delivery.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• goods or products for public display, (when product is presented for promotional or retail purposes) e.g.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>i.) as a sticker or other label affixed to the goods or product; or</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>ii.) a product wrap.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• non-recyclable packaging or containers for goods or products intended for retail display e.g. boxes, crates or the like.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single Color Reproduction: black and white.</td>
<td>• goods or products for public display, (when product is presented for promotional or retail purposes)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>i. as a sticker or other label affixed to the goods or product; or</td>
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<td>ii. a product wrap.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• non-recyclable packaging or containers for goods or products intended for retail display e.g. boxes, crates or the like</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Color Reproduction of the SQF Quality Shield

Reproduction of the SQF quality shield is to be clear, precise and of the highest standard. The following guidelines govern full color reproduction.

PMS 7463 C
CMYK: C=40 M=13.6 Y=0 K=0.8

40% Tint of PMS 3005C
CMYK: C=100 M=43 Y=0 K=65

Font type of the SQF Quality Shield must be Chaparral Pro Semibold.

Wording In Lieu of the SQF Quality Shield

A supplier may use the following wording in lieu of the SQF quality shield: “(Insert Supplier name from Certificate)” – an SQF Level 3 Quality Certified Supplier No. (Insert number issued by the CB) and Certified by (Insert name of Certification Body).”

The words must appear in the dominant font color of the packaging.

Dimensions

The dimensions of the SQF quality shield are 47mm high by 35mm wide, as shown.

Variation to these dimensions is permitted provided that any such variation is proportional to the above dimensions and the letters and numerals on the logo remain clear and legible.
Certification Numbers

The individual Certification Number issued to suppliers must always be included as part of the SQF quality shield as follows:

Special Cases

Where it is demonstrated that alternative reproduction of the SQF quality shield or wording in lieu of the SQF quality shield enhances the status of the SQF quality shield and/or SQFI, then the alternative is permitted provided it is approved by the certifying certification body. All requests must be provided in writing per certified site to the certifying certification body and SQFI.
Introduction

1.1 The SQF logo is owned by SQFI.

1.2 Suppliers 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 suppliers for the right to use the SQF logo, other than fees payable to obtain and maintain certification.

1.3 Suppliers obtain no property in the SQF logo.

1.4 Suppliers 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 licensed Certification Body (CB).

1.6 These rules of use regulate the use of the SQF logo by suppliers 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.

Conditions for Use

2.1 A supplier shall, for the duration of its certification, prove to the satisfaction of SQFI and the CB that its quality system satisfies the requirements set forth in the current edition of the SQF Code, at level 2 or level 3; and

2.2 A supplier must only use the SQF logo in accordance with its certificate and these rules of use.

Reproduction

3.1 If a supplier wishes to reproduce the SQF logo it must do so strictly in accordance with the requirements and specifications set out in Schedule 2.

Obligations of a Supplier

4.1 A supplier 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 supplier to use the SQF logo will:

a) be suspended if the supplier’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 supplier’s certification is withdrawn, relinquished or not renewed.

5.3 Conditions for suspending or ceasing a supplier’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 supplier breaches or fails to comply with these rules of use;

b) suspended if the supplier fails to use the SQF logo in accordance with its certificate, including the certification schedule;

c) ceased if the supplier 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 supplier 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 supplier (except for the purpose of amalgamation or reconstruction) or the supplier 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 supplier 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 2: REPRODUCTION REQUIREMENTS FOR THE SQF LOGO

Introduction

Suppliers who achieve and maintain level 2 or 3 certification 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 level 2 or level 3 certified site.

Electronic SQF logo files are to be obtained from the certifying CB.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Color Format</th>
<th>For Use On</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Full Color Reproduction: see PMS color format set out at Schedule 2 Clause 2.</td>
<td>• brochures, flyers, advertisements, press releases, company website</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• internal documents and training materials</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single Color Reproduction: black and white.</td>
<td>• brochures, flyers, advertisements, press releases, company website</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• internal documents and training materials</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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.

Color: 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.