



TIP SHEET 4

MANAGEMENT COMMITMENT

Management commitment is when all employees are unified in their way of thinking about food safety. Simply meeting the Code requirements is not a commitment to food safety; because food safety is never truly implemented if there is no commitment. Senior site management supports the food safety system by their direct participation, actions, support and belief in food safety, incorporating this mindset in daily decisions.

Management commitment and food safety culture is a shared belief - with the key word being “shared.” Values don’t just live in the individual, but rather in groups and the organization. There is no one-size-fits-all solution; however, if management commitment to food safety is present, this shared belief will resonate throughout the organization.

This tip sheet will provide useful tips to drive management commitment while building the food safety culture at your site.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES	APPLICABLE CODE ELEMENT
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ DEFINE MANAGEMENT COMMITMENT○ EXPLAIN WHY MANAGEMENT COMMITMENT IS IMPORTANT TO YOUR SITE○ DESCRIBE HOW TO GET MANAGEMENT INVOLVED AND COMMITTED○ SUMMARIZE HOW TO CREATE A STRONG FOOD SAFETY CULTURE | <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ SYSTEM ELEMENTS SECTION 2.1 |
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KEY TERMS

- FOOD SAFETY CULTURE
- Shared values, beliefs and norms that affect mind-set and behavior toward food safety in, across and throughout an organization (as defined by GFSI and other published documents).



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○ MANAGEMENT COMMITMENT

A uniform way of thinking about food safety that is driven by the senior site management to all levels within the site. This way of thinking is incorporated into the decisions that are made on a daily basis.

○ SENIOR SITE MANAGER

“Senior” means the person who has operational control within the site. It is considered to be the senior person on site.

PROCESS STEPS

1. Develop a food safety policy statement
 - a. Set the direction of your organization through your mission, vision and food safety policy. Commitment to a policy by senior management is a visible sign of leadership – the creation of a “culture of food safety” within the site. The policy statement provides a focus on what the site aspires to and is working to achieve in terms of food safety.
 - b. A policy statement is a simple statement that sets out the objectives of the site’s SQF System, and how they will be achieved. The policy statement should be written in a way that every employee at the site can contribute toward achieving them.
 - c. Commitment to regulatory and customer requirements underpins the site’s SQF System and must be included in the policy statement.
 - d. The policy statement is to be signed by the senior site manager

The next page shows an example of a policy statement



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Example of a Policy Statement:

Quality is the cornerstone of ABC Company's business principles. These principles guide our actions to meet or exceed our customer and regulatory obligations to deliver product that is safe, consistent and preferred.

As the supplier of the world's finest ice cream, ABC Company consistently manufactures products that are safe under the FDA regulations and a HACCP-based food safety and quality system program that is independently audited by third party institutions following Global Food Safety Initiative (GFSI) – Safe Quality Food Institute (SQFI) standards.

We strive to continuously provide our employees with the resources, including information and training, which they require to understand and be competent in applying these practices. We will continuously review these practices to identify gaps and communicate to our employees any opportunity to improve our performance to ever higher levels of product safety and quality.

At ABC Company, our commitment is to never compromise on the safety, compliance and quality of our products and services. This requires everybody to be engaged, to understand their responsibility and to be empowered to take action in order to protect our customers and our brands. We believe that our success will be achieved by:

- Site managers leading by example
- Following our documented procedures
- The ongoing review and continuous improvement of our food safety plan
- Providing initial and refresher training and education to our staff, visitors and community
- Requiring all staff members to play own their part in achieving high standards of food safety

We are fully committed to building a strong food safety culture backed by the commitment from all levels of the organization. This policy and food safety objectives will be reviewed to ensure it continuously meets the goals and objectives of this organization.

Signed,

Senior Site Management



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2. Establish Goals and Measurements

- a. Food safety objectives are a specific statement of a desired short-term condition or achievement; includes measurable end results to be accomplished by specific teams or individuals within time limits (from *American Society for Quality*).
 - Objectives establish what we want to achieve
 - Defined
 - Measureable
 - Communicated
 - Understood
 - Supported (resources and management commitment)
- b. Use the SMART principle below to establish the goals for the organization.
- c. Don't forget to measure the goals and objectives. The data you capture can be very valuable in determining the effectiveness of controls.

S	• Specific Is the goal specific; is there one item you are focusing on?
M	• Measurable Is the goal measurable; is there a number or percentage that you must meet to complete the goal?
A	• Attainable Is the goal attainable; can you actually accomplish the goal?
R	• Realistic Is the goal realistic; Can it be achieved using the resources on hand?
T	• Time-bound Is the goal time-bound; is there a date by which the goal must be completed?



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3. Support the food safety initiatives and participate
 - a. Tangible actions must follow commitment. Management must ensure that there are enough available resources to implement the policy and food safety objectives. Resources are often scarce in many organizations. Regardless, management must demonstrate that employees understand their responsibility for food safety and be allowed the time, tools and authority to carry out these responsibilities.
 - b. Hiring competent employee's means having a person with the knowledge, skills and ability to do their job. This is especially important when it comes to food safety. A competent food safety professional will have knowledge of HACCP, the food safety risks applied to your products and process, and the ability to gain new insight or knowledge to existing and potential food safety risks. You may seek the engagement of a consultant or expertise outside your internal staff but having the right person on the job will assist you in making key food safety decisions.
 - c. Senior site management should establish an organizational chart and/or reporting structure that identifies each employee's role in food safety. The organizational structure provides a snapshot of how these positions interact and share that responsibility.
 - d. Providing position descriptions for each role will clarify everyone's function and how it relates to food safety. Position descriptions should include the required competencies to carry out the defined responsibility as it relates to food safety along with the required training. Position descriptions also aid in training new hires, temporary help and refresher training.
 - e. Particularly important is having a dedicated person responsible for food safety to oversee the implementation and maintenance of the SQF system. This person is should have a defined position description, be designated on the organizational chart and recognized by all staff as the decision maker for food safety.
 - f. Senior site management should be a part of the ongoing discussion on food safety and support the continuous education of the food safety staff and the mission of the organization. This means reading articles, participating in conferences and webinars, and having discussions with other relevant industry stakeholders regarding the existing and potential food safety risks. Additionally, the person in charge of food safety should update the senior site manager about the challenges, victories or obstacles about site's food safety system.
4. Lead by Example
 - a. Employees watch every move their leader makes because they want to know if what you say is what you do. Leading by example is quite easy. If your team can count on you to do whatever you expect from them, they'll work hard to achieve your goals and the goals of the site. To get the trust and confidence of your team, you must set an example by your actions.



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A few ways to demonstrate your leadership by example include

- Be truthful. Honesty IS the best policy.
- Listen. Just don't hear what your employees are saying but seek to understand. Ask questions and be engaged.
- Walk the walk. If the site's policy is to wash your hands each time you enter production, then wash your hands each time you enter production.
- Don't provide excuses. If something didn't go as planned, acknowledge the error and find the solution.
- Roll up your sleeves. Be willing to do the task you assign to your team.

5. Reward and Recognize

- b. *The consequence of an act affects the probability of it occurring again.*
- B.F. Skinner
- c. Consequence does not have to be negative. It has been found that positive reinforcement leads to a bigger change in behavior than negative reinforcement. Implement a positive reward system that includes:
 - i. Immediate recognition when an employee meets expectations.
 - ii. Small tokens of appreciation, such as a pin or cap.

RELEVANT RESOURCES

- Global Food Safety Initiative
Food Safety Culture Technical Working Group position paper
www.mygfsi.com
- Yiannas, Frank *Food Safety Culture: Creating a Behavior-Based Food Safety Management System* Springer, 2008.
Yiannas, Frank *Food Safety = Behavior: 30 Proven Techniques to Enhance Employee Compliance* Springer, 2016