

Approved Supplier Program

Definition

Approved supplier is a supplier that has been assessed and approved by a site based on risk assessment as capable of meeting the sites food safety and quality requirements for goods and services supplied.

Applicable Code Requirements

1. **2.3.4.1 – 2.3.4.6** (Codes: Food, Pet Food, Animal Feed, and Dietary Supplements Manufacturing; Food Packaging)
2. **2.3.3.1 – 2.3.3.3** (Codes: Primary Plant, and Primary Animal Production)
3. **2.3.2.1 – 2.3.2.7** (Code: Storage & Distribution)

Review Glossary Terms

1. Audit Checklist
2. GFSI
3. Supplier

Implementation & Audit Guidance

What does it mean?

The objective of this element is to ensure that all incoming materials, inputs, goods, products for re-sale and services meet specifications and are safe. This element links to the applicable code requirements that describe specifications for an incoming item and any possible testing or evaluation programs. An approved supplier/input program is a set of procedures and controls implemented by the sites to assure the safety of incoming goods and services. It may be based on the risks presented by the material/input or based on historical performance or prior history of the supplier to the site.

Why is it in the Code & why is it important?

This is a mandatory clause.

Suppliers of materials, inputs and services to sites are integral partners in the sites ability to consistently produce products that meet food safety expectations in the marketplace. These expectations come from regulators, customers and finally consumers. As per the sites food safety plan these materials, inputs and services are assessed for food safety hazards that may be inherent in them or have a reasonable likelihood of occurring prior to receipt and use at the site in the formation of products being sold. Regardless of where the site is situated in the food supply chain, these suppliers need to be managed.

Management of suppliers will reduce the potential for a food safety contamination or incorrect labeling from occurring at the site. Food safety recalls due to supplier issues are an on-going concern for the food supply chain. The methods for selecting, evaluating, approving and monitoring an approved supplier must be documented and form the basis of solid site managed program. The site defines how this program will be managed for each supplier, group of suppliers or other means of categorization. Supplier assessment should be risk-based and may be as simple as a good supply history, sourcing from certified suppliers (e.g., SQF certified suppliers) or personally auditing/inspecting the material supplier's operations, depending on risk, supplier

knowledge and past history. The program for monitoring performance will likely be linked to the specifications that the supplier is contracted to deliver as well as any testing required by the supplier or the site to illustrate conformance to specifications. The specification management and testing protocol are defined in the code in more detail in the respective code requirements. Those code references vary depending on the code being applied but will be in either section 2.3 or 2.4 of any of the codes. Where incoming materials or products and their selection or ownership is controlled by another entity other than the site (e.g., corporate or customer) the site must still be able to show how they ensure those products are still safe to be received, stored, and handled.

See RIO Chart on following page.

RIO Road to Audits (Records, Interviews, and Observations)

Records	Interviews	Observations
<p>The following are examples of records and/or documents to assist in the implementation and review of this topic:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Approved supplier program ▪ Approved Supplier List ▪ Testing records ▪ Monitoring Records: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ C of A's ▪ Audit reports ▪ Audit certificates ▪ Complaints ▪ Purchase Records ▪ Procedures ▪ Risk assessment Process 	<p>The following are examples of people to interview to assist in the implementation and review of this topic:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Purchasing Manager ▪ SQF Practitioner ▪ Receiving Personnel ▪ Testing Personnel <p>The following are examples of questions to ask to assist in the implementation and review of this topic:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Describe the role and responsibility of the person(s) in the supplier approval process. ▪ How are supplier materials confirmed and approved for receipt? ▪ How are the results for approvals or verification? ▪ Explain the process when materials do not meet specification? ▪ What is the process for sourcing from non-approved suppliers in an emergency situation? 	<p>The following are examples of observations to assist in the implementation and review of this topic:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Inputs in stock and in use ▪ Inputs on hold ▪ Receiving activities ▪ Testing activities

Additional References

- SQFI October 2017 Learning Lunch: Revisiting Approved Supplier Program
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mwxYFXxHew0&list=PLUUh0zb5v1fT445EnBiEKKzLqKg37rAA7&index=11>
- SQFI Checklist (Excel)
<https://www.sqfi.com/resource-center/sqf-guidance-tip-sheets-and-checklists/>