

SQF Fundamentals Global Markets Program Features

Retailer implementing a risk ranking management system for supplier food safety determine the appropriate oversight activities to mitigate food hazard risks.

SQF Fundamentals, an enhanced program built upon the GFSI Global Markets toolkit, is a robust yet flexible option for managing lower risk suppliers and food products.

- BASIC (GMP and Preventive Controls focus) and INTERMEDIATE (HACCP Based Food Safety System) levels – both options require the ability to identify and mitigate food safety risk appropriate to the food sector. INTERMEDIATE LEVEL challenges the site to establish a food safety management system.
- Onsite audit for full visibility into conditions at the site and engagement with plant personnel
- Lower cost option with one-day audit duration
- Licensed and qualified SQF certification bodies and auditors
- Flexible auditor requirements provide opportunities for auditor growth
- Multi-site option available for primary producers and storage and distribution reduces total audit burden for small suppliers in a purchasing network

Supplier Support Tools and Training

- SQF experienced consultants and trainers are a click away on the SQF website
- Self-paced training provides affordable and efficient learning to expose small suppliers to critical concepts
- Consistency in support from accredited Certification Bodies and the SQF community accelerates capability toward eventual GFSI benchmarked certification with SQF.

Benefits to Grocery and Foodservice Retail Buyers

- Due diligence and risk management – protect your brand with a world class partner in SQF
- SQF assessment database and partner software solutions make data accessible to retail partner food safety teams
- Consistency in application of SQF code from low to high-risk suppliers
- Participation in food safety capacity building is a key component of the UN SDGs

SQF Fundamentals Global Markets Program FAQs for Suppliers

The SQF Fundamentals Global Markets program for food safety assurance helps your burgeoning small business meet retailer's expectations for food safety practices verified by a third-party audit. This program is built to provide guidance for smaller but growing food businesses to meet regulatory and industry standards and prepare your operation to consistently manage complexity as the operations grow.

SQFI provides answers to common questions about the SQF Fundamentals Global Markets program to help you determine if the program is right for you. SQFI has a solution to fit your needs, contact us today!

- 1) How long is the audit, and do I have to do it every year?
The audit is typically one day only and is conducted annually.
- 2) What is the cost for SQF Fundamentals certification?
After initial registration fee of \$200 the auditing company you choose to work with determines the SQF Fundamentals certification costs, but typically costs about \$2,500.
- 3) Will the auditor be able to help me during the process?
You can trust the SQF licensed Certification Bodies authorized to conduct SQF Fundamentals are using auditor qualified in the program with food safety expertise for your sector. They can provide information on industry best practice for food safety management but will never demand that you fix something a certain way or tell you how to write a procedure to be in compliance. They will keep you informed of any issues that are noted during the audit and why there are non-conformities.
- 4) Will I get a certificate?
Yes. Sites that close out all their non-conformities within thirty (30) days are deemed to have successfully implemented the SQF Fundamentals program. A certification decision will be made within forty-five (45) calendar days of the last day of the SQF Code audit and within ten (10) days from that you will receive a certificate which includes the following information:
 - i. The name, address, and logo of the certification body.
 - ii. The heading "certificate of completion;"

- iii. The phrase “(site name) is registered as meeting the requirements of the SQF Fundamentals for Manufacturing, Basic or Intermediate, edition 1;”
- iv. The food sector categories and products included in the scope of registration.
- v. Dates of audit (last day), date of next re-certification audit, date of certification decision, and date of certificate expiry.
- vi. The SQF logo; and
- vii. Signatures of the authorized officer and issuing officer.

All certificates are valid for seventy-five (75) days beyond the anniversary of the initial certification audit date.

- 5) Does the new SQF Fundamentals program require an unannounced audit?
No. The SQF Fundamentals program does not require an unannounced audit.
- 6) Does this replace the need to get certified to the GFSI recognized SQF Food Safety and Quality Codes?

It depends on your customers' requirements. Some retailers will accept SQF Fundamentals in lieu of a GFSI recognized SQF Food Safety certification for small and medium size suppliers. Best practice for a site that has implemented SQF Fundamentals at either basic or intermediate level is to advance to the appropriate Food Safety Code within a year or two once Fundamentals requirements are established in the operation. Advancing to GFSI recognized SQF certification provides greater market access and opportunity to grow your business, develop your employees, and improve internal management practices and operational capabilities.

- 7) What type of training is available for the Fundamentals Code?

SQFI uses a three-pronged approach to address the learning and access needs for the Fundamentals audience:

- Online course (focus is on the SQF Fundamentals Intermediate level)
- Self-directed learning tools (SQF Tip Sheets)
- Instructor-led training by a licensed SQF training center (virtual or onsite)

The online self-paced course is an easy access course via a computer or laptop. The advantage of the online course is that there is no need for travel, it is self-paced with the ability to repeat lessons and it includes knowledge checks for

understanding. You can find these resources and training options via our website: <https://www.sqfi.com/online-training>.

- 8) What do I implement if my site is covered under the storage and distribution or food packaging SQF Food Safety Codes?

If your site does not fit under one of the SQF Fundamentals Codes (manufacturing or primary production), you can still use the SQF Fundamentals program. Your Certification Body can assess your site against the system elements (module 2) from the SQF Fundamentals Code and the GMP module from the relevant SQF Food Safety Code. For example, if you are a packaging manufacturer who wants to start off in the Basic SQF Fundamentals Program. You will use the system elements from the SQF Fundamentals for Manufacturing, Basic code combined with the GMP module 13 from the SQF Food Safety Code for Manufacture of Food Packaging.

- 8) Can the Quality Code be used with the SQF Fundamentals Code?

No, a site can only be certified against the SQF Quality Code if it has attained certification to SQF Food Safety Code, another GFSI benchmarked or technically equivalent standard, HACCP Certification, or ISO 22000 program.

- 9) How do I get started?

Register your site today in the [SQF Assessment Database](#) and download the SQF Fundamentals code to prepare for your audit.

Search for a SQF Certification Body on our site; "How to Get Certified" tab, [SQF Certification Bodies](#).

For more information to get started with SQFI, please contact us directly:

Jonathan Lackie
SQF North America Business Development Manager
jlackie@sqfi.com

SQFI Customer Service
Info@sqfi.com
202-220-0635