

FOOD SAFETY CERTIFICATION – THE ESSENTIAL RULE FOR SAFE FOODSTUFFS

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Abstract: In order for the marketed foodstuffs to be safe for consumption, it is necessary for a food safety standard to be implemented throughout the entire food chain, thus contributing to avoiding or reducing a high number of food safety related risks. Food safety management systems play an essential role in guaranteeing safety “from farm to consumer”.

Keywords: food safety, safety product, improvement

Food producers shall be obliged to distribute on the market only safe products which do not affect the consumers’ health in any way.

However, food products may affect consumers’ health and even their life if produced under inappropriate health and safety conditions.

In order for the marketed foodstuffs to be safe for consumption, it is necessary for a food safety standard to be implemented throughout the entire food chain, thus contributing to avoiding or reducing a high number of food safety related risks.

Food safety management systems play an essential role in guaranteeing safety “from farm to consumer”. By implementing such systems, an organisation is guided and controlled at the level of food safety; the systems established as part of an organisation’s management are based on principles and meet certain standardised requirements unanimously recognized within EU and at international level.

The food safety management systems for which RINA SIMTEX-OC provides certification are in compliance with the following reference standards:

- SR EN ISO 22000: 2005 (Requirements for any organisation in the food chain)
- IFS (International Food Standard)
- BRC (British Retail Consortium)
- FSSC- Global standard for food safety (based on ISO 22000 and ISO/TS 22002-1)
- GLOBAL GAP - key reference on Good Agricultural Practices (Good Agricultural Practices - GAP) on the world market.

The advantages of the certification of food safety management systems are mainly the following:

- Conquest of new commodity markets;
- Prevention of potential disease transmission from animal to human;
- Identification and control of associated food safety risks;
- Compliance with potential bidding criteria;
- The guarantee offered to the clients that the products are manufactured within a system which does not jeopardise their life or health;
- Mitigation of incidents involving legal liability of the organisation;
- Proof of an organisation capability to consistently provide products that comply with client and legal requirements;

- Awareness promotion on food safety among suppliers and all individuals working for or on behalf of the organisation;
- Increase of presence on the market particularly on the international market;
- Improvement of labour conditions of employees;
- Continuous improvement of good practices on food safety;
- Compliance with legal requirements (European regulations in force);
- Increase of partners, clients and consumers trust in products quality/safety;
- Increase of control authorities trust in the company's capacity to provide good quality/safe products;
- Loss reduction (waste);
- A safer introduction of changes for quality improvement purposes;
- Reduces internal and external barriers are reduced;
- Provision of safe products complying with clients requirements and at the same time legal requirements and all stakeholders requirements in general, among which, but not the last, the related control authorities requirements.

Food safety implies guaranteeing food safety throughout the entire chain of the production process, from basic material to final consumer; all the parties involved in the food chain shall be responsible of reducing to minimum or eliminating the contamination risk.

Therefore, it is absolutely necessary that product safety (an express and long range requirement) to be obtained and controlled through methods guaranteeing the systematic and preventive handling of potential dangers and approached through a coherent process of anticipation and prevention prior to the consumption of the final product.

The implementation of a food safety management system provides the highest safety level for foodstuffs, which shall lead to the reduction of consumers health related incidents and implicitly to increasing their trust in the products they buy and to improving the corporate image both on domestic and international market.

In order to establish such a system, first the Good Hygiene Practices (GHP) shall be applied throughout the food chain, from basic material purchase to final consumer.

Food safety systems are mainly based on prevention of potential shortcomings which could cause risks for consumers; therefore it is imperative that a certified food safety management system is applied within an organisation.

References:

SR EN ISO 22000:2005 – Food Safety Management System