

BRC

GLOBAL STANDARD

FOR FOOD SAFETY



Issue 5

The Standard consists of the following sections:

- Section I** Provides a background to, and details the format of, the Standard.
- Section II** Details the requirements of the Standard with which a company must comply in order to gain certification.
- Section III** Provides information on the selection of a certification body, and details of the process for gaining a certificate.
- Section IV** Describes the BRC Global Standards Directory, the information contained within it and the parties to whom this is accessible.

1.8 Effective Date of Issue 5

As with all revisions of the Global Standards, there must be recognition that a transition period is in place between publication and full implementation. Therefore, certification against Issue 5 will commence from 1 July 2008. There will be no recognition of certificates that are issued as a result of audits performed against Issue 4 after 30 June 2008. All certificates issued against audits carried out prior to 1 July 2008 will be against Issue 4 and be valid for the period specified on the certificate. In order to ensure that the infrastructure is in place to support successful audits, audits against Issue 5 will not commence until 1 July 2008. Certificates issued before this date against Issue 5 will not be recognised.

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Section I

1 Introduction

1.1 Background

Welcome to the fifth issue of the Global Standard for Food Safety. Originally published by the British Retail Consortium (BRC) in 1998 for food producers supplying Own Brand goods into the UK Retail Market, the Standard has been updated at regular intervals to reflect the latest thinking in food safety, and has now attained usage worldwide as a framework for any business to assist the production of safe food. In response to demand the Global Standard for Food Safety has been translated into many languages to facilitate implementation by food businesses across the world. The fifth issue has been developed with advice and input from international stakeholders.

The Global Standard for Food Safety has been developed to specify the safety, quality and operational criteria required to be in place within a food manufacturing organisation to fulfil obligations with regard to legal compliance and protection of the consumer. The format and content of the Standard is designed to allow an assessment of a company's premises, operational systems and procedures by a competent third party – the certification body – against the requirements of the Standard.

1.2 The Scope of the Global Standard for Food Safety

The Global Standard for Food Safety sets out the requirements for the manufacture of processed foods and the preparation of primary products supplied as retailer branded products, branded food products and food or ingredients for use by food service companies, catering companies and food manufacturers. Certification will apply to products that have been manufactured or prepared at the site where the audit has taken place and will include storage facilities that are under the direct control of the production-site management.

Companies whose primary operation is the processing of product or the preparation of primary products may have **factored goods** (refer to glossary) included in the scope of the certification, where they can demonstrate that appropriate controls are in place and the scope specifically excludes the processing or preparation of these products. Certificates shall clearly identify that these factored goods are included.

The Standard shall not apply to activities relating to wholesale, importation, distribution or storage outside the direct control of the company. The BRC has developed a range of Global Standards which set out the requirements for the wide range of activities undertaken in the production, packaging, storage and distribution of food. Appendix 1 provides further detail of the scopes of, and relationship between, the current Global Standards.

1.3 Food Safety Legislation

Legislation covering food safety differs in detail worldwide, but generally requires food businesses:

- to ensure the presence of a detailed specification which is lawful and consistent with compositional and safety standards and good manufacturing practice
- to ensure they satisfy themselves that their suppliers are competent to produce the specified product, comply with legal requirements and operate appropriate systems of process control
- from time to time to make visits, where practical, to verify the competence of their suppliers or receive the result of any other audit of the supplier's system for that purpose
- to establish and maintain a risk-assessed programme for product examination, testing or analysis

- to monitor and act upon customer complaints.

The Global Standard for Food Safety has been developed to assist businesses to meet these requirements, and therefore assist companies to comply with relevant food safety legislation.

1.4 Benefits of the Global Standard for Food Safety

There are a number of benefits to food businesses arising from the adoption of the Standard. The Standard:

- provides a single standard and protocol that allows an accredited audit by third party certification bodies
- provides a single audit commissioned by the company, in line with an agreed audit frequency, that will allow the company to report upon their status to customers and other organisations as agreed, and can reduce time and costs
- provides a measure by which food manufacturers and suppliers can demonstrate to potential customers a level of competence in food safety and quality systems
- is comprehensive in scope, covering areas of quality, hygiene and product safety
- addresses part of the legislative requirements of the food manufacturer/supplier, packer/filler, retailer and other customers. Companies may also use this Standard to ensure their suppliers are following good food safety management practices
- requires ongoing surveillance and confirmation of the follow up of corrective actions on non-conformity to the Standard thus ensuring that a self-improving quality and product safety system is established.

2 The Food Safety Management System

2.1 Principles of the Global Standard for Food Safety

A food business must have a full understanding of the products produced, manufactured and distributed and have systems in place to identify and control hazards significant to the safety of food. The Global Standard for Food Safety is based on two key components: senior management commitment and HACCP (Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point – a step-by-step approach to managing food safety risks).

2.1.1 Senior Management Commitment

Within a food business, food safety must be seen as a cross-functional responsibility, including activities that draw on many departments using different skills and levels of management expertise in the organisation. Effective food safety management extends beyond technical departments and must involve commitment from production operations, engineering, distribution management, procurement of raw materials, customer feedback and human resource activity such as training.

The starting point for an effective food safety plan is the commitment of senior management to the development of an all-encompassing policy as a means to guide the activities that collectively assure food safety. The Global Standard for Food Safety places a high priority on clear evidence of senior management commitment.

2.1.2 A HACCP-based System

The Global Standard for Food Safety requires the development of a food safety plan based on HACCP. The development of the plan requires the input of all relevant departments and must be supported by senior management.


2.2 The Format of the Global Standard for Food Safety

The Global Standard for Food Safety requires the development of and compliance with:

- Senior Management commitment – the resources required for demonstration of commitment to achieving the requirements of the Standard are detailed in Section II, Part 1
- a HACCP plan – this provides a focus on the significant product and process food safety hazards that require specific control to assure the safety of individual food products or lines as detailed in Section II, Part 2
- a Quality Management System – details of the organisational and management policies and procedures that provide a framework by which the organisation will achieve the requirements in this Standard as given in Section II, Part 3
- Prerequisite Programmes – the basic environmental and operational conditions in a food business that are necessary for the production of safe food. These control generic hazards covering Good Manufacturing and Good Hygienic Practice as detailed in Section II, Parts 4–7.

Each clause of the Global Standard for Food Safety begins with a highlighted paragraph in bold text, the 'statement of intent', that all companies must comply with in order to gain certification.

Below this 'statement of intent' are requirements in a tabular format, which together specify the criteria against which the audit will be carried out.

Product certification depends on continued compliance and within the Standard certain requirements have been designated as 'fundamental' requirements, which are marked with the word **'FUNDAMENTAL'** immediately after the section heading and denoted with the following symbol . These 'fundamental' requirements relate to systems that are crucial to the establishment and operation of an effective food quality and safety operation. The clauses deemed to be 'fundamental' are:

- Senior Management Commitment and Continual Improvement, Clause 1
- The Food Safety Plan – HACCP, Clause 2
- Internal Audits, Clause 3.5
- Corrective and Preventive Action, Clause 3.8
- Traceability, Clause 3.9
- Layout, Product Flow and Segregation, Clause 4.3.1
- Housekeeping and Hygiene, Clause 4.9
- Handling Requirements for Specific Materials – Materials Containing Allergens and Identity Preserved Materials, Clause 5.2
- Control of Operations, Clause 6.1
- Training, Clause 7.1.

Failure to comply with the statement of intent of a 'fundamental' clause leads to non-certification at an initial audit or withdrawal of certification at subsequent audits. This will require a further full audit to establish demonstrable evidence of compliance.

Section II

Requirements

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