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PREMIER

PURCHASING PARTNERS QUALITY STANDARDS

Contracted supplier food quality and safety expectations manual

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Introduction

Thank you for your interest in becoming a supplier with Premier's Foodservice program. We are devoted to clarity in our food safety and quality practices, and have developed this manual to provide our suppliers with requirements and expectations for food quality and safety. It reflects general guidelines for developing or improving the quality systems of companies that provide raw food materials, food ingredients and manufactured products.

Premier, Inc. expects that all suppliers will not only adhere to the policies outlined in this manual, but will also strive to make continuous improvements. Suppliers will be audited by an industry recognized and certified third-party audit firm selected by Purchasing Partners. Premier approved third-party auditing firms. By meeting these expectations, together we will reach our goal of providing safe, high quality products to our customers.

Most of the expectations in this manual are based on regulatory requirements or industry best practices. Premier reserves the right to make modifications at any time. This manual does not supersede a supplier's responsibility to comply with all applicable federal, state and local regulations.

About Premier Inc., 2006 Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award recipient

Serving more than 2,000 U.S. hospitals and 53,000-plus other healthcare sites, the Premier healthcare alliance and its members are transforming healthcare together. Owned by not-for-profit hospitals, Premier operates one of the leading healthcare purchasing networks and the nation's most comprehensive repository of hospital clinical and financial information. A subsidiary operates one of the nation's largest policy-holder owned, hospital professional liability risk-retention groups. A world leader in helping healthcare providers deliver dramatic improvements in care, Premier is working with the United Kingdom's National Health Service North West and the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services to improve hospital performance. Headquartered in San Diego, Premier has offices in Charlotte, N.C., Philadelphia and Washington. For more information, visit www.premierinc.com.



Premier Contracted Supplier Approval Criteria

Expectation:

A contracted supplier must submit and adhere to the descriptions and criteria required for approval for entry into the Premier Purchasing Partners, L.P. foodservice supply chain.

Requirements:

Approval audit – Each prospective supplier must undergo an evaluation as part of Purchasing Partners' bid process. The results of the evaluation will be shared with Purchasing Partners' member committee assigned to the particular product category. The purpose of this evaluation is to assess the prospective supplier's programs and practices against the expectations detailed in this document. The results of the assessment will be reviewed by the member committee as part of the criteria used to evaluate potential contract awards.

Routine audit – Purchasing Partners contracted foodservice suppliers are required on an annual basis to submit a passing audit report to Purchasing Partners for each production facility. Audits must be completed and submitted to Purchasing Partners by suppliers by November 30 of each calendar year.

The audit must be performed by a certified third-party audit firm approved by Purchasing Partners. Passing audits will generally be defined as achieving at least a 90 percent score or equivalent and no critical nonconformance(s). Approved suppliers not achieving a passing audit report must undergo a follow-up audit by the same audit firm within 60 days of the audit date. Suppliers are requested to submit corrective action plans to the Purchasing Partners foodservice contract administrator for all nonconformances found within the audit reports.

A facility failing to submit a passing audit, not submitting corrective actions on a timely basis, or found to be implicated in a food-borne outbreak may, at the discretion of Purchasing Partners, be placed on suspended status (e.g., no product accepted).



Sample requirements:

Approval of samples by Purchasing Partners approved third-party audit firms.

- Approval of pilot plant sample(s)
- Production-run sample(s)
- Routine product monitoring sample(s)

Food Safety Certification requirements:

- Suppliers of leafy greens, strawberries, and shell eggs require SQF level 2 certification (or GFSI* equivalent) by the end of 2008
- Perishable, high risk items require SQF level 2 certification (or GFSI equivalent) by the end of 2009
- All other food suppliers require SQF level 2 certification (or GFSI equivalent) by the end of 2010
- SQF Level 3 certification (or GFSI equivalent) will be required the next calendar year after initial food safety certification is required.

*GFSI - Global Food Safety Initiative



Sustainability Policy

Expectation:

Purchasing Partners is committed to being a responsible and sustainable company. This includes a commitment to integrity throughout our business as well as compliance with all applicable local, state, and federal laws. In addition to our commitments to integrity and compliance, we recognize that we have an important role to play in protecting environmental quality and improving quality of life for our stakeholders.

We are focused on three pillars of Corporate Responsibility and Sustainability:

- Improving environmental performance by providing increasing levels of service to our customers while reducing the energy required and waste generated in running our operations
- Enriching community engagement by being an active and valued member in the communities where we operate and encouraging diversity in our workforce and supplier network
- Creating sustainable offerings by initiating improvements that increase the environmental and social sustainability of our products and providing information to help customers make sustainable and healthy product choices

We expect that our suppliers will share our commitments to corporate responsibility and sustainability.

Requirements:

Comply with all legal requirements – Our suppliers must operate in a manner that meets or exceeds all applicable local and national laws, regulations, and ordinances as well as international standards as appropriate.

Ensure fair labor practices – Purchasing Partners is committed to full compliance with labor laws and we expect the same commitment from our suppliers. Suppliers must adhere to national, state, and local laws as well as international labor standards as applicable. Suppliers must also take action to ensure that their suppliers are in compliance with these standards.



Promote environmental sustainability – Suppliers will review and analyze environmental impacts related to their production process and supply chain. Suppliers will seek opportunities for innovation that improve the quality and safety of their products and promote a healthier environment.



Quality Management Systems & Quality Policy

Expectation:

Suppliers must have policies in place that define the organizational structure, procedures, and training programs that will be executed to ensure that the raw materials supplied to and products manufactured and sold to all Premier Purchasing Partners members will meet the safety and quality expectations of those members.

Requirements:

Organization and responsibility – Organizational responsibility for management of food safety programs, regulatory compliance activities and programs, and quality systems should be defined and documented. Responsibility should reside at the lowest possible levels of the organization to be effective. An organization chart of plant management, including reporting structure, must be available.

Quality systems – Suppliers must use all raw materials or ship all finished products by the first-in, first-out (FIFO) product rotation method to ensure that all products purchased or produced first are assumed to be used or sold completely before items purchased or produced later are sold.

Suppliers must have controls in place to facilitate the tracking of product code date to the customer and to ensure proper rotation so that only product with acceptable shelf life is shipped.

Only reputable carriers must be used for product shipping. All loads must be secured within the trailer to prevent damage during shipping. Suppliers must have controls in place to manage food that is damaged during shipping and storage. Systems must be in place to ensure that finished goods are protected during transit, i.e., all full loads and less than full loads (LTL) to and from the facility must be secured (sealed or locked), and all ingredients, products, and packaging are inspected at receipt to ensure integrity.

Crisis management – A team must be in place to manage major situations involving food safety, major regulatory issues, or significant public-relations problems. Roles and responsibilities should be well defined and documented. Current contact lists of appropriate facility staff members and the appropriate Purchasing Partners Contract



Management contact should be maintained. Communication of high-risk incidents to products and supply must be reported to Purchasing Partners Contract Management.

Audits – A monthly internal self-audit process must be in place and functioning to ensure ongoing compliance to quality policies and good manufacturing practices on the interior and exterior of the facility. Corrective actions must be developed based on findings.

Training – Training programs that ensure knowledge transfer must be in place and given at a frequency appropriate for the topic, and the results should be documented. Training must be given in the appropriate language and level so that all attendees can achieve understanding of the material being delivered.

Specifically, orientation and annual training is required for the following:

- Sanitation procedures and chemical handling for sanitation employees
- HACCP for those employees with HACCP-defined responsibilities
- Allergens, food security, and Good Manufacturing Practices (GMPs) for all employees

Product recovery – A product recovery program with specific task procedures for the recovery of raw materials and finished products through to the first customer must be in place. A current contact list for all internal contacts involved in the facility's product recovery program must be maintained. The current contact list must include contacts for the Purchasing Partners foodservice contract manager. Any product recovery that includes Purchasing Partners contracted product requires communication directly with the Purchasing Partners contract manager.

Contact to Purchasing Partners about a product recovery must include the following information:

- Product information (manufacturer's product code, brand, product name, pack size, production date and or lot number)
- Classification of the recovery and the reason for the recovery



- Purchasing Partners Authorized Distributor's facilities that received the product, the dates of shipments, purchase-order numbers, and the quantity of product delivered.
- Instructions for product disposition
- Instructions for Purchasing Partners member notification, if applicable

Mock recalls – Tests of the recovery process must be conducted and the results documented at least annually. The minimal acceptable recovery rate is 98 percent within four hours.

Customer complaints – A program to collect, track and address customer complaints must be in place. The program must include the following:

- Process to rapidly resolve a complaint to ensure customer satisfaction
- Process to track individual complaints and their causes
- Corrective-action component to reduce the likelihood of a recurrence

Employee hygiene practices – A written employee hygiene program must be in place. At a minimum it must address the following:

- Food employees shall clean their hands and exposed portions of their arms in a lavatory by vigorously rubbing together the surfaces of their lathered hands and arms for at least 20 seconds and thoroughly rinsing with clean water. Employees shall pay particular attention to the areas underneath the fingernails and between the fingers.
- Frequency with which employees should wash and sanitize hands, such as when starting work, when returning to work, and after handling unclean items or touching their faces.
 - **When to Wash** – Food employees shall clean their hands and exposed portions of their arms immediately before engaging in food preparation including working with exposed food, clean equipment and utensils, and unwrapped single-service and single-use articles and:



- After touching bare human body parts other than clean hands and clean, exposed portions of arms
- After using the toilet room
- After caring for or handling support animals or aquatic animals
- After coughing, sneezing, using a handkerchief or disposable tissue, using tobacco, eating, or drinking
- After handling soiled equipment or utensils
- During food preparation, as often as necessary to remove soil and contamination and to prevent cross contamination when changing tasks
- When switching between working with raw food and working with ready-to-eat food
- After engaging in other activities that contaminate the hands
- **Where to Wash** – Food employees shall clean their hands in a hand washing lavatory and may not clean their hands in a sink used for food preparation, or in a service sink or a curbed cleaning facility used for the disposal of mop water and similar liquid waste.
- **Hand Sanitizers**
 - A hand sanitizer and a chemical hand sanitizing solution used as a hand dip shall:
 - Have active antimicrobial ingredients that are:
 - Listed as safe and effective for application to human skin as an antiseptic hand wash, or
 - Previously authorized, and listed for such use in the USDA List of Proprietary Substances and Nonfood Compounds
 - Have components that are:
 - Regulated for the intended use as food additives as, or



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- Generally recognized as safe (GRAS) for the intended use in contact with food, or
- Exempted from the requirement of being listed in the federal food additive regulations, and
- Be applied only to hands that are cleaned as specified
- If a hand sanitizer or a chemical hand sanitizing solution used as a hand dip does not meet the criteria specified, use shall be:
 - Followed by thorough hand rinsing in clean water before hand contact with food or by the use of gloves, or
 - Limited to situations that involve no direct contact with food by the bare hands
- A chemical hand sanitizing solution used as a hand dip shall be maintained clean and at a strength equivalent to at least 100 mg/L chlorine.
- Appropriate use of hair restraints (including beards) when working in production areas
- Restriction against the use of fingernail polish and the wearing of jewelry in production areas as a good practice
- Appropriate clothing—including footwear, gloves, aprons, and smocks—to be worn by production employees, and the frequency that it should be changed and laundered
- Color-coding system used to separate equipment and employees
- Restriction against eating, drinking, using tobacco products, chewing gum, and/or holding items in the mouth when working in production areas



Employee illness – Employees who exhibit symptoms of injury or illness that can affect food products must not be allowed to work in areas where product could be impacted. Open sores, cuts, and other lesions must be covered with clean and impermeable coverings. Individuals with diseases that are transmissible through food (e.g., salmonella typhi, shigella sp., Shiga toxin-producing Escherichia coli, and the hepatitis A virus) or have symptoms of diarrheal illness are not allowed to handle exposed food.

References

2005 and 2007 updated FDA.FSIS.CDC Food Code:
<http://www.cfsan.fda.gov/~dms/fc05-toc.html>



Hazard Analysis & Critical Control Point

Expectation:

Suppliers must have a documented food safety program in place for all supplied products. This HACCP program must address all hazards identified in the hazard analysis and development of a process-flow diagram. Where the hazard analysis concludes that there is/are critical control points (CCPs) that must be controlled to ensure the food safety of the product being processed, a HACCP plan must be in place. The plan must have been developed as defined by the National Advisory Committee on Microbiological Criteria for Food.

Requirements:

The HACCP plans must be developed following the required steps:

- Conduct a hazard analysis.
- Determine the critical control points.
- Establish critical limits.
- Establish monitoring procedures.
- Establish corrective actions.
- Establish verification procedures.
- Establish record-keeping, documentation, and validation procedures.

Plans must be reviewed and revised, if necessary, when a change is made to the product or process or when repetitive issues occur. At a minimum all plans must be reviewed annually. All plans must be reviewed more frequently if required by regulations.

Training programs must be in place to ensure that appropriate personnel are trained to effectively execute the plan. At a minimum, training in HACCP principles must be conducted at hiring, and refresher training must be delivered annually and documented.

References

9 CFR Part 417

“Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point Principles and Application Guidelines” NACMCF; August, 1997

21 CFR Part 123

“Procedures for the Safe and Sanitary Processing and Importing of Fish and Fishery Products,” FDA, December 1997



Allergen Controls

Expectation:

Suppliers must have policies and controls in place to ensure that allergenic material is declared in the ingredients list and the allergen statement.

Requirements:

Product design – Products are developed and formulated with a goal of eliminating any allergenic component that does not deliver to the product a technical effect that provides a value to the customer. Where allergenic ingredients are necessary they will be clearly reflected in the product label.

Ingredient selection – Ingredients used in formulation and food-contact materials/processing aids used in the production of all products must be reviewed to ensure that all allergenic components are identified before use.

In process – Programs must be in place to ensure that materials containing allergens in process are adequately labeled and controlled so that cross-contact does not occur.

Production sequencing and equipment sanitation – Sequencing (i.e., non-allergen-containing product is produced first) or sanitation protocols must be in place to ensure that equipment used for the production of allergen-containing products is not used to produce products not containing the allergen before cleaning or sanitizing.

Verification of adequate removal – Potential allergenic-product residue removal is completed after each sanitation event, prior to the manufacturing of non-allergen-containing product.

Work in process (WIP) or rework controls – Controls must be in place to ensure that rework or WIP is only incorporated into similar products.

Storage of materials – Allergens must be stored in a manner that protects other non-allergenic materials from inadvertent contamination.



Product retention – Protocols must be in place to direct the disposition of commingled products. Relabeling to provide an accurate ingredient statement or destruction are acceptable dispositions.

References

The Food Allergy and Anaphylaxis Network Web site
FARRP: Food Allergy Research and Resource Program Web site



Facility & Equipment Requirements

Expectation:

Suppliers must produce products in facilities and with equipment that is properly designed, built, and maintained to ensure the production of safe food products.

Requirements:

Food manufacturing facilities must be constructed so they are cleanable and allow operations and storage of materials to be conducted in a sanitary manner. Floors, walls, and ceilings of product storage and processing areas must be constructed of easily cleanable, nonporous material. Buildings and grounds must be maintained to support sanitary operations, to exclude pests and other environmental sources of product contamination.

Outer openings into the storage and processing areas must be protected with screens. No gaps over 1/4" may be evident in storage or processing areas. No roof leaks are permitted in product storage or processing areas. Procedures must be in place to prevent and identify potential extraneous-material contamination of products.

Components of the program must include the following:

Equipment inspection policy – All processing equipment should be inspected for abnormal wear or damage at the end of each shift. Potentially impacted product should be retained and evaluated.

No temporary repairs that could contaminate the product can be made for food-contact processing equipment or within food-processing zones. A condensation management program must be in place to ensure product protection during storage and processing. Also, there must be annual verification of water source for potability.

Glass management policy – No unprotected glass will be allowed in the facility; light bulbs, including insectocutors and dock lights, must be shielded.

Maintenance of equipment – A planned preventative maintenance process must be in place, including a schedule of activities. A process to identify repairs needed to either



the facility or to processing equipment and to plan for the completion of those repairs in a manner consistent with maintaining a sanitary operation must be in place and documented. Ladders and walkways over exposed product lines are protected with kick plates or other appropriate means. Kick plates must be at least four inches high. Utility controls must be in place to prevent biological, chemical, or physical contamination risks. Controls for production of product contact steam, environmental air, process water, and product contact compressed gasses will be in place and managed.

Vehicles and equipment used for moving raw materials, finished products, and packaging throughout and within the facility are cleaned, well maintained, and do not transport goods outside the facility.



Sanitation

Expectation:

Suppliers must have policies and controls in place to ensure that the facility is operated in a sanitary manner.

Requirements:

Sanitation standard operating procedures (SSOPs) must be in place for all sanitation activities that include chemicals and water within the product processing and storage areas. An SSOP must include the task to be completed, the chemicals (including dilution or concentration) and equipment used, and the frequency of the task. A master sanitation schedule must be in place to ensure cleaning of those portions of the interior and exterior of the facility that do not require at least daily cleaning. All chemicals used for sanitation must be properly stored when not in use and properly labeled when not in the original container. Sanitizers must be routinely tested to verify strength and effectiveness. All chemicals used for sanitation within the facility must have MSDS sheets and sample labels readily available. Cleanliness must be maintained in all areas of the processing and storage areas of the food-processing facility. There must be no evidence of aged spills in processing or storage areas. Excessive moisture and condensation must be removed promptly, and floors must be free of standing water.

Pre-operational sanitation – The effectiveness of cleaning must be monitored using appropriate technologies and deemed acceptable prior to the start of production and documented. At a minimum a visual and surface sampling program must be utilized to verify the effectiveness of the sanitation.

Operational sanitation – Operations must be conducted to ensure the facility is operated in a sanitary manner. Procedures to detect and to address deficiencies must be in place. Conditions during operations must be monitored and documented. Pathogen monitoring programs are required when the need is indicated by either regulatory requirements or prudent food safety protection protocols for ready-to-eat product.

Chemical controls including lubricants – Only chemicals acceptable for use in food-processing establishments may be used.



Pest Prevention

Expectation:

Suppliers must have an effective integrated pest management program in place to ensure that the facility is maintained in a sanitary and pest-free condition.

Requirements:

A written program must exist, defining the details of an integrated pest management program to control pests on the grounds and in the facility to ensure the sanitary operation of the facility. The program must include the following components:

- Detailed description of the pest-control process, including inspection frequencies, chemical application rates, and the corrective action process. At a minimum, pest-control activities should include an integrated pest management program that does not rely solely on chemical applications but other methods to control pests (e.g., crevice treatment or traps).
- Map depicting the location of an appropriate number of traps (including wind-up traps, glue boards, and electric light traps) must be available, include all pest-control devices, and be updated at least annually.
- Copies for the past twelve months of all pest-control service activities, including activity noted and the signature of the pest-control operator.
- Copies of the labels and MSDS sheets for all pesticides used in or around the facility.
- Copy of the current license of the (internal or contract) pest-control operator, plus the certificate of insurance for a contract firm.
- Requirement detailing storage locations of pesticides separated and controlled from the production environment.
- Documentation showing any chemicals used and the method of application.
- Identification of the pest-control devices, including labels of service on the device.
- Policy that pesticides must be applied within the facility only by a certified pest-control operator. No evidence of pest activity is allowed on the interior or exterior of the facility.
- Placement of pest-control devices will include all appropriate product and equipment storage areas, locker



rooms, break rooms, processing rooms as appropriate, and the exterior of the facility. The distribution of the pest-control devices must be appropriate for the type of process and area of the facility being controlled. Note the following guidelines:

- Bait stations should be used every 50 feet on the exterior perimeter of the facility.
- Mechanical traps should be within six feet of each side of all exterior doors.
- All devices must be located every 25 feet on walls on the interior perimeter of the facility.
- Insect-control devices and insect light traps must be placed so that product contamination is prevented.



Traceability

Expectation:

Suppliers must have policies and controls in place that will permit the tracing of all product ingredients, product contact packaging supplies, and finished products by individual lot number or other identifying code, one step back and one step forward in the supply chain.

Requirements:

Code dating and shelf life

- **Outer/Master case** – A production code date must be applied to the finished product that will identify the day on which the product was packaged. Code-dating schemes used must have a calendar date with year (MM DD YY) or a three-digit Julian date preceded by the year (in the format YDDD or YYDDD).
- **Inner packages** must be labeled with production code date.

Ingredient and packaging material controls – Record-keeping systems must be in place that will allow tracing of all ingredients, components, food-contact packaging materials, and rework and processing conditions to the finished product lot.

Record-storage requirements – Records of production must be maintained for one year past the shelf life of the product or as required by applicable regulations. Training of employees in the elements of traceability must be conducted and documented.



Product & Facility Security

Expectation:

Suppliers must have policies and controls in place to ensure that their buildings, operations, products, and people are secure from threats or activities that could cause an adulteration of product that could jeopardize either their business or the safety of the customers and consumers.

Requirements:

Receiving and shipping controls – Systems must be in place to assure that received materials are controlled through distribution and received in a safe and wholesome condition. Additionally, systems to ensure that finished goods are protected in transit must be in place. All full loads to and from the facility must be secured (sealed or locked). All less than full loads (LTL) that are arranged are secured (locked). All ingredients, products, and packaging are inspected at receipt to ensure integrity of product containers.

Program – The facility has a food security program that includes an assessment of the food security risks and a review and update of the food security program of the facility annually at minimum. Training of employees in the elements of product and facility security must be conducted and documented.

Facility protection – Processes must be in place to prevent unauthorized access to the manufacturing facility. Exterior doors must be secured or monitored. Chemicals for sanitation and maintenance are stored to allow for access only by authorized personnel.

Employee screening and identification – Processes must be in place to assure that only individuals with authorized access are allowed into the facility. Included are employees, contractors, suppliers, and other visitors.

References

FSIS Model Food Security Plan for Meat and Poultry Processing Facilities, April 2005
FDA Food Security Guidelines for Food Processors, Importers, and Brokers



Procurement Controls

Expectation:

Suppliers must have policies and controls in place to ensure that products that are received comply with the specifications.

Requirements:

Requirements for suppliers – Producers must have a program in place to approve the suppliers of food ingredients and food-contact packaging material. The program should include pre-sourcing audits of the suppliers as well as the program used to periodically evaluate the supplier's performance.

Purchased material controls – Written specifications must be available for each material purchased. A list of approved suppliers must be maintained. A written program must be available that describes the necessary receiving checks required to ensure the supplier's compliance to specifications as well as the process to manage the disposition of materials that do not comply with specifications. A process must be in place and documented to evaluate the condition of the carriers and materials prior to unloading to ensure the integrity of the material.

Letters of Continuing Guarantee—Copies of Letters of Continuing Guarantee should be obtained from all suppliers for each item purchased and must be available when needed.



Manufacturing Controls

Expectation:

Suppliers must have policies and controls in place to ensure the production of products that are safe and appropriately labeled and that conform to specifications and applicable regulations.

Requirements:

Rework controls – Systems must be in place to ensure that rework is identified and is used only in products that are properly labeled to declare the presence of allergens, meat species, and other ingredients.

Work in-process controls – Controls must be in place to manage in-process inventories to ensure they are used on a timely basis and stored in a sanitary manner.

Equipment calibration – A documented process must be in place to ensure that all measurement, analytical, and processing equipment is calibrated and accurate according to regulatory or accepted industry standards. The program must require that the results of the calibration activities are documented. This process must describe the disposition of product produced when a tool is found to be operating outside of set limits.

A foreign-material control program must be in place. It must include magnets, sieves, screens, bone detection devices, and metal detectors as necessary, based on the process and the manufacturing environment.

A metal-detection program must be in place, including the following:

- Checking of the metal detector several times during each production shift. If it is found not to be functioning properly, product since the last successful check must be identified and run through a properly functioning metal detector.
- Detection levels should be the following:
 - 2.5 mm for ferrous metals
 - 3.0 mm for nonferrous metals
 - 3.0 mm for stainless steel

Product hold and release – Effective controls must be in place to manage product that does not conform to



specifications or regulatory requirements to ensure that it does not inadvertently get shipped to Purchasing Partners Authorized Distributors. Components of this program must include the following:

- Definition of personnel responsible to administer the program and to make disposition of retained product.
- Record-keeping procedures to log and track all lots put on HOLD to ensure timely and effective disposition. The log should be audited at least annually.
- Secure location to store product retained for food safety or major regulatory noncompliance issues.
- A documented method to clearly identify all retained product so that the status of the lot is evident to all employees.

Laboratory controls – For external laboratory analysis, an A2LA certified laboratory must be used whenever possible. When an internal laboratory is used to perform product testing, the following systems and practices must be in place:

- Written sampling plans must be in place for all materials to be tested.
- All laboratory methods should be written and based on USDA, AOAC, FDA, or other accredited methods.
- The laboratory should have quality-control procedures in place to ensure the accuracy of results.
- The laboratory should participate in a check sample program to periodically ensure the accuracy of both chemical and micro testing methods.
- Pathogen testing should be performed only if the appropriate laboratory controls and laboratory design/location is in place to protect the production facility

Inventory-control program – Suppliers must have controls in place to do the following:

- Facilitate the tracking of product code dates to the customer.
- Ensure proper product rotation so that only product with sufficient code life remaining is shipped.
- First-in, first-out (FIFO)—All raw materials and all finished products should be used following the FIFO product rotation method to ensure that all older product is used or shipped prior to newer product.



Transportation Controls

Expectation:

Suppliers must have policies and controls in place to ensure that products are stored and distributed in a timely, safe, and secure manner and can be effectively traced if necessary. Suppliers must place the appropriate transient temperature requirement on the bill of lading (BOL) to Purchasing Partners' Authorized Distributors.

Requirements:

Receiving controls – Procedures and practices to ensure control of incoming products must be in place, including inspection of trailers, taking of product temperatures, and inspection of loads. Receiving activities must be documented.

Testing hold – Any product subject to microbial testing must be held by the supplier until product safety is determined.

Inventory controls/Shelf life – Controls must be in place to facilitate the tracking of product by code date to the customer and to ensure proper rotation so that only product with sufficient code life remaining is shipped.

- Thirty day or less shelf life – Raw materials or products must arrive at the Purchasing Partners Authorized Distributor with at least 50 percent of shelf life remaining.
- Thirty days to one year – Raw materials or products must arrive at the Purchasing Partners Authorized Distributor with at least 60 percent of shelf life remaining.
- One to two years – Finished products must arrive at the Purchasing Partners Authorized Distributor with at least nine months of shelf life remaining.

Transportation and storage requirements – A written program must be in place that details the following:

- Controls in place to manage goods damaged in storage
- Controls in place to ensure carrier cleanliness prior to loading
- Controls required to protect products from hazardous materials if included in the same carrier
- Frozen products shall arrive at the Purchasing Partners Authorized Distributor at a temperature of 10°F or below



- Refrigerated ready-to-eat (RTE) products shall arrive at the Purchasing Partners Authorized Distributor at a temperature between 33°F and 40°F
- Refrigerated fresh meat/poultry items shall arrive at Purchasing Partners Authorized Distributor at temperatures between 28°F and 33°F
- Where required, approved time-temperature recorders (TTR) include the following:
 - Comark EVT1
 - Sensitech Temp Tale 4

Returned goods controls – A documented program must be in place describing the management of any finished product returned to the facility after it has left the control of the company. The following should be included:

- Methods used to segregate and evaluate the condition of the product when received
- Appropriate methods of disposition, including resale or charitable donation
- Restriction that returned product is not reused as rework in current production
- Restriction that once a product has been rejected, same product cannot be delivered to another Purchasing Partners Authorized Distributor



Commodity-Specific Expectations

Expectation:

Purchasing Partners recognizes that there are specific requirements for certain commodities of food products. All suppliers will comply with Federal food safety notices, directives, and requirements.

Beef, Pork, Veal, and Poultry

All fresh meat and poultry must be stored and shipped at temperatures between 28°F and 33°F.

Frozen meat and poultry products must be stored and shipped at temperatures between 0°F and 10°F.

Suppliers must have policies and quality systems in place that support and manage the treatment of animals in their supply chain to ensure they are handled without abusive or cruel treatment.

Slaughter facilities must conduct an annual animal-welfare audit based on the appropriate guidelines for the species of animal being handled:

- Beef, pork, and veal – American Meat Institute
- Chicken – National Chicken Council
- Labeling – All additives must be declared on the product labels.
- All meat and poultry products must not contain substances banned by the FDA.

Beef

BSE controls

- Raw-material suppliers must have programs in place to ensure that their sources of live animals and the feed sources for those animals comply with the requirements of the FDA ruminant feed ban.
- Processors of bone-in beef raw materials must have a procedure in place to verify that animals in process are less than 30 months of age. Dentition examination or records review are both acceptable methods.
- Facilities that convert animals to meat will ensure compliance with all Specified Risk Material (SRM) controls.
- Facilities that convert animals to meat must not process non-ambulatory cattle.
- A letter stating compliance to the above BSE-control policies must be obtained from each supplier annually.



- Audits of controls must be conducted by each supplier and documented.

E. coli controls – Product-testing protocols and appropriate intervention technologies must be in place and included in the supplier’s HACCP plan.

Poultry

Raw-material suppliers must have programs in place to ensure the prevention and control of avian influenza and other diseases.

Salmonella controls – Suppliers must have appropriate intervention technologies in place and included in their HACCP program to reduce or limit the amount of Salmonella in poultry products.

Fresh Shell Eggs / Egg Products

Fresh shell eggs

Suppliers must conduct an annual animal-welfare audit of all hatcheries, breeder farms, and laying facilities based on the guidelines of the United Egg Producers. Product-testing protocols and appropriate intervention technologies should be in place to reduce or limit the amount of Salmonella found in fresh shell eggs. These should be listed in the firm’s HACCP plan. Eggs must be in compliance with the U.S. Standards for Grades of Fresh Eggs. Shell eggs must be marked with USDA grading shield on outer case. All fresh eggs must be transported and stored at ambient temperatures at or below 45°F. Production dates and pack dates must be labeled on all master cases of product.

Liquid egg products

All liquid egg products must be pasteurized. All additives must be declared on the product label.

All liquid egg products must be stored and shipped at temperatures less than 40°F.

Seafood

For refrigerated ready-to-eat seafood products with transit time of over four hours to a Purchasing Partners Authorized Distributor, an approved time-temperature recorder must be included on the load. Species must be verifiable upon request. The supplier must have a species-verification program in place to ensure accuracy of species being packed,



where applicable. No banned antibiotics, as defined by the FDA and the state regulatory authority, are to be present (at any detection level) in any seafood products sold to a Purchasing Partners Authorized Distributor.

Labeling requirements

A seafood weight-verification program must be in place and meet declared label weights for flesh weight versus glazed product weights. All additives must be declared on the label and comply with FDA labeling regulations. Product packaging must comply with all U.S. Customs and FDA requirements for the following:

- Country of origin
- Species identification
- Net weight labeling
- Count per pound (if applicable)
- Accurate breeding percentage (if applicable)
- Portion size (if applicable)

Good aquaculture practices, as defined by the Global Aquaculture Alliance, should be used for all aquacultured products. Compliance with the Global Aquaculture Alliance Practices (GAPP) standards must be verified by the Aquaculture Certification Council certifiers, according to ACC standards. Suppliers must have a traceability program to document the source of product from raw material at point of harvest through production to finished-product shipment to a Purchasing Partners Authorized Distributor.

Documentation must be retained for one year. An Economic Integrity Program must be in place using USDC inspection or another certified third-party tester to verify net weight, counts, and uniformity.

Shellfish must be harvested in approved areas only using approved methods, and must comply with all FDA required label requirements.

Suppliers must adhere to all legally required fishery practices, Endangered Species Act regulations, fishery management quotas, coastal zone management, and/or other mandated fishery product regulations according to country of origin.



Ready-to-Eat (RTE) Products

Processing and sanitation controls

For all facilities that produce a ready-to-eat product, an environmental monitoring program that includes testing the environment for *Listeria* sp. is in place and available for review. Records of the results are kept, and corrective actions are completed and documented.

Suppliers of RTE products must have the following contamination prevention controls in place:

- Separate processing areas of raw materials from finished products
- Separate uniforms for raw-material and finished-product employees
- Sanitizer footbaths and hand-dip stations upon entry into finished-product processing areas.

Shipping temperature controls

All trailers that transport RTE products must be pre-cooled to 40°F or less prior to loading. All RTE products must be shipped to and received at Purchasing Partners Authorized Distributors at a temperature below 40°F. All loads with transport times of four hours or more are recommended to have an approved time-temperature recorder (TTR) present in the trailer.

Produce

Field sanitation and practices

Growers/Farmers must use Good Agricultural Practices (GAPs) during the growing and harvesting produce.

Harvesting crews must use good hygiene practices. Fields must be equipped with clean, portable lavatory facilities and hand washing stations. Annual GAP audits must be conducted on growing fields. A passing score must be achieved on all GAP audits. GAP audit reports must be made available to Purchasing Partners upon request.

Processing / Storage

Refrigeration units and rinse-water temperatures are required to be between 33°F and 40°F.

Refrigeration units must be kept clean. Rinse water must be monitored and changed frequently enough to maintain adequate levels of free chlorine to effectively reduce microbial loads but remain within FDA's legal limits.



Shipping / Temperature control

All transport vehicles must be pre-cooled to between 33°F and 40°F prior to loading. All processed produce must be shipped and received between 34°F and 40°F. Mixed-temperature loads must be shipped at a temperature appropriate to the product requiring the coldest temperature. An approved time-temperature recorder (TTR) is required to be included on all loads of RTE processed produce, loads of tomatoes, melons, and herbs with a transient time of four hours or longer. A TTR is recommended for all other loads of produce of transient times of over 4 hours. The temperature during transit must be less than 40°F for the duration of the transit or at a temperature appropriate for the type of produce. A TTR must be placed on the first pallet or load placed into an LTL load (i.e., the front of the load). Temperature-sensitive items (e.g., asparagus and strawberries) should have two TTRs per load. All produce loads should be protected from freezing and/or freezing temperatures. Suppliers must list the shipping temperature on the bill of lading (BOL). All loads must be shipped in accordance with PACA regulations. Ethylene-producing products should be isolated from non-ethylene-producing products whenever possible.

Produce packaging

The date of pack must be listed on the outer/master case.

Boxes must adhere to the following requirements:

- Corrugated cases must be strong enough to support the weight of the full pallet of produce under normal storage and shipping conditions for the entire shelf life of the product.
- Corrugated cases must contain product-appropriate air holes to allow rapid cooling and respiration of the product.
- The corrugated material in the cases must be recyclable.
- The master cases must have an appropriate fill (with limited headspace) to ensure maximum product quality maintenance during shipping and storage.

Frozen fruit and vegetables

• Storage / Shipping / Receiving temperatures

Product must be stored at a temperature of 0°F. Frozen products must be stored and shipped to maintain a temperature at or below 10°F. Shipping temperatures of 0°F



or below are preferred. Trailers must be pre-cooled to 0°F prior to loading products. Products showing signs of thawing and refreezing will be rejected upon receipt. All products intended to be cooked prior to consumption must contain cooking instructions on the outer cases and inner package, if applicable (e.g., frozen vegetables).

- **Sanitation controls**

All “Thaw & Eat” item manufacturers must have a process and program in place to limit or eliminate pathogens. GAP audit reports must be made available to Purchasing Partners upon request.

Dairy Items

Sanitation controls

All raw-material transport trucks must be fully cleaned and sanitized before each load.

Temperature controls

All fluid dairy and soft cheeses must be shipped and stored at temperatures between 32°F and 40°F. All other dairy items must be stored and shipped at temperatures between 32°F and 45°F (e.g., aged cheese, butter, cultured dairy, etc.).

Bakery Items

If bulk flour is received, transfer hoses must be capped and stored off the ground. All connection ports to the facility must be capped and locked. A program must be in place to monitor and document tailings (material left on sifter screens) from sifted flour. Blunt instruments must be used to cut dough to prevent possible product contamination. Product traceability controls must be in place for managing bulk ingredients (e.g., silo management).

Dressings and Sauces

If bulk ingredients are received, transfer hoses must be capped and stored off the ground. All connection ports to the facility must be capped and locked. Only pasteurized eggs may be used in dressing and sauce formulations. Refrigeration should be used only as a quality measure.



Specifications

Expectation:

All Purchasing Partners contracted products must have nutritional information consistent with FDA or USDA nutritional labeling requirements as appropriate and be packaged in such a way that the product is protected throughout the life cycle of the product.

Requirements

Product Specifications

All raw materials must be compared to the supplier product specifications upon receipt.

Finished goods

All finished products must have specifications that address the product-quality attributes defined, including performance standards and shelf life. Manufacturer will provide storage/stability test data to support shelf life claims. At a minimum, all product specifications must include the following:

- Product Description of the finished product
- Ingredients
- Product information to include appearance, size/weight, dimensions, and count per case
- Raw material specifications
- Product formulation
- Product processes
- Chemical and microbiological analysis limits with corresponding analysis methodology
- Cooked product sensory attributes to include appearance, flavor and texture
- Defects and acceptable limits
- Packaging and labeling information for primary and secondary materials including packaging type, burst strength, dimensions, pack size, labeling and production date information
- Storage and transport information
- Product shelf life under defined storage conditions

A check-weight program must be in place to ensure that both individual pieces and boxes/cases meet specified and labeled weights. Finished-good testing must be documented per the product specification and samples held for the duration of the product's shelf life. All QA checks must be documented,



and records must be readily available to Purchasing Partners for review.

Food safety and quality assurance records availability

All production QA checks and records must be made available to Purchasing Partners upon request.



Packaging Graphics Approval

Expectation:

Suppliers are accountable for complying with all federal, state and local regulations regarding labeling.

Requirements

- An internal package labeling approval process must be completed that ensures all labels and claims made meet all U.S. regulatory requirements. All claims made on labels must be verifiable.
- Packaging graphics shall include Country of Origin information as required by state and federal authorities.
- Packaging graphics approval includes a check for all ingredients that are considered allergens. Labels that include allergenic ingredients must have the common name of the allergen clearly stated per FDA labeling regulations.
- The receiving of packaging components includes an inspection process to verify that the information on the label is cross-referenced against the label specification.
- Labels for all Purchasing Partners contracted products must include a nutritional statement that is consistent with FDA nutritional labeling regulations.
- The packaging inventory management program includes the removal of old labels from active storage and destruction of old, inactive, and obsolete products.
- A process must be in place that manages the application of labeling devices to ensure that the correct label is always applied. The handling of labels, verification of accuracy at shift start and changeover, partial lot storage, and disposition of obsolete labels must be addressed.
- All production code dates must be listed legibly on the master case and on inner packaging (as applicable).
- A calendar date format (MMDDYY) is preferred. If a calendar date is not possible due to space or mechanical restraints, a year and Julian date format is to be used (YDDD) or (YYDDD).

Non-Food Items

- Facilities are required to have a third party audit at approval and annually thereafter.



- Non-food items that are food contact items (cutlery, cups, etc.) are required to have a food safety management system and quality management system in place.
- Other non-food items are required to only have a product quality management system in place.



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