SQF Audit Checklist - Food Manufacturing

FreshBite Foods, Inc., Richmond, Virginia / 12 Dec 2025 / Hannah Lancaster

Complete

Score	12 / 296 (4.05%)	Flagged items	0	Actions	2

Site

FreshBite Foods, Inc., Richmond, Virginia

Conducted on	12 Dec 2025 14:09 PST
Prepared by	Hannah Lancaster
Location	Richmond, Virginia, USA

Actions

2 actions

Food Manufacturing Audit / 2.1.2 Management Responsibility

i. Lead the development and implementation of Good Manufacturing Practices (GMP) outlined in 2.4.2;

Partially Compliant

Newer evening shift staff haven't received formal GMP training yet.

To do | Assignee: SafetyCulture Staff | Priority: Low | Due: 19 Dec 2025 14:14 PST | Created by: SafetyCulture Staff

Schedule a training with night shift employees within the week

Food Manufacturing Audit / 2.1.2 Management Responsibility

Job descriptions for those responsible for food safety shall be documented and include provision to cover for the absence of key personnel.

Partially Compliant

Some tasks, such as CCP verification, internal auditing, and supplier approval, are referenced only verbally among the team.

To do | Assignee: SafetyCulture Staff | Priority: Low | Due: 19 Dec 2025 14:17 PST | Created by: SafetyCulture Staff

Document this properly within the week.

Food Manufacturing Audit	2 actions, 12 / 296 (4.05%)
2.1.2 Management Responsibility	2 actions, 8 / 11 (72.73%)
The reporting structure describing those who have responsibility for food safety shall be documented, identified and communicated within the site.	Fully Compliant
The senior site management shall make provision to ensure fundamental food safety practices and all applicable requirements of the SQF System are adopted and maintained.	Fully Compliant
The senior site management shall ensure adequate resources are available to achieve food safety objectives and support the development, implementation, maintenance and ongoing improvement of the SQF System.	Fully Compliant
Senior site management shall designate a person responsible for each site with responsibility and authority to:	
i. Lead the development and implementation of Good Manufacturing Practices (GMP) outlined in 2.4.2;	Partially Compliant
Newer evening shift staff haven't received formal GMP training yet.	
To do | Assignee: SafetyCulture Staff | Priority: Low | Due: 19 Dec 2025 14:14 PST | Created by: SafetyCulture Staff	
Schedule a training with night shift employees within the week	
ii. Oversee the development, implementation, review and maintenance of the SQF System; and	Fully Compliant
iii. Take appropriate action to ensure the integrity of the SQF System.	Partially Compliant
The person responsible designated under 2.1.2.4 shall:	
i. Be fully employed or contracted by the site as a company employee/contractor;	Fully Compliant
ii. Hold a position of responsibility in relation to the management of the site's SQF System;	Fully Compliant
iii. Be competent to implement and maintain food safety fundamentals; and	Fully Compliant
iv. Have an understanding of the SQF Food Safety Fundamentals and the requirements to implement and maintain SQF System relevant to the site's scope of	Fully Compliant

certification.	
Job descriptions for those responsible for food safety shall be documented and include provision to cover for the absence of key personnel.	Partially Compliant

Some tasks, such as CCP verification, internal auditing, and supplier approval, are referenced only verbally among the team.

To do | Assignee: SafetyCulture Staff | Priority: Low | Due: 19 Dec 2025 14:17 PST | Created by: SafetyCulture Staff

Document this properly within the week.

2.1.3 Management Review	4 / 4 (100%)
The senior site management shall be responsible for reviewing the SQF System and documenting the policy statement.	Fully Compliant
The SQF System in its entirety shall be reviewed at least annually.	Fully Compliant
The SQF System, and other aspects of Good Manufacturing Practices (GMP) shall be reviewed and updated as needed when any potential changes implemented have an impact on the site's ability to deliver safe food.	Fully Compliant
All changes made to Good Manufacturing Practices (GMP) and other aspects of the SQF System shall be validated or justified.	Fully Compliant
Records of all reviews, validations and changes to the SQF System shall be maintained.	Not Applicable
2.1.4 Complaint Management	0 / 2 (0%)
The methods and responsibility for handling and investigating the cause and resolution of complaints from customers and authorities, arising from products manufactured or handled on site, shall be documented and implemented.	
Records of customer complaints and their investigations shall be maintained.	
2.1.5 Crisis Management	

Not Applicable for SQF Fundamentals for Manufacturing - Intermediate

2.2.1 Food Safety Manual	0 / 1 (0%)

A food safety manual shall be documented and maintained in either electronic and/or hard copy form and include or reference the written procedures, pre-requisite programs and other documentation necessary to support the development and the implementation, maintenance and control of the SQF System.

2.2.2 Document Control 0 / 2 (0%)

Documents shall be controlled in a manner that ensures employees use up to date and current policies, procedures and forms when food safety related activities are documented.

A register of current SQF System documents and amendments to documents shall be maintained.

2.2.3 Records 0 / 3 (0%)

All records shall be legible and suitably authorized by those undertaking monitoring activities that demonstrate inspections, analyses and other essential activities have been completed.

Records shall be readily accessible, retrievable, securely stored to prevent damage and deterioration and shall be retained in accordance with periods specified by a customer or regulations.

2.2.3 Records Summary

2.3.1 Product Development and Realization

Not applicable for SQF Fundamentals for Manufacturing - Intermediate

2.3.2 Raw and Packaging Materials 0 / 1 (0%)

Specifications for raw materials and packaging materials including, but not limited to ingredients, additives, hazardous chemicals and processing aids, that impact on finished product safety shall be documented, comply with relevant legislation, and kept current.

2.3.3 Contract Service Providers

Not applicable for SQF Fundamentals for Manufacturing - Intermediate

2.3.4 Contract Manufacturers

Not applicable for SQF Fundamentals for Manufacturing - Intermediate

2.3.5 Finished Product Specifications 0 / 3 (0%)

2.3.5.1 Finished product specifications shall be documented, current, approved by the site and their customer, accessible to relevant staff and may include:

i. Microbiological and chemical limits; and

ii. Labeling and packaging requirements.

2.4.1 Food Legislation 0 / 1 (0%)

The site shall ensure that, at the time of delivery to its customer, the food supplied shall comply with the legislation that applies to the food and its production in the country of its origin and destination if known. This includes compliance with legislative requirements applicable to maximum residue limits, food safety, packaging, product description; net weights, nutritional, allergen and additive labeling, any other criteria listed under food safety legislation, and to relevant established industry codes of practice.

2.4.2 Food Safety Fundamentals 0 / 1 (0%)

The site shall ensure the practices described in the relevant subsequent modules of this Code are applied or exempted according to a risk analysis outlining the justification for exclusion or evidence of the effectiveness of alternative control measures to ensure that food safety is not compromised.

2.4.3 Food Safety Plan 0 / 15 (0%)

The site shall have a HACCP-based reference Food Safety plan, developed by a responsible authority to meet regulatory and customer requirements or has developed their own plan following the Codex Alimentarius model.

The site's written food safety plan shall include at minimum:

i. An established a multi-disciplinary food safety team;

ii. A description of the product and product category of all ingredients (including raw materials, packaging, finished product) and the required conditions for storage and distribution;

iii. A description of the intended use of the product and identify the target consumer;

iv. A description of all of the steps taken to produce the

product in a process flow diagram; and

v. A comparison of the process flow diagram with the production process to ensure it is accurate.

The site shall perform a hazard analysis of their food manufacturing process as a minimum step in order to determine if there are any hazards associated with the production of their food item. The site shall use the HACCP tool to accomplish this assessment. If hazards are identified within the manufacturing process, it is expected that the business will take appropriate action necessary to develop a HACCP Plan. The hazard analysis shall be conducted for each process step in the manufacturing of the food item.

If the hazard analysis indicates any significant hazards not minimized or eliminated by Good Manufacturing Practices (GMPs) that are present within the food manufacturing process, they shall be identified as Critical Control Points (CCPs).

The site shall ensure the following for each CCP:

i. Critical Limits are established for each CCP;

ii. Monitoring procedures are established for each CCP;

iii. CCPs are effectively implemented; and

iv. Corrective actions are established for each CCP in the event critical limits are exceeded.

Verification procedures shall be established and effectively implemented.

Record keeping and documentation for all HACCP-related procedures shall be established and effectively implemented.

The site shall have implemented specific control measures for all relevant steps not identified as CCPs.

2.4.4 Approved Supplier Program

0 / 4 (0%)

Raw materials, ingredients, packaging materials, and services that impact on finished product safety shall meet the agreed specification (refer to 2.3.2) and be supplied by an approved supplier.

Inspections and analyses shall conform to standard reference methods.

Records of inspections and analyses shall be maintained.

2.4.4 Approved Supplier Program Summary

2.4.5 Non-conforming Product or Equipment 0 / 2 (0%)

Non-conforming product, raw material, ingredient, work-in-progress, packaging or equipment shall be quarantined, handled, re-worked or disposed of in a manner that minimizes the risk of inadvertent use, improper use or risk to the integrity of finished product.

Records of the handling and disposal of non-conforming product shall be maintained.

2.4.6 Product Rework 0 / 2 (0%)

Rework (recycle or regroup) activities shall be controlled and traceability ensured.

2.4.6 Product Rework Summary

2.4.7 Product Release 0 / 4 (0%)

The responsibility and methods for releasing products shall be documented and implemented.

The methods applied shall ensure the product is released:

i. By authorized personnel; and

ii. Once all inspections and analyses are successfully completed and documented to verify legislative and other established food safety controls have been met.

Records of all product release shall be maintained.

2.4.8 Environmental Monitoring 0 / 4 (0%)

A risk-based environmental monitoring program shall be in place for all food manufacturing processes and consider the following:

i. Applicable pathogens or indicator organisms;

ii. Number and location of samples to be taken; and

iii. Frequency of sampling.

2.5.1 Validation and Effectiveness 0 / 1 (0%)

The methods, responsibility and criteria for ensuring the effectiveness of all applicable elements of the SQF program shall be documented and implemented.

2.5.2 Verification Activities 0 / 2 (0%)

A verification schedule outlining the verification activities, their frequency of completion and the person responsible for each activity shall be prepared and implemented.

Monitoring activities associated with Good Manufacturing Practices (GMP), and other food safety controls, and the legality of certified products, shall be documented and implemented.

2.5.3 Corrective and Preventative Action 0 / 2 (0%)

Corrective action shall be undertaken to resolve non-compliance.

Records of corrective action shall be maintained.

2.5.4 Product Sampling, Inspection and Analysis 0 / 5 (0%)

The methods, responsibility and criteria for sampling, inspecting and/or analyzing raw materials, finished product and work in progress shall be documented and implemented.

The methods applied shall ensure:

i. Inspections and analyses are completed at regular intervals as required and to agreed specification and legal requirements;

ii. Inspections are conducted to ensure raw materials, work in process and finished products comply with the relevant specification, regulatory requirements and are true to label; and

iii. All analyses are conducted to nationally recognized methods or alternative methods which are validated as equivalent to the nationally recognized methods

Where external laboratories are utilized to conduct input or product analysis, the laboratories shall be accredited to ISO 17025 or an equivalent national standard.

2.5.5 Internal Audits 0 / 3 (0%)

The methods and responsibility for scheduling and

conducting internal audits to verify the effectiveness of the SQF System shall be documented and implemented. Internal audits shall be conducted at least annually.

The methods applied shall ensure:

iv. Correction and corrective action of deficiencies identified during the internal audits are undertaken; and

v. Records of internal audits and any corrections and corrective action taken as a result of internal audits shall be maintained.

2.6.1 Product Identification 0 / 4 (0%)

A product identification system shall be implemented to ensure:

i. Product is clearly identified during all stages of receipt, production, storage and dispatch;

ii. Finished product is labeled to the customer specification and/or regulatory requirements; and

iii. The size of the site and the design of product, types of commodities and/or people flow.

Product Identification records are maintained.

2.6.2 Product Trace 0 / 4 (0%)

A product trace system shall be implemented to ensure:

i. Finished product is traceable to the customer (one up) and provides traceability through the process to the manufacturing supplier and date of receipt of raw materials, food contact packaging and materials and other inputs (one back);

ii. Traceability is maintained where product is reworked;

iii. The effectiveness of the product trace system shall be reviewed at least annually; and

iv. Records of raw and packaging material receipt and use, and finished product dispatch and destination shall be maintained.

2.6.3 Product Withdrawal and Recall 0 / 3 (0%)

The site shall outline the methods and responsibility for notifying their customers and other essential bodies where circumstances arise that require product to be withdrawn or recalled from distribution.

SQFI and the certification body shall be notified in writing within 24 hours upon identification of a food safety event that requires public notification. SQFI shall be notified at foodsafetycrisis@sqfi.com.

Records of all product withdrawals, recalls and mock recalls shall be maintained.

2.7.1 Food Defense Plan 0 / 1 (0%)

The methods, responsibility and criteria for preventing food adulteration caused by a deliberate act of sabotage or terrorist-like incident shall be documented, implemented and maintained.

2.7.2 Food Fraud

Not applicable for SQF Fundamentals for Manufacturing - Intermediate

2.8.1 Allergen Management for Food Manufacturing 0 / 14 (0%)

The responsibility and methods used to control allergens and to prevent sources of allergens from contaminating product shall be documented and implemented.

The allergen management program shall include:

i. A risk analysis of those raw materials, ingredients and processing aids, including food grade lubricants, that contain food allergens;

ii. An assessment of workplace-related food allergens from locker rooms, vending machines, lunch rooms, visitors;

iii. A register of allergens which is applicable in the country of manufacture and the country(ies) of destination if known;

iv. A list of allergens which is accessible by relevant staff;

v. The hazards associated with allergens and their control incorporated into the food safety plan; and

vi. A management plan for control of identified allergens.

Instructions shall be provided to all relevant staff involved in the receipt or handling of raw materials, work-in progress, rework or finished product on how to identify, handle, store and segregate raw materials containing allergens.

Provision shall be made to clearly identify and segregate foods that contain allergens. Segregation procedures shall be implemented and continually monitored.

Where allergenic material may be intentionally or unintentionally present, cleaning and sanitation of product contact surfaces between line changeovers shall be effective, appropriate to the risk and legal requirements, and sufficient to remove all potential target allergens from product contact surfaces, including aerosols as appropriate, to prevent cross contact. Separate handling and production equipment shall be provided where satisfactory line hygiene and clean-up or segregation is not possible.

Based on risk assessment, procedures for validation and verification of the effectiveness of the cleaning and sanitation of areas and equipment in which allergens are used shall be effectively implemented.

Where allergenic material may be present, product changeover procedures shall be documented and implemented to eliminate the risk of cross-contact.

The product identification system shall make provision for clear identification and labeling in accordance with regulatory requirements of those products produced on production lines and equipment on which foods containing allergens were manufactured.

The site shall document and implement methods to control the accuracy of finished product labels (or consumer information where applicable) and assure work in progress and finished product is true to label with regard to allergens. Such measures may include label approvals at receipt, label reconciliations during production, destruction of obsolete labels and verification of labels on finished product as appropriate and product change over procedures.

2.9.1 Training Requirements 0 / 1 (0%)

Appropriate training shall be provided for personnel carrying out the tasks essential to the effective implementation of the SQF System and the maintenance of food safety and regulatory requirements.

2.9.2 Training Program 0 / 3 (0%)

An employee training program shall be documented and implemented. It shall outline the necessary skills for specific duties and the training methods to be applied for those staff carrying out tasks associated with:

i. Developing and applying Good Manufacturing Practices; and

ii. Applying food regulatory requirements.

2.9.3 Instructions 0 / 1 (0%)

Instructions shall be available in the languages relevant to the staff, explaining how all tasks critical to meeting regulatory compliance, the maintenance of food safety and process efficiency are to be performed.

2.9.4 HACCP Training Requirement 0 / 2 (0%)

The person(s) involved in developing and maintaining food safety plans shall be trained in the HACCP method.

2.9.4 HACCP Training Requirement Summary

2.9.5 Language 0 / 2 (0%)

Training materials and the delivery of training shall be provided in language understood by staff.

2.9.5 Language Summary

2.9.6 Refresher Training 0 / 1 (0%)

The training program shall include provision for identifying and implementing the refresher training needs of the organization.

2.9.7 Training Skills Register 0 / 1 (0%)

A training skills register describing who has been trained in relevant skills shall be maintained.

11.1.1 Premises Location and Approval 0 / 2 (0%)

The location of the premises shall be such that adjacent and adjoining buildings, operations and land use do not interfere with safe and hygienic operations.

The construction and ongoing operation of the premises on the site shall be approved by the relevant authority.

11.2.1 Materials and Surfaces	0 / 1 (0%)
Product contact surfaces and those surfaces not in direct contact with food in food handling areas, raw material storage, packaging material storage, and cold storage areas shall be constructed of materials that will not contribute a food safety risk.	
11.2.2 Floors, Drains and Waste Traps	0 / 2 (0%)
Floors shall be constructed of smooth, dense impact resistant material that can be effectively graded, drained, impervious to liquid and easily cleaned.	
Drains and waste trap systems shall be constructed and located so they can be easily cleaned and not present a hazard.	
11.2.3 Walls, Partitions, Floors and Ceilings	0 / 1 (0%)
Walls, partitions, ceilings and doors shall be of durable construction. Internal surfaces shall be smooth and impervious with a light-colored finish, and shall be kept clean (refer to 11.2.13.1).	
11.2.4 Stairs, Catwalks and Platforms	0 / 2 (0%)
Stairs, catwalks and platforms in food processing and handling areas shall be designed and constructed so as not to present a product contamination risk, and with no open grates directly above exposed food product surfaces. They shall be kept clean (refer to 11.2.13.1).	
11.2.4 Stairs, Catwalks and Platforms Summary	
11.2.5 Lighting and Light Fittings	0 / 3 (0%)
Lighting in food processing and handling areas and at inspection stations shall be of appropriate intensity to enable the staff to carry out their tasks efficiently and effectively.	
Light fittings in processing areas, inspection stations, ingredient and packaging storage areas, and all areas where the product is exposed shall be shatterproof, manufactured with a shatterproof covering or fitted with protective covers and recessed into or fitted flush with the ceiling. Where fittings cannot be recessed, structures must be protected from accidental breakage, manufactured from cleanable materials and addressed in the cleaning and sanitation program.	
Light fittings in warehouses and other areas where the	

product is protected shall be designed such as to prevent breakage and product contamination.

11.2.6 Inspection/Quality Control Area 0 / 1 (0%)

A suitable area shall be provided for the inspection of the product if required.

11.2.7 Dust, Insect and Pest Proofing 0 / 9 (0%)

All external windows, ventilation openings, doors and other openings shall be effectively sealed when closed and proofed against dust, vermin and other pests.

External personnel access doors shall be provided. They shall be effectively insect-proofed and fitted with a self-closing device and proper seals to protect against ingress of dust, vermin and other pests.

External doors, including overhead dock doors in food handling areas used for product, pedestrian or truck access shall be insect-proofed by at least one or a combination of the following methods:

i. A self-closing device;

ii. An effective air curtain;

iii. An insect-proof screen;

iv. An insect-proof annex; and

v. Adequate sealing around trucks in docking areas.

Electric insect control devices, pheromone or other traps and baits shall be located so as not to present a contamination risk to the product, packaging, containers or processing equipment. Poison rodenticide bait shall not be used inside ingredient or product storage areas or processing areas.

11.2.8 Ventilation 0 / 6 (0%)

Adequate ventilation shall be provided in enclosed processing and food handling areas.

All ventilation equipment and devices in product storage and handling areas shall be adequately cleaned as per 11.2.12, to prevent unsanitary conditions.

Extractor fans and canopies shall be provided in areas where

cooking operations are carried out or a large amount of steam is generated and shall have the following features:

i. Capture velocities shall be sufficient to prevent condensation build up and to evacuate all heat, fumes and other aerosols to the exterior via an exhaust hood positioned over the cooker(s);

ii. Fans and exhaust vents shall be insect-proofed and located so as not to pose a contamination risk; and

iii. Where appropriate, positive air-pressure system shall be installed to prevent airborne contamination.

11.2.9 Equipment, Utensils and Protective Clothing 0 / 2 (0%)

Equipment and utensils shall be designed, constructed, installed, operated and maintained to meet any applicable regulatory requirements and not to pose a contamination threat to products.

Benches, tables, conveyors, mixers, mincers, graders and other mechanical processing equipment shall be hygienically designed and located for appropriate cleaning. Equipment surfaces shall be smooth, impervious and free from cracks or crevices.

11.2.10 Premises and Equipment Maintenance 0 / 10 (0%)

The methods and responsibility for the maintenance and repair of plant, equipment and buildings shall be documented, planned and implemented in a manner that minimizes the risk of product, packaging or equipment contamination.

Routine maintenance of plant and equipment in any food processing, handling or storage area shall be performed according to a maintenance-control schedule and recorded. The maintenance schedule shall be prepared to cover building, equipment and other areas of the premises critical to the maintenance of product safety and quality.

Failures of plant and equipment in any food processing, handling or storage area shall be documented, reviewed and their repair incorporated into the maintenance control schedule.

Maintenance staff and contractors shall comply with the site’s personnel and process hygiene requirements (refer to 11.3.1, 11.3.2, 11.3.3, 11.3.4).

All maintenance and other engineering contractors required to work on site shall be trained in the site's food safety and

hygiene procedures, or shall be escorted at all times, until their work is completed.

The maintenance supervisor and the site supervisor shall be informed if any repairs or maintenance pose a potential threat to product safety (i.e. pieces of electrical wire, damaged light fittings, and loose overhead fittings). When possible, maintenance is to be conducted outside processing times.

Temporary repairs, where required shall not pose a food safety risk and shall be included in the cleaning program. There shall be a plan in place to address completion of temporary repairs to ensure they do not become permanent solutions.

Maintenance staff and contractors shall remove all tools and debris from any maintenance activity once it has been completed and inform the area supervisor and maintenance supervisor so appropriate hygiene and sanitation can be completed and a pre-operational inspection conducted prior to the commencement of site operations.

Equipment located over product or product conveyors shall be lubricated with food grade lubricants and their use controlled to minimize the contamination of the product.

Paint used in a food handling or contact zone shall be suitable for use and in good condition and shall not be used on any product contact surface.

11.2.11 Calibration 0 / 6 (0%)

The methods and responsibility for the calibration and re-calibration of measuring, test and inspection equipment used for monitoring activities critical to food safety and regulatory requirements shall be documented and implemented.

Procedures shall be documented and implemented to address the disposition of potentially affected products should measuring, test and inspection equipment be found to be out of calibration state.

Calibrated measuring, test and inspected equipment shall be protected from damage and unauthorized adjustment.

Equipment shall be calibrated against national or international reference standards and methods or to accuracy appropriate to its use. In cases where standards are not available, the site shall provide evidence to support the calibration reference method applied.

Calibration shall be performed according to regulatory

requirements and/or to the equipment manufacturers recommended schedule.

Calibration records shall be maintained.

11.2.12 Pest Prevention

0 / 11 (0%)

The methods and responsibility for pest prevention shall be documented and effectively implemented. The premises, its surrounding areas, storage facilities, machinery and equipment shall be kept free of waste or accumulated debris so as not to attract pests and vermin.

Identified pest activity shall not present a risk of contamination to food products, raw materials or packaging.

The pest prevention program shall:

i. A record of pest sightings;

ii. The methods used to prevent pest problems;

iii. The pest elimination methods (e.g. rodent glue boards, bait stations and insect electrocutors);

iv. The frequency with which pest status is to be checked;

v. A site map the identification, location, number and type of bait stations set;

vi. The chemicals used (they are required to be approved by the relevant authority and their Safety Data Sheets (SDS) made available);

vii. The methods used to make staff aware of the bait control program and the measures to take when they come into contact with a bait station; and

viii. The requirements for staff awareness and training in the use of pest and vermin control chemicals and baits.

Inspections for pest activity shall be undertaken on a regular basis by trained personnel and the appropriate action taken if pests are present.

11.2.13 Cleaning and Sanitation

0 / 10 (0%)

The methods and responsibility for the cleaning of the food handling and processing equipment and environment,

storage areas, staff amenities and toilet facilities shall be documented and implemented.

Consideration shall be given to:

i. What is to be cleaned;

ii. How it is to be cleaned;

iii. When it is to be cleaned;

iv. Who is responsible for the cleaning;

v. Methods used to confirm the correct concentrations of detergents and sanitizers, and

vi. The responsibility and methods used to verify the effectiveness of the cleaning and sanitation program.

Provision shall be made for the effective cleaning of processing equipment, utensils and protective clothing.

Suitably equipped areas shall be designated for cleaning product containers, knives, cutting boards and other utensils and for cleaning of protective clothing used by staff. These cleaning operations shall be controlled so as not to interfere with manufacturing operations, equipment or product. Racks and containers for storing cleaned utensils shall be provided as required.

Pre-operational inspections shall be conducted following cleaning and sanitation operations to ensure food processing areas, product contact surfaces, equipment, staff amenities and sanitary facilities and other essential areas are clean before the commencement of production. Pre-operational inspections shall be conducted by qualified personnel.

11.3.1 Personnel 0 / 4 (0%)

Personnel who are known to have been known to be carriers, or are carriers, of infectious diseases that present a health risk to others through the packing or storage processes shall not engage in the processing or packing of food, or enter storage areas where food is exposed.

The site shall have measures in place to prevent contact of materials, ingredients, food packaging, food, or food contact surfaces from any bodily fluids from open wounds, coughing, sneezing, spitting, or any other means.

Personnel with exposed cuts, sores or lesions shall not be

engaged in handling or processing products or handling primary packaging materials or food contact surfaces. Minor cuts or abrasions on exposed parts of the body shall be covered with a colored bandage containing a metal strip or an alternative suitable waterproof and colored dressing.

Smoking, chewing, eating, or spitting is not permitted in areas where product is produced, stored, or otherwise exposed. Drinking of water is permissible only under conditions that prevent contamination or other food safety risks from occurring. Drinking water containers in production and storage areas shall be stored in clear, covered containers, and in designated areas away from raw materials, packaging or equipment.

11.3.2 Hand Washing 0 / 9 (0%)

Hand wash basins shall be provided adjacent to all personnel access points and in accessible locations throughout food handling and processing areas as required.

Hand wash basins shall be constructed of stainless steel or similar non-corrosive material and as a minimum supplied with:

i. A potable water supply at an appropriate temperature;

ii. Liquid soap contained within a fixed dispenser;

iii. Paper towels in a hands free cleanable dispenser; and

iv. A means of containing used paper towels.

The following additional facilities shall be provided in high risk areas:

i. Hands free operated taps; and

ii. Hand sanitizers.

A sign instructing people to wash their hands, and in appropriate languages, shall be provided in a prominent position.

11.3.3 Clothing 0 / 5 (0%)

The site shall ensure that the clothing and hair policy protects materials, food and food contact surfaces from unintentional microbiological or physical contamination.

Clothing worn by staff engaged in handling food shall be maintained, stored, laundered and worn so as not to present

a contamination risk to products.

Clothing including shoes, shall be clean at the commencement of each shift and maintained in a serviceable condition.

Excessively soiled uniforms shall be changed or replaced where they present a product contamination risk.

Disposable gloves and aprons shall be changed after each break, upon re-entry into the processing area and when damaged. Non-disposable aprons and gloves shall be cleaned and sanitized as required and when not in use stored on racks provided in the processing area or designated sealed containers in personnel lockers and not on packaging, ingredients, product or equipment.

11.3.4 Jewelry and Personal Effects 0 / 1 (0%)

Jewelry and other loose objects shall not be worn or taken into a food handling or processing operation or any area where food is exposed. The wearing of plain bands with no stones and prescribed medical alert bracelets can be permitted, however the site will need to consider their customer requirements and the applicable food legislation.

11.3.5 Visitors 0 / 5 (0%)

All visitors, including management and maintenance staff, shall wear suitable clothing and footwear when entering any food processing or handling area.

All visitors shall be required to remove jewelry and other loose objects.

Visitors exhibiting visible signs of illness shall be prevented from entering areas in which food is handled or processed.

Visitors shall enter and exit food handling areas through the proper staff entrance points and comply with all hand washing and personnel practice requirements.

All visitors shall be trained in the site's food safety and hygiene procedures before entering any food processing or handling areas, or shall be escorted at all times in food processing, handling and storage areas.

11.3.6 Staff Amenities

Not applicable for SQF Fundamentals for Manufacturing - Intermediate

11.3.7 Change Rooms 0 / 1 (0%)

Change room facilities shall be provided to enable staff and visitors to change into and out of protective clothing as required.

11.3.8 Laundry

Not applicable for SQF Fundamentals for Manufacturing – Intermediate

11.3.9 Sanitary Facilities 0 / 8 (0%)

Toilet rooms shall be:

i. Designed and constructed so that they are accessible to staff and separate from any processing and food handling operations;

ii. Accessed from the processing area via an airlock vented to the exterior or through an adjoining room;

iii. Sufficient in number for the maximum number of staff;

iv. Constructed so that they can be easily cleaned and maintained;

v. Include an area inside or nearby, for storing protective clothing, outer garments and other items while using the facilities; and

vi. Kept clean and tidy.

Sanitary drainage shall not be connected to any other drains within the premises and shall be directed to a septic tank or a sewerage system in accordance in regulations.

Hand wash basins shall be provided immediately outside or inside the toilet room and designed as outlined in 11.3.2.2.

11.3.10 Lunch Rooms 0 / 1 (0%)

Separate lunch room facilities shall be provided away from a food contact/handling zone.

11.4.1 Staff Engaged in Food Handling and Processing Operations 0 / 14 (0%)

All personnel engaged in any food handling, preparation or processing operations shall ensure that products and materials are handled and stored in such a way as to prevent damage or product contamination.

They shall comply with the following processing practices:

i. Personnel entry to processing areas shall be through the personnel access doors only;

ii. All doors are to be kept closed. Doors shall not be left open for extended periods when access for waste removal or receiving of product/ingredient/packaging is required;

iii. Packaging material, product, and ingredients shall be kept in appropriate containers as required and off the floor;

iv. Waste shall be contained in the bins identified for this purpose and removed from the processing area on a regular basis and not left to accumulate;

v. Staff shall not eat or taste any product being processed in the food handling/contact zone, except as noted in element 11.4.1.2;

vi. The wearing of false fingernails, false eyelashes, eyelash extensions, long nails or fingernail polish is not permitted when handling exposed food; and

i. vii. Hair restraints are used where product is exposed.

In circumstances where it is necessary to undertake sensory evaluations in a food handling/contact zone the site shall implement proper controls and procedures to ensure:

i. Food safety is not compromised;

ii. Sensory evaluations are conducted by authorized personnel only;

iii. A high standard of personal hygiene is practiced by personnel conducting sensory evaluations;

iv. Sensory evaluations are conducted in areas equipped for the purpose; and

v. Equipment used for sensory evaluations is sanitized, maintained and stored separate from processing equipment.

All wash down hoses shall be stored on hose racks after use and not left on the floor.

11.5.1 Water Supply 0 / 2 (0%)

Adequate supplies of hot and cold potable water drawn from

a known clean source shall be provided for use during processing operations, as an ingredient and for cleaning the premises and equipment.

The delivery of water within the premises shall ensure potable water is not contaminated.

11.5.2 Water Treatment 0 / 4 (0%)

Water treatment methods, equipment and materials, if required, shall be designed, installed and operated to ensure water receives an effective treatment.

Water treatment equipment shall be monitored regularly to ensure it remains serviceable.

Treated water shall be regularly monitored to ensure it meets the indicators specified.

Water used in as an ingredient in processing, or in cleaning and sanitizing equipment, shall be tested, and if required, treated to maintain potability (refer to 11.5.2.1).

11.5.3 Ice Supply 0 / 2 (0%)

Ice provided for use during processing operations or as a processing aid or an ingredient shall comply with 11.5.4.1.

Ice rooms and receptacles shall be constructed of materials as outlined in elements 11.2.1, 11.2.2 and 11.2.3 and designed to minimize contamination of the ice during storage and distribution.

11.5.4 Monitoring Water Microbiology and Quality 0 / 8 (0%)

Water shall comply with local, national or internationally recognized potable water microbiological and quality standards as required when used for

i. washing, thawing and treating food;

ii. handwashing;

iii. to convey food;

iv. as an ingredient or food processing aid;

v. cleaning food contact surfaces and equipment;

vi. the manufacture of ice; or

vii. the manufacture of steam that will come into contact with food or used to heat water that will come in contact with food.

11.5.5 The Quality of Air and Other Gases 0 / 2 (0%)

Compressed air or other gasses (e.g. nitrogen, carbon dioxide) that contacts food or food contact surfaces shall be clean and present no risk to food safety.

Compressed air systems, and systems used to store or dispense other gasses used in the manufacturing process that come into contact with food or food contact surfaces shall be maintained and regularly monitored for quality and applicable food safety hazards.

11.6.1 Storage and Handling of Goods 0 / 5 (0%)

The site shall document and implement an effective storage plan that allows for the safe, hygienic storage of raw materials (i.e. frozen, chilled, and ambient), ingredients, packaging materials, equipment, and chemicals.

The responsibility and methods for ensuring effective stock rotation principles are applied shall be documented and implemented.

Procedures shall be in place to ensure that all ingredients, materials, work-in-progress, rework, and finished product are utilized within their designated shelf-life.

Equipment storage rooms shall be designed and constructed to allow for the hygienic and efficient storage of equipment and containers.

Records shall be available to validate alternate or temporary control measures for the storage of raw materials, ingredients, packaging materials, equipment, chemicals, or finished products.

11.6.2 Cold Storage, Freezing and Chilling of Foods 0 / 5 (0%)

Chillers, blast freezers and cold storage rooms shall be designed and constructed to allow for the hygienic and efficient refrigeration of food and easily accessible for inspection and cleaning.

Sufficient refrigeration shall be available to chill, freeze, store chilled or store frozen the maximum anticipated throughput of product with allowance for periodic cleaning of refrigerated areas.

Discharge from defrost and condensate lines shall be

controlled and discharged to the drainage system.

Freezing, chilling and cold storage rooms shall be fitted with temperature monitoring equipment and located to monitor the warmest part of the room and be fitted with a temperature measurement device that is easily readable and accessible.

Loading and unloading docks shall be designed to protect the product during loading and unloading.

11.6.3 Storage of Dry Ingredients, Packaging, and Shelf Stable Packaged Goods — 0 / 3 (0%)

Rooms used for the storage of product ingredients, packaging, and other dry goods shall be located away from wet areas and constructed to protect the product from contamination and deterioration.

Racks provided for the storage of packaging shall be constructed of impervious materials and designed to enable cleaning of the floors and the storage room. Storage areas shall be constructed to prevent packaging from becoming a harborage for pests or vermin.

Vehicles used in food contact, handling or processing zones or in cold storage rooms shall be designed and operated so as not to present a food safety hazard.

11.6.4 Storage of Hazardous Chemicals and Toxic Substances — 0 / 1 (0%)

Hazardous chemicals and toxic substances with the potential for food contamination shall be stored so as not to present a hazard to staff, product, packaging, product handling equipment or areas in which the product is handled, stored or transported.

11.6.5 Loading, Transport and Unloading Practices — 0 / 1 (0%)

The practices applied during loading, transport and unloading of food shall be documented, implemented and designed to maintain appropriate storage conditions and product integrity. Foods shall be loaded, transported and unloaded under conditions suitable to prevent cross contamination.

11.6.6 Loading — 0 / 3 (0%)

Vehicles (e.g. trucks/vans/containers) used for transporting food shall be inspected prior to loading to ensure they are clean, in good repair, suitable for the purpose and free from odors or other conditions that may impact negatively on the product.

Loading practices shall be designed to minimize unnecessary exposure of the product to conditions detrimental to maintaining the product and package integrity during loading and transport.

Vehicles (e.g. trucks/vans/containers) shall be secured from tampering using a seal or other agreed upon, acceptable device or system.

11.6.7 Transport 0 / 2 (0%)

Refrigerated units shall maintain the food at required temperatures and the unit's temperature settings shall be set, checked and recorded before loading and product temperatures recorded at regular intervals during loading as appropriate.

The refrigeration unit shall be operational at all times and checks completed of the unit's operation, the door seals and the storage temperature checked at regular intervals during transit.

11.6.8 Unloading 0 / 2 (0%)

Prior to opening the doors, the refrigeration unit's storage temperature settings and operating temperature shall be checked and recorded. Unloading shall be completed efficiently and product temperatures shall be recorded at the commencement of unloading and at regular intervals during unloading.

Unloading practices shall be designed to minimize unnecessary exposure of the product to conditions detrimental to maintaining the product and package integrity.

11.7.1 Process Flow 0 / 1 (0%)

The process flow shall be designed to prevent cross contamination and organized so there is a continuous flow of product through the process. The flow of personnel shall be managed such that the potential for contamination is minimized.

11.7.2 Receipt of Raw and Packaging Materials and Ingredients 0 / 1 (0%)

Dry ingredients and packaging shall be received and stored separately from frozen and chilled raw materials to ensure there is no cross contamination. Unprocessed raw materials shall be received and segregated to ensure there is no cross contamination.

11.7.3 Thawing of Food 0 / 4 (0%)

Thawing of food shall be undertaken in equipment and rooms appropriate for the purpose.

Equipment for water thawing shall be continuous flow to ensure the water exchange rate and temperature does not contribute to product deterioration or contamination. Water overflow shall be directed into the floor drainage system and not onto the floor.

Air thawing facilities shall be designed to thaw food under controlled conditions at a rate and temperature that does not contribute to product deterioration or contamination.

Provision is to be made for the containment and regular disposal of used cartons and packaging from thawed product so that there is no risk to the product.

11.7.4 High Risk Processes

0 / 5 (0%)

The processing of high risk food shall be conducted under controlled conditions such that sensitive areas in which high risk food has undergone a "kill" step, a "food safety intervention" or is subject to post process handling, are protected/segregated from other processes, raw materials or staff who handle raw materials to ensure cross contamination is minimized.

Areas in which high risk processes are conducted shall only be serviced by staff dedicated to that function.

Staff access points shall be located, designed and equipped to enable staff to don distinctive protective clothing and to practice a high standard of personal hygiene to prevent product contamination.

Staff engaged in high risk areas shall change into clean clothing or temporary protective outerwear when entering high risk areas.

Product transfer points shall be located and designed so as not to compromise high risk segregation and to minimize the risk of cross contamination.

11.7.5 Control of Foreign Matter Contamination

0 / 9 (0%)

The responsibility and methods used to prevent foreign matter contamination of the product shall be documented, implemented and communicated to all staff.

Inspections shall be performed to ensure plant and equipment remains in good condition, equipment has not become detached or deteriorated and is free from potential contaminants.

All glass objects or similar material in food handling/contact zones shall be listed in a glass register including details of their location.

Containers, equipment and other utensils made of glass, porcelain, ceramics, laboratory glassware or other like material (except where the product is contained in packaging made from these materials, or measurement instruments with glass dial covers or MIG thermometers required under regulation) shall not be permitted in food processing /contact zones.

Regular inspections of food handling/contact zones shall be conducted to ensure they are free of glass or other like material and to establish changes to the condition of the objects listed in the glass register.

Glass instrument dial covers on processing equipment and MIG thermometers shall be inspected at the start of each shift to confirm they have not been damaged.

Wooden pallets and other wooden utensils used in food handling/contact zones shall be dedicated for that purpose, clean, maintained in good order. Their condition shall be subject to regular inspection.

Loose metal objects on equipment, equipment covers and overhead structures shall be removed or tightly fixed so as not to present a hazard.

Knives and cutting instruments used in processing and packaging operations shall be controlled, and kept clean and well maintained. Snap-off blades shall not be used in manufacturing or storage areas.

11.7.6 Detection of Foreign Objects 0 / 3 (0%)

The responsibility, methods and frequency for monitoring, maintaining, calibrating and using screens, sieves, filters or other technologies to remove or detect foreign matter shall be documented and implemented.

Metal detectors or other physical contaminant detection technologies shall be routinely monitored, validated and verified for operational effectiveness. The equipment shall be designed to isolate defective product and indicate when it is rejected.

Records shall be maintained of the inspection of foreign object detection devices and of any products rejected or removed by them. Records shall include any corrective actions resulting from the inspections.

11.7.7 Managing Foreign Matter Contamination Incidents 0 / 2 (0%)

In all cases of foreign matter contamination the affected batch or item shall be isolated, inspected, reworked or disposed of.

In circumstances where glass or similar material breakage occurs, the affected area is to be isolated, cleaned and thoroughly inspected (including cleaning equipment and footwear) and cleared by a suitably responsible person prior to the commencement of operations.

11.8.1 Location 0 / 3 (0%)

On site laboratories conducting chemical and microbiological analysis that may pose a risk to product safety, shall be located separate from any food processing or handling activity and designed to limit access only to authorized personnel.

Provisions shall be made to isolate and contain all laboratory waste held on the premises and manage it separately from food waste. Laboratory waste water outlet shall as a minimum be down stream of drains that service food processing and handling areas.

Signage shall be displayed identifying the laboratory area as a restricted area accessible only by authorized personnel.

11.9.1 Dry and Liquid Waste Disposal 0 / 2 (0%)

The responsibility and methods used to collect and handle dry, wet and liquid waste and store prior to removal from the premises shall be documented and implemented.

Waste shall be removed on a regular basis and not build up in food handling or processing areas. Designated waste accumulation areas shall be maintained in a clean and tidy condition until external waste collection is undertaken.

11.10.1 Grounds and Roadways 0 / 2 (0%)

The grounds and area surrounding the premises shall be maintained to minimize dust and kept free of waste, accumulated debris or standing water so as not to attract pests and vermin.

Paths, roadways and loading and unloading areas shall be maintained so as not to present a hazard to the food safety operation of the premises.

Completion

Comments and recommendations

Close documentation gaps by December 19, 2025;
Conduct refresher training for new line staff on SQF documentation procedures;
Prepare for scheduled third-party SQF certification audit in January 2026.

Name and signature

Hannah Strong
12 Dec 2025 14:21 PST