International Food Standard Version 5
The requirements placed on food safety are extended

On August 1, 2008, the IFS Version 5 Standard was introduced on the market. The new version defines the criteria for auditing manufacturers of private labels. The requirements placed on hygiene, packaging material and traceability are extended. In future the focus will be on controlling the processes in the production area, i.e. on food safety.

Based on the experience of the previous IFS Versions and after interviewing 500 experts from trade and industry as well as federal institutions and making test audits throughout Europe, Version 5 of the International Food Standard, which defines the criteria for auditing manufacturers of private labels, has now been published. In future the IFS will not only be supported by the German and French trade associations (HDE – Hauptverband des deutschen Einzelhandels; FCD – Fédération des entreprises de Commerce et de la Distribution) but also by the Italian trade associations (Federdistribuzione, ANCD (Associazione Nazionale Cooperative tra Dettagliante) and ANCC/COOP (Associazione Nazionale Cooperative Consumatori)). In future the focus will be on controlling the processes in the production area. In this context, the focus is on food safety, which is reflected in six additional KO criteria.

Quality Austria informs on the most important innovations
As compared to Version 4, the new version excels by the fact that the Catalogue of Questions has been reduced by one quarter. The new EU Regulations have also been considered in the catalogue of criteria. Furthermore, the requirements placed on hygiene, packaging material and traceability have been improved significantly. “The most important innovations are the facts that all the requirements have been combined to one level (instead of three), the problem of impurities and personnel hygiene are paid more attention to, there are effective procedures for calling back and taking back products as well as internal audits and the number of KO criteria has been increased to ten (instead of four).” This is how DI Alfred Greimel, Sector Manager Food and Feedstuffs of Quality Austria, enumerated the innovations in Linz. “Still another novelty is the period of the validity of the Certificate. Now this period will always amount to 12 months, even at a higher level, which is only reached at 95% instead of 90% before.”

IFS yields many advantages
As Mag. Elisabeth Voltmer, Quality Manager of KOTÁNYI Ltd. puts it, “I am an absolute supporter of IFS because I think IFS yields advantages to any company, above all relating to the improvement of product safety. IFS Version 5, in particular, has given adequate tools to the competent persons in the companies by clearly formulating the catalogue of requirements and wording things precisely. The companies’ autonomy is intensified by Version 5 because the requirement for risk based action planning is intensified and is a big challenge for food industry. For example, the HACCP concept will also have to be scrutinized and re-assessed.”

Dr. Herfried Haupt, Competence Center Service of Official Veterinarians and Food Safety, stresses in his lecture in Linz, “IFS and inspections carried out by public authorities make contributions to traceability of how food safety is ensured. Careful risk analyses should consider imaginable risks and the likelihood of their occurrence. Certification systems and official monitoring should consider whether the businessperson, who has the main responsibility for food safety, exercises due care.”
The most important innovations at a glance

- The catalogue of questions has been reduced by one fourth.
- All the requirements are combined to one level (up to now there have been three levels).
- There are altogether ten KO criteria (up to now there have been four KO criteria).
- The problem of impurities and personnel hygiene are paid even more attention to.
- The Certificate will always be valid for 12 months (even at a “higher level”).
- There are effective procedures for calling back and taking back products and internal audits.
- The higher level is only reached at 95% (up to now >90%)

Further information events of Quality Austria
Quality Austria, which is the only Austrian organization to be accredited as an IFS Certification Body, is pleased to invite all the customers in Austria and, above all, also in South to this important information event. At all the events in Styria and South Tyrol, DI Alfred Greimel, Sector Manager Food and Feedstuffs of Quality Austria, will be the presenter of the evening and inform on the most important innovations as seen by the Certification Body in detail. Specialists from the food sector report about experience made with IFS up to now and give an outlook on future changes and the practical importance of certification systems for official monitoring of compliance with the requirements of food law. The goal is to inform the audience on the effects of the new version on in-company practice and impart valuable contents about food safety and crisis prevention. The event mainly addresses the CEO’s and Quality Managers from the food safety sector as well as Hygiene Representatives, members of HACCP Teams, Food Safety Teams and technical media.

Lebring, Graz/Styria
Thursday, October 25, 2007, from 2 pm
Fast Forward Region GmbH
TECHforTASTE.Net Steiermark, Parkring, 8403 Lebring bei Graz

Terlan/South Tyrol
Monday, November 12, 2007, from 2 pm
VOG – Verband der Südtiroler Obstgenossenschaften
Jakobstraße 1/A, 39018 Terlan

Photo text: Dr. Herfried Haupt, Competence Center Service of Official Veterinarians and Food Safety, Mag. Elisabeth Voitmer, Quality Manager of KOTÁNYI, and DI Alfred Greimel, Quality Austria
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