Document Control

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GFSI Intermediate Requirement

• The company shall establish and implement a procedure to ensure all documents are maintained and updated. Records shall be retained for a time period required to meet customer and/or legal requirements.
Importance of Documentation

• Establish the requirement for a document and its purpose
• Vehicle for good communication- Food Safety Policy
• Promotes harmonisation of communication and understanding
• Provides history and information for review
• Promotes defined procedural requirements- frequency of testing, signing on action
• Provides legal protection – evidence of action
Documentation Control

• A person should have the responsibility to develop, implement and control the Food Safety documentation system

• There must be a systematic approach to document control

• A procedure supporting document control should be in place

• The system may be paper or electronic, but best practice principles shall still apply
Document Control

• Document Control Procedure- why, who, what, how and when

• Allocate responsibility- this may or may not be the Food Safety Manager

• Define document identification system
  - document title
  - document type
  - reference number or code
  - document version number
  - the person issuing the document
  - date of issue
  - date of implementation (if different from date of issue)
  - reason for change/amendment
  - reference to the obsolete document
Principles of Good Document Control

- Proper authorisation
- Control of document issue
- Control of document versions
- Control of reference/coding system
- Legibility
- Clarity
- Correct language
- Accessibility
- Retention
Types of Documents

- Policy
- Food Safety Manual
- Specifications (Reference GFSI BASIC Level)
- Procedures
- Work Instructions
- Records
- Contracts or Agreements
Amendment of Documents

• Management review
• Internal Audit
• New product specification
• New equipment-maintenance / cleaning
• Corrective action
• New contract
Implementation Considerations

• Who is the authorising person?
• Who should be provided with the document?
• How they should be provided with the document?
• Does the issue of the document have an effect of other documents or procedures? Good example: finished product specification and recipe sheets
• Do documents inter relate and cross reference?
• Will the document be clearly understood by all recipients or is training required?
• When will the review of the document be undertaken?
Documentation Retention

• Documents should always be stored in a way to retain their condition

• Documents should not be issued in a format that can be easily changed or amended by unauthorised persons.

• Documents should be retained for an agreed length of time – legal and customer requirements
Records

• Necessary to provide evidence of conformity and the effective operation of the food safety management system

• Records are ‘working documents’ so completion, review and retention are critical

• Must be legible

• Must be signed by the appropriate person

• Must be reviewed by the appropriate person

• Consideration should be given to provide additional information on record sheets i.e. acceptance parameters, escalation instructions when critical limits exceeded

• Where necessary, train staff on the need for the record and how to complete

• Record keeping is critical to ensure verification of actions and is difficult to control
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