1.0 Purpose

The purpose of the SQF Certification Program is to assess the extent to which an organization conforms to the applicable SQF Code(s) regarding products that are retailed, manufactured, produced, packaged, stored or distributed.

2.0 Scope

Certification is open to all interested organizations. This procedure describes the events, which occur during the certification process. The purpose of the certification process is to assess the extent of any applicant's organizational conformance with the applicable SQF Code(s) Ed. 8.0 to which they are making application. All organizations that utilize UL Registrar's (UL R) assessment services are guided by these procedures and are required to comply with all of the relevant provisions contained herein, including implementing appropriate changes when they are communicated by UL Registrar, LLC.

The organization shall make all necessary arrangements for UL Registrar LLC (UL R) personnel to conduct the assessment, including provisions for examining documentation, access to all areas, records, investigation of complaints, participating observers and personnel for the purpose of audits, surveillance, re-certification, follow-up, special audits and resolution.

3.0 Program Participation (New/Existing Clients) – Application for Certification

Organizations to undergo assessment must apply for certification by providing UL Registrar LLC information on the Application for Certification (QF 7.2-1SQF) supplied by UL R to include but not limited to the following:

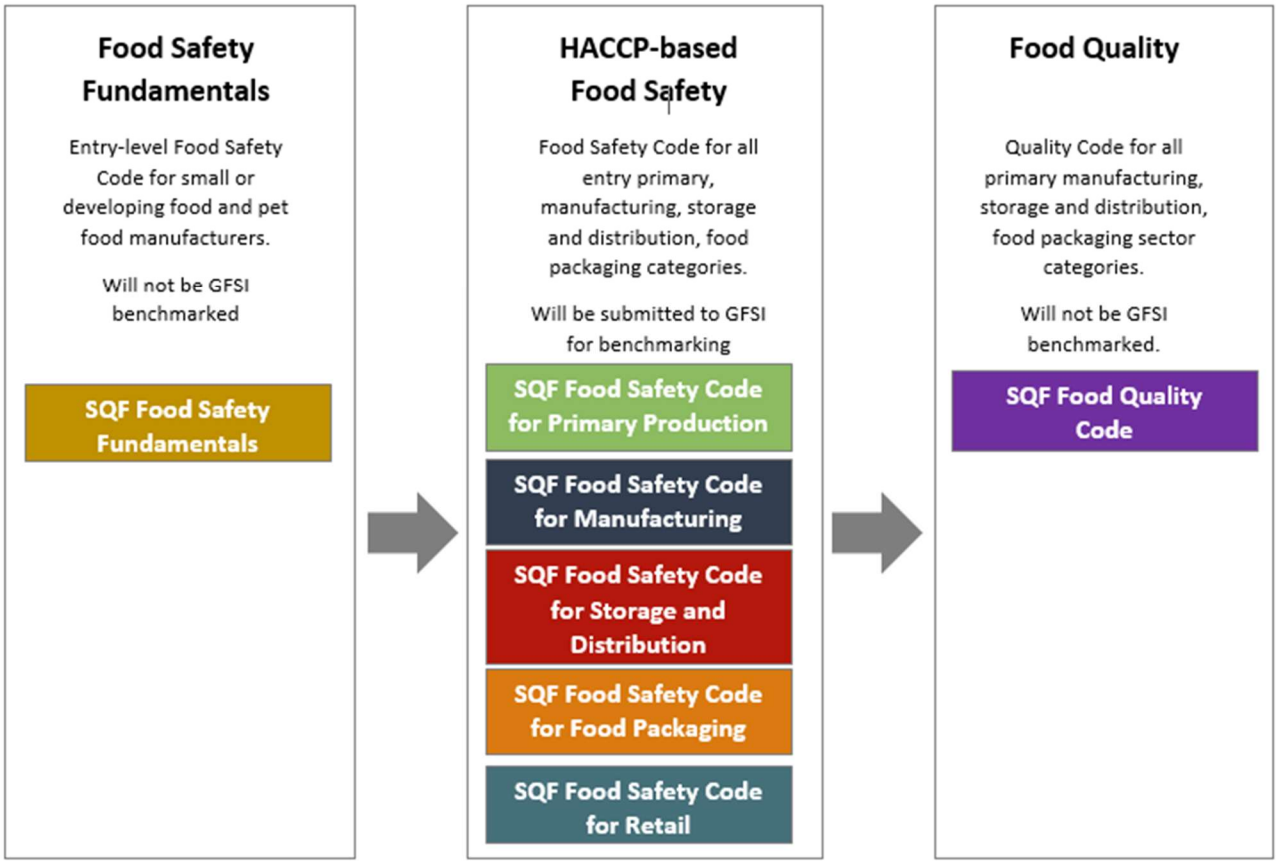
- The size and location of the site to undergo audit,
- the number of employees at the site,
- all requested audit scope(s) under audit,
- and a list of all finished products manufactured, packaged or stored, which may be provided for retail or wholesale trade.

Select the Relevant SQF Modules

SQFI recognized that food safety practices differ depending on the food safety risk to the product and the process, and has designed the SQF Food Safety Codes to meet the individual requirements of each industry sector.

The SQF food sector categories and applicable modules are listed in full in Appendix 1 of all SQF Codes. This appendix includes a more detailed description with examples, level of risk, and the relationship with the Global Food Safety Initiative (GFSI) industry scopes outlined in the GFSI Requirements Document.

The following provides a guide to the SQF Codes and modules that apply to each food manufacturing industry sector or groups of industry sectors. All manufacturers are required to implement the manufacturing system elements plus the applicable Good Manufacturing Practices (GMP) module:



FSC #	FSC	Applicable Code	Applicable Modules
1	Production, Capture and Harvesting of Livestock and Game Animals	Primary Production	SQF System Elements + **Module 5: GAP for farming of animal products**
		Food Quality Code	The SQF Food Safety Code for Primary Production
2	Growing and Harvesting of Sprouted Seed Crops for Human Consumption	Primary Production	TBA by SQFI
3	Growing and Production of Fresh Produce and Nuts	Fundamentals	SQF System Elements + Module 7: GAP for farming of plant products (fruit and vegetables) Or Module 7H: GAP for farming of plant products
		Primary Production	SQF System Elements + Module 7: GAP for farming of plant products (fruit and vegetables) Or Module 7H: GAP for farming of plant products
		Food Quality Code	The SQF Food Safety Code for Primary Production
4	Fresh Produce and Nuts Pack-house Operations	Manufacturing	SQF System Elements + Module 10: GMP for pre-processing of plant products
		Food Quality Code	The SQF Food Safety Code for Manufacturing
5	Extensive Broad Acre Agricultural Operations	Primary Production	SQF System Elements + Module 8: GAP for farming of grains and pulses

FSC #	FSC	Applicable Code	Applicable Modules
		Food Quality Code	The SQF Food Safety Code for Primary Production
6	Harvest and Intensive Farming of Seafood	Primary Production	SQF System Elements + Module 6: GAP for farming of seafood
		Food Quality Code	The SQF Food Safety Code for Primary Production
7	Slaughterhouse, Boning and Butchery Operations	Manufacturing	SQF System Elements + Module 9: GMP for pre-processing of animal products
		Food Quality Code	The SQF Food Safety Code for Manufacturing
8	Processing of Manufactured Meats and Poultry	Fundamentals	SQF System Elements + Module 11: GMP for processing of food products
		Manufacturing	SQF System Elements + Module 11: GMP for processing of food products
		Food Quality Code	The SQF Food Safety Code for Manufacturing
9	Seafood Processing	Fundamentals	SQF System Elements + Module 11: GMP for processing of food products
		Manufacturing	SQF System Elements + Module 11: GMP for processing of food products
		Food Quality Code	The SQF Food Safety Code for Manufacturing
10	Dairy Food Processing	Fundamentals	SQF System Elements + Module 11: GMP for processing of food products
		Manufacturing	SQF System Elements + Module 11: GMP for processing of food products
		Food Quality Code	The SQF Food Safety Code for Manufacturing
11	Apiculture and Honey Processing	Fundamentals	SQF System Elements + Module 11: GMP for processing of food products
		Manufacturing	SQF System Elements + Module 11: GMP for processing of food products
		Food Quality Code	The SQF Food Safety Code for Manufacturing
12	Egg Processing	Fundamentals	SQF System Elements + Module 11: GMP for processing of food products
		Manufacturing	SQF System Elements + Module 11: GMP for processing of food products
		Food Quality Code	The SQF Food Safety Code for Manufacturing
13	Bakery and Snack Food Processing	Fundamentals	SQF System Elements + Module 11: GMP for processing of food products
		Manufacturing	SQF System Elements + Module 11: GMP for processing of food products
		Food Quality Code	The SQF Food Safety Code for Manufacturing
14	Fruit, Vegetable and Nut Processing, and Fruit Juices	Fundamentals	SQF System Elements + Module 11: GMP for processing of food products
		Manufacturing	SQF System Elements + Module 11: GMP for processing of food products
		Food Quality Code	The SQF Food Safety Code for Manufacturing

FSC #	FSC	Applicable Code	Applicable Modules
15	Canning, UHT and Aseptic Operations	Fundamentals	SQF System Elements + Module 11: GMP for processing of food products
		Manufacturing	SQF System Elements + Module 11: GMP for processing of food products
		Food Quality Code	The SQF Food Safety Code for Manufacturing
16	Ice, Drink and Beverage Processing	Fundamentals	SQF System Elements + Module 11: GMP for processing of food products
		Manufacturing	SQF System Elements + Module 11: GMP for processing of food products
		Food Quality Code	The SQF Food Safety Code for Manufacturing
17	Confectionery Manufacturing	Fundamentals	SQF System Elements + Module 11: GMP for processing of food products
		Manufacturing	SQF System Elements + Module 11: GMP for processing of food products
		Food Quality Code	The SQF Food Safety Code for Manufacturing
18	Preserved Foods Manufacture	Fundamentals	SQF System Elements + Module 11: GMP for processing of food products
		Manufacturing	SQF System Elements + Module 11: GMP for processing of food products
		Food Quality Code	The SQF Food Safety Code for Manufacturing
19	Food Ingredient Manufacture	Fundamentals	SQF System Elements + Module 11: GMP for processing of food products
		Manufacturing	SQF System Elements + Module 11: GMP for processing of food products
		Food Quality Code	The SQF Food Safety Code for Manufacturing
20	Recipe Meals Manufacture	Fundamentals	SQF System Elements + Module 11: GMP for processing of food products
		Manufacturing	SQF System Elements + Module 11: GMP for processing of food products
		Food Quality Code	The SQF Food Safety Code for Manufacturing
21	Oils, Fats, and the Manufacture of oil or fat-based spreads	Fundamentals	SQF System Elements + Module 11: GMP for processing of food products
		Manufacturing	SQF System Elements + Module 11: GMP for processing of food products
		Food Quality Code	The SQF Food Safety Code for Manufacturing
22	Processing of Cereal Grains	Fundamentals	SQF System Elements + Module 11: GMP for processing of food products
		Manufacturing	SQF System Elements + Module 11: GMP for processing of food products
		Food Quality Code	The SQF Food Safety Code for Manufacturing
23	Food Catering and Food Service Operations	N/A	N/A
24	Food Retailing	Retail	SQF System Elements + Module 15: GRP for Retail

FSC #	FSC	Applicable Code	Applicable Modules
25	Repackaging of products not manufactured on site	Fundamentals	SQF System Elements + Module 11: GMP for processing of food products
		Manufacturing	SQF System Elements + Module 11: GMP for processing of food products
		Food Quality Code	The SQF Food Safety Code for Manufacturing
26	Food Storage and Distribution	Fundamentals	SQF System Elements + Module 12: GDP for transport and distribution of food products
		Storage & Distribution	SQF System Elements + Module 12: GDP for transport and distribution of food products
		Food Quality Code	The SQF Food Safety Code for Storage and Distribution
27	Manufacture of Food Packaging	Fundamentals	SQF System Elements + Module 13: GMP for manufacture of food packaging
		Food Packaging	SQF System Elements + Module 13: GMP for manufacture of food packaging
		Food Quality Code	The SQF Food Safety Code for Manufacture of Food Packaging
28	Not in Use	N/A	N/A
29	Not in Use	N/A	N/A
30	Not in Use	N/A	N/A
31	Manufacture of Dietary Supplements	Fundamentals	SQF System Elements + Module 11: GMP for processing of food products
		Manufacturing	SQF System Elements + Module 11: GMP for processing of food products
		Food Quality Code	The SQF Food Safety Code for Manufacturing
32	Manufacture of Pet Food	Manufacturing	SQF System Elements + Module 4: GMP for processing of pet food products
		Food Quality Code	The SQF Food Safety Code for Manufacturing
33	Manufacture of Food Processing Aides	Fundamentals	SQF System Elements + Module 11: GMP for processing of food products
		Manufacturing	SQF System Elements + Module 11: GMP for processing of food products
		Food Quality Code	The SQF Food Safety Code for Manufacturing
34	Manufacture of Animal Feed	Manufacturing	SQF System Elements + Module 3: GMP for animal feed production
		Food Quality Code	The SQF Food Safety Code for Manufacturing
35	Not in Use	N/A	N/A

Where sites have vertically integrated processes operating on one site (e.g. growing and packaging of produce on one site; aquaculture and seafood processing on one site), the food sector categories of the listed finished products shall apply.

While the food sector category lists the finished product, UL R will provide SQF food safety auditors and/or technical experts that represent all the processes that are within the scope of certification.

Submission of the completed Application for Certification by the Organization is the first step in the certification process. The Application for Certification may be filled out on behalf of an organization by a UL R representative utilizing information provided by the organization to UL R.

Submission of the completed Application for Certification and acceptance by UL R of the completed form is not binding on the organization or UL R. The purpose of the form is simply to start the quotation process.

Agreement

Upon receipt of the Application for Certification, a Contract/Proposal (Agreement) will be forwarded to the applicant. This document will be used as a contractual agreement between UL Registrar LLC and the organization to carry out certification services.

A copy of the Agreement will be provided to the applicant for the purpose of signing. To the extent that there is any inconsistency between this “Procedure for Certification” document and the final contractual agreement (proposal), the terms of this procedure shall control. Signatures by both parties indicate mutual agreement of the contract acceptance, including the scope of certification and any exclusion(s), the certification costs, and the associated Terms and Conditions. Amendments to the contract, as agreed on by both parties, may be issued as necessary, however, the scope of certification cannot be changed once the Facility Audit has begun.

The scope of certification, including site, food sector categories and products must be clearly identified and agreed upon between UL Registrar and the site prior to the initial certification audit and included in the scope of the initial certification audit and all subsequent audits.

Cancellation of the Agreement requires that the Certificate of Conformity to be immediately withdrawn. The Certificate of Conformity is the property of UL Registrar LLC and must be surrendered without delay upon request to do so. All Certification Marks provided for use by the organization shall be surrendered as well as all advertising bearing the marks removed immediately from use and/or public domain.

The required number of audit days is determined using the most recent version of the SQF Audit Duration Guidance with consideration to such scenarios where interpreters are required, technical experts, high risk, low risk products, complex processes, etc.
* Interpreters will be provided by UL R, if necessary, to ensure that competency and conflict of interest requirements are met.

It may be required to make use of technical experts for conducting assessments/audits. In this case, UL R will communicate with the applicant, obtain their consent, and prior to providing the quote. The use of technical experts in audits will be as per SQF guidelines.

UL R will attempt to schedule pre-assessments and assessments on mutually acceptable dates with the Organization. If this is not possible, assessments will be scheduled at the earliest possible date acceptable to the organization that UL R personnel are available.

If the Organization is currently registered with another registrar or is seeking a joint certification with another entity and wishes to coordinate certification activities with UL R, the Application shall be completed. Upon receipt of such application and request for transfer, UL R will follow the guidelines of QSLP 7.6.2 Transfer of Accredited Certification prior to accepting Application for Certification in this case.

Should the organization desire, in advance of their planned assessment activities, to evaluate their Management System on the basis of the checklist that will be utilized by UL R's audit team, they may do so by: (a) purchasing a copy of the Document and Facility Review checklist found online at the SQFI store.

4.0 Optional - Pre-assessment

At the option of the organization, a pre-assessment audit can be conducted by UL Registrar LLC prior to the Initial Certification audit. This pre-assessment will be charged on a per diem basis at the prevailing daily rate. The pre-assessment is a non-mandatory activity and is used to measure the applicant's readiness for a full and formal audit. An Audit Summary Report will be left on-site with the organization at the conclusion of the assessment, but a formal "pre-assessment report" will NOT be issued to the organization.

The opportunity for an optional Pre-assessment exists up until you undergo your Stage 1 Desk Audit. The benefits of the optional pre-assessment are that it provides you with a good indication of whether your system meets the prerequisite requirements listed above and that your system appears in compliance with the SQF Code. It further provides the opportunity for your site to meet and work with your assigned lead auditor in advance of the initial audit. It provides an opportunity to have a second set of eyes review your documentation and practices, rather than having those familiar with the documentation/practices review their own work. Pre-assessments may be tailored to meet your specific needs, including both audit content and duration. The typical pre-assessment usually entails a single (1) audit day, however additional days can be provided at your request.

5.0 SQF Initial Certification Process

The entire site, including all premises, support buildings, silos, tanks, loading and unloading bays and external grounds must be included in the scope of certification. Where a site seeks to exempt part of the site for any reason, the request for exemption must be submitted to the UL R in writing and shall be listed in the facility description in the SQF assessment database. However all parts of the premises and process that are involved with the production, processing and storage of products included in the scope cannot be exempted. SQF allows that, in some cases, certain quality system requirements may be excluded due to the nature of the organization's product, customer requirements or the applicable regulatory requirements. While such exclusions may reduce the complexity of the system and the resources required, they may not affect the organization's ability, or absolve it of its responsibility, to provide product that meets customer and applicable regulatory requirements. **Any such exclusion that is claimed must be clearly defined and justified in the Quality Manual and identified in the scope of certification**. At the time of audit, should any claimed exclusions be found inappropriate, additional time may be required on-site and/or the certification audit may be unsuccessful.

Exempted products will not be listed on the Certificate and shall not be promoted by the site as being covered by the Certification. Instances where promotion of exempted products or processes are identified and substantiated (either by regular audit or by other means) will result in immediate withdrawal of the SQF Certification.

5.1 SQF Desk Assessment

Stage 1 – Off-site Audit Preparation and Documentation Review

Approximately 2-4 weeks in advance of the certification audit activity, UL Registrar will schedule an on-site Desk Audit of your Food Safety & Quality Management System documentation, including

your quality manual and procedures. Desk Audits are conducted by UL R SQF Auditors and are qualified accordingly. The documentation will be reviewed to determine that the documentation adequately addresses the requirements of SQF.

Before commencing an on-site Certification Audit UL Registrar will complete a comprehensive review of the SQF System as presented at a Desk Audit to ensure that:

- An appropriately qualified SQF practitioner is designated;
- The food safety plan and the associated critical control point (CCP) determinations, validations and verifications are appropriately documented and endorsed by the SQF practitioner;
- The documented System is relevant to the scope of certification.

In addition to its evaluation plan for all SQF System Certification activities UL Registrar shall prepare a written site audit plan and make that plan available to the auditee's designated contact or Management Representative.

Any significant omissions identified by UL Registrar will be reported to you in writing. During the Desk Audit, the Audit checklist will be developed to enable the audit team to reference applicable requirements within your organization's documented system prior to conducting the Stage 2 Initial Audit. No changes to the scope can be made once the On-site Initial Certification (Facility) Audit Activity begins.

Where a site operates under seasonal conditions (a period in which the major activity is conducted over 5 consecutive months or less) the Certification audit must be completed during the peak operational part of the season.

5.1.1 SQF Food Safety Code for Retail

In the case of a site whom is being audited against the SQF Food Safety Code for Retail, they will have an assessment that consists of two stages.

Stage 1: The corporate office audit(s) is undertaken to verify that the organization's SQF System documentation, policies and procedures meets the requirements of the SQF Food Safety Code for Retail.
Stage 2: The store audit is conducted at selected store location(s) and determines the effective implementation of the organization's documented SQF System.

5.2 Stage 2 - On-site Initial Certification (Facility) Audit Activity

The Stage 2 Initial Audit comprises of an on-site evaluation of your implemented system as well as the SQF requirements. There should be a minimum of 3 weeks between the Stage 1 Document Review Audit to ensure all corrective actions from Stage 1 were submitted and approved by the Auditor prior to conducting the on-site facility audit. UL R and the site must be agreed on the scope of the audit before the on-site audit occurs and cannot be changed once the audit has commenced. In reviewing the adequacy and effectiveness of your Food Safety & Quality Management System, the auditors will interview personnel in any department or area, which have responsibilities and authorities associated with the intended scope of your certification.
The Certification Audit of the SQF System is undertaken to verify the effectiveness of the site's SQF System in its entirety. It shall establish that:

- Effectiveness of the SQF food safety system in its entirety;
- Food safety hazards are effectively identified and controlled;
- Effective interaction between all elements of the SQF system; and

- Level of commitment demonstrated by the site to maintaining an effective SQF system and to meeting their food safety regulatory and customer requirements; and
- The exempted products or areas of the site do not pose a food safety risk to the products covered under certification.

Audit results are reported verbally at the conclusion of the audit, and subsequently in a written report. Any major system weakness or non-conformance to the standard identified during the Initial Audit must be addressed to the satisfaction of UL R prior to the certification of your system.

Stage 2 - On-site Initial Certification / Seasonal Production

Initial Certification Audits for sites involved in seasonal production (i.e. a period in which the major production activity is conducted over more than 5 consecutive months) must be conducted during the peak operational part of the season.

Where sites seek to include products from more than one season within their scope of Certification, UL R and the site must agree to conduct the initial audit during the highest risk and / or highest volume production operation. Documentation and records for other seasonal production will be reviewed as part of the Certification Audit.

6.0 The SQF Certification Decision Process

Following the off-site Stage 1 Desk Audit and on-site Stage 2 Initial Audit Activities, members of the UL R management will review the audit team's recommendation, written report and all associated documentation independently. Certification of SQF Systems shall not be granted unless a **"C"** Audit rating or greater is achieved, all Major and Critical Non-conformities have been corrected and those corrections verified by UL R (by site visit or other appropriate means).

When this review determines that all requirements have been met, UL R will register your organization and issue the SQF Certificate to your organization for the scope of the services evaluated in accordance with the guidelines listed below.

Once the decision to grant Certification is made, UL R shall apply to the SQFI for a unique Certification Number for that Certification. Within ten (10) days of receiving the unique Certification Number, UL R shall provide to the site:

- A Certificate of Conformance meeting the requirements of SQF and specifying the scope of certification;
- An electronic copy of the Quality Shield (*only when certified to the Quality Code*) which shall include the UL R name/logo;
- A statement detailing the duration of the Certification and the grounds upon which Certification may be suspended or withdrawn;
- The Audit Report including the Audit rating;
- The requirements for undertaking Surveillance Audits and Re-certification Audits and their frequency; and
- Where the Scope of Certification is changed (i.e. expanded or reduced) as a result of an Audit, a new Certificate of Conformance shall be issued which includes the changed Scope of Certification and UL R shall notify the SQFI of the change.

7.0 Surveillance Audits

The surveillance audit is conducted when the site attains a "C-complies" rating a certification or re-certification audit. The surveillance audit shall be conducted within thirty (30) calendar days either

side of the six (6) month anniversary of the last day of the previous certification or re-certification audit. A new score and rating is issued at the surveillance audit, however the re-certification audit date is not affected.

The purpose of the Surveillance Audit is to:

- Verify the continued efficacy of corrections and corrective actions close out at previous audits;
- Verify that the SQF System continues to be implemented as documented;
- Consider and take appropriate action where changes to the site's operations are made and the impact of those changes on the site's SQF System;
- Confirm continued compliance with the requirements of the relevant SQF Food Safety Code;
- Verify all critical steps remain under control; and
- Contribute to continued improvement of the site's SQF System and business operation.

Major or minor non-conformities raised at the surveillance audit shall be closed out within the same timeframe as defined for certification and re-certification audits. The site's certificate shall be suspended by UL Registrar if:

- The site fails to permit the surveillance audit within the required timeframe;
- A critical non-conformance is raised at the surveillance audit, or;
- The site fails to close out major or minor non-conformities within the agreed timeframe.

UL R, at its discretion, will conduct a minimum of one (1) Surveillance Audit, six (6) months after the date of the Certification Audit and the date of the Re-certification Audit. Surveillance Audits shall be conducted within thirty (30) days of the due date. The detail covered by UL R during the Surveillance Audit shall be sufficient to establish the effective implementation and ongoing maintenance of the SQF System.

8.0 Annual Recertification

UL R will conduct a Recertification Audit of the SQF System to verify the continued effectiveness of the site's SQF System in its entirety. The Recertification Audit shall provide for a review of past performance of the SQF System over the period of Certification and may replace and/or extend a regular Surveillance Audit. It shall ensure:

- Verify the continued efficacy of corrections and corrective actions closed out at previous audits;
- Verify that the SQF Food Safety System continues to be implemented as documented;
- Verify that internal audits, annual reviews of the crisis and food defense plans and recall system, and management reviews have been effectively completed;
- Verify that corrective and preventative actions have been taken on all non-conformities;
- Consider and take appropriate action where changes to the site's operations are made and the impact of those changes on the site's SQF Food Safety System;
- Verify all critical steps remain under control and the effective inter-action between all elements of the SQF System;
- Verify the overall effectiveness of the SQF System in its entirety in the light of changes in operations;
- Verify that the site continues to demonstrate a commitment to maintaining the effectiveness of the SQF System and to meeting regulatory and customer requirements; and
- Contribute to continued improvement of the site's SQF System and business operation.

Recertification audits are conducted annually following the initial certification audit to verify that your organization continues to satisfy the Standards' requirements under which you've been registered. The time allocated shall be based on factors such as the size, complexity of operations, whether it involves a High Risk Product and/or High Risk Process, the degree of organization of the site and the number of locations.

UL R shall schedule the Recertification Audit within thirty (30) days of the anniversary date of the Initial Certification Audit. As opposed to annual Surveillance audits, the Recertification audit is more in depth and closely resembles the Initial Certification Audit, though of slightly reduced duration. Audit results are reported verbally at the conclusion of the audit, and subsequently in a written report. Any critical or major non-conformance to the standard identified must be corrected to the satisfaction of UL R, prior to recommendation to the Certification Committee for renewed certification of your system.

Upon conclusion of the audit, UL R management will review the audit team's recommendation, written report and all associated documentation independently to verify that all requirements have been met. Once satisfied, **UL R will re-certify your organization and reissue a new SQF Certificate of Conformance to your organization for the scope of the services evaluated.** This new certificate shall be valid for one (1) year, subject to continued conformance through Surveillance or other appropriate means.

9.0 Unannounced Re-certification Audit

Within three (3) certification cycles UL Registrar shall conduct one (1) unannounced re-certification audit of the site. The unannounced food safety audit shall occur within the sixty (60) day re-certification window (i.e., the anniversary date of the initial certification audit +/- thirty (30) days). SQF sites shall be required to undertake one (1) unannounced audit within the three (3) year certification cycle.

- The sites certification cycle begins with the initial certification audit date. Unannounced re-certification audits shall occur once in every three (3) certification cycles.
- Unannounced audits shall not be conducted on the initial certification audit or on a surveillance audit.
- If a site changes certification bodies, the site's unannounced re-certification audit schedule shall not change.
- The unannounced re-certification audit shall follow the protocol under the SQF Code, Part A, 4.4, 4.5 and 4.6.
- Those sites that fall under the SQF multi-site program are exempted from unannounced audits.
- The date of the unannounced audit shall be determined by UL Registrar within the 60 day re-certification audit window.
- The unannounced audit year shall be determined between the site and UL Registrar.
- A defined blackout period shall be established by negotiation between the site and UL Registrar that prevents the unannounced re-certification audit from occurring out of season or when the facility is not operating for legitimate business reasons.
- Immediate suspension of the site's certificate will occur in facilities that refuse entry to the auditor for an unannounced audit.
- Certificates issued following unannounced re-certification audits shall indicate that the audit was unannounced.
- A site may forgo the three year certification cycle requirement and voluntarily elect to have annual unannounced re-certification audits. If annual unannounced re-certification audits

are conducted by the site then the protocol outlined for the three year certification cycle audit shall be followed. Sites with annual unannounced re-certification audits shall be recognized on the SQF certificate as an "SQFI select site."

10.0 Non-Conformance

UL R will identify any lapse of conformance within the site's system through the use of Corrective Action Request (CAR). CAR shall be completed by the site on the UL R CAR form left on-site by the auditor and in accordance with the requirements below:

A **Minor Non-conformity** is an omission or deficiency in the SQF System that produces unsatisfactory conditions that if not addressed may lead to a risk to food safety but not likely to cause a system element breakdown. A minor non-conformity shall be corrected, verified and closed out by the SQF food safety auditor within thirty (30) calendar days of the completion of the site audit. Extensions may be granted by UL R where there is no immediate threat to product safety, and alternative, temporary methods of control are initiated. The site shall be advised of the extended timeframe. Where an extension is granted, the non-conformity shall still be closed out and the SQF food safety auditor shall document all details of justification of the extension, how the risk is being controlled, and the agreed completion date.

A **Major Non-conformity** is an omission or deficiency in the SQF System producing unsatisfactory conditions that carry a food safety risk and are likely to result in a System element breakdown. A major non-conformity shall be corrected and appropriate corrective action verified and closed out within thirty (30) calendar days of the completion of the site audit. In circumstances where the corrective action involves structural change or cannot be corrected due to seasonal conditions or installation lead times, this period can be extended provided the corrective action time frame is acceptable to UL R and temporary action is taken by the site to mitigate the risk to product safety. However, in such cases, the non-conformity shall be closed out and the SQF food safety auditor shall document all details of justification of the extension, how the risk is being controlled, and the agreed completion date. A documented root cause analysis shall be submitted by the site as part of the corrective action evidence for every major non-conformity.

A **Critical Non-conformity** is a breakdown of control(s) at a critical control point, a pre-requisite program, or other process step and judged likely to cause a significant public health risk and / or where product is contaminated. A critical non-conformity is also raised if the site fails to take effective corrective action within the timeframe agreed with UL R, or if UL R deems that there is systemic falsification of records relating to food safety controls and the SQF System. If the SQF food safety auditor considers that a critical non-conformity exists during a certification audit, the SQF food safety auditor shall immediately advise the site and notify UL R. A critical non-conformity raised at an initial certification audit, surveillance or recertification will result in an automatic failure of the audit, and the site must re-apply for certification.

All Non-conformities and root cause analysis shall be completed / submitted on the issued CAR form and submitted to UL R at LST.ENF.CAPA@ul.com.

Audit Score and Rating

Based on the evidence collected by the UL R SQF food safety auditor, each applicable aspect of the SQF certification food safety audit (Initial Certification, Surveillance, Recertification) is automatically scored in the audit report. Desk Audits are not scored.
The calculation uses the following factors:

0	Aspect meets the criteria
1	Aspect does not meet the criteria due to minor variations (Minor Non-conformity)
10	Aspect does not meet the criteria (Major Non-conformity)
50	Aspect does not meet the criteria (Critical Non-Conformity)

A single rating is calculated for the site audit as (100 – N) where N is the sum of an individual rating criteria allocated. The rating provides an indication of the overall condition of the site against the SQF Code, and also provides a guideline on the required level of surveillance by UL Registrar. The audit rating level is indicated as follows:

Score	Rating	Certification (Certification also requires that all Major and Minor non-conformities are closed out within 30 calendar days.)	Audit Frequency
96 - 100	E – Excellent	Certificate Issued	12 Monthly recertification audit
86 - 95	G - Good	Certificate Issued	12 Monthly recertification audit
70 - 85	C - Complies	Certificate Issued	6 Monthly recertification audit
0 - 69	F – Fails to Comply	No Certificate Issued	Considered to have failed the SQF Audit

Failure to Comply

Where a site achieves an “F – Fails to Comply” rating at a food safety certification audit, the site is considered to have failed the SQF food safety audit. The site must then re-apply for certification. When the site’s re-application occurs within 6 months of the last audit date, and with the same Certification Body (UL Registrar), a site audit shall be scheduled, but a desk audit is not required. If the re-application occurs after 6 months from the last audit date, or with a new Certification Body, then a desk audit and site audit are required.

11.0 Client’s Prerequisite Requirements

The certification process requires that an operational Management System be in place at the time of the audit. This means that at a minimum:

The System is fully documented and has been implemented.

- The site’s SQF System meets the requirements of the relevant SQF Code;
- SQF Plans have been derived as required in the relevant SQF Code and that they have been developed, validated and verified by an SQF Practitioner;

- Substantiating evidence to show that Food Safety Plans, and Food Quality Plans were derived using the HACCP method;
- The Internal Audit system is fully implemented, with one complete round of internal audits completed and the system demonstrates effectiveness;
- A complete Management Review cycle has been carried out;
- A Management Representative/SQF Expert has been appointed who is responsible for ensuring complete implementation of the Food Safety & Quality Management System and who will assist the audit team during the assessment process.

12.0 SQFI Assessment Database / Information Sharing Agreement

Upon completion of the Initial Certification Audit, the Site's Certificate of Conformance details will be made available on the SQFI web portal for public display; the minimum amount of information that will be publicly displayed will include:

Site name, address, country, certificate type and number, accreditation body logo and accreditation number, audit date, date of next audit, date of issue, certification expiry date, relevant SQF Code, food sector category(s), product(s) covered by the certificate.

13.0 Mandatory Complaint(s) Reporting

By signed agreement of this proposal the Site confirms acceptance of the requirements of this clause. This clause deals only with complaints received by the Site, not by UL R.

Complaints may indicate a possible Non-conformity. On receipt of a complaint involving a Critical or Major Non-conformity the Site shall notify UL R without delay. In addition the Site shall establish the cause of the non-conformity and implement immediate and appropriate corrective action.

UL R shall, either at Surveillance Audits or as otherwise determined, check where any such Non-conformity or failure to meet the requirements of the relevant SQF Code is identified, that the Site has investigated its own systems, procedures and has taken appropriate corrective action.

UL R shall satisfy itself that the Site is using such investigations to develop remedial/corrective action, which shall include measures for:

- Notification to appropriate authorities if required by regulation;
- Restoring conformity as quickly as practicable;
- Preventing recurrence;
- Evaluating and mitigating any adverse food safety aspects and the associated impacts;
- Ensuring satisfactory interaction with other components of the SQF System; and
- Assessing the effectiveness of the remedial/corrective measures adopted.

The implementation of the remedial or corrective action shall not be deemed to have been completed until its effectiveness has been demonstrated and the necessary changes made in the procedures, documentation and records.

14.0 Suspension of Certification

UL R has the right to suspend the SQF Certificate if the site:

- Failure to fulfill financial commitments;
- Failure to permit the recertification or surveillance audit;
- Receives an "F – Fails to Comply" rating;

- Failure to permit an unannounced audit;
- Failure to take corrective action within the timeframe specified; or
- Where in the opinion of UL Registrar, fails to maintain the requirements of the SQF Code.

UL R will immediately amend the details on the SQFI assessment database when a site's certificate has been suspended, indicating the reason for the suspension and the date of effect. UL R will provide to the site in writing with the SQF Compliance Manager on copy:

- Reasons for the actions taken and the date of effect;
- That the site is required to provide a detailed corrective action plan outlining the corrective action to be taken within 48 hours of receiving the notice of suspension.

Upon receipt of the detailed corrective action, UL R will:

- Schedule an on-site audit within 30 days of receiving the corrective action plan to verify that the immediate correction has been taken;
- Re-instate the site's status on the SQFI assessment database once corrective action has been successfully implemented, and provide written notice to the site that their certificate is no longer suspended with SQFI copied.
- Conduct an unannounced Surveillance audit no more than 6 months after suspension to verify the effective implementation of the corrective action plan and that the site's SQF System is achieving stated objectives.

The site shall not represent itself as holding an SQF certificate during the duration of the suspension.

For sites certified to the SQF Quality Code, in instances where the site's food safety certificate is suspended, the quality certification shall also be suspended until the food safety suspension is lifted.

Quality Code sites must comply with the SQF Quality Code's Reference *Appendix 3: SQF Quality Shield and Logo Rules of Use*.

15.0 Withdrawing Certification

UL R will withdraw the SQF Certificate when the site:

- Has been placed under suspension and fails to submit approved corrective action plans as defined by UL R within forty-eight (48) hours, or fails to take approved corrective action as determined by UL R within the timeframes specified;
- Has falsified records;
- Fails to maintain the integrity of the SQF certificate;
- Is in misuse of the Certificate of Conformity and/or the SQF Quality Shield; or
- Has an administrator, receiver, receiver and manager, official manager or provisional liquidator appointed over its assets or where an order is made or resolution passed for the closure of the site (except for the purposes of amalgamation or reconstruction) or the site ceases to carry on business or becomes bankrupt, applies to take the benefit of any law for the relief of bankrupt or insolvent debtors or makes any arrangement or composition with its creditors.

In addition, Quality Code sites must comply with the SQF Quality Code's Reference *Appendix 3: SQF Quality Shield and Logo Rules of Use*. For all other SQF Codes, sites must comply with *Appendix 3: SQF Logo Rules of Use*.

When a site's certificate is withdrawn, UL R will immediately amend the details on the SQFI assessment database to "withdrawn" status indicating the reason for the withdrawal and the date of effect. UL R will, in writing with SQFI on copy:

- Inform the site that the SQF certificate has been withdrawn, the reason for such action and the date of effect; and
- Instruct the site to return the certificate to UL R within 30 days of notification.

For sites certified to the SQF Quality Code, in instances where the site's food safety certificate is withdrawn, the quality certification shall also be withdrawn, and the site must re-apply for both food safety and quality certification.

A site that has had their certificate withdrawn will not be permitted to apply for certification for twelve (12) months from the date the certificate was withdrawn by UL R or any other Certification Body. The withdrawn site will be posted on the SQFI website (sqfi.com) for twelve (12) months.

16.0 Seasonal Sites

Surveillance Audit for Seasonal Sites

Seasonal Sites that attain a "C" rating at a certification or recertification audit are subject to a surveillance audit.

Where the due surveillance audit date falls within the operational season, the surveillance audit shall occur within thirty (30) days either side of the six (6) month anniversary of the last day of the previous certification or re- certification audit.

Where the due date of the surveillance audit falls outside the operational season, UL R shall conduct a pre-operational audit no less than thirty (30) days prior to the next season. The pre-operational audit shall comprise a full review of corrective actions from the last audit, and preparedness for the next re-certification audit.

Re-certification Audits

The recertification audit of seasonal sites will follow the requirements of Section 8.0 of this Procedure. However, where there is a significant change in seasonal operations whereby the re-certification audit 60 day window cannot be met, UL R and the site may temporarily reset the re-certification audit date so that it falls during the peak operational part of the season.

If the site wishes to permanently change the re-certification audit date due to seasonal conditions, the request must be made to the SQF Compliance Manager in writing.

17.0 Changing the Scope of Certification

A site may decide to add a Food Sector Category(s) or product to their scope of certification. If this is the case, the site shall request, in writing, an increase to their scope of certification to UL R. UL R shall conduct a site audit of the additional process or products and shall either issue a new certificate, or advise the site, in writing, why the new certificate cannot be issued.

An audit for an increase in scope shall not change the re-certification date or certificate expiry date. When a new certificate is issued, the re-certification audit date and certificate expiry date shall remain as per the original certificate.

When a new certificate is issued, UL R will update the SQFI assessment database with relevant details.

UL R shall be advised in writing when the scope change is:

- a new process or a major change to an existing process,
- a new product line, or
- a significant change in personnel, or
- a significant change in raw materials, or
- a significant change in packing materials, or
- a significant change in ingredients.

Where the request is received within thirty (30) days prior to the re-certification audit window, UL R shall defer the scope extension to the next re-certification audit and shall advise the site. No new certificate shall be issued until after a successful re-certification audit.

18.0 Notification of Product Recalls and Regulatory Infringements

Upon identification that a certified site initiates a food safety event that requires public notification (such as a Class I or Class II recall, or the receipt of a regulatory warning letter), the site shall notify UL R (ULWarningsRecalls@ul.com) and SQFI (foodsafetycrisis@sqfi.com) within 24 hours of the event. UL Registrar and SQFI shall be listed in the site's essential contacts list as defined in element 2.6.3 of the SQF Code.

UL R will then notify SQFI within 48 hours of any action intended to be taken to ensure integrity of the Certification.

19.0 Change of Ownership

When a certified site's business has been sold and the business name is retained, the new owner shall notify UL R within 30 calendar days of the change in ownership and apply to retain the SQF certification and the existing certification number. In cases where the ownership of a certified site changes, but the staff with major responsibility for the management and oversight of the SQF food safety system has been retained, UL R may retain the existing audit frequency status. In making this application, UL R will determine that staff with major responsibility for the management and oversight of the SQF System has been retained.

If there are significant changes in site management and personnel, UL R will complete a certification audit and issue a new certificate and a new certification number. The audit frequency applicable to a new certification shall apply.

20.0 Relocation of Premises

When a certified site relocates the business premises, the site's certification does not transfer to the new site. A successful certification of the new premises must be conducted. Although the site's certificate number shall remain the same, an initial certification audit of the new premise shall apply, i.e. a desk audit and site audit.

21.0 Language

UL R ensures that the SQF food safety auditor conducting the audit can competently communicate in the oral and written language of the site being audited. In circumstances where a translator is

required, UL R will provide the translator and ensure that the translator has the knowledge of the technical terms used during the audit. UL R will also ensure that the translator is independent of the site being audited and has no conflict of interest. The site will be notified of any increase in an audit duration and cost associated with the use of a translator.

For the purpose of resolving a conflict, the English version of the SQF Food Safety Code shall be the deciding reference.

22.0 Conflict of Interest

UL R ensures that all certification activities are separately controlled and managed (including the development of policy and practices) from any consulting activity.

SQF food safety auditors shall not audit anywhere they have participated in a consulting role involving the site in question, or anybody related to the site, within the last two (2) years (considered to be participating in an active and creative manner in the development of the SQF System to be audited, including the development of food safety plans). Consulting includes, but is not limited to, activities such as:

- Producing or preparing food safety plans, manuals, handbooks or procedures;
- Participating in the decision making process regarding SQF System;
- Giving advice – as a consultant or otherwise – toward the design, documentation, development, validation, verification, implementation or maintenance of SQF System; and
- Deliver or participate in the delivery of an “in-house” food safety training service at which advice and instruction on the development and implementation of food safety plans and SQF system for eventual certification is provided.

UL R ensures that SQF food safety auditors disclose any existing, former or proposed link between themselves or their organization and the site.

UL R ensures through organizational structure that no potential conflict of interest, consulting, or training occurs from auditors contracted or employed by UL R to existing or potential sites within the SQF Program.

A site can refuse the service of an SQF food safety auditor when they consider the auditor has a conflict of interest, or for other reasons. In such circumstances, the site shall outline the reasons in writing to UL R.

23.0 Complaints, Disputes and Appeals

UL Registrar has a procedure for handling complaints, disputes and appeals. It is readily available upon request. A copy can be obtained by emailing ULQAReportRelease@ul.com.

When a site has cause to register a complaint about UL R’s activities, or disputes or appeals a decision made by UL R, including the activities and decisions of its auditors, UL R investigates and resolves these matters without delay and keeps records of all complaints, disputes and appeals and their resolution.

When UL R receives a complaint about a site from other parties, UL R is required to investigate and resolve the matter without delay and keep records of all complaints, disputes and appeals, and their resolution.

Appeals regarding decisions on the suspension and / or withdrawal of the SQF certification by UL R do not delay the decision to suspend or withdraw the certification.

When it is determined upon investigation of a complaint that there has been a substantiated breakdown of a site's SQF system or any other condition not in accordance with the SQF Food Safety Code and / or other supporting documents, UL R will suspend certification as outlined about in Section 14.0 of this Procedure.

Where a complaint is registered about the conduct or behavior of an auditor or UL R personnel, UL R investigates and resolves the complaint without delay and keeps records of all complaints as well as their resolution.

Records of complaints and investigations are available to SQFI upon request. Where a complaint, appeal or dispute cannot be satisfactorily resolved between the site and UL R, the matter shall be referred to the SQFI complaints and appeals procedure via the SQF website (sqfi.com).

Complaints and comments about the SQF Code, the SQF assessment database, SQF training centers and consultants can also be registered at this address.

24.0 Rules for Use of Marks, SQF Logo, Quality Shield and Reference to SQF Participation

The Certificate of Conformity, SQF Logo and SQF Quality Shield are the property of SQFI and UL Registrar, LLC and are on loan to the certified organization for its use in accordance with the Rules for Use of Certification Marks (Certificate of Conformity & Safe Quality Food Logo and SQF Quality Shield) found in Annex 1. If copies of the certification documents are provided to others, the documents shall be reproduced in their entirety.

The organization may refer to involvement with the UL Registrar LLC SQF Certification Program and publish their Certificate in any professional, technical, trade or other business publication; however, such references must not imply product endorsement. Certified sites shall abide by the Rules of Use of Certification Marks or risk suspension or withdrawal.

Rules for the Use of Certification Marks can be found in Annex 1 to this procedure.

25.0 Confidentiality

UL Registrar LLC maintains a high level of confidentiality at all levels of its organization concerning information obtained in the course of its business. UL R has provisions in place to ensure that all records, data and information received during the execution of an SQF audit remains confidential and the property of the site. No information will be disclosed to a third party unless in response to legal process or the organization has requested such disclosure, in writing, in which case UL R will notify the organization prior to disclosing the information.

Upon request, UL R will send duplicate copies of a confidentiality agreement to the organization. Once signed copy of the agreements should be signed and returned prior to the audit.

26.0 Changes Affecting Certification

All organizations that utilize UL Registrar's assessment services are required to implement appropriate changes when they are communicated by UL Registrar, LLC.

Changes or new and revised requirements issued by SQF will be communicated by UL R to the SQF site, which UL R will then verify that the changes were implemented.

27.0 Scheduling

Should you elect to pursue certification through UL R, we will work to coordinate the scheduling of the on-site audit dates with you and will provide the details of our planned audit team representatives for your approval.

28.0 Accreditation & Prior Experience

The certification services offered in this Procedure will be conducted in conformance with the ISO 17065 Standard. UL R is accredited by the American National Standards Institute (ANSI). UL R is required by accreditation bodies and scheme owners (i.e. SQFI) to share information for the purpose of demonstrating conformance to the standards for which UL R is accredited. Such records may include audit results and UL Registrar's certification processes and procedures. If the certification client does not wish to allow their records to be shown to the accreditation body, notification must be provided to UL R in writing. UL R holds confidentiality agreements with all accreditation bodies.