The SQF Practitioner
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The SQF Practitioner is a critical role that must be filled at each site that an organization is including in SQF Certification. The practitioner will be the person who is responsible for managing the development, implementation, and daily operation of the SQF system. In this guide we will look at what the requirements and responsibilities are for this key position.

SQF Practitioner Requirements

Top management is responsible for designating a person to be the SQF Practitioner. When choosing a practitioner you must make sure the practitioner meets certain requirements. The practitioner must:

1. Be a full time employee in a position of responsibility for the management of the SQF System. The practitioner may not be a consultant or contract position.

2. Complete a recognized HACCP Training Course. This course does not have to be approved by SQFI, but the practitioner must be competent to implement and maintain the HACCP system.
   - A two day class or equivalent is recommended. For example: Newslow and Associates

3. Be trained on and understand the SQF Code. Acceptable training options include:
   - Online Training on the SQF Code - See our Premium Online All-in-One Package or our SQF Complete Training Program. Both of these programs meet requirements for training the practitioner. The Premium Online All-in-One also includes online training sessions for additional employees and internal auditors.
   - Classroom Training Programs - SQFI offers the course “Implementing SQF Systems”, a 2 day classroom training that you may follow with an online exam. This course and exam are not required, but are a good option if you prefer classroom training.
   - Reading the code and demonstrating competence to your SQF Auditor.
The SQF Practitioner
The SQF Practitioner: Qualifications and Responsibilities

Development of the system
The SQF Practitioner will lead the development and implementation of the SQF System. Assigning your practitioner the role of project manager is an effective way of giving them the responsibility for the implementation of the system. They will assign responsibilities to others throughout the project, but remain responsible for ensuring the implementation meets requirements and is carried out fully and effectively.

The practitioner must be closely involved in the development of the Food Safety Fundamentals, also referred to as GMPs or Prerequisite Programs, and the HACCP Food Safety Plans. Each prerequisite program must be verified and signed off by the SQF Practitioner. The practitioner must also validate the HACCP plan, including the critical limits. This must be done initially, when any changes are made to the plan, and on an annual basis.

Ongoing maintenance of the SQF system
It is also the responsibility of the SQF Practitioner to ensure the ongoing maintenance and integrity of the SQF System. Consultants may assist the SQF Practitioner with tasks but responsibility lies with the SQF practitioner.

To be effective, the SQF Practitioner must have the support of senior management, and the time and availability to monitor the SQF system. It is up to management to ensure that the resources (including time) are available to the practitioner to fulfill the day to day responsibilities required to maintain the system. The practitioner must also be competent and have the authority to take corrective actions when necessary.

Ongoing responsibilities include:
- Leading the HACCP Team (not a requirement, but an effective practice in many cases)
- Communicating essential information to personnel necessary for maintenance or improvement of the system
- Validate and verify Food Safety Fundamentals
- Validate and verify Food Safety Plans
- Review of changes to food safety fundamentals and food safety plans when changes are made
- Managing changes and informing management responsible for authorizing and approving them
- Recording major changes, and the reasons and actions taken
- Ensuring that major changes trigger a review of the food safety plan and are validated and verified before implementation
- Making sure that all validation and verification activities are carried out, including establishing the frequency schedule.
- Documenting and implementing methods for confirming the effectiveness of PRP programs and validating critical control limits
- Ensuring resources are available for verification activities
The SQF Practitioner: Recommended Training

Train your SQF Practitioner using our Complete Training Package:

A. **Introduction to System Elements**
   
   Covers all the requirements of Module 2- SQF System Elements

B. **Food Safety Fundamentals**
   
   Covers the requirements of the food safety fundamentals modules (GMPs)

C. **The Gap Analysis Checklists and Tutorial**
   
   Includes checklists for the System Elements and Food Safety Fundamentals

D. **SQF Templates and Implementation Tools**
   
   Includes document templates and detailed implementation plan

The SQF Practitioner: a checklist

- Choose a person who is organized and can lead others effectively
- Evaluate their position and adjust responsibilities to allow time for the practitioner role and responsibilities
- If they are not HACCP trained by an outside, recognized training program schedule training
- Schedule training on the SQF Code
- Provide them with implementation tools: planning tools, checklists, tutorials, document templates and implementation plans (included in the SQF Templates and Implementation Tools Package listed above and included in the Complete Training Package)
- Document the assignment of the SQF Practitioner Role and ensure they have the appropriate authorities to carry out responsibilities
- Assign them as the HACCP team leader, if appropriate in your organization
If you are interested in a quick start and a fast track to your SQF Certification, use our Complete Training Package to quickly work you through each step of your implementation. Our tools and training help you create a system that is effective, efficient and tailored to your organization.

Register your SQF Practitioner for the Complete Training Package that includes all of our documents, tools and detailed how-to instructions that will guide them through each step of the project. Our tools and training help your company create a system that is effective, efficient and tailored to your organization.

Documents include our: Manual, Procedures, Food Safety Fundamentals, Forms, Checklists, Implementation plans and more. The training series includes courses to cover each step of your project:

A. Introduction to System Elements
   Covers all the requirements of Module 2- SQF System Elements

B. Food Safety Fundamentals
   Covers the requirements of the food safety fundamentals modules (GMPs)

C. The Gap Analysis Checklists and Tutorial
   Includes checklists for the System Elements and Food Safety Fundamentals

D. SQF Templates and Implementation Tools
   Includes document templates and detailed implementation plans

E. Internal Auditing
   Includes an online, interactive practice audit.

Available for:

SQF Level 2: Food Processors
SQF Level 3: Food Processors
SQF Level 2: Packaging Manufacturers
SQF Level 3: Packaging Manufacturers