

Guideline

Broker Meat and Meat Products



Version: 01.01.2024



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1 Fundamentals

For fundamentals of the QS scheme like organisation, conditions of participation, use of the certification mark and sanction procedures see **Guideline General Regulations**.

1.1 Scope

Brokers are companies which are engaged in trading activities, act as distribution companies for manufacturing companies or which are indicated as distributors of goods. They can be owners of the goods without possessing them themselves or coming in direct contact with them and organise logistic activities in their own name or via service providers.

1.2 Responsibilities

The **scheme participant** is responsible for:

- The compliance with the requirements,
- The complete and correct documentation,
- The self-assessment,
- The adequate and timely implementation of corrective actions,
- The correct use of the QS certification mark and product labelling.

The scheme participant must always comply with the requirements of the QS scheme and always be in a position to demonstrate compliance with said QS requirements. They must ensure compliance not only with the requirements of this guideline and all related documents (Guideline "General Requirements", Guideline "Certification" and "Paper of incident") but also with the applicable legal provisions both within the country in which the QS products are produced as well as the country in which they will be marketed by the scheme participant.

2 General requirements

2.1 General scheme requirements


2.1.1 General business data

The following master data must be entered in the QS database and always be kept up to date:

- Address of the main company and all production locations with EU approval numbers and QS ID (QS identification number)
- Company name
- Phonenummer, e-mail address, legal representative, contact person
- Crisis manager
- Details on the type of company and on the production

In addition, a business overview must be drawn up (existing documentation may be used, e. g. QM or HACCP), which as well as the information listed above also includes the following data:

- Information on existing quality management and audit systems (e. g. ISO 9001, IFS, BRC)
- Commissioned laboratories (current address, phone number, e-mail address) and their fields of analysis

 Company overview

2.1.2 Use of the QS certification mark

Scheme participants are entitled to use the QS certification mark once they have been permitted to do so by an explicit agreement with QS.

The QS certification mark may only be used in accordance with the style guide for the QS certification mark.

Scheme participants may only sell their goods to resellers as goods from QS certified companies or describe their goods as such in the accompanying documents, if the reseller is also a QS scheme participant. Goods labelled with the QS certification mark may be marketed to non-QS scheme participants, if it can be expected that the reseller will no longer actively advertise said goods as QS products in its own business transactions and customer contacts. In the accompanying papers the products must not be described as QS or it must be clearly ascertainable from the accompanying documents that the reseller no longer actively advertises the goods as QS products in the course of his business and in contact with his customers. Scheme participants are allowed to

market goods that are already packaged for sale to the final consumer and are marked with the QS certification mark only to QS scheme participants. Marketing to non-QS scheme participants is not allowed.

2.1.3 Incident and crisis management

QS has developed a comprehensive crisis management system that ensures the provision of active support to scheme participants in the event of an incident or crisis. The scheme participants must inform QS immediately and - where a legal obligation exists - also the competent authorities about critical incidents and public product recalls where these are of relevance for the QS scheme.

Critical incidents are occurrences that pose or could pose a risk to humans, animals, assets or the QS scheme as a whole.

In particular, the scheme participants must inform QS in cases in which

- Nonconformities occur in the procurement of goods, in production or marketing that might pose a risk to food safety,
- Preliminary proceedings are initiated due to violation of regulations to secure food safety,
- Investigations are carried out by the media, critical reports in the media, or public protests are held on issues of food safety

the system partners must inform QS.

All scheme participants must have access to a paper of incident so that they can pass on all necessary information in a targeted manner in the event of an incident. Moreover, all scheme participants must name a crisis officer, and this officer must be reachable at all times. The name of the crisis officer must be entered in the QS database.

A procedure of conduct in the event of incidents or crises must be defined and implemented, as well as verified at regular intervals, but at least once a year (approx. every 12 months).

It must include the following points:

- Creation of a crisis team
- Emergency call list
- Procedure for product recall and return
- Communication plan
- Customer information

 Paper of incident, procedure for conduct in the event of incidents or crises

2.1.4 Handling of documents

A procedure for archiving the documentation must be in place and applied in the company. All relevant records are to be kept in a detailed and seamless manner.

The documents and records of internal inspections must be retained for a period of at least two years – provided that no longer retention periods are stipulated by law.

The broker must ensure compliance with all processes that are of relevance for food safety and QS labelling in line with QS requirements and, if necessary, regulate them contractually with the service providers. These contracts and agreements must always be kept up to date and must be aligned to the relevant processes. This can also take the form of verification of successful QS certification (or certification by a recognised standard).

2.1.5 Food safety culture

An appropriate food safety culture is established by the food business operator in accordance with **Reg (EU) 2021/382**. Responsibilities and accountabilities for all processes related to food safety are clearly defined. The implementation and timeliness of the food safety culture is to be ensured by the food business operator. The essential principles required for that purpose are part of the QS participation and certification.


2.1.6 Commissioning of service providers

When service providers are commissioned for the external storage or transport of meat and meat products, the owner of the goods must ensure that he commissions companies whose approval includes the QS requirements for the storage and transport of meat and meat products.

Initially, transport companies that carry meat and meat products on behalf of QS scheme participants can become voluntarily certified in accordance with the new guideline. From 1st January 2024, after a two-year

transition period, certification shall become mandatory for all transport service providers engaged by QS scheme participants.

If logistics companies are commissioned for the transport of QS goods at short notice or on a one-off basis (due to a high seasonal volume, e.g. as part of daily contracts), then it is possible to deviate from this requirement. In this case, the companies must be obliged to comply with the QS requirements (*Guideline Logistics for Meat and Meat Products*). The implementation of the requirements by the companies (e.g. freight forwarders) must be ensured on the basis of evidence and randomly checked as part of self-assessment.

 For transports commissioned at short notice or on a one-off basis: Evidence of implementation of QS requirements, checklist for self-assessment

2.2 HACCP


2.2.1 [K.O.] HACCP concept

The company must develop, apply and maintain a hazard control system in accordance with the HACCP principles (**REG (EC) No 852/2004**) in order to ensure food safety, that is comprehensible for third parties.

If changes which are HACCP-related are made to a product, a manufacturing process or a production, processing, storage or sales storage, the company must review and if applicable modify the HACCP concept.

Compliance with the requirements must be checked constantly within the scope of self-assessments. Self-assessments must be conducted and documented regularly, at least once a year (approx. every 12 months) on the basis of a checklist. Existing control and documentation systems can be used if they guarantee that the requirements are fulfilled.

The broker must have knowledge of the HACCP concept of his or her service providers. It is not necessary to keep documentation on this, but it must be contractually agreed that the service providers meet the necessary requirements. This can also take form of proof of successful QS certification (or certification by a recognised standard), for example.

 Self-assessment records, checklists

2.2.2 Flow chart

A schematic flow chart must be prepared. The flow chart must include all operating processes and product groups.

In the case of brokers, flowcharts must show all production processes for the time during which the QS products are in the property of the broker or during the time the broker has control of the QS products for resale.

2.2.3 Hazard analysis

The HACCP concept is based on the determination of hazards that must be avoided, eliminated or reduced to an acceptable level.

2.2.4 HACCP verification

Implementation of the HACCP concept must be checked (verified) at least once a year (approx. every 12 months).

2.3 Staff training

2.3.1 Information on the QS scheme

All responsible employees must be informed of the requirements of the QS scheme manual. This includes not only the basic principles of the QS scheme but also the specific requirements in the area of activity of the employees in question.

3 Process-specific requirements

Processes in the company/plant must be designed according to the **REG (EC) No 852/2004** so that contamination of food stuff is prevented.

The legally required temperatures during deboning, storage and the transport of meat must be adhered and may only deviate for a short period, if this is required for reasons of practicality (e. g. during loading and unloading, during transport within the plant). The cold chain may not be interrupted.

Furthermore, the following points must be observed within the company:

- Raw material and product specifications
- Assessment and selection of suppliers
- Incoming good, interim and final product inspections
- Manufacturing and work instructions
- Temperature monitoring

3.1 Incoming goods

3.1.1 [K.O.] Labelling procured QS produce

The labelling of QS products must be clear. In addition, the transport documents must also be clearly labelled (normally this applies to the delivery note or delivery notification via electronic data interchange), so that a unique reference can be made from the goods produced in line with QS and the respective delivery note or invoice, etc. at any time.

The broker must sign agreements/contracts that ensure that labelling of the procured QS products is correctly checked by the service providers. In addition to these checks, service provider audits must be performed and documented annually (approx. every 12 months). This is not necessary if proof is provided that the service providers have been successfully QS-certified (or certified in line with a recognised standard).

3.1.2 [K.O.] Returns management

A system to process returns must be implemented. The internal guidelines for further use of returned goods must be followed. Measures must be implemented to prevent the reoccurrence of the deviation. The separation of QS products and non-QS products must be respected.

The broker must be in possession of all information regarding returns.

3.1.3 Complaints management

A system for managing product claims and product complaints must be in place.

All claims/complaints must be assessed and, if necessary, the appropriate measures introduced.

- Claims = made by authorities
- Complaints = made by costumers and end-users

3.2 Packaging/storage transfer

3.2.1 Packaging material

Packaging material and any supplementary material must be stored and transferred so that the risk of contamination is low. Damage must be avoided and prevented in particularly in case of packaging materials such as plastics (HACCP). Packaging material and any supplementary material must be suitable for the intended purpose and correspond to current legal requirements (Sample form Declaration of conformity with the food laws for food packaging). Only packaging material from which the outer packaging has already been removed must be used in the production rooms.

The broker must sign agreements/contracts that ensure that the service providers comply with the requirements for packaging materials, their storage and transport, etc. In addition to these checks, service provider audits must be performed and documented annually (approx. every 12 months). This is not necessary if proof is provided that the service providers have been successfully QS-certified (or certified by a recognised standard).

Reference to further documents:

- Sample form Declaration of conformity with the food laws for food packaging

3.2.2 [K.O.] Declaration of conformity/declaration of no objection

A declaration of conformity/declaration (Sample form Declaration of conformity with the food laws for food packaging) of no objection must be present for packaging materials that come into direct contact with the foods.

The broker must be in possession of declarations of conformity/declarations of no objection for the packaging materials if the service provider commissioned with packaging operations is not QS-certified (or certified by a recognised standard).

Reference to further documents:

- Sample form Declaration of conformity with the food laws for food packaging

3.3 Commissioning, outgoing goods/dispatch

3.3.1 [K.O.] Labelling of marketed QS produce

QS products leaving the company must be clearly identified as QS products on the delivery note as well as on the product.

Marketing of loose produce

If QS certified and not QS certified loose goods are transported in one container (e. g. for the service counter) the labelling with the QS certification mark on the container is not allowed. If possible, every QS product should be labelled as such (e. g. with a banderole). In this case, a QS labelling is only allowed on the valid delivery note. It is important that the recipient is informed which articles from the order fulfil the QS requirements and can therefore be marketed as QS products. For these purposes, a list must be kept available for the staff in the food retail store, indicating whether the products are QS products or not. This method is only allowed if the system is comprehensible for third parties (e. g. unmixed separation of QS products and non-QS products).

Scheme participants may only label QS products as such in the accompanying documents if the reseller is also a QS scheme participant. If QS products are marketed to non-QS scheme participants at a business customer level, these goods may not be identified as such in the accompanying documents, unless it can be expected that the reseller will no longer actively advertise the goods as QS products in his business dealings and in contact with his customers (e.g. by a general reference on the bill of delivery).

The broker must sign agreements/contracts that ensure that labelling of the marketed QS products is correctly implemented by the service providers. In addition to these checks, service provider audits must be performed and documented annually (approx. every 12 months). This is not necessary if proof is provided that the service providers have been successfully QS-certified (or certified by a recognised standard).

3.3.2 [K.O.] Product temperature

The temperature of the purchased goods specified in accordance with **REG (EC) No 853/2004** Annex III may not exceed the values specified in tab. 1.

If lower temperatures are defined in the company and agreed with the suppliers, they must be fulfilled and taken into consideration when receiving goods.

Table 1: Temperature requirements, measured as product temperature⁽¹⁾, for food of animal origin requiring cold storage

Products	Maximum Temperature [°C]	Minimal Temperature [°C]
Meat, fresh (except poultry) and meat products	+7	-2
Slaughter by-product (e. g. offal)	+3	-2
minced meat (self-service packaged)	+2	-2
Meat preparations	+4	-2
Poultry (incl. poultry offal)	+4	-2


⁽¹⁾ The product temperature is the highest temperature for food that is subject to cooling at any point.

The product temperature of deep-frozen foods may not exceed -18 °C. Brief fluctuations of max. 3 °C are permissible when loading and unloading these foods in line with the **regulation on deep-frozen foods(TLMV)**.

Poultry used in fresh poultry preparations must always be stored at temperatures ranging between -2 °C and +4 °C in accordance with **REG (EC) No 1308/2013**.

The products must comply with temperature regulations upon goods issue. The temperature must be adhered to during the entire transport according to the current requirements. The temperature must be controlled and documented.

The broker must ensure compliance with the required product temperatures. The broker defines the requirements in writing and performs risk-based monitoring of compliance, at least every two months (e. g. receipt of data logger evaluations).

 Temperature documentation

4 Traceability and origin of goods

4.1 Traceability method and inspection

4.1.1 [K.O.] Traceability method

It may be necessary to define the produced batch sizes to secure traceability. Traceability should be ensured to at least a fatter group of one day or one shift. The systems and procedures for traceability must be traceable by third parties and allows a distinct identification of the QS products as well as a traceable and plausible commodity flow. Where necessary, the traceability method of the service providers must be incorporated in the traceability system of the broker. System partners must set up traceability systems and procedures in accordance with **REG (EC) No 178/2002**.

When forming beef batches, the provisions of **REG (EC) No 1825/2000**, Article 4 must be compulsory fulfilled. For pork and poultry, Articles 4 and 5.3 of **REG (EC) No 1337/2013** must be complied with. Furthermore, national regulations must also be complied with.


Scheme participants must implement systems for traceability that ensure that traceability data is submitted to QS within 24 hours of contact with the scheme participants.

Internal traceability processes during the audit should be structured so that the respective information can be compiled within four hours.

The following customer and supplier information are relevant:

- Name, address and telephone number of the food business operator from whom the food was dispatched
- Name and address of the consignor (goods owner), if this is not the food business operator from whom the food was dispatched
- Name and address of the food business operator to whom the food is dispatched
- Name and address of the consignee (owner), if this is not the food business operator to whom the food is sent
- QS-ID or location number (as long as this identification number has been issued within the framework of the QS scheme)
- Type and quantity of delivered products
- Dispatch date, delivery data and/or slaughter data (slaughter data only relevant for the stage slaughtering/deboning)
- Batch or lot number (if generated in the production process)

It must be possible to trace which products were procured from which supplier (supplier list). It must be possible to trace which products are delivered to which customer (customer list).


 Batch creation, traceability system

4.1.2 [K.O.] Traceability test

The labelling and registration system implemented in the company must enable the unique identification of products as QS products, in order to trace back the goods on the basis of production sample or goods issue as per **REG (EC) No 178/2002**. This also applies to packaging and spices.


The labelling and registration system is tested at least once a year (approx. every 12 months). All relevant flows of goods should be considered. The test must be documented and the findings presented in a plausible manner.

Products that are known to contain QS products, but are not marked as QS products, must also be considered for the traceability test.

 traceability test


4.1.3 **[K.O.] Reconciliation of incoming produce with outgoing produce**

The company must see that there is a plausible relation between the quantity of the purchased goods and the quantity of the stored and delivered goods.

 Incoming goods documents (e. g. delivery notes, incoming goods inspection) and outgoing goods documents, as well as quantity in cold/frozen storage

4.1.4 **[K.O.] Check on eligibility of delivery into the QS scheme**

All delivering and receiving companies of QS products must be clearly identifiable as eligible to deliver scheme participants in the QS software platform at the time the goods are handed over.


 Procedure for the check of QS eligibility of delivery into the QS

5 Definitions

5.1 Explanation of symbols

K.O. criteria are marked **[K.O.]**.

Reference to related documents are highlighted with **bold text**.

 This sign means: A written proof must be kept. In addition to this symbol, documents that can be used as proof are also indicated. All (including digital) control and documentation systems that prove that the requirements are fulfilled, can be used.

⇒ References to other sections of the Guideline are indicated by an arrow.

Notes are identified by **Note** in *italics*.

5.2 Abbreviations

HACCP Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points

K.O. Knock out

5.3 Terms and definitions

- HACCP (Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point):
A system that identifies, assesses and monitors hazards that are significant in terms of food safety.
- HACCP concept:
Documentation in compliance with HACCP principles to ensure the monitoring of hazards relevant to food safety.
- QS goods:
QS goods means goods that are produced and/or marketed in a QS-certified company in line with the requirements of the QS scheme.

You can find a list of general terms and definitions in the **Guideline "General Requirements"**

Revision Information Version 01.01.2024

Criterion	Changes	Date of change
2.1.6 Commissioning of logistics companies/ Subcontractors	<p>Renaming: Prior <i>commissioning of service providers</i></p> <p>Clarification: If logistics companies are commissioned at short notice for the transport of QS goods on the spot market within the framework of individual daily contracts (e.g. in the case of high seasonal volumes), this requirement can be deviated from. In this case, companies must comply with QA requirements.</p>	01.01.2024
3.1.1 Labelling procured QS goods	<p>Clarification: Clear identification of QS goods in the accompanying documents</p>	01.01.2024

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