



Quality Assurance. **From farm to shop.**



**QS. Quality
Scheme for Food.**

Press release

Random sample audits in the QS scheme: Businesses have to expect inspections every day.

Bonn, 19.08.2014

QS Qualität und Sicherheit GmbH is currently conducting more than 300 unannounced random sample audits on the premises of scheme participants in Germany and abroad. The businesses to be inspected are selected at random, so that every QS scheme participant has to expect to be subjected to additional, unscheduled auditing. By doing so, it is checked whether the requirements regarding process assurance and traceability are also complied with consistently between scheduled regular audits. If any nonconformities are discovered, reprimands, sanctions, suspension and even exclusion from the QS scheme can result.

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Mandatory process requirements and more than 40,000 independent inspections every year ensure transparency in the QS scheme. Auditors from the certification bodies are currently conducting additional random sample audits by order and at the expense of QS. "Random sample audits have been a tried and tested instrument of our inspection system for 10 years now. The goal is to establish whether QS requirements are also complied with between scheduled regular audits," says Dr. Alois Fenneker who has responsibility for auditing at QS Qualität und Sicherheit GmbH. "When selecting a business, it does not matter what stage in the supply chain the business belongs to or in which country it is located. Every QS scheme participant has to expect an inspection every day," according to Fenneker.

Consistent control measures

The auditor discusses the audit results on-the-spot together with each scheme participant. Nonconformities in the process are recorded, corrective actions are agreed upon and their implementation verified in a timely manner. Gross violations of QS requirements result in a so-called *K.O. evaluation* as a consequence of which a livestock farmer can immediately lose the eligibility of delivery into the QS scheme, for example. A *K.O. evaluation*, which means failing an audit due to severe nonconformities, triggers a sanction procedure. "Sanction penalties are the last resort for us, but we have an obligation to all QS scheme participants to identify blatant defects and exclude individual businesses from the scheme if necessary," adds Dr. Alois Fenneker of QS. This forms the basis of trust in cross-stage quality assurance among scheme participants and consumers alike. Everyone must be able to rely on the work of the other.



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QS Qualität und Sicherheit GmbH is owner of the QS quality scheme for food. The standards defined by QS set clear and verifiable production requirements for all stages of the food supply chain – from the feed sector right through to the food retail. The cross-stage monitoring of these requirements as well as the traceability of agricultural products and goods made from them characterise the QS scheme. More than 109.000 companies from feed sector, agriculture, slaughtering/deboning, processing and butchery, wholesale and food retail and more than 23.000 companies in the fruit, vegetables and potatoes supply chain have already chosen to become part of the QS scheme.

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