



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



QS random sample audits along the entire supply chain

Additional controls ensure scheme stability

In the coming months, more and more additional random sample audits will be taking place throughout the entire QS scheme. The randomly selected companies will be audited without advance notice and will face sanctions in the event of noncompliance with requirements.

“Random sample audits have been a tried and tested part of our internal control system since as far back as 2005,” explains Dr. Alois Fenneker, who has responsibility for auditing at QS. “All scheme participants have to reckon with a check at any time. Some of them are also selected on a risk basis, which means that companies which have had nonconformities in the past can be audited more frequently”. The additional audits are planned by QS head office and conducted by neutral certification bodies at the expense of QS.

Although the results of recent years show that the companies involved in the QS scheme perform just as convincingly in the additional audits as in the regular ones, the former are indispensable for the reliability and stability of the entire system. Over 400 scheme participants in Germany and abroad were additionally audited in 2016, with 97 percent of the companies passing the test. 13 companies contravened QS requirements with the result that the sanction procedure was imposed.

Random sample audits in other countries too

The audits were conducted in domestic as well as foreign businesses. This year, 26 of the total of 445 scheduled random sample audits will take place abroad. In addition to these, QS is jointly organising random sample audits with other European standard owners in businesses which participate in the QS scheme on the basis of bilateral recognition. To this end, the special auditors commissioned by QS are deployed on-site to check the functionality of the recognised schemes in order to ensure the fulfilment of QS requirements. The jointly conducted audits strengthen confidence in the reliability of the European standards and enhance the mutual trust of the standard owners.

About QS, your test scheme for food

QS has been ensuring food safety since 2001 – from the farm to the shop counter. Today, 95 percent of the pork and poultry meat and 90 percent of the beef produced in Germany comes from QS-certified businesses. A total of around 76,500 livestock farmers take part in the QS scheme with the joint goal of conducting consistent self-assessments and comprehensive process

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controls and verification of origin. 13,000 producers of fresh fruit, vegetables and potatoes can be added to this number. Within the QS scheme, they produce safe foods in line with clearly defined criteria with the support of all upstream and downstream commercial processes. Consumers can recognise safe foods from the QS scheme by the blue certification mark which can be found in the 24,500 food retail outlets that participate in the QS scheme along with all preliminary production stages.

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