



Communicate care for food safety and quality

IFS – International Food Standard

The International Food Standard (IFS) is a common food safety standard with a uniform evaluation system used to qualify and select suppliers. It helps retailers ensure the food safety of their products and monitors the quality level of producers of retailer branded food products.

Having a common standard and a uniform way to evaluate the quality level of suppliers reduces a retailer's need for second party audits. For the retailer, supply chain management becomes more consistent and efficient. It reduces the overall costs of the process, and increases the level of safety for customers, suppliers, and consumers. While it may be a ticket to trade with retailers, it is also a chance for you to demonstrate your commitment to food safety, quality, and legality, and to work on continual improvement.

What is the standard?

Concern among retailers about food safety because of their direct responsibility in case of an incident led to the development of uniform food safety standards and audit system. IFS (International Food Standard) was developed by German and French food trade associations to take control of the situation, and it is the international standard for auditing retailer and wholesaler

branded food products. It is also supported by the major Italian trade association. The standard applies to suppliers at all steps of the food processing subsequent to the agricultural stage. The requirements are related to the quality management system and the HACCP system, supported by detailed prerequisite programmes, that is a set of GMP (Good Manufacturing Practice), GLP (Good Laboratory Practice) and GHP (Good Hygiene Practice) requirements.. It helps ensure that they comply with quality and safety demands, and legal requirements.

IFS meets the criteria of the Global Food Safety Initiative by CIES – The Food Business Forum, the global organisation including CEOs and senior management of around 400 retailers (operating close to 200,000 stores) and manufacturer members of all sizes.

Why is certification good for my business?

The most important European retailers require IFS certification from the suppliers that are included in their supply chain. But IFS is an international standard and can be applied to suppliers outside Europe as well.

The standard enables your organisation to:

- Provide evidence of commitment, and, in case of a food safety incident, legal defence in the frame of the “due diligence” concept*
 - Build and operate a management system capable of helping you to better meet food quality/safety requirements and legal compliance, with specific reference to the legislation applicable in the countries where the finished product is consumed
 - Provide a tool for food safety performance improvement, and the means to monitor and measure food safety performance effectively
 - Facilitate reductions in product waste, product reworking, and product recall
- * The capability to be able to demonstrate that every reasonable measure has been taken to avoid an incident

How can I prepare for certification?

Companies that plan well will often have an advantage and be better prepared for certification. It is important that you and your company are positive, committed, and set clear target dates for implementation and assessment.

This includes:

- Establishing a quality management system
- Identifying legal requirements
- Identifying and documenting the specific food safety hazards and the relevant control measures (HACCP system)
- Identifying the applicable Good Manufacturing Practice/ Good Hygiene Practice, including a pest control program, equipment and building maintenance program, housekeeping and cleaning program, and all the specific standard requirements
- Implement any needed structural improvements

Why partner with DNV?

DNV is a leading provider of services for managing risk, combining in-depth technical expertise and industry knowledge to help organisations along the food supply chain enhance their performance responsibly. As an independent foundation with the objective of safeguarding life, property and the environment, we believe in a partnership approach toward sustainable business.

Offering a comprehensive range of advisory, certification, training and technical services, DNV helps businesses manage the risks in their own operations and along the supply chain. Pro-actively managing your risks will effectively protect and build your brand, while demonstrating to stakeholders that you are committed to quality, safety and sustainability.

DNV is a market leader with a global reputation for excellence. We operate from more than 300 offices worldwide; our employees speak your language and know your local needs, customs and market.

DNV offers competence and expertise in all sectors and can therefore satisfy sector-specific requirements relevant for all food producers and operators.

DNV’s extensive local presence, consolidated experience and acknowledged competence in the field of risk management make us an ideal partner for companies in the food and beverage industry.