

## Introduction to the IndiaGHP/IndiaHACCP Certification Schemes

The FSSAI has in Schedule 4 to the FSSAI Licensing Regulations, while prescribing hygiene and sanitary conditions as a pre requisite to both registration and licensing of FBO, also encouraged the food business operators (FBO) to go for implementation of HACCP. The regulations states:

“...These are the basic - compulsory requirements for ensuring safety of the food manufactured in any premise and FBOs shall continuously try to improve the sanitary and hygienic conditions at the premises **with a goal of attaining India HACCP standards** within a - previously determined period...”

Codex Alimentarius Commission has published **CAC/RCP -1 1969 - Recommended Code of Practice - General Principles of Food Hygiene**, describing the controls recognized internationally as essential for safety and suitability of food, while HACCP is recommended for ensuring enhanced food safety. The Codex General Practice of Food Hygiene (GPFH) is applicable across the food chain and is so written that each industry has to interpret and apply it. It is a guidance document and is therefore not amenable to auditing or certification, which needs a normative document or a requirement standard.

Since this Codex GPFH and HACCP document is not a normative document that enables assessment, the Indian industry is having to resort to foreign HACCP based food safety standards for demonstrating compliance to HACCP like Dutch HACCP, SQF etc.

In keeping with the intent of FSSAI for promoting food safety by FBOs, QCI with multi stakeholder participation has developed two Schemes namely **IndiaHACCP Certification Scheme** and the **IndiaGHP Certification Scheme**, for enabling verification of compliance by FBOs through a voluntary certification initiative.

These Certification Schemes are based on the international best practices and global standards for development of certification standard(s) and schemes to ensure internationally acceptable certification. These Certification Schemes would not only help provide assurance that food is suitable for human consumption but also maintain confidence in internationally traded food. It would also provide Indian FBOs an alternative to foreign certifications and outgo of foreign exchange.

These Certification Schemes have been designed using the principles of third party assessment and the Scheme document include;

- a) Governing Structure – the structure, components, roles and responsibilities of participating organizations and committees, if any;
- b) Certification criteria – the standard for certification, which have been developed following the Code of Good Practice enshrined in the WTO TBT;
- c) Certification Process – initial evaluation, frequency of surveillance, requirements for evaluators etc.;
- d) Requirements for Certification Bodies.

QCI had constituted an **Agrifood Steering Committee** under **Mr. Rakesh Kacker**, former Secretary, Ministry of Food Processing Industries to lead these initiatives.

The details of the Schemes are available on QCI's website at link <http://www.qcin.org/India%20GHP%20&%20India%20HACCP.php>

Many countries including US have mandated HACCP for certain high risk sectors like meat, juice etc. through their food regulations. Although Indian regulation is using the term IndiaHACCP but it had not yet designed the scheme and therefore QCI has developed this scheme with active support from FSSAI.

These schemes would serve as a stepping stone for achieving certification against any of the international schemes which are prerequisite for food industry to enter international markets.

