

How to implement a food safety management system

by Roger Frost

ISO has followed up its recent publication of ISO 22000, the International Standard for food safety management systems, with implementation guidance.

ISO/TS 22004:2005, *Food safety management systems – Guidance on the application of ISO 22000:2005*, gives advice that will be useful for all types of organization within the food supply chain.

These range from feed producers, primary producers, food manufacturers, transport and storage operators and sub-contractors to retail and food service outlets – together with related organizations such as producers of equipment, packaging material, cleaning agents, additives and ingredients.

ISO/TS 22004 will facilitate the effective implementation of ISO 22000

Food safety failures in both developed and developing countries have intensified interest everywhere in systematic prevention at every link in the supply chain. ISO 22000, backed by international consensus among government and industry experts, harmonizes the requirements for good food safety practice worldwide.

In turn, ISO/TS 22004 will act as a “force multiplier” by pro-

viding guidance for organizations that recognize the potential benefits of implementing a food safety management system, but are unsure of how to go about it. The document will therefore contribute to the spread of such systems, as well as improving understanding, communication and coordination between the actors in food supply chains.

Market relevance

ISO Secretary-General Alan Bryden commented: “ISO/TS 22004 will facilitate the effective implementation of ISO 22000 and therefore help to maximize the benefits. It is an example of

ISO’s market relevance, showing how we as an organization are keeping pace with evolutions in business practice, such as today’s tendency to accompany products with service and support packages.”

ISO/TS 22004 gives generic guidance for small and large enterprises on the implementation of ISO 22000, without altering or replacing any of the requirements in the standard. It explains “the process approach” used in ISO 22000 and provides guidance on the main clauses of the standard.

The process approach

On processes, ISO/TS 22004 states: “For an organization to function effectively and efficiently, it has to identify and manage numerous linked activities. An activity using resources, and managed in order to

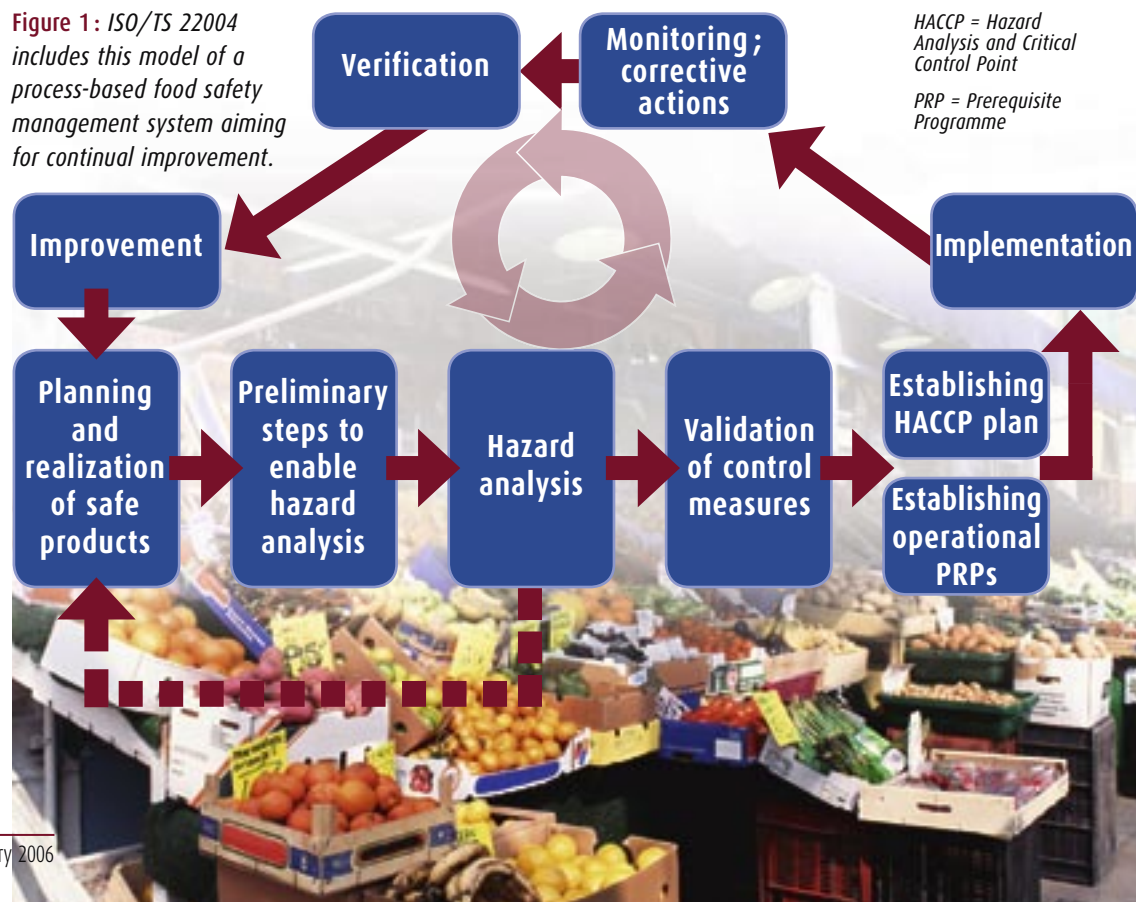
enable the transformation of inputs into outputs, is considered as a process. Often the output from one process directly forms the input to the next.

“The application of a system of processes within an organization, together with the identification of interactions and the management of these processes can be referred to as the ‘process approach’.

“An advantage of the process approach is the ongoing control that it provides over the linkage between the individual processes within the system of processes, as well as their combination and interaction.”

The model of a process-based food safety management system shown in **Figure 1** illustrates the process linkages presented in Clauses 4 to 8 of ISO 22000:2005. The model does not show the processes at

Figure 1: ISO/TS 22004 includes this model of a process-based food safety management system aiming for continual improvement.



a detailed level, but does illustrate the continual improvement concept on which ISO 22000:2005 is built.

Relationship to ISO 9001:2000

Both the process approach and continual improvement were derived from the ISO 9001 quality management system standard and ISO/TS 22004 points out that ISO 22000 was designed to work in harmony with ISO 9001:2000 and its supporting standards.

ISO/TS 22004 states: “ISO 9001 provides requirements for a quality management system that can be used for internal application by organizations, or for certification, or for contractual purposes. It focuses on the effectiveness of the quality management system in meeting customer requirements. ISO 22000 provides the essential elements of a food safety management system for similar purposes.

Compatibility with other MMS

Regarding compatibility of ISO 22000 with other management system standards (MSS), ISO/TS 22004 does not include guidance specific to other management systems, such as those particular to environmental management, occupational health and safety management, financial management, or risk management.

“However,” it states, “ISO 22000 enables an organization to align or integrate its own food safety management sys-

tem with related management systems. It is possible for an organization to adapt its existing management system(s) in order to establish a food safety management system that follows the requirements of ISO 22000.”

HACCP

A major benefit of ISO 22000 is that it provides a framework for organizations worldwide to implement the Codex HACCP (Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point) system for food hygiene in a harmonized way, which does not vary with the country or food product concerned.

To further this objective, ISO/TS 22004 includes a flow chart on the planning of safe foods that combines steps addressed by the Codex HACCP guidelines and steps specific to ISO 22000.

ISO/TS 22004:2005, *Food safety management systems – Guidance on the application of ISO 22000:2005*, costs 75 Swiss francs and is available from ISO national member institutes (a complete list with contact details is available on the ISO Web site: www.iso.org) and from ISO Central Secretariat (sales@iso.org). •