



# ISO 22000 standard for safe food supply chains

by Roger Frost



September 2005 is ISO's publication target for ISO 22000<sup>1)</sup>, the new standard for food safety management systems, which is intended to ensure that there are no weak links in food supply chains.

ISO has circulated the final draft of the standard to the national standard bodies that make up its membership for a two-month voting period, ending on 5 July 2005.

ISO 22000, *Food safety management systems – Requirements for any organization in the food chain*, can be applied to organizations ranging from feed producers, primary producers through food manufacturers, transport and storage operators and subcontractors to retail and food service outlets – together with inter-related organizations such as producers of equipment, packaging material, cleaning agents, additives and ingredients.

"As food safety hazards can be introduced at any stage of the food chain, adequate control throughout the food chain is essential," commented Jacob Færgemand, convenor of the ISO working group that is developing ISO 22000.

## Food chain

"Thus, food safety is a joint responsibility that is principally assured through the combined efforts of all the parties participating in the food chain."

ISO 22000 specifies the requirements for a food safety management system in the food chain where an organization needs to demonstrate its ability to control food safety hazards in order to provide consistently safe end products that meet both the requirements

agreed with the customer and those of applicable food safety regulations.

Dorte Jespersen, secretary of the ISO 22000 working group, explained the background to the standard: "Organizations that produce, manufacture,

9001:2000, with or without independent (third party) certification of conformity.

## Complemented

The publication of ISO 22000 will be complemented by an ISO Technical Specification (ISO/TS 22004) giving guidance on the implementation of the standard, with a particular emphasis on small and medium-sized enterprises. In the following months, another Technical Specification (ISO/TS 22003) will be published explaining certification requirements applicable when third-party certification is used.

handle or supply food recognize that customers increasingly want them to demonstrate and provide adequate evidence of their ability to identify and control food safety hazards and the many conditions impacting food safety.

**The standard can be applied on its own, or in combination with other management system standards such as ISO 9001:2000**

"The growing number of national standards for food safety management has led to confusion. Consequently, there is a need to harmonize the national standards at an international level."

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These documents are being developed by working group WG 8, *Food safety management systems*, of ISO technical committee ISO/TC 34, *Food products*. Experts from 23 countries are participating and organizations with liaison status include the following: Confederation of the Food and Drink Industries of the European Union (CIAA), Codex Alimentarius Commission, International Hotel and Restaurant Association, CIES/Global Food Safety Initiative, and World Food Safety Organization (WFSO).

1) See "ISO 22000 to ensure integrity of food supply chain", *ISO Management Systems* September-October 2004.