



*A commitment to safe, quality food.*

**SQF PROGRAM  
FOOD SECTOR CATEGORIES**

**SQF PROGRAM  
FOOD SECTOR CATEGORIES  
1ST EDITION - AMENDED NOVEMBER 2005**

Copyright© Food Marketing Institute 2005  
655 15th Street, N.W.  
Washington, DC 20005, USA



SQFI is a Division of the Food Marketing Institute

[www.sqfi.com](http://www.sqfi.com)

## Preface

The following document provides a list of Food Industry Categories to be used in conjunction with the relevant publications within the SQF program. The list is to be used as a guide only. Examples are included in each industry group.

A Technical Committee reviews and makes recommendations on changes to the “SQF Program: Food Sector Categories” in line with the current requirements and expectations of the global food sector. Amendments are posted on the SQF web site. The document is reissued when warranted.

Suggestions for improvements to “SQF Program: Food Industry Categories” are encouraged from all users. They should be submitted in writing and be sent to the Technical Manager, SQF Institute, 655 15th St., N.W., Washington DC, 20005, USA.

Copyright© Food Marketing Institute (FMI). All rights reserved.

First printed September 2003

Users of these Categories and the associated documents are reminded that copyright subsists in all SQF publications and software. Except where the Copyright Act allows and except where provided for below no publications or software produced by FMI may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system in any form or transmitted by any means without prior permission in writing from FMI. Permission may be conditional on an appropriate royalty payment. All requests for permission and information on software royalties should be directed in writing to FMI.

Care should be taken to ensure that material used is from the current edition of the “SQF Program Food Sector Categories” and that it is updated whenever the document is amended or revised. The date of the “SQF Program Food Sector Categories” should therefore be clearly identified.

The use of material in print form or in computer software programs to be used commercially, with or without payment, or in commercial contracts is subject to the payment of a royalty. FMI may vary this policy at any time.

SQF, its certification marks, intellectual property and logos are owned by FMI and are used under license by its nominated Agents

## 1 INTRODUCTION

The Food Sector Categories listed are used to facilitate a uniform approach to the management of the SQF Program.

## 2 SCOPE

This document applies to Certificates of Registration issued within the SQF Program, including, but not limited to Certificates of Registration, SQF Expert Registration, and SQF Auditor Registration.

## 3 DEFINITIONS

For the purposes of this document the relevant definitions given in the “SQF Program – Vocabulary” apply.

## 4 RISK LEVEL

Processes and products are classified as either **General Risk** or **High Risk** dependant upon the potential safety hazard that loss of control during processing poses to the intended consumer of the product. SQF Expert and SQF Auditor Applicants requesting a category that includes High Risk Processes are required to demonstrate specific training and/or work experience in those processes. Examples of high risk classifications are provided in the following table as guidance only and take into account that within certain Food Industry Categories there may well be low and High Risk Processes. For example Category 3 is generally considered a low risk category however, the category also includes the production and supply of bean sprouts, now accepted as a High Risk Food and involving a High Risk Process. Therefore to achieve registration to audit a bean sprout process the applicant will need to satisfy the requirements for High Risk Processes. Another example of a High Risk process is provided in the table below.

Risk Classification	Description	Typical Business
High Risk	Processing of ready-to-eat foods targeted at vulnerable groups and the manufacture of high risk food for a large customer base, prepared in one location and served in another.	For example caterers, nursing homes, home delivery operations, hospitals and child care centres and Producers supplying bean sprouts.

## 5 SQF PROGRAM FOOD SECTOR CATEGORIES

Food Sector Categories are listed below. Applicants must demonstrate knowledge and practical experience in the categories requested for registration by completing Part D in the appropriate application. Additional categories can be added after initial registration provided the appropriate training and/or work experience can be demonstrated.

Primary Production – SQF 1000 Code			
No	Category	Description	Example of Products
1	<b>Production, Capture and Harvesting of Livestock and Game Animals</b>	Applies to the capture, transport, holding, intensive animal husbandry and free range farming of animals, but does not include fish.	a) Includes bees, deer, cows, goats, sheep, swine, poultry, ostrich, and emu b) Includes milk, honey, and egg production
2	<b>Animal Feeds Production</b>	Applies to the production, harvesting, transport and storage of all non-processed sources of animal feeds. Excludes manufactured feeds.	Includes pasture, silage and hay.
3	<b>Growing and Production of Fresh Produce</b>	Applies to the production, harvesting, preparation, field packing, transport and controlled temperature storage of fresh whole fruit and vegetables. Includes all products grown under broad acre and intensive horticulture production systems, including orchards, viticulture, hydroponic production and silviculture and nursery operations.	Includes all fruit and vegetable varieties.  <b>Note:</b> Certain crops such as bean sprouts are classified as a High Risk Food.
5	<b>Extensive Broad Acre Agriculture Operations</b>	Applies to the production, harvesting, preparation, transport and storage of cereal and other grains.	Includes all grain and cereal varieties.
6	<b>Harvest and Intensive Farming of Fish</b>	Applies to the harvest and wild capture and intensive farming of freshwater and marine fishes and shellfish, including purification, transport and storage and extends to gilling, gutting, shucking and chilling operations at sea.	Includes all live marine and freshwater fish and shellfish species.  <b>Note:</b> The farming or harvesting of oysters, mussels and other filter feeders are classified as a High Risk Foods.

<b>Processing and Manufacturing – SQF 2000 Code</b>			
<b>4</b>	<b>Fresh Produce Pack house Operations</b>	Applies to the packing, sorting, grading, cleaning, controlled temperature transport and storage of fresh and pre-packaged whole unprocessed fruits and vegetables for retail sale or further processing.	Includes all fruit and vegetable varieties which are packed in pack houses and undergo controlled storage and transport.
<b>7</b>	<b>Slaughterhouse, Boning and Butchery Operations, Meat and Poultry</b>	Applies to the slaughtering, dressing, processing, transport, storage, chilling, freezing and wholesaling of all animal species and game animals for consumption and extends to all cuts of meat (including minced meat).	Includes uncooked meats prepared in retail butcher shops, boning rooms and meat wholesale markets, including ground beef.
<b>8</b>	<b>Processing of Manufactured Meat and Poultry</b>	Applies to all value-adding processing, transport and storage operations where meat (all species) is the major ingredient (e.g. cook-chill, crumbing, curing, smoking, cooking, drying and fermenting) including chilling, freezing, but not canning of meat products.	Includes meats blended from other foods and raw heat-treated and fermented meats including salami, hot dogs, sausages, bacon, pepperoni, proscuitto, and meat pastes.
<b>9</b>	<b>Seafood Processing</b>	Applies to the processing, transport and storage of all fish species and extends to value-adding operations including dismembering, fermenting, crumbing, smoking, cooking freezing, chilling, drying and wholesaling, but not canning of fish.	Includes uncooked and cooked fish products including sashimi, sushi, surimi, reformed fish cakes, coated fish portions and the handling of ready-to-eat uncooked shellfish
<b>10</b>	<b>Dairy Food Processing</b>	Applies to the processing, transport and storage of food products from all species used for milk collection and extends to all value-adding operations including pasteurisation, UHT, freezing ultra filtration, evaporation/concentration, fermentation, clarification, culturing and spray drying of milk.	Includes all milk collection and includes milk and cream, butter, cheese, yoghurt, ice cream and dried milk. Includes milk substitutes such as soymilk and tofu (where the process and technology is essentially the same). Also includes infant formula.
<b>11</b>	<b>Honey Processing</b>	Applies to the processing, transport and storage of food products from all species used for honey collection including value-added operations. Includes clarifying and treatment operations.	Includes honeycomb; pollen and royal jelly
<b>12</b>	<b>Egg Processing</b>	Applies to the processing, transport and storage of food products from all species used for egg collection and including pasteurising and drying.	Includes value added products where egg is the major ingredient.

<b>Processing and Manufacturing – SQF 2000 Code (continued)</b>			
<b>13</b>	<b>Bakery and Snack Food Processing</b>	Applies to the processing, transport and storage of extruded snack foods and cake mix formulations and extends to all bakery operations.	Includes baked items such as meat pies, custard pies, bread, biscuits (cookies), cakes and mixes and all varieties of snack food.
<b>14</b>	<b>Fruit and Vegetable Processing</b>	Applies to the processing, transport, storage and distribution of all processed fruit and vegetable varieties, but not including fruit or vegetable juice manufacture or the canning of fruits and vegetables. Includes freezing, fermenting drying, slicing, dicing, cutting, and modified atmosphere processing of all fruits and vegetables.	Includes frozen. Fermented, dried, sliced, diced, cut, and modified (MAP) packaged fruit and vegetable products including prepared salads.
<b>15</b>	<b>Canning, UHT and Aseptic Operations</b>	Applies to the processing, transport and storage of low acid canned foods, and pasteurisation, sterilisation (retorting) UHT, other high temperature processes not covered elsewhere and the manufacture of the associated hermetically sealed containers.	Includes canned fish, meats, vegetables and other low acid soups and sauces and the associated containers including glass, metal and retort pouches.
<b>16</b>	<b>Ice, Drink and Beverage Processing</b>	Applies to all beverage processes including fermentation, concentration, pasteurisation, UHT, aseptic fill or drying operations.  Excludes milk and powdered milk products.	Includes fruit juice, cordial, carbonated soft drinks, carbonated and non carbonated waters, mineral water, ice, wine, beer and other alcoholic beverages, powdered beverage formulations and tea and coffee products.
<b>17</b>	<b>Confectionary Manufacturing</b>	Applies to the preparation, transport and storage of all types of confectionary and extends to all chocolate and imitation chocolate-based processing.	Includes all confectionary products which undergo refining, conching, starch moulding, compression, extrusion and vacuum cooking.
<b>18</b>	<b>Preserved Foods Manufacture</b>	Applies to the processing, transport and storage of all foods preserved under high temperature processes not covered elsewhere, compositionally preserved foods that are not high temperature processed or other alternative acceptable methods not covered elsewhere.	Includes dressings, mayonnaise, sauces, marinades, pickled foods, peanut butter, mustards, jams and fillings.
<b>19</b>	<b>Food Ingredient Manufacture</b>	Applies to the processing, blending, re-packaging transport and storage of dry food ingredients including cultures and yeast, but excludes dairy products, fermented meats or other fermented products mentioned elsewhere.	Includes starter cultures used in cheese, yoghurt and wine manufacture and cultures used in the baking industry and other products such as vinegar used for the preservation of foods. Other additional products include additives, preservatives, flavourings, colourings, soup mixes, sauces, dehydrated culinary products, salt, sugar, spices and other condiments.
<b>20</b>	<b>Recipe Meals Manufacture</b>	Applies to the processing, receipt, controlled temperature storage and transport of foods prepared from a range of ingredients (mixed foods) that require cooking or heating prior to serving.	Includes sous vides products, frozen meals, and freeze-dried and dehydrated meals such as frozen pizza and other entrees, and dried soups.

<b>Processing and Manufacturing – SQF 2000 Code (continued)</b>			
21	<b>Oils, Fats, and the Manufacture of oil or fat-based spreads</b>	Applies to the manufacture of all animal and vegetable oils and fats and to the manufacture of margarine. Includes clarifying and refining processes.	Includes shortening (animal and vegetable), oils (olive, peanut, corn, vegetable, sunflower, safflower, canola, nut, seed), and oil-based spreads such as margarine and oil based spreads.
22	<b>Processing of Cereal Grains and Nuts</b>	Applies to the processing of cereals and nuts of all varieties, including sorting, grading, picking, handling of bulk grains, milling, and extruding and the roasting, drying, cutting, and grinding processing of nuts.	Includes wheat, maize, rice, barley, oats, millet, nut butters/pastes, pasta, breakfast cereals, and sliced, chopped, and ground nuts.

<b>Retailing and Food Service Operations – SQF 2000 Code</b>			
23	<b>Food Catering and Food Service Operations</b>	Applies to all food preparation and service activities, including transport, storage, and distribution undertaken with of prepared mixed foods that are ready to eat and do not require further treatment or processing by the consumer.	Includes food service caterers, retail delicatessen/self serve facilities, restaurants, fast food outlets, delicatessens, school cafeterias (canteens), hospital/institution meal services, childcare centers, and mobile and home delivery food services.
24	<b>Food Retailing</b>	Applies to the receipt, handling, storage and display at retail level of stable or pre-processed and packaged foods and/or food intended for further preparation by the consumer.	Includes all foods distributed and sold through retail outlets that are not considered high-risk foods.

<b>Wholesaling and Distribution – SQF 2000 Code</b>			
25	<b>Fresh Produce Wholesaling and Distribution</b>	Applies to the receipt, controlled temperature storage, display, consolidation and distribution of all perishable fresh produce at wholesale level.	Includes all varieties of fresh unprocessed fruits and vegetables.
26	<b>Food Wholesaling and Distribution</b>	Applies to the receipt, storage, display, consolidation and distribution of general food lines including dry goods, stable or pre-processed and packaged foods and/or food intended for further preparation by the consumer at wholesale level.	Includes all foods distributed and sold through retail outs that are not considered high-risk foods.

<b>Food Sector Services – SQF 2000 Code</b>			
<b>27</b>	<b>Manufacture of Food Sector Packaging Materials</b>	Applies to the manufacture, storage and transport of food sector packaging materials.	Includes all food-grade packaging materials including flexible films, paperboard based containers, metal containers, flexible pouches, glass containers, plastic and foam containers (PET, polystyrene, etc.), and single-use foodservice products,
<b>28</b>	<b>Provision of Crop Spray Services</b>	Applies to the provision of a spray service on field crops.	Includes pesticides and fertilizers administered dry or in aqueous solution.
<b>29</b>	<b>Provision of Field Harvest Services</b>	Applies to the provision of manual labour and equipment to provide harvest services in the field.	Includes fresh fruit and vegetable pickers, rice-pickers, and nut pickers.
<b>30</b>	<b>Provision of Sanitation and Hygiene Services</b>	Applies to the provision of sanitation and hygiene facilities and the servicing and maintenance of these facilities on site or in the field.	Includes stationary and portable lavatories, hand-washing stations, and foot baths and contract cleaning services.
<b>31</b>	<b>Dietary Supplements</b>	Applies to the manufacture, blending, transport and storage of dietary supplements.	Includes vitamins, probiotics and label supplements.
<b>Food Sector Services – SQF 2000 Code</b>			
<b>32</b>	<b>Fertilizer Manufacture</b>	Applies to the manufacture, conditioning, storage and transport of fertilizers used for agriculture.	Includes soil conditioners, chemical and organic fertilizers.
<b>33</b>	<b>Manufacture of Agricultural Chemicals and Food Processing Aides</b>	Applies to the manufacture, storage and transport of chemicals and aides used in the agricultural and processing sectors.	Includes food grade lubricants, post-harvest waxes and spray treatments and chemicals for clean-in-place systems.
<b>34</b>	<b>Manufacture of Animal Feeds</b>	Applies to the manufacture, blending, transport and storage of processed animal feeds.	Includes compounded and medicated feeds.