



Early adopters underline benefits of new ISO standard for safe food supply chains

by **Roger Frost** *Companies among the first in the world to implement ISO 22000 are underlining the benefits of the new International Standard for ensuring safe food supply chains. At least 50 countries look set to have adopted it within only six months of its publication.*



Early adopters of ISO 22000, the new International Standard on food safety management systems, have provided favourable comments and expressed positive reactions in response to an informal enquiry from ISO Central Secretariat to gauge the worldwide reaction to ISO

22000, which ISO published on 1 September 2005.

Thirty-four countries around the world were already reporting various ISO 22000 deployment activities by the end of 2005, while the standard had also been published as a Euro-

pean Standard, to be followed by adoption as a national standard by the 29 countries that are members of the European Committee for Standardization (CEN).

This indicates that ISO 22000 will have been adopted by 50

INTERNATIONAL

countries or more – or be in the process of adoption – within six months of its publication.

An edited selection of the replies follows with firstly, comments from companies that have already been certified to ISO 22000, and secondly a brief overview of worldwide developments.



The voice of the ISO 22000 user

ARGENTINA

Bodega Familia Schroeder – vineyard and winery



Silvana Sassin, Head of Quality Control: “Implementing ISO 22000 in our organization means an advantage over other schemes as it offers management tools – like those offered by ISO 9001:2000 – but better adapted to the food industry. ISO 22000 also gives guidelines

to guarantee the quality of the product – like those included in the seven Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP) principles.

“All these are simplified into one quality and safety management system that meets all the requirements of many customers, covering ISO 9001:2000, GMP, HACCP, BRC, IFS and similar frameworks.

“With the implementation of ISO 22000, we guarantee safe products and the effectiveness of the production process. It also allows us to improve the relationship with the international market in order to grow industrially and commercially.

“We believe that the implementation of a food safety management system brings significant benefits. First of all, it gives our customers greater confidence when buying and drinking our wines. At the same time, it instills in all of us here at the firm a sense of satisfaction and ease of mind from the knowledge that what we are doing is being done well – and not only from the point of view of quality. Finally, doing things properly is beneficial to society in that it helps to preserve jobs in a healthy organization.

“On top of this comes the added prestige brought by this certification to an ISO standard, and the considerable support we have received as a result amply justifies this recent venture.

“Our greatest satisfaction stems from the fact that behind the consumers’

choice there is an organization working day after day to achieve one of the main objectives of our winery – continual improvement.”

AUSTRALIA

Vinpac International – wine bottling and packaging



Ben Bowering, Quality, Health, Safety and Environmental Manager: “This standard has the potential to turn the onerous task of meeting multiple, often duplicated or even contradictory requirements from various different safety and quality guidelines into one meaningful system.

“I believe that in terms of its international recognition, its rigour and its capacity to improve safety along the entire food chain, the ISO 22000 standard is exactly that – something that will offer benefits for everyone concerned.”

Implementing ISO 22000 means an advantage over other schemes

BELGIUM

Hedelab – manufacturer of dietary supplements



Gilles Gernaey, Scientific Director: “For us, the objective of ISO 22000 is to allow the harmonized implementation, no matter what the country or product concerned, of the HACCP method, recognized by experts as the best tool currently available for guaranteeing food safety for the consumer.

ISO 22000 allows the harmonized implementation of the HACCP method

“Since the significant increase of various food safety crises, certain countries, as well as certain food industry groups and companies, have established their own safety standards, resulting in more than 20 coexisting standards. Thanks to the international consensus which led to the development of ISO 22000, certification to this standard is destined to become the international benchmark for food quality.”

DENMARK

Danisco Sugar – sugar factory of one of the world's leading producers of ingredients for food and other consumer products



Henrik Solkær, Vice President responsible for sustainable development: “As a manufacturer of food ingredients and feed, product safety has top priority and we find it natural that we're front runners in this important area. We constantly strive to improve our safety efforts and we've long been awaiting a global standard covering both food and feed as an alternative to many industry standards.

“We have a strong focus on safety management and communication up through the supply chain – from suppliers to customers – to ensure the highest possible food and feed safety standard. The new ISO standard thus fits our approach perfectly. The ISO 22000 certification is an important milestone in our year-long effort, and we see it as a clear signal to the world of our stance on food and feed safety.”

FINLAND

Caternet – fresh food logistic services



Michael Weckström, Managing Director (right), and Jaakko Repo, Quality Manager: “All our operations are now based on ISO 22000 and on the ISO 9001:2000 quality management standard. ISO 22000 is a useful additional tool to the quality management system that emphasizes the organization's responsibility for food safety, increases the efficiency of our previous system and improves our working methods.

“It has already drawn interest among our customers. In the future, we see ISO 22000 as bringing credibility to the company image and improving our competitiveness.”

FRANCE

Veolia Eau Ile-de-France/Centre – manager of public utilities involved in the production and supply of drinking water

Gabrielle Coat – Quality-Environment Manager: “Veolia Eau Ile-de-France/Centre produces and supplies drinking water. ISO 22000 provides an answer to its core concern: to control all sanitary hazards. Before starting our approach towards ISO 22000 certification, we had already introduced an HACCP system and an ISO 9001:2000-certified quality management system.



“Once it became available, ISO 22000 was able to merge seamlessly with the two existing systems. Today, ISO 22000 enables us to identify the risks associated with our activity, to foresee them and to more effectively contain any emergency that may occur.

“For a group like Veolia Eau, this certification means that we can guarantee the reliability of our organization, not only to our local customers – community groups, for instance – but also at international level.”

PALESTINE

Al-Haya Food Industries Co. – meat processing



Nahed A. Sabri, Quality Assurance Manager: “As a small meat processing company in Jerusalem, we have managed

to prove that commitment to produce safe food and to comply with International Standards is not limited to big companies and has nothing to do with the location of the company.

“We have managed to develop the ISO 22000:2005 system by building on our existing ISO 9001:2000 and HACCP system in a country with a destroyed economy and bad security situation.

“We believe that this new standard is very comprehensive, well established and very systematic. It has helped us in gathering all different systems and programmes under ‘one umbrella’ and achieving a focused approach to control the safety of our products.

Certification to this standard is destined to become the international benchmark

“We now we feel much more confident in the products' safety and we have achieved an excellent reputation in the country for being the first to adopt such a new standard.

“We very much encourage food organizations to adopt such a comprehensive standard which will have a positive impact on the overall food safety status and company reputation – and we highly appreciate ISO for taking the initiative to develop this standard.”

INTERNATIONAL

PORTUGAL

M.A. Silva Cortiças Lda. – wine cork producer



Manuel Silva, President and Managing Director: “M.A.Silva is a leading Portuguese cork producer whose mission is to produce reliable, high quality corks for bottles of fine wines created around the world. It was the first company in Portugal to be certified to ISO 22000:2005

“As a global player, we welcome ISO 22000:2005 because we had felt the need to have a normative reference that could be recognized and accepted worldwide. Previously, our dilemma was deciding which of the existing local norms we should adopt to meet the demands of different markets on food safety.

“The beauty of ISO 22000 is that we did not need to overload our documentation system, indeed the standard’s integration with our quality management system certified to ISO 9001 for over 10 years was quite harmonious.

“This ISO 22000 certification is the perfect tool to offer our customers the guarantee that our natural corks are a strong

link in the food supply chain and to show the world the advantages of using a natural product to seal wine bottles.”

SPAIN

Angulas Aguinaga – manufacturer of food products based on fish and surimi



Javier Cañada Millán, Director, Quality and R&D: “In 2005, Angulas Aguinaga received the prize for innovation from the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries of the Spanish Government.

“The main reason why we implemented ISO 22000 is that it deals specifically with food safety and because it is a standard with international reach, developed by a scientifically based committee with broad experience in the field of food and public health.

“The deployment of this standard required us to strengthen our existing HACCP team, enabled us to develop a better structure and a better definition of our corporate quality policy in relation to food safety and, as a result of this implementation, we have been able to move forward significantly in the study of Critical Control Points (CCP).”

SWITZERLAND

Chocolats & Cacaos Favarger – chocolate manufacturer



Philippe de Korodi, General Manager: “Favarger recognizes that the quality and safety of its products are the condition for its long-term growth. Customers increasingly need ‘trust marks’ to make decisions in the face of complex choices. In addition to ISO 9001:2000, ISO 22000 brings the necessary focus on safety.

Complying with International Standards is not limited to big companies

“The international and ‘neutral’ nature of ISO 22000 certification makes it an attractive and economically sound management target compared to other regional food safety standards. For an SME like Favarger, the cost and energy required to obtain an ISO 22000 certification cannot be taken for granted. However, the benefits far outweigh the investment.”

UNITED KINGDOM

CROWN Speciality Packaging – manufacturer of decorative tinfoil containers for food, promotional and pharmaceutical products



James Barnett, Plant Manager: “Crown Carlisle is very proud to have achieved another major milestone with the attainment of our ISO 22000 food safety management certification. This significant accomplishment underscores the company’s continued commitment to deliver best-in-class service and quality to our clients.

“Companies within our sector are increasingly recognizing the important role of accredited systems in order to protect consumers and enhance the manufacture of product to meet more demanding standards. The certification enables us to demonstrate the result of our activities to customers, suppliers and other interested organizations.”

ISO 22000 will have been adopted by 50 countries or more

UNITED KINGDOM

The Wrigley Company – manufacturer of chewing and bubblegum, and confectionery

Alan Richards, Production Director: “Food safety standards are of the highest priority for the Wrigley Company. We want to be 100 % confident at all times that we have the very best systems in place to ensure that nothing could leave our factory that could be harmful to the consumer.

It integrates food safety management with our ISO 9001:2000 system

“After extensively reviewing existing standards and the new ISO 22000, we were convinced that this new standard would help us ‘raise the bar’ to an even higher level. The benefit of ISO 22000 is that it audits and verifies our food safety management system according to HACCP principles and that it integrates food safety management with our ISO 9001:2000 quality management system.

“We have combined ISO 22000 with our own internal standards and this has not only provided a robust guideline for our food safety management system, but it has also allowed us to promote a culture of continual improvement in our manufacturing practices.”

ISO 22000 worldwide overview

By the end of 2005, activities at various stages related to the deployment of the standard were already being reported in 34 countries. These activities range from the translation and adoption of ISO 22000 as a national standard to the establishment of accreditation and certification systems, to promotion, training, implementation, certification, preparation for certification audits, or to waiting for certificates to be issued following successful audits.

In response to the informal survey carried out by ISO Central Secretariat, one or several of such activities were reported to be in process in the following countries: Argentina, Australia, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, China, Cuba, Denmark, Estonia, Egypt, Finland, France, Hungary, India, Israel, Jordan, Latvia, Lithuania, Malaysia, Morocco, Palestine, Philippines, Portugal, Serbia and Montenegro, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, Thailand, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom, USA.

As ISO 22000:2005 was developed in cooperation with the CEN, it was also published as a

European Standard. According to CEN rules, this means that all CEN members (29 countries at present) have to adopt this standard as national standard within six months after its publication and withdraw

any national standard which is contradictory with it. •

The benefits far outweigh the investment

