Traceability throughout the supply chain is a non-negotiable, standard part of chilled food management systems.
Ensuring Traceability Right Through the Chilled Food Supply Chain

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Programme:

- CFA’s approach and representation
- CFA products
- Basis of chilled food industry operations
- Retail customers
- Management of the supply chain
- Traceability
- Technical standards
- Incident management
- Examples
- Summary
CFA’s Approach:

• CFA promotes and maintains standards of excellence in chilled food production
  • Best practice emphasis
  • Whole chain approach

• Membership criteria:
  • Compliance with CFA Guidelines for Good Hygienic Practice in the Manufacture of Chilled Foods; and
  • Successful UKAS-accredited audit
CFA Represents:

- >80% of UK chilled prepared food market
  - £6Bn = ~50% total EU
- 21 Member companies
- 150 plants:
  - UK/EU
  - Australia
- 45,000 employees inc 1,000 scientists
CFA Products:

- Short shelf life – JIT systems
- Seasonal raw materials
- Year-round supply/production
  - Pan-global sources
- Hygiene/safety critical
  - Unpreserved products
- Multicomponent prepared products
- 95% retailer own label
- ~8,500 SKUs
CFA Products:

- Ready meals and side dishes
- Dressed salads (with/out protein)
- Dry salads (e.g. mixed leaf)
- Prepared vegetables & stir fry mixes
- Pizzas
- Fresh pasta (plain and filled)
- Soups, Sauces, Dressings and Dips
- Sushi
- Sandwiches and sandwich fillings
- Delicatessen products
- Prepared fruit
- Desserts

Multicomponent
Basis of Chilled Food Industry’s Operation:

• Massive investment in hygiene & technology
  • 1970s secure chill chain established: target 5°C
  • HACCP
• Factory design & layout: area segregation
• Process design & control: 6 D heat processes
• Safety & traceability: ‘farm to fork’
• Generally, short shelf lives: 1-10 days
• Manufacturer/retailer partnerships: whole chain approach
• Forecast/orders/manufacturing/distribution systems integrated
  • no stock & minimal raw materials held at plants – JIT

CONTROL as foundation for innovation
Members’ Major UK Retail Customers:

- Marks & Spencer
- Sainsbury’s
- Tesco
- ASDA
- Safeway plc
- Somerfield
- Waitrose
Management of the Supply Chain:
Supply Chain Routes:

Farm
UK >100,000

Primary Processor

Secondary Processor

Food Manufacturer

Food Retailer

Consumer
UK >60M

Agent Importer
Traceability:

Consumers ↔ Retailers ↔

CFA members’ operating units (150)

Suppliers (thousands)

Source
Raw Material Suppliers:

Companies’ approach:

• **Internal Integration**
  • Commercial and Technical – best practice encouragement
  • Known Suppliers
  • Business development

• **External Partnership**
  • Responsibility to all stakeholders
  • Existing suppliers used preferentially
  • Dual supply of key materials
Supplier Approval & Management Process:

- Supplier approval inspection vs technical standards
- Material inspection vs specifications
- Supplier management - Repeat inspection vs technical standards
- Continuous material appraisal vs product & process specification

Traceability
Technical Standards for Suppliers:

• CFA Guidance:
  • Manufacturing hygiene (‘The CFA Guidelines’)
  • Pesticides due diligence guidance
  • Microbiological guidance for growers
  • All guidance incorporates traceability

• Companies’ Codes
• Retailer Codes
• BRC Core Standard
Technical Standards for Suppliers:

Supplier Approval Criteria:

- Structure & Plant
- Hygiene & Housekeeping
- Process Control – **Traceability**
  - Do not specify how system should be constructed - but must enable to trace to source
  - Challenge system on approval visit
  - Poor system - no approval
- Finished Product Control
- Foreign Body Control
- Infestation Control
- Management Control
- Product Quality
Tech Standards: Agents & own Sites

**Agents:**
- Used where appropriate
- In accordance with codes of practice and guidance
- Knowledge of operations
  - **Traceability**
- Approval of source of supply

**Companies’ Own Sites:**
- **Traceability = one part of product management system**
- Design of traceability system is not specified
- Challenge system on
  - Company inspection visit
  - Accredited inspection body audit
Effective Traceability:

• Must link a lot or batch with its source and any treatment it has received
• Will allow rapid access to product information
• Can limit the potential scope of a problem associated with a raw material
• Can help identify where the source of a problem may be
Incident Management:

- Internal Procurement & Technical Partnership
- External Supplier Partnership
- Materials traceability to source
  - Thorough
  - Rapid

Note:

Need good quality information on the precise problem, viz. raw material &/or lot &/or plant/line codes, as applicable
Example 1 – Bagged Salad:

- Crop protocols: GAP/HACCP
  - Assured Produce Scheme (UK) & EUREP GAP (EU)
    - Assure GAP compliance - Third party verification
    - HACCP applied to harvesting activities

- Contracts and audits
  - Specified suppliers – traceability generally to field level
  - Irrespective of source
    - Regular audits of suppliers
    - Common criteria and standards
    - Risk assessments: grower capabilities, performance

- Raw material batch segregation in processing
  - Traceability
Produce Raw Material Traceability:

• Lot number
• Date of harvest
• Identity of the
  • farm (plot or field)
  • producer
  • country of origin
• Chain of ownership of the material
  • from grower to recipient
• Agricultural inputs (e.g. manure/fertiliser, irrigation, pesticides)
  • dates of application
  • input lot numbers
Example 2 – Thai Chicken:

- Contracts and audits
  - Integrated production chain
    - Known, specified, audited suppliers
    - Raw material not bought on the open market
    - Risk assessments of suppliers capabilities & performance
  - European standard plants
    - Verification and audits
  - HACCP
  - Traceability to source
- Supplied stock quality/safety = raw material issue:
  - Must relate to RAW MATERIAL source codes, NOT simply plant/finished product codes
Summary:

• Traceability is not negotiable
  • Mandatory requirement
  • Throughout the supply chain
  • Optional design (paper, electronic, colour, bar code, passport etc), but functionality must be demonstrable
  • Trigger information quality is critical

• Traceability integral to product management systems
  • Consequence of HACCP

• CFA members use
  • Known Suppliers
  • Known Standards
  • Known Sources
  • Partnership throughout the supply chain