

# Complaint Handling

FSKN I 4

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# GFSI Intermediate Requirement

- The company shall implement an effective management system for addressing and correcting customer/ consumer complaints.



# The Importance of Customer Complaints

- to provide a means of performance measurement
- to meet customer expectations/ requirements
- to build customer relationships and confidence
- to validate if the food safety management system is working correctly, and where necessary, amend to improve compliance



# Complaint Procedures

- Customers encourage consumers to provide feedback on the safety and quality of products; for example consumer service desks in stores and consumer complaint departments
- Customer feedback on performance and complaints should be regarded as being 'positive' and a means to drive improvement
- Develop a documented complaint handling procedure
- It is important to define and agree timescales for actions within the process ( some may be defined for you by customers)

# Procedure

- Why?- to respond positively to customer complaints and use the information to review, and where necessary, revise control procedures
  - to understand safety performance
  - to meet customer expectations
  - to build customer relationships and confidence
  - to provide a means of performance measurement
  - to validate if the food safety management system is working correctly and where necessary amend to improve compliance

# Procedure

- What?- to have the ability to collect and respond to **all** complaints
  - it is important to understand how complaints are received and the flow of communication within the company
  - the complaint handling system needs to be fully documented
  - there needs to be specific documentation to be developed and actions recorded
  - customer communication is important – requirement to understand the complaint data and response to the customer

# Procedure

- **Who?- define roles and responsibilities within the process**
  - there should be a person who has overall responsibility for the complaint handling process
  - the food safety manager should always be involved to provide investigation of the complaint and advise on corrective action
  - there will be a number of persons involved in the process and each should understand the importance of complaint handling and the timescale for response
  - complaints should be part of the management review process
  - complaint trend analysis should be part of the HACCP review and where necessary revise the HACCP Plan

# Procedure

- How?- detailed written instructions and communication strategy
  - Develop standardised documentation for the process
  - Investigate the reason for the complaint and the implementation of corrective action
  - Record corrective action and monitor if this is effective
  - Carry out complaint trend analysis at defined intervals
  - Develop strategic responses to customers , for example;
    - i. Letter of confirmation of receipt- thanks, what will happen, when it will happen
    - ii. Formal response letter- thanks, reason for the complaint and confirmation of corrective action
  - Include Customer Complaint data in Management Review agenda
  - The Customer Complaint process should be reviewed in the Management Review to ensure compliance with the defined requirements



# Procedures

- **When?- to work within an agreed timescale**
  - Develop and agreed timescales for key steps within the procedure, for example, timescale for the complaint investigation process and timescale for response to your customer
  - Implement corrective actions as soon as possible



# FDA rushes to find E. coli outbreak source

## 2nd supplier recalls spinach for possible contamination

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MSNBC staff and news service reports  
Updated: 11:13 a.m. ET Sept 18, 2006

SAN FRANCISCO - The company whose fresh spinach was linked to an E. coli outbreak that's sickened at least 109 people said its organic products had been cleared of suspicion, while health officials continued working to pinpoint the bacteria source.

Natural Selection Foods LLC, the country's largest grower of organic produce, said late Sunday that manufacturing codes from packages of spinach that infected patients turned over to health officials all were from non-organic spinach. Natural Selection packages both organic and conventionally grown spinach in separate areas at its San Juan Bautista plant.

The company, however, did not immediately lift any recalls of 34 brands. Those brands include the company's own labels and those of other companies that had contracts with Natural Selection to produce or package its spinach.

**MSNBC VIDEO**



**Launch**

- **Spinach-related illnesses continue rise**  
Sept. 18: The number of people sickened by an E. coli outbreak traced to tainted spinach rises to 109 as federal officials announce that more brands are recalling their products. NBC's Michael Okwu reports.

Today show



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