

JOB DESCRIPTION

Quality Assurance & Laboratory Specialist

Summary

The Quality Assurance & Laboratory Specialist supports the development, implementation, and continuous improvement of human food and animal food safety and quality systems. This role ensures compliance with regulatory requirements, customer expectations, and internal standards. This position also assists with other lab functions as needed to operate in a smooth and efficient manner and produce the best products possible. The position reports directly to the Quality Assurance Manager.

Essential Job Duties

Food Safety & Quality Systems

- Serve as a backup SQF Practitioner, overseeing the development, implementation, review, and maintenance of the SQF System, including Food Safety and Food Quality Plans.
- Act as a Preventive Controls Qualified Individual (PCQI) for human food and animal food operations.
- Maintain and update SQF, GMP+B2, and FAMI-QS program elements.
- Ensure the integrity and effectiveness of all food safety and quality systems through routine review and corrective action.
- Participate in or lead HACCP meetings, food safety committee meetings, and management review meetings.
- Participate in project review meetings and cross-functional initiatives.
- Represent the organization at United Sugars Producers and Refiners Quality Council meetings and related external functions.

Audits, Inspections & Regulatory Compliance

- Support customer audits, SQF audits, GMP+B2 audits, FAMI-QS audits, and FDA inspections.
- Conduct internal audits, GMP inspections, program verifications, and silo/tank inspections.
- Maintain the pest control program in collaboration with an external contractor.
- Perform bi-annual mock traceability and recall exercises.

Monitoring, Verification & Corrective Actions

- Conduct daily pre-shipment and post-shipment audits; initiate corrective actions for deviations.
- Assist in managing customer complaint investigations, including root cause analysis, communication, and documentation.
- Perform semi-annual food fraud assessments and support food defense, crisis management, and HACCP program testing.

Training & Employee Development

- Provide training for sugar loading and packaging lead personnel.
- Deliver new-hire and annual refresher training on human food safety, animal food safety, and GMPs.
- Develop and maintain training materials, presentations, and documentation.

Cross-Functional Laboratory Support

- Monitor quality of sugar produced and shipped: make sure it meets our specifications as well as the customer's specs
- Help with training tare lab employees and process lab personnel
- Assist in compiling data into computer
- Assist in other lab functions as needed (wastewater discharge, prepare reagents for lab when needed) to help provide a smooth, efficient operation of the lab
- Non-bin report, sugar bin measurements and humidities
- Molasses inventory report
- Typing, filing, purchase orders, and lab office requirements during inter-campaign
- Assure that all work areas are kept clean within the food safety, feed safety, and sanitation guidelines.
- Develop the skills of self and others through training.
- Use people, time, equipment, and material in the most efficient manner.
- Report mechanical, electrical, instrumentation, environmental, food safety, feed safety, operational problems, and unsafe conditions to supervisor.
- Other duties as required by the business.
- Adhere to all company policies and all safety, food safety, feed safety, and sanitation rules and programs

General Responsibilities

- Maintain strong attendance, safety performance, and overall employment record.
- Adhere to all company policies, food safety plans, animal food safety plans, GMPs, and safety procedures.
- Perform other duties as assigned to support business needs.

Qualifications

Education & Experience

- Preferred certifications: SQF Practitioner, PCQI, HACCP.
- Typing, filing, and computer experience
- Accounting skills preferred
- Previous knowledge of lab operation and analyses desired
- Should be motivated, willing, enthusiastic, and promotable
- Good attendance, safety, disciplinary, and overall employment records
- Ability to communicate and work cohesively with others
- Demonstrated leadership and judgment.
- Organized with excellent time management skills
- Ability to communicate effectively with employees at all levels

Knowledge & Skills

- Strong understanding of modern quality assurance methods and techniques.
- Knowledge of FDA requirements for human food and animal food manufacturing.
- Experience with sugar manufacturing and animal food production is beneficial.
- Strong interpersonal and communication skills.
- Ability to work effectively with personnel at all organizational levels.
- Ability to lead, train, and influence others.
- Excellent organizational and time-management skills.
- Proficient computer skills.
- Knowledge of state, local, and regulatory requirements.

Competencies

- Food safety and quality systems expertise
- Communication and interpersonal effectiveness
- Organization and time management
- Problem-solving and root cause analysis
- Audit readiness and regulatory compliance
- Documentation control and technical writing

Physical Demands & Work Environment

- Work occurs throughout the facility, including areas with mechanical, chemical, thermal, and electrical hazards.
- Some areas may be hot or cold depending on season and location.
- Occasional strenuous physical effort may be required.