



REMOTE SUPPLIER ASSESSMENT

>> HOW SUPPLIERS RISK CAN BE ASSESSED REMOTELY USING GLOBAL FOOD SAFETY INSIGHTS?

With restrictions applied in a large number of countries, the Food Safety and Quality Assurance (FSQA) experts face a very important challenge: **how can I assess my suppliers and facilities now that I cannot travel to conduct audits?** Until today the onsite audits were the most important supplier verification activity.

FDA, issued a temporary policy for the onsite audits of food facilities during the coronavirus (COVID-19). The policy was issued to minimize disruptions in the supply chain now that the demand for some food products is high. The policy is temporarily not enforcing onsite audits. Without having the onsite audits as a main tool, companies need to be based on the Food Safety Plans and other verification activities like sampling, testing or review of food safety records. As mentioned in the policy:

"Alternative methods need to be defined to provide sufficient assurance that hazards have been significantly minimized or prevented during the period of onsite audit delay."

Now, it is more important than ever before, to be aware of all potential hazards and to monitor them continuously, remotely. What kind of information and data is needed to identify the hazards? Which are the steps for the risk assessment that will complement a remote audit and will ensure that hazards will be significantly minimized?



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>> SEVEN STEPS FOR REMOTE SUPPLIER ASSESSMENT

A systematic risk assessment supported by a wide spectrum of global food safety insights can ensure the highest level of effectiveness for a remote audit. A list of proposed steps for a remote supplier risk assessment follows.

Step 1: Compile a list with all the ingredients and raw materials that the supplier is using.

Step 2: Search for known biological, physical, chemical hazards and fraud for all these ingredients. Focus on the risk of each region to identify risks for sourcing countries like the increased chemical contamination in fruits and vegetables. Document the main hazards per ingredient.

Step 3: Search in National and International Authorities databases such as the FDA Import Alerts and FDA Import Refusals, FDA Inspections, whether the supplier was previously involved in a recall or border rejection. Study if the cases were for chemical, biological, physical, fraud issues. Document the results together with the information collected in step 2.

Step 4: After collecting all this information, analyze all the hazards and rank the risk using an approach that takes into account the severity of the hazard and the frequency of the incidents.



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Step 5: With these findings at hand, ask for an updated Food Safety Plan from the supplier for all the ingredients and/or raw materials used in the supplied product types. Also ask for full traceability records of all the ingredients used in the products that you are buying and focus on the origin going back to the raw materials.

Step 6: Cross-check the food safety plan with the hazards that you have documented and analyzed in steps 2 and 3. Identify gaps in terms of hazards and fraud issues and missing corrective actions. Ask for a response on these points plus the mitigation plans for all the recalls, border rejections and inspections with negative outcomes that you have identified.

Step 7: Arrange a virtual call with the FSQA team of the supplier to discuss details about the hazards and the mitigation steps.

Collecting all the required information, organizing it, analyzing all the hazards, estimating the risk and creating the report from the findings may be time consuming and error-prone. With all the new challenges that a FSQA expert is currently facing due to coronavirus (COVID-19), spending extra time is not feasible.

Today, such process can be highly speed up using a [digital platform](#) that provides insights for all potential hazards and allows the generation of risk reports based on data collected from several National Authorities from all around the globe.

EXPLORE HOW YOU CAN CONTINUOUSLY MONITOR YOUR SUPPLY CHAIN BASED ON GLOBAL FOOD SAFETY DATA

PERFORM REMOTE SUPPLIER CHECK

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FOODAKAI is an intelligent online system that minimizes the food safety risks in your supply chain by delivering insights about hazards in raw materials and products.

It strategically gathers, processes and delivers live food safety data and risk estimation for ingredients, products and suppliers in a fast and easy way.



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