STANDARDIZATION IN CATERING FACILITIES WORKING WITH FOOD IN THE REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA[1]

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Abstract

The use and preparation of food in catering facilities is a whole science. However, over the years there has imposes a need for existing guaranteed quality of food products, which will give to users confidence in the use of these products. This is achieved by introducing of certain standards. In this paper we will address the need and significance of different standards in catering facilities. Namely, the ISO 9001, HACCP, HALAL and FIS standard will be elaborated as commonly represented, widely accepted and internationally recognized. For this purpose, we will also meet the conditions necessary for the application of these standards, which during the process of preparation of the food should be satisfied, and at the same time will meet the requirements of the gests regarding to the quality of the food.

KEYWORDS: Standards, food, ISO 9001, HACCP, HALAL, IFS, catering facilities

INTRODUCTION

Standardization is an activity of establishing general and multiple use provisions in relation to real or potential problems in order to achieve an optimal level of regulation in a given context, which involves the process of formulating, issuing and applying standards at national and international level. Standardization results are standards such as official documents, product requirements, a process in which a product occurs or an enterprise as a business system established for the purpose of performing a particular

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activity that creates a value (product or service) for the market (users) and for the owners.

Standardization can have one or more goals that allow products, processes, and services to be consistent with their purpose. General objectives of standardization can be compatibility, interchangeability, reduction in the number of variants, safety, environmental protection and product protection. Other goals may include health protection, mutual bargaining, improving economic performance, removing barriers to trade, and more.

The basic principle of standardization is that standards are prepared by stakeholders (industry, consumers, government authorities, professional and business associations, conformity assessment bodies, etc.), when there is an objective need for them and a desire for stakeholders to participate in their formulation. In other words, standardization is an instrument of techno-economic self-regulation that belongs to all participants in the national, regional, or world economy and serves to create public goods.

The standard is a document established by consensus and adopted by a recognized body, with which (for multiple use) are determined rules, guidelines or characteristics of activities or their results, in order to achieve an optimal level of regulation in a given area. The standards aredocumented contracts that content technical specifications and other precise criteria that are used as rules, guidelines, or definition of features to ensure that materials, products, processes, and services fully meet its purpose.

Standardization in catering facilities working with food in The Republic of Macedonia

The standards that are defined and adopted by The Republic of Macedonia are marked with MKS and are issued by the Institute for Standardization of The Republic of Macedonia (ISRM). The standards adopted internationally have the ISO mark (international standardization organization), and if they are adopted in Europe they have an EN mark (European norm). The Macedonian standard can be identical with European (EN), international (ISO / IEC) standard or some other national standard (DIN, BS ...), in which case it can be recognized by mark (MKS EN, MKS ISO, MKS DIN), however, the Macedonian standard is usually a national standard, that is, made by experts from ISRM technical working bodies and adopted by ISRM as a Macedonian standard. This standard has not been adopted at European and international level, but for its existence, European standardization bodies must be notified.

Standardization is also adopted in the field of food safety, that is, handling food and beverages.In this paper we will analyze the standards HACCP, ISO, HALAL and IFS.

Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point - HACCP standard for food safety in catering facilities

The basic requirements for food safety in The Republic of Macedonia are regulated by the Law on Food Safety and Products and Materials in contact with Food (Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia No. 54/2002 and 84/2007) as a basic Law in the field and the Law on Veterinary Public Health (Official Gazette of The Republic of Macedonia No. 114/2007). The main objectives of the Low on Food Safety and the Products and Materials in contact with Food are the protection of people's health from Foodborne diseases, the protection of consumers from misconception and fraud in terms of food, and trade facilitation with food. For the successful achievement of the stated goals in terms of food safety, food production introduces a legal obligation for food operators that are obliged to introduce, implement and maintain a permanent procedure based on hazard analysis and critical control points, ie System for Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP).

The HACCP system is an appropriate tool for controlling the hazards of food safety in the food business where the dangers are likely to occur without being adequately controlled. HACCP principles are based on a scientific basis and systematic approach in order to identify the specific hazards in food production and to determine the necessary measures for their control in order to ensure safe food. It is a tool for assessing hazards and establishing control systems that target prevention, rather than end-product testing.

Before implementing the HACCP system in any food business, operators must meet the prerequisite requirements for food hygiene - Good Manufacturing Practice (GMP) and Good Hygiene Practice (GHP). They represent a basis for the effective implementation of HACCP and should be fulfilled before its implementation. The general implementation of HACCP based procedures, together with the application of GHP and GMP, should strengthen the responsibilities of food operators. The Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points System allows the principles to be implemented in all cases where flexibility is needed, which is important for small food businesses and businesses where food risk is low.

Implementation of food safety systems by catering facilities will provide increased levels of food safety, easier access to implementation of the inspection by the competent authorities, facilitated international trade and strengthening of the economy in the country. Investments that are needed for the implementation of food safety systems lead to long-term social and economic benefits in terms of reducing public health costs –because of reducing foodborne illness and financial savings due to absences from work caused by foodborne diseases and economic benefits.

For the purpose of efficient implementation of the HACCP system among the food businessoperators, by the Commission for drafting the National Strategy for HACCP Implementation, a National Strategy has been prepared in accordance with the National Strategy for Food Safety, especially in the part referring to - Objectives in the industry for producing and processing food, where it is planned to develop programs and a system for helping the food industry to introduce HACCP, Good manufacturing practice and Good hygiene practice in the production and processing of food. The elaboration of this Strategy is in line with the remark given in the 2009 Progress Report on The Republic of Macedonia, prepared by the European Commission in relation to Food Safety, Veterinary and Phytosanitary Policy, which refers to the fact that in The Republic of Macedonia the Strategy for HACCP Implementation has not yet been prepared.

ISO 9001 - standard for food safety

ISO 9001 is an international standard that defines the system for managing the quality and is the only standard for managing the quality that is universally applicable to all organizations, products and services. The purpose of this standard is to facilitate operation. By applying of the principles and requirements of this standard, work is greatly facilitated, thanks to the clear definition of responsibility. Also, by defining the input and output elements of all processes and by defining the necessary resources, is created a starting basis for planning, as well as feedback for the fulfillment of the client's expectations. This model increases the customer's confidence in the product/ service and leads to better market positioning. Since the certificate is issued by an independent certification company, the certificate of ownership of the standard ensures that the enterprise has implemented the required processes that the standard itself requires.[1]
The established and certified system for managing the quality according to ISO 9001 suggests that the production, processes and working methods of the enterprise are defined so as to enable the delivery of products with good

quality, but do not guarantee the quality of the product itself. With an orderly system of operations, there is a greater possibility that the enterprise will produce quality. Therefore, often in contracting with the suppliers as requirement is established the possession of a certified ISO 9001 standard, which is also an external reason for its introduction.

Internal reasons for the application of ISO 9001 in the enterprises are: easier execution of the work, better use of time, reduction of the expenditure of material, reduction of inventories, better flow of information, saving of other costs, effective monitoring of the overall activities.

Food standard HALAL

The HALAL standard consists of five rules and guidelines for the production and preparation of food in accordance with Islamic religious customs. The requirements of the HALAL come from the Quran and the Sharia Law, which prescribe what is halal or "allowed", and what is haram or "prohibited". When is mentioned that something is "allowed" is meant on food that is prepared in accordance with the Sharia laws, which a large number of Muslims around the world is applying this way of eating.[2]

HALAL, among other things, prohibits the use of:
• Pork meat;• Blood;• Alcohol;• Meat from a dead animal;• Donkey;• Dog;• Birds of prey;• Food prepared with the use of wine;• Cookies with any kind of alcohol;• Foods containing emulsifiers based on pig and animal fat, etc.

Most of the requirements of the HALAL standard are similar to the HACCP system and the ISO 9001 standard, which for organizations that have established one of these two systems, make the certification especially facilitating.

HALAL is applicable to various types of products and services: food, cosmetics, medicines, clothing, footwear, furniture, tourism and catering...but it is commonly used in the food and pharmaceutical industry, as the production of cosmetics.

The requirements that HALAL sets infront of the producers are particularly strict when it concerns to the meat industry. The meat to be HALAL, the slaughter of the allowed animals must bein accordance with the following requirements:[3]

• The animal must be carefully treated, healthy and alive, and the person performing the act of slaughter must be mentally healthy and capable of performing that activity.

• It is prohibited the act of slaughtering the animal to be done by a person who is under the influence of alcohol, and also it is forbidden that act to be made by someone who is not a Muslim, a Christian or a Jew, because only they know what mean the mentioning of God's name during the slaughter. Also, there are prescribed methods for performing the ritual during the slaughter process.

In order for one production process to receive a HALAL certificate, it is necessary to apply a controlled procedure that is in accordance with Islamic regulations, where the product or service of Muslims would be acceptable for consumption or for use. In one country, to have a company in charge for certifying of this system, the company must apply to the Islamic Community Agency. On that occasion, the interested company gives a statement that it knows all the laws that refers to the HALAL standard, as well as all the prohibitions that arise from it.[3]

Furthermore, is being implemented a procedure in which is determining whether raw materials used in production are allowed according to the law of Muslims. After the fulfillment of the foreseen conditions, a HALAL certificate is issued which confirms the HALAL status of the products and is approved the use of the HALAL mark on the product packaging.

The certificate is valid for one year, and during the duration of the certificate, regular control is performed by HALAL Controller, especially on its placing on the market. In this way, it is ensured that there will be no "haram", that is, religious desecration of the product at any stage of production.

The HALAL sign contributes to the recognition of the HALAL product on the market. In case of any deviation from the standard, the Agency will deduct the certificate, the product will be withdrawn from the market and an appropriate procedure will be initiated. The HALAL sign can be used by the Agency, the producers who have successfully fulfill the basis of the Halal standard, the sellers and distributors of the HALAL product, and other users after approval by the Agency.

A very large amount of food contains emulsifiers that serve for extendingthe shelf life and give certain properties of the food, such as color, flavor, etc.

Many of them are of animal origin - pig, which seems unacceptable from the aspect of the HALAL standard. A typical example is the gelatinous masses that are often used in the preparation of food, but also in the pharmaceutical industry.

Besides the use of HALAL ingredients, it is necessary to pay special attention to i.e. cross-contamination, that is, the danger during the production or the process of preparing the food to come into contact with an ingredient which according to the HALAL standard is not allowed,ie"haram",which would destroy the "correctness" of the total product. It specifically means that must not be used the same equipment for preparing HALAL and non-HALAL food, and the production line (process technique, production line, conveyors, etc.) for the production of the HALAL food must be completely separated from the rest of the proces that can be "haram".

International Food Standard (IFS)

Due to the pressure from the different demands towards the producers, and in order to make these demands somehow equalize - the German and French trade chains joined in their interest groups HDE (German: Hauptverband des DeutschenEinzelhandels) and FCD (French: Fédération des Entreprises du Commerce et de la Distribution), assisted by other international chains, joined in the IFS work group and developed the International Food Standard (IFS). This standard is at the same time a quality standard and a standard for food safety. Although it is introduced primarly for the control and aligment of the quality of the products under private commercial trademarks, IFS today is widely applied world standard for food safety control and quality of the manufacturer. These highest food standards are based on the traceability principle - the ability to follow productsrightness and quality, at any time on the road from the primary producer to the final consumer, at each stage of production and distribution. The purpose of the IFS standard is to create a consistent evaluation system for all companies that supply foodto retail trade. This primarily refers to private brands of products on big trading chains.[1]

The basic objectives of the IFS standard are:
- Improving the safety and quality of products,
- Acquisition of trust among consumers,
- Transparency across the all supply chain,
- Reducing costs and time savings, both for suppliers and for retail chains,
- Establishing a general standard with a single assessment system.

The standard can be applied to suppliers, in all steps of food processing, except for agricultural production. The requirements are related to the sytem for managing quality and HACCP which include prerequisite programs: Good Manufacturing Practice (GMP), Good Laboratory Practice (GLP) and Good Hygiene Practice (GHP). Only the certification bodies that have signed an agreement with the IFS have the right to issue a certificate of compliance with this standard.

Conclusion

Due to the safety requirement of the guests, in the use of food products in catering facilities, is imposed the need for introducing certain standards that will guarantee the quality of the prepared food products.

For this purpose in The Republic of Macedonia several standards for food preparation are used in the catering industry.

The HACCP system(System for Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point) is an appropriate tool for controlling the hazards of food safety in the food business where the dangers are likely to occur without being adequately controlled. HACCP principles are based on a scientific basis and systematic approach in order to identify the specific hazards in food production and to determine the necessary measures for their control in order to ensure safe food. It is a tool for assessing hazards and establishing control systems that target prevention, rather than end-product testing.

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