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FACT SHEET

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VERIFICATION VS. VALIDATION

In attaining food safety through your facilities food safety program, verification and validation go hand in hand and play a very important role, but what is the difference between them? What role does each play?

VALIDATION

Validation provides documented evidence that a properly implemented control measure is capable of controlling an identified hazard. Consider the following steps when validating.

VALIDATION STEPS

- Identify associated hazards
- Determine validation methods or approach (e.g. shelf life testing, in-house challenge testing, peer-reviewed scientific literature, regulatory requirements, historical knowledge, statistical analysis, mathematical modelling, industry practices, simulated or regular production data, etc.)
- Identify contributing factors to the hazard (e.g. pathogenic microorganism, worst-case scenario, etc.)
- Identify the control measure(s) (e.g. pasteurization, metal detection, chilling, etc.)
- Identify parameters and decision criteria that will demonstrate that the control measure, when properly implemented is capable of consistently controlling the hazard (e.g. pasteurization for raw milk with <10% fat needs to be pasteurized 72°C for 15 seconds – if this parameter is not met the decision to re-process would be made)
- Execute the validation study by collecting and analyzing the data retrieved. It must support control of the hazard
- Complete a validation report to ensure all steps of the validation are well documented.

VALIDATE OR RE-VALIDATE WHEN

- A food safety program is being implemented
- A new product is being introduced to the product line
- A process step is being introduced or changed
- A control measure is being introduced, changed or has been deemed ineffective
- New equipment is being introduced
- The impact of something new or something being changed could impact control of a hazard
- New technology or new regulations/requirements become available
- Monitoring or verification identifies failures in which the cause can not be identified
- Emergence of a previously unidentified hazard occurs

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VERIFICATION

The verification is performed after the validation and confirms whether a control measure put in place is functioning as it was intended, to continuously control the identified hazard. Consider the following steps when verifying.

VERIFICATION STEPS

- Identify who is responsible for performing the verification activities and at what appropriate frequency - ensure the responsible person (internal or external) is competent, qualified or an expert and is not the person responsible for the monitoring or corrective action activities
- Describe the verification activities to be completed and use a variety of verification techniques to increase confidence that the monitoring procedures are effective – onsite observation of monitoring, records review, corrective actions taken, sample and test the food and environment, confirm required and critical calibrations have been completed, interview employees
- Complete a verification report to ensure all verification activities completed are well documented, specify any additional corrective action procedures and necessary follow-up that are required to be completed in the case that issues are identified during the verification

Once any validations and verifications have been completed, it is important to share them with management and all operations employees to ensure the results and expectations going forward are communicated appropriately and understood by everyone.

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:

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RESOURCES

CFIA. (2019). Verification procedures for your preventative control plan. Retrieved June 10, 2020 from **https://www.inspection.gc.ca/preventive-controls/preventive-control-plans/verification-procedures/eng/1513700334340/1513700334773**

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