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INCREASE IN COMPETITIVENESS THROUGH  
MANAGING QUALITY AT FOOD INDUSTRY EXAMPLE**Abstract**

It is possible to say about many aspects of managing which decide about the success of the enterprise. Authors of the article wanted to pay attention to chosen aspects of system managing the quality in the food business. They focused e.g. on foodstuffs health safety, managing the risk, technical issues, suppliers evaluation. The verification of hypotheses set at work allows to put managing the quality in the food business forward a motion about most important elements.

**Introduction**

An enterprise strategy is established by its top managers coherent conception of activities once implemented ensures achieving fundamental long-term goals of the company within chosen activity field [1]. To gain competitive advantage on the market an enterprise has to adopt an appropriate action strategy and carry it out consistently. One of the elements of effective organization management is implemented, effective and efficient management system that automatically reacts to changes in the company environment [2]. To be competitive on the market continuous development of the system is inevitable nowadays.

Specific branch of industry is foodstuffs processing where quality and directly connected with it products' health safety are critical attributes on more and more competitive world food market. Nowadays there is no necessity to convince anyone that care of foodstuffs quality must be taken through all stages of foodstuffs production chain. Increasing consumers requirements in the area of foodstuffs quality and health safety level extort strategic position of quality management in agriculture and foodstuffs production [3]. Systemic approach to the problem seems to be the best solution.

The aim of the work is to emphasize that putting managing the quality in food business forward a motion is one of key factors of the firm success and important element of its strategic advantage. The necessity of continuous development especially in the management area in the sector was stressed.

**FOODSTUFFS QUALITY MANAGEMENT**

Foodstuffs quality, especially their health safety, are the most important food attributes for contemporary consumers, the more so because bigger and bigger group of foodstuffs is being perceived as a potential source of food poisonings and alimentary infections. To produce foodstuffs of appropriate, desired quality level special efforts must be made at every stage of its production process as each of them influences foodstuffs quality and products' health safety at the same time.

- Basic processes determining foodstuffs' quality cover product planning, producing, consumption and recycling and include:
- marketing activities (promotion of product within HACCP system, analysis of consumer needs and preferences, competitiveness analysis)
  - planning – determination of critical control points by experts
  - purchasing – choice of raw materials and additives' suppliers
  - planning and development of process – methods of planning and hazards elimination
  - production – critical points control and monitoring in processing
  - control and tests – raw materials, packages, products in critical control points
  - packaging, storing, transport – certificates for packaging materials, processing, packaging, keeping and transport conditions
  - selling – conditions in warehouses, wholesale outlets, eating places
  - service for consumers – consultancy, consumer education
  - recycling – possibility to recycle packages and production waste [4].

**QUALITY AND HEALTH SAFETY OF FOODSTUFFS**

Nowadays HACCP seems to be the most effective system to ensure foodstuffs health safety. It covers the whole process starting from gathering raw materials to end-user product consumption. HACCP is also used to eliminate a risk connected with foodstuffs contaminations before they appear. It is used to undertake reparation actions but always in time to not allow bad quality product appear at all, too.

Guarantying consumers quality and safety of foodstuffs is connected with requiring high standards from all participants of food production chain – producers, commodity brokers participating in foodstuffs production and distribution processes. Supervising animal health and transport, monitoring environment, conditions of processing, storage, transport is necessary.

Certification of HACCP system is nowadays one of most popular evaluating methods of introduced system's effectiveness – it is one of the most important elements concerning competitiveness on the market, it increases companies prestige and gives the guarantee, that HACCP system was really introduced in the company. For many enterprises it is the necessary work condition, because it is legally required.

Because of increasing market's requirements, taking necessity of activities improvement in the enterprise into consideration and putting attention to marketing need to demonstrate outside the enterprise's value the most important thing is to introduce quality management system according to ISO 9001:2000, and more and more often also ISO 22000. The following base of system solutions is dedicated to production enterprises from food industry and makes the connections between elements of quality management system and foodstuffs health risk management. Its successful implementation improves management and increases the quality of processes, products and firm itself.

System of quality management including foodstuffs health safety should be adopted to the firm culture and specificity and consider interests of employees, suppliers and clients. It has to be element of companies value and prestige as well as base to establish high requirements towards suppliers. The fact that these requirements are being met is a prove and test of common responsibility of producer and its cooperators for consumers satisfaction and safety.

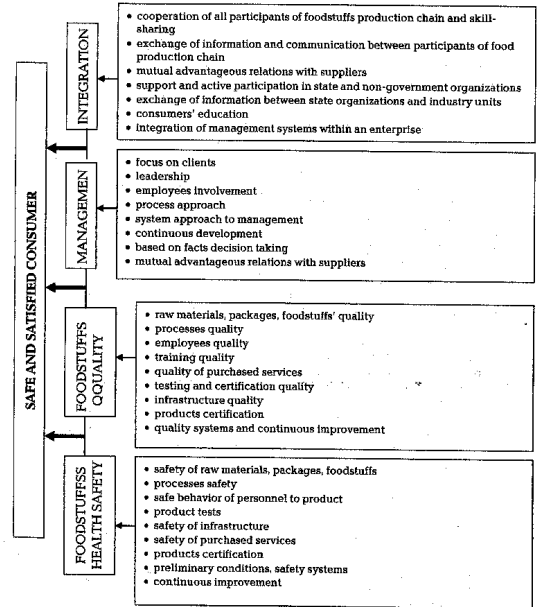


Figure 1. The Idea of Total Integrated Food Quality and Safety Management System Source: [5]

The foodstuffs safety hazards and their development are the reasons that trying to coordinate actions to identify and eliminate them on the level of the enterprise and in the global scale as well is more and more popular. Responsibility for the food product obliges to continual care for its quality „from field to board”, to using good practices and approved management systems and to carefulness in using legal principles and consumer's requirements [5, 6].

#### STANDARD ISO 22000

Finally in 2005 standard ISO 22000 [6] was established, aiming to get approval and acceptance of each part of the word in the scope of ensuring food health safety. The new standard has to be used in total delivery-chain beginning from raw materials producers ending at final distribution. Requirements of the new standard are also dedicated for organizations connected with foodstuffs production as production equipment producers or packages producers but also many others.

ISO 22000 includes requirements concerning food safety using in every organization participating directly or indirectly on the food market, that want to demonstrate their ability to manage food safety market in order to ensure safety and deliver products, that meet requirements pointed by consumers and other legal requirements.

Popularization of the following is connected with these circumstances:

- Popularization of HACCP system
- Shortage of exactly described requirements for HACCP system -standards are not the same in individual countries and state standards; there is nowhere described how exactly to interpret 7 basic principles of HACCP; different level of quality in company HACCP plans
- Difficulties in certification of HACCP system
- Necessity of describe the same requirements for all, what will make equal the level of HACCP system's introducing and certification

#### RISK MANAGEMENT

Risk management in nowadays management systems can not be treated as an optional element, but as necessary process that starts building system solutions [7].

Risk management, where risk is defined as the combination of the probability of an event and its consequences, is a central part of any organization's strategic management [8]. In all types of undertaking, there is the potential for events and consequences that constitute opportunities for benefit (upside) or threats to success (downside). Risk Management is increasingly recognized as being concerned with both positive and negative aspects of risk. In the safety field, it is generally recognized that consequences are only negative and therefore the management of safety risk is focused on prevention and mitigation of harm.

#### Conclusion

1. Managing quality in foodstuffs enterprise requires money, and well qualified employees. Often is connected with additional capital spending. On the other hand improves products quality and guarantees its repetitiveness as well as health safety. It ensures active approach to solve the problems, disciplines the team, make the cooperation with suppliers and all elements of food production chain easier. It enables meeting customer requirements and make possible to take preventive actions before the problem occurs.

2. Quality and food health safety level depends of degree of coordination, engagement, responsibility and communication between the government, consumer and industry. In ensuring this degree crucial is system approach, taking into account first of all HACCP system, ISO 9001 system, and in future also ISO 22000 system. Nowadays the need of introducing and improving of quality and food safety system solutions in the whole chain of foodstuffs production jest very important.
3. Risk Management elements must be integrated into the culture of the organization with an effective policy and a programme led by the senior management. It must translate the strategy into tactical and operational objectives, assigning responsibility throughout the organization with each manager and employee responsible for the risk management as part of their job description. It supports accountability, performance measurement and reward, thus promoting operational efficiency at all levels.

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