

## FAQs from the Field

*The Ecolab Technical Customer Service line receives hundreds of calls a day from customers seeking help on a wide variety of issues including the GFSI recognized programs like BRC Food, SQF and FSSC 22000. This section of the newsletter will address common questions received on a continual basis.*

### **How long should my BRC Food certification audit take?**

**Q:** My company is in the process of implementing the British Retail Consortium's (BRC) Standard for Food Safety and we hope to be certified within the next year. I have received a number of quotes from different certification bodies regarding audit duration and they vary greatly. I don't understand the variations between the audit service providers. Does the BRC set the audit duration? How long should my initial certification audit take?

**A:** Audit duration for most food safety management systems is dependent on the size and overall complexity of the operation. Most certification bodies utilize a matrix which takes many factors into consideration when determining the audit duration, including the physical size of the facility, number of HACCP plans included in the scope of the certification and the number of employees at the site. Most certification bodies also identify those factors which may increase or decrease the duration of the audit such as the labor-intensive nature of the process and the food processor's readiness for the audit. As a result, most certification bodies will produce similar audit duration estimates.

Although the BRC does not mandate audit duration, it does provide guidance based on similar criteria described above and makes it available to stakeholders. The latest guidance on audit duration from the BRC was published as a Position Statement in November 2011. The Position Statement (No. 12) can be downloaded from the Member's Area of the BRC Website ([www.brcglobalstandards.com](http://www.brcglobalstandards.com)) or can be obtained by contacting your BRC training provider.

### **What Is the BRC Standard for Food Safety?**

The BRC Standard for Food Safety is a food safety management system for food manufacturers. It lays out the requirements that a food processor must follow to control the safety and legality of the product they are making in their facility.

BRC is one of the four food safety programs recognized by the Consumer Goods Forum's Global Food Safety Initiative (GFSI). Once a facility is audited and verified to comply with the BRC Food standard through a third party certification process the facility is certified for one year.

### **FREE WEBINAR:**

January 11, 2011, 2:00 PM EST. "Process Improvement with GFSI Compliant Management Systems". Register now at

<http://www.nwasoft.com/FSMSWebinar3.htm>

### **EcoSure Can Help**

- ▲ We offer monthly training courses in key locations (Calif., N.Y., Minn., Ill., N.C., Col. & Tex.)
- ▲ We can conduct onsite training for large groups at your location
- ▲ We offer SQF, BRC Food, FSSC22000, GFSI and HACCP training (accredited by the International HACCP Alliance)
- ▲ Our consultants can help develop, implement and verify your BRC, SQF and supporting programs, and help you prepare for an audit

**SELECT THIS  
ICON to view our  
training schedule**



### **Our EcoSure Food Safety Management Systems Expert**



EcoSure's supply chain program is managed and courses taught by Dr. Tatiana Lorca, the former technical manager for the SQF Institute. Dr. Lorca has years of experience developing and delivering food safety training programs around the world. She is a registered BRC ATP and Consultant. Dr. Lorca is also an experienced trainer and consultant for other programs such as SQF, FSSC 22000, HACCP and Sanitation.

**ECOLAB®**

For more information on BRC, HACCP, GFSI, SQF, food safety training services and consulting services, contact us via e-mail at [FoodSafety@Ecolab.com](mailto:FoodSafety@Ecolab.com), or call 866.EcoSur1, Ext 0 or visit our website at [www.ecosure.com](http://www.ecosure.com).

To remove your name from our mailing list, please e-mail [FoodSafety@Ecolab.com](mailto:FoodSafety@Ecolab.com).