TECHNICAL SPECIFICATION

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Prerequisite programmes on food safety —

Part 3: **Farming**

Programmes prérequis pour la sécurité des denrées alimentaires —

Partie 3: Agriculture

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Contents

Page

Introduction

Food and feed safety has to be ensured at all stages of the food chain. Operators have the responsibility to ensure that the production, processing and distribution of foodstuffs meet hygiene requirements.

In the same way, farmers (organizations) have to implement food safety control measures relevant to the required safety of their end-products. This applies to all farm end-products, but the required safety may depend on the intended use, such as whether they are intended to be processed, and on whether hazards can be controlled later in the food chain. Farmers (organizations) will be able to justify and implement these control measures, and when necessary carry out records, ensure upstream and downstream traceability, maintain documents related to incoming materials and even sometimes carry out sampling for analyses.

The farmers (organizations) are required to comply with local regulation including general and specific hygiene rules, which include good hygiene programmes. Where no such regulation exists, it is often the case that Codex standards or the regulation of the country of sales apply.

Today, food safety control measures at farms are typically integrated into good practices [e.g. good agricultural practices (GAP), good farming practices (GFP), good veterinary practices (GVP), good hygienic practices (GHP)]. GAP and GFP can address environmental, economic and social sustainability for on-farm processes, resulting in safe and qualitative food and non-food agricultural products. GHP address the conditions and measures necessary to ensure the safety and suitability of feed or food at all stages of the food chain. GVP address the appropriate use of veterinary drugs or feed additives, in accordance with the authorized use, in terms of dosage, applications and withholding periods, to obtain adequate treatment of animals while leaving as little residue as possible in food derived from the animals. These practices aim at contaminants in general, whether they affect safety, suitability or both. They are generally not oriented towards specific hazards.

The roles and responsibilities of the Codex Alimentarius Commission (CAC) and the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) are to set international standards that are the basis for safe international trade under the World Trade Organization Agreement on the Application of Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures (SPS Agreement). The OIE establishes official standards for animal health (including on farm measures for food safety) and health certification and the CAC establishes official standards for food safety and labelling.

ISO 22000 specifies food safety requirements for organizations in the food chain willing to meet them. One such requirement is that organizations establish, implement, and maintain prerequisite programmes (PRPs) to assist in controlling food safety hazards (ISO 22000:2005, 7.2). PRPs are the basic conditions and activities that are necessary to maintain a hygienic environment throughout the food chain suitable for the production, handling and provision of safe end-products and safe food for human consumption.

When a farm moves from a GHP-based system to an ISO 22000-based system, a hazard analysis is required when it is missing. Then, most of the GHPs are likely to continue as PRPs. If the hazard analysis concludes that there are hazards that need to be controlled by targeted measures, others may be categorized as operational prerequisite programs (oPRPs).

This part of ISO 22002 does not duplicate the requirements given in ISO 22000 and is intended to be used when establishing, implementing and maintaining the PRPs specific to the organization(s), in accordance with ISO 22000. This part of ISO 22002 is not intended for certification purposes.

In practical terms, the following applications of this part of ISO 22002, in accordance with ISO 22000, are possible.

a) An organization developing the PRPs part of codes of practice, or checking that an existing code of practice is consistent with this part of ISO 22002.

b) A group of farmers establishing a common ISO 22000 food safety management system. Based on the hazards analysis, the group determines the control measures to be implemented by each member. It is intended that the group of farmers will use this part of ISO 22002 as a basis to structure and document the PRPs corresponding to the activity of the farms. If certification is desired, the certificate can be granted to the group of farmers and not to the individual members.

c) One or more organizations establishing an integrated ISO 22000 food safety management system covering both farming and processing. Based on the hazards analysis, the organization(s) determine(s) the control measures to be implemented at the farming and processing levels. PRPs applicable to the farms will be selected and implemented on the basis of this part of ISO 22002. PRPs applicable to the processing establishment(s) will be selected and implemented on the basis of the ISO/TS 22002-1. If certification is desired, one certificate can be granted to the integrated system.

d) A farmer implementing an ISO 22000 food safety management system. Based on the hazards analysis, the farmer determines the control measures to be implemented. The farmer will use this part of ISO 22002 as a basis to structure and document the PRPs corresponding to the activity of the farm. If certification is desired, the certificate can be granted to the farmer.

Each subclause specifying guidelines for the selection of PRPs within Clauses 5, 6 and 7, starts with a paragraph introducing the objective as regards food safety. It is followed in the next paragraphs by general requirements ("shall" wording) for maintaining a hygienic environment within primary production. Further, itemized examples of potentially applicable PRPs intended to comply with those requirements are recommended ("should" wording). The final paragraphs of each subclause describe the documentation, including records, which are required or recommended, as well as the actions to implement when applicable requirements are no longer met.