



QS-REPORT Meat and Meat Products 01/2017

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Editorial Dear Readers,

Convenience products are attuned to the fast pace of modern life. They are taking the supermarket shelves by storm and are increasingly labelled with the QS certification mark. You can read more about this topic on this page. Regarding the current developments in online trading of fresh food, please see our article on page 2. On page 4, there is also an interview with Prof. Dr. Robby Andersson, who talked to us about the recording and robustness of finding data in poultry for slaughter.

The editorial team would be pleased to receive questions and suggestions on the QS-Report to presse@q-s.de.



Megatrend “convenience” More ready-to-eat products with QS certification mark

Whether meat kebabs with peppers, doner meals with onions, cevapcici with rice or “traditional” cordon bleu – the QS certification mark can be found on all of these products in food retail outlets. The share of QS products in the segment of preprepared food products has increased in recent months. 24,500 food retail outlets now sell meat, sausage and ham as well as a growing range of convenience products bearing the QS certification mark.

Ready meals account for 28 percent of total weekly food requirements (Mafowerk GmbH, 2015). The market volume for refrigerated convenience products was 1.77 billion euros in 2014, an increase of 20 percent on the 2010 figure (LPV Media GmbH, 2015). There is a growing demand for simple food products that are quick to prepare, and QS can make a key contribution towards ensuring the quality of these products.

The Guidelines “Processing Meat and Meat Products” and “Preparation/Processing Fruit, Vegetables, Potatoes” have been extended and expanded as part of the 2017 revision. The labelling of convenience products with the QS certification mark is regulated in annex 7.2, which can be downloaded in the document center on our website.

The labelling of convenience products with the QS certification mark is clearly regulated and assists companies who want to emphasise their commitment for safe food using the QS certification mark.

Greater transparency and growing consumer acceptance

With these adapted provisions, QS has created even greater transparency in the labelling of convenience products. **“The consumer can clearly see which ingredients comply with the QS requirements”**, explains **Robert Römer**, responsible for the meat and meat products area at QS. This increases consumer acceptance for ready-to-eat food products, and the range of products with QS certification mark is becoming even more extensive and varied than was previously the case. **“The QS certification mark is a visible sign of quality. Particularly in the sensitive segment of convenience products”**, emphasises Römer.

New labelling rules for convenience products made up of different foods

According to the stipulations of the QS scheme, all chopped ingredients consisting of fruit, vegetables or potatoes in mixed convenience products that make up at least 10 percent of the product and that fall under the scope of the Guideline Preparation/Processing Fruit, Vegetables, Potatoes must be used as QS goods. Products whose name emphasises an

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Megatrend Convenience

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ingredient comprising fruit, vegetables or potatoes – such as pepper pastry – must also be QS goods. In addition, the principle also applies that 100% of all used meat

and meat products for which requirements are defined in the QS scheme must come from QS-certified businesses. **When these composed products are labelled, there is a**

provision for label approval by QS.

This ensures avoidance of false label printing and permits clarification of misunderstandings in advance.



Controlled storage: Coldstore Hengelo B.V.



Founded in 1983 by J. B. M. Jansen, Coldstore Hengelo B.V. is today one of the most experienced companies in the

Netherlands for the storage of packaged and nonpackaged food under controlled conditions. Coldstore Hengelo B.V. offers its customers a broad portfolio of services from a single source – from import, export and the performance of all veterinary tasks all the way through to customs clearance in third countries and the loading of deep-frozen goods onto containers.

“We have a responsibility towards our customers and the consumer, and compliance with strict requirements that

go beyond the legal stipulations when producing safe food products is therefore absolutely essential”, explains Dirk Radstok, plant manager at Coldstore Hengelo B.V. “This is why, alongside our ISO 22000 and FSSC 22000 certification, we have also decided to participate in the QS scheme.” The new guideline for the storage of meat and meat products outlines high-level requirements for temperature-controlled storage. Strict compliance with hygiene provisions, traceability of the goods and front-to-end documentation are also integral elements of the standard. Radstok is convinced: “By obtaining QS certification, we are showing our customers that we take our responsibilities seriously when it comes to quality assurance and food safety, and that we meet all the necessary stipulations in an optimum manner. We are sending a clear signal that all operational processes are monitored not only by official checks but also by independent bodies. This enables us to cement the bond with our customers and to set ourselves apart from the competition.”

With a storage capacity of 8,000 pallet places, the storage of fresh pork and beef for QS-certified business associates is one of the core activities of the family-run company. Alongside freezing, a further speciality of Coldstore Hengelo B.V. is tempering of the goods. Every day, 20 employees work to ensure front-to-end quality assurance and handle the freezing, tempering or loading of 100 tonnes of meat and meat products within 24 hours. Coldstore Hengelo B.V. is also active beyond Europe’s borders and conducts trading operations as far afield as Hong Kong and South Africa. “Our credo? Continuous commitment and constant optimisation of quality assurance”, emphasises Radstok.

Buying meat on the Internet

Online traders in the QS scheme

Online trading with food products is picking up pace. The GfK market research organisation predicts that turnover will increase from the current level of around 1 billion euros to over 7 billion euros by the year 2025. Fresh, highly perishable food products are also increasingly sold via the Internet. This creates new challenges for the sector in order to ensure the quality and safety of food products that are sold online. QS offers online traders the option of scheme participation and auditing to help them to properly manage potential risks and quality impairment, and to support them in the new challenges they face.

The sending of fresh meat and meat products is a challenge. When it comes to ensuring food safety, one of the key aspects is strict observance of the cooling chain. Temperature recording and

documentation during transport, suitable cooling measures for dispatch and dealing with risk factors – such as high outside temperatures in the summer months – play an important role in this respect. The focus is also on such things as outgoing goods inspection, vehicle and personal hygiene, and complaint and returns management (see diagram).

Meeting quality expectations

Anyone who wants to reliably deliver sensitive goods like fresh meat to the consumer via the Internet must master quality assurance. QS offers online traders who participate in the QS scheme a form of certification that complies with newly tested standards. This means that providers of Web retail outlets can document their professional practices vis-à-vis their customers and be certain that all upstream production and marketing



Source: POS-Profi-Club by Lebensmittel Zeitung direkt, Frankfurt, survey February 2017

stages are certified by independent bodies. The QS requirements are adapted in a practice-focused way to the special processes and critical points arising in the area of online shipping.

Incident management in the QS scheme

Incidents in 2016 show room for improvement

The susceptibility to crises of businesses in the agricultural and food sector differs from other sectors. Weather as well as environmental influences cannot be planned, the animals' health and well-being is dependent on many factors. Due to the high number of scheme participants, there are frequent incidents and crises that have to be managed within the QS scheme. With the incident and crisis management system, QS has created a reliable mechanism for the avoidance, early detection, control and follow-up of critical incidents for the entire value added chain. The incidents that occurred last year show that the control and reaction mechanisms in the QS scheme function very effectively. Potential for improvement is also identified and actively addressed.

102 incident reports were recorded and processed by the incident and crisis management system in 2016. Most of these reports related to routine cases. There were also eight incidents with a certain level of risk potential due to possible health hazards – due, for example, to listeria or residues of plant protection products in sausage meat. We were particularly concerned about incidents that resulted in criticism

of the QS scheme and with it the entire sector. Cases that are worthy of mention in this regard were media reports on possible shortcomings in livestock management on the part of important function holders in the German agricultural sector and individual livestock owners participating in the QS scheme. In these cases, QS immediately conducted audits of special purpose, looked into and addressed the facts of the case, reporting objectively on the identified situation and using the information to derive potential for improvement. Together with representatives of the agricultural sector, QS is currently looking into how individual cases in livestock businesses can be identified more rapidly and more reliably. The focus is on the evaluation and utilisation of the data from previous

audits, experiences gained through incident and crisis management or, more recently, the findings of official meat inspections that QS records in a central database. The inspection rhythm, greater concentration on questions relating to livestock management and animal welfare in the audits, or totally unannounced checks are possible measures that have already been implemented in the wake of the incidents in 2016 or that will be discussed once again in the very near future.

61 audits of special purpose were performed in 2016, **59 of them in agricultural businesses.** The independent QS sanction board imposed penalties on five livestock owners.

Experiencing sausage production on site

QS Ambassador visits Wilhelm Brandenburg



Ein Unternehmen der REWE GROUP.

When you walk into the production hall of Wilhelm Brandenburg in Dreieich, the smell tells the whole story: this is a place where sausage products are produced. Whether smoked, boiled or salted – the product range is (almost) endless. Around 350 skilled employees are hard at work every day in a production facility with an area of 28.300 m². Our QS Ambassador from food retail and Grips&Co winner Maria Szeja took a look behind the scenes of the QS-certified REWE meat plant.

Her verdict following her wide-ranging tour of the company: **“For me, the tour completed the circle to the retail trade. It was really interesting to see how the products we sell to customers in the supermarket are actually made, and to learn about the work and the number of employees involved in the process. If, like me, you work in the food sector, I can only recommend that you take a look at how the products are made.”**

Head of production **Helmut Heyn** accompanied the 21-year-old through the plant and explained every step in the production of sausage and ham specialities. **“Our biggest sellers are selfservice packaged sausage products. We also produce delicatessen salads in Dreieich. Convenience products are becoming increasingly popular – as we are also noticing. This is why we focus particularly on the development of new products.”** Apropos product development: a team of five employees is busy experimenting every day in the new test kitchen. **Lydia Horn-Kessler**, member of the product development team, explains: **“We are currently working on around 40 projects. In addition to developing totally new products we also work on improving recipes and texture. Every product innovation is preceded by intensive market research and close consultation with the sales department. This ensures that the innovations meet the preferences of customers.”** Maria, for whom this was the first visit to a processing company, particularly liked this part of the company's operations: **“So much comes together here: knowledge of the product, technology, marketing... I find it inspiring.”**



Tradition reaching back over more than 125 years

It was in 1885 that entrepreneur Wilhelm Brandenburg founded the company of the same name for the production of sausage and ham specialities in Rügenwalde on the Baltic coast of Pomerania. After the Second World War, the company was re-established in 1949 at the Timmendorfer Strand location, which is still home to one of the five production centres. Since 1986, the Wilhelm Brandenburg GmbH & Co. OHG company has been a member of the REWE Group and produces goods exclusively for the REWE sales lines. And the sausage and ham producer has been a QS scheme participant since 2003.

Recording of finding data in poultry for slaughter

Interview with Professor Dr. Robby Andersson

QS has paved the way for the recording of finding data for slaughtering poultry. As of 1 July 2017, all abattoirs participating in the “Initiative Tierwohl” (Animal Welfare Initiative) must report finding data to the central finding database for poultry at QS. From 1 January 2018, reporting will also be compulsory for all QS abattoirs. We asked poultry expert Prof. Dr. Robby Andersson from Osnabrück University about the evaluation and the informative value of finding data in poultry for slaughter.

Question: What information can finding data supply, and which indicators are of any relevance at all?

Andersson: Finding data is designed to allow assessments regarding the management, feeding and care of the animals. These factors naturally differ from business to business. In a large-scale study conducted in cooperation with the poultry industry, we investigated various indicators such as mortality, footpad health, changes in the breast skin or the rejection of entire animals or parts of animals in the slaughtering of poultry. It was ultimately the condition of the footpads that provided the best indication of the quality of

livestock management. They enable us to arrive at an assessment of litter, climate, feed, intestinal health and flock management. The mortality in the stock allows conclusions regarding the state of health of the flocks – but should also be seen in combination with factors such as the use of antibiotics. The transport losses can sometimes provide pointers as to the vitality of the flocks and on the frequency and percentage of weakened animals. Evaluation of rejected animals did not provide us with any useful information in this regard.

Question: So of what use is the evaluation of the indicators for footpad health and mortality in practice?

Andersson: First of all, the identified indicators enable us to determine the situation in individual stocks. They also allow us to track changes and developments over time. Every livestock owner should have the option of comparing current results with those of preceding fattening cycles, and in future also to compare the results with those of other businesses. Businesses with conspicuous results can be identified by the scheme owner and, where necessary, arrangements can be made to provide advisory services for the businesses in question.

Question: The study you mention only included turkeys. What needs to be borne in mind with broilers?

Andersson: In principle, the requirements for broilers are the same as those for turkeys. Assessment of footpad health and the creation of scores can be performed in a similar fashion. The main difference is that broilers are kept for a far shorter period of time.

Question: What particular insights have you gained from the documentation and evaluation of finding data?

Andersson: It's currently not possible to compare the documentation of footpad health between the abattoirs, as methods differ from abattoir to abattoir. This is why it is important to agree on and implement minimum conditions when findings are documented using camera-based systems. There are also seasonal differences in results in terms of such things as mortality (heat stress) or footpad changes (high humidity). Comparative evaluations must take these differences into account in future. Seasonal factors are often more relevant than other factors.



News in brief

Piglet castration: requirements also compulsory for foreign suppliers

As of 1 January 2019, the stipulations of the German Animal Welfare Act on piglet castration without anaesthesia must be applied in the QS scheme. All methods to avoid piglet castration without anaesthesia that comply with the German Animal Welfare Act can be used. These are surgical castration under anaesthesia or analgesia, entire male production and entire male production with vaccination. The advisory board has decided that the stipulations shall also apply to animals and meats that are delivered into

the QS scheme from abroad and then marketed through the scheme based on the recognition of other standards. This general demand forms the basis for discussions with foreign standard owners concerning this matter. We will counteract competitive distortions in the QS scheme.

Save the Date: Anuga 2017

Visit us from 7–11 October 2017 at the Anuga in Cologne, Hall 6.1, stand number E-009. We look forward to seeing you there!



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QS Qualität und Sicherheit GmbH
Responsible for the content:
Dr. Hermann-Josef Nienhoff
Schedestraße 1-3, 53113 Bonn

Phone: +49 (0) 228 35068-0
Fax: +49 (0) 228 35068-10
E-Mail: info@q-s.de
Online: www.q-s.de

