

Free Guide

FSSC 22000: Food Safety System Certification 22000



Skills management software
for frontline workers

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What is FSSC 22000?

FSSC 22000 provides a framework for effectively managing food safety responsibilities. It is designed for organizations in the food chain that process or manufacture food products.

The certification is recognized by the Global Food Safety Initiative (GFSI), and encompasses the ISO 22000 standard for food safety management systems, ISO/TS 22002-1 standards for prerequisite programs (PRPs), and additional FSSC-specific requirements, such as those focused on food fraud prevention, food defense, and allergen management.

Who needs an FSSC 22000 certification?

FSSC 22000 certification is intended for any organization in the food supply chain that wants to demonstrate robust food safety management and meet global market expectations, especially from retailers, manufacturers, and regulators.

The certification is not legally mandatory, but is often required when organizations aim to enter global supply chains, meet customer and retailer requirements, and boost risk management and credibility.

How to earn a FSSC 22000 certification

To earn an FSSC 22000 certification, organizations must take a three-pronged approach, which includes implementing:

- **ISO 22000.** A globally recognized food safety management system standard that defines how an organization must identify, evaluate, and control food safety hazards through a structured, risk-based approach
- **Any necessary PRPs.** Basic operational and environmental conditions necessary for safe food production. These are tailored to industry sectors – such as manufacturing or packaging — and outlined in the ISO/TS 22002-x series' standards
- **FSSC Scheme requirements.** Additional requirements mandated by the FSSC, including food fraud prevention, allergen management, and regulatory compliance, supported by interpretation articles and Board of Stakeholders decisions for consistent application

All the requirements for each program listed above are available on [the FSSC's website](#). After they are implemented, organizations must undergo an audit by an FSSC-approved certification body. After a successful audit, they will earn an FSSC 22000 certification.

Renewal requirements for FSSC 22000 certifications

FSSC 22000-certified organizations are subject to annual surveillance audits. The certification itself is valid for three years, after which point there is a recertification audit.

The benefits of FSSC 22000 certification

An FSSC 22000 certification offers several benefits to employees and their organizations. Some key advantages include the following.



Enhanced supplier acceptance and global market access

Certification under FSSC 22000 aligns with GFSI standards, which means manufacturers are better able to meet procurement criteria of major global retailers and multinational brands. This can reduce audit fatigue and streamline access to international supply chains and co-manufacturing partnerships.



Strengthened food safety risk mitigation

Integrating ISO 22000 with sector-specific PRPs builds a preventive, system-wide approach to hazard analysis and control. The result is reduced reliance on end-product testing and improved confidence in food safety throughout the process, from raw material handling to packaging.



Streamlined regulatory compliance and audit readiness

FSSC 22000's structured documentation and continual improvement processes prepare facilities to meet diverse regulatory requirements (such as FDA FSMA and EU 852/2004), as well as reduce non-conformities during second- and third-party inspections or unannounced audits.

Challenges in earning an FSSC 22000 certification

Earning an FSSC 22000 certification may pose several challenges to employees and organizations. They include the following.



Integration with existing management systems

Harmonizing FSSC 22000 with ISO 9001 or environmental systems often demands resource-heavy alignment of documentation, KPIs, and audit protocols, especially in complex facilities already operating under lean manufacturing or Six Sigma frameworks.



Resource burden on SMEs and co-packers

Smaller operations often struggle with the financial and personnel demands of implementing PRPs, maintaining documentation, and training across shifts – especially where HACCP-only systems previously sufficed or where multilingual workforces create communication gaps.



Interpreting and applying FSSC's additional requirements

Requirements like food fraud vulnerability assessment and food defense planning can be difficult to quantify and embed operationally, particularly for mid-sized processors with limited exposure to enterprise-level risk modeling or scenario testing tools.

Tips and strategies for earning an FSSC 22000 certification

Here are a few tips for preparing for an FSSC 22000 certification:

- Read the [FSSC 22000 FAQ document](#)
- Familiarize yourself with the [FSSC 22000 Scheme documents](#)
- Read our [ISO 22000 certification guide](#)

Resources for FSSC 22000 certification

For more information and guidance on CNA certification, you can refer to the following resources:

FSSC. The [FSSC's website](#) should be the first stop for organizations seeking FSSC 22000 certification. There, you can find resources, support, and full guidelines for the certification program.

ISO 22000. Because FSSC 22000 certification requires ISO 22000 certification, organizations should almost familiarize themselves with the requirements on [ISO's website](#). You can also use our [ISO 22000 certification guide](#) to help you through the process

ISO/TS. ISO/TS 22002-x outlines the PRPs needed for FSSC 22000 certification. Organizations should review the appropriate sector-specific standard, such as the [PRP for food manufacturing](#) linked here.

Skills management for FSSC 22000 certifications

AG5 stores all certifications in the cloud, providing all authorized personnel with access to the right version of approved certifications. This helps you easily keep track of all data and documentation related to FSSC 22000 certifications across your organization.

Using AG5's skills management software, you can monitor the status of any type of certification that is relevant to your workforce, leveraging intuitive dashboards that provide you with a clear understanding of exactly what is needed to keep your employees skilled and safe.

Frequently asked questions about FSSC 22000 certifications

What is the scope of an FSSC 22000 certification?

An FSSC 22000 certification is a comprehensive approach to food safety throughout the entire organization.

Is an FSSC 22000 certification mandatory?

No, they are not legally mandatory, but they may be required in certain markets or by certain companies.

How long does it take to obtain an FSSC 22000 certification?

Obtaining FSSC 22000 certification typically takes three to 12 months, depending on your organization's size, preparedness, and existing certifications and systems.

What are the cost considerations for FSSC 22000 certification?

Costs vary by organization size and scope, but usually include auditor fees, training, and system upgrades.

What is the validity period of a CNA certification?

FSSC 22000 certifications are valid for three years.

Can an FSSC 22000 certification be integrated with any management systems?

Yes, FSSC 22000 can be integrated with ISO management systems like ISO 9001 or ISO 14001.

How can you learn more about FSSC 22000 certification?

Visit the [FSSC's website](#).

Sources

- [FSSC](#)
- [ISO](#)

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