

SALSA BITES

Seasonal Newsletter | Summer 2022



Edition 03

#SafeFoodSells

Last month we celebrated our 15th Birthday! When SALSA was launched in April 2007, we had a clear vision to become the scheme of choice for small food and drink producers to demonstrate their compliance with recognised food safety standards. In 15 years we have supported thousands of UK small food and drink producers. You can listen to an interview with SALSA Founder & CEO, Chris Grimes [here](#), where he reflects on the how the organisation has grown.

The SALSA Team

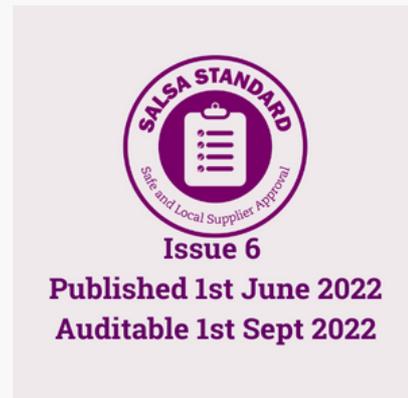


Issue 6 Is Here!

The SALSA Standard has been revised for the fifth time since its original launch in March 2007. Now available to [download](#), Issue 6 is published on the **1st June** and will be auditable from **1st September**. At the core of Issue 6 is Safe Food First and it balances the need to keep pace with industry best practice, whilst remaining true to SALSA's core values.

Key Changes to The Standard:

- Allergen Management **NOW** includes an enhanced and dedicated section.
- Raw Materials Risk Assessment (Food Fraud) **NOW** clarified with enhanced guidance
- HACCP **NOW**:
 - Has clearer alignment with CODEX
 - Is expanded to include product description and intended use
 - Requirement for understanding and justification of CCPs and Critical Limits
- Supplier Approval **NOW** with enhanced guidance for risk assessment
- Labelling **NOW** with enhanced guidance, including website claims.
- Premises, Layout & Structure **NOW** includes food defence, cyber security and site plan requirement.



There are a number of important documents available to support your transition to Issue 6:

- Guidance Notes have been fully updated and are now known as the **Interpretation Guide**.
- The updated and expanded **SALSA Glossary** is an important reference tool for making sure you fully understand the requirements of the SALSA Standard and a useful 'jargon buster' for industry terminology.
- Our **Summary of Changes** will give you an overview of what has changed, what has moved and what is new within the Standard.

You can also sign up for our free 'Introduction to Issue 6' webinars:
10th June 10am sign up [here](#) and 15th July 10am sign up [here](#)



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Safe Food First

Joining the SALSA Scheme and successfully implementing the Standard, supports the development and maintenance of an effective food safety culture. Whilst Issue 6 will not introduce an explicit requirement for an effective food safety culture, we will be clear on the attributes that we expect our members to embrace as they seek to commit to Safe Food First.



- **Leadership** - Strategy and a plan to ensure the production of safe food consistently.
- **Awareness** - Engagement and commitment of all employees in the importance safe production and distribution of food.
- **Communication** - Understanding of roles and responsibilities and their interactions for all employees in the food business
- Maintaining the **integrity** of the food safety management system, through verifying controls in a timely and efficient manner and documentation is up to date
- Continual **improvement** of the food safety management system, taking into account changes and developments in science, technology and best practices.
- Availability of sufficient **resources** and facilities to ensure the consistent safe and hygienic handling of food.

These guiding principles support an effective Food Safety Culture. During the SALSA Audit process you can expect Auditors to be looking for good examples of the above which underpin your ability and commitment to comply with the individual requirements of the Standard. We are sure that many of you already exemplify great food safety culture, demonstrated by your passion for your products and business and choosing to be part of the SALSA Scheme.

Interview with an Auditor

Liz Rouwenhorst

How long have you worked in the food industry & what was your first food job?

Long enough to remember food safety without HACCP, auditing to BS5750 and listening to The Bangles singing Manic Monday! After researching meat spoilage and yeasts at Bath Uni, my first job was in vendor assurance at Mars Confectionary. When I wasn't out auditing anything micro-sensitive, you could find me by the Twix line sampling warm shortbread with caramel topping - yum!

How long have you worked for SALSA?

Five years and its gone so quickly, I have loved being part of the Standard Working Group team.

What is the most important piece of advice you can give a food producer preparing for an audit?

Be honest, make good use of the SALSA Interpretation Guide, the Glossary and the Tools & Tips and remember, what you don't know you don't know, there's always someone to ask in the SALSA world.

What do you enjoy most about SALSA auditing and mentoring?

Getting to know small and family run companies that have a dream and helping them to be safe and successful.

You have co written Issue 6, what are they key changes to the Standard?

I think there's a better balance and logic between the four sections. There's a spotlight on Food Safety Culture and although this already existed within Issue 5, the clauses where it really shines out are highlighted. Finally, and I think most notably, product description has been added to the HACCP section 2 and this is probably the most important requirement in the whole standard, because if you don't know your products well enough to know why they are safe, then you shouldn't be selling them.



5 Minute Chat with Branded Cuppa

Branded Cuppa are a family business, based in Bury St Edmunds. They had their first SALSA audit in January 2022, gaining their certificate in March with very few action points. Their Auditor, Liz Rouwenhorst told us,



“Branded Cuppa have worked hard and thoroughly to achieve the SALSA standard without any outside help whatsoever. Their beautifully presented procedures are a true family effort and their packing machines are both from Argentina and have been cared for by Dan so they still look new. In my opinion, true SALSA Stars!”

We talked to **Branded Cuppa** about their experience,

Why did you choose SALSA?

We have always had high standards in the factory. But, over the last few years, our customers have been increasingly asking if we have any certification for health and safety, food standards. It's frustrating having to answer 'no' to these queries. Our working methods meant we had the processes and procedures in place but not the paperwork trail to evidence it. A supplier suggested SALSA to us, and it felt like a good fit.

How did you find implementing the Standard?

Implementing the standard was challenging but rewarding. We decided to overhaul our systems simultaneously while working towards certification. These changes meant we could make SALSA part of our workflow rather than having additional paperwork. We're a small company, so time is limited. Integrating SALSA into a new system gives us the flexibility to adapt to future company developments and future SALSA requirements more efficiently.

How did you find your audit?

Our audit was comprehensive but also rewarding. Our auditor was very knowledgeable, professional and helpful. She worked with us through each stage and clearly explained any areas needing improvement.

SALSA Round Up

POST AUDIT ADVICE

The **Post-Audit Meeting** with your Auditor takes place straight after your audit is completed (on the same day). It is an opportunity to discuss next steps and is a critical element of your audit visit. It is important that you understand the following important points:



- **What evidence is required from your Action Plan?**
- **Are you clear on the difference between what has been raised as an action and an improvement?**
- **How can you access your Action Plan?**
- **When your evidence must be submitted?**
- **How do you submit your evidence?**



Our Pick of Industry News

[Virtual Cheese Awards winners announced!](#)

Get signed up to [Food Safety Alerts!](#)

Food producer unable to 'safety process orders due' to [Cyber Security attack](#)

Farming Transformation Fund – [Adding Value grant](#)

Food prices are rising as UK inflation hits [40-year high](#)

Latest Training News - New Courses!



HACCP for Soft Drinks - 23rd June and HACCP for Fish -20th October.

These are practical and interactive full-day courses where delegates gain a sound knowledge of HACCP and the confidence to apply it within their business. Check out our full list of bespoke courses in the **Training Section** of our website.

"I really enjoyed this course. It was delivered in a very engaging, informative and collaborative style, and the whole team were actively engaged and took part which was fantastic."

Bakery Delegate, March 2022



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