



BRC IOP and GMP FEFCO

Food Packaging

The BRC IOP Standard provides safety and quality guidance primarily for the producers of packaging materials, but also for similar products in contact with food. The GMP FEFCO is applicable to cardboard packaging producers.

These are comprehensive standards covering areas of hygiene and product safety throughout the packaging industry.

Food packaging producers are deeply involved in the food chain, and can significantly influence food safety. A specific technical perspective is provided by these standards, enabling the producers to take responsibility by putting in place a widely recognised food safety management system. The standards address part of the "due diligence" requirements* of the packaging manufacturer, packer/filler, and retailer.

*The capability to be able to demonstrate that every reasonable measure has been taken to avoid an incident.

What are the standards?

All materials that come into contact with food, especially the food packaging, can influence food safety; both by failing to protect the food properly and through contamination. The BRC IOP standard, developed by the British Retailers, and the GMP FEFCO standard, developed by the European cardboard producers, address the requirements to guarantee food safety by applying the HACCP (Hazard Analysis & Critical Control Points) and GMP (Good Manufacturing Practice) principles specific to this sector of the food industry.

The BRC IOP Standard requires:

- The adoption of a formal Hazard Analysis System.
- A documented Management System.
- The control of factory standards, products, processes, and personnel.

The GMP FEFCO International Standard is based on the assumption that no "Critical Control Point" exists for the cardboard-specific production process, because all risks are adequately controlled by GMPs. A general "hazard inventory" for the individual production plants and a consistent GMP set are provided.

Why is certification good for my business?

The food safety chain and the connected due diligence chain are based on the appropriate contribution of all the market players. Your achievement as a reliable supplier is also linked to your capability to provide safe products.

The standards provide several benefits:

- Single verification commissioned by the manufacturer, in line with an agreed evaluation frequency, will allow manufacturers to report on their status to food retailers and other organisations.
- Comprehensive standards cover areas of hygiene and product safety throughout the packaging industry.
- Packaging manufacturers may use these standards to ensure that their suppliers are following good hygiene practices and complete the "due diligence" chain.

- Ongoing surveillance and confirmation of the follow-up of corrective actions ensure that a self-improving quality, hygiene, and product safety system is established.

How can I prepare for certification?

Companies that plan well will often have an advantage and be prepared for certification. It is important that you and your company are positive, committed, and set clear target dates for implementation and assessment.

This includes:

- Establishing a Technical Management System.
- Identifying legal requirements.
- Identifying and documenting the specific food safety hazards and the relevant control measures (HACCP system and/or Good Manufacturing Practice).
- Identifying the applicable Good Manufacturing Practice/Good Hygiene Practice, including a pest control programme, equipment and building maintenance programme, housekeeping and cleaning programme, and all the specific standard requirements.
- Implementing any needed structural improvements.