

3334 Principles of fresh produce handling and quality

SQA Unit Code

H3KM 04

Level 3

SCQF Level 6

Credit value 5

Unit Summary

This unit is about understanding the principles of fresh produce handling and quality in support of your role in food and drink manufacture and/or supply operations. These underpin your role with your own organisation providing you with knowledge that is essential to competent performance.

The principles apply where fresh produce is processed and/or supplied for human consumption. They can be applied to produce including salads, vegetables and fruit. The characteristics of fresh produce and its vulnerability to physical damage and spoilage determine that this knowledge is essential.

You will need to understand the principles of fresh produce handling so that the techniques and methods you apply avoid damaging the product and maintain the quality demanded by customers and consumers. It includes understanding how growing conditions and farming practices can impact on the quality of fresh produce.

This unit is for you if you work in food and drink manufacturing and/or supply chain operations and are involved in production operations.

In order to be assessed as competent you must demonstrate to your assessor that you can consistently perform to the requirements set out below. Your performance evidence must include at least one observation by your assessor.

Evidence of knowledge and understanding should be collected during observation of performance in the workplace. Where it cannot be collected by observing performance, other assessment methods should be used.

You need to know and understand:

1. what the common forms of fresh produce contamination are caused by farming methods
2. how growing conditions can affect quality of fresh produce
3. how quality is influenced by the amount of time fresh produce is in the supply chain
4. what the common causes of damage are
5. what the common causes of spoilage are
6. the measures that are taken to limit spoilage
7. how fresh produce must be handled if quality is to be maintained
8. the limitations of produce handling methods
9. how a good manufacturing practice helps to maintain product quality
10. what methods are used to measure the external quality of fresh produce

11. how do these methods measure the external quality of fresh produce
12. the destructive methods used to assess the internal quality of fresh produce
13. the non-destructive methods used to assess the internal quality of fresh produce
14. what organoleptic quality assessment techniques are
15. how organoleptic quality assessment techniques are carried out
16. the impact temperature control has on fresh produce quality
17. why time and temperature control during production is essential to quality
18. how product handling systems are designed to maintain product quality
19. what product shelf life is and how it is established for items of produce
20. the legal and company regulations affecting the production of fresh produce
21. how seasons and country of origin can affect the handling and quality requirements of fresh produce
22. how product quality is maintained throughout the supply chain
23. how different types of packaging are used to maintain the quality of fresh produce
24. key performance indicators and their role in the maintenance of quality
25. how use by dates, best before dates and average weights relate to quality
26. the impact that poor handling can have on profitability
27. how legislation controls the supply and quality of fresh produce is relevant to use by dates
28. how legislation affects best before dates in the supply and quality of fresh produce
29. how legislation affects average weights in the supply and quality of fresh produce
30. what are Maximum residue levels (MRL)
31. how MRL relate to the safety of fresh produce
32. the legal requirements when handling disease insects found in the handling process

Evidence of performance may employ examples of the following assessment:

- observation
- written and oral questioning;
- evidence from company systems (e.g. Food Safety Management System)
- reviewing the outcomes of work
- checking any records of documents completed
- checking accounts of work that the candidate or others have written