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**Periodic Quality Audits and Action Plans**

**1. Introduction**

Regular quality audits are essential for maintaining high standards in food manufacturing (NIC Code 10101). These audits identify areas of non-compliance, potential risks, and opportunities for improvement. This document outlines the process of conducting periodic quality audits and developing effective action plans to address identified issues.

**2. Conducting Quality Audits**

* Planning the Audit: Define the scope of the audit, identifying specific areas or processes to be reviewed. Develop a detailed audit checklist based on relevant standards (e.g., HACCP, GMP, ISO 9001). Schedule the audit and notify relevant personnel.
* Performing the Audit: Conduct the audit systematically, following the established checklist. Gather evidence through observation, interviews, document reviews, and sampling. Document all findings clearly and objectively, including evidence of non-compliance.
* Reporting the Audit Findings: Prepare a comprehensive audit report summarizing the findings, highlighting areas of strength and weakness. Identify any non-compliances and potential risks. The report should be clear, concise, and easily understandable.

**3. Developing Action Plans**

* Prioritizing Issues: Prioritize identified issues based on their severity and potential impact on food safety and quality. Focus on addressing critical issues first.
* Assigning Responsibilities: Assign responsibility for addressing each identified issue to a specific individual or team. Set clear deadlines for completion.
* Defining Corrective Actions: Develop specific corrective actions to address each issue. These actions should be effective, feasible, and documented.
* Implementing and Monitoring: Implement the corrective actions and monitor their effectiveness. Track progress and make adjustments as needed. Document all actions taken.

**4. Compliance Notes**

* Regulatory Compliance: Ensure that the audit process and action plans comply with all relevant food safety regulations and industry standards.
* Documentation: Maintain detailed records of all audits, findings, action plans, and corrective actions. This documentation is crucial for demonstrating compliance and continuous improvement.
* Internal Audits: Regularly conduct internal audits to verify the effectiveness of the quality management system and identify areas for improvement.

**5. Practical Guidelines**

* Use a standardized audit checklist: This ensures consistency and reduces bias.
* Involve multiple auditors: Different perspectives can help identify a wider range of issues.
* Use a collaborative approach: Involve employees in the audit process and the development of action plans.
* Regularly review and update the audit process: The audit process should be reviewed and updated regularly to ensure its effectiveness.

**6. Example Action Plan:**

* Issue | Severity | Assigned To | Corrective Action | Target Completion Date | Status |

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* Inadequate handwashing practices in the production area | High | Production Supervisor | Implement additional handwashing stations and reinforce training on proper handwashing techniques. | 2 weeks | In Progress |
* Outdated equipment calibration records | Medium | Quality Control Manager | Update equipment calibration records and implement a system for regular calibration. | 1 month | Completed |
* Missing documentation for supplier audits | Low | Purchasing Manager | Develop a procedure for documenting supplier audits and ensure that all supplier audits are documented. | 1 month | In Progress |