

Conference for Food Protection

Standards for Accreditation of Food Protection Manager Certification Programs

(with edits accepted by the 2004 Conference)

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Preamble

The Conference for Food Protection is an independent voluntary organization that has identified the essential components of a nationally recognized Food Protection Manager *Certification Program* and established a mechanism to determine if *certification organizations* meet these standards. The Conference *Standards for Accreditation of Food Protection Manager Certification Programs* are intended for all *legal entities* that provide *certification* for this profession. The standards have been developed after years of conference research into, and discussion about, Food Protection Manager *Certification Programs*.

All *certifying organizations* attesting to the *competency* of Food Protection Managers, including *regulatory authorities* that administer and/or deliver *certification programs*, have a responsibility to the individuals desiring *certification*, to the employers of those individuals, and to the public. *Certifying organizations* have as a primary purpose the evaluation of those individuals who wish to secure or maintain Food Protection Manager *Certification* in accordance with the criteria and standards established through the Conference for Food Protection. *Certifying organizations* issue *certificates* to individuals who meet the required level of *competency*.

The conference standards are based on nationally recognized principles used by a variety of organizations providing *certification* programs for diverse professions and occupations. *Accreditation*, through the process recognized by Conference for Food Protection, indicates that the *certification organization* has been evaluated by a third party *accrediting organization* and found to meet or exceed all of the conference established standards.

To earn *accreditation*, the *certification organization* must meet the following conference standards and provide evidence of compliance through the documentation requested in the application. In addition, the *certification organization* agrees to abide by *certification* policies and procedures, established by the conference Food Protection Managers Training, Testing and *Certification Committee*, endorsed by the Conference for Food Protection and implemented by the *accrediting organization*.

The *accrediting organization* shall verify and monitor continuing compliance with the conference standards through the entire *accreditation* period. The conference Food Protection Managers Training, Testing and *Certification Committee* will work directly with the *accreditation organization* to enhance and maintain *certification* policies and

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procedures that meet the specific needs of Food Protection Managers while ensuring a *valid, reliable and legally defensible* evaluation of *certification* programs.

The conference Food Protection Managers Training, Testing and Certification Committee continues to work within the Conference structure to finalize the criteria and selection process for an organization to serve as the accrediting body for Food Protection Manager Certification Programs. Beginning in January of 2003, the American National Standards Institute assumed responsibility as the accrediting organization for the conference Standards for Accreditation of Food Protection Manager Certification Programs.

The Conference for Food Protection strongly encourages *regulatory authorities* and other entities evaluating credentials for Food Protection Managers to recognize and endorse these standards and the accreditation process. The *Conference Standards for Accreditation of Food Protection Manager Certification Programs* provide the framework for universal acceptance of individuals who have obtained their credentials from an *accredited certification program*. In Section 2-102.11 of its Food Code, Food and Drug Administration recognizes Food Protection Manager *certificates* issued by an *accredited certification program* as one means of meeting the FDA's Food Code knowledge requirement.

Modifications and Improvements

The Committee followed the Conference directive to use the 1996 conference working document, *Standards for Training, Testing and Certification of Food Protection Managers*, in the development of *accreditation* standards. Extensive revision of this document was presented to the 2000 and 2002 Conference under the title, *Standards for Accreditation of Food Protection Manager Certification Programs*.

The title was changed in 2000 to more accurately reflect the Standards. The revision and reformatting of the document were made after a comprehensive Committee review of each section. The *Standards for Accreditation of Food Protection Manager Certification Programs*:

- (1) adds and improves definitions that are more precise and more consistent with terminology and definitions used in the *psychometric* community and by *accreditation organizations*;
- (2) italicizes defined terms throughout the document;
- (3) eliminates ambiguities in the 1996 conference working document pertaining to test development and administration; and
- (4) identifies *certification organization* responsibilities to candidates, the public and the *accrediting organization*; and
- (5) adds computer-based test standards; and
- (6) clarifies demonstration of *continued* proficiency.

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Annexes

The annexes located at the back of the document are NOT part of the Standards, but provide information to guide those responsible for implementing or reviewing Food Protection Manager *Certification* programs. Each of the annexes provides guidelines for specific responsibilities that impact the effective implementation of the *Conference Standards for Accreditation of Food Protection Manager Certification Programs*.

Annex A provides a “Code of Ethics” for *certification organizations* and test providers responsible for the design of the assessment tool used to measure a candidate’s *competency*. *Certification organizations* have a responsibility to ensure that the *certification* process is fair to the candidates and protects their inherent rights.

Annex B provides guidelines for the developers and *instructors* of training programs designed to prepare Food Protection Managers for *certification*. The Conference for Food Protection supports the position that training is critical to performance and operational application of food safety principles and practices. However, training criteria are not incorporated into the *accreditation* standards. This decision is based on the:

- recognition that effective training incorporates a variety of instructional techniques, approaches and delivery systems;
- emergence of new delivery technologies, such as distance learning and computer based training (CBT), increasing accessibility and availability of training;
- difficulty in developing an “*equivalency* standard” to assess content, scope and effectiveness of diverse training methods; and
- recognition that an assessment tool (*food safety certification examination*) is the common component in *certification* programs.

The *instructor* and training program guidelines presented in Annex B are based on unifying principles developed through the Conference for Food Protection. Those individuals and organizations involved in the development and delivery of training programs should assess their programs against these guidelines.

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Annex C provides some guidance to *regulatory authorities* that incorporate Food Protection Manager *Certification* as part of their requirements to obtain, or retain, a permit to operate. The *Conference Standard for Accreditation of Food Protection Manager Certification Programs* is designed to be a voluntary unifying national standard. The Standards provide a mechanism for the universal acceptance of Food Protection Managers who obtain their *certificates* from an *accredited certification program*.

Over the past 25 years, many *regulatory authorities* have developed their own Food Protection Manager *Certification* Programs. This has resulted in a variety of standards for *certification* programs. This national standard for universal acceptance of *Certified Food Protection Managers* provides *regulatory authorities* reliable and *legally defensible* criteria for evaluating *certification* programs. In addition, it eliminates duplication of training/testing and additional cost for the industry.

Regulatory authorities that may not be in a position to eliminate their existing programs are encouraged to recognize Food Protection Managers certified in accordance with these standards as fulfilling their program requirements. Annex C provides additional guidance, developed through the Conference for Food Protection, for the implementation of these regulatory *certification* programs.

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SECTION 1.0 - DEFINITIONS

Section 1.0 Definitions

- 1.1 Accreditation** means that an *accrediting organization* has reviewed a Food Protection Manager *certification* program and has verified that it meets standards set by the Conference for Food Protection (a review of a *certifying organization* by an independent organization using specific criteria, to verify compliance with Food Protection Management *Certification* Program standards).
- 1.2 Accrediting organization** means an independent organization that determines whether a Food Protection Manager *Certification* Program meets the standards set by the Conference for Food Protection.
- 1.3 Accredited certification program** means a Food Protection Manager *Certification* Program that has been evaluated and listed by an *accrediting organization* accepted by the Conference for Food Protection and has met the Conference Standards for such programs.
- (a) refers to the *certification* process and is a designation based upon an independent evaluation of factors such as the sponsor's mission; organizational structure; staff resources; revenue sources; policies; public information regarding program scope, *continued proficiency*, discipline and grievance procedures; and test development and administration.
- (b) does not refer to training functions or educational programs.
- 1.4 Algorithm** means a set of procedures or rules pertaining to the selection of test questions on an exam.
- 1.5 Certificate** means documentation issued by a *certification organization*, verifying that an individual has complied with the requirements of an *accredited certification program*.
- 1.6 Certification** means the process wherein a *certificate* is issued.
- 1.7 Certification organization** means an organization that provides a *certification program* and issues the *certificate*.

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- 1.8 Certified Food Protection Manager** means a person who has demonstrated by means of a *food safety certification examination* to a *certifying organization* that he/she has the knowledge, skills and abilities required to protect the public from food borne illness. Duties of such persons include but are not necessarily limited to:
- a. responsibility for identifying hazards in the day-to-day operation of a *food establishment* that provides food for human consumption;
 - b. development or implementation of specific policies, procedures or standards aimed at preventing food borne illness;
 - c. coordination of training, supervision or direction of food preparation activities, and responsibility for taking corrective action as needed to protect the health of the consumer;
 - d. responsibility for completion of in-house self-inspection of daily operations on a periodic basis to see that policies and procedures concerning food safety are being followed.
- 1.9 Competency** means a defined combination of knowledge, skills and abilities required in the satisfactory performance of a job.
- 1.10 Competency examination** means an instrument that assesses whether an individual has attained at least a minimum level of *competency* that has been determined to be necessary to perform effectively and safely in a particular occupation or job. It must be based on a thorough analysis of requirements for safe and effective performance.
- 1.11 Computer-Adaptive Testing** means a method of computer-based testing that uses algorithms based on the statistics of the test questions to determine the examinee's proficiency by selecting items at various difficulty levels.
- 1.12 Computer-Based Testing** means an examination administered on a computer.
- 1.13 Continued proficiency** means a *certification organization's* process or program designed to assess continued *competence* and/or enhance the *competencies* of *Certified Food Protection Managers*.
- 1.14 Demographic data** means the statistical data of a population, especially the data concerning age, gender, ethnic distribution, geographic distribution, education, or other information that will describe the characteristics of the referenced group.
- 1.15 Educator**, in this instance, means a teacher in a secondary or post-secondary program leading to a degree or certificate in a course of study that includes *competencies* in prevention of food borne illness.

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1.16 Entry level performance means carrying out job duties and tasks effectively at a level that does not pose a threat to public safety but not necessarily beyond that level. It requires safe performance of tasks expected of a worker who has had at least the minimal training (either in a formal school setting or on-the-job), but not long experience.

1.17 Equivalency (in “equivalent examinations”) means that there is specific *psychometric* evidence that various forms of an examination cover the same content and their respective passing scores represent the same degree of competence.

1.18 Examination forms means alternate sets of test questions (with at least 25% alternate questions) to assess the same *competencies*, conforming to the same *examination specifications*.

1.19 Examination specifications means the description of the specific content areas of an examination, stipulating the number or proportion of items for each area of *competency* and the level of complexity of those items. The specifications are based on the *job analysis* and its verification.

1.20 Examination version means a test in which the exact set of items in an *examination form* is presented in another order, language, manner or medium.

1.21 Food establishment

(a) **Food establishment** means an operation that stores, prepares, packages, serves, vends, or otherwise provides food for human consumption:

(i) such as a restaurant; satellite or catered feeding location; catering operation if the operation provides food directly to a consumer or to a conveyance used to transport people; market; vending location; conveyance used to transport people; institution or food bank; and

(ii) that relinquishes possession of food to a consumer directly, or indirectly through a delivery service such as home delivery of grocery orders or restaurant takeout orders, or delivery service that is provided by common carriers.

(b) **Food establishment** includes:

(i) an element of the operation such as a transportation vehicle or a central preparation facility that supplies a vending location or satellite feeding location unless the vending or feeding location is permitted by the *regulatory authority*; and

(ii) an operation that is conducted in a mobile, stationary, temporary, or permanent facility or location; where consumption is on or off the premises; and regardless of whether there is a charge for the food.

(c) **Food establishment** does not include:

- (i) an establishment that offers only prepackaged foods that are not potentially hazardous;
- (ii) a produce stand that only offers whole, uncut fresh fruits and vegetables;
- (iii) a food processing plant;
- (iv) a kitchen in a private home if only food that is not potentially hazardous is prepared for sale or service at a function such as a religious or charitable organization's bake sale if allowed by law and if the consumer is informed by a clearly visible placard at sales or service locations that the food is prepared in a kitchen that is not subject to regulation and inspection by the *regulatory authority*;
- (v) an area where food that is prepared as specified in Subparagraph (c)(iv) of this definition is sold or offered for human consumption;
- (vi) a kitchen in a private home, such as a small family day-care provider; or a bed-and-breakfast operation that prepares and offers food to guests if the home is occupied, the number of available guest bedrooms does not exceed 6, breakfast is the only meal offered, the number of guests served does not exceed 18, and the consumer is informed by statements contained in published advertisements, mailed brochures, and placards posted at the registration areas that the food is prepared in a kitchen that is not regulated and inspected by the *regulatory authority*; or
- (vii) a private home that receives catered or home-delivered food.

- 1.22 **Food Safety Certification Examination** means an examination in food safety approved in accordance with the provisions of this program.
- 1.23 **Instructor** means an individual whose educational background and work experience meet the guidelines for an *instructor* as outlined in Annex B.
- 1.24 **Item bank** means all of the items that have been developed for the several forms of an examination. It includes all of the items available to create *examination forms*.
- 1.25 **Item sequence** means the presentation order of test items in an examination.

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- 1.26 **Job Analysis** means the description of functions or tasks required for an individual to perform to entry level standards in a specific job or occupation, including information about the attributes required for that performance. It defines the performance dimension of a job and includes knowledge, skills and abilities necessary to carry out the tasks.
- a. tasks are the individual functions, whether mental or physical, necessary to carry out an aspect of a specific job
 - b. knowledge, skills and abilities (KSA's) include the information and other attributes that the worker must possess in order to perform effectively and safely. They include information and understanding as well as learned behaviors and natural attributes.
- 1.27 **Legal entity** means an organization structured in a manner that allows it to function legally and be recognized as a responsible party within the legal system
- 1.28 **Legally defensible** means the ability to withstand a legal challenge to the appropriateness of the examination for the purpose for which it is used. The challenge may be made on by actual or potential examinees or on behalf of the public. Candidate's challenges may pertain to perceived bias of the examination or inappropriately chosen content. Challenges on behalf of the public may claim that the examination does not provide adequate measures of a candidate's knowledge, skills and abilities required to protect the consumer from food borne illness.
- 1.29 **Monitor** (See *Proctor*) means an authorized agent of the *program sponsor* who ensures the security of the *food safety certification examination* and verifies the identity of candidates for *certification*.
- 1.30 **Overexposure** means the relative frequency in which a test item, which is presented across all computerized tests, has undermined the integrity of the tests. Whether a test item is overexposed or not is based upon the type of exam test item (pictorial vs. written) and it's frequency of use.
- 1.31 **Proctor** means persons under the supervision of a *test administrator*, assisting by assuring that all aspects of an examination administration are being carried out with precision, with full attention to security and to the fair treatment of examinees. *Proctors* have the responsibility and must have the ability to observe examinee behaviors, accurately distribute and collect test materials, and assist the *test administrator* as assigned. They must have training or documented successful experience in monitoring procedures and must affirm in writing an agreement to maintain test security and to assure that they have no conflict of interest.
- 1.32 **Program sponsor** means the entity conducting a training course (Annex).
- 1.33 **Psychometric** means scientific measurement or quantification of human qualities, traits or behaviors.

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- 1.34 Psychometrician** means a professional with specific education and training in development and analysis of tests and other assessment techniques and in statistical methods. Qualifications may vary but usually include at least a bachelor's degree and a minimum of two formal courses in test development and a minimum of two in statistical methods.
- 1.35 Recognized examination** means Conference for Food Protection acknowledgement that a *food safety certification examination* has been reviewed and determined to have met the test development and administration portions of the Conference *Standards for Accreditation of Food Protection Manager Certification Programs*.
- 1.36 Regulatory Authority** means a government agency that has been duly formed under the laws of that jurisdiction to administer and enforce the law.
- 1.37 Reliability** means the degree of consistency with which a test measures the attributes, characteristics or behaviors that it was designed to measure.
- 1.38 Retail food industry** means those sectors of commerce that operate *food establishments*.
- 1.39 Test Administrator** means the individual at the test site who has the ultimate responsibility for conducting a *food safety certification examination*. *Test Administrators* must have training, documented successful experience, or a combination of experience and training in test administration and security procedures. They must provide written assurance of maintaining confidentiality of test contents and of adherence to standards and ethics of secure examination administration. Their responsibilities include but are not limited to:
- a. verifying that the contents of the examination materials shipment matches the packing list;
 - b. assuring that the site conforms to requirements;
 - c. training and supervising *monitors/proctors*;
 - d. assuring accurate identification of examinees;
 - e. adherence to all procedures and instructions in the examination administration manual;
 - f. maintaining security of test materials;
 - g. assuring compliance with procedures for handling any breaches of security that may occur;
 - h. proper handling of completed examinations;
 - i. confidentiality of candidate scores;
 - j. such unspecified duties as may be required for safe and secure administration of the examination.

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- 1.40 Test encryption and decoding** means the security aspects of a computer examination to prevent the test from being read by unauthorized persons if downloaded or otherwise accessed without authorization. Encryption refers to how a computer examination is coded. Decoding refers to how the computer examination is translated back from the code.
- 1.41 Trainer**, in this instance, means a professional with appropriate expertise who conducts a course in food safety for applicants for *certification* as Food Protection Managers.
- 1.42 Validity** means the extent to which a test score or other type of assessment measures the attributes it was designed to measure. In this instance, does the test produce scores that can help determine if examinees are competent to protect the public from food borne illness in a *food establishment*.

SECTION 2.0 – PURPOSE OF CERTIFICATION ORGANIZATIONS

Section 2.0 Purpose of *Certification Organizations*

- 2.1 The *certification organization* shall have as a purpose the evaluation of those individuals who wish to secure or maintain Food Protection Manager *Certification* in accordance with the criteria and standards established through the Conference for Food Protection, and the issuance of *certificates* to individuals who meet the required level of *competency*.
- 2.2 A *certifying organization* responsible for attesting to the *competency* of Food Protection Managers has a responsibility to the individuals desiring *certification*, to the employers of those individuals, and to the public.
- 2.3 A *certification organization* for Food Protection Manager *Certification* Programs shall not be the *accrediting organization* nor may the *certification organization* have any conflict of interest with said *accrediting organization*

**SECTION 3.0 – STRUCTURE AND RESOURCES OF
CERTIFICATION ORGANIZATIONS**

Section 3.0 Structure and Resources of *Certification Organizations*

- 3.1** Structure of *certification organizations*. The *certification organization* shall be incorporated as a *legal entity* (applies to the parent organization if the *certification organization* is a subsidiary of another organization).
- 3.2** A *certification organization* shall conform to all Conference for Food Protection Standards for *accreditation* and demonstrate that the relationship between the *certification organization* and related association, organization or agency ensures the independence of the *certification* program and its related functions.
- 3.3** If a *certification organization* provides both education and *certification*, the *certification organization* shall administratively and financially separate any education and *certification* functions that are specific to Food Protection Manager *Certification* to ensure that the certification program is not compromised. This may be satisfied if the governing structure documents to the *accrediting organization* the distinct separation of the two functions confirming that no undue influence is exercised over either the education or the *certification* process, by virtue of the structure within the association, organization, agency or another entity.
- 3.4** Resources of *Certification Organizations*. A *certification organization* shall conform to all Conference for Food Protection Standards for *accreditation* and demonstrate
- a. the availability of financial resources to effectively and thoroughly conduct regular and ongoing *certification* program activities.
 - b. that staff possesses the knowledge and skills necessary to conduct the *certification* program or has available and makes use of non-staff consultants and professionals to sufficiently supplement staff knowledge and skills.

**SECTION 4.0 – FOOD SAFETY CERTIFICATION EXAMINATION
DEVELOPMENT**

Section 4.0 Food Safety Certification Examination Development

- 4.1** *Food safety certification examinations* administered by *accredited certifying programs* must comply fully with all criteria set by the Conference for Food Protection (conference) and must meet explicit and implicit standards to protect the public from food borne illness.
- 4.2** Each *certification organization* must provide evidence that it meets the following professional requirements:
- a. ability to conduct or otherwise use a *legally defensible* and *psychometrically valid job analysis*;
 - b. demonstrated experience in the development of *psychometrically valid competency examinations*;
 - c. demonstrated capability to develop and implement thorough procedures for security of the *item bank*, printed, taped or computerized examinations, and candidate scores;
 - d. data handling capabilities commensurate with the requirements for effective processing, reporting and archiving of candidate *food safety certification examination* scores;
 - e. demonstrated evidence of an understanding of and willingness to abide by the principles of fairness and due process;
- 4.3** The *certification organization* must provide complete information about the *food safety certification examination*, including that related to procedures and personnel involved in all aspects of the examination development and analysis. The information required for *accreditation* will include, but is not necessarily limited to:
- a. complete description of the scope and usage of the examination;
 - b. *job analysis* task list, with knowledge, skills and abilities (KSA's);
 - c. *examination specifications*;
 - d. the number of unduplicated items in the *item bank*;
 - e. statistical performance of each item in the bank;
 - f. number of *examination forms* and evidence of their *equivalence* to each other;

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- g. description of method used to set passing score;
 - h. copies of all logs, diaries and personnel lists and descriptions kept as required in the development process;
 - i. summary statistics (Section 4.17 - Periodic Review) for each *examination form*;
 - j. names, credentials and *demographic* information for all persons involved in the *job analysis*, item writing and review, and setting the passing score.
- 4.4 *Job Analysis*. The content validity of a *food safety certification examination* shall be based on a *psychometrically valid job analysis* developed by *Psychometricians* and a *demographically* and technically representative group of individuals with significant experience in food safety. The representative group must include but not necessarily be limited to persons with experience in the various commercial aspects of the *retail food industry*, persons with local, state or national regulatory experience in retail food safety, and persons with knowledge of the microbiology and epidemiology of food borne illness, and must be sufficiently diverse as to avoid cultural bias and ensure fairness in content according to all federal requirements.
- 4.5 The *job analysis* must provide a complete description of the knowledge, skills and abilities (KSAs) required to function competently in the occupation of *Certified Food Protection Manager*, with emphasis on those tasks most directly related to the *Certified Food Protection Manager's* role in the prevention of food borne illness.
- 4.6 Detailed *food safety certification examination specifications* must be derived from a *valid* study of the *job analysis* tasks and their accompanying knowledge, skills and abilities (KSAs) and must be appropriate to all aspects of *the retail food industry*. The *job analysis* must include consideration of scientific data concerning factors contributing to food borne illness and its epidemiology. The *examination specifications*, consisting of percentage weights or number of items devoted to each content area, must be available to candidates and to the public.
- 4.7 The *certification organization*, or their contracted test provider, must maintain a log and diary of the procedures and a list of the qualifications, identities, and *demographic data* of the persons who participated in development of the *job analysis* and of the *food safety certification examination specifications*. Those materials must be provided to the *accrediting organization* on demand.

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- 4.8 *Certifying organizations* are required to systematically evaluate practices in the *retail food industry* to assure that the *job analysis* on which an examination is based remains appropriate for the development of *food safety certification examinations* on which the universal credential is awarded. The maximum length of use for any *job analysis* is five years from the date of validation.
- 4.9 Until such time as the Conference for Food Protection develops or endorses a single *job analysis* and related *food safety certification examination specifications* for examinations leading to a universal credential for *Certified Food Protection Managers*, recognition of new *food safety certification examinations* will be limited to those using this document and administered through an *accredited certification program*. *Accredited certification programs* whose examinations are already *recognized* at the time a single *job analysis* is endorsed by the conference, will be required to use the *job analysis* endorsed by conference **when** their existing *job analysis* is due for renewal at the end of its five-year life span.
- 4.10 *Psychometric Standards*. *Food safety certification examination* development, including setting the passing score, shall be based on the most recent edition of *Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing*, developed jointly by the American Psychological Association, American Educational Research Association and National Council for Measurement in Education, and on all appropriate federal requirements (for example, Americans with Disabilities Act); *Food safety certification examinations* must be revised as needed to be in compliance with changes in the *Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing* or in any of the federal requirements.
- 4.11 The *food safety certification examination* development procedures shall ensure that the *competencies* assessed in the *accredited certification program* are those required for *competent entry level performance* in the role of *Certified Food Protection Manager*, as defined by law and industry standards, and that they focus on factors related to the prevention of food borne illness in the *retail food industry*.
- 4.12 The *food safety certification examination* must be based on *psychometrically valid* procedures to assure the relative *equivalence* of scores from various *examination forms*. The *certifying organization* must provide evidence of such *equivalence* as public information.
- 4.13 When the *food safety certification examination* is administered in a medium other than the common pencil-and-paper format, evidence must be provided to assure that all *competencies* are assessed in a *reliable* manner and that the *validity* of the examination is preserved. Evidence of comparability with other *examination forms* must be provided.

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- 4.14 When any form and/or item bank of the *food safety certification examination* is translated into a language other than that in which it is originally developed and *validated*, the developer of the examination must provide evidence of content *equivalency* of the translated *version* with the original *examination form and/or item bank*. The developer must provide a detailed description of the translation method(s), including the rationale for selecting the translation method(s), and must demonstrate congruence of items and instructions with those of the *examination form and/or item bank* that was translated. To avoid potential problems in translation of terms specific or idiomatic to the *retail food industry*, translation should be accomplished with the consultation of food safety personnel competent in the languages of both the original and the translated *version* of the *food safety certification examination*.
- 4.15 *Food safety certification examination* developers must maintain a log and diary of the procedures and a list of the qualifications, identities, and *demographic data* of the persons who participated in item development, examination development, translations, setting the passing score, and the statistical analyses of the test items and of the full examination. Those materials must be provided to the *accrediting organization* on demand.
- 4.16 Internal Security. The *certifying organization* will demonstrate that procedures are developed and implemented to assure that individual items, *item banks*, *food safety certification examinations* presented in all media (printed, taped and computerized), and candidate scores are and remain secure. In addition to procedures to assure security, the system must include the protocol for handling any real or suspected breaches of security, the contingency plans for disposition of *examination forms* or items that are shown to be disclosed, and notification to clients of the problem and its consequences.
- 4.17 Periodic Review. At least semiannually, each *certifying organization* must report to the *Accrediting Organization*, providing a review of its *food safety certification examination(s)*. The report will include the following summary statistics for all examinations administered during the preceding six months, as well as other information that may be reasonably requested by the *accrediting organization*:
- a. number of *food safety certification examinations* administered;
 - b. mean;
 - c. mode;
 - d. standard deviation;
 - e. range;
 - f. *reliability* coefficient;
 - g. number and percentage of candidates passing the examination;
 - h. the statistics describing the performance of each item used on *food safety certification examinations* administered during the six-month period.

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- 4.18** Specific Procedures for Examination Administration. *Certification organizations* must specify procedures for administering all *food safety certification examinations* in a standard manner in order to assure that all candidates are provided with the opportunity to perform according to their level of *competency* and to assure comparability of scores. Procedures must include, but not be limited to:
- a. requirements for qualifications of *test administrators* and *monitors/proctors* and a suitable training program for each;
 - b. a complete administration manual, describing each step of the test administration process and the rationale for each;
 - c. clear instructions for candidates, both printed for distribution to candidates and read by the *test administrator*;
 - d. high quality printing of examination booklets to assure ease of reading;
 - e. specification of security procedures to assure lack of exposure of test items to unauthorized persons during testing and to prevent theft of examination items or booklets;
 - f. clear criteria (with rationale) for physical facilities for examination administration;
 - g. clear criteria (with rationale) and procedures for adaptations necessary to accommodate qualified candidates with disabilities.
 - h. clear criteria (with rationale) and procedures for adaptations necessary to accommodate qualified candidates with literacy limitations that may require a reader.

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- 4.19 A *certification organization* must have a published, written policy regarding test-site interpretation of *food safety certification exams*. If a *certification organization* chooses to allow test-site interpretation of food safety exams, when an exam is not available in the candidates' native language, the *certification organization* must have a published, formal application process available to all candidates. Procedures must include, but not be limited to:
- a. an application process for candidates, that includes an evaluation and documentation component, to determine the eligibility of the candidate for test-site interpretation
 - b. an application process for *interpreters* that includes clear and precise qualifications that must include, but not be limited to the following:
 - i. fluent in both languages
 - ii. have a recognized skill in interpretation
 - iii. trained in the principles of objective test administration
 - iv. have no personal relationship with the candidate (may not be another candidate, may not be a relative or friend of the candidate and may not be a co-worker, employer, or an employee of the candidate)
 - v. may not be a *certified food protection manager* nor have any vested interest in food protection manager certification or conflict of interest,
 - vi. provide references or other proof attesting to the *interpreter's* competencies and professional acumen.
 - c. must be in a proctored environment where the *interpreter* and candidate are not a distraction to other candidates.
 - d. must be in a proctored environment where the *interpreter* is not active as the test administrator or proctor.

SECTION 5 – FOOD SAFETY CERTIFICATION EXAMINATION
ADMINISTRATION

Section 5.0 Food Safety Certification Examination Administration

- 5.1** All aspects of *food safety certification examination* administration are to be conducted in a manner that maximizes the security of the examinations, in keeping with the public protection mandate of the Conference for Food Protection. This must be accomplished in a manner that ensures fairness to all candidates.
- 5.2** Security of Food Safety Certification Examination Contents. *Food safety certification examinations* must be presented in a manner that allows absolutely no one other than the examinees to see the contents of the booklet or alternative medium, both before and after the examination is administered.
- 5.3** Instructor/Educator/Trainer as Test Administrator/Proctor. When an *instructor/educator/trainer* of a training program administers, *proctors* or *monitors* a *food safety certification examination* from an *accredited certification program*, the *accredited certification program* shall provide a *food safety certification examination* that:
- a. conforms to all Conference for Food Protection Standards;
 - a. has been developed from an *item bank* of at least 600 questions; and
 - b. on a quarterly basis, is based on a new *examination form*.
- 5.4** Where special accommodations must be made for otherwise qualified candidates under provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act, arrangements must be such that the *food safety certification examination* contents are not revealed to any test administration personnel with any conflict of interest. A written affirmation to that effect and a written nondisclosure statement from the individual who was chosen to assist the otherwise qualified candidate must be provided to the *certifying organization*.
- 5.5** The *certifying organization* must provide procedures to be followed in any instance where the security of a *food safety certification examination* is, or is suspected, to be breached. Included must be specific procedures for handling, and reporting to the *accrediting organization*, suspected or alleged cheating incidents, lost or stolen booklets, intentional or unintentional divulging of test items by examinees or test administration personnel, or any other incidents perceived to have damaged the security of the examination or any of its individual items.

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- 5.6 Examination Administration Manual. The *certifying organization* must provide each *test administrator* with a manual detailing the requirements for all aspects of the *food safety certification examination* administration process.
- 5.7 Packing, Shipping and Storage of Examination Materials. Security of the *food safety certification examination* materials must be maintained in shipments to and from the examination administration site, and must include but not necessarily be limited to the following requirements:
- a. secure, tamper resistant packing is required for all materials in all phases of shipment; packing system must be designed to reveal any tampering or violation of the package's security;
 - b. shipping must be done by certifiable, traceable means so that it's location can be determined at any given time;
 - c. the packing list must show the number of packages in the shipment and the exact contents of each.

The package(s) of examination booklets must be placed in secure storage immediately upon delivery. They must be kept in secure storage both before and after they are used.

- 5.8 Test Administrator and Monitor/Proctor Qualifications, Training and Duties. *Certifying organizations* must specify the responsibilities of *test administrators* and of *monitors/proctors*, set minimum criteria for approval of *test administrators* and for *monitors/proctors*, and provide suitable programs of training to enable persons to meet those criteria. Responsibilities, duties, qualifications and training of *test administrators* and *monitors/proctors* must be directed toward assuring standardized, secure examination administration and fair and equitable treatment of examinees.
- 5.9 *Test administrators* are responsible for the organization and administration of all examination site activities and procedures, and for the accurate identification of each examinee. They are also responsible for supervision of the activities of *monitors/proctors*. When the *instructor/educator/trainer* also serves in the role of *test administrator*, it is important that the individual clearly recognizes the difference in those two roles.
- 5.10 *Monitors/Proctors* shall work under the direction of the *test administrator*. They have the responsibility and must have the ability to observe examinee behaviors, accurately distribute and collect test materials, and assist the *test administrator* as assigned.

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- 5.11 The number of approved *monitors/proctors* assigned to a *test administrator* must be sufficient to allow each examinee to be observed and supervised to assure conformance to security requirements. There shall be no less than one *test administrator* for the first thirty-five examinees, plus one additional test administrator, or *proctor* or *monitor* for each additional 35 examinees or fraction thereof.
- 5.12 Site Requirements. Sites chosen for administering *food safety certification examinations* must conform to all legal requirements for safety, health, and accessibility for all qualified candidates. Additionally, the accommodations, lighting, space, comfort, and work space for taking the examination must allow all candidates to perform at their highest level of *competency*.
- 5.13 Requirements at each site include but are not limited to:
- a. accessibility in accordance with requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act must be available for all qualified examinees, whether it be the main site for an administration or in an alternative site meeting all other requirements of the main site;
 - b. all sites must conform to all fire safety and occupancy codes of the jurisdiction in which they are located;
 - c. there must be sufficient spacing between each examinee in the area in which the actual testing is conducted, or other appropriate and effective methods, to preclude any examinee from viewing another examinees test.
 - d. acoustics must allow each examinee to hear instructions clearly, using an electronic audio system if necessary;
 - e. lighting at each examinee's work space must be adequate for reading fine print;
 - f. ventilation and temperature must be appropriate for health and comfort of examinees;
- 5.14 Examination Scheduling. *Food safety certification examinations* must be scheduled far enough in advance to allow for timely shipment of supplies.
- 5.15 Scoring and Reporting Requirements. Completed answer sheets and test booklets (used and unused) must be shipped by the test administrator according to the certification organization's written security procedures.
- 5.16 Scoring will be done only by means authorized by the *certifying organization* and approved by the *accrediting organization*.

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- 5.17** *Food safety certification examination* scores will not be released as being official until verified and approved by the *certifying organization*.
- 5.18** Examinee scores will be confidential, available only to the examinee and to persons or organizations approved in writing by the examinee.
- 5.19** Score reports will be available to examinees in a time frame specified in the application, which will not be later than fifteen business days following the administration of the *food safety certification examination*. If there is a delay due to problems in verification or authentication of scores, examinees will be so informed and an approximate date for release of the scores will be announced. The *certifying organization* will have ongoing communication with examinees and with the *test administrator* until the scores are verified and released.

SECTION 6.0 – COMPUTER-BASED TESTING (CBT)

6.0 Computer-Based Test Development and Administration

- 6.1 Computer-Based Test Development. Examination specifications for computer-based testing must describe the method for development including the algorithms used for test item selection, the item response theory model employed (if any), and examination equivalency issues.
- 6.2 Items must be evaluated for suitability for computer delivery, be reviewed in the delivery medium, and be reviewed in the presentation delivery medium. Assumptions must not be made that items written for delivery via a paper/pencil medium are suitable for computer delivery nor should it be assumed that computer test items are suitable for paper/pencil delivery.
- 6.3 When examination forms are computer-generated, whether in Computer-Adaptive Testing (CAT) or in a simple linear algorithm, the algorithm for item selection and the number of items in the item bank from which the examination is generated shall assure that the items are protected from overexposure. Item usage statistics must be provided for all available items in the pool.
- 6.4 Computer-Based Testing Administration. Where examination environments differ (for example, touch screen versus mouse) evidence must be provided to demonstrate equivalence of the examinees' scores.
- 6.5 Tutorials and/or practice tests must be created to provide the test takers adequate opportunity to demonstrate familiarity and comfort with the computer test environment.
- 6.6 If the time available for computer delivery of an examination is limited, comparability of scoring outcomes with non-timed delivery of the exam must be demonstrated. Data must be gathered and continually analyzed to determine if scoring methods are comparable.

Evidence of security in the computer-based testing environment must be provided. Factors affecting test security include, but are not limited to, test taker workspace, access to personal materials, level of test taker monitoring, and test encryption and decoding.

- 6.7 Documentation of precautions to protect examination forms and the item bank from unauthorized access must be provided.

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- 6.8** Policies and procedures regarding the recording and retention of the *item sequence* and test taker item responses for each candidate must be developed and followed. Computer examinations using a unique sequence of items for each test taker must record the information necessary to recreate the sequence of items and test taker responses on the computer examination.
- 6.9** Systems and procedures must be in place to address technical or operational problems in examination administration. For example, the examination delivery system must have the capability to recover test taker data at the appropriate point in the testing session prior to test disruption. Policies regarding recovery for emergency situations (such as retesting) must be developed.
- 6.10** Due Process. Candidates must be informed of any information relevant to *computer-based testing* that may affect their performance or score.

SECTION 7.0 – CERTIFICATION ORGANIZATION
RESPONSIBILITIES TO CANDIDATES AND THE PUBLIC

Section 7.0 Certification Organizations Responsibilities to Candidates and the Public.

- 7.1 Responsibilities to Applicants for Certification.** *A certifying organization shall:*
- a. not discriminate among applicants as to age, sex, race, religion, ethnic origin, disabilities or marital status and shall include a statement of non-discrimination in announcement of the *certification program*;
 - b. make available to all applicants information regarding formalized procedures for attainment of certification and provide evidence to the accrediting organization of the implementation of the policy;
 - c. have a formal policy for the periodic review of application and examination procedures to ensure that they are fair and equitable and shall give evidence to the *accreditation organization* of the implementation of the policy (Section 4.17);
 - d. provide evidence that competently *proctored* testing sites are readily accessible (Section 5.10);
 - e. provide evidence of uniformly prompt reporting of *food safety certification examination* results to applicants (Section 5.19);
 - f. provide evidence that applicants failing the *food safety certification examination* are given information on general areas of deficiency;
 - g. provide evidence that each applicant's *food safety certification examination* results are held confidential (Sections 5.17 and 5.18);
 - h. have a formal policy on appeals procedures for applicants questioning eligibility or any part of the *accredited certification program* (Section 4.19).
- 7.2 Qualifications for Initial Certification.** To become a *certified food protection manager* an individual must pass a *food safety certification examination* from an *accredited certification program* recognized by the Conference for Food Protection. The *certificate* shall be valid for no more than 5 years.

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- 7.3 Effective Date of Certificate. *Certificates* issued, and electronic listing of *certificate* holders maintained, by *accredited certification programs* shall identify the *food safety certification examination form* recognized by the *accrediting organization* and specify the date the examination was taken.
- 7.4 Replacement or Duplicate Certificate. Replacement or duplicate *certificates* issued through an *accredited certification program* shall carry the same effective date as the original with an expiration worded in such a manner that indicates the certification will be valid for no more than five years.
- 7.5 Discipline of Certificate Holders and Applicants. A *certification organization* shall have a formal *certification* policies and operating procedures including the sanction or revocation of the *certificate*. These procedures shall incorporate due process.
- 7.6 Continued Proficiency. An *accredited certification program* shall include a process or program for assessing continued *competence* that includes an examination component at an interval of no more than five years. The outcome of the process or program must demonstrate that the person has maintained the minimum competencies as determined by the current Job Task Analysis.
- 7.7 Responsibilities to the Public and to Employers of Certified Personnel. A *certification organization* shall maintain a registry of individuals certified. Any title or credential awarded by the *certification organization* shall appropriately reflect Food Protection Manager's daily food safety responsibilities and shall not be confusing to employers, consumers, related professions and/or other interested parties.
- 7.8 Each *accredited certification program* must have a published protocol for systematically investigating problems presented by users of the Program, including specific concerns about examination items, administration procedures, treatment of candidates, or other matters involving potential *legal defensibility* of the examination or program. The protocol will include a published time frame for reporting findings to the User.
- 7.9 Misrepresentation. Only organizations whose *food safety certification examinations* are part of a conference accredited food protection manager certification program that conforms to all test development and administration criteria contained within Sections 4.0 and 5.0 of this Standard may make reference as being accredited. Organizations whose *food safety certification examinations* are part of an accredited program will make no reference to the Conference for Food Protection except to state that their program has been so accredited.

SECTION 8.0 – CERTIFICATION ORGANIZATION
RESPONSIBILITIES TO THE ACCREDITING ORGANIZATION

Section 8.0 Certification Organization Responsibilities to the Accrediting Organization.

- 8.1** *Certifying organizations seeking accreditation for development and/or administration of a certification program shall provide at least the following information, as well as other information that might be requested by the accrediting organization.*
- a. the name and complete ownership of the *legal entity*;
 - b. the address, telephone/fax number(s) and other contact information of the *certification organization's* headquarters;
 - c. the name, position, address and telephone/fax/e-mail information of the contact person for projects related to the Conference for Food Protection *Standards for Accreditation of Food Protection Manager Certification Programs*;
 - d. such fiscal information as may be needed to establish evidence of ability to carry out obligations under these Standards.
- 8.2** Summary Information. *A certifying organization shall:*
- a. provide evidence that the mechanism used to evaluate individual *competence* is objective, fair and based on the knowledge skills needed to function as a *Certified Food Protection Manager* (Sections 4.3 and 4.4);
 - b. provide evidence that the evaluation mechanism is based on standards which establish *reliability* and *validity* for each form of the *Food Safety Certification Examination* (Sections 4.3, 4.4 and 4.6);
 - c. provide evidence that the pass/fail levels are established in a manner that is generally accepted in the *psychometric* community as being fair and reasonable (Section 4.10);
 - d. have a formal policy of periodic review of evaluation mechanisms and shall provide evidence that the policy is implemented to ensure relevance of the mechanism to knowledge and skills needed by a *Certified Food Protection Manager* (Sections 4.8 and 4.17);

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- e. provide evidence that appropriate measures are taken to protect the security of all *food safety certification examinations* (Sections 5.2 through and including 5.15)
- f. publish a comprehensive summary or outline of the information, knowledge, or functions covered by the *food safety certification examination* (Section 4.4);
- g. make available general descriptive materials on the procedures used in examination construction and validation and the procedures of administration and reporting of results (Section 4.7);
- h. compile at least semi-annually, a summary of *certification* activities, including number of applicants, number tested, number passing, number failing, and number certified (Sections 4.17 and 4.19).

8.3 Responsibilities to the Accrediting Organization. The *certification organization* shall:

- a. make available upon request to the *accrediting organization* copies of all publications related to the *certification* program;
- b. advise the *accrediting organization* of any changes in proposed structure or activities of the *certifying organization*;
- c. advise the *accrediting organization* of substantive change in *food safety certification examination* administration;
- d. advise the *accrediting organization* of any major changes in testing techniques or in the scope or objectives of the *food safety certification examination*;
- e. annually complete and submit to the *accrediting organization* information requested on the current status of the Food Protection Manager *Certification Program* and the *certification organization*;
- f. submit to the *accrediting organization* the report requirements information specified for the Food Protection Manager *Certification Program*;
- g. be re-accredited by the *accrediting organization* at least every 5 years.

8.4 *Certification organizations* shall review the Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing produced by the American Educational Research Association, the American Psychological Association and the National Council on Measurement in Education, to verify that the *food safety certification examination(s)* comply with these provisions which are frequently referred to in legal challenges of examinations.

ANNEX A

RESPONSIBILITIES OF PROFESSIONALS INVOLVED IN THE CREDENTIALING PROCESS FOR CERTIFIED FOOD PROTECTION MANAGERS

Accepted June, 1997

Recognizing that the justification for regulating entrance to the occupation of *Certified Food Protection Manager* is to protect the safety and welfare of the public;

and

recognizing that the responsibility and liability for overseeing the protection of safety and welfare of the public lies with those governmental jurisdictions at Federal, state and local levels having the power to set forth laws regulating entrance to and performance in occupations;

and

recognizing that the rights of the public at large and of those members of that public who wish to enter an occupation must be balanced in terms of fairness and due process in the form of a credentialing process for admitting qualified persons to perform in that occupation;

and

recognizing that the *validity* of any credentialing process for *Certified Food Protection Managers* is dependent on unbiased application of all aspects of that process, requiring careful determination of the *competencies* necessary to prevent food borne illness, unbiased education and training for acquisition of those *competencies*, and fair assessment practices to assure that individuals have achieved mastery of the *competencies*;

therefore, professionals involved in the credentialing process for *Certified Food Protection Managers* accept responsibilities based on those considerations.

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Assessment tools will be developed to be free from bias due to characteristics that have no bearing on the *competencies* being measured. Such characteristics as gender, ethnicity, race, socioeconomic status, age, and any other concerns unrelated to ability to apply the required *competencies* will not be allowed to create differences in candidate scores.

Actual or potential conflicts of interest that might influence judgment or performance of examination developers, *instructors/trainers/educators*, or other participants in the credentialing process will be disclosed.

Items for *competency* assessments will be selected to be a representative sample of the full spectrum of the *competencies* determined by the Conference for Food Protection and by federal guidelines to be necessary to protect the public from food borne illness, regardless of the training/education program undertaken by the applicants being tested.

Training/education will be based upon the full spectrum of the *competencies* agreed upon as being necessary to protect the public from food borne illness, unbiased by any knowledge of the contents of the *competency* assessment for the credential.

Administration of the assessment instrument will be done with professional attention to security of the *food safety certification examination* to assure current and continued *validity* of the examination and of the credential that is earned through its use.

Professionals and organizations will develop and implement full quality assurance procedures to ensure the accuracy of assessment decisions and the integrity of the entire credentialing process.

The rights of those who are assessed will be recognized and protected.

ANNEX B

Guidelines for Food Protection Manager Certification Training Programs

- B.1** Food Protection Manager *Certification* Training Programs. Delivery of training programs may include alternative methods other than classroom, to include but not be limited to distance learning, computerized training programs, and correspondence courses
- B.2** Instructor Qualifications. *Instructors/Educators/Trainers* conducting Food Protection Manager *Certification* training should:
- a. Demonstrate proficiency and *competency* in food safety and sanitation and have knowledge of current retail food regulations by means of:
 - 1) educational background to include, but not be limited to, successful completion of a degree program from an accredited university or college in:
 - food Safety;
 - food science or technology;
 - epidemiology;
 - environmental/public health;
 - culinary arts;
 - retail food establishment management, such as hotel and restaurant management;
 - microbiology with an emphasis on food safety; or
 - 2) experience in food safety and/or training from:
 - food quality assurance/quality control;
 - supervision of food preparation;
 - sanitation training;
 - *regulatory authority* with food safety responsibilities; or

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- 3) Demonstrated proficiency in conducting training programs as substantiated by adult educational background or practical experience, such as:
 - faculty member of a college, university, or community college;
 - teacher in an accredited technical school, vocational school, or high school;
 - professional *trainer* with a minimum of two (2) years-prior teaching experience, team-teaching experience, train-the-trainer courses, or public/risk communication courses;
 - holder of a valid teaching certificate.
- b. Be a *Certified Food Protection Manager* and comply with *continued proficiency* requirements to maintain a valid *certification* and comply with Section 5.2 and 5.3 relating to the non-disclosure of *food safety certification examination* items.
- c. Individuals who do not meet the requirements specified above should team-teach food protection manager *certification* courses with a qualified instructor to gain additional needed experience.

B.3 Responsibilities of *Program Sponsors* and *Instructors/Educators/Trainers*.

- a. *Program sponsors* and *instructors/educators/trainers* should:
 - 1) deliver the training program as approved;
 - 2) monitor *instructor/educator/trainer* qualifications and performance in accordance with these guidelines;
 - 3) maintain registration, attendance and additional student information required by the *certifying organization*;
 - 4) maintain the date, time, and location of class meetings and examinations as required by the *certifying organization*.

B.4 Training Program:

- a. the training program should reflect the course content specified in Annex B.5;
- b. specify the text, materials and other resources used;
- c. specify delivery methods, which may include traditional or alternate methods of training.

B.5 Course content. Course content should include the elements of a *valid job analysis* as defined in Section 1.26 and Sections 4.4 through 4.9.

ANNEX C

Guidelines for Regulatory Authorities Implementing Food Protection Manager *Certification* Programs

- C.1 Each permitted *food establishment* should have a minimum of one designated *Certified Food Protection Manager* who is accountable for food safety.
- a. documentation of *certification* of *Certified Food Protection Manager(s)* should be maintained at each *food establishment* and shall be made available for inspection by the *regulatory authority* at all times.
- C.2 A *Certified Food Protection Manager* is responsible for:
- a. identifying hazards in the day-to-day operation of a *food establishment*;
 - b. developing or implementing specific policies, procedures or standards aimed at preventing food borne illness;
 - c. coordinating training, supervising or directing food preparation activities and taking corrective action as needed to protect the health of the consumer; and
 - d. conducting in-house self-inspection of daily operations on a periodic basis to see that policies and procedures concerning food safety are being followed.
- C.3 *Qualifications for Certification.* In order to become a *Certified Food Protection Manager* an individual must pass a *food safety certification examination* from an *accredited certifying program* recognized by the conference. To prepare for *certification*, it is recommended that the individual obtain training as outlined in Annex B.5.
- C.4 *Regulatory authorities* should work with the *certification organization* on a mutually agreeable format, medium and time frame for the submission of score reports pertaining to the administration of *food safety certification examinations*.