Company Interview – Tyson Foods

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**Introduction**

I chose to interview a quality professional at Tyson Foods in Rome, GA. At this Tyson plant, they produce Nature Valley bars as a contractor for General Mills. Production is over 3 million Nature Valley bars a day. I interviewed Brice Baker who is a Senior Supervisor HACCP/FSQA at Tyson Foods.

Contact Method: Email interview on April 24th, 2018

**Interview Questions**

* Does your company's mission statement mention quality?
* Yes, it does. Quality is the first component mentioned in the mission statement.
* Does your company's mission statement mention customer service?
* Yes, it does. The mission statement discusses product quality as an aspect of customer service.
* Does the company have a separate quality mission statement?
* There is no separate quality mission statement. Quality is a prominent aspect of the main mission statement.
* Does the company have a written quality plan? If so, where is it located?
* Yes, the quality plan is kept in the Food Safety and Quality Assurance (FSQA) department.
* In your organization, who is responsible for quality?
* At the plant level everyone plays a role in maintaining quality, but the FSQA department and specifically the FSQA Manager are responsible for quality.
* What are some job titles that relate to quality in your company? What is the educational background for these positions?
* There are several positions that relate to quality listed below:
* FSQA Technician: High school diploma or GED; experience related to quality assurance
* Supervisor FSQA/HACCP: 4-year degree based in the sciences; experience with food safety and quality assurance.
* FSQA Manager: 4-year degree based in the sciences or engineering; “x” years of experience in food safety and quality.
* How does your organization define quality?
* Quality is defined as the ability to manufacture product at a certain standard, normally set forth by the customer, and to not deviate from that standard.
* How do you train/educate your employees concerning quality issues?
* Through monthly complaint reduction and problem-solving meetings. Team members are also put through monthly safety and food safety training.
* How do your customers influence your quality program?
* Through complaint data that is received on a monthly basis. The data that is collected is used to conduct problem solving meetings, which help determine the root of the issues. After finding the root cause, they can easily target and reduce the sources of the quality issues.
* Has your company ever applied for or earned a national quality award or certification? (Baldrige Award, ISO 9000, CMMI, Other?)
* Each year the facility undergoes a third-party audit as part of Safe Quality Foods (SQF) re-certification. The plant is SQF Certified (Level 3), which means that there is compliance to the highest standards of both food safety and quality.
* Do government regulations have a large impact on your quality procedures?
* Yes, they do. Government regulations are impactful at all levels of the business. A great example is the Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA), which has redefined a lot of the requirements for both food safety and quality.
* Do you routinely collect data on the quality of your product or process? Do you use statistics to analyze the data collected?
* Data is collected routinely. Checks are done during all hours of production. Trend charts and SPC are used to analyze the data that is collected on the floor.
* Do you use control charts? If so, what processes are charted?
* Control charts are automatically populated through the data collection program used at the facility. Attributes such as color, moisture, and weight are charted.
* What kind of quality reporting techniques do you use? Who generates the reports? Who sees the reports?
* The quality reports are processed and gathered by the customer through the data collection program used at the plant. The plant and the customer are the only ones who see the reports.
* What kind of quality/process control software do you use? (Excel, generic SPC, proprietary, etc)
* SPC is used through the quality collection program used in the plant.
* How do you monitor incoming materials and/or your suppliers?
* The receiving department refers to the approved supplier register for all incoming materials. The register is a comprehensive list of all packaging and ingredients that are allowed in the facility.
* Do you use acceptance sampling methods? If so, what standards are they based on? Who designs the plan?
* Yes. They are based on the standards set forth by corporate FSQA. A team from corporate designs the plan and presents it to the plants for implementation.
* What percentage of your product is scrapped or reworked?
* ~3% is scrapped or reworked.
* Has your organization ever issued a product recall? If so, please identify the product and the date of the recall.
* No, they have not.
* Does your organization follow Six Sigma or Lean Sigma quality methodologies for process improvement?
* Yes, the plant follows both Six Sigma and Lean quality methodologies for process improvement.
* Are employees encouraged to obtain quality credentials such as Certified Quality Engineer. Lean Sigma Green Belt or Six Sigma Black Belt?
* Yes, many members of the management team are encouraged to obtain Six Sigma Green Belt and Black Belt certification.

**Authorization to post responses on website - yes**