

# Training Report

BSTI Quality Certification for SMEs

21 December, 2009

Conference Room, SME Foundation, Dhaka

Food industries in Bangladesh, particularly SMEs of this sector, are facing numerous challenges due to their lack of capacity in achieving and maintaining basic food quality which is critical to market food products and perform food business in a legal environment. It is also very important in achieving confidence of the consumers. The six sector study conducted by SME Foundation recommends "BSTI Quality Certification" for food industry as a very important training need by the Agro Food Industry.

The HRD team on the basis of (a) the six sector study, (b) its adherence with the SMEs and (c) discussion with resource person designed a customized training on BSTI Quality Certification for local SMEs involved in food production/processing. This is a day long training program, aimed at providing introductory but practicable knowledge to the participants of SMEs. It provides (a) a brief introduction of BSTI-its activity and related laws, (b) Standard and compliance for selected food products (based on the products of participating enterprises), (c) food quality and d) BSTI product certification procedure

## Synopsis:

<b>Methodology Used :</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>§ Lecture and discussion</li><li>§ Group Work</li><li>§ Plenary discussion</li></ul>
<b>Participants</b>	<i>23 qualified SME Entrepreneurs</i> from different food industries participated in the training course. The List of participants is annexed.
<b>Resource Person:</b>	<i>Md. Shariful Alam, Deputy Director, BSTI.</i> He has more than twenty years of experience in quality certification of BSTI. Along with his vast experience he is an IRCA registered Lead Auditor on Food Safety Management System (ISO 22000) and Quality Management System (ISO 9000). He coordinated numerous training courses on BSTI quality certification, awareness, and food quality management systems. He is associated by one of his colleague Mr. Nazir, field officer, BSTI.
<b>Duration:</b>	<i>21 December 2009.</i> About 8 hours in a day long program.
<b>Venue:</b>	<i>Conference Room, SME Foundation, Dhaka</i>
<b>Handouts:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>§ The training handout was prepared in Bengali and reproduced to circulate to all the participants.</li><li>§ Specific exercise and standard of relevant food products were also provided among the participants.</li></ul>

## Training in Pictures



Picture 1 DGM HRD of SME Foundation opened the training



Picture 2 Resource Person delivering lecture



Picture 3 Participants discussing in a group exercise



Picture 4 The CEO of SME Foundation attended closing ceremony

## Course Evaluation by the Participants

At the end of the course the program was evaluated by the participants. A semi-structured questionnaire is circulated among the participants to evaluate the course which shows that 86% of the participants are satisfied with the program as it fulfils their expectations. Some 14% of them feel it is more than what they expected. The program contents, the physical arrangement of the training and the resource person satisfied all the participants. Moreover, 45% of participants particularly mentioned about the contents and the physical arrangement by SME Foundation were beyond their expectation. No one else found to put any bad remarks in these items/issues.

Although more than half of the participants are quite happy with program schedule (63%) and time allocation (77%), the rest of them mentioned that the time allocated for the course is not enough for them to fully comprehend the contents and the program start time is too early to attend considering the traffic condition on the road and the busy schedule of their business. It is found that the methodology

used by the resource person for this training satisfies more than 90% of the participants but 9%. The detail of the program evaluation by the participants is revealed in the following table.

**Table 1: Program Evaluation by the Participants**


The participants of the training course highly rated following aspects of the program:

1. The selection of the course and closely homogeneous participants;
2. Important issues on BSTI standard and certification procedure;
3. The opportunities they got to discuss and participate in actives of the course;
4. The physical arrangement of SME Foundation;
5. The very experienced resource person to attend queries of the participants.

There were also few things which the participants mentioned as weak points of the training program:

1. The noise created by cell phones of some participants is not properly handled;
2. Inadequate time allocation.

Most of the participants mentioned that they have gained practicable knowledge and skills on a) Food quality and standard, b) obtaining certification and managing food business within legal framework, and c) the relevant laws and procedures. They also showed their intention to maintain BSTI standard of food quality in their product and market according to required procedure. Some of them mentioned that they will work for awareness raising of other entrepreneurs.

The participants put the following suggestions for follow-up activities, including suggestions for organizing similar and related program (prioritized according to frequency):

1. Training on food safety management or ISO standard of food safety;
2. Training of factory workers/managers to implement food quality/safety management;
3. Training on food technology and preservation;
4. Marketing of safe food in export market;
5. Marketing Management;
6. Pricing.

The participants put the following suggestions for improvement, if this course is to be implemented again (prioritized according to frequency):

1. The time schedule should be changed by selecting suitable time for the participants while extending the number of days;
2. More time should be allocated for this course so that all participants may be able to comprehend;

3. Inclusion field visit;
4. Suitable factory where food safety management is in practice should be selected for field visit;
5. Inviting and discussion with relevant government authorities who can make changes in the standard and its compliance procedures.

