

Agri-food Quality Certifications

The strategies and the motivations of agri-food companies to acquire them

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Voluntary certifications - System Certifications

The **system approach** to quality does not specifically refer to specific product requirements but guarantees the ability of an organization to structure and manage its own resources and production processes in such a way as to identify and meet the needs of customers and stakeholders.

- UNI EN ISO 9001 - Quality management systems
- ISO 14001 - Environmental management system
- OHSAS 18001 - Occupational health and safety management system
- ISO 22000 - Food Safety Management Systems, Requirements for any organization in the food chain
- FSSC - Food Safety System Certification, based on ISO 22000 + ISO / TS 22002-1: Food Processing, ISO / TS 22002-3: Farming, ISO / TS 22002-4: Food Packaging Manufacturing

Voluntary certifications - Process Certifications

(complementary to System Certifications)

The **process approach** is based on the assessment of the capacity of production processes to provide products that conform to production methods.

- ISO 22005 - Traceability in feed and food chain
- GMO - Genetically modified organism free production
- UNI 11233 - Integrated production systems in agricultural food chains

Voluntary certifications - Product Certifications

(complementary to System Certifications)

The **product approach** is aimed at ensuring product compliance to certain requirements that directly characterize the ability to meet the needs of mass-retailers

- BRC - British Retail Consortium
- IFS - International Food Standard
- GlobalG.A.P. - Good Agricultural Practice for production of Crops, Livestock and Aquaculture

European Regulated Certifications

Reg. (EU) 1151/2012 on quality schemes for agricultural products and foodstuffs

- PDO - Protected Designation of Origin
- PGI - Protected Geographical Indication
- TSG - Traditional Speciality Guaranteed

Reg. (EC) 479/2008 on the common organisation of the market in wine

- PDO (wine) - Protected Designation of Origin
- PGI (wine) - Protected Geographical Indication

Reg. (EC) 834/2007 on organic production and labelling of organic products

- Organic production

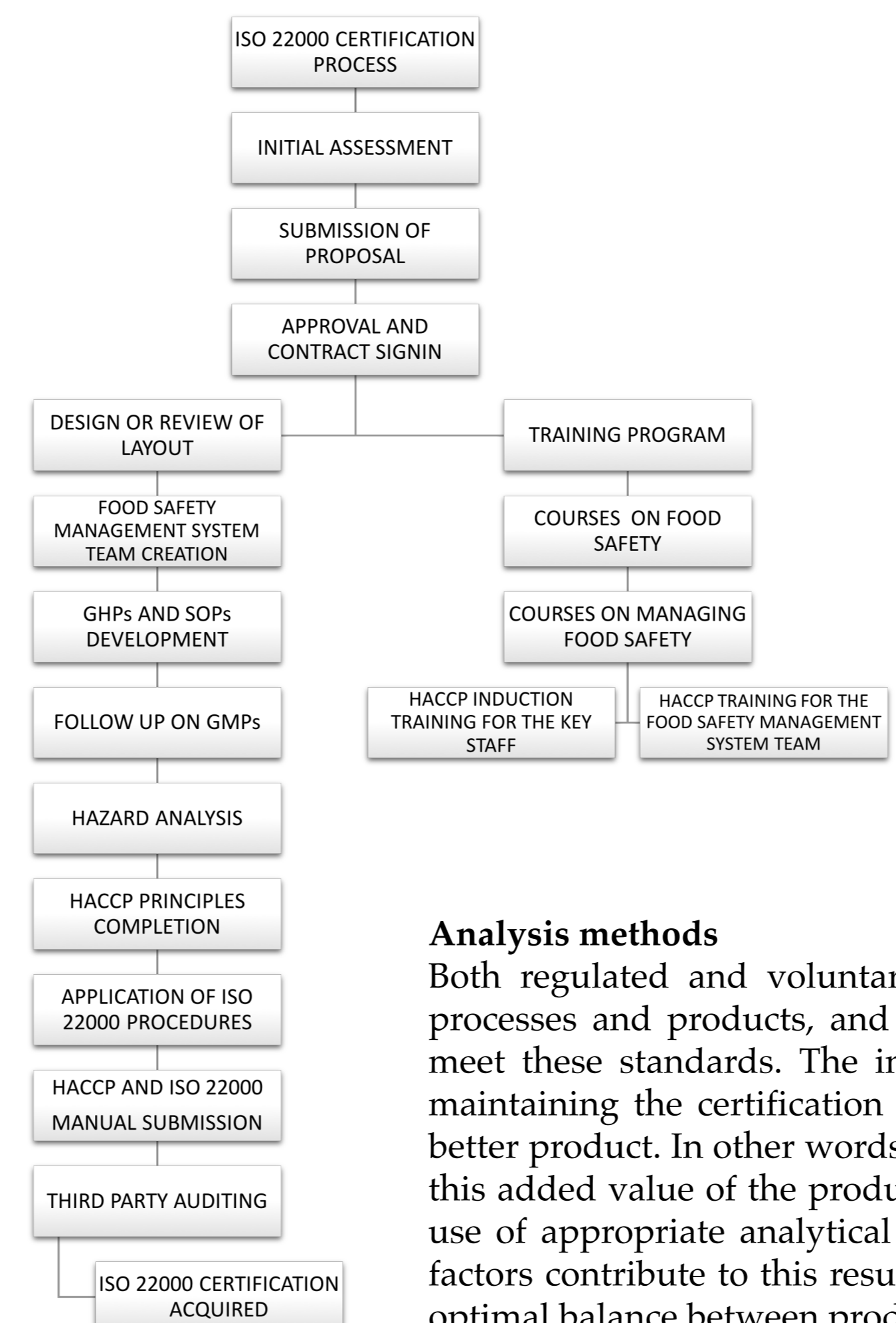
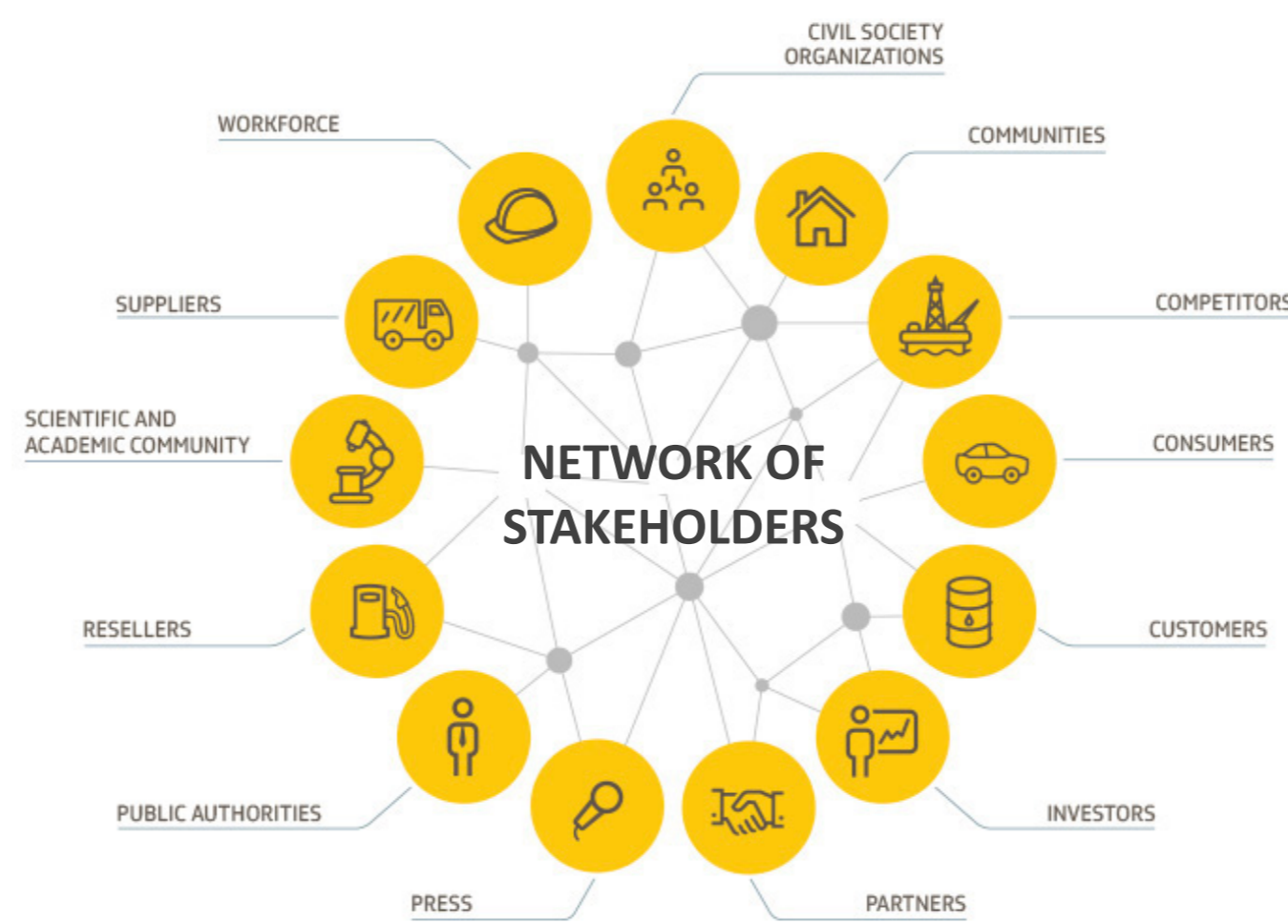
Project plan

According to Accredia, the only Italian accreditation body, in 2016, accreditations grew. Businesses want to increase their credibility, competitiveness, and revenue. Market demands push businesses to invest in competitiveness through certification, inspection and verification systems. Accreditation is an added value for businesses and is also a guarantee of quality of processes and products and a trusted consumers tool. Today, mass-retailers increasingly resort to accreditation, which has become a habit in all relationships requiring a qualified compliance assessment to protect the market and consumers. In the Emilia Romagna Region, there are about 4800 agro-food companies, different from each other for type of production, volume of business, and for certified production or not. With the data of the Chambers of Commerce, this research study has the ambition to identify the latent variables that induce companies to engage in certification with a commitment and a *modus operandi* that goes well beyond the already severe legal norms.

Quality context

Quality management systems ensure quality in design, development, manufacture, distribution and after-sales service. They also allow cost reductions in the supply chain in terms of economics and public health.

A certification exam essentially includes documentary analysis and certification audit, certification body examination, and certificate issuance. They follow the surveillance audit, typically every 12 months, and the certification audit at maturity, usually after 3 years.



Preliminary study

An in-depth and up-to-date reconnaissance of all quality certifications was carried out. At the same time, research has been carried out on requirements required for industry to market globally, taking into account the major foreign markets and also taking into account the new demands made by the FDA's Food Safety Modernization Act. The book titled *"Le certificazioni di qualità nel settore agroalimentare, stato dell'arte ed evoluzione"*, written by Pulvirenti and De Giorgio and published by Unindustria and UniMoRe, includes the updates to September 2017.

Case study

In the last year, a study was conducted on a feed additive Company. The Company's reference retailer for the European and international market demanded to the Company to acquire a quality certification for greater access to international trade. From a comparative analysis between GMP Plus certification and Fami Qs, the Company opted for the latter. In this case, our workgroup has carried out a thorough analysis of the operating status of the Company by providing qualified advice. At present, that Company has reached such a condition that it allows to apply for certification. Obviously, these procedural steps will be made by the Company's top management.

The report on the case under study *"Fami Qs and Agristudio S.r.l., the development of Company policies aimed at achieving the quality certification for the production of feed additives"*, is under writing and will describe the actions to try and get the goal.

Analysis methods

Both regulated and voluntary certifications ensure compliance, quality and safety of processes and products, and mass retailers demand from their suppliers products that meet these standards. The interesting aspect is to see if the process of acquiring and maintaining the certification puts the agri-food company in the condition of offering a better product. In other words, we want to investigate the impacts and factors that lead to this added value of the product that is also seen as a company's reputation. Through the use of appropriate analytical methods, such as factor analysis, we propose to see what factors contribute to this result and what other factors are not consistent in achieving an optimal balance between production, profit and quality of the system.



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