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Launch of First Technical Reference for Handling Frozen Fish and Seafood

Singapore, Wednesday, 25 May 2016 - Singapore Manufacturing Federation Standards Development Organisation (SMF-SDO) and SPRING Singapore, together with Seafood Industries Association Singapore (SIAS) jointly launched a Technical Reference, TR49: 2016 Cold Chain Management of Frozen Fish and Seafood today.

The Technical Reference was developed to safeguard and meet the increasing demand by consumers for quality and safe frozen fish and seafood products. TR49 covers the application and observance of temperature controls for the cold chain management[1] of raw and minimally processed frozen seafood. This covers the stages of post-harvesting, handling, packaging/re-packaging, storage, distribution, transportation and retail.

Significance of TR49

Temperature is one of the most critical roles in ensuring food safety in cold chain management. Fish and seafood are highly perishable as they are prone to quality (i.e. freshness and wholesomeness) deterioration which is accelerated with increasing temperature. As Singapore imports seafood from around the world, the safety and quality of such highly perishable goods must be ensured throughout the entire supply chain.

Employing the recommended conditions of handling, production and storage of frozen fish and seafood therefore maximises their storage life throughout the supply chain. The guidelines provided in TR49 to develop, implement and maintain cold chains will not only safeguard public health, but reduce unnecessary food wastage as well.

Benefits of Implementing TR49

TR49 is targeted at producers, importers, logistics and cold store operators, distributors, retailers and regulatory authorities. The adoption of TR49 by the fish and seafood industry will benefit both parties involved in the cold chain, and consumers.

Dr Allan Lim, Chairman of the Food Standards Committee, said “Development of this TR is timely and useful for the fish and seafood industry to ensure safer and better quality supply of frozen fish and seafood. It is part of our long term effort to raise the safety standard of practise of cold chain management in this sector.” The Food Standards Committee is one of 12 Standards Committees ,

[1] Cold chain management refers to a temperature-controlled supply chain to keep the ideal storage conditions for perishable and temperature-sensitive products from their origin to the consumer.

MEDIA RELEASE

established by the Singapore Standards Council to develop, maintain, promote and facilitate the implementation of Singapore Standards and relevant International Standards.

Said Mrs Belinda Lee, Second Vice Chairman of SIAS, "It is important to raise awareness of having an unbreakable yet interdependent cold chain management for perishable products, such as frozen fish and seafood. Mishandling of temperature control in any part of the cold chain will cause product quality to deteriorate and may negatively impact food safety. The launch of this new standard will benefit frozen fish and seafood companies that are interested in implementing cold chain standards to build up their capabilities and adopt best practices to maintain fish and seafood quality across the value chain."

"Singapore imports over 90 per cent of food consumed. Given our heavy reliance on food supplied from overseas, reducing food wastage is an important aspect of improving our food security. Standards, such as the TR49, help to optimise efficiencies and maintain seafood quality across the value chain, as well as support sustainable growth in the long-run," said Ms Choy Sauw Kook, Assistant Chief Executive, Quality and Excellence, SPRING Singapore.

Next steps

For effective implementation of TR49, SMF-SDO will be scheduling workshops to provide in-depth information to industry. The workshops will also cover information on the implementation process of TR49.

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About Singapore Manufacturing Federation-Standards Development Organisation (SMF-SDO)

http://www.smf-sdo.org.sg/

The Singapore Manufacturing Federation was appointed by SPRING Singapore on 1 April 2011 as the Standards Development Organisation in the areas of biomedical, food, general engineering & safety, as well as manufacturing. SMF-SDO administers the development, promotion and implementation of standards in these areas to meet the needs of industry and regulators. SMF-SDO supports the industry-led Singapore Standards Council and SPRING Singapore in the development and promotion of standards in Singapore.

About Seafood Industries Association Singapore (SIAS)

http://www.seafoodsingapore.org/

SIAS is committed in championing the interest of our members in positioning Singapore seafood industry as one of the leading seafood manufacturing, processing and trading hub in the Asia Pacific region.

The 3 pronged-strategies are as follows,

- To work closely with our government agencies and related industry partners in advancing the well-being of our members
- To advocate food safety standards and promote international best practises within our industry
- To work with related government agencies to support and encourage members to penetrate oversea markets.

About SPRING Singapore

www.spring.gov.sg

SPRING Singapore is an agency under the Ministry of Trade and Industry responsible for helping Singapore enterprises grow and building trust in Singapore products and services. As the national standards and accreditation body, SPRING develops and promotes an internationally-recognised standards and quality assurance infrastructure. SPRING also oversees the safety of general consumer goods in Singapore. As the enterprise development agency, SPRING works with partners to help enterprises in financing, capability and management development, technology and innovation, and access to markets.

About Singapore Standards Council (SSC)

www.spring.gov.sg/standards

The industry-led Singapore Standards Council (SSC) approves the establishment and withdrawal of Singapore Standards and advises SPRING Singapore, the national standards body, on the directions, policies, strategies and priorities for the Singapore Standardisation Programme. The Council has appointed 12 Standards Committees to lead standards development and implementation in various functional areas. Under these Standards Committees, various Technical Committees and Working Groups, which comprise representatives from the industry, professional bodies, associations, academia and government agencies, are formed to undertake the preparation of standards.