SQF Edition 10 Supplier-Document Gap Checklist

Practical working template aligned to official SQFI requirements and guidance themes.

Important
- Validate this checklist against your applicable SQF Code, Food Sector Category, customer requirements, regulatory requirements, and certification body advice.
- This is a practical working template, not an official SQFI checklist.
- The optional internal scoring method is for internal use only.

How to use

- Complete each line as Yes, Partial, No, or N/A.
- Use the spreadsheet version for owner, evidence, gap, priority, target date, and notes.
- Use the Summary sheet for internal readiness tracking and the Common Gaps sheet for observation-only checks.

Optional internal readiness band	What it means
85%-100%	Strong baseline
70%-84%	Moderate risk / improvement needed
Below 70%	High risk / control weaknesses likely

1. Applicability and scope

#	Requirement	Yes	Partial	No	N/A
001	We have identified the applicable SQF Code and Food Sector Category for our site.				
002	We have confirmed which supplier-document requirements apply to our products, processes, and inputs.				
003	We understand that this checklist is a practical working tool and not the auditable SQF standard.				
004	We have considered any customer-specific, regulatory, or market-specific supplier-document requirements in addition to SQF.				

2. Approved supplier program and documented responsibility

#	Requirement	Yes	Partial	No	N/A
005	We have a documented approved supplier program.				
006	The approved supplier program defines how suppliers are selected, evaluated, approved, monitored, and reviewed.				
007	Responsibilities for supplier approval and supplier-document control are documented.				
008	Personnel responsible for supplier-document activities are identified.				
009	Backup responsibility is defined for key personnel where needed.				

3. Approved supplier list / register

#	Requirement	Yes	Partial	No	N/A
010	We maintain a current list or register of approved suppliers.				
011	The register includes sufficient supplier identification and contact information.				
012	The supplier register is kept current.				
013	We can distinguish suppliers that are approved from those that are pending, not approved, or no longer in use.				
014	Emergency suppliers, where used, are identified and handled under controlled conditions.				

4. Risk-based supplier evaluation and monitoring

#	Requirement	Yes	Partial	No	N/A
015	Supplier approval decisions are based on documented risk.				
016	We can explain how supplier risk is determined.				
017	Higher-risk suppliers are subject to stronger evaluation or monitoring.				
018	Supplier audits, where used, are based on risk.				
019	Supplier monitoring is documented.				
020	We can show periodic review of supplier performance and approval status.				

5. Supplier approval evidence

#	Requirement	Yes	Partial	No	N/A
021	We maintain records that support supplier approval.				
022	Supplier approval evidence is linked to the relevant supplier.				

#	Requirement	Yes	Partial	No	N/A
023	We can show the basis on which a supplier was approved.				
024	We can show follow-up where supplier approval evidence was incomplete, missing, or required review.				
025	We can show that supplier approval records are maintained as part of the food safety management system.				

6. Supplier-related specifications and change control

#	Requirement	Yes	Partial	No	N/A
026	Specifications and/or descriptions for raw materials and packaging that impact product safety are documented and kept current.				
027	We can show how supplier-related specifications are reviewed and maintained.				
028	We require suppliers to notify us of relevant changes in product composition or other changes that may impact food safety where applicable.				
029	We can show how supplier-related changes are reviewed and communicated internally when needed.				

7. Document control for supplier-related documents

#	Requirement	Yes	Partial	No	N/A
030	Supplier-related documents are subject to document control.				
031	Current versions are identifiable.				
032	Obsolete or superseded documents are controlled to prevent unintended use.				
033	There is a documented method for maintaining, updating, and replacing controlled documents.				
034	We can show who reviewed or updated controlled supplier-related documents where applicable.				

8. Records control, storage, and retrieval

#	Requirement	Yes	Partial	No	N/A
035	Records supporting supplier approval and supplier-document control are maintained.				
036	Records are legible.				
037	Records are readily accessible.				
038	Records are retrievable when needed.				

#	Requirement	Yes	Partial	No	N/A
039	Records are securely stored to prevent unauthorized access, loss, damage, or deterioration.				
040	We can retrieve supplier approval and supplier-document records in a reasonable timeframe during an audit or investigation.				
041	Electronic and/or paper records are controlled appropriately.				

9. Record retention and completeness

#	Requirement	Yes	Partial	No	N/A
042	We have defined retention practices for supplier-related records.				
043	Supplier approval records are complete enough to support audit and investigation needs.				
044	We can show historical records where needed.				
045	Records demonstrate implementation of the supplier approval process, not just the existence of a procedure.				

10. Monthly management updates and annual management review

#	Requirement	Yes	Partial	No	N/A
046	Supplier-document control issues are included in monthly management updates where relevant.				
047	Records are maintained of monthly management updates where supplier-document issues were discussed.				
048	Supplier-related issues can be escalated to site management when they impact or could impact the food safety system.				
049	Supplier approval and supplier-document performance can be included within the annual management review where relevant.				
050	Follow-up actions from reviews are tracked to completion.				

11. Nonconformities, corrections, and corrective action

#	Requirement	Yes	Partial	No	N/A
051	We document supplier-document nonconformities or gaps when identified.				
052	We document corrections and corrective actions where required.				
053	We can show investigation and resolution of supplier-document-related nonconformities where applicable.				
054	Repeated supplier-document issues are reviewed for recurring causes.				

12. Training and competency

#	Requirement	Yes	Partial	No	N/A
055	Personnel involved in supplier approval and supplier-document control are trained for their responsibilities.				
056	Training needs are identified for relevant roles.				
057	A means to assess competency is included as part of the training process.				
058	Training records are maintained.				
059	Training records include the participant name.				
060	Training records include a description of necessary skills.				
061	Training records include a description of training provided.				
062	Training records include the date training was completed.				
063	Training records include the trainer or training provider.				
064	Training records verify that the trainee is competent to complete the required tasks.				

Common control weaknesses to test for internally

Observation-only section. These checks are not included in the internal readiness score.

Gap pattern	Observed?	Why it matters
Approved supplier list is not current		Approval status can become difficult to defend during an audit.
Supplier approval evidence is incomplete		Approval decisions may not be adequately supported.
Supplier approval cannot be linked clearly to the supplier record		Evidence retrieval becomes slow and unreliable.
Document versions are unclear		Teams may rely on outdated or conflicting supplier documents.
Obsolete supplier documents are still accessible without clear control		Outdated documents can be used unintentionally.
Records exist but are difficult to retrieve		Audit response and investigations become slower and weaker.
Supplier-related changes are not captured consistently		Food-safety-relevant changes can be missed.
Management does not receive regular visibility of supplier-document risks		Escalation and decision-making are weakened.
Training records are incomplete or do not show competency verification		Training cannot be demonstrated effectively.
Corrective actions are not clearly closed out		The same supplier-document issues can recur.

Optional items that may apply

These may apply depending on customer, contractual, regulatory, product, or market requirements.

Optional item	Applies?	Why it may apply
Insurance certificates		May be required by customer, contractual, or company policy requirements.
Environmental compliance documents		May apply where customer or market requirements extend beyond core SQF controls.
Social compliance documents		May apply for customer, retailer, or corporate responsibility programs.
Customer-specific declarations		May be required for certain accounts, product categories, or markets.
Market-specific compliance statements		May be required for exports or destination-market compliance.

Optional item	Applies?	Why it may apply
Additional supplier questionnaires beyond core approval evidence		May be used where customer or internal risk models require more detail.

Official source note

This checklist is a practical implementation template aligned to official SQFI requirements and guidance themes. Use the applicable SQF Code and your certification body guidance as the source of truth.

https://www.sqfi.com/the-sqf-code/choose-your-code/library-of-codes/food-manufacturing

https://www.sqfi.com/the-sqf-code/choose-your-code/library-of-codes/code-document/approved-supplier-program

https://www.sqfi.com/the-sqf-code/choose-your-code/library-of-codes/code-document/management-review

https://www.sqfi.com/the-sqf-code/choose-your-code/library-of-codes/code-document/records

https://www.sqfi.com/the-sqf-code/choose-your-code/library-of-codes/code-document/training