

Paper Proposal
Application of the Hungarian Agricultural Excellence Award
by the PICK Szeged Meat Company

László Sutka

Economic Manager of the PICK Szeged Meat Company

E-mail: sutka@pick.hu

Dr. Zsuzsanna Varró

Quality Manager of the PICK Szeged Meat Company

E-mail: varrone@pick.hu

Related Subtopic: Excellence in the Food Chain

Introduction and Problem Statement

PICK SZEGED E. Co. Ltd. is one of the largest and an oldest food industrial company that is still Hungarian owned. To keep the high-quality level of the whole organization as well as of the products and services new methods and additional activities were necessary.

Objectives

Led by the Company's Mission and Vision, the management annually determines those key processes to assist in realising the objectives of the Company Strategy.

Key processes at PICK SZEGED E. Co. Ltd. are:

1. Monitoring customer satisfaction
2. Sales
3. Management, organisation, quality management
4. Product development
5. Managing economic resources
6. Ensuring raw and base materials
7. Production of dry products

The development of this key processes were focused on the followings:

- ◆ Development aimed at increasing food safety;
- ◆ Development aimed at satisfying new buyer/consumer expectations.

Procedures

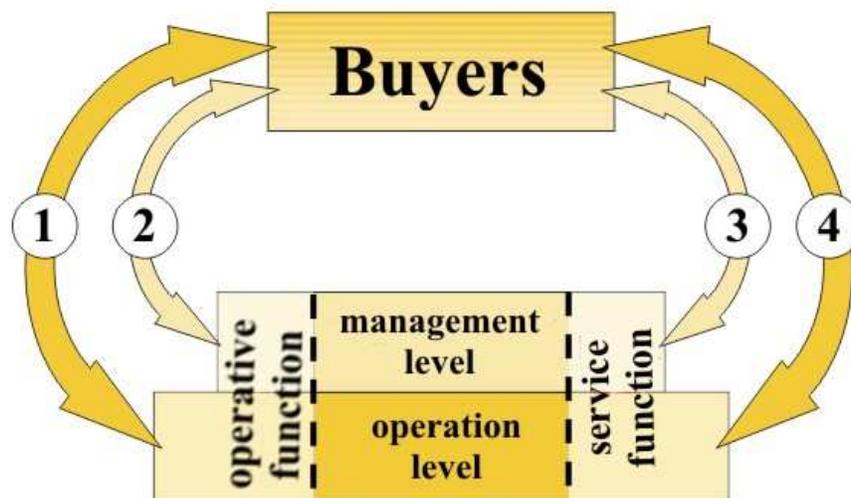
In the framework of the self-assessment following areas were investigated and evaluated relating to the abilities and the results of the

- Management;

- Strategy;
- Staff including Employee Satisfaction;
- Resources;
- Suppliers and Customers including Customer Satisfaction;
- Technological and other Processes;
- Influence on the Environment and Society (Sustainable Development).

In addition to the a. m. self-assessment activities the breakthrough method was used to achieve simultaneous and comprehensive fundamental changes in the fields of the production and sale processes. Also the gradual development method were used when the process does not require a major change and the task can be broken down to separate and subsequent steps. A good example is product development: we usually do not launch many new products on the market since on the one hand this would result in dispersing our resources, whilst on the other hand, the presence of many new products would hinder each other's market success. Therefore the synchronised development of one product family, e.g. the "Mangalica" product family was preferred. Relating to product development continuously cooperated with national and international science institutions, and in cooperation with these professional and academic institutions focused on the functional product development satisfying the modern nutrition requirements.

A very direct method of understanding buyer and customer requirements was used regularly via **questionnaire surveys**. In addition the random sampling market research method provided what our actual as well as our potential buyers (customers) expect. The surveys was focused on the launch process of the new product, the assessment of the existing markets, the popularity of certain brands or on learning about the company's market position.



Results

Hungarian and top-quality became the characteristic features of the products produced by PICK SZEGED. We attach special importance to producing our meat preparation products from Hungarian raw materials by employing a domestic workforce.

The raw material provided by our own slaughtering activity meets the strictest veterinary expectations, also, the quality management and food safety systems applied at PICK SZEGED guarantee that the products produced at all of our sites are continuously reliable, cutting-edge and of the highest quality.

Our activities are controlled by good production and hygiene practices, increased control checks performed at critical points within the framework of the HACCP System and our ISO 9001 Quality Management System. During these activities we strive to fully satisfy the requirements of Hungarian as well as EU and international regulations.

PICK SZEGED E. Co. Ltd. is one of the few Hungarian food companies that meet the even stricter American and far-east Asian requirements, thus claiming presence on these markets, too.

Our dedication towards consumer health protection as well as food safety was acknowledged through the IFS (International Food Standard) and ISO 22000 Food Safety System Certificates.

Among our PICK, Délhús and Ringa brand names one can find premium products satisfying a great variety of market demands: dry products, hams, red products as well as cold cuts, spreads, bacons and a large array of ready-to-use meats and quick-frozen products.

Our flagship product is PICK Winter Salami, which has a nearly 80% market share of the domestic salami market, it is a genuine Hungaricum, i.e. traditional Hungarian speciality and it has been granted a protected designation of origin status by the European Union.

Conclusions

The self-assessment method according to the Hungarian Agricultural Excellence Award Model provided well-founded results and should be used regularly. At all levels of the Management the Customer Expectations should have the first priority also in the future. These activities should be extended by determination of buyer (customer) segment priorities as well as by using benchmarking and detailed SWOT analysis. Also the research cooperation with universities and research institutes especially relating to product development should be extended.