

## QUALITY ASSURANCE GUIDE

### Introduction

The Quality Assurance Guide gives prospective suppliers to 3663 an overview of the functions [of the QA Department](#), [standards for suppliers](#), [product information requirements](#) and additional requirements for [own brand suppliers](#). All QA requirements are intended either to comply with legal and customer requirements, or as part of 3663's policy of providing excellent service to its customers.

The Guide is not intended to be exhaustive, but to highlight general requirements and standards which 3663's suppliers should meet. It should be read in conjunction with the Commercial and Supply Chain Guides.

Full details are in the password protected area of the supplier website.

### The QA Department

The QA Department is responsible for all quality assurance and technical matters relating to products sold by 3663. The extent of the involvement of the QA Department depends on the category of product supplied (3663 Own Brand, Manufacturer's Branded, or Customer Sourced Products).

3663 constantly monitors and ensures absolute compliance with all legal standards. Food Law is a constantly improving set of standards and 3663 ensures it is always operating above the minimum legal standard. The Quality Assurance department is responsible for the practical application of these quality standards.

QA is responsible for management and processing of customer complaints. We have a standard quality complaint process, and (if appropriate) a fast track Complaints Injurious to Health process, which all suppliers are expected to support. The customer complaints management system is used to analyse complaint trends and to facilitate rapid investigation of complaints by the manufacturer.

The 3663 product recall process is managed by Quality Assurance and there are options for depot quarantine and customer recall of products. Suppliers will meet the costs of any product recall if the need for a recall arises.

All of our systems are subject to regular internal and more importantly independent third party auditing. Our systems allow for both unannounced and planned auditing to be carried out as the risk warrants.

Full details of standards and processes and any associated charges can be found in the password protected area of the site. [Top of the Document](#)

### Supplier and Product Approval

There are two approval elements for suppliers new to 3663:

The first stage is **Supplier Approval**, to ensure that minimum standards are met by the supplier overall. Supplier Approval must be completed before any products will be listed by 3663.

The second stage is **Product Information** to ensure we have the requisite information to provide to our customers as and when they request it. All product information must be supplied to 3663 in the approved format, before any orders are placed for the product.

## **ALL OWN BRAND AND BRANDED SUPPLIERS AND PRODUCTS**

There are a number of standards which apply to all suppliers, which are outlined below. There are also additional requirements of 3663 Own Brand products which are outlined in the final section.

### **Supplier QA Standards and Approval:**

The minimum acceptable standard for 3663 suppliers is BRC certification or equivalent. A copy of the certificate, and the 3663 supplier questionnaire, including HACCP details, must be provided as part of the supplier approval process

3663 requires suppliers to have policies in place in respect of GMOs, environmental policies, packaging waste directive support and reports. Information regarding these policies must be available from suppliers prior to acceptance of any new products.

Suppliers are required to provide warranty relating to each specific product as a condition of continued trade. [Top of the Document](#)

### **Product Information Requirements**

The QA department is responsible for ensuring correct product information is available for our customer needs. We add value for our customers via:

- Nutritional calculation and balanced menu provision
- Technical policy developments and product monitoring.

3663 Customers expect us to have product information when they ask for it. Therefore, if accepted as a 3663 supplier you will be expected to provide full details of your products (e.g. ingredient list/allergen/nutritional information) on the New Line Form, which can be accessed via the password protected section of the supplier website. Any additional information will be specified by your QA contact.

Certain products sold into the Education and Healthcare Sectors have additional product information requirements. These additional product attributes includes information such as micronutrients and can be submitted on an additional section of the New Line form.

Given the fast changing nature of legal and customer requirements in this area, 3663 reserves the right to vary the product information requirement at any time. [Top of the Document](#)

## **OWN BRAND SUPPLIERS**

In addition to the above criteria, much emphasis is placed upon ensuring that 3663 Own Brand products meet the highest standards of consistency and safety.

This includes regular visits from 3663 personnel who are professionally trained food and non-food technologists and auditors.

A detailed product specification is required for each own brand product supplied.

These product specifications, together with Quality Audit reports and delivery performance are used to assess the supplier's due diligence procedures, and to confirm their effectiveness via 3663 technical audit schedules and sampling programmes. Product quality audits carried out under this programme include physical, organoleptic (tasting), chemical and microbiological parameters.

Details within the product specifications are used during pre-launch activities to confirm that the products and proposed pack copy details conform to relevant food safety, quality, compositional and labelling regulations.

The accumulated data from all these activities is analysed during regular supplier performance reviews to highlight any areas where improvement or change might be required.

Suppliers should be aware that various charging mechanisms exist for supply of 3663 Own Brand products including turnover charges, new packaging development and recycling logo assessments. Details of these supplier charges can be found in the password protected section of the website. [Top of the Document](#)

### **QA Department Contact Details**

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### **Note:**

This QA Guide is provided for guidance only, and is a summary of requirements for 3663 suppliers. Detailed requirements are accessed from the full supplier section of the website by logging on using the password allocated to you.