BRCGS Packaging and Packaging Materials, Issue 5

P547: Hygiene category determination decision tree

The outline is provided as a guide to help companies in the use and interpretation of the product category groupings.

The company seeking certification must conduct a hazard and risk analysis which will establish a full description of the packaging product and the intended use by the customer. Identifying potential hazards and establishing control points will help to verify the packaging category that shall be established through application of the Packaging Category Determination Decision Tree.

Once the company has determined the packaging category, it is recommended that this is verified with their customers as appropriate. The packaging category shall also be verified by the Certification Body.

The purpose of the decision tree is to enable the user to determine the packaging category for the packaging products which they produce and ensure that the audit is conducted at an appropriate level suitable for the nature of the material being produced. Issue 5 of the BRCGS Standard identifies 2 categories of packaging with regard to the standards of hygiene under which packaging is produced.

For each packaging product manufactured, each of the questions in the decision tree should be answered sequentially from the first question until a category is arrived at.

The ultimate decision for the packaging category shall be agreed by the manufacturer and the customer and verified by the certification body. The outline is provided as a guide to help companies in the use and interpretation of the product category groupings.

Guidance is given to the interpretation of the questions however, the ultimate decision for the packaging category shall be agreed by the manufacturer and the customer and verified by the certification body.

Generally the following packaging categories apply:

- High hygiene category
- Basic hygiene category

It is recognised that many manufacturers or suppliers fall into more than one Category. In these circumstances they may either choose to use one category for the entire factory or separate them by areas. It is not envisaged that more than one category would apply within the same area.
Review the intended use of the packaging or packaging product group

Is the packaging intended for a food product or hygiene-sensitive product, e.g. cosmetics?

Yes

Is the packaging intended for direct contact with a food or hygiene sensitive product?

No

Basic Hygiene

Yes

Is the packaging vulnerable to microbial, physical or chemical contamination that poses a risk to product safety?

Yes

Basic Hygiene