

RETAILER PERSPECTIVES AND EXPERIENCES

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Objectives

The paper will discuss consumer expectations as viewed by retail food businesses with specific regards to various food safety and quality related attributes, including traceability and animal identification.

Discussion

The reputation and business fate of large retailers and restaurant chains are ultimately reliant upon providing perceived value through products and services provided to consumers. Perceived value of many food products, especially products of animal origin, include less tangible attributes such as the origin of the product, health of the animal, husbandry practices employed, animal welfare provided, and feed sources utilized just to name a few. For moving internationally, harmonisation of national systems is an important objective and the adoption by countries of international standards (i.e. those of the OIE and Codex Alimentarius) can help to achieve this goal. While “one-step forward and back” traceability can often be achieved through routine business documents, animal identification and movement tracking systems are essential if accurate and prompt supply-chain wide traceability is to occur. Right or wrong, many consumers perceive complete traceability is essential to ensuring the integrity and safety of food products. These consumer expectations, frequently championed by the retail sector, will continue to drive the adoption and refinement of animal identification and traceability systems.

Key words: Animal identification and traceability – Retail – Consumer – International standards.
