

Comparing the GFSI benchmarked food safety standards

Dr. John G. Surak

Surak and Associates

Clemson, SC, USA

Email: jgsurak@yahoo.com

Marketplace issues

- Globalization of retailers
- Customer driven supply chain
 - Customers demand a safe supply of food
 - Consumers expect to eat products 12 months a year
 - Consumers do not care where the food is produced

Food safety and world trade

- ❑ Businesses importing food want assurance that the ingredients and products are safe
- ❑ Just meeting regulatory requirements may not be enough to meet customer contractual requirements
- ❑ Certification may or may not be the answer to the marketplace demand for food safety
- ❑ World class companies can produce safe food anywhere in the world
- ❑ What happens when things go wrong

Reaction to marketplace needs for safe food

- Demand for third party audits
- Development of food safety standards
 - Provide descriptions in a common language
 - Facilitate harmonization
 - Used for audits and certifications
- Mandatory certification

Global Food Safety Initiative (GFSI)

- ❑ GFSI is part of CIES Food Business Forum
- ❑ Board consists of 10 retailers, 6 processors, and 1 food service
- ❑ Impact of GFSI on the market place
- ❑ Recognize international food safety management system certification processes through a benchmarking process

GFSI

- ❑ GFSI does NOT approve food safety standards
- ❑ GFSI does NOT approve certification schemes
- ❑ GFSI benchmarks FSMS certification schemes
 - GFSI determine if the certification scheme meets or does not meet the GFSI requirements

GFSI audit schemes

- Confusion in the terminology of audit schemes
 - Food safety management system
 - PRPs
 - HACCP
 - Components of a management system
 - Food safety certification system
 - Audit protocol
 - Auditor requirements
 - Certification protocol
 - Accreditation requirements
 - Need evidence that the audit scheme will work
-

Parts of a GFSI audit scheme

- Audit scheme holder
 - Assure that the audit scheme is properly working
- Accreditation bodies
 - Assure that certification bodies are complying to audit scheme standards
- Certification bodies
 - Assure that the organizations are complying to the FSMS standard

Certification systems recognized by GFSI

- BRC – British Retail Consortium
 - Global Standard for Food Safety
- National Board of HACCP Experts
 - Dutch HACCP
- Foundation for Food Safety Certification (provisional GFSI recognition)
 - FSSC 22000 - Food Safety System Certification 22000
 - ISO ISO-22000 and PAS 220
- IFS
 - International Food Standard
- SQF – Safe Quality Foods
 - SQF 2000 Code

Comparison of FSMS standards

- The standards are equivalent but not equal
- Basis for any comparison
 - Standard
 - Guidance documents
 - Official auditor check list

Factors for potential comparisons

- Scope of the standard
- Length of the standard
- Number of documents required by the standard
- Underlying structure
 - Element based structure
 - System based structure
- All of these comparisons have problems

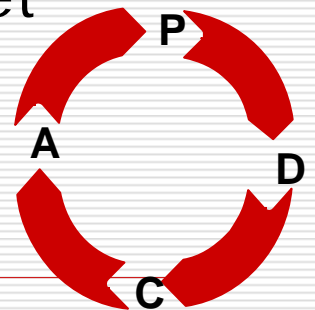
Function of FSMS

- ❑ Ensure processes are controlled so safe food is produced
- ❑ Take appropriate actions when there is a problem
- ❑ Ensure FSMS is continually improved

Function of FSMS

□ How is this accomplished?

- Define Food safety policies and objectives
- **Plan** systems, programs, projects, etc. to be in compliance with policies and meet objectives
- Allocate resources and implement systems, programs, projects, etc. (**do**)
- **Check** to ensure that objectives are met
- Take appropriate actions (**act**)



Factors for potential comparisons

- Focus of the standard or the level of detail in the standard, guidance documents, and official checklists.
 - Design process approach
 - The standard describes what must be done
 - The standard describes how it must be done
 - Performance approach
 - The standard describes what must be done
 - The organization describes how it must be done

Audit focus

- Move past using the audit as a snapshot of food safety operations
- Audits are more complex
- Critical questions to be answered
 - Has the FSMS functioned properly since the last audit?
 - Will the FSMS function properly until the next audit?
 - How do you audit when the system is working correctly 99% of the time?

The audit

- Observations in the plant
- Review documents and records
- Interview employees
- Analysis of data
 - What type of trend analysis is conducted?
- Follow the audit trail
 - The exception path
- How much time is allocated to each part?

ISO 22000

- ❑ ISO 22000 is a food safety management system with the emphasis on **MANAGEMENT**
- ❑ Understand the process model
 - One sees the word “plan” throughout the standard
 - This implies the use of the plan, do check act cycle as a means to achieve food safety
- ❑ Understand the process model
- ❑ Understand the linkages in the standard

**Facilities, equipment,
materials and
environmental factors**

The process model

**By
whom**

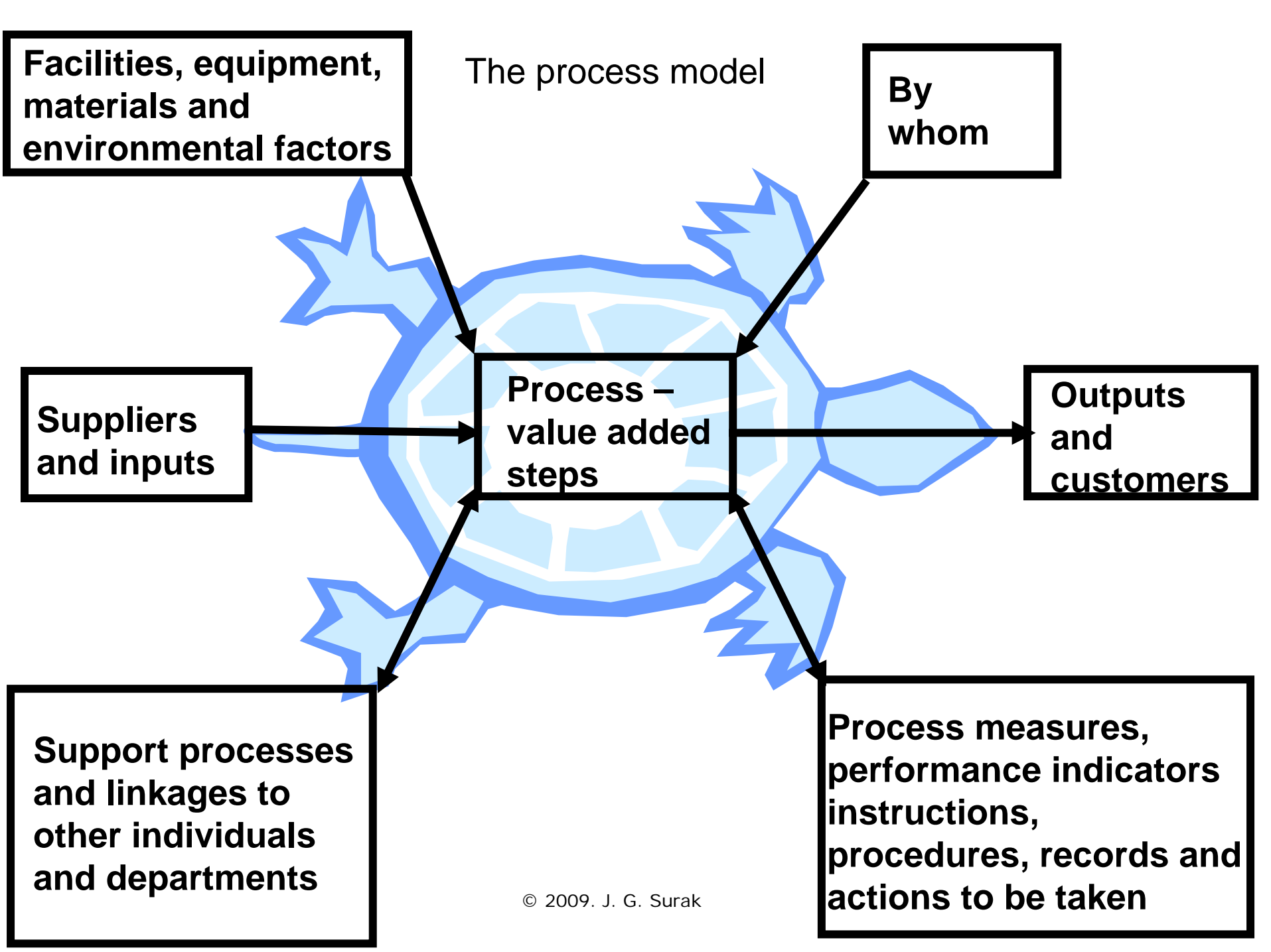
**Suppliers
and inputs**

**Process –
value added
steps**

**Outputs
and
customers**

**Support processes
and linkages to
other individuals
and departments**

**Process measures,
performance indicators
instructions,
procedures, records and
actions to be taken**



The process audit

- ❑ If a system is working at 99% effectiveness, it will be difficult to identify problems on an audit
- ❑ Start with identified problems
 - Exception reports
 - Corrective action records
- ❑ Use the process model to audit
- ❑ Follow the linkages
 - Is the ISO 22000 FSMS working as a system or is it a collection of individual parts?

**Facilities, equipment,
materials and
environmental factors**

The process audit

**By
whom**

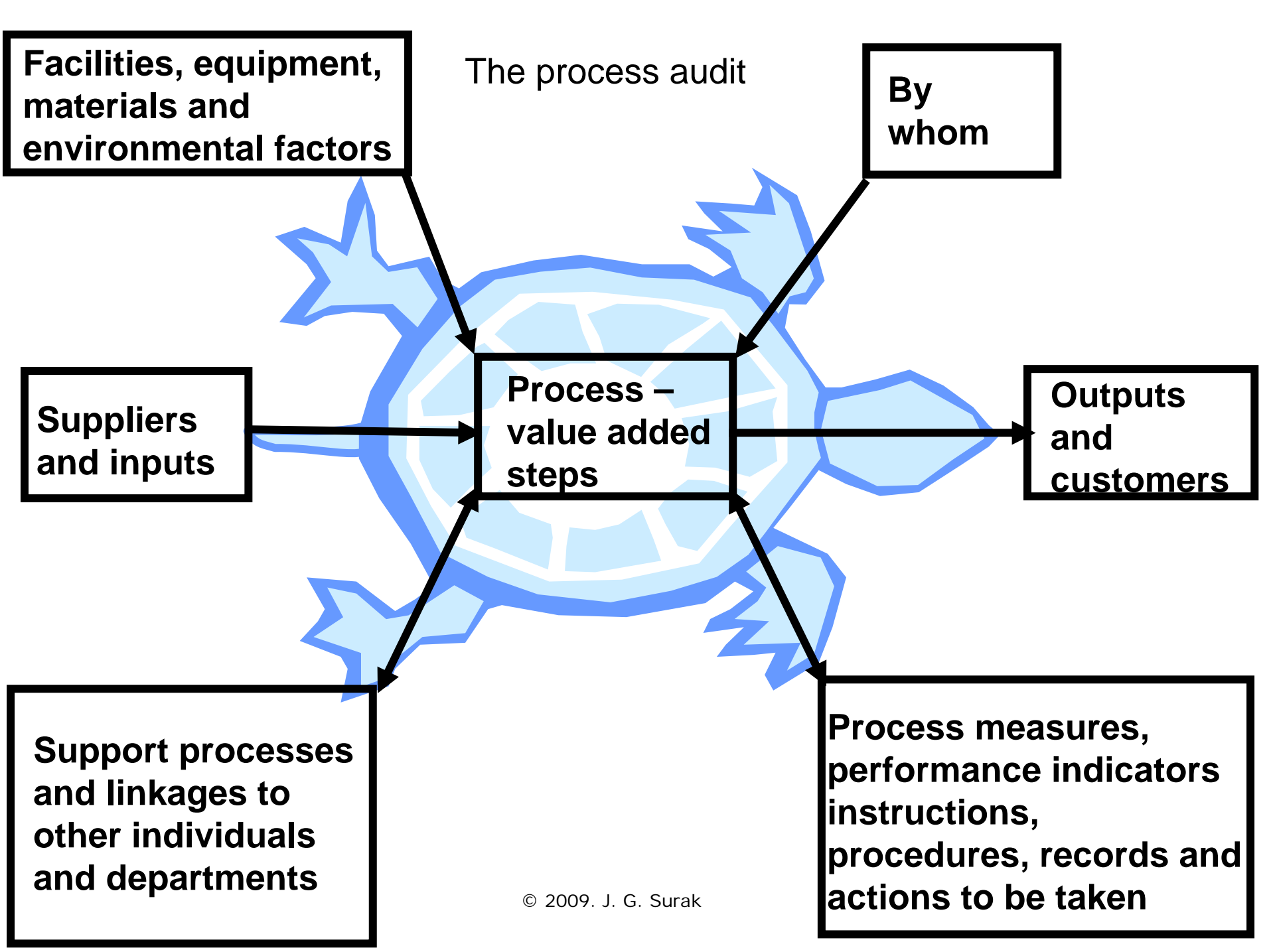
**Suppliers
and inputs**

**Process –
value added
steps**

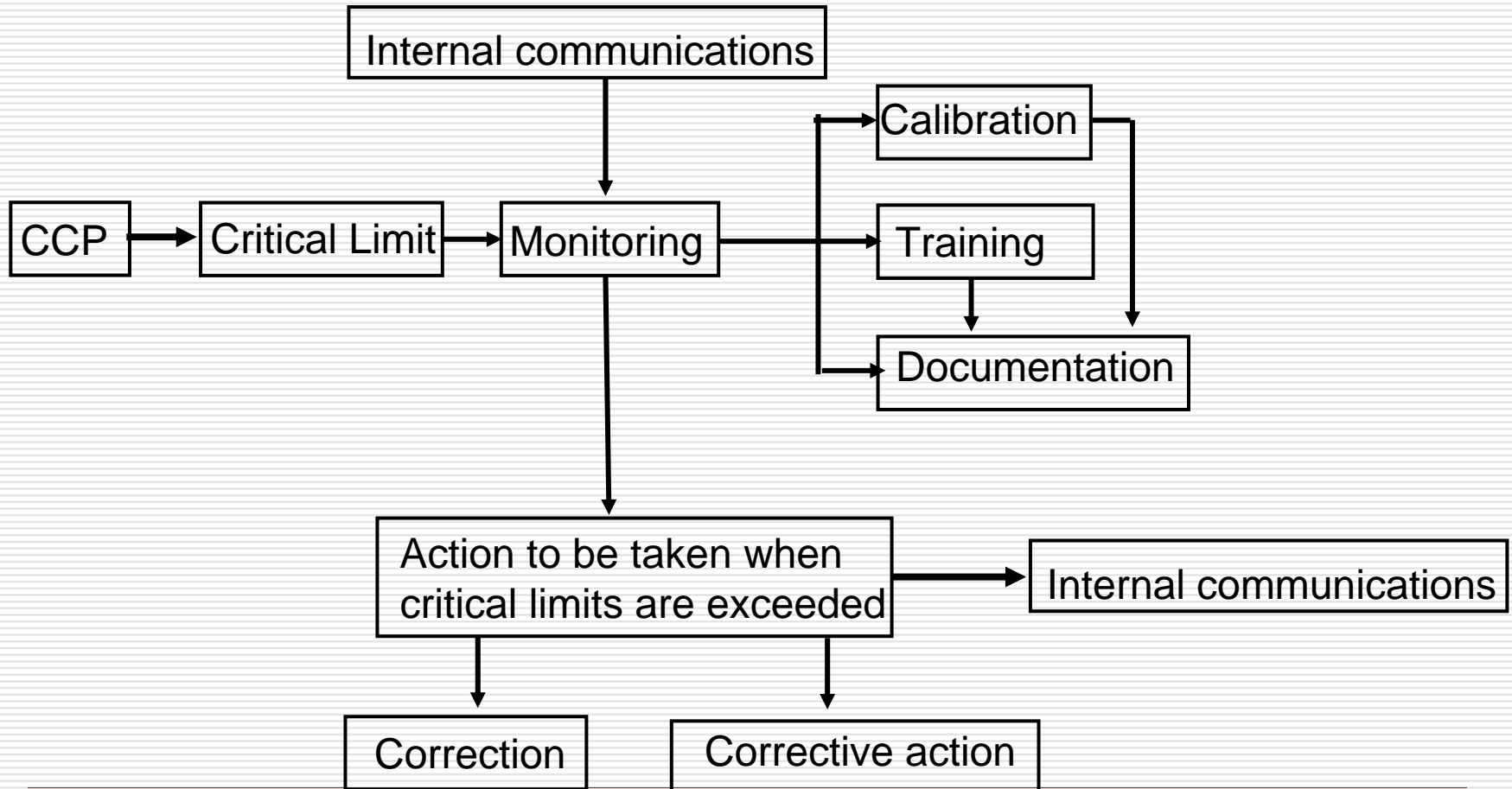
**Outputs
and
customers**

**Support processes
and linkages to
other individuals
and departments**

**Process measures,
performance indicators
instructions,
procedures, records and
actions to be taken**



Example of some links in the food safety management system



Future of 22000 – ISO TC 34 WG 17

- ❑ ISO 22000:2005 a vote to confirm
- ❑ PAS 220 recommended for a vote to be elevated to an ISO Technical Specification and then there will be a vote for revision
- ❑ ISO 22004:2005 a vote to confirm
- ❑ Create a procedure to convert relevant documents (PRPs) into ISO documents
- ❑ Create a procedure assessing the adequacy of externally developed control measures
- ❑ The WG will ensure that Codex principles are not compromised

What is the best standard?

- Answer – It depends
 - Look at the culture of the company
 - Look at the current level of employee competencies
 - Food safety
 - Documentation
 - Validation and verification
 - Management systems
 - What standard will be the easiest to implement and have an effective FSMS, based on your current QA/Food safety systems?

Keys to success

- Management commitment
 - Customer
 - Food safety
- Understand the food safety standard
- Systems and process perspective to food safety
- Effective audits
- Continual improvement



Thank you

John G. Surak, PhD
jgsurak@yahoo.com
