SOP: Ingredient Sourcing and Quality Inspection

This SOP details the **ingredient sourcing and quality inspection** processes, including criteria for supplier selection, procurement protocols, quality standards verification, incoming ingredient inspection, sample testing procedures, documentation requirements, and corrective actions for non-conforming materials. The goal is to guarantee that all ingredients meet specified quality benchmarks to ensure product safety and consistency.

1. Purpose

To define standardized procedures for sourcing ingredients and inspecting their quality to ensure compliance with internal and regulatory standards.

2. Scope

This SOP applies to all personnel involved in the procurement and quality inspection of ingredients used in production.

3. Responsibilities

- **Procurement Team:** Source ingredients, evaluate and select suppliers, and ensure documentation is complete.
- **Quality Assurance (QA) Team:** Inspect and test ingredients, maintain records, and initiate corrective actions if needed.
- **Warehouse Staff:** Ensure proper storage and handling of incoming ingredients.

4. Procedure

4.1 Supplier Selection Criteria

1. Compile and review potential suppliers based on:
    - Product quality and certifications (e.g., ISO, HACCP, organic)
    - Reputation and references
    - Delivery reliability and capacity
    - Compliance with regulatory and ethical standards
2. Conduct site audits and supplier evaluations as required.
3. Approve qualified suppliers prior to procurement.

4.2 Procurement Protocols

1. Create purchase orders specifying product name, quality grade, quantity, and delivery requirements.
2. Ensure all procurement is made through approved suppliers only.
3. Retain all documentation related to orders and correspondence.

4.3 Quality Standards Verification

1. Verify that suppliers provide up-to-date certificates of analysis, material safety data sheets, and compliance documents.
2. Ensure supplied ingredients meet company and regulatory standards.

4.4 Incoming Ingredient Inspection

1. On arrival, inspect shipment for:
    - Proper labeling and intact packaging
    - Product appearance, odor, and integrity
    - Conformance with specification sheets
2. Record inspection results on the Receiving Inspection Log.

4.5 Sample Testing Procedures

1. Randomly select samples from batches using statistical sampling methods.
2. Conduct physical, chemical, and/or microbiological tests as per the ingredient's requirements.
3. Document results and compare with acceptance criteria.

4.6 Documentation Requirements

- Purchase Orders
- Supplier Evaluation Forms
- Certificates of Analysis (COA)
- Inspection and Testing Records
- Non-Conformance Reports

4.7 Corrective Actions for Non-Conforming Materials

1. Quarantine non-conforming ingredients immediately.
2. Complete Non-Conformance Report and notify the QA Manager.
3. Engage supplier for resolution (replacement, credit, or corrective action).
4. Update records and review supplier status as needed.

5. Definitions

Term	Definition
COA	Certificate of Analysis: Document verifying product testing results and compliance.
Non-Conformance	Any deviation from established quality standards or specifications.

6. Records & Documentation

- All documents must be maintained for a minimum of 5 years.
- Ensure traceability of each batch from supplier to finished product.

7. References

- Company Quality Manual
- Applicable Food Safety Standards (e.g., ISO 22000, FDA CFR 21)