Elena Vasquez

Food Safety Scientist

Food Safety Scientist with 6 years in fresh-cut produce plants and food testing labs in California's Central Valley. Designs environmental monitoring, pathogen testing and validation studies that hold up in SQF audits and FDA inspections. Has written HACCP and FSMA compliance plans for 4 facilities with no major nonconformities.

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Experience

Food Safety Scientist

Valley Harvest Fresh • Fresno, CA • 02/2022 - Present

Fresh-cut produce and salad kit processor with 3 plants and 1,100 employees.

- Design environmental monitoring programs for 3 plants, sampling **450** sites a month for Listeria.
- Conduct root cause analysis on positive swabs and drive corrective actions, cutting repeat positives by 60%.
- Validate wash-water chlorine and kill-step controls through challenge and validation studies with outside labs.
- Prepare all 3 sites for SQF audits, keeping each certified with an Excellent rating since 2023.

Microbiologist

Sierra Analytical Labs • Modesto, CA • 07/2020 - 01/2022

Contract food testing laboratory serving growers, packers and processors.

- Performed pathogen testing for Salmonella, Listeria and E. coli O157:H7 on **200+** samples a week.
- Ran food microbiology methods under ISO 17025 and reported results to clients within 48 hours.
- Wrote technical reports explaining out-of-spec results to client quality managers.
- Trained 4 new analysts on aseptic technique, sample handling and lab safety.

Certificates

Preventive Controls Qualified Individual (PCQI)

Food Safety Preventive Controls Alliance • 06/2021

HACCP Certification

International HACCP Alliance • 03/2022

Implementing SQF Systems

Safe Quality Food Institute • 09/2022

Skills

Food Safety , HACCP
FSMA Compliance
Food Microbiology
Environmental Monitoring
Pathogen Testing
Root Cause Analysis
SQF Audits
Validation Studies
Technical Writing

Education

Bachelor of Science

California State University, Fresno

Fresno, CA

05/2020

Microbiology