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Supermarkets role on society: Food safety and security

Statement of the Problem: Food wasted by supermarkets, and its economic and social impacts were analyzed. Literature points out that reducing food waste is one step further to ensure Food Security. However, Food Safety (FS) must be allied as to prevent Foodborne Illnesses (FBI). The purpose of these notes is to understand how Rio de Janeiro (RJ) state's Supermarkets Association (ASSERJ), through its FS Council - composed by Quality and Operational Managers of the Associated Supermarkets (AS) - and interaction with enforcement agencies, plays active role in reducing FBI cases as well as reducing hunger and the need for balanced diet of the low-income population.

Methodology & Theoretical Orientation: Observations were made through reports of sales, losses, product discards and donations to the Niterói's, a city from RJ state food bank. Literature about the importance of practical methodologies aimed to help reducing food waste was also considered.

Findings: ASSERJ, through its FS Council, aligns technical understandings of current FS laws and operations between AS and the governmental bodies - municipal, state and federal. This led to greater understanding of actual FS risks and its importance to processes' standardization amongst AS, improved inspections' assertiveness (less arbitrariness) and bettered products' quality and processes. There was also reduction of discarded goods by fiscal actions and of the food wasted by each establishment and of operations' costs; the latter would still be complemented by recent partnerships between many AS and Niterói's food bank - ensuring Food Security, for the most needy population, through donations of commercially devalued (but sensory and microbiologically fit for consumption) foods.

Conclusion & Significance: The proactivity and representativeness of ASSERJ are responsible for FS and Quality of food supplied daily to more than 10,000,000 people in RJ's state, besides contributing to food losses' reduction, at the same time in which acts on Food Security.

Biography

Thiago Cabral Zilli is a Veterinarian graduated from the Federal University of the State of Rio de Janeiro (UFF) and completed his MBA in Business Management at Getúlio Vargas Foundation (FGV), ISO 22000:2005 Lead-Auditor by Det Norske Veritas (DNV) - IRCA certified; Integrated Management Systems (ISO 9001, OHSAS 18001, ISO 14001), Internal Auditor for SQS Consultants and Associates and Organizational Consultants for the Getúlio Vargas Foundation. He has 10 years of professional experience in food quality management area - both in industry and retail. He worked on licensing and certification of production to foreign markets; analysis, development, training, implementation, validation, standardization and monitoring of quality systems; strategic optimization of operational flows, increasing productivity and quality and reducing waste generation and costs; internal and suppliers' audits; reduction of customer complaints and of Food Safety infractions and their severity; improving adaptation to legal food safety requirements, considering the available technical and operational feasibility, and improving the companies' images before consumers and regulators.

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