Third party certifications: What those approvals mean

Food safety is a critical concern in the U.S. and around the world. A recently enacted U.S. law – the Food Safety and Modernization Act (FSMA) – is having a major impact on the manufacturing practices of many feed ingredient and feed product suppliers. Fortunately, Diamond V is well-prepared for FSMA, based on our long history of state-of-the-art manufacturing and regulatory compliance confirmed by third party certifications.

Trust and reliability make up the cornerstone of the Diamond V brand, which depends on the company's ongoing investment in the most modern and technologically advanced manufacturing capabilities. The focus of manufacturing is our two plants in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, which supply Diamond V products to more than 60 countries.

The North Plant is on the site of our original facility, dating back to the 1940s, but with state-of-the-art technology continuously updated to the present. The South Plant is part of our Corporate Campus where construction began in 2008. Currently, the South Plant is in its third state-of-the-art expansion.

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Quality manufacturing depends on consistency in supply of quality ingredients and consistency in processing and quality assurance. Our focus on manufacturing in Cedar Rapids allows us to assure the highest possible levels of ingredient traceability and manufacturing certifications. Diamond V works

constantly to maintain manufacturing practices and standards of production that exceed those required.

Looking ahead to the full implementation of FSMA, here's a brief overview of our current manufacturing facility regulations and third party certifications.

GMP+:

- Good Manufacturing Practices "plus" Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP) emphasis, for which Diamond V has held certification since 2006
- GMP+ safety and quality assurance standard developed in the Netherlands by the PDV, a statutory regulatory industrial organization established at the request of the Dutch feed business and now used by leading feed industry suppliers worldwide
- GMP+ certification viewed favorably by European Union countries and beneficial in obtaining product registration approval in many other countries
- Annual Diamond V GMP+ auditing to the PDV standard by SGS International, a third party certification body

HACCP:
- Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point certification, for which Diamond V has held certification since 2008
- "Food safety management tool that focuses on preventing biological, chemical and physical hazards from reaching the consumer"
- Focus on prevention of contamination entering the production stream rather than testing the end product for defects
- HACCP-like regulations part of the FSMA initiative
- Annual third party certification by Validus/FCI (Facility Certification Institute), which was developed in partnership with the American Feed Industry Association (AFIA)
- Validus accredited for ISO 65 SQF with ISO 9001:2008 Certification

Safe Feed/Safe Food:
- Established by the American Feed Industry Association, with certification held by Diamond V since 2008
- Created to promote generally accepted food safety guidelines designed to ensure continuous improvement in the delivery of a safe and wholesome feed supply for the growth and care of animals.
- Certification standards to closely follow FSMA requirements

- Diamond V manufacturing certified by Validus/FCI with an annual audit (see HACCP above)

Food Safety and Modernization Act:
- FSMA signed into law 2011 with regulatory responsibility by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA)
- Seven proposed foundational rules to become final in 2015 and 2016
- Focus on the prevention of food supply contamination, including:
  o Preventive controls for Human Food
  o Preventive controls for Animal Food
  o Produce Safety
  o Foreign Supplier Verification Program
  o Third Party Certification
  o Sanitary Transport
  o Intentional Adulteration
- Increased regulatory oversight of steps "upstream" from the human food supply
- Animal feed considered food, with resulting huge impact on the U.S. feed industry
- Safety assurance required at all levels -- supplier, process, distribution
- Safe Feed/Safe Food certification standards closely following FSMA requirements, which becomes part of Diamond V manufacturing certification through Validus/FCI

Diamond V's long history with third party certifications has enabled us to be well prepared to meet the FSMA requirements. Diamond V's HACCP team has been in place for more than seven years. The team has included employees from Procurement, Operations, Maintenance, QA, Research and Development, and IT units of the company.

Having a diverse membership has added strength to process and product safety evaluations by providing many points of view. And, to keep up with new regulatory and customer requirements, Diamond V created a new Certification Specialist position in 2012.

But feed and food safety and quality assurance can never be taken for granted, even in a complex manufacturing operation that has never experienced a product recall. So, we are committed to continuous learning. Regular third party audits fuel continuous improvement of our quality system. Each auditor brings a fresh perspective on ways to make things better and we pay attention.