



Breaking News on Food Safety & Quality Control

Majority of manufacturers feeling impact from FSMA - Aptean

By Joe Whitworth+, 14-Jan-2016

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More than three-quarters of manufacturing customers have experienced some level of impact from the Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA), according to Aptean.

The enterprise software provider found a majority (81%) of customers surveyed are experiencing some effect from the regulations.

Respondents listed traceability, supplier and facility audits, HACCP/preventative, corrective actions and product recalls as the five areas of operations that have been impacted the most.

Final rule progress

The US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) issued [three final rules under FSMA](#) in November last year.

They are the Produce Safety rule, the Foreign Supplier Verification Programs (FSVP) rule, and the Accredited Third-Party Certification rule.

Two were published in September (Preventive Controls for Human Food and Preventive Controls for Animal Food) and the final two are scheduled for spring 2016 (Sanitary Transportation of Food in April and Food Defense in June).

The survey to gauge sentiment of Aptean manufacturing customers on the FSMA was done during Q3 last year and received more than 100 respondents.

Jack Payne, VP of product management and solution consulting at Aptean, said now some of the final rules have been published most proactive companies are in good shape.

"There may be some tweaking but they are along the path to compliance with FSMA and this is not just for Aptean's customers but for any food company," he told FoodQualityNews.

"I was on-site with one customer a few weeks ago, a producer of beverage products who was also a respondent in the survey, and I sat in on an internal meeting of food safety and traceability and they talked about how to fine-tune the continuous improvement process."

FSMA compliance with other standards

Even with Global Food Safety Initiative (GFSI) guidance and credentials, 70% of manufacturers felt there was still 'moderate to considerable' effort needed on their part to comply with FSMA.

"I was encouraged by the findings, they are positive, when a new regulation comes out it allows a review of current business processes and to find unknowns and where the gaps are," said Payne.

"Prior to FSMA most companies complied due to GFSI, as industry recognised the problem and took positive steps to solve it as if they wanted to sell to major retailers they needed to comply."

"Before GFSI was widespread, food companies recognised the brand protection part of value and how a recall could cripple the brand so they invested in technology before [the regulations]."

Respondents believed their Aptean enterprise resource planning (ERP) and manufacturing execution solution (MES) have helped with aspects of FSMA including traceability, product recalls and supplier/facility audits.

Payne said it is in the process of a cross-industry survey on how customers use ERP, a repeat of one early last year, and one on FSMA might be repeated at the end of this year or start of 2017.

Manufacturers ranked MES highest for traceability and lowest for consumer complaints in terms of the way it could help manage FSMA.

When asked what they considered to be the top three benefits of Aptean's Ross ERP system, they listed access to analytics, increased response time and increased prevention.

"Aptean has enabled our team to maintain a higher level of accountability when it comes to all areas of our product. It tracks and traces every component from farm to fork," said Kelly Finch, director of technology at O-AT-KA Milk Products Corporation.

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