

Information on the organization of market surveillance in technical rationing and conformity assessment in the Republic of Belarus

The State Committee of Standardization (Gosstandart) of the Republic of Belarus, as per legislation on guaranteeing quality and safety of food and feed, deals with technical rationing and standardization, confirmation of compliance with the requirements of technical normative acts, state control and surveillance in the sphere of guaranteeing quality and safety in food and feed production and sale.

State monitoring

Within its competence, Gosstandart carries out systemic control and monitoring of the following: quality of the goods produced, compliance of legal entities and individual entrepreneurs with the requirements of normative acts while selling imported goods. The State monitors the requirements of technical regulations by performing testing sample at all the stages, from development of goods and setting them on production to production and sale. In its activity, Gosstandart is guided by the following legislative and technical normative acts:

- Law of the Republic of Belarus “On technical rationing and standardization”
- Law of the Republic of Belarus “On consumer rights protection”
- Law of the Republic of Belarus “On the assessment of conformity with the requirements of technical normative acts in the sphere of technical rationing and standardization”
- Law of the Republic of Belarus “On sanitary and epidemic well-being of the population”
- Law of the Republic of Belarus “On food and feed quality and safety for human health”
- Decree of the President of the Republic of Belarus “On accomplishment of controlling (monitoring) activity in the Republic of Belarus”
- Enactment of the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Belarus “On confirmation of rules of the procedure of executing state monitoring on conformity with the requirements of technical regulations and the rules of the procedure of state metrological monitoring”
- Offences Code of the Republic of Belarus, international normative acts on specific types of goods, interstate standards, state standards of the Republic of Belarus, technical conditions.

As a result of state monitoring, certain legal steps may be taken with respect to individual entrepreneurs and officials. This may include banning the sale of all products of the manufacturer concerned, banning the sale of checked batches of sub-standard or uncertified goods, instituting administrative proceedings, issuing instructions of return of goods from consumers, etc.

According to the Decree of the President of the Republic of Belarus “On accomplishment of controlling (monitoring) activity in the Republic of Belarus”, risk assessment and management techniques are introduced into the practice of state monitoring of conformity with the requirements of technical regulations and standards, as well as in all the other types

of control and monitoring in the country. The Decree also confirms “the criteria for assigning controlled subjects to risk groups and for setting regular checks”. Checks are set according to the risk groups (high, medium or low). Economic agents assigned to the high, medium and low risk group are exposed to regular checks no more frequent than once per year, once per three years and once per five years respectively. Non-regular checks, however, can be assigned for certain reasons, which are stipulated by the Decree. In technical rationing and the assessment of conformity with the requirements of technical normative acts, economic agents assigned to high risk groups are the ones who perform under special requirements stipulating the absence of unacceptable risk of harming human life, health and heredity, as well as property and environment, or the presence of information on harm caused to human life and health or environment. Economic agents assigned to the medium risk group are the ones who produce, exploit, store, transfer and sell goods or services for which there are special rules on technical and informational compatibility, product interchangeability and rational resource use. Monitored economic agents not assigned to any of these two groups are considered to be low risk. If state monitoring discovers that any goods pose a threat to life and health, the importing country is informed about this by means of CIS-operating “Opasnaya produktsiya” telecommunication system. In the framework of conformity assessment, products getting to the market are also controlled. The certification of finished foodstuff, as well as quality and safety management system at enterprises is a part of state regulation in the sphere of quality and safety of food and feed, along with the state hygienic registration of products, veterinary and sanitary monitoring and state monitoring of compliance with the requirement of technical regulations and standards. Products are certified by respective accredited bodies that are under the jurisdiction of various state agencies. For ensuring systemic management of safety and quality of food and feed, enterprises introduce management systems based on international standards such as ISO 9001 and HACCP. Besides, for purposes of following the integrated approach to guaranteeing safety and quality of food and feed at all stages of its life-cycle, ISO 22000 standard is being introduced at processing enterprises.

The Director of State Monitoring and Controlling Section of the State Standard Authority of the Republic of Belarus, V. Narygin