Strategic Inventory Control for Food and Perishables Training Course



07 - 11 Dec 2026

Cape town

4600 € (Per Person)

Ref: #IM5127_260472

Course Introduction / Overview:

Managing the flow of perishable goods is one of the most critical challenges in the modern supply chain. This training course offers a comprehensive exploration of the principles and practices essential for effective food and perishable goods inventory management. We delve into strategies that go beyond basic tracking to minimize spoilage, reduce waste, and enhance profitability while ensuring food safety and quality. Participants will learn to navigate the complexities of cold chain logistics, from temperature-controlled storage to last-mile delivery. The curriculum is built on foundational concepts like FIFO and FEFO, and it expands to cover advanced demand forecasting, modern warehouse management systems (WMS), and the integration of technologies like RFID and blockchain for superior traceability. As discussed by the renowned supply chain expert Dr. Donald Bowersox in his seminal work, "Supply Chain Logistics Management," a strategic approach to logistics is the cornerstone of competitive advantage. BIG BEN Training Center has designed this program to provide that strategic edge, blending proven theories with practical, real-world applications to master perishable product handling and optimize the entire food supply chain.

Target Audience / This training course is suitable for:

- Supply Chain Managers.
- Inventory Control Specialists.
- Warehouse Supervisors and Managers.
- Logistics Coordinators.
- Procurement and Purchasing Professionals.
- Food and Beverage Managers.
- Retail Store Managers.
- Quality Assurance and Control Personnel.
- Operations Managers in the food industry.
- Entrepreneurs in the food and grocery sector.

Target Sectors and Industries:

- Food and Beverage Manufacturing and Processing.
- Retail and Grocery Chains.
- Wholesale and Distribution Centers.
- Hospitality, including Hotels and Restaurants.
- Third-Party Logistics (3PL) and Cold Storage Providers.
- Agriculture and Fresh Produce Suppliers.
- Pharmaceuticals and Healthcare.
- Government and Public Health Agencies responsible for food safety and distribution.

Target Organizations Departments:

- Supply Chain and Logistics.
- Procurement and Purchasing.
- Warehouse and Distribution.
- Inventory Management and Control.
- Quality Assurance and Food Safety.
- Operations Management.
- Retail Operations.
- Finance and Cost Control.

Course Offerings:

By the end of this course, the participants will have able to:

- Implement First-In, First-Out (FIFO) and First-Expired, First-Out (FEFO) systems to minimize waste.
- Develop accurate demand forecasting models specific to perishable products.
- Optimize cold chain logistics and temperature-controlled storage operations.
- Utilize Warehouse Management Systems (WMS) for efficient food inventory tracking.
- Enhance traceability and transparency using technologies like RFID and lot tracking.
- Create effective strategies for reducing food spoilage and managing waste.
- Ensure compliance with food safety regulations and HACCP principles in inventory processes.
- Analyze inventory turnover and implement cost-saving measures.
- Manage supplier relationships to improve the reliability of the perishable supply chain.
- Conduct risk assessments and develop mitigation plans for supply chain disruptions.

Course Methodology:

This training course at BIG BEN Training Center employs a dynamic and interactive learning methodology designed for maximum knowledge retention and practical application. The approach is centered on participant engagement, moving beyond traditional lectures to create an immersive educational experience. Each session combines expert-led presentations with hands-on activities, including real-world case studies that challenge participants to solve complex issues in perishable inventory management. Group discussions and collaborative workshops encourage the sharing of diverse perspectives and experiences, fostering a rich learning environment. We will analyze challenges in perishable product handling, from dairy and meat inventory to fresh produce logistics. Practical exercises will cover topics like demand forecasting for fresh produce and implementing FEFO inventory methods. Participants will receive constructive feedback throughout the course, allowing them to refine their understanding and build confidence in applying these new skills directly to their work roles and improving their organization's food supply chain management.

Course Agenda (Course Units):

Unit One: Foundations of Perishable Inventory Management

- Introduction to the perishable goods supply chain.
- Unique characteristics and challenges of food inventory.
- The financial impact of spoilage, waste, and stockouts.
- Core principles: First-In, First-Out (FIFO) vs. First-Expired, First-Out (FEFO).
- Understanding product shelf life and date coding.
- Introduction to inventory costing methods for food products.
- Key performance indicators (KPIs) for perishable inventory.

Unit Two: Demand Forecasting and Inventory Planning

- Techniques for demand forecasting for perishable goods.
- Analyzing seasonality, promotions, and market trends.
- Calculating safety stock for items with short shelf lives.
- Inventory replenishment models (e.g., periodic vs. perpetual).
- Strategies for managing dairy, meat, and fresh produce inventory.
- Supplier collaboration and information sharing for better planning.
- Introduction to inventory optimization techniques.

Unit Three: Cold Chain Logistics and Warehouse Operations

- Fundamentals of cold chain management.
- Best practices for temperature-controlled storage and handling.
- Warehouse layout and design for perishable goods.
- Receiving and inspection processes for quality control.
- Order picking and fulfillment strategies to maintain the cold chain.
- Managing last-mile delivery for temperature-sensitive products.
- Energy efficiency and sustainability in cold storage.

Unit Four: Technology and Traceability in the Food Supply Chain

- Role of Warehouse Management Systems (WMS) in food logistics.
- Leveraging Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) systems.
- Barcode, RFID, and sensor technologies for real-time tracking.
- Implementing lot tracking and full traceability systems.
- The role of blockchain in ensuring food safety and transparency.
- Data analytics for improving inventory decisions.
- Software solutions for food and beverage inventory control.

Unit Five: Risk, Quality, and Strategic Management

- Identifying and mitigating risks in the perishable supply chain.
- HACCP and food safety regulations in inventory management.
- Developing a robust food spoilage and waste reduction program.
- Conducting inventory audits and cycle counts effectively.
- Lean principles applied to perishable inventory.
- Building a resilient and sustainable food supply chain.
- Final project: Developing a strategic inventory improvement plan.

FAQ:

Qualifications required for registering to this course?

There are no requirements.

How long is each daily session, and what is the total number of training hours for the course?

This training course spans five days, with daily sessions ranging between 4 to 5 hours, including breaks and interactive activities, bringing the total duration to 20 - 25 training hours.

Something to think about:

As technologies like blockchain and AI offer unprecedented traceability and predictive capabilities, how might their integration fundamentally reshape the ethical responsibilities and risk management strategies within the perishable goods supply chain?.

What unique qualities does this course offer compared to other courses?

This training course distinguishes itself by moving beyond theoretical knowledge to provide a deeply practical and strategic perspective on perishable inventory management. While other programs may focus narrowly on software or basic principles, this course integrates all facets of the food supply chain, from sourcing and cold storage management to last-mile delivery challenges. We emphasize the critical thinking needed to not just implement systems like FEFO, but to understand the strategic impact on profitability, food safety, and brand reputation. The curriculum is uniquely focused on contemporary issues, including sustainable supply chain practices, risk mitigation in a volatile global market, and the effective application of emerging technologies like blockchain for food traceability. Participants will not just learn what to do. they will understand why they are doing it, empowering them to develop innovative solutions and lead their organizations toward greater efficiency and resilience in the complex world of perishable goods.