

Supplier Facility Visit Checklist

What experienced sourcing teams actually evaluate at origin

Use this checklist* during or immediately after a supplier facility visit. The goal is not to fail suppliers, it's to understand what you're actually working with. The most important evaluations happen on the floor, not in the conference room.

1. Storage Conditions

- ☐ Raw material held properly before processing begins
No cross-contamination risk between raw and finished goods
 - ☐ Finished goods stored separately from raw inputs
Separate bays or clearly partitioned areas
 - ☐ Temperature and humidity actively managed (not just monitored)
Look for logs, sensors, or climate control systems in use
 - ☐ No product left exposed or unsealed between steps
Watch for open bags, uncovered bins, or product on the floor
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2. Day-to-Day Operations

- ☐ Workflow looks like a practiced routine, not a staged one
Observe staff movement and handling when no one is presenting
 - ☐ Processing steps are consistent and in the correct order
Ask to see a full production run, not just a demonstration
 - ☐ Staff handles product the same way across the facility
Watch areas away from the main tour path
 - ☐ No shortcuts visible under observation
Are safety and quality procedures followed without prompting?
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3. Answers vs. What You See

- ☐ Supplier can answer off-agenda questions confidently
Ask about something not on the itinerary and watch the response
- ☐ No redirection when asked to see unscheduled areas
Hesitation or avoidance is worth noting
- ☐ Claims about capacity match visible operation
What you're told about volume should match what you see running
- ☐ Quality standards described verbally are visible in practice
Are the specs they quote reflected in actual handling and storage?

*This guide does not replace or substitute for an audit of your Quality Assurance system.
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4. Traceability in Practice

- ☐ Supplier can trace a specific lot live, on the floor
Don't accept a document walk-through, ask to do it with real product
 - ☐ Records match physical product in real time
Check that lot numbers, dates, and quantities align on the floor
 - ☐ Traceability system doesn't require preparation to demonstrate
A well-run system should be accessible at any moment
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5. The Relationship Beyond the Sale

- ☐ Supplier communicates proactively, not just when things go well
Ask how they've handled a past supply problem and what they did
- ☐ They speak honestly about their own supply chain constraints
Evasiveness about limitations is a red flag
- ☐ You leave with confidence in long-term reliability
Not just the product, the people, the process, and the partnership

Notes from the visit
