SPECIALIZED PACKAGING MARKETPLACE . ASEPTIC BAG-IN-BOX

The Aseptic Bag-in-Box Supplier Qualification Checklist

How to qualify a second source without risking a single run.

The North American aseptic bag-in-box market is controlled by two suppliers, and they count on one thing, your fear of switching. This checklist removes it. It walks the disciplined, five-stage qualification that brings a second source up to proven, line-ready status while your incumbent stays in place the whole time. You are not switching. You are earning a choice. Work the boxes in order.

1 Spec and sample match

- [ ] Get real production samples, not renderings or marketing samples
- [ ] Confirm film structure fits your product, single web vs multi-ply
- [ ] Confirm barrier type suits your oxygen sensitivity, EVOH, metallized, or foil
- [ ] Confirm the fitment and spout type match your filler
- [ ] Confirm available bag sizes match your fill volumes, 3L to 1000L
- [ ] Get the full written spec sheet

2 Lab and barrier validation

- [ ] Validate oxygen transmission for your specific product
- [ ] Confirm the barrier holds for your required shelf life, 6 to 12 months ambient is typical
- [ ] Test for your exact product type, acidic, dairy, and particulate behave differently
- [ ] Confirm seal integrity testing
- [ ] Get documented test results in writing, not verbal assurances

3 Filler and fitment qualification

- [ ] Confirm the fitment seats and locks on your existing filler
- [ ] Run a fitment test on your actual filler model, not a generic one
- [ ] Confirm the connector type matches, the most common point of failure
- [ ] Confirm the supplier has run on your filler brand, or will support qualification
- [ ] Confirm cap and closure compatibility

4 The parallel run

- [ ] Keep your incumbent fully in place for the entire trial
- [ ] Run a limited-volume trial on your real line with real product
- [ ] Document fill speed, seal performance, leak rate, and swelling over time
- [ ] Hold finished product through its full shelf-life window and inspect
- [ ] Confirm the supplier supports you live during the trial

5 Phased volume transfer

- [ ] Move volume in stages, never all at once
- [ ] Keep the incumbent as a secondary source even after qualifying
- [ ] Set clear performance metrics for each phase
- [ ] Confirm lead times hold at higher volume
- [ ] Re-confirm complete shipments at scale

Six questions to ask before you qualify anyone

- [ ] What certifications do you hold? ISO, FDA, and BRC at minimum
- [ ] What is your real lead time at my volume?
- [ ] Will you run my sizes and my short runs?
- [ ] Who do I call at 2 a.m. when the line is down?
- [ ] Can you give references in my product category?
- [ ] What is your minimum order quantity, and how does it move the price?

Red flags. Walk away if you see these.

- X Leads with target price before understanding your product
- X Cannot or will not provide real samples
- X Vague or missing certifications
- X No named technical contact
- X Pushes you to switch fully instead of qualify
- X Cannot speak to fitment compatibility with your filler

Certifications to confirm

ISO
Quality management

FDA
Food contact compliance

BRC
Global food safety standard

The one rule that matters

Qualify, do not switch. The incumbent stays in place the whole time, and the risk you fear never shows up. A second source is leverage and insurance whether or not you ever move a single truckload.

Want a second source vetted for your specific product, by someone with 35 years in packaging and no stake in keeping you captive? That is the conversation to have. Reach me at the line below.