

HACCP Basics

Getting Started Checklist

A practical starting point for food businesses beginning to build or review a HACCP-based food safety system. This checklist covers the core building blocks — it isn't a substitute for a full HACCP plan tailored to your operation.

1 Before You Start

- ☐ Get visible commitment from management — HACCP needs time, resourcing and follow-through.
- ☐ Define the scope: which product(s), process(es) or site(s) this HACCP plan will cover.
- ☐ Assemble a HACCP team with knowledge across production, quality and (ideally) engineering/maintenance.
- ☐ Gather existing documentation: process flow, recipes/specifications, site layout, current SOPs.

2 Describe the Product and Process

- ☐ Write a product description: ingredients, intended use, and intended consumer.
- ☐ Draw a full process flow diagram, from receiving raw materials through to dispatch.
- ☐ Walk the floor and confirm the flow diagram matches what actually happens on site.

3 Apply the Seven HACCP Principles

1 Conduct a hazard analysis
Identify biological, chemical, physical and allergen hazards at each process step.

2 Determine Critical Control Points (CCPs)
Identify the points where control is essential to prevent or eliminate a hazard.

3 Establish critical limits
Set the measurable limit (e.g. temperature, time) for each CCP.

4 Establish monitoring procedures
Decide how, how often, and by whom each CCP will be checked.

5 Establish corrective actions
Define what happens when a critical limit isn't met.

6 Establish verification procedures
Confirm the system is working as intended (e.g. calibration, review, testing).

7

Establish record-keeping and documentation

Keep records that demonstrate the system is being followed in practice.

4

Keep Reviewing

- ☐ Review the HACCP plan whenever a product, process, or supplier changes.
- ☐ Reassess at least annually, even if nothing has obviously changed.
- ☐ Check the plan still reflects what's actually happening on the floor — not just what's on paper.

Want help applying this to your business?

SafeFood Pathways works with New Zealand food producers to build practical, audit-ready HACCP and food safety systems — from first plan through to certification. Get in touch for a consultation.

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