

# Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point system in meat plants

How to comply with food regulations that aim to reduce contamination of meat and maintain safety for consumers.

You are required by [EU Regulation 852/2004](#) (Article 5) to implement and maintain hygiene procedures based on Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) principles for meat plants.

The HACCP system is internationally accepted as the system of choice for food safety management.

The seven principles it is based on are to:

- identify any hazards that must be prevented eliminated or reduced
- identify the critical control points (CCPs) at the steps at which control is essential
- establish critical limits at CCPs
- establish procedures to monitor the CCPs
- establish corrective actions to be taken if a CCP is not under control
- establish procedures to verify whether the above procedures are working effectively
- establish documents and records to demonstrate the effective application of the above measures

The HACCP approach provides a systematic way of identifying food safety hazards and making sure that they are being controlled every day.

## Hazards

The seven principles aim to focus on the identification and control of hazards during production. These hazards include:

- microbiological
- chemical
- physical food safety hazards during production

## Microbiological hazards and pathogens

The hazard assessment and regular monitoring of critical control measures must be documented. These records will be the basis for audit checks and provide evidence of due diligence in the event of legal action.

HACCP plans will focus on control measures that can reduce the risk of contamination of meat from microbiological hazards during production. These include:

- [Salmonella](#)
- E.coli O157

- [Campylobacter](#)

These meat-borne pathogens can be carried by healthy animals and cannot be detected by sight or smell.

## **Bacteria**

Meat can be handled by lots of people before it is cooked and bacteria can spread to other foods. Thorough cooking will kill most bacteria.

Bacteria multiply very quickly, especially in warm conditions. Retailers and consumers need to take precautions including controlling temperature of the meat keeping raw meat, cooked meat and ready to eat foods separate.

## **Controls**

You have a legal obligation to make sure that food safety management is achieved by a combination of good hygiene practices and operational hygiene procedures.

These are covered in [Regulation 853/2004](#).

Guidance on these legal requirements can be found in the [Meat Industry Guide](#).

The Meat Industry Guide also has a chapter on HACCP. This includes a plan template and a general HACCP plan with selected steps for slaughter and cutting. We have a guide to completing a HACCP plan.

## **Documentation**

Records should be kept up to date as they provide evidence of your decisions and the reasoning behind them.

Visual monitoring will be necessary to ensure carcasses are free of visible faecal contamination. These records can be limited to 'exception reporting'. This means that you only need to make a record when there is a problem or something unusual happens. The record must include how this problem was resolved.

The HACCP approach involves four steps to help you:

- plan
- do
- check
- act

## **Operational hygiene controls**

Operational hygiene controls are required for:

- raw materials
- animal welfare and transport
- slaughter
- dressing

- storage
- cutting
- processing

You must document:

- HACCP plans
- staff instructions
- monitoring and corrective action procedures
- daily records

## **Plan**

Plan what needs to be done to maintain food safety and write it down. It is particularly important to:

- minimise the likelihood of food poisoning bacteria contaminating meat and associated products
- avoid physical and chemical contamination of meat
- reduce the potential for growth of food poisoning bacteria on meat and associated products
- minimise the potential for cross contamination of ready-to-eat foods by food poisoning bacteria on meat during processing or in the kitchen

When planning your approach to HACCP you should always pay attention to:

- hazards
- controls
- good hygiene practices
- operational hygiene controls
- documentation

Hazards cover microbiological, chemical and physical issues.

Controls and good hygiene practices include:

- maintenance
- cleaning
- pest control
- training
- personal hygiene
- traceability
- waste management
- wrapping and packaging
- transport

## **Do**

Do what you planned to do to maintain food safety and document these actions.

## **Check**

Check that you are doing what you planned to do to maintain food safety and write down what was checked and when.

You need to include checks of:

- supervision
- monitoring
- verification including micro testing
- reviewed documentation

## **Act**

Act to correct any food safety problems and write down what has been done about the problem and when.

## **Model documents**

Suggested HACCP model documents are available for food business operators to use or adapt to help manage food safety issues such as:

- maintenance
- cleaning staff
- training temperature checks

[View HACCP Model Plan as Word](#) (99.88 KB)

## **Food safety management (FSM) diary for meat producers**

This diary has been produced for meat producers to keep important information about the hygienic operation of their food business for the year.

[View Food safety diary as PDF](#) (765.45 KB)

## **HACCP training**

You need an understanding of HACCP principles so that you can set up and maintain HACCP based procedures. Staff should also be aware of the importance of these procedures.

Training is available from:

- local colleges
- specialist training companies and consultants
- in-house resources

HACCP training is more effective if it is directly related to the products that you handle.

An accredited one or two-day course [Meat Plant Manager's Hygiene & HACCP](#) is available with the [Food and Drink Training and Education Council](#) (formerly The Meat Training Council).

Contact [Food & Drink Sector Skills, Belfast](#).

## IMPORTANT

Other than in Northern Ireland, any references to EU Regulations in this guidance should be read as meaning retained EU law. You can access retained EU law via HM Government's [EU Exit Web Archive](#). This should be read alongside any EU Exit legislation that was made to ensure retained EU law operates correctly in a UK context. EU Exit legislation is on [legislation.gov.uk](#).

In Northern Ireland, EU law will continue to apply in respect to the majority of food and feed hygiene and safety law, as listed in the [Northern Ireland Protocol](#), and retained EU law will not apply to Northern Ireland in these circumstances.