

Advisory Note 20 Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP) - Proprietors

[The Food Hygiene \(England\) Regulations 2006](#) and [EC Regulation No. 852/2004](#) came into force in 1st January 2006 and introduced a requirement for food businesses operators to:

“....put in place, implement and maintain a permanent procedure or procedures based on HACCP principles.”

In simple terms this means that if you run a food business you must look at the operation from start to finish, decide which parts of it might lead to the food which you serve or sell becoming unsafe to eat and take action to prevent this from happening. As well as setting up the system you must also make sure that it is kept up to date.

Before starting to draw up a HACCP system you must make sure that your premises are in a good condition and that all the equipment and facilities that might be needed for it to operate hygienically are provided (e.g. enough sinks, wash basins, the premises are clean and free from pests etc.)

The HACCP List which is attached will help you to draw up your system.

Who should be involved in setting up the system?

The number of people who need to be involved will depend on the size of your business and the types of food you sell. In a small business such as a corner shop or take-away, it will usually be done by the owner or manager. In a larger operation such as a large restaurant several people, perhaps the manager and chefs may need to be involved.

In most cases you should be able to carry out the process yourselves. You can obtain outside help from a consultant if you wish. It is important that the people involved have had adequate food safety training so that they are able to decide where there is a risk to the safety of food. (The Regulations also made food safety training compulsory. Details of the level of training are contained in Advisory Note 22).

How detailed does my system need to be?

The amount of detail that should be included will depend on the types of food which are prepared, served or sold by your business. A HACCP based system for a business which is cooking or slicing roast meats will need to be more detailed than one for a greengrocers shop, as the risk of food poisoning is much greater.

Is there a standard system I can use?

Every food business is different, so every HACCP system will need to be slightly different. The idea of the Regulation is to get people running food businesses to look closely at their own operation and decide what they need to do to make sure that the food they sell is safe.

The Food Standards Agency has developed a pack to help small catering businesses such as restaurants, cafés and takeaways comply with new regulations that apply from 1 January 2006.

You can download the [full pack](#) in pdf format (2.65MB), as well as a [guide explaining how to use it](#).

More detail about SFBB

This pack has been developed by the Food Standards Agency, working with catering businesses, to be practical and easy to use. Using this pack will help you to:

- comply with the new regulations
- show what you do to make food safely
- train staff
- protect your business's reputation
- improve you business e.g. by wasting less food.

If you would like to order a hard copy of 'Safer food, better business' call 0845 606 0667 or email foodstandards@ecgroup.uk.com

Where do I start?

You will need to consider in detail every part of your food operation. The areas to be looked at will depend on your particular business but might include:

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Suppliers of food and ingredients	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• cooling
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• incoming deliveries	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• service or sale
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• storage of food and ingredients	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• cleanliness of equipment etc
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• preparation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• hygiene of food handlers
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• cooking	

What are the things that might make my food unsafe?

For each part of your business your business you need to decide what hazards might lead to food becoming unsafe to eat. These include: -

- bacteria or other organisms that cause food poisoning
- foreign material, such as glass, metal or plastic
- chemicals, for example cleaning products or pest baits.

The most important of these are food poisoning bacteria which can contaminate food and multiply to harmful levels.

Deciding how the hazards might affect the food

Food can pass through many steps such as delivery, storage, preparation, cooking, cooling and sale of service. Hazards can occur at any or all of these stages. For each part of your business you should identify the hazards that might occur. For example:

- food can become contaminated with bacteria, chemicals or foreign materials;
- food poisoning bacteria can grow to harmful levels if food is kept at the wrong temperature;
- bacteria can survive a process that should kill them, for example if food is not cooked properly or a slicing machine is not thoroughly cleaned and disinfected.

Once you have identified the hazards that might affect the food, you must decide which must be controlled if the food which is to be served or sold is to be safe. These are called **critical points**. For example:

- if food can become contaminated this may be a “critical point”. Controls might include making sure that a slicer used for cooked meat is clean;
- any cooking or reheating must be adequate to kill food poisoning bacteria. This will mean making sure that the cooking temperature is correct and the food is heated for long enough;
- the growth of bacteria must be controlled. The temperature at which food is stored and stock rotation may both be critical.

How can I deal with the hazards?

Once you have decided which points in the food handling process are “critical” to food safety, the next step is to decide what action needs to be taken to make sure that the hazards are dealt with. For example controls might include: -

- checking the temperature of incoming deliveries, making sure that they are free from pest and checking the use-by dates;
- making sure that the temperature of food stored in a fridge is correct by checking it regularly (i.e. twice a day);

- checking that food is hot enough. For example, by using a probe thermometer to measure the temperature of a joint of roast chicken or reheated lasagne;
- making sure that food which is to be stored in a fridge is dated, checking daily and throwing away food which is out of date.

What should I do if I find a problem?

If your checks show that there is a problem which might affect the safety of the food, it is essential that you take action. For example: -

- rejecting food which has been delivered at the wrong temperature and sending it back to your supplier;
- calling the engineer to repair fridge which is not operating properly and deciding whether it is safe to use the food which has been stored in it;
- cleaning and disinfecting equipment again which has not been cleaned properly. A cleaning schedule will help you to do this.

Keeping the system up to date

The Regulations say that the system must be kept up to date by reviewing it whenever any part of your business changes. For example, if you:

- change to a new supplier;
- decide to start slicing cooked meat instead of buying it pre-packed;
- change your menu;
- prepare food in advance and reheat it instead of serving it freshly cooked;
- change your cleaning chemicals.

Record keeping

The Regulations do now say that you have to keep records of your HACCP based system. Records will help you to make sure that your business is run properly and it will be much easier for you to show an officer from this Directorate that you have an acceptable system if you have records available. The records you keep will depend on your particular business but might include:

- records for checks on the temperatures of incoming deliveries
- temperature records for fridges and freezers. These should be checked at least daily
- production records if you are making large batches of food
- a cleaning schedule with records to show that equipment is checked to make sure that it has been cleaned properly
- pest control records
- staff food safety training records

Any records you keep may also help establish a “Due Diligence” defence (see advisory note 23) if legal proceedings are taken against you.

Where can I get more information?

If you would like to order a hard copy of 'Safer food, better business' call 0845 606 0667 or email foodstandards@ecgroup.uk.com

Other sources of information:

- Your Trade Association
- Local authorities, colleges and companies who run training course - a list is available from us at the address below
- Food Safety Consultants
- www.food.gov.uk
- [Business Newsletter](#):- 2006 Food Hygiene Regulations
- [Summary of main changes to hygiene regulations from 1st January 2006](#)

**For further Advice/Information contact
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