

FOOD



Hygiene in the food sector requires operators in the sector to prepare, implement and maintain a self-control procedure based on the **HACCP (Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points)**, system, which regulates correct hygiene practice in all activities in which the handling/processing of foodstuffs takes place.

HACCP SYSTEM AND RISK ANALYSIS

The HACCP system is based on 7 internationally recognised principles:

PRINCIPLE 1

Hazard identification and analysis

Identify potential hazards associated with the production of a foodstuff in all its phases, from growing or breeding, to production, distribution and consumption (e.g.: ingredients, processing, packaging, storage, distribution)

The hazards can be of different types:

BIOLOGICAL: contamination of foodstuff by living things (bacteria, mould, parasites, insects).

PHYSICAL: presence of foreign bodies (hairs, sand, wood, metal, etc.).

CHEMICAL: detergents, pesticides, drugs.

PRINCIPLE 2

CCP (critical control point) identification

Identify all those operations for which a preventive or control action is able to eliminate the hazard (e.g.: hand washing, adequate sanitation of toilets, work surface cleaning, use of suitable materials, etc.).

PRINCIPLE 3

Critical Limit definition

Establish critical limits that must be observed to ensure that each CCP is under control (e.g.: cooking time, temperature, storage humidity).

PRINCIPLE 4

Monitoring procedure definition

Implement a series of preventive actions and measurements to keep CCPs under control and within the safety limits (e.g.: supplier control, temperature control, hygiene control)

PRINCIPLE 5

Corrective action definition and planning

Establish in advance the actions to be carried out when monitoring indicates that a particular CCP is not under control (e.g.: extending the cooking temperature, etc.).

PRINCIPLE 6

Verification procedure definition

Establish verification procedures to confirm that the HACCP system is functioning effectively (e.g.: inspections, checks, internal and/or external feedback, chemical and microbiological analyses, fridge temperature verification).

PRINCIPLE 7

Registration procedure definition

Prepare appropriate documentation regarding all registration procedures appropriate to these principles and their applications. The documentation must be signed by the person responsible for the HACCP plan and, in fact, a large part of the official controls (inspections and audits) by the health and safety services are based on it.



HYGIENE IN FOOD AREAS

During the production/processing of foodstuffs, special precautions must be taken in relation to transport, storage, handling, refrigeration, freezing, cooking of the foodstuffs themselves. To achieve adequate hygiene levels, the following are essential: thorough cleaning/disinfection of environments and processing equipment, avoiding that food and/or organic residues remain on the equipment, hygiene of personnel (with particular attention to frequent hand washing with appropriate products) and cleaning of the clothes worn (lab coats, overalls, gloves, etc.). These are some of the good equipment cleaning standards:

WASHING OVENS, PLATES AND GRILLS

Burnt fats that are also carcinogenic, alter the taste of food and produce unpleasant odours. If the oven is not cleaned, it becomes a container of micro-organisms. Descaling is important for the correct functioning of equipment and good thermal efficiency, to eliminate unpleasant odours and to avoid the accumulation of dirt.

WASHING HOODS AND FILTERS

The hood must be clean to prevent dissolved fats from falling onto food. The filters must be cleaned to allow proper vapour suction and air filtering.

WASHING PASTA COOKERS AND KETTLES

Proper cleaning of pasta cookers and kettles is important to avoid that starch and fat residues are cooked again, thus polluting subsequent cooking and altering the taste of the food.

In addition to above, the following cleaning operations, are recommended:

- Cold store cleaning for good food preservation and to eliminate the proliferation of mould and unpleasant odours.
- Cleaning of rubbish bins to eliminate the odour that forms from rotting waste and for reasons of hygiene (reduction of infestations).
- Cleaning of toilets to improve the working environment, reduce the risk of microbiological transmission and eliminate unpleasant odours.
- Cleaning of handles to minimise the risk of cross contamination
- Floor cleaning, since 80% of dirt ends up on the floor.

Personal hygiene is essential in environments in contact with food. Proper hand washing is therefore recommended:

- on starting work
- between processing of two different raw materials
- on leaving the toilet
- after processing any dirty product

The correct use of gloves, which do not replace hand washing, is essential. They must be changed or removed after contact with the contaminated part of the environment.



For further information on hand hygiene please go to the “Hand Hygiene” page

The Sutter Professional range includes products dedicated to the food processing sector that needs to achieve high standards of cleanliness and sanitation. Expert consultants are available to customers for the creation of customised cleaning procedures in this sector.

