TrainUp

Principles of HACCP for a commercial kitchen

HACCP – Hazard Analysis of Critical Control Points

Controlling and monitoring of what goes on in your business is an integral part of your food safety management system. However, it will only be effective if you and your team are committed to it; and if you use it properly.

- You must set the standards and objectives
- You must provide adequate resources and establish systems and controls, including proper documentation
- You must communicate these standards to your team
- You must train and help to motivate the staff to ensure their competence to produce safe food; especially in relation to the control of hazards
- You must provide effective supervision; and monitor, analyse and compare actual standards with those required. If necessary you must take corrective action and improve performance to facilitate achievement of objectives

Monitoring of all food operations is essential to:

- Confirm that your standards are met
- Ensure that all food produced is safe, wholesome and of good quality
- Ensure compliance with legislation and exhibit due diligence
- Identify any possible sources of contamination
- Minimize complaints
- Assist in the development of a food safety culture

Necessary requirements for a HACCP system

Prior to implementing a HACCP system it is essential to have good practices in place. These will include the following;

- Approved suppliers who have committed themselves to good working practices.
- Premises and equipment capable of handling the amount of food that you wish to produce. They should be well designed, constructed and maintained
- Provision of potable water for food production (including ice)
- Managers and staff (especially food handlers) should be well trained in their work tasks and understand what is expected of them. They should have high standards of personal hygiene.
- An effective and planned cleaning and disinfection schedule
- Pest control measures
- Good stock rotation both of high risk foods and dry goods
- Washing of fruit and vegetables and any other food that may be served as a ready-to-eat item
- Waste management measures
- Effective traceability and labelling of all food produced

Once you have established the CRITICAL CONTROL POINTS you should construct a simple flow chart.

Conduct a Hazard Analysis

Hazard analysis includes the following;

- Identify the hazards that may affect a process
- Identify the steps at which the hazards are likely to occur
- Deciding which hazards are significant i.e their elimination or reduction to acceptable levels is essential to the production of safe food
- Determining the measures necessary to control the hazards

Remembering that a Hazard is something that has the potential to cause harm; in food production they may be either Biological (bacterial/microbial); Chemical (including allergens/pesticides/additives) or Physical (dust/metal particles/string/hair/ etc).

Determine the Critical Control Points

Critical Control Points are those steps in the process where you can prevent, eliminate or reduce a hazard to an acceptable level. A failure to apply the necessary control measures will result in food poisoning, injury or harm.

In an establishment where it may be said that all of the food is treated as HIGH RISK the HACCP can be used as a generic tool, not changed and adapted to each meal or dish produced.

Monitoring measures must allow for rapid detection and correction and could include any or all of the following;

- Time in or out of temperature control
- Core temperature
- Visual/Organoleptic testing (smell, touch, appearance)
- Ph levels
- Audits

It should be clear WHAT the critical limits are; HOW the monitoring should be undertaken; WHERE the monitoring should be undertaken; WHEN the monitoring should be undertaken and WHO is responsible for the monitoring.

Monitoring should be cost-effective and sufficient to ensure that any hazard is controlled. Corrective measures should be in place in cases where the control measures have been exceeded. Monitoring will inevitably include written records as a way of displaying due diligence. The key areas to consider are the “Four Cs” of food hygiene; cleaning, chilling, cooking and cross-contamination (prevention).

Thought should also be given to the following important measures;

1. Effective hand washing
2. Effective cleaning and disinfection
3. Prevention of physical hazards
4. Prevention of chemical hazards
5. Double wash ready-to-eat fruit and vegetables
6. Refrigeration of ALL raw perishable food below 13ºC (potatoes etc)
7. Cooking to kill salmonella (above 71ºC for 5 seconds)

8. Hot holding above 63ºC
9. Cooling from above 63ºC to 7ºC within 90 minutes
10. Refrigerating HIGH RISK foods below 7ºC if kept for less than 4 days
11. Cold salad sandwiches precooled to below 10ºC
12. Leftovers should never be mixed or fresh added to old food