

Overview of Food Safety Systems for Retail Meat Operations

A key aspect of the successful management of any business is to ensure that desired practices are consistently maintained. The best way to achieve this is to make a “system” which outlines the actions which are required and documents that goals have been achieved. The approach explained in this manual relies on what is known as a Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (or HACCP) system to control food safety hazards.

The development of a HACCP based system requires building two components, the prerequisite programs and what are called HACCP plans. These two parts of the HACCP based system differ in the types of hazards they are designed to control. Prerequisite programs are generally constructed to target hazards which are common to many production processes. HACCP plans are built upon the foundation provided by the prerequisite programs and focus primarily on controlling significant hazards which are likely to arise during specific production processes. The diagram below shows the structure of a typical HACCP based system for a full service retail meat operation. Note that most prerequisite programs are also applicable to businesses providing case-ready products.

HACCP Based Food Safety System for a Full Service Retail Meat Operation



All materials in this manual can be downloaded in Microsoft Word format from the Internet at www.goodretailpractices.net
Written programs and form templates can be modified to suit the specific requirements of individual operations or used as is.

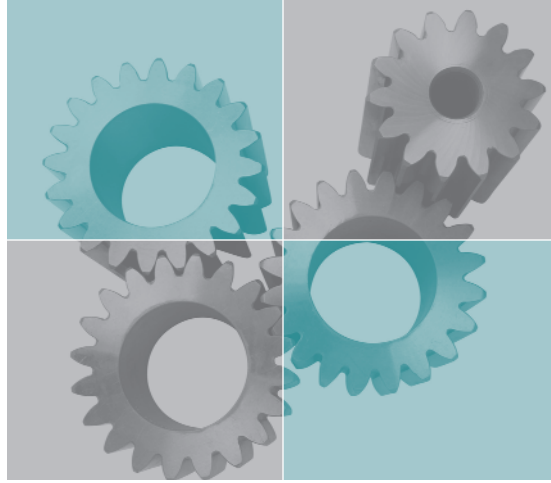


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Developing Prerequisite Programs

Prerequisite programs provide the foundation upon which HACCP based food safety systems are built. In this first section of the manual the development of the nine prerequisite programs commonly required by retail meat operations (as well as for other perishable goods) will be addressed. The prerequisite programs and their functions are outlined below.

Prerequisite Program	Major Function
Receiving	Inspection of trailers and products upon arrival to ensure food materials and packaging are suitable for use.
Storage	Control of hazards which may occur during storage of meat and packaging.
Display	Ensures food safety requirements are met during display of products for retail sale.
Recall Preparedness	Maintains readiness in the event of a recall of food products.
Sanitation	Outlines procedures for effective cleaning and sanitation.
Pest Control	Control of pests and related hazards.
Maintenance	Control of hazards which might arise from improperly maintained equipment or during maintenance activities themselves.
Hygiene Training	Provides employees with basic knowledge of procedures and policies required to ensure that hygiene requirements are met.
Premises	Ensures that facilities are adequate for food production activities.

Example *written programs* for each prerequisite will be developed which outline the procedures and policies to be followed as well as methods for employee training and record keeping. Sample logs and other supporting records will also be provided.

The recommendations in this manual are designed to assist retail meat operations to establish HACCP based food safety systems in the most straightforward manner with a minimum of record keeping. Requirements of individual operations may vary and management, corporate food safety specialists and, when necessary, local regulatory authorities should be consulted in any area where uncertainty exists.