**ASEAN Guidelines on Inspection and Certification of Food Hygiene**

**SECTION 1 INTRODUCTION**

1. This document is intended to provide practical guidance to assist the national government, and their competent authority[[1]](#footnote-1) in inspection and certification of food hygiene. It highlights the key principles and core elements of an efficient and effective inspection and certification system of food hygiene.
2. This guidance is intended for the implementation of the ASEAN Common Food Control Requirements (ACFCR) - ASEAN General Principles of Food Hygiene.
3. A competent authority may apply these principles and guidelines, where appropriate, according to their particular situations should allow for flexibility and modification as required to ensure the objectives can be achieved.

## **SECTION 2: SCOPE**

5. This document provides guidelines for competent authorities in conducting inspection, and certification of Food Hygiene. This document also provides checklist for food hygiene inspection of food establishment.

6. This guideline is designed according to the requirements as in the ASEAN Common Food Control Requirements (ACFCR) - ASEAN General Principles of Food Hygiene.

**SECTION 3: DEFINITION**

7. “Certification” means the procedure by which official certification bodies and officially recognized bodies provide written or equivalent assurance that foods or food control systems conform to requirements. Certification of food may be, as appropriate, based on a range of inspection activities which may include continuous on-line inspection, auditing of quality assurance systems, and examination of finished products.

8. “Competent Authority” means the official government agency having jurisdiction having jurisdiction.

9. “Food” means any substance, whether processed, semi-processed or raw, which is intended for human consumption, and includes drinks, chewing gum and any substance which has been used in the manufacture, preparation or treatment of ‘food’ but does not include cosmetics or tobacco or substances used only as drugs.

10. “Food establishment” means any building or are in which food is handled and the surroundings under the control of the same management.

11. “Inspection” means the examination of food or systems for control of food, raw materials, processing and distribution, including in-process and finished product testing, in order to verify that they conform to requirements.

12. “Official inspection systems and official certification systems” are systems administered by a government agency having jurisdiction empowered to perform a regulatory or enforcement function or both.

13. “Officially recognized inspection systems and officially recognized certification systems” are systems which have been formally approved or recognized by a government agency having jurisdiction.

**SECTION 4 – PRINCIPLE OF INSPECTION**

14. The competent authority should follow the following Principles when conducting the inspection and certification on food hygiene

1. **Principle A**

15. Inspections should be outcome focused, transparent, evidence-based and conducted in a cooperative, ethical and professional manner, respecting confidential information where appropriate.

1. **Principle B**

16. The competent authority should establish the scope and objectives of the inspection and appropriate tools for the conduct of the inspection prior to its commencement.

1. **Principle C**

17. The inspection process should be planned, systematic, transparent, consistent, fully documented and well communicated.

1. **Principle D**

18. Define corrective actions, timeframes and follow-up verification procedures should be clearly established and documented.

1. **Principle E**

19. The final assessment report should be accurate and transparent and may be published respecting confidentiality of information, where appropriate.

**SECTION 5 – CERTIFICATION SYSTEM**

20. Certification should provide assurance that a food inspection system conforms to specified requirements, and will be based, as appropriate, on:

– regular checks by the inspection service;

– analytical results;

– evaluation of quality assurance procedures linked to compliance with specified requirements;

– any inspections specifically required for the issuance of a certificate.

21. Competent authorities should take all necessary steps to ensure the integrity, impartiality and independence of official certification systems and officially-recognized certification systems. They should ensure that personnel empowered to validate certificates are appropriately trained and fully aware, if necessary from notes of guidance, of the significance of the contents of each certificate which they complete.

22. Certification procedures should include procedures to ensure the authenticity and validity of certificates at all the relevant stages and to prevent fraudulent certification. In particular, personnel:

– should not certify matters without their personal knowledge or which cannot be ascertained by them;

– should not sign blank or incomplete certificates, or certificates for products which have not been produced under appropriate control programmes. Where a certificate is signed on the basis of another supporting document, the person signing the certificate should be in possession of that document;

– should have no direct commercial interest in the products being certified.

**SECTION 6 - CONDUCTING INSPECTION**

23. The competent authority should conduct inspection based on the element in the Checklist as contained in the Annex 1 of this Guidelines.

24. The checklist in Annex 1 is developed according to the requirements of ASEAN General Principles of Food Hygiene and provide only generic checklist that can be modified to suit particular food commodity/processes.

**SECTION 7 – VERIFICATION OF COMPLIANCE TO HACCP SYSTEM**

25. If HACCP system is required for particular food commodity/processes, it is recommended that the checklist in Annex 2 is utilized to verify its adequacy.

26. The checklist based the requirements to the ACFCR: ASEAN General Principles of Food Hygiene

**ANNEX 1 – CHECKLIST FOR INSPECTION AND CERTIFICATION OF FOOD HYGIENE**

The checklist is developed according to the requirements of ACFCR Guideline on Food Hygiene

This is a generic checklist and can be modified to suit particular food commodity

| **Main topics** | **Checklist** | **COMPLY** | **NON COMPLY** | **NA** | **Comment/Evidence** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 1.Primary production  Primary production should be managed in a way that ensures that food is safe and suitable for its intended use. Where necessary, this will include:  − avoiding the use of areas where the environment poses a threat to the safety of food;  − controlling contaminants, pests and diseases of animals and plants in such a way as not to pose a threat to food safety;  − adopting practices and measures to ensure food is produced under appropriately hygienic conditions. | 1.1 Environmental Hygiene |  |  |  |  |
| 1.2 Hygienic Production of Food Sources |  |  |  |  |
| 1.3 Handling, Storage and Transport |  |  |  |  |
| 1.4 Cleaning, Maintenance and Personnel Hygiene at Primary Production |  |  |  |  |
| 2. ESTABLISHMENT: DESIGN AND FACILITIES  Depending on the nature of the operations, and the risks associated with them, premises, equipment and facilities should be located, designed and constructed to ensure that:  − contamination is minimized;  − design and layout permit appropriate maintenance, cleaning and disinfections and minimize air-borne contamination;  − surfaces and materials, in particular those in contact with food, are non-toxic in intended use and, where necessary, suitably durable, and easy to maintain and clean;  − where appropriate, suitable facilities are available for temperature, humidity and other controls; and  − there is effective protection against pest access and harbourage. | 2.1 LOCATION  2.1.1 Establishments  2.1.2 Equipment |  |  |  |  |
| 2.2 PREMISES AND ROOMS  2.2.1. Design and layout  2.2.2 Internal structures and fittings  2.2.3 Temporary/mobile premises and vending machines |  |  |  |  |
| 2.3 EQUIPMENT  2.3.1 General  2.3.1.1 Equipment and containers (other than once-only use containers and packaging) coming into contact with food, should be designed and constructed to ensure that, where necessary, they can be adequately cleaned, disinfected and maintained to avoid the contamination of food  2.3.1.2 Equipment and containers should be made of materials with no toxic effect in intended use  2.3.1.3 Where necessary, equipment should be durable and movable or capable of being disassembled to allow for maintenance, cleaning, disinfection, monitoring and, for example, to facilitate inspection for pests  2.3.2 Food control and monitoring equipment  2.3.3 Containers for waste and inedible substances |  |  |  |  |
| 2.4 FACILITIES  2.4.1 Water supply  2.4.2 Drainage and waste disposal  2.4.3 Cleaning  2.4.4 Personnel hygiene facilities and toilets  2.4.5 Temperature control  2.4.6 Air quality and ventilation  2.4.7 Lighting  2.4.8 Storage |  |  |  |  |
| 3. CONTROL OF OPERATION  To produce food which is safe and suitable for human consumption by:  − formulating design requirements with respect to raw materials, composition, processing, distribution, and consumer use to be met in the manufacture and handling of specific food items; and  − designing, implementing, monitoring and reviewing effective control systems. | 3.1 CONTROL OF FOOD HAZARDS |  |  |  |  |
| 3.2 KEY ASPECTS OF HYGIENE CONTROL SYSTEMS  3.2.1 Time and temperature control  3.2.2 Specific process steps  3.2.3 Microbiological and other specifications  3.2.4 Microbiological cross-contamination  3.2.5 Physical and chemical contamination |  |  |  |  |
| 3.3 INCOMING MATERIAL REQUIREMENTS |  |  |  |  |
| 3.4 PACKAGING |  |  |  |  |
| 3.5 WATER  3.5.1 In contact with food  3.5.2 As an ingredient  3.5.3 Ice and steam |  |  |  |  |
| 3.6 MANAGEMENT AND SUPERVISION |  |  |  |  |
| 3.7 DOCUMENTATION AND RECORDS |  |  |  |  |
| 3.8 RECALL PROCEDURES |  |  |  |  |
| 4. ESTABLISHMENT: MAINTENANCE AND SANITATION  To establish effective systems to:  − ensure adequate and appropriate maintenance and cleaning;  − control pests;  − manage waste; and  − monitor effectiveness of maintenance and sanitation procedures. | 4.1 MAINTENANCE AND CLEANING  4.1.1 General  4.1.1.1 Establishments and equipment should be kept in an appropriate state of repair and condition to:  • facilitate all sanitation procedures;  • function as intended, particularly at critical steps (see 3.1);  • prevent contamination of food, e.g. from metal shards, flaking plaster, debris and chemicals.  4.1.1.2 Cleaning should remove food residues and dirt which may be a source of contamination  4.1.1.3 Disinfection may be necessary after cleaning  4.1.1.4 Cleaning chemicals should be handled and used carefully and in accordance with manufacturers’ instructions and stored, where necessary, separated from food, in clearly identified containers to avoid the risk of contaminating food  4.1.2 Cleaning procedures and methods |  |  |  |  |
| 4.2 CLEANING PROGRAMMES |  |  |  |  |
| 4.3 PEST CONTROL SYSTEMS  4.3.1 General  4.3.1.1 Good hygiene practices should be employed to avoid creating an environment conducive to pests.  4.3.1.2 Good sanitation, inspection of incoming materials and good monitoring can minimize the likelihood of infestation and thereby limit the need for pesticides  4.3.2 Preventing access  4.3.3 Harbourage and infestation  4.3.4 Monitoring and detection  4.3.5 Eradication |  |  |  |  |
| 4.4 WASTE MANAGEMENT |  |  |  |  |
| 4.5 MONITORING EFFECTIVENESS |  |  |  |  |
| 5. ESTABLISHMENT: PERSONAL HYGIENE  To ensure that those who come directly or indirectly into contact with food are not likely to contaminate food by:  − maintaining an appropriate degree of personal cleanliness;  − behaving and operating in an appropriate manner. | 5.1 HEALTH STATUS |  |  |  |  |
| 5.2 ILLNESS AND INJURIES |  |  |  |  |
| 5.3 PERSONAL CLEANLINESS |  |  |  |  |
| 5.4 PERSONAL BEHAVIOUR |  |  |  |  |
| 5.5 VISITORS |  |  |  |  |
| 6. TRANSPORTATION  Measures should be taken where necessary to:  − protect food from potential sources of contamination;  − protect food from damage likely to render the food unsuitable for consumption; and  − provide an environment which effectively controls the growth of pathogenic or spoilage micro-organisms and the production of toxins in food. | 6.1 GENERAL  6.1.1 Food must be adequately protected during transport.    6.1.2 .The type of conveyances or containers required depends on the nature of the food and the conditions under which it has to be transported. |  |  |  |  |
| 6.2 REQUIREMENTS  6.2.1 Where necessary, conveyances and bulk containers should be designed and constructed so that they:  • do not contaminate foods or packaging;  • can be effectively cleaned and, where necessary, disinfected;  • permit effective separation of different foods or foods from non-food items where necessary during transport;  • provide effective protection from contamination, including dust and fumes;  • can effectively maintain the temperature, humidity, atmosphere and other conditions necessary to protect food from harmful or undesirable microbial growth and deterioration likely to  render it unsuitable for consumption; and  • allow any necessary temperature, humidity and other conditions to be checked. |  |  |  |  |
| 6.3 USE AND MAINTENANCE |  |  |  |  |
| 7. PRODUCT INFORMATION AND CONSUMER AWARENESS  Products should bear appropriate information to ensure that:  − adequate and accessible information is available to the next person in the food chain to enable them to handle, store, process, prepare and display the product safely and correctly;  − the lot or batch can be easily identified and recalled if necessary. Consumers should have enough knowledge of food hygiene to enable them to:  − understand the importance of product information;  − make informed choices appropriate to the individual; and  − prevent contamination and growth or survival of foodborne pathogens by storing, preparing and using it correctly.  Information for industry or trade users should be clearly distinguishable from consumer information, particularly on food labels. | 7.1 LOT IDENTIFICATION |  |  |  |  |
| 7.2 PRODUCT INFORMATION |  |  |  |  |
| 7.3 LABELLING |  |  |  |  |
| 7.4 CONSUMER EDUCATION |  |  |  |  |
| 8. TRAINING  Those engaged in food operations who come directly or indirectly into contact with food should be trained, and/or instructed in food hygiene to a level appropriate to the operations they are to perform. | 8.1 AWARENESS AND RESPONSIBILITIES |  |  |  |  |
| 8.2 TRAINING PROGRAMMES |  |  |  |  |
| 8.3 INSTRUCTION AND SUPERVISION |  |  |  |  |
| 8.4 REFRESHER TRAINING |  |  |  |  |

**ANNEX 2 – CHECKLIST FOR INSPECTION AND CERTIFICATION OF HACCP**

The checklist is developed according to the requirements of ACFCR Guideline on Food Hygiene

This is a generic checklist and can be modified to suit particular food commodity. The nature and size of operations should also be taken into account.

| **Main topics** | **Checklist** | **COMPLY** | **NON COMPLY** | **NA** | **Comment/Evidence** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Application of HACCP System | Organization has in place prerequisite program such as good hygienic practices according to ACFCR: ASEAN Guideline on Food Hygiene. |  |  |  |  |
| Management awareness and commitment support for implementation of an effective HACCP system. |  |  |  |  |
| 1. Assemble HACCP Team | 1.1 HACCP team and HACCP team leader are nominated in organization. |  |  |  |  |
| 1.2 HACCP team is multidisciplinary and includes person with specific expertise and knowledgeable on product. |  |  |  |  |
| 1.3 List of HACCP team members is available and updated. |  |  |  |  |
| 1.4 Scope of HACCP plan, describing the segment of food chain involved and classes of hazards to be addressed, is identified. |  |  |  |  |
| 2. Describe Product | 2.1 A full product description is corresponded in HACCP study which includes : |  |  |  |  |
| 2.1.1 Product compositions. |  |  |  |  |
| 2.1.2 Physical/chemical structures (including Aw, pH, etc). |  |  |  |  |
| 2.1.3 Microcidal /static treatments (heat-treatment, freezing, brining, smoking, etc) |  |  |  |  |
| 2.1.4 Packaging |  |  |  |  |
| 2.1.5 Information on label |  |  |  |  |
| 2.1.6 Shelf life and storage conditions |  |  |  |  |
| 2.1.7 Method of distribution |  |  |  |  |
| 2.1.8 Information on label are complied with information stated in product description. |  |  |  |  |
| 3. Identify Intended Use | 3.1 The expected uses of product by the end user or consumer is used for identifying intended use. |  |  |  |  |
| 3.2 Group of potential end users or consumers is listed. |  |  |  |  |
| 3.3 Vulnerable groups of the population, e.g. institutional feeding, are listed, if applicable. |  |  |  |  |
| 4. Construct Flow Diagram | 4.1 Flow diagram is constructed in HACCP study by HACCP team. |  |  |  |  |
|  | 4.2 Flow diagram covers all steps in the operation for a specific product, including all raw materials, packaging material, reprocess, utilities use in operation and transportation of finished product. |  |  |  |  |
|  | 4.3 When applying HACCP to a given operation, consideration should be given to steps preceding and following the specified operation. |  |  |  |  |
| 5. On-site Confirmation of Flow Diagram | 5.1 HACCP team, including a person or persons with sufficient knowledge of the processing operation, confirms the processing operation against the flow diagram during all stages and hours of operation and amends the flow diagram where appropriate. |  |  |  |  |
| 6. List all potential hazards associated with each step, conduct a hazard analysis, and consider any measures to control identified hazards | 6.1 Potential hazard(s) at each step according to the scope from primary production, processing, manufacture, and distribution until the point of consumption, are listed, where necessary. Potential hazards include physical hazard, chemical hazard, and biological hazard. |  |  |  |  |
| 6.2 The hazard analysis is conducted to identify for the HACCP plan, which hazards are of such a nature that their elimination or reduction to acceptable levels is essential to the production of a safe food. |  |  |  |  |
| 6.3 Wherever possible, the following should be included when  conducting the hazard analysis:   * the likely occurrence of hazards and severity of their   adverse health effects.   * the qualitative and/or quantitative evaluation of the presence of hazards. * survival or multiplication of microorganisms of concern. * production or persistence in foods of toxins, chemicals or physical agent. * conditions leading to the above. |  |  |  |  |
| 6.4 The control measure(s) for each of identified hazard are described in hazard analysis. |  |  |  |  |
| 6.5 During hazard identification, evaluation, and subsequent operations in designing and applying HACCP systems, consideration must be given to the impact of   * raw materials, * ingredients, * food manufacturing practices, * role of manufacturing processes to control hazards, * likely end-use of the product, * categories of consumers of concern, and  - epidemiological evidence relative to food safety. |  |  |  |  |
| 7. Determine Critical Control Points | 7.1 The appropriated logic reasoning approach, such as decision tree, is used for determination of the CCPs in the HACCP system. |  |  |  |  |
| 7.2 Application of a logic reasoning approach, or a decision tree, are appropriated as flexible, given whether the operation is for production, slaughter, processing, storage, distribution or other. |  |  |  |  |
| 7.3 HACCP team understands the principle and application of a logic reasoning approach, or a decision tree. |  |  |  |  |
| 7.4 If a hazard has been identified at a step where control is necessary for safety, and no control measure exists at that step, or any other, then the product or process should be modified at that step, or at any earlier or later stages, to include a control measure. |  |  |  |  |
| 8. Establish Critical Limit for each CCP | 8.1 The critical limit for each CCP must be specified and validated. |  |  |  |  |
| 8.2 Criteria for critical limit are appropriated with conditions of that production process, such as measurement of temperature, time, moisture level, pH, Aw, available chlorine, and sensory parameters such as visual appearance and texture. |  |  |  |  |
| 8.3 Critical limit(s) are measurable. |  |  |  |  |
| 9. Establish a Monitoring System for each CCP | 9.1 There is a monitoring procedure for each CCP relative to its critical limit(s) and the monitoring procedure must be able to detect loss of control at the CCP. |  |  |  |  |
| 9.2 Monitoring procedure in HACCP plan includes responsible person, frequency of monitor, method of monitoring, point of monitoring, and record of monitoring. |  |  |  |  |
| 9.3 Monitoring procedure provides the information in time to make adjustments to ensure control of the process to prevent violating the critical limits. |  |  |  |  |
| 9.4 Where possible, process adjustments are made when monitoring results indicate a trend towards loss of control at a CCP. The adjustments are taken before a deviation occurs. |  |  |  |  |
| 9.5 Data derived from monitoring are evaluated by designated person with knowledge and authority to carry out corrective actions when indicated. |  |  |  |  |
| 9.6 Persons who conduct monitoring at CCP must be competence and knowledgeable. They understand the actions to be taken when there is any deviation of CCP monitoring result. |  |  |  |  |
| 9.7 If monitoring is not continuous, then the amount or frequency of monitoring must be sufficient to guarantee the CCP is in control. |  |  |  |  |
| 9.8 All records and documents associated with monitoring CCPs must be signed by the person(s) doing the monitoring and by a responsible reviewing official(s) of the company. |  |  |  |  |
| 10. Establish Corrective Actions | 10.1 Specific corrective actions must be developed for each CCP in the HACCP system in order to deal with deviations when they occur. |  |  |  |  |
| 10.2 Corrective actions in HACCP plan include responsible persons, details of correction and corrective actions (both with product and process), and record of corrective action. |  |  |  |  |
| 10.3 Whenever any deviation of CCP occurred, the effective corrective actions are taken according to activities stated in HACCP plan and must be ensure that the CCP has been brought under control. |  |  |  |  |
| 10.4 Corrective actions taken must also include proper disposition of the affected product. Products produce during deviation of CCP occurred must be segregated and identified. |  |  |  |  |
| 10.5 Deviation and product disposition procedures must be documented. |  |  |  |  |
| 10.6 In case of repeated incident of CCP deviation, the root cause of this deviation is investigated and, if necessary, updated the HACCP plan. |  |  |  |  |
| 10.7 Records of correction/corrective action taken are available. |  |  |  |  |
| 11. Establish Verification Procedures | 11.1 Verification procedure (verification plan) with defined frequency is established and implemented. |  |  |  |  |
| 11.2 The frequency of verification should be sufficient to confirm that the HACCP system is implemented effectively. |  |  |  |  |
| 11.3 Organization conduct at least the following verification activities:   * Review of the HACCP system and its records. * Review of deviation and product dispositions. * Confirmation that CCPs are kept under control. |  |  |  |  |
| 11.4 Verification should not be carried out by person who is responsible for performing the monitoring and corrective actions. Where certain verification activities cannot be performed in house, verification should be performed on behalf of the business by external experts or qualified third parties. |  |  |  |  |
| 11.5 Actions to confirm the efficacy of all elements of the HACCP system are included in validation activity. |  |  |  |  |
| 11.6 The HACCP application is reviewed and necessary changes when any modification is made in the product, process, or any step. |  |  |  |  |
| 12. Establish Documentation and Record Keeping | 12.1 HACCP procedures (documentation and records) are documented and kept for at least (3) years. Documentation examples are:  • Hazard analysis; • CCP determination; • Critical limit determination. • Record examples are:  - CCP monitoring activities;  - Deviations and associated corrective actions;  - Verification procedures performed;  - Modifications to the HACCP plan; |  |  |  |  |
| 12.2 There are appropriate documentation and record keeping system to assist the business to verify that the HACCP controls are in place and maintained. |  |  |  |  |
| 12.3 A simple record-keeping system is developed to communicate to employees easily and effectively. It may be integrated into existing operations and use existing paperwork. |  |  |  |  |
| 13. Training | 13.1 HACCP team members and personnel monitoring at CCP are regularly trained on HACCP principles and applications. |  |  |  |  |

1. Throughout the document “competent authority” refers to one or more competent authorities as appropriate [↑](#footnote-ref-1)