

Food Hygiene

General Principles

- To identify the *essential principles of food hygiene applicable throughout the food chain (primary production through to the consumer)*
- Goal of ensuring that food is safe and suitable for human consumption
- Recommends a HACCP based approach as a means to enhance food safety
- Provides a guidance for specific codes needed for processes

Scope

- Covers the complete food chain from primary production to the final consumer
- State to have policies for vulnerable population and for different age groups within the population
- Provide health education programmes to effectively communicate the principle of food hygiene
- Industry to apply the hygienic practices to provide food that is safe and suitable for consumption

Primary Production

- Rationale is to reduce the likelihood of introducing a hazard that may adversely affect the safety of food
- Includes the use of areas where food is processed
- Controlling contaminants, pests and diseases
- Adopting practices and measures to ensure food is produced under appropriate hygienic conditions

Establishment Design and Facilities

- Risks associated with the operations, premises, equipment and facilities should be located
 - To ensure that contamination is minimized
 - Design and layout permit appropriate maintenance
 - Surfaces and materials in contact with food are non-toxic and easy to maintain and clean
 - Suitable facilities are available for temperature, humidity and other controls
 - There should be effective protection against pest access

Hygiene Control Systems

- Time and temperature control - systems should specify tolerable limits for time and temperature variations
- Microbiological, physical, and chemical specifications to be based on sound scientific principles
- Raw materials should be inspected and sorted before processing and laboratory tests should be done to establish fitness for use
- Packaging design and materials should provide adequate protection for products to minimize contamination

Hygiene Control Systems

- Managers and supervisors should have good knowledge of food hygiene principles and practices
- Where necessary appropriate records of processing, production, and distribution should be kept and retained for a period that exceeds the shelf-life of the product
- Effective procedures should be in place to deal with any food safety hazard and should enable rapid recall of the implicated food

Maintenance and Sanitation

- Establish effective systems to ensure adequate and appropriate maintenance and cleaning
- Cleaning should remove food residues and dirt which may be a source contamination
- Cleaning and disinfection programmes should ensure that all parts of the facility are appropriately cleaned
- The programmes should be documented

Product information and consumer awareness

- Product should bear appropriate information - prepackaged food should be labelled with clear instructions
- Lot or batch can be easily identified and recalled - each container of food should be permanently marked to identify the producer and the lot
- Consumers to make informed choices appropriate to the individual and prevent contamination

Training

- Those engaged in food operations who come directly into contact with food should be trained
- All personnel should be aware of their role and responsibility in protecting food from contamination
- Personnel handling cleaning chemicals to be instructed in safe handling techniques
- Periodic assessments of the effectiveness of training programmes should be made