

# Record Keeping, SFBB & HACCP

## What records do I need to keep as a food business?

Food Businesses need to be able to demonstrate safe cooking processes and cleaning procedures and these should be written and be available for inspection by an environmental health official. The level of detail for the records is based on the concept of 'due diligence and reasonable precautions' in regard to complexity and therefore will be proportionate in terms of the level of detail as based on the size and nature of the organisation.

To make the process easier, the Food Standards Agency have produced a pack for small retailers and caterers (with some applicability to manufacturers) called Safer Food Better Business (SFBB). SFBB is free to download and print off. In this pack you can write up your own procedures in the Safe Methods section, using your own equipment, cooking and cleaning products. This is a good way to organise day-to-day activity, record any problems and maintain supplier information and a diary record is included for this purpose for start up and closing checks, daily recording of untoward events and also includes a four-weekly review. Food safety and hygiene regulations say you must be able to show what you do to make and sell food that is safe to eat and have this written down. The SFBB pack helps you do this.

## Who fills in and maintains the SFBB pack?

SFBB should be treated as a 'living' document and updated on a regular basis by the food business operator or person who is responsible for the day to day running of the premises and production of food. As SFBB contains many elements such as cleaning, suppliers, cooking methods and storage, you may need to include other people from your team to ensure it is filled in accurately and any changes to procedures are updated regularly.

## What is HACCP?

HACCP, which stands for Hazard Analysis and Critical Points is a tool for food manufacturers to demonstrate the system and process they use for creating a safe food product. It is a written document which can be used by retailers, manufacturers and caterers that outlines the different stages of their own production processes and the associated control of hazards through monitoring activities within the business. It also establishes limits or points in the process where the product's safety may become compromised and cause a problem. This is called a critical control point in the process. Essentially, the HACCP plan demonstrates that the food producer knows what to do in when a problem arises and how it will be rectified.

**A HACCP food safety management system is based on 7 key principles:**

1. Conduct a hazard analysis which will involve identifying hazards at each step and also evaluating control measures to reduce or eliminate hazards. Hazards will normally include a scope for microbes, chemical, physical and allergenic hazards.
2. Determine where Critical Control Points (CCP) apply within the process.
3. Establish critical limits which are the boundary between what is acceptable and unacceptable.
4. Establish a system to monitor control of the CCP
5. Establish corrective action, should limits be breached and enable control to be regained.
6. Establish procedures for verification to confirm the system is working
7. Establish documentation.

(Continued on page 2)



# Record Keeping, SFBB & HACCP

(Continued from page 1)

To establish a HACCP system and ensure food safety, each of these principles must be followed, monitored and reviewed regularly. As an introduction to the HACCP plan, pre-requisites should be established. Pre-requisites include things such as cleaning schedules, waste management, pest control and staff training - all things that are the foundations of operating the business and premises safely. Normally the scope of the plan is defined, together with a product description and statement of the intended use of products. Next, process flow diagrams will be established to illustrate the flow of manufacture from raw materials to final supply and based on generically similar product groups.

HACCP plans should be reviewed and updated regularly or immediately if there is a change in the operations. This can include recipe amendments, cooking procedure or times, or when a piece of manufacturing equipment is updated. It is also useful to test your plan to make sure that it is accurate and reflects what is happening on the production floor.

## When do I need to have a HACCP and how to get started?

The UK government states that 'If you run a food business, you must have a plan based on the Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) principles.' (<https://www.gov.uk/food-safety-hazard-analysis>) It is advisable to do some research and speak to your local EHO to see whether a full HACCP plan is required, or if you can use SFBB. If HACCP is new to you, an online or in-person training course is a good way of finding out more and to ensure that you will be able to cover all the aspects of developing a useable plan for your food operation. However, some online courses are unaccredited and are unlikely to provide the necessary competence and therefore care is needed in obtaining the right level training course.

## Keeping records

Whether you use SFBB and or a HACCP plan you will need to complete some records such as production diaries, temperature check sheets for fridges and freezers and completed cleaning schedules. Key processing measurements and values will also need to be recorded, such as cooking and cooling temperatures as part of the overall plan of control.

There is no definite time to keep hold for and it will vary between businesses. Good practice is to keep records for at least the shelf life of the product and then an extra defined period e.g. an extra 12 months is normally specified in certification schemes, such as SALSA.

It is important to understand that if your food safety systems are challenged by a serious complaint or alleged food poisoning problems, the records will help to demonstrate that all reasonable precautions and due diligence have been followed and records will act as a defence in the event of a challenge. As such, those completing records need to take this responsibility seriously and provide diligent and accurate information.

## Further information

<https://www.food.gov.uk/business-guidance/hazard-analysis-and-critical-control-point-haccp#.UH1ku-1OE2o>

<https://www.highspeedtraining.co.uk/hub/haccp-faqs/>

