

How to Write a HACCP Plan Step-By-Step



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HACCP plan vs a HACCP system?

Mandated in many countries, Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) plans ensure that businesses or manufacturing plants only serve and produce safe food items free from hazards.

A HACCP plan is an internationally recognized <u>food safety</u> management system, developed in document form, that addresses the hazards in your food operations by carefully identifying them and assigning preventive measures.

A HACCP system is the implementation of the developed plan.

Building a comprehensive and accurate HACCP plan shows your committed approach to food safety for your consumers.

Why?

Because a HACCP plan can help prevent any unacceptable health risks and the occurrence of any severe illness as a result of consuming your finished products.



How do I write a HACCP plan?

Let's start with a high-level view of what's going to be involved and outlined in detail later in this eBook. **Before writing the HACCP plan itself, the process involves preoperational steps.** These preparatory steps include:

- Reviewing Prerequisite Programs (PRPs)
- · Establishing an interdisciplinary food safety team
- Laying out product and market information
- · Constructing a commodity flow diagram
- Verifying all preoperational steps above

After preliminary tasks, what will the HACCP team need to work on?

Once you've done that, you can move onto the step-by-step process of writing a HACCP plan which is based on the seven principles of HACCP:

- 1. Identify and analyze all hazards
- 2. Identify all Critical Control Points (CCPs)
- 3. Set up critical limits
- 4. Build a monitoring procedure system for CCPs
- 5. Establish corrective action procedures
- 6. Establish verification procedures
- 7. Align on record-keeping and documentation processes

This food safety system aims to prevent any foodborne illness and other adverse health consequences of poor food employee practices from occurring. Writing a HACCP plan involves several subsequent steps that you need to follow to achieve the system's best advantages.



HACCP Plan preparation steps

1. Review your prerequisite programs

The first step to creating a HACCP plan is to check your prerequisite programs. These programs are foundational to your eventual HACCP plan and ensure the basic conditions of the manufacturing process and service.

They address minimum quality standards regarding sanitary design principles, general food safety and hygiene practices, employee health, proper environmental conditions, and proper employee training.

Some basic prerequisite programs that can easily address low-risk food safety concerns may include:

- Sanitation standard operating procedures
- Sanitation design principles
- Proper layout of your food business (e.g., one-direction flow, easy-to-clean walls, and availability of handwashing facilities)
- Food safety posters and reminders
- Air and water controls
- Employee training on food hygiene
- Effective pest control program

2. Perform the five preliminary tasks of HACCP plan

Before building a complete HACCP plan, you need to clearly layout important information about your products and food operations and establish a working team for the task. These preliminary steps are explained below.

1. Build your HACCP team

Who is responsible for creating the HACCP plan?

Task	Responsible person(s)
Overall responsible person for HACCP plan	Manager
Daily health check	Manager
Food handling control and quality management	Manager
Waste management	Manager

Tasks divided by HACCP team members

People who are responsible for creating the HACCP plan are key company employees from each department in your food business. Building a HACCP plan is not the sole responsibility of a food business manager.

Before you can put up a plan, you will need to build your HACCP team. Your team must consist of people who know how to make a HACCP plan or its basic principles.

HACCP Plan preparation steps

2. Identify your product's intended use and general food group

Describing the product you are analyzing gives your team an idea of what hazards may be involved.

- Complete description of the product
- Ingredient declaration
- Allergen information
- · Specifications and general food group
- Physical dimensions and visual appearance
- · Method of storage between packaging and the end user

Your product description becomes more useful if the details become very specific.

Produced/served/sold food
Salads
Soups
Vegetable dishes
Meat dishes
Side dishes
Bakery products

The sample description of general food groups

3. Identify target consumers

Your team will also be responsible for identifying which market segment your product is made for. This step is particularly essential if your product is intended for niche consumers, which refers to those who have intolerances or weak immune systems.

These groups include infants, pregnant women, the elderly, and individuals with special diet needs.

Main customer group Regular customers

Example of the market segment

4. Develop a block-type flow diagram of your food service operations

This commodity flow diagram is a simple outline of the whole production processing method of your food operations, from receiving the raw materials to the distribution procedures of the finished safe products.

Your simple schematic diagram describes the process steps needed to produce a specific product which means all inward and outward flows of processes must be included.

Your process flow diagram must be accurate and comprehensive. Every processing line must have its own flow chart.

HACCP Plan preparation steps

Differences in equipment design and process steps may render different conclusions in a HACCP plan.

We emphasize this importance because this flow chart will be your basis for later steps in knowing how to write a HACCP plan. Process flow charts differ depending on the type of product you are trying to analyze. The process of making a sandwich is very different from the pasteurization of milk.

5. Verify all preparatory steps

Traditionally, this step calls for an on-site monitoring & verification procedure for your commodity flow chart. We suggest applying the whole comprehensive verification activities to all of the mentioned preparatory steps.

All of these verification steps are vital to preparing your whole food business in making a HACCP plan the traditional way. Check for any spots in the preparatory plan that may have been missed during any activity of verification.



Free flow chart template from FoodDocs

Step 1. Identify and analyze all hazards

A HACCP plan aims to control potential hazards in food to an acceptable level before they cause significant harm. To do this, you must accurately identify all of the potential food safety hazards in your operations — in other words, conduct a hazard analysis — before proceeding to any of the next operations in a HACCP plan

Hazards are any material that can contaminate food and harm customers. These potential hazards may be classified as:

- Biological hazards (e.g., enteric pathogens such as cells of Salmonella and E. coli in raw meat)
- Physical hazards (e.g., stones, glass, seeds)
- Chemical hazards (e.g., cleaning solution)

They must be listed for further hazard analysis and identification of the point they would most likely occur.

In hazard identification, list the hazard's likelihood of occurrence, the duration of illness, and the level of risk of damage as an assessment for illness caused in addition to their proper identification.

After identifying and analyzing the hazards, control measures needed to control the hazard must be added. Each preventive and control measure must then be identified, whether it is a CCP with a YES or NO based on hazard risk assessment. Hazards are quite specific to the type of food you are producing and the operations you are using. Some of the most common, unsafe food safety hazards in a restaurant or food service setup that can cause foodborne illness to consumers may come from:

- High level of physical agents in raw material production and receiving
- Biological hazard contamination due to poor employee health
 and personal hygiene
- Cleaning and sanitation solution
- Cross-contamination
- Food allergens
- Preparation of raw materials
- Inadequate cooking process to the correct internal temperature
- Improper product storage conditions (e.g., food temperature control, sanitation, and ventilation)
- Poor pest control
- Packaging materials (e.g., for takeout)

Safe food products can only be produced if your team properly performs hazard identification and analysis. This step is vital for setting up control measures in your operations.

Use our <u>free Hazard Analysis worksheet template</u> to help you map out and present all identified hazards in your food establishment.

The Example of Hazard Analysis

Company name: Enter name

Date: _____

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Hazard Analysis Template by www.fooddocs.com

Process Step	Potential hazards (P) Physical (C) Chemical (B) Biological	RLTO (Reasonably Likely to Occur)	Justification of Decision	Preventative Measures	ls CCP?
	(P) Contamination with foreign objects from packaging materials, and other physical hazards from production	Yes / No	Foreign objects can contaminate packed food products during the production process.	Approved Supplier SOP Receiving SOP	No
Delivery of products	(C) Contamination with naturally occurring and added hazardous chemicals	Yes / No	Raw ingredients may contain antibiotics and/or pesticides, industrial chemicals, environmental contaminants, colors, additives, and/or radionuclides.	Approved Supplier SOP Receiving SOP	No
	(B) Multiplication and survival of spore-forming and toxin-forming bacteria: <i>Staphylococcus</i> <i>aureus Clostridium perfringens Clostridium</i> <i>botulinum Bacillus cereus</i>	Yes / No	Raw ingredients are known to contain these biological hazards.	Approved Supplier SOP Receiving SOP Training SOP	No
	(P) Foreign objects in food: Wood, metal, plastic, glass, human hair, jewellery, buttons, thread, human nails, stones, and bandages	Yes / No	Hazard Analysis and Risk-Based Preventive Controls for Human Food: Draft Guidance for Industry	Check produce before cooking. Produce must be free from soil and stones. Establish a foreign object management program Cleaning and sanitizing SOP Employees' health and personal hygiene SOP Personnel receive clear procedures and proper training on what checks to perform on incoming goods on foreign body check	No
Cooking	(C) Unwanted allergens	Yes / No	USDA FSIS Unreported Allergens Food Code 2017 Recommendations of the United States Public Health Service Food and Drug Administration	Cook allergen special orders separately Use separate utensils for allergen special orders Wash hands, change apron, change gloves before cooking allergen-special orders Avoid cross-contact with allergen Allergens SOP Identify allergen special orders by using a clear markers (different shape and/or color of plate, colored flags) Wash, rinse, and sanitize utensils and equipment that will be used to cook allergen special orders	Yes
	(B) Multiplication and survival of spore-forming and toxin-forming bacteria: Staphylococcus aureus Clostridium perfringens Clostridium botulinum Bacillus cereus	Yes / No	Food Code 2017 Recommendations of the United States Public Health Service Food and Drug Administration	Handwashing SOP Pasteurization of dairy products Heat treatment at 176'F for 10 minutes Proper refrigeration	Yes
	(P) Foreign objects in food: Wood, metal, plastic, glass, human hair, jewellery, buttons, thread, human nails, stones, and bandages	Yes / No	Hazard Analysis and Risk-Based Preventive Controls for Human Food: Draft Guidance for Industry	Establish a foreign object management program Cleaning and sanitizing SOP Employees' health and personal hygiene SOP Chill food only covered	No
Cooling/ Chilling	(C) Unwanted allergens	Yes / No	USDA FSIS Unreported Allergens Food Code 2017 Recommendations of the United States Public Health Service Food and Drug Administration	Chill allergen special orders separately Avoid cross-contact with an allergen Allergens SOP Identify allergen special orders by using a clear markers (different shape and/or color of plate,	Yes
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Free Hazard Analysis Template from FoodDocs from FoodDocs

Step 2. Establish critical control points (CCP)

Identifying which among your controllable processing steps is a critical control point is also a mandatory element in knowing how to make a HACCP plan. From your previously analyzed hazards and designated preventive measures, your HACCP team must identify which steps are critical control points.

A critical control point is any step in your operation where measurable controls and critical limits can be applied to control specific hazards to an acceptable level. Plainly, critical control points are your company's main defense against hazards. Evaluation of control measures can be done using established scientific literature surveys or decision tools such as a <u>HACCP decision</u> <u>tree</u> or a <u>food risk assessment matrix</u>. In each step, one or multiple hazards may be addressed and must be listed under a food operation for evaluation. CCPs must be consistently applied to every batch of food products you serve.

Process Step	Potential hazards (P) Physical (C) Chemical (B) Biological	RLTO (Reasonably Likely to Occur)	Justification of Decision	Preventative Measures	ls CCP?
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	(P) Foreign objects in food: Wood, metal, plastic, glass, human hair, jewellery, buttons, thread, human nails, stones, and bandages	Yes / No	Hazard Analysis and Risk-Based Preventive Controls for Human Food: Draft Guidance for Industry	Check produce before cooking. Produce must be free from soil and stones. Establish a foreign object management program Cleaning and sanitizing SOP Employees' health and personal hygiene SOP Personent receive clear procedures and proper training on what checks to perform on incoming goods on foreign body check	No
Cooking	(C) Unwanted allergens	Yes / No	USDA FSIS Unreported Allergens Food Code 2017 Recommendations of the United States Public Health Service Food and Drug Administration	Cook allergen special orders separately Use separate utensils for allergen special orders Wash hands, change apron. change gloves before cooking allergen-special orders Avoid cross-contact with allergen Allergens SOP special orders by using a clear markers (different shape and/or color of plate, Usen tify allergen special orders by using a clear markers (different shape and/or color of plate, Wash, rinse, and sanitize utensils and equipment that will be used to cook allergen special orders	Yes
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	(P) Foreign objects in food: Wood, metal, plastic, glass, human hair, jewellery, buttons, thread, human nails, stones, and bandages	Yes / No	Hazard Analysis and Risk-Based Preventive Controls for Human Food: Draft Guidance for Industry	Establish a foreign object management program Cleaning and sanitizing SOP Employees' health and personal hygiene SOP Chill food only covered	No
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Hazard Analysis Template from FoodDocs (highlighted: CCP decision)

Step 3. Set up critical limits

Identifying the risk level and likelihood of occurrence of a food safety hazard in combination with CCPs leads to establishing critical limits. These acceptable limits are the lowest and highest tolerable values and control factors for your critical control for safety.

Critical limit deviation may lead to the production of a non-compliant product or hazardous foods and cause severe health effects. Staying within the critical limit range is an essential criterion for food safety. For a restaurant food business HACCP plan, typical critical limits are usually related to the:

- Adequate time-temperature combination for cooking food
- pH of beverage and water

Company name:

- Minimum chlorine level for sanitizing solution
- Correct hot holding and cold holding temperature for food preparation.

Date:

Critical limits can be science-based facts for regulatory standards such as the minimum and maximum limits for raw meat's internal temperature for a thermal process. Breach of critical limits may lead to the production of unsafe food and unacceptable health risks.

HACCP Plan Template by www.fooddocs.com

Critical Control	Potential hazards (P) Physical		MONITORING						Record-
Point (CCP)	(C) Chemical (B) Biological	Critical limits	What	How	Frequency	Who	Corrective action	Verification procedures	keeping procedures
Cooking	(C) Unwanted allergens	No undeclared allergens in food	Check storage of food: allergens must be separated daily; Check labels of food deliveries daily; Check valiability of separate utensils and equipment for allergen special orders daily; Check product allergen declarations; Check inglementation of allergen controls daily	Visual check	Daily	Manager	Recall food that is suspected to have undeclared allergens; Dispose of food that has been exposed to cross-contact during storage; Re-train staff who are not practicing good personal hygiene; Dispose of food that is exposed to an allergen during cooking	Chemical analysis of raw materials and finished products that do not contain the allergen; Conduct internal audits; Records of third-party audits	Yearly audit: Results of Laboratory analyses
Cooking	(B) Multiplication and survival of spore- forming and toxin- forming bacteria: Staphylococcus aureus Clostridium perfringens Clostridium botulinum Bacillus cereus	Internal temperature 176'F for 10 minutes is achieved	Check and record cooking temperatures following the required minimum temperatures using a calibrated thermometer	 Check the internal temperature of cooked food; Use food probe thermometers that are properly calibrated 	(1) Every batch; (2) Weekly	(1) Staff; (2) Manager	 Continue cooking until required temperature of 176 F for 10 minutes is achieved; Re-calibrate food probe thermometers 	Manager must maintain record of cooking temperature and calibration: Manager confirms weekly that food probes are used, properly maintained, and calibrated	Cooking temperature log: Calibration record
Chilling	(B) Multiplication and survival of spore- forming and toxin- forming bacteria: Staphylococcus aureus Clostridium perfringens Clostridium botulinum Bacillus cereus	Chill food down from 135°F to 70°F within 2 hours (Record starting time): Then from 70°F to 41°F or lower within 4 hours: (Record finish time and temp): Total chilling time may not exceed 6 hours.	Marking starting time for the processed food; Avoid recontamination; Cover food during cooling	 (1) Check the internal temperature of chilled food: (2) Use food probe thermometers that are properly calibrated 	(1) Every batch; (2) Weekly	(1) Staff: (2) Manager	(1) Continue chilling until the required temperature of 70° / 41° F is achieved; (2) Re-calibrate food probe thermometers; Review chilling procedure	The manager must maintain a record of chilling temperature and calibration: The manager confirms weekly that food probes are used, properly maintained, and calibrated	Cooling temperature log: Calibration record

FoodDercs

HACCP plan template (Highlighted: Critical Limits)

Step 4. Build a monitoring procedure system for CCPs

To ensure that the CCPs and other control measures do their intended purpose, your HACCP team is tasked with establishing CCP monitoring procedures and have the responsibility for oversight of production.

These monitoring activities aim to record a sequence of observations for CCPs and will serve as documentation after the food operations in appropriate monitoring logs. They can serve as proof that your HACCP food safety plan is working.

Examples of monitoring activities on essential food preparation steps may include physical and chemical methods with appropriate logs. Monitoring forms or logs are composed of several parameters that need to be filled by the person with the position responsible for daily record review. These parameters vary in frequency of continuous monitoring.

Each CCP will need a corresponding monitoring form to determine any concerns, such as loss of control in their critical limits. A good monitoring form must be comprehensive and flexible. Some components of a monitoring record may include:

- What: Parameters to monitor
- How: Procedures for monitoring
- When: Monitoring frequency
- Who: Individuals responsible for monitoring
- · Summary and remarks

The responsibility for monitoring must be clearly communicated to employees in

charge of food safety and quality control. Employees must undergo an effective training program to familiarize themselves with the monitoring procedures. Parameters that need to be included in monitoring records and the appropriate critical limits must be clear to avoid producing unsafe food.

Monitoring records must clearly represent what occurred during food preparation as proof of food safety compliance. Any critical point unaccompanied by a monitoring procedure may introduce a chance for crosscontact product contamination.

Company	name:		Date:	FoodDecs			HA	CCP Plan Template by www.food	docs.com	
Critical Control	Potential hazards (P) Physical		MONITORING							
Point (CCP)	(C) Chemical (B) Biological	Critical limits	What	How	Frequency	Who	Corrective action	Verification procedures	keeping procedures	
Cooking	(C) Unwanted allergens	No undeclared allergens in food	Check storage of food; allergens must be separated daily; Check labels of food deliveries daily; Check personnel hygiene daily; Check availability of separate utensils and aquipment for allergen special orders daily; Check product allergen declarations; Check implementation of allergen	Visual check	Daily	Manager	Recall food that is suspected to have undeclared allergens; Dispose of food that has been exposed to cross-contact during storage: Re-tain staff who are not pacticing good personal hygiene: Dispose of food that is exposed to an allergen during cooking	Chemical analysis of raw materials and finished products that do not contain the allergen: Conduct internal audits; Records of third-party audits	Yearly audi Results of Laboratory analyses	
Cooking	(B) Multiplication and survival of spore- forming and toxin- forming bacteria: Staphylococcus aureus Clostridium perfringens Clostridium botulinum Bacillus cereus	Internal temperature 176'F for 10 minutes is achieved	controls daily Check and record cooking temperatures following the required minimum temperatures using a calibrated thermometer	 (1) Check the internal temperature of cooked food; (2) Use food probe thermometers that are properly calibrated 	(1) Every batch; (2) Weekly	(1) Staff; (2) Manager	 Continue cooking until required temperature of 176 F for 10 minutes is achieved: Re-calibrate food probe thermometers 	Manager must maintain record of cooking temperature and calibration: Manager confirms weekly that food probes are used, properly maintained, and calibrated	Cooking temperatu log: Calibration record	
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HACCP plan template: (Highlighted Monitoring procedures)

Step 5. Identify corrective actions

A HACCP plan is a systematic approach to food safety, but that doesn't mean it's a zero-risk approach. This means there may be lapses in the system, especially if there is due maintenance in the operations or other unforeseen circumstances. Monitoring procedures can reveal a trend towards loss of control, which is when corrective actions are needed.

Corrective actions aim to gain control over the operations again and address the remaining food safety risk with little to no compromise to the food products. Corrective actions are meant to maintain food safety when a critical control point fails to control a hazard. In establishing corrective actions for deviations, an employee must be assigned to conduct the task and audit why the corrective action was applied.

Company name:			Date: Foodbacs				HACCP Plan Template by www.fooddocs.com			
Critical Control	Potential hazards (P) Physical		MONITORING						Record-	
Point (CCP)	(C) Chemical (B) Biological	Critical limits	What	How	Frequency	Who	Corrective action	Verification procedures	keeping procedures	
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HACCP plan template (Highlighted: Corrective Actions)

Step 6. Verify the whole HACCP plan

Learning how to write a HACCP plan means knowing that this food safety system is based on scientific studies and facts, and that all steps must undergo verification. This step aims to ensure that all procedures work and achieve their targeted functions when needed. The initial validation step can be in the form of internal audits.

Verification and validation of your system is not a one-time thing. An aspect of verification is the commitment to food safety that ensures your HACCP system is still effective and does not need to be revised. External audits, frequent reviews, and health inspections from regulatory agencies are occasionally conducted to validate your system. Your verification procedures include product testing, CCP evaluation, inhouse plant observations, revision of operational limits, and review of monitoring records.

A HACCP plan is a system that requires extensive documentation. Every monitoring, revision, deviation, corrective action record, sampling system, layout, employee training record, certificate, calibration record, and verification report must be properly documented.

Individuals responsible for record-keeping are required to keep all these documents for at least 2 years for future verification and reviews.

Company	name:		Date:	FoodDecs			HA	CCP Plan Template by www.food	docs.com
Critical Control	Potential hazards (P) Physical		MONITORING						Record-
Point (CCP)	(C) Chemical (B) Biological	Critical limits	What	How	Frequency	Who	Corrective action	Verification procedures	keeping procedure
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Example of verification procedures

Step 7. Record-keeping and documentation

Proper documentation is key proof that your food business has successfully implemented your HACCP plan and that your team is performing their assigned tasks. If in case a known hazard occurs in your operations, your record will be proof for regulatory agencies that you applied control measures to bring the hazard to an acceptable level.

A great way to create an accurate record-keeping HACCP system is to have sets of templates for all your procedures. This allows you to easily add new information and tailor the forms to your food business. The likelihood of causing any severe illness or a foodborne outbreak is low with a comprehensive HACCP plan. With a working HACCP plan, less end-product testing and post-analyses would be required for the purposes of product safety, and wholesome foods would be ensured.

Company	ompany name: Date: FooDecs HACCP Plan Template by www.food					docs.com			
Critical Control	Potential hazards (P) Physical		MONITORING						Record-
Point (CCP)	(C) Chemical (B) Biological	Critical limits	What	How	Frequency	Who	Corrective action	Verification procedures	keeping procedures
Cooking	(C) Unwanted allergens	No undeclared allergens in food	Check storage of food: allergens must be separated daily: Check labels of food deliveries daily: Check personnel hygiene daily: Check availability of separate utensils and equipment for allergen special orders daily: Check product allergen declarations: Check implementation of allergen controls daily	Visual check	Daily	Manager	Recall food that is suspected to have undeclared allergens: Dispose of food that has been exposed to cross-contact during storage: Re-train staff who are not practicing good personal hygiene; Dispose of food that is exposed to an allergen during cooking	Chemical analysis of raw materials and finished products that do not contain the allergen: Conduct internal audits; Records of third-party audits	Yearly audit: Results of Laboratory analyses
Cooking	(B) Multiplication and survival of spore- forming and toxin- forming bacteria: Staphylococcus aureus Clostridium perfringens Clostridium botulinum Bacillus cereus	Internal temperature 176 F for 10 minutes is achieved	Check and record cooking temperatures following the required minimum temperatures using a calibrated thermometer	 Check the internal temperature of cooked food; Use food probe thermometers that are properly calibrated 	(1) Every batch; (2) Weekly	(1) Staff; (2) Manager	 Continue cooking until required temperature of 176°F for 10 minutes is achieved; Re-calibrate food probe thermometers 	Manager must maintain record of cooking temperature and calibration: Manager confirms weekly that food probes are used, properly maintained, and calibrated	Cooking temperature log: Calibration record
Chilling	(8) Multiplication and survival of spore- forming and toxin- forming bacteria: Staphylococcus aureus Clostridium perfringens Clostridium botulinum Bacillus cereus	Chill food down from 135°F to 70°F within 2 hours (Record starting time): Then from 70°F to 41°F or lower within 4 hours: (Record finish time and temp): Total chiling time may not exceed 6 hours.	Marking starting time for the processed food: Avoid recontamination: Cover food during cooling	 (1) Check the internal temperature of chilled food: (2) Use food probe thermometers that are properly calibrated 	(1) Every batch; (2) Weekly	(1) Staff: (2) Manager	 Continue chilling until the required temperature of 70°F / 41°F is achieved: Re-calibrate food probe thermometers: Review chilling procedure 	The manager must maintain a record of chilling temperature and calibration: The manager confirms weekly that food probes are used, properly maintained, and calibrated	Cooling temperature log: Calibration record

HACCP plan template (Highlight: Determining Record-keeping Procedures)

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FoodDocs is the only digital solution that offers an Al-powered HACCP plan builder. In just one hour, you'll get a comprehensive and working HACCP plan – **based on your specific business operations – that you can start using quickly in your HACCP system.** No more long hours of meetings and revisions.

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"This software took away the headache of researching state guidelines requirements and saved me so much time.

Customer service is always available to help promptly when necessary and this program makes my job and life so much easier."

Arielle Nachi

Business owner from New York 11-50 employees

