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# CPG Safety & Quality Assurance Checklist



To comply with food safety standards, food processing facilities must maintain strict adherence to regulations at local, national, and international levels, including those outlined by the FDA, USDA, and EU. They must also meet specific food safety certification standards, such as:

- HACCP (Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points): A systematic approach to identifying, evaluating, and controlling food safety hazards to prevent contamination during production.
- GMP (Good Manufacturing Practices): Guidelines ensuring food products are consistently produced and controlled according to quality standards, focusing on cleanliness, equipment, and personnel hygiene.
- ISO 22000: An international standard for food safety management systems, integrating key elements of food safety to ensure a safe food supply chain from farm to fork.

By following this quality assurance checklist, food processing companies can ensure that they meet regulatory requirements, maintain high-quality standards, and minimize safety risks. This creates a more reliable and efficient production environment.

## Sanitation and Hygiene Protocols

Sanitation and hygiene are the backbone of any food processing facility, directly impacting the safety and quality of the final product. Ensuring clean hands, surfaces, and equipment prevents contaminants from compromising public health.

In fact, product contaminants accounted for 91% of food and beverage recalls over the past 20 years, underscoring the critical need for strict hygiene protocols—across every part of the facility.

Adhering to these standards not only protects consumers but also helps safeguard a company's reputation and operational efficiency.



## Employee Training and Certification

Given the high stakes of their responsibilities, employees must hold the necessary certifications for their specific roles to demonstrate their competence and knowledge. Regularly updating and documenting training ensures that staff remain compliant with evolving regulations and industry standards.

Indeavor's workforce management platform offers seamless tracking and upskilling capabilities, allowing facilities to monitor and manage employee training progress, certifications, and competency development.

At the point of scheduling, Indeavor takes employees' skills, competencies, and qualifications into account, ensuring that only qualified individuals are assigned to specific tasks. By automating these processes, Indeavor helps ensure that employees are always prepared, qualified, and up-to-date on required training.

## Allergen Control

Even trace amounts of allergens can cause severe reactions in sensitive individuals. With 65% of consumers referring to packaging and labels before purchasing products, implementing rigorous cross-contamination protocols and providing accurate labeling ensures that consumers can make informed choices.

The FDA's recent designation of sesame as the ninth major food allergen underscores the evolving nature of allergen management. By implementing robust allergen control measures, food processing facilities can protect consumers, maintain trust in their products, and comply with regulatory requirements—all while avoiding costly food recalls and potential lawsuits.

## Hazard Analysis and Risk Assessment

Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP) is a management system designed to identify, evaluate, and control potential food safety hazards throughout the production process.

By proactively pinpointing risks at critical control points where contamination could occur, HACCP enables facilities to implement preventative measures early in the process.

This approach minimizes the likelihood of contamination and ensures food products meet stringent safety standards. Regularly reviewing and updating risk assessments is essential to stay aligned with changes in production processes or evolving safety regulations.

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# Quality Control Procedures

By establishing clear protocols, food processing facilities can systematically monitor each step of the production process, ensuring that all products meet safety, quality, and regulatory standards.

Regular audits and inspections provide ongoing checks to verify that these standards are being upheld and allow facilities to identify potential issues before they impact product quality.

HACCP, GMP, and ISO 22000 all explicitly require ongoing quality control and corrective actions in place so that any deviations are promptly addressed.

# Emergency Procedures and Contingency Plans

According to the Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA) as outlined by the FDA, food processing facilities must have documented protocols in place to address emergencies such as contamination or recalls.

Having accessible first aid and emergency contact information is critical for responding to accidents and health-related emergencies. Incident reports and thorough investigations are necessary for identifying the root causes of any safety issues, implementing corrective actions, and preventing future occurrences. B

y adhering to these practices, facilities can not only protect consumer health but also mitigate the risks of non-compliance and safeguard their reputation.

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## Temperature Control and Storage

If you’re manufacturing perishables, temperature control and proper storage are an integral part of your safety and quality assurance checklist. Maintaining proper temperature ranges across the entire supply chain prevents the growth of harmful bacteria and ensures that food products stay safe for consumption.

Refrigeration units must be regularly monitored to ensure they are operating within specified temperature ranges, reducing the risk of spoilage or contamination. Temperature logs are critical for tracking conditions throughout the supply chain, and they should be consistently maintained and reviewed to identify potential issues early on.

## Waste Management

Improperly managed waste can lead to cross-contamination, spoilage, and potential environmental health hazards. As sustainability becomes an increasingly important concern, consumers are closely evaluating brands' environmental practices.

60% of consumers reported purchasing sustainable food products in the past year, with 61% emphasizing the importance of reducing food waste and using recycled materials or packaging.

By implementing effective waste management practices, food processing facilities can reduce environmental impact, enhance sustainability, and meet the growing consumer demand for environmentally responsible products.

## Supply Chain and Supplier Management

Conducting regular supplier audits is considered a best practice in food safety management, ensuring that all parties in the supply chain adhere to established safety standards.

It is a recommended practice to maintain ISO 22000 standards, for example. And many facilities implement supplier audits as part of their hazard control measures (HACCP) to ensure the safety of raw materials and ingredients.

By effectively managing their supply chain, food processing facilities not only protect consumers but also maintain the integrity of their products, reduce the risk of recalls, and uphold their reputation in the market.

## Product Inspection and Testing

By implementing robust inspection and testing procedures, food processing facilities can maintain product integrity, meet regulatory standards, and safeguard public health.

Regular inspections of finished products help identify any issues with quality, appearance, or packaging before they make it to market, preventing consumer dissatisfaction and potential safety risks.

In the event of any issues, proper traceability enables facilities to quickly isolate and remove any potentially unsafe items from the market.



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## Packaging and Labeling

43% of food product recalls are due to mislabeling. Proper labeling not only ensures compliance with regulations but also helps consumers make informed decisions about the products they purchase.

Additionally, packaging materials must be food-safe and suitable for their intended use, to prevent contamination or degradation of the product. Having labels that are both accurate and compliant with legal and marketing requirements reduces the risk of recalls, maintains consumer confidence, and helps facilities avoid potential legal or financial liabilities.



## Equipment Maintenance and Calibration

Regular maintenance and inspection of processing equipment help identify and address any issues before they lead to equipment failure or product inconsistencies.

Calibrating equipment ensures accurate measurements and temperature control, which are critical for maintaining food safety standards and product quality.

Additionally, following manufacturer instructions for cleaning and sanitizing equipment helps prevent contamination and ensures that the equipment operates at optimal performance.

Adhering to these practices enables food processing facilities to reduce the risk of product defects and ensure the safe production of food.

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# Your Company's Checklist

## Sanitation

- ☐ Check the cleanliness of equipment, workstations, and facilities.
- ☐ Ensure proper sanitation of food contact surfaces.
- ☐ Confirm employee hygiene practices (e.g., hand washing, gloves and masks).
- ☐ Assess the cleanliness of restrooms, break areas, and common spaces.

## Certifications

- ☐ Verify that all employees have received food safety training.
- ☐ Check that employees have the necessary certifications for their roles.
- ☐ Confirm that training is up-to-date and documented.

## Allergen Control

- ☐ Confirm identification and proper labeling of allergens in all products.
- ☐ Ensure protocols for preventing cross-contact between allergens and non-allergen foods.
- ☐ Check traceability and documentation of allergen-containing ingredients.

## Hazard Analysis

- ☐ Ensure a documented hazard analysis (HACCP) is in place.

Review risk of Hazards, which can include but are not limited to:

- ☐ Labeling – missing/mislabeled
- ☐ Personnel – sanitation
- ☐ Storage
- ☐ Facility design
- ☐ Transportation

## Quality Control

- ☐ Verify clear quality control protocols are in place for all stages of production.
- ☐ Ensure regular inspections to monitor product consistency and quality.
- ☐ Check corrective action procedures for non-conforming products.

## Emergency Procedures

- ☐ Confirm that emergency protocols for food safety incidents (e.g., contamination, recalls) are documented.
- ☐ Ensure that first aid and emergency contacts are accessible to employees.
- ☐ Verify that investigations and safety incidents are filed for all safety issues.

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# Checklist Continued

## Temp Control

- ☐ Verify proper temperature controls for perishable items during storage, transportation, and handling.
- ☐ Confirm that refrigeration units are working within specified ranges and are regularly monitored.
- ☐ Ensure that temperature logs are maintained and reviewed.

## Product Inspection

- ☐ Confirm that regular inspections of finished products are conducted for quality, appearance, and packaging.
- ☐ Check that batch testing (e.g., microbiological, chemical) and document results.
- ☐ Ensure traceability of product lot numbers for recall management.

## Waste Management

- ☐ Check that waste disposal systems are hygienic and comply with safety regulations.
- ☐ Ensure proper disposal of hazardous waste (e.g., chemical, biological) and recycling programs are in place.
- ☐ Confirm that waste handling does not compromise food safety.

## Packaging

- ☐ Verify packaging materials are food -safe and compliant with regulations.
- ☐ Confirm labels are accurate and include necessary information (e.g., ingredients, nutritional facts, allergens, expiration dates).
- ☐ Ensure that labeling meets both regulatory and marketing standards.

## Supply Chain

- ☐ Ensure supplier evaluations and certifications are up-to-date.
- ☐ Check that incoming raw materials and ingredients are inspected for quality and safety.
- ☐ Verify that supplier audits are conducted regularly.

## Equipment Maintenance

- ☐ Ensure that all processing equipment is regularly maintained and inspected.
- ☐ Confirm that equipment calibration is performed regularly and documented.
- ☐ Verify equipment is cleaned & sanitized per manufacturer instructions.



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