

## The Bureau de normalisation du Québec (BNQ) at Your Service

Established in 1961, the BNQ is a body accredited by the Standards Council of Canada (SCC) for the development of standards, the certification of products and services and the registration of quality and environmental management systems. The BNQ also acts as the SCC's partner in the scope of the Program for the Accreditation of Laboratories - Canada (PALCAN).

Since 2001, the BNQ has been offering HACCP system certification to companies from the agri-food sector. The BNQ's HACCP system certification process is also recognized by the Ministère de l'Agriculture, des Pêcheries et de l'Alimentation du Québec (MAPAQ) in the framework of an agreement reached between the two agencies.

Since 2003, the BNQ has been a member of the Canadian technical committee ISO/TC 34 and the Canadian and international advisory group ISO/TC 34/WG8 to develop the ISO 22000 standard. The final version of the standard is entitled *Food Safety Management Systems – Requirements for any organization in the food chain* and was published on September 1, 2005.

### HACCP System Certification by the BNQ, An Excellent Choice

Calling upon the BNQ for certification means choosing a certification body that has earned its stripes. Not only does a HACCP certification by the BNQ confirm the implementation of a systematic method to prevent foodborne risks, it also offers the following advantages:

- Recognition by a neutral and impartial body of the conformity and effectiveness of the system in place;
- Audits by qualified HACCP auditors with many years of practical experience in the food industry;
- System audits conducted according to an audit process and method recognized internationally;
- Audit approach focused on the improvement and effectiveness of the system;
- Climate of trust and optimization of employee time during the audit;
- Possibility of using the BNQ trademark in corporate promotional materials;
- Employee motivation.

### Other Services Offered :

- Pre-audit of sound food practices and HACCP plans.
- Registration of integrated management systems according to ISO 9001, ISO 14001 and HACCP.
- Information sessions on the food product safety standards (HACCP, ISO 22000).
- Training sessions on the ISO 22000 standard.

### To Contact Us

For more information, please contact a BNQ advisor by phone at **418 652-2238** or **1 800 386-5114** or by e-mail at [bnqinfo@bnq.qc.ca](mailto:bnqinfo@bnq.qc.ca).

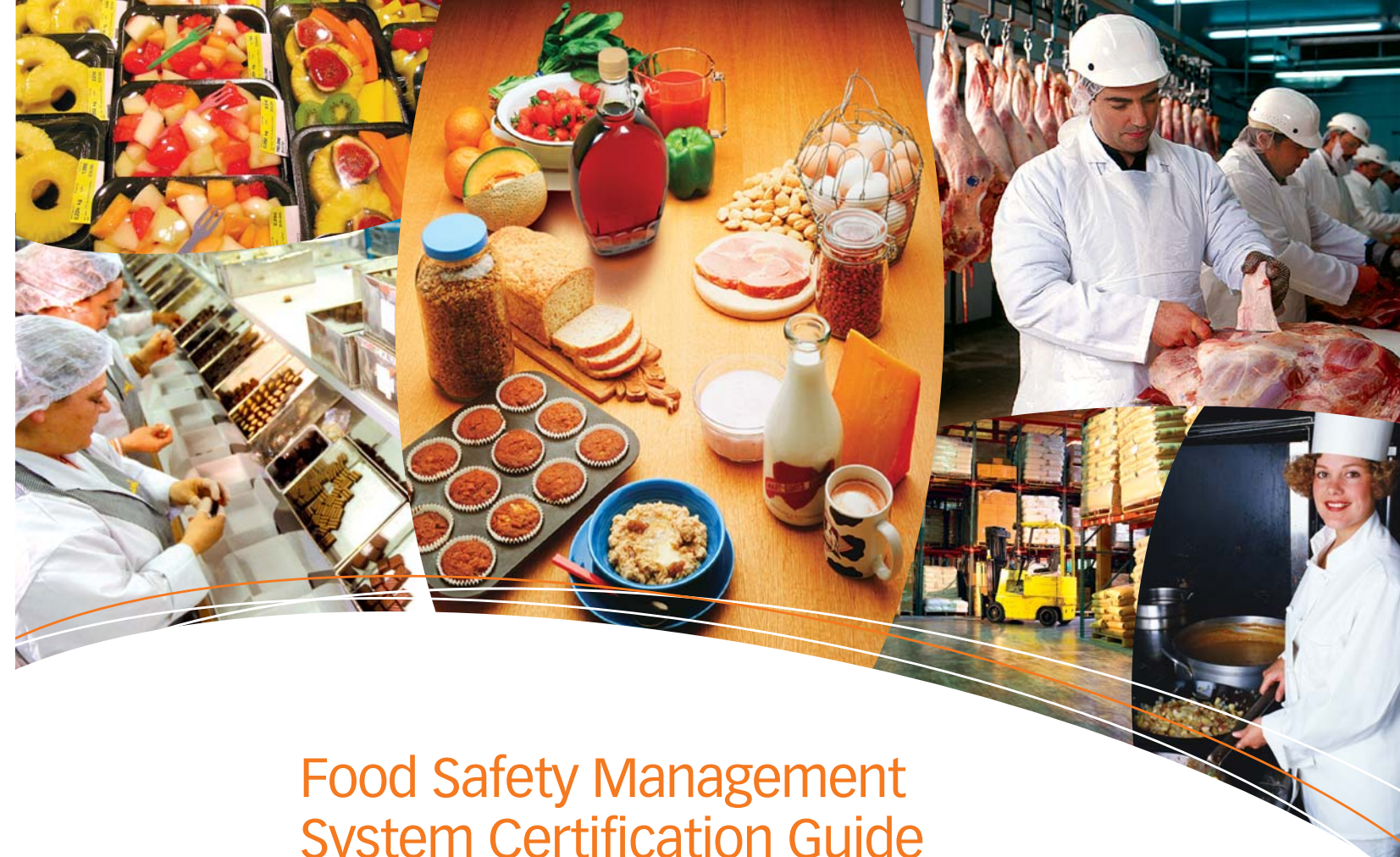
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## Food Safety Management System Certification Guide (HACCP and ISO 22000)

*Certification by the BNQ, An Excellent Choice*



# Food Safety - From the Farm to the Table

In recent years, several outbreaks of food poisoning and foodborne illnesses have seriously undermined consumer confidence. That is why government authorities and others, concerned with public health and safety, strongly encourage companies to adopt preventive measures to avoid such hazards. Food safety has become a matter of concern to all companies involved at any level in the food chain.

Therefore, whether you are a feed producer, primary producer, food manufacturer, transport or storage operator or subcontractor to retail and food service outlets, you are responsible for offering your customers safe food products.

Related companies, such as producers of equipment, packaging material, cleaning and sanitizing agents, additives and ingredients, are also responsible for food safety.

## Sound Food Practices, HACCP and ISO 22000: A Winning Combination!

Sound food practices (also called “prerequisite programs”, “General Principles of Food Hygiene” or “Good Manufacturing Practice (GMP)”) are part of a structured approach aimed at preventing foodborne risks and ensuring food safety. They concern the following main aspects:

- 1 – Facilities.
- 2 – Transportation, reception and storage.
- 3 – Equipment.
- 4 – Personnel.
- 5 – Hygiene and pest control measures.
- 6 – Withdrawal of products for hygienic or safety reasons.

The combination of sound food practices and HACCP, which stands for Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point, remains the approach used in food safety management systems, including ISO 22000.

## HACCP, A Well-Established, Internationally-Recognized Method

HACCP is based on a systematic approach aimed at analyzing hazards and identifying critical points to control. It applies to all companies in the food chain, regardless of their size or complexity of operations.

To design a HACCP system, the method established and recommended internationally by the Codex Alimentarius Commission is based on twelve stages. The first five are called “prerequisite stages” while the subsequent ones correspond to the seven “HACCP Principles.”

### Prerequisite Stages

- Stage 1:** Assemble a HACCP team.
- Stage 2:** Identify the products involved and their characteristics.
- Stage 3:** Determine their use.
- Stage 4:** Establish an operational flow chart.
- Stage 5:** Confirm the operational flow chart on-site.

### HACCP Principles

- Stage 6:** Perform a hazard analysis (Principle 1).
- Stage 7:** Decide on the critical control points (CCPs) (Principle 2).
- Stage 8:** Determine the critical limits for preventive measures (Principle 3).
- Stage 9:** Establish procedures to monitor CCPs (Principle 4).
- Stage 10:** Establish the corrective actions to be taken when monitoring shows that a critical limit has been exceeded (Principle 5).
- Stage 11:** Establish verification procedures to make sure the HACCP system is working (Principle 6).
- Stage 12:** Establish a record keeping system to document the HACCP system (Principle 7).

## A Business Decision That Pays Off!

Companies that implement a HACCP system can expect to reap the following main benefits:

- Marked improvement in the effectiveness of company operations;
- Substantial reduction in costs due to nonconforming products being rejected or recalled;
- Greater employee accountability;
- Increase in consumer and government confidence in product safety;
- An undeniable competitive edge.

## Certification in Only Four Steps

The HACCP system certification process in many ways resembles that established for quality and environmental management system certification. It includes four steps:

- 1 Preparing the Audit**  
Audit preparation consists of examining the company's documentation and making a complete on-site verification of the system's implementation. These activities make it possible to ensure that the documentation is sufficiently comprehensive and that it conforms to the requirements stipulated in the target reference. They make sure the company is ready for the on-site audit. Detailed planning, including, among other things, the logistics, chronology, schedule and special conditions for conducting the audit is presented to the company prior to the audit.
- 2 Conducting the On-Site Audit**  
The aim of the audit is to assess the conformity and effectiveness of the system implemented with the view of ensuring food safety. The record of proof is established by meeting the personnel concerned, examining documents and observing the company's operations.
- 3 Issuing the Certificate**  
When the HACCP system has been recognized as conforming to the requirements of the target reference, the BNQ, upon recommendation by the auditor and after examining the file, delivers a certificate valid for a three-year period.
- 4 Conducting the Maintenance Audits**  
The BNQ ensures the maintenance of conformity and effectiveness of the HACCP system by conducting partial audits whose frequency is determined according to the category of risk into which the company's products fall. They are conducted at least once a year.