Adopt Food Safety System – Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point

The Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) system

is a food safety system which identifies specific hazards and preventive measures for their control to ensure the safety of food. **HACCP** is a tool to assess hazards and establish control systems that focus on preventive measures rather than relying on end-product testing.

食物安全中心
Centre for Food Safety

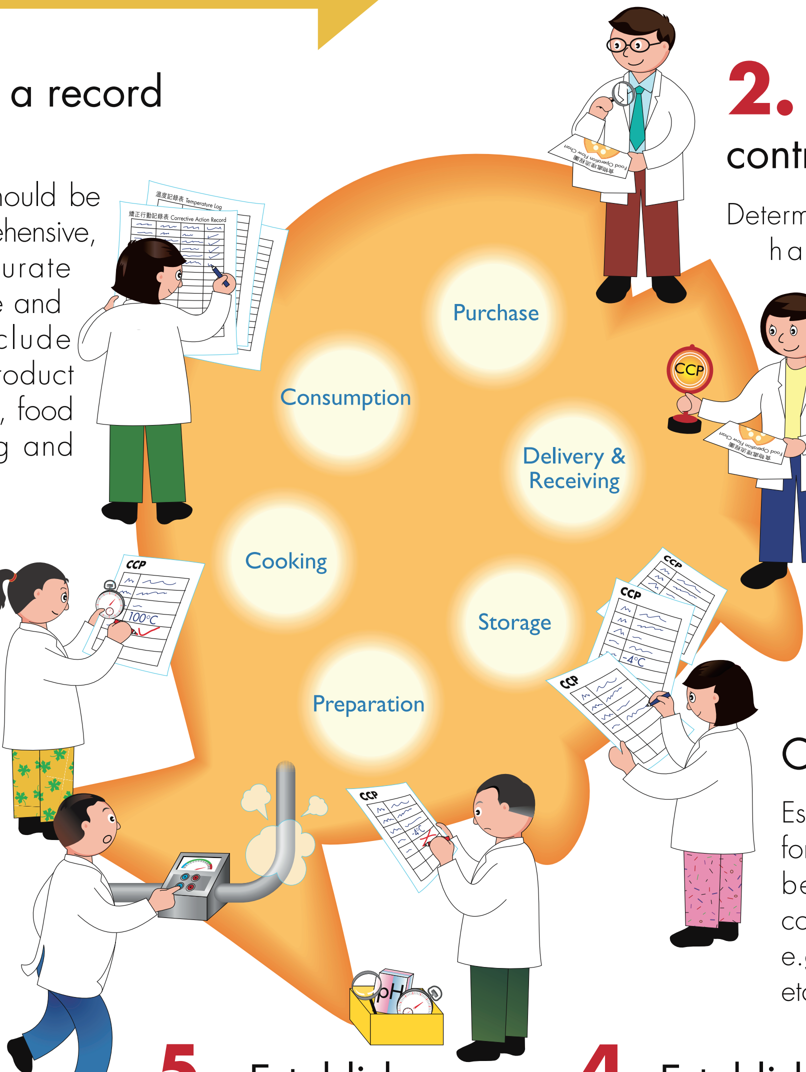
The HACCP system involves seven steps :

1. Analyse hazards

Analyse the whole food production process and identify hazards posed to the safety of food.

2. Determine critical control points(CCPs)

Determine critical control points at which hazards can be controlled or eliminated. Common CCPs in food production are in the following process steps: purchase of raw materials, cold storage of raw materials, cooking, cold- and hot-holding of prepared food.



3. Establish limits for CCPs

Establish a set of clear limits for CCPs for the food to comply with. These can be limits of cooking temperature, cooking time and physical properties, e.g. food colour, appearance, texture, etc.

4. Establish monitoring procedures for CCPs

The purpose of monitoring procedures is to assure that the food meets the limits set for CCPs, e.g. the temperature limit, or cooking or cooling time limit. Major monitoring procedures include visual inspections and physical measurements such as temperature readings. Besides, the frequency and time of the monitoring procedures should be specified.

5. Establish corrective actions

Establish corrective actions in advance for CCPs so as to correct deviations of the limits quickly and prevent unsafe products from entering into the market.

6. Establish verification procedures

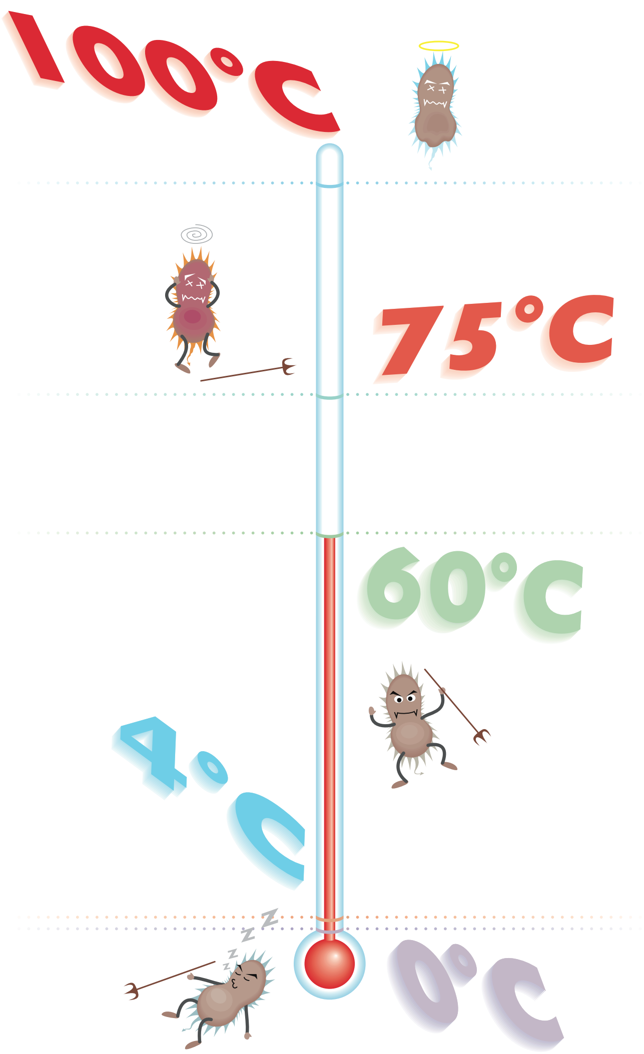
Establish verification procedures to ensure that the HACCP system is functioning properly.

7. Establish a record system

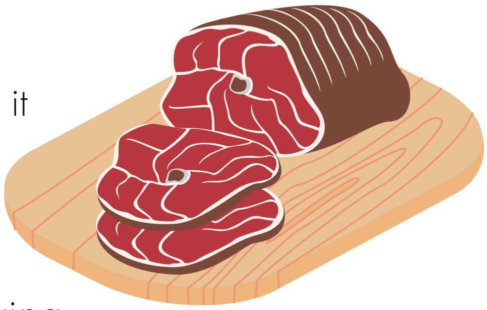
A HACCP system should be supported by comprehensive, effective and accurate records for reference and review. They include records on food product safety, process steps, food storage; monitoring and corrective action etc.

The Importance of Temperature and Time Control

Most food-borne diseases, such as bacterial food poisoning, cholera and dysentery hepatitis A, are caused by intake of undercooked or contaminated food. Within the dangerous temperature zone of 4°C to 60°C, pathogenic bacteria grow fastest. Normal pathogenic bacteria grow slowest below 4°C. They can be brought under control above 60°C. Therefore, through the **HACCP system** in which cooking and storage steps are established as CCPs and limits on temperature and time, and monitoring procedures for these CCPs are set, safe food production can be ensured.

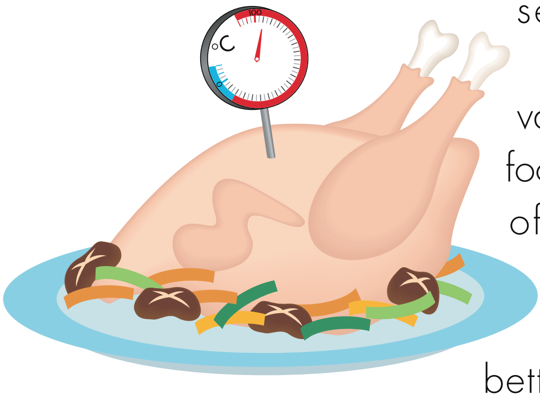


Proper Temperature and Time Control



1. To defrost frozen food, it is safer to put it in a refrigerator at temperature between 0°C to 4°C for thawing one day before cooking.

2. Food has to be **cooked thoroughly**. That means each part of the food including its **centre** has to be cooked to **75°C** or above for at least 30 seconds. The cooking temperature and time vary for different types of food as well as the weight of food. Big pieces of food should be cut into small pieces to allow better heat penetration to every part so that the food can be cooked evenly.



3. Store properly the cooked food if not for immediate consumption. Food to be consumed cold should be put in a refrigerator with temperature at 4°C or below, and food to be consumed hot should be stored in a container of temperature above 60°C.

4. Leftover food or garnish should only be consumed after they have been reheated thoroughly, i.e. cooked to 75°C or above for at least 30 seconds.

5. Raw or perishable food and garnish not for immediate use should be stored in a refrigerator with temperature at 4°C or below or a container of temperature above 60°C.

Low temperatures can inhibit the growth of pathogenic bacteria while high temperatures can kill them. Hence, remember that the most reliable and effective method to ensure food safety is the proper control of **temperature** and **time**.

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