

HACCP Regulations: How Does Your Company Comply

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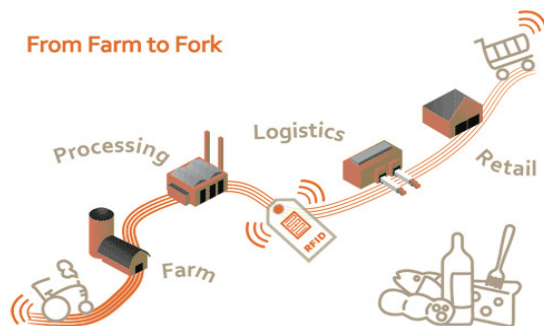


About The Answer Company

The Answer Company is a leading supplier of business management software and technology consulting services. Since 1995, we have been helping businesses answer the difficult questions with regards to investments in technology and information systems. Our goal is to make businesses more successful at what they do and gain confidence to make profitable moves in their respective industries. Our software solutions support accounting, operations, customer relationship management, human resources, time tracking, merchant services, and the specialized needs of the manufacturing, construction, distribution, healthcare, nonprofit, and real estate industries.

Food borne illness is recognized as a significant public health problem in the United States. A 1999 estimate from The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) attributes 76 million illnesses, 325,000 hospitalizations and 5,000 deaths to food borne pathogens annually.

In an effort to combat this problem, the United States Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and the Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) implemented Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point (HACCP) systems regulations, which apply to every commercial food processor, regardless of size. HACCP is an internationally recognized, scientific approach to producing safer food by anticipating how biological, chemical or physical hazards are most likely to occur and by installing appropriate measures to prevent them from occurring. HACCP is being adopted worldwide, on recommendation of the United Nations. It is already mandated in many countries, and the European Union (EU) is establishing a HACCP-inclusive food regulatory system to govern all EU members.



HACCP is a quality control management system placing responsibility for the result totally in the hands of the manufacturers and handlers of the product. The actual system is created in steps wholly by the enterprise having “care, custody and control” (the 3 C’s) over the raw materials, work in progress or completed product at each step of the way from ocean or farm to dinner plate.

This means that each participant’s HACCP system must create the accountability needed to enable the next participant in line to pick up responsibility from a known, acceptable status. In other words, each passes the “3 C’s” to the next holder in an adequately documented, accountability guaranteed, safe condition. Each prior HACCP plan provides data to the next holder’s HACCP system, preserving product integrity to that point. Each HACCP system is totally independent of all the others and applies only to that company’s processing/handling. Yet, each must provide the data to mesh with, and validate, the next holder’s system input. The integration is guaranteed by guideline rules and the oversight provided by the food processor’s HACCP Team and the concerned state/federal government regulatory agency(ies).

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Complying with HACCP regulations can be quite a burden. Without a functionally rich software system in place, this task drains resources by necessitating manual procedures throughout the manufacturing process. And, accessing the information required for government reporting becomes a time consuming labor.

Sage ERP X3 Process Manufacturing offers food processors the capabilities they need to be HACCP compliant.

User-defined technical sheets and operational detail instructions, along with lot and sub-lot control, enable complete forward and backward traceability for each ingredient and finished product. Sage ERP X3 maintains a full audit trail and archive of historical transactions is maintained for the company-specified number of years. A fully integrated quality control process rigorously enforces inspections to assure item conformance to any required product characteristics, operational tolerances or expected results.

Inspections, including microbiological testing yielding results from tests such as Salmonella, E. coli, mold and yeast, coliform bacteria and other user-definable tests, are conducted at key event points such as during receiving or at any stage of the production and packaging processes. Suspicious items or those that fail any inspection rules are automatically quarantined and designated for further inspection or disposal. Sage ERP X3's rules-based orientation assures blockage of any item from being used if it doesn't have an acceptable quality status.

Once the finished product passes all quality inspections, Sage ERP X3's labeling feature provides a unique method to capture key information from various quality control points. Labels can be printed and applied to products or packages to ensure adequate status and critical information is visible to inspectors and employees. Further, associated FDA and other regulatory reports can be easily designed and generated using Sage ERP X3 report writing capabilities.

Sage ERP X3 helps food processors comply with FDA regulations by providing a convenient and efficient way to gather and monitor relevant process information. The system's quality control features enable companies to produce a consistent product while ensuring consumer confidence.

Please contact us for a free assessment of how your company can benefit from Sage ERP X3.