HACCP-Based
Hygiene Management Plan

Revision History

Edition	Revision date	Revision details / background	Approved by
1	May 28, 2021	・Created to comply with the institutionalization of HACCP (effective June 1, 2021).	Kuze
2	December 5, 2023	・Complied with the Food Labeling Act amendment (March 9, 2023) regarding the addition of "Walnuts" to mandatory allergen labeling. (Transitional period ends: March 31, 2025)	Kuze
3	October 1, 2025	・Complied with the Consumer Affairs Agency notification (March 28, 2024) regarding the addition of "Macadamia nuts" to recommended allergen labeling and the removal of "Matsutake mushrooms." ・Revised the Raw Material Quality Management standards (October 2024). ・Chapter 2-III-4. 6) Control until Service/Shipping: Updated the basis for setting expiration dates from the "Manual for Hygiene Management at Large-scale Food Preparation Facilities" to scientific evidence such as shelf-life test results. ・Chapter 2-IV-2. 5) Added "Chemical Management."	Kuze
3.1	December 4, 2025	Changed department name from Quality Control Department to Quality Assurance Department.	Kuze

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Introduction

◆ FOOD & LIFE COMPANIES' Approach to food safety and reliability

The future our Group aims for is:

"Discovering new tastiness, Sharing moments of joy."

To realize this, we have upheld "Dedicated/Single-minded sincerity"—one of the core pillars of our guiding principles.

"Our priority is the safety and well-being of people and the environment."

We promise to remain committed to our customers' health, safety, and reliability, as well as the global environment, throughout the entire supply chain—from raw materials to the products delivered to our customers.

◆ Quality Assurance System Based on HACCP Approach

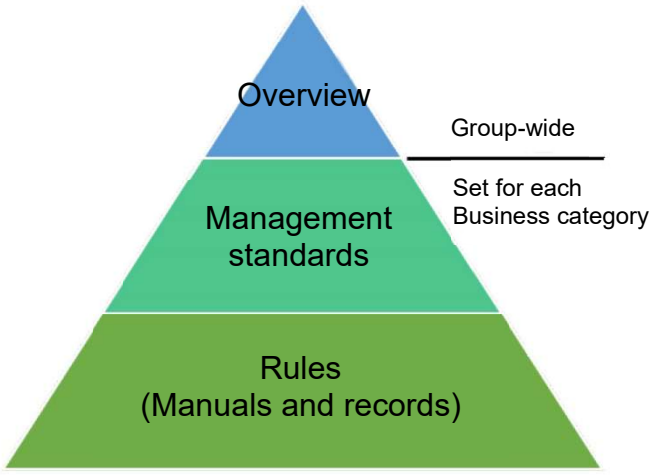
Supply Chain Overview

HACCP (Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point) is a fundamental concept centered on analyzing risks from raw materials to delivery, planning management methods to avoid them at each stage, continuously verifying and "visualizing" implementation, and performing improvements or plan reviews whenever issues arise. Based on this approach, we manage our entire supply chain.

◆ HACCP-Based Hygiene Management Plan

This document provides an overview of our Group's quality assurance framework and the management standards for each stage.

Specific rules are described in detail in the respective manuals and records.



Basic Knowledge

(1) Food Poisoning and the Three Major Risks to Note

◆ About Food Poisoning

Food is the source of our life and a provider of joy in our daily lives.

Nevertheless, since food enters our bodies directly, it also holds the potential to become a threat to our health and well-being.

"Food poisoning" refers to the impairment of health caused by consuming food contaminated with harmful substances. Symptoms vary widely; however, some can lead to lasting aftereffects or, in the worst cases, even death.

Each and every one of us must take to heart that working with food means being responsible for the lives of our customers.

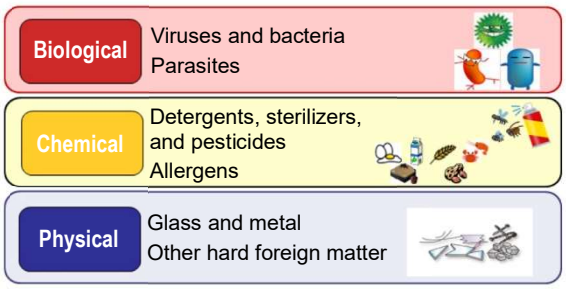
◆ Three Major Risks to Note

The risks to note when handling food are categorized into three types: **Biological**, **Chemical**, and **Physical**.

Biological Risks: Caused by dangerous living organisms.

Chemical Risks: Caused by hazardous components or substances.

Physical Risks: Caused by dangerous foreign objects.



Biological Risks: Viruses

○ Characteristics

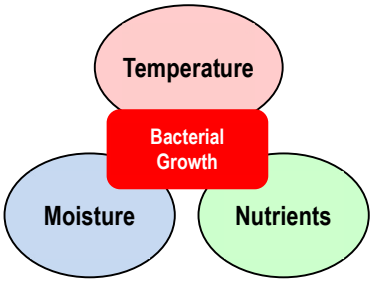
Viruses are tiny, invisible organisms that multiply inside humans and animals. Once a virus has replicated, it spreads to other people via food, contaminated surfaces, or the air we breathe.

One such virus, Norovirus, multiplies in the human intestines. After an incubation period of 24 to 48 hours, it causes symptoms such as diarrhea, vomiting, and fever. It is important to note that an infection can show no symptoms, creating a high risk of spreading the virus without realizing it.

If an infected person handles food, the viruses on their hands can contaminate the products, leading to food poisoning. Additionally, if stool or vomit containing the virus is not handled properly, the virus can become airborne, allowing the infection to spread through the air.

Viruses multiplied in the human intestines are excreted in feces and flow from rivers into the sea. They accumulate in the intestinal canal of bivalves, such as oysters; therefore, consuming raw bivalves can cause food poisoning.

Biological Risks: Bacteria



○ Characteristics

Bacteria are microscopic organisms that multiply by dividing in environments where three conditions are met: temperature, moisture, and nutrients. Food poisoning occurs when people consume food contaminated with harmful bacteria.

While food poisoning can be caused by many different types of bacteria—each with varying target foods, incubation periods, and symptoms—certain strains like Enterohemorrhagic E. coli (O157, etc.) are extremely dangerous and can lead to severe illness or death, making strict countermeasures essential.

The optimal temperature for bacterial growth is generally between 10°C and 60°C. Since bacteria die at high temperatures and become dormant at low temperatures, the basic principles of prevention are to prevent growth through cold chain management and to eliminate them through proper heating.

However, these basic principles alone are insufficient for certain bacteria, such as those that cause illness in minute amounts, grow at low temperatures, form heat-resistant spores, or produce heat-resistant toxins. Therefore, it is crucial to manage the entire process appropriately.

Especially for foods that do not undergo a heating process, it is necessary to implement measures tailored to the specific risks of the bacteria and the characteristics of the food—such as chemical sanitization, drying, reducing water activity through sugaring or salting, pH control, or the use of food additives.

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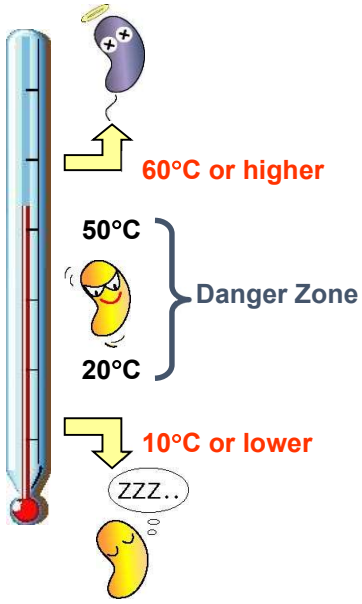
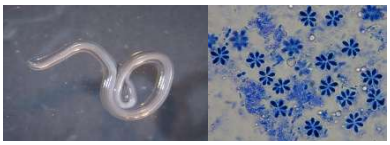
Bacteria and temperature



Biological Risks: Parasites



○ Characteristics

Parasites are organisms that live on or inside a host (human, animal, or plant). Consuming food containing harmful parasites leads to food poisoning.

While risks vary by food type (seafood, meat, vegetables, etc.), the three pillars of prevention are washing, freezing, and avoiding raw consumption.

In our pursuit of the finest flavors, we take pride in serving fresh ingredients in their raw state, without the freezing process. For seafood, however, this means we must directly confront the risks of parasites such as Anisakis or Kudoa septempunctata.

To balance exceptional taste with uncompromising safety, it is necessary to implement measures such as the careful selection of sourcing regions, strict management of fish farms, the purchase and rapid processing of high-quality raw materials, and the removal of parasites through thorough visual inspection.

Chemical Risks: Allergens

○ Characteristics

Food allergies occur when the body's immune system mistakenly identifies a specific food as a foreign substance, causing an overreaction. Typical symptoms include skin rashes (hives), stomachaches, and difficulty breathing. Moreover, if a systemic reaction known as anaphylactic shock occurs, the condition can become severe within minutes and may even lead to death.

To help individuals with food allergies choose products safely, labeling rules have been established worldwide. Under Japan's Food Labeling Act, eight items are designated as "Mandatory Labeling Items" (Specified Raw Materials): shrimp, crab, wheat, milk, egg, buckwheat, peanuts, and walnuts. In addition, labeling is recommended for 20 other items categorized as "Specified Raw Materials Equivalent."

When selling products that carry labels or for which allergy information is provided online, any discrepancy between the listed information and the actual ingredients can lead to life-threatening accidents. Therefore, if a labeling error or contamination during production is discovered, sales must be immediately suspended, the public notified, and a product recall initiated.

Even in businesses such as restaurants or face-to-face sales where labeling is not mandatory, providing casual or unverified answers to customer inquiries can lead to serious accidents. Thus, it is necessary to handle such requests properly according to established protocols.

Chemical Risks: Chemicals

○ Characteristics

In food handling facilities, various chemicals are used for cleaning, sanitizing, and pest control.

If these substances contaminate food, they cause food poisoning. Since some are highly toxic chemicals, they can lead to life-threatening accidents.

The most critical factor in preventing accidents is the proper management of chemicals.

It is essential to identify all chemicals used within the facility while ensuring they are stored in designated locations and specialized containers; in the case of highly toxic chemicals, the inventory and check-out process must be strictly managed. Furthermore, to prevent misuse and avoid leaving accidental residues on food, it is important to visualize the intended purpose and correct application methods of each chemical.

Physical Risks: Foreign matter

○ Characteristics

A foreign object is defined as any material that is not inherently supposed to be in food.

If hard or sharp objects—such as metal or glass fragments—contaminate a product, they can cause mouth injuries, broken teeth, or, in the worst cases, damage to internal organs if swallowed.

Furthermore, even if an object is not physically harmful, the presence of unsanitary pests like cockroaches causes immense distress to customers and can spread rapidly via social media, potentially triggering a crisis that threatens the survival of the entire group.

To prevent foreign object contamination, maintaining the overall environment is of the utmost importance; this requires consistently checking cooking equipment, utensils, and containers while ensuring proper facility maintenance and effective pest and rodent control.

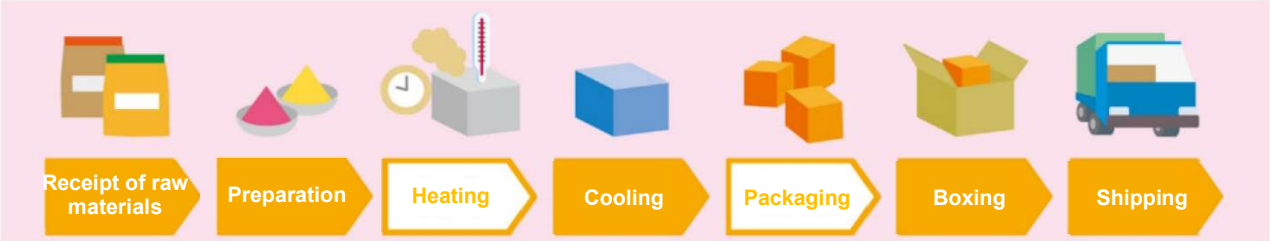
(2) Risk reduction Systems: HACCP

◆ Process management based on the HACCP approach for risk reduction

What is HACCP?

HACCP stands for Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point. In summary, this system involves analyzing every stage of the process—from raw material procurement to delivery to the customer—to identify where and why the three aforementioned risks (biological, chemical, and physical) may occur. Based on this analysis, specific countermeasures are determined and executed at critical stages to mitigate those risks.

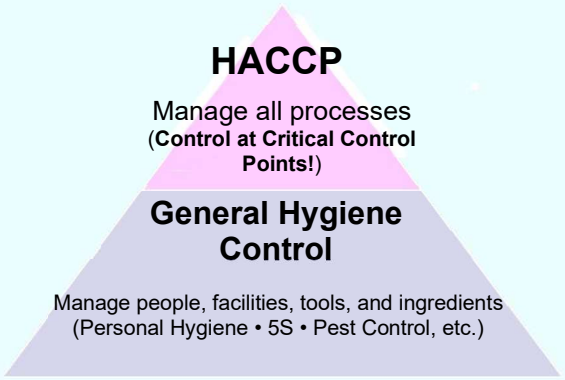
Throughout our Group, we implement management based on HACCP principles across every stage of our operations. These practices are tailored to the scale, food types, and sales formats of each business unit, referencing CODEX HACCP as well as sanitation management handbooks developed by industry organizations.



Key point!

General Hygiene Control

To implement management based on HACCP principles, it is essential to first ensure the hygienic management of personnel, facilities, equipment, and ingredients; this foundation is referred to as General Hygiene Control. Especially in business formats that handle a large volume of raw food, since establishing clear Critical Control Points (CCPs) for risk elimination is often difficult, General Hygiene Control serves as the fundamental basis for all safety initiatives.

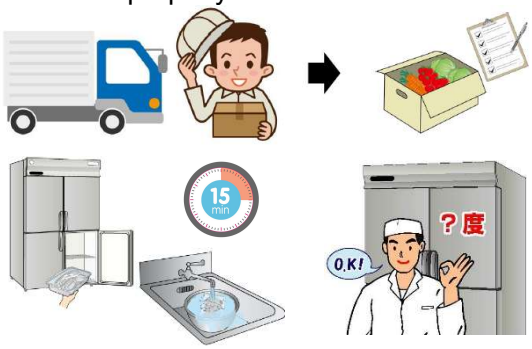


Basic Principles for Risk Reduction

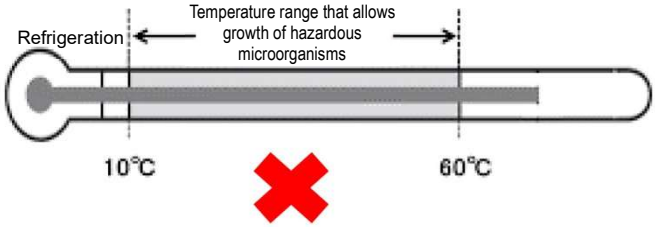
1. Prevent Entry
   - No working if sick: Prohibit staff with potential viral/bacterial infections from working.
   - No hazardous items: Do not bring in dirty or dangerous objects.

2. Prevent Contamination
   - Thorough Washing: Hands, tools, and machinery.
   - Use Covers: Keep all food items covered.

3. Prevent Growth
   - Temperature Control: Maintain low temperatures.
   - Shelf-life management: Monitor and manage dates properly



   - Quickly adjust the temperature to outside the risk range.



4. Eliminate
   - Sanitize: Wash and sanitize raw ingredients.
   - Heat: Apply proper heating.
   - Regular Reset: Perform periodic deep cleaning and resets.

5. 5S methodology

Sort (Seiri)	Remove and discard all unnecessary items.
Set in order (Seiton)	Store items properly in designated areas.
Shine (Seiso)	Perform regular cleaning.
Standardize (Seiketsu)	Maintain a clean and hygienic state.
Sustain (Shitsuke)	Make following the rules a habit.

Chapter 1 Raw Material Quality Management standards—From Origins to Processing Factory—

If raw materials and products are contaminated with agents that cause food poisoning, it can lead to an outbreak. To prevent this, our Group has established Quality Management standards for all items used. When purchasing raw materials and products, it is necessary to verify their compliance with these standards, in addition to ensuring their freshness and flavor.

Chapter 1	Raw Material Quality Management standards	(1) Prohibited Items and Acceptance/Monitoring Standards

Overview

Managing risks at the factory if the store cannot eliminate them, and at the store if the factory cannot, is the fundamental approach. If risks cannot be eliminated at either stage, they are addressed through usage restrictions and acceptance standards.

Management standards

1) Prohibited items

- ☐ Items containing food poisoning agents that pose a high risk of cross-contamination in subsequent processes because separating workspaces or timeframes is difficult.
- ☐ Items prohibited or restricted for consumption by national or local authorities.
- ☐ Items that cannot be handled due to insufficient business licenses, facility requirements, or required qualifications.

  * Note: Prohibited items are designated for each business category based on their specific characteristics.

  * Note: Final decisions are made by management, taking into account the severity and potential for spread of the risk.

2) Acceptance and Monitoring Standards

Acceptance standards: Criteria for purchase, use, and sales eligibility

- ☐ In principle, items must comply with the regulatory standards of the country of final sale (e.g., Food Sanitation Act, hygiene standards). However, internal standards are established for each business category for items with a high risk of food poisoning that cannot be eliminated in subsequent processes.
- ☐ Purchasing, use, and sales must be suspended if a manufacturer's shipping standards or test results deviate from the acceptance standards.

  *Note: Final decisions regarding the suspension of purchasing, use, or sales are based on results from ISO 17025 certified or government-registered laboratories using officially designated testing methods.

Monitoring standards: Criteria for tracking quality consistency and process stability

- ☐ Standards are established to ensure stable manufacturing within hygienic environments, or for items that require monitoring despite having no formal acceptance criteria.
- ☐ Even if a deviation occurs, it does not immediately trigger a suspension of purchasing, use, or sales; however, if a risk is deemed to exist, a cause investigation and improvement report must be requested, or verification must be conducted through factory audits.

* Key Internal Standards

Foodborne Pathogens	Rationale for Standard
Vibrio parahaemolyticus	The rapid growth rate of this pathogen, combined with extended lead times before consumption, significantly increases the risk of food poisoning. Consequently, negative standards are established for high-risk "raw-consumption" materials, particularly in business categories with a high volume of takeout orders.
Escherichia coli (*E.coli*)	Contamination can be prevented through hygienic processing at the source; however, if present in "raw-consumption" materials, it cannot be eliminated in any subsequent processes. To mitigate this risk, negative standards are set for these high-risk items.
Listeria monocytogenes	This pathogen is capable of growing at standard refrigeration temperatures (10℃ or less). Since store-level cold storage cannot effectively prevent its proliferation, negative standards are required for all high-risk "raw-consumption" materials.

Chapter 1	Raw Material Quality Management standards	(2) Factory Audit Standards

Overview

To ensure the safety of raw materials, it is essential that manufacturers implement appropriate controls. Consequently, factory audit standards are established to verify the integrity of a processing factory's management system and to confirm the effective execution of General Hygiene Management and HACCP.

Management standards

1) Factory Audit Items and Pass/Fail Criteria

Factory Audit Items

- ☐ Verify all processes from raw material acceptance and manufacturing to shipping, storage, and delivery.
- ☐ Verify company-specific requirements, based on the JFS-B food safety management standard.
- ☐ Evaluate each item through visual inspection, interviews, record reviews, and testing.

Pass/Fail criteria

- ☐ The overall level of quality control initiatives is represented by a score (0 to 100 points). Based on this score, the company determines transaction approval and the permissible scope of business.
- ☐ If any deficiencies identified are deemed highly critical—based on their impact on final products, product characteristics, or factory scale—they will be designated as Mandatory Improvement Items.
- ☐ Regardless of the overall score, if any Mandatory Improvement Items remain, business will not commence until the completion of improvements has been verified through either a re-audit or the acceptance of an improvement report.

*Score and Approval Status

Grade	Score (0-100)	Approval Status
S	90 or more	Approved for all formats, including direct import (importer F&LC).
A	80 or more	Approved for AS, Takeout Kyotaru, multiple overseas countries, and all Grade B formats.
B	70 or more	Approved for Sugidama, Misaki, Trial, Takeout small formats, and a single overseas country.
-	Less than 70	Transaction Not Approved.
Special Case	-	Approved with conditions.

Chapter 1	Raw Material Quality Management standards	(3) Food Item Procurement Flow

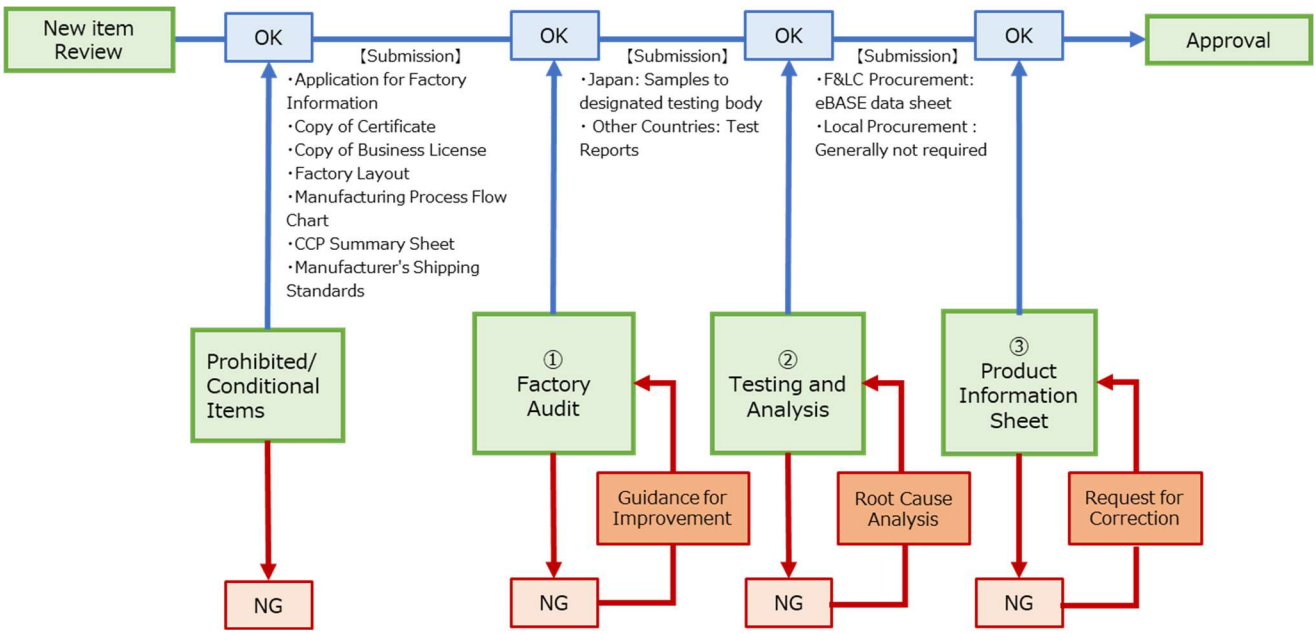
Overview

When procuring food items, we verify that they are not prohibited items and that they meet both our acceptance and factory audit standards; only items that align with our internal criteria are approved for purchase. The specific content to be verified is determined based on factors such as the risks associated with the food item and the supplier's management level.

Management standards

1) Flow from New Item Review to Approval

- ☐ Verification is conducted across three key areas to ensure compliance with all standards: Factory Audit, Testing, and Product Specification Data (Product Information Sheet).
- ☐ Any of these three areas may be omitted for items deemed low-risk or based on other relevant factors.



2) Factory Audit

Implementation of Audits

- ☐ The necessity of an audit is determined based on factors such as the food item risk and the factory management level (including certifications held by the factory).

- ☐ An audit may be omitted in the following cases:
  - ・Owner-specified items: Safety is guaranteed by the commercial facility owner
  - ・Unprocessed raw materials: Items that will undergo chemical sterilization or heat treatment at stores or Central Kitchens (CK)
  - ・Low-risk items: Materials such as rice, sugar, salt, flour, starch, and oil, etc.
  - ・Third-party certified factories:
    ✓Rank A: Factories with GFSI-recognized schemes or ISO 22000.
    ✓Rank B: Factories with third-party HACCP certification.

Category	For Limited Format Use *Note: Microbial-risk-controllable items only (e.g., To be heated)		For Sugidama, Misaki, Trial, TO small formats, Single overseas country		For AS, TO Kyotaru, Multiple overseas countries /F&LC procurement		For Direct Imports (F&LC as Importer)
Factory Management Level	Below HACCP	HACCP or above	Below HACCP	HACCP or above	Below GFSI ISO 22000	GFSI ISO 22000	GFSI ISO 22000
Audit Requirement	Simplified	May be omitted	Mandatory	May be omitted	Mandatory	May be omitted	Mandatory
Audit Score	-		70 or more Critical findings related to food poisoning must be corrected		80 or more		90 or more
Grade	Special Case	Special Case	Grade B	Grade B	Grade A	Grade A	Grade S
Notes	Special permit if microbial risk is controlled (Foreign object risk accepted by management)		For ambient sales: Shelf-life test & manufacturer's test results/official opinion		For ambient sales: Shelf-life test & manufacturer's test results/official opinion		ISO 22000/ GFSI Certification Mandatory

3) Testing

- ☐ New food items must meet both the regulatory standards of the country of final sale and our internal acceptance standards to be approved for purchase.
  * Testing may be omitted based on the risk level of the food item or other relevant factors.
- ☐ If results deviate from monitoring standards, a root cause investigation shall be conducted. Where necessary, findings shall be reflected in the shelf-life settings, recipes, or process flowcharts used at our stores and Central Kitchens (CK), and verified through periodic factory audits.

4) Product Information Sheet (Product Specification Data) Verification

- ☐ Approve the ingredient specification information after confirming that it meets both the national standards and our own acceptance standards.
  - Basic information
  - Traceability information
  - Quality Disclosure Data: Information required for creating food labels and disclosing quality details, such as ingredients, additives, allergens, and nutritional components.
  - Hygiene Risk Assessment Data: Information necessary for understanding safety risks, including manufacturing processes, shipping standards, and testing results.

NOTE: Key point!

Direct Import (Flow for products directly purchased and imported by the Group)

1. Factory Audit
2. Confirmation of Ingredient specification information
   (e.g. flow diagrams, manufacturing QC processes, recipes, product specifications, ingredient specifications, factory shipping standards, and shelf-life guarantee data)
3. Creation of Product Labels (Mandatory Labeling)
4. Preparation of Specification Sheets and Conclusion of Sales Contract
5. Trial Production (Witnessed): Full production begins after passing testing at external laboratories
6. Full Production (Witnessed): Export begins after passing testing by Japanese designated bodies
7. Data Registration in the Product Specification Management System
8. Customs clearance

Overview

Risks that cannot be managed at the raw material stage must be addressed in downstream processes (e.g., at stores or Central Kitchens). This section describes food items that require specific attention.

Management standards

1) Processing Status and Management Stages

☐ Unprocessed materials (raw) and unheated processed items intended for downstream cooking require management in downstream processes due to the potential presence of food poisoning bacteria.

Processing Category	Managed at Raw Material Stage	Managed in Downstream Processes
Unprocessed materials (Raw)		O
Non-heat treated processed (ready-to-cook)		O
Non-heat treated processed (ready-to-eat)	O	
Heated/Cooked processed	O	

2) Food Items Requiring Specific Attention in Downstream Processes

☐ For the food items listed in the table, risk reduction methods must be clearly defined in recipes and process flowcharts as follows:

- Clearly define conditions for washing, sanitization, heating, etc.
- Segregate tools and containers used before and after washing/sanitization or heating.
- Perform handwashing, glove changes, and workstation resets before and after washing/sanitization or heating.

Item	Risk factor (reason)	Management method
Unprocessed Seafood	*Vibrio parahaemolyticus*	Washing instructions in recipe Compliance with recipe Segregation of prep area and time
Non-heat Treated Processed Seafood (Chilled / Ready-to-Eat)	Parasite: *Anisakis*	Removal through visual inspection
Non-heat Treated Processed Seafood (for cooking)	*Vibrio parahaemolyticus*	Heating instructions in recipe Compliance with recipe
Unprocessed Vegetables	*E. coli*	Washing/sanitization or cooking as per manual Compliance with recipe. Segregation of prep area and time
Non-heat Treated Processed Vegetables (for cooking)	*E. coli*	Heating instructions in recipe Compliance with recipe
Non-heat Treated Processed Meat (for cooking)	*E. coli* *Salmonella* *Campylobacter*	Heating instructions in recipe Compliance with recipe Segregation of prep area and time
Shell Eggs	*Salmonella*	Heating/cooling instructions in recipe Compliance with recipe

Chapter 2 Product Quality Management standards—Production to Sales—

The previous chapter explained the systems for purchasing safe raw materials. However, even when purchasing safe raw materials, inadequate management during the production and sales stages can allow food poisoning agents to attach to food or multiply, leading to food poisoning accidents. This chapter describes the required actions for all store and factory staff across the Group.

Chapter 2	Product Quality Management standards	(1) -1 Management systems: Required Preparations

Overview

Food directly affects human life and health. Therefore, national and local governments establish various laws and regulations to manage food safety. Failure to comply with these regulations not only increases the risk of accidents but also causes severe damage to business operations due to penalties or public disclosure resulting from legal violations.

Management standards

1) Acquisition and Renewal of Operating Permit

Acquisition of Operating Permit

- ☐ Confirm the types of permits and notifications required for the food items handled and the sales format.
- ☐ Submit the necessary applications and notifications for the operating permit.
- ☐ Once issued, clearly display the operating permit at the place of business.

*Submit the application forms well in advance.

*Bring the facility layout plan and consult with the public health center before construction work begins.

Renewal of Operating Permit

- ☐ Renew the permit by submitting the necessary paperwork to the public health center approximately one month before it expires.
- ☐ Check with the public health center in the following cases, as you may need to reacquire or update your operating permit:
  - Relocation of the place of business.
  - Changes to the equipment or layout.
  - Changes in the business operator or corporate form.

Why? **Operating permit requirements**

The scope of an operating permit and its acquisition criteria are established by law.
Handling non-permitted food items or operating in unapproved sales formats is a violation of the law.
Making unauthorized changes to the equipment or layouts specified in the application drawings is also prohibited.

Compliance with Operating Permit Scope and Requirements

- ☐ Business must not be conducted using non-permitted food items or unapproved sales formats.
- ☐ Equipment or layouts must not be changed without permission.

2) Food Hygiene Manager Certification and Notification to the Public Health Center

Food hygiene manager certification and notification

- ☐ Confirm the details of the certification lecture with the local public health center or the Japan Food Hygiene Association, and apply for it.
- ☐ Participate in the lecture and other required events.
  - * Holders of specific qualifications (e.g., licensed nutritionists, licensed cooks) may be exempt from this training.
- ☐ Submit a notification of the food hygiene manager appointment to the local public health center.

Key point! **If a food hygiene manager is transferred, leaves the company, or takes a leave of absence…**

Designate a new food hygiene manager and submit a notice of change to the local public health center.

Responsibilities of food hygiene managers

- ☐ Manage and implement food hygiene practices.
- ☐ Promote improvement activities to prevent food poisoning incidents and avoid customer complaints.
- ☐ Obtain information on the revision or repeal of laws, regulations, and rules, communicate such information to employees, and work to ensure that applicable laws, regulations, and rules are not violated.

Key point! **Displaying the operating permit certificate and the food hygiene manager plate**

Display them in a highly visible location!

Note! **Opening a store in a new country**

The permits, facility standards, and qualifications that are required for the operation of a business vary by country.

When opening a store in a new country, study the local laws, regulations, and standards and act accordingly.

3) Management of HACCP-related documents

- ☐ Be aware of the storage location of the HACCP-Based Hygiene Management Plan.
- ☐ Be aware of the storage location of related manuals.
- ☐ Required manuals must be posted in easily visible locations for employees to reference during tasks.
  - * Post the latest manuals.
- ☐ Record sheets must be kept in easily accessible locations for employees to use.
  - * Use the latest record sheets.
- ☐ Record sheets and documents that require storage must be stored for a specified period of time.

Chapter 2	Product Quality Management standards	(1)-2 Management system: Employee training

Overview

All hygiene-related rules are established to prevent food poisoning incidents. However, compliance is impossible without being aware of these rules. Managers must proactively acquire hygiene knowledge and conduct employee training at appropriate times.

Management standards

1) Training for New Employees

- ☐ Conduct an orientation for new employees to provide necessary information.
- ☐ On the first day of work, provide explanations and on-the-job training (OJT) covering basic hygiene rules, such as personal appearance, procedures for feeling unwell, handwashing, and restroom usage.
- ☐ Regularly check in on new employees and provide additional explanations and conduct OJT whenever issues arise.

* For employees speaking different languages, adjust communication methods using translated materials, illustrations, and practical OJT.

2) Regular Training

- ☐ Conduct employee training at appropriate times, including:
  - When rules are updated.
  - When “Hygiene News” is issued.
  - When employee alerts are necessary due to the occurrence of dangerous incidents or near-misses.

Key point!

Hygiene News

The Group periodically issues “Hygiene News” based on seasonal changes and the hygiene status of group stores and factories.

Utilize the newsletter during morning meetings to clearly communicate the importance of hygiene management and the reasons behind daily hygiene rules.

All employees must take the accompanying tests to verify their understanding.

Managers must review the test results and provide individual guidance to employees who lack a correct understanding.

Chapter 2	Product Quality Management standards	(1)-3 Management system: Reviews and Revisions

Overview

Effective leadership in hygiene management by managers enhances employee awareness and compliance with rules. Managers must routinely monitor the situation and implement necessary activities. The Quality Assurance Department will conduct timely reviews and revisions in response to onsite conditions and changes in the external environment.

Management standards

1) Routine Checks and Improvement Activities

- ☐ Managers must regularly check for hygiene issues through record inspections, visual observations, and employee interviews.
- ☐ If any issues are found, take prompt action toward improvement.
  * These checks and actions must be performed by the manager.

Item	Method	Task
Health check sheet	Records	Confirm that checks have been completed and no unwell employees are working, then sign the sheet.
Hygiene management record sheet		Confirm that records are properly kept, and check for any issues such as deviations from standards, then sign the sheet.
Personal Hygiene	Visual observations / Interviews	Check whether employees understand and follow the rules regarding personal appearance, procedures when feeling unwell, restroom usage, and the timing and methods of handwashing.
Process management		Check whether employees understand and follow the necessary rules at each stage, from receiving food items to product provision, delivery, and sales.
Area and utensil management		Confirm that washing, cleaning, and disinfection are executed as planned, and check for any issues in the implementation. Confirm there is no damage that could lead to foreign matter contamination or the intrusion and breeding of pests and rodents. Check for the presence of pests and rodents, and ensure countermeasures are thorough by interviewing employees and reviewing work reports from pest control contractors.
Emergency response and reporting		Check whether employees understand emergency response procedures for incidents such as vomiting, customer inquiries, and reports of feeling unwell or foreign matter contamination.

2) Regular Evaluations and Improvement Activities

Responsibilities of the Quality Assurance Department

- ☐ Plan and conduct regular audits to confirm whether Group stores and factories are managed in accordance with the HACCP-Based Hygiene Management Plan.
- ☐ Evaluate audit results on a four-level scale based on risk: white, yellow, red, and black.
- ☐ Consider revising the HACCP-Based Hygiene Management Plan, manuals, and records depending on the situation.

* When revising the HACCP-Based Hygiene Management Plan, manuals, or records, draft revision proposals after discussing with relevant departments, and implement the revisions upon receiving approval from the executive in charge of quality assurance.

Note!

Environmental Tests

To verify that production areas are kept hygienic, the Quality Assurance Department conducts regular tests alongside audits. These tests include the following:

- ATP test: Inspects for residual dirt (organic matter)
  Checks whether handwashing and utensil cleaning are performed properly.
- Bacteria test: Inspects for bacteria in areas, on utensils, on food items, and in the air.
  Checks whether the principles of preventing introduction, preventing cross-contamination, preventing growth, and eliminating pathogens are properly implemented. Air testing is conducted to check whether air conditioners and air intake and exhaust systems are being managed properly so that there are no bacteria or mold spores present in the air at production sites.

Responsibilities of Stores and Factories

- ☐ Conduct self-checks before audits to confirm compliance with rules.
- ☐ Upon receiving an audit report, implement improvement activities according to the following steps:
  - Analyze the root causes of identified issues.
  - Develop an improvement plan.
  - Explain the current situation and planned actions to employees.
  - Verify the implementation status.
- ☐ Submit an improvement report following the Quality Assurance Department's instructions if a severe issue occurs.

3) Reviews and Revisions

- ☐ The Head of the Quality Assurance Department must report the following at management meetings:
  - Sharing of activity policies, goals, and plans.
  - Sharing of the hygiene status, achievements, and challenges.
  - Sharing of information regarding changes in the external environment, including laws and regulations.
  - Proposals for revising the HACCP-Based Hygiene Management Plan, manuals, and records.

Chapter 2	Product Quality Management standards	(1)-4 Management system: Emergency Response

Overview

Unexpected incidents may occur despite the implementation of rigorous preventive measures. In such cases, prompt reporting and coordinated company-wide responses are essential to minimize damage.

Management standards

1) Incidents Requiring Emergency Response

Category	Content	Particularly Critical Situations
Food poisoning Contamination Risks by Hazardous Matters	Viruses / Bacteria	Multiple health hazards, or due to raw material factors
	Parasites	Health hazards
	Hazardous chemicals (detergents, disinfectants, etc.)	Health hazards, or due to raw material factors
	Allergens	Health hazards, or due to raw material factors
	Physical hazards (glass, metal, etc.)	Health hazards, or due to raw material factors
	Others	High-impact incidents
Cluster Infection Infection Risks	Group infection / food poisoning among employees	Infection of customers; site inspection by the public health center
	Vomiting in stores or factories	Vomiting in production areas, on conveyor belts, etc.
	Others	High-impact incidents
Labeling Errors	Ingredients	Undeclared allergen information
	Expiration / Best-before dates	Labeling with a date longer than the actual period
	Storage methods	Labeling with a temperature higher than the actual range
	Other	High-impact incidents

2) Daily Reporting Flow

- ☐ Store and factory managers must create an environment that encourages immediate reporting of abnormal incidents by employees.
- ☐ Employees must report any abnormal incidents to managers immediately.
- ☐ Managers must verify the facts of reported incidents.
- ☐ Managers must respond in accordance with established rules.
- ☐ Record the incident and the response as necessary.
- ☐ Report to relevant departments via workflow as necessary.

3) Emergency Reporting Flow

- ☐ Store and factory managers must immediately submit the initial report to their superior and the Quality Assurance Department when an incident requiring an emergency response occurs.
- ☐ Quality Assurance personnel must verify the situation and report to the Head of the Quality Assurance Department.
- ☐ The Head of the Quality Assurance Department must report to the President & CEO and explain the identified facts along with the following:
  - Potential for serious illness or death.
  - Potential for further spread of damage.
  - Necessity for emergency measures, including suspension of operations, suspension of sales, public announcements, and product recalls.
  - Necessity for cooperation with regulatory authorities.
  - Necessity for other company-wide responses.

4) Emergency Response

- ☐ The President decides whether the incident constitutes a crisis and issues response instructions.
  - In case of a crisis: Convene an extraordinary Internal Control Committee, determine response policies, and establish a response headquarters.
  - In other cases: Response led by the department in charge.
- ☐ The Head of the Quality Assurance Department proposes emergency measures (e.g., suspension of business operations, suspension of sales, release of announcement, and product recall) that will need to be taken to prevent any escalation of damage.
- ☐ The Head of the Quality Assurance Department negotiates with regulatory authorities to contain the situation.
- ☐ The Head of the Quality Assurance Department conducts an investigation, collects information, and shares it with the relevant departments.
- ☐ The Head of the Quality Assurance Department works with the relevant departments to implement measures necessary to contain the situation.

5) Cause Investigations and Recurrence Prevention measures

- ☐ The Quality Assurance Department investigates the cause of the incident that has occurred.
- ☐ The Quality Assurance Department proposes and implements measures that will need to be taken to prevent a recurrence.
  * Review the HACCP-Based Hygiene Management Plan, Management standards, manuals, and records as necessary.

6) Effectiveness Evaluation

- ☐ The Quality Assurance Department verifies whether the recurrence prevention measures are working effectively and being implemented consistently.
- ☐ Review recurrence prevention measures as necessary.

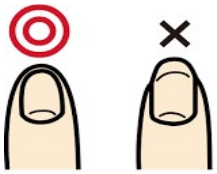
Chapter 2	Product Quality Management standards	(2)-1 Personnel Hygiene: Appearance

Overview

Appearance is a critical element for food handlers in terms of both hygiene management and the impression given to customers. Be mindful of maintaining a clean appearance and diligently follow the established rules.

Management standards

1) Appearance

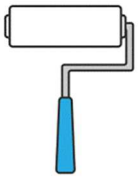


- ☐ Keep fingernails cut short and neat.
- ☐ Change into designated shoes.
- ☐ Exchange and wash uniforms in accordance with the specified frequency.
- ☐ Remove accessories that may cause hand contamination or interfere with handwashing (e.g., rings, watches, and bracelets).
- ☐ Follow any other appearance rules set by the store or factory.

2) Items Prohibited at the Production Area

- ☐ Establish rules regarding items prohibited in production areas to ensure that employees do not bring in dangerous items, unsanitary items, or items that may cause foreign matter contamination.
- ☐ Employees must not bring prohibited items into production areas.

3) Use of a Lint roller



- ☐ Use a lint roller or other cleaning utensil to remove hair or dust from the cap or uniform where necessary.

4) Use of Gloves

- ☐ Wear gloves as necessary, such as when handling final products or ingredients for food to be consumed raw.
- ☐ Wear gloves when performing tasks that involve touching ingredients if there are any cuts or chapped hands on the hands or fingers.
  *Put on gloves after hands are thoroughly washed and cleaned.

5) Removal of uniform when using (or cleaning) the toilet

- ☐ Remove any parts of the uniform that may become contaminated when using (or cleaning) the toilet (e.g., aprons and sleeves).

Chapter 2	Product Quality Management standards	(2)-2 Personnel Hygiene: Health Management

Overview

Feeling unwell indicates the possibility of harboring bacteria or viruses that cause food poisoning. Since bacteria and viruses are invisible, food can be contaminated without even realizing it. Proper health management is essential to prevent their introduction into production areas.

Management standards

1) Stool Tests, Health Certifications etc.

- ☐ Conduct all examinations required by laws and regulations (e.g., stool tests, health checkups, and blood tests). If any issues are identified, respond in accordance with applicable laws or established rules.
- ☐ Managers must check the implementation status of the examinations.
- ☐ Necessary records must be stored.

Note!

Stool Tests

The Japanese Sanitary Management Manual for Large-Scale Cooking Facilities requires regular health checkups along with stool tests for enterohemorrhagic *Escherichia coli (E. coli)* and Norovirus.

To reduce the risk of employees working while infected with a virus or bacterium that can cause food poisoning, our group (in Japan) requires regular stool tests for Category III food poisoning bacteria (as specified in the Infectious Disease Control Law) , as well as stool tests for Norovirus when an employee is feeling unwell.

2) 2) Advance Notification When Feeling Unwell

- ☐ When feeling unwell (any symptoms of diarrhea, vomiting, or fever [37°C or higher]), contact must be made by phone without coming to the store or factory.
- ☐ Even without symptoms, when an infectious disease is contracted and a stay-at-home request is issued by a hospital or administrative agency, contact must be made by phone without coming to the store or factory.




3) Confirming Health Status

- ☐ Confirm employees' health status before they start work.
- ☐ Record the confirmed information.
- ☐ Managers must verify that checks are properly conducted and recorded before signing the record.

4) Appropriate Responses to Unwell Employees

- ☐ Suspend employees from work when notified that they are feeling unwell.
- ☐ Upon receiving a report of an employee feeling unwell during the health status check or while on duty, send them home and record the action taken.
- ☐ Require the submission of a stool test if necessary, and allow the employee to return to work only after confirming a negative result.

5) Checking for Cuts and Chapped Hands/Fingers, and Appropriate Responses

- ☐ Check for cuts and chapped hands/fingers, and record the results.
- ☐ If cuts or chapped hands/fingers are present, ensure the employee wears company-designated bandages and gloves while working, or reassign them to tasks that do not involve handling food ingredients.
- ☐ Record the actions taken.

Why?

What is Staphylococcus aureus?

Staphylococcus aureus is a food poisoning bacterium found on human skin, hair, and in the nose, mouth, and throat. It is particularly abundant in cuts and infected wounds.

When it multiplies, it produces a toxin called enterotoxin. Consuming food contaminated with this toxin causes severe vomiting and diarrhea.

The rules regarding cuts and chapped hands are established to prevent Staphylococcus aureus from contaminating food ingredients.

6) Response to Vomiting Incidents

When handling internally:

- ☐ Store a vomit treatment kit and the corresponding treatment manual.
- ☐ Inform employees of the storage location of the treatment kit and the treatment procedures.
- ☐ Record the response actions taken for vomit treatment.
- ☐ Managers must verify the implementation status.

Why?

Why is vomit treatment necessary?

Vomit may contain dangerous viruses and bacteria. If not cleaned up promptly and properly, these pathogens can scatter or remain on surfaces, causing infectious diseases and food poisoning.

When outsourcing the cleanup:

- ☐ Restrict access to the area around the vomit to prevent anyone from approaching.
- ☐ Ventilate the area.
- ☐ Contact a professional disposal company and request vomit cleanup.
- ☐ Managers must confirm that the cleanup has been completed and record the occurrence of the vomiting incident.

Chapter 2	Product Quality Management standards	(2)-3 Personnel Hygiene: Hand and finger hygiene

Overview

Hands and fingers are contaminated with invisible viruses and bacteria. Without proper handwashing at the correct timing, these viruses and bacteria can contaminate food ingredients, potentially causing food poisoning incidents. Proper handwashing is the fundamental practice for preventing such accidents.

Management standards

1) Environment for Handwashing

- ☐ Install sinks used only for handwashing.
  *Clarify the purpose of the sink.
  *Do not use the sink for any other purpose.
- ☐ Provide necessary supplies and equipment (water, soap, and hand-drying facilities).
- ☐ Keep the handwashing equipment hygienic.
- ☐ Keep the area around sinks clear of objects and obstructions to ensure they are always ready for use.
- ☐ Post handwashing manuals in visible locations.

2) Implementation of Handwashing

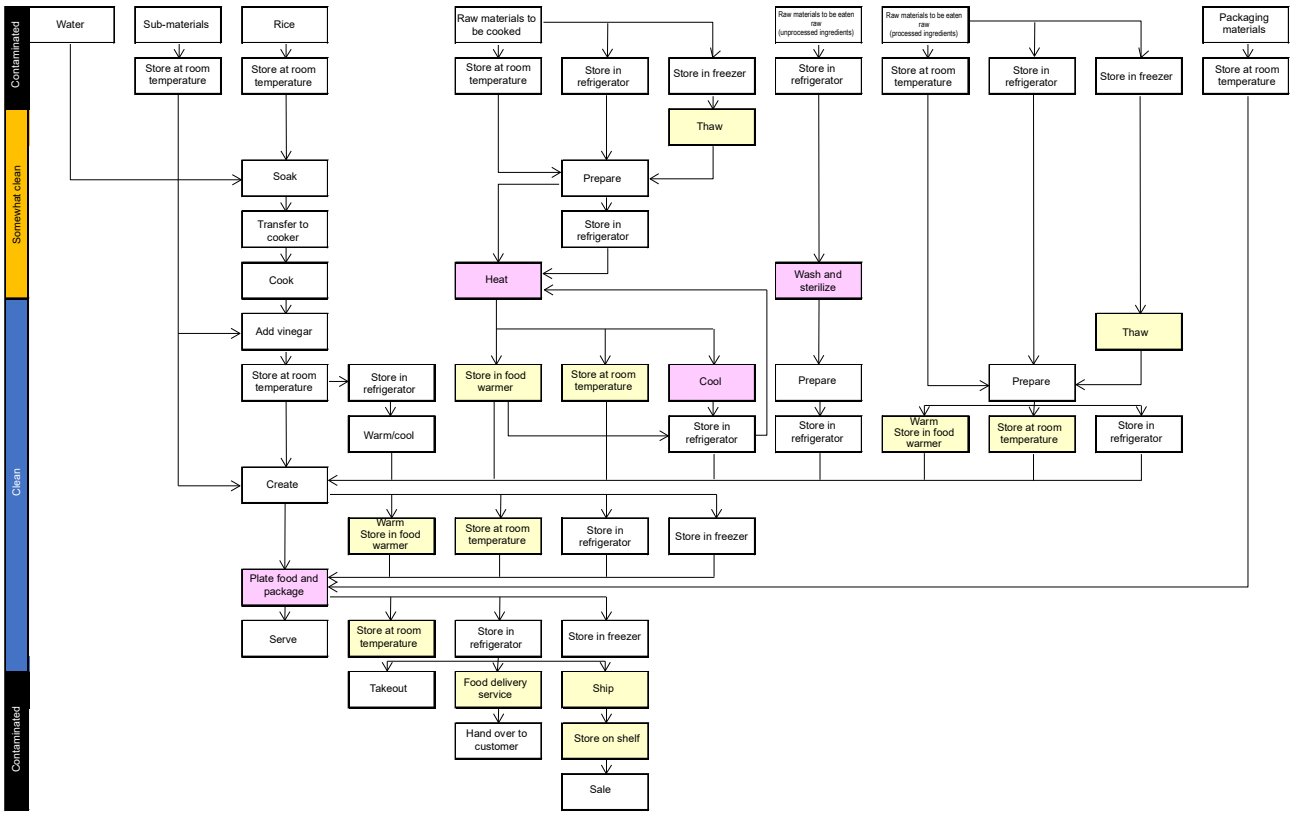
- ☐ Ensure employees are aware of the correct timing for handwashing:
  - When entering a room (after a break), after using (or cleaning) the toilet, and after cleaning up vomit.
  - When moving between designated zones.
  - When transitioning from contaminated tasks to hygienic tasks.
  - After touching dirty or contaminated items.
- ☐ Ensure employees are aware of the proper handwashing methods.
- ☐ Perform handwashing strictly according to the established rules.
- ☐ Managers must regularly check the handwashing practices of employees and provide immediate guidance if any issues are found.

Overview

When developing or updating a product, or when selling through a new sales format, it is necessary to analyze potential risks from the receipt of raw materials to delivery to the customer, and determine management methods. For high-risk processes in particular, management standards must be clearly defined in recipes, process flowcharts, and other relevant documents.

Management standards

Overview of a production process



1) Creation of Recipes and Process Flowcharts

☐ Create recipes and process flowcharts as necessary to clearly specify the raw materials to be used and points of caution.

2) Items Requiring Clarification

Raw materials used:

☐ For business categories that disclose allergy information or for products sold with comprehensive labels, the raw materials to be used must be clearly specified to prevent ingredient mix-ups.

Thawing food

☐ Establish temperature standards for items based on the risk of the food ingredients.
*Guideline: Internal temperature of 10°C or lower (Set in consideration of national legal standards and risks).

☐ Set the thawing method, time, and temperature according to the business category and equipment to ensure compliance with the temperature standards.
- Thaw in a refrigerator.
- Thaw under running water (Preferably using chilled water or other methods where water temperature can be controlled), etc.

☐ Use timers and measure temperatures as necessary.

Sanitization methods for unprocessed raw materials for raw consumption:

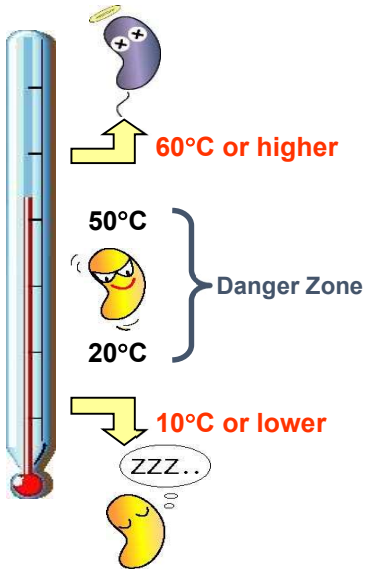
☐ When using unprocessed raw materials for raw consumption, establish sanitization methods appropriate to the risk of the ingredients.
- Vegetables and fruits: Chemical sanitization or heat sanitization.
- Seafood: Washing with fresh water.

Heating and Cooling methods:

☐ For products requiring heating, confirm the temperature and time required to eliminate risk-posing microorganisms according to the type of food, and determine heating methods and times that can guarantee these conditions.

☐ For products with a risk of heat-resistant spores, establish a cooling method that can rapidly pass through the danger zone (the temperature range that allows bacterial growth).
*Guideline: Cool to 20°C within 30 minutes.

☐ Establish methods to verify whether proper heating and cooling are being performed at the production site as necessary.
- Check the set temperature at the start and set the time using a timer.
- Visually check the core condition of the product at the start.
- Measure and record the core temperature at the start.



Packaging

☐ When selling products with product information labels, determine methods for confirmation and recording to prevent applying the wrong label or displaying incorrect information.

☐ For products with a risk of quality deterioration or bacterial growth due to temperature rise during distribution, consider necessary packaging formats, such as including ice packs or using cooler bags.

☐ Set other necessary packaging formats according to product characteristics and sales formats.

Chapter 2	Product Quality Management standards	(3)-2 Process management: Receiving and Storage

Overview

If raw materials are not delivered properly, it can lead to quality deterioration and bacterial growth. Furthermore, even if items are delivered in a safe condition, improper storage afterward will ruin them before they are used.
Carefully check that there are no problems with the delivered food items and store them appropriately.

Management standards

1) Inspection and Storage Upon Receipt

- ☐ Upon receipt, verify the temperature, quantity, and appearance (e.g., damage, dirt, discoloration) of the items.
- ☐ If any issues are found, respond in accordance with established rules and record the details.
- ☐ Begin storing items promptly after inspection, placing them in the appropriate temperature zones.

2) Fixed-Location Storage, Segregation, and First-In First-Out

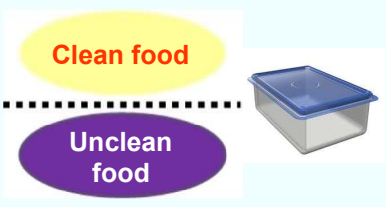
- ☐ Store all items in their designated locations.
- ☐ Segregate and store raw materials with different hygiene levels.
  - * Separate them by location, store vertically, or store them in containers with lids.
  - * When storing items vertically, store items with a high hygiene level (e.g., processed foods, food items for raw consumption) on the upper shelves, and items with a low hygiene level (e.g., unprocessed raw materials, food items to be heated) on the lower shelves.
- ☐ Implement the First-In First-Out (FIFO) method during storage to prevent the use of expired or spoiled food items.

Note! **What are food items with a low hygiene level (contaminated food items)?**

1. Items touched by many unspecified people (items brought in from outside).
2. Unprocessed raw materials before washing and sanitization.
3. Food items intended to be eaten after heating.

Key point! **Key points for segregation**

- Separate by location.
- Store vertically.
- Store in containers with lids



3) Hygienic Storage

- ☐ Store food items, packaging materials, and tools that come into contact with food in hygienic locations.
- ☐ Protect items by storing them in containers with lids, using plastic wrap, or by other means to prevent contamination.

4) Temperature Checks for Constant-temperature Storage Equipment (e.g., Freezers and Refrigerators)

- ☐ Regularly check the temperatures of freezers, refrigerators, and other equipment used to store food items at a constant temperature to ensure the appropriate temperatures are maintained.
  * For equipment powered off after operations, turn the power on before starting work and confirm that the standard temperature has been reached before storing food items.
- ☐ Record the results of the temperature checks.
- ☐ When the temperature deviates from the standard, respond according to the established rules and record the actions taken.
  * Example rule: Remeasure after 30 minutes. If the temperature remains higher than the standard, move the food items to another storage location or discard them.
- ☐ Managers must verify that the response actions were appropriate and sign the record.

Key point!

Standard temperatures

To prevent quality deterioration and bacterial growth, it is necessary to set appropriate standard temperatures according to the food items.

As a basic rule, our standard is set at -15°C or lower for freezers and 10°C or lower for refrigerators. However, items that discolor quickly, such as tuna and bonito, must be stored at ultra-low temperatures, and items with standard temperatures stipulated by law must have their standards set accordingly.

Ensure that the specifications, characteristics, and risk factors of the food items being handled are checked in advance.

Chapter 2	Product Quality Management standards	(3)-3 Process management: Shelf Life management

Overview

Food items deteriorate and bacteria multiply over time, so it is important to use and sell them within their established dates. Using or selling expired food items can lead to major issues, such as food poisoning accidents and product recalls.

Management standards

1) Checking and Recording of Expiration and Best-before dates

- ☐ Regularly check the dates of stored food items to ensure that no expired food items are used or stored.
- ☐ If a product has an expiry date or best-before date recorded on it, check that the product has not expired before selling or shipping it.
- ☐ Record the expiry and best-before dates where necessary.

2) Checking and Recording of Internal Use-by date (Control Number)

- ☐ Clearly indicate the internal use-by date(Control Number) on food items after thawing, opening, or preparation.
- ☐ Regularly check the dates to ensure that no food items past their internal use-by date are used or stored.
- ☐ Record the checks as necessary.

Key point!

Shelf Life Management

- Sort and organize.
- First-In First-Out (FIFO).
- Attaching and recording dates
- Checking before use
- Regular checking

Note!

Expiration/Best-Before Dates vs. Internal Use-By Dates (Control Number)

“Expiration/Best-before dates” are the guaranteed periods when a product is stored unopened under the manufacturer's specified storage methods. Because bacterial growth and oxidation progress after opening, thawing, or preparation, many food items deteriorate before their manufacturer-designated expiration/best-before dates.

Therefore, the "Internal Use-By dates(Control Number)" is determined through testing to establish how long a food item can be safely used after opening, thawing, or preparation.

To provide safe products, it is necessary to manage both the "Expiration/Best-before dates" and the "Internal use-by dates(Control Number)”.

Chapter 2	Product Quality Management standards	(3)-4 Process management: Process management

Overview

Even if safe ingredients are delivered, improper production processes can lead to food poisoning accidents. Follow the management standards specified in recipes or process flow charts throughout the entire process.

Management standards

1) Verification of Ingredients Used

- ☐ When disclosing allergy information or selling products with product information labels, the purchase of commercially available food items and the use of ingredients different from the recipe are prohibited.
- ☐ Verify and record the ingredients used as necessary.

Why? **Reasons for prohibiting the use of commercially available food items or ingredients different from the recipe**

While hives are a typical symptom of a food allergy, it can also cause a systemic reaction called anaphylactic shock, which can lead to death in a short period.

Even for similar ingredients, the contained allergens vary depending on the manufacturer, production factory, and specific product. Using ingredients different from the recipe will cause a discrepancy between the disclosed information and the allergens actually contained, potentially leading to life-threatening situations.

2) Proper Thawing

- ☐ Thaw items using appropriate methods.
- ☐ Follow established rules, such as using timers and managing temperatures, to prevent unnecessary temperature rise.

3) Storage in Appropriate Temperature Zones

- ☐ Store food items using appropriate methods (e.g., freezing, refrigeration, warm storage).
- ☐ Plan your workflow to prevent ingredients from being left out or sitting at room temperature.
  - * If leaving them out is unavoidable, take measures to prevent the food temperature from rising, such as using chilled trays or controlling the room temperature.

4) Washing and Sanitization of Unprocessed Raw Materials for Raw Consumption

- ☐ Wash and sanitize unprocessed raw materials for raw consumption using appropriate methods.
  - Vegetables and fruits: Chemical sanitization or heat sanitization.
  - Seafood: Washing with fresh water.
- ☐ Segregate workspaces, tools, and times to prevent unprocessed raw materials before washing and sanitization from crossing paths with sanitized ingredients or other food items.
- ☐ After handling unprocessed raw materials, wash and sanitize workspaces, and wash, sanitize, or exchange tools.
- ☐ After handling unprocessed raw materials, wash hands and change gloves.

Why? **<u>Why wash and sanitize unprocessed raw materials for raw consumption?</u>**

Numerous bacteria exist in nature, and freshly harvested, unprocessed raw materials are covered with them. Eating unprocessed raw materials as they are carries a high risk of food poisoning, making it necessary to wash, sanitize, or heat them thoroughly.

5) Proper Heating and Cooling

- ☐ Heat items using appropriate methods.
  * Follow the heating methods, temperatures, and times specified in recipes, process flowcharts, and other relevant documents.
- ☐ Verify whether the item is properly heated to its core using one of the following methods:
  - Check the set temperature at the start and set the time using a timer.
  - Visually check the core condition of the product at the start.
  - Measure and record the core temperature at the start.
- ☐ Segregate workspaces, tools, and times to prevent food items before heating from crossing paths with heated ingredients or other food items.
- ☐ Cool items exactly as specified in recipes or process flowcharts.
- ☐ After handling food items before heating, wash and sanitize workspaces, and wash, sanitize, or exchange tools.
- ☐ After handling food items before heating, wash hands and change gloves.
- ☐ Replace cooking oil at appropriate intervals.

Knowledge **<u>Degradation (Oxidation) of Oil</u>**

As oil is continuously heated or mixed with impurities, it gradually degrades (oxidizes). Consuming degraded oil can cause heartburn, vomiting, diarrhea, and other health issues.

Signs of oil degradation include turning completely black, emitting a strong oil odor, forming fine and persistent bubbles, and becoming sticky when the temperature drops. Set an appropriate replacement frequency based on usage conditions!

6) Management Up to Serving and Shipping

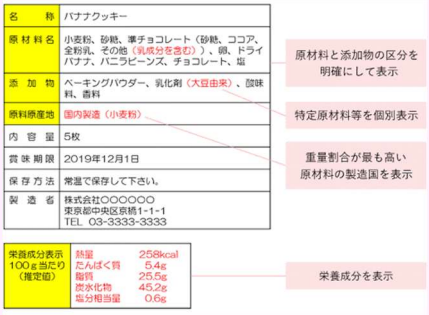
- ☐ Conduct a final check of the product to confirm there are no quality abnormalities or foreign matter contamination, and that the packaging format is appropriate.
- ☐ If a post-production shelf life is determined, clearly indicate the date.
  - * The date must be determined based on scientific evidence, such as preservation test results (microbial, sensory, etc.).
- ☐ Properly attach product information labels to packaged products.
- ☐ To prevent applying the wrong product information label or displaying incorrect information, confirm and record using established methods.
- ☐ Store products using established methods after production.
- ☐ Serve or ship products within the established timeframe after production.

Knowledge

What are Product Information Labels?

When packaging food and selling it at a location other than the production site, it is legally required (in Japan) to attach a comprehensive label like the one shown on the right.

Selling products without a label or with incorrect information not only violates the law but can also lead to health hazards such as allergy accidents.



Knowledge

Retain Samples (Kenshoku)

According to the Japanese Sanitary Management Manual for Large-Scale Cooking Facilities, when producing a large volume of products at once, at least one sample of the product must be kept frozen for two weeks or longer to facilitate prompt cause investigation in the event of a food accident.

*Guideline: When serving 300 or more meals of the same menu at once, or 750 or more meals per day.

Chapter 2	Product Quality Management standards	(3)-5 Process management: Regular Reset

Overview

Over time, bacteria multiply on hands, tools, and workspaces. Furthermore, viruses and bacteria brought in from outside, or bacteria attached to ingredients, can spread without being noticed. Prevent the spread of contamination by performing regular resets.

Management standards

1) Resetting Hygiene Supplies and Tools

Dusters (Cleaning cloths)

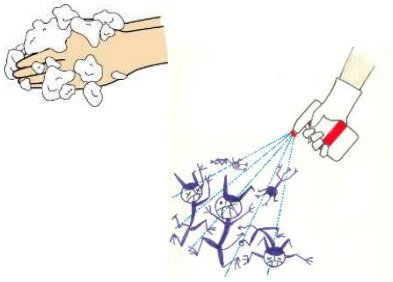
- ☐ Separate dusters used in contaminated areas from those used in clean areas.
- ☐ For dusters used in clean areas, separate them by purpose as necessary.
- ☐ Wash, sanitize, and replace dusters at designated frequencies.

Tools (Utensils)

- ☐ To prevent bacterial growth from continuous use, regularly wash, sanitize, and exchange tools.
- ☐ Wash and sanitize using established methods at the end of operations.
  - * E.g., Chemical sanitization or heat sanitization.

2) Handwashing, Glove Changing, and Sanitization During Tasks

- ☐ Wash hands or change gloves when transitioning from contaminated tasks to sanitary tasks.
  - When moving from a contaminated area to a clean area.
  - When switching from a contaminated task to a sanitary task.
  - After touching contaminated items.
- ☐ Perform regular handwashing and glove changing.



3) Resetting Workspaces

- ☐ Regularly clean, wash, and sanitize workspaces.
- ☐ Regularly sanitize high-touch surfaces (e.g., handles, water taps).

Why? **Cross-Contamination and Regular Resets**

Cross-contamination occurs when viruses, bacteria, or other pathogens attached to contaminated items are transferred to sanitary items (such as food ingredients) via people, tools, or workspaces. To prevent cross-contamination—and to stop it from spreading if it does occur—it is crucial to perform regular resets.

Knowledge **Measures to Prevent the Accidental Mixing of Allergenic Ingredients**

If an allergenic ingredient not listed on the label is mixed into a product sold with a product information label, it constitutes a violation of the Food Labeling Act.

To prevent the unintended mixing of allergenic ingredients, the three reset tasks mentioned above must be strictly performed when changing workstations or ingredients.

Chapter 2	Product Quality Management standards	(3)-6 Process management: Delivery and Sales

Overview

Even if safe products are produced, improper management during the delivery and sales stages can lead to product contamination by viruses and bacteria, or allow bacteria to multiply. Maintain strict management without letting your guard down until the products are delivered to the customers.

Management standards

1) Management During Delivery

- ☐ When handling home delivery or shipping, confirm delivery temperatures and times in advance, and consider necessary packaging formats (e.g., including ice packs, using cooler bags) to ensure appropriate temperatures are maintained during transit.
- ☐ When using frozen or refrigerated courier services, request temperature control from the delivery company.
- ☐ Deliver products using the specified packaging formats and conditions.

2) Management During Sales

- ☐ Conduct receiving inspections for delivered products.
- ☐ Store products in the appropriate temperature zone.
- ☐ Manage the temperature of product storage areas.
- ☐ When displaying price cards for sales, verify that they match the actual products.
- ☐ Use clean tongs or gloves when touching products directly.
- ☐ Verify that expiration/best-before dates have not passed at the time of sale.

3) Accurate Information Communication

- ☐ If there is an inquiry from a customer regarding allergy information, respond according to the established rules.
  - When allergy information is disclosed:
    Direct the customer to where the information is published, or show the allergy information to the customer.
    Explain that there is a possibility of accidental mixing (cross-contact).
  - When allergy information is NOT disclosed:
    Explain that allergy management is not conducted.
- ☐ If there is even the slightest uncertainty, do not make a personal judgment; confirm with the manager or headquarters before responding.

Why?

The Importance of Accurate Information Communication

When choosing products, customers with food allergies may ask store staff for information in addition to checking published information or attached product information labels.

Providing incorrect information could trigger an allergic reaction in the customer, leading to a life-threatening situation in the worst-case scenario. Handle customer inquiries with extreme care.

Therefore, we must handle customer inquiries with extreme care.

Chapter 2	Product Quality Management standards	(4)-1 Area and Utensil Management: Management Systems

Overview

Keeping food handling facilities in appropriate condition is a prerequisite for hygiene management. In addition to complying with the facility standards required by law, properly establish management systems such as waste and water management, pest and rodent control, and cleaning and maintenance plans to maintain a hygienic environment.

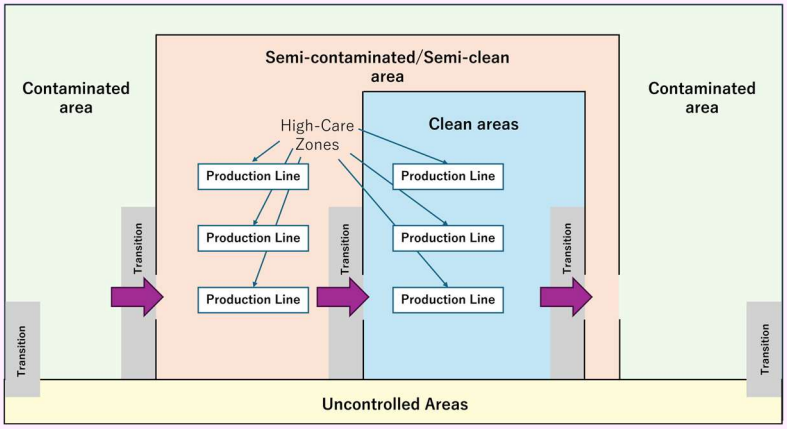
Management standards

1) Facility Design

- ☐ Design the facility and arrange equipment in compliance with the facility standards required to obtain a business license.
- ☐ For equipment connected to the outside, such as drainage, intake/exhaust, and air conditioning systems, take necessary measures to prevent the intrusion of insects and rodents from the outside and the emission of wastewater and foul odors to the outside.
- ☐ Take necessary measures to prevent unauthorized persons from entering the facility, water storage tanks, and other restricted areas.
- ☐ Segregate areas into contaminated areas and clean areas according to the tasks performed in each area.
- ☐ Install necessary equipment, such as handwashing sinks, to prevent cross-contamination when movement occurs from a contaminated area to a clean area.
  * Set necessary hygiene management rules according to the hygiene level of each area.
- ☐ Arrange the equipment necessary for performing tasks along the workflow paths.

Knowledge **Area Segregation (Zoning)**

- ●Contaminated areas:
  Areas in contact with the outside, such as delivery entrances, dining areas, and shipping areas. Areas handling items returning from contaminated areas.
- ●Semi-contaminated/Semi-clean areas:
  Areas for storage or pretreatment tasks
- ●Clean areas:
  Areas where production takes place.



2) Facility Management

Management of garbage areas and drainage systems

- ☐ Have garbage collected at an appropriate frequency.
- ☐ Clean the garbage areas, drainage equipment, and grease traps and keep them hygienic.

Why?

Consideration for the Surrounding Environment

Leaving garbage storage areas and drainage equipment unhygienic not only breeds pests like cockroaches and small flies and attracts rodents and birds, but it can also lead to penalties for violating drainage standards or cause foul odors that inconvenience neighboring residents.

To be a company loved by the community, let's show care for the surrounding environment!

Water management

- ☐ When using well water, conduct statutory inspections.
- ☐ When using a water storage tank, conduct regular cleaning at least once a year and keep the records.
- ☐ Conduct bacterial testing, sensory testing, and chlorine concentration checks of the water used as necessary.

Pest and Rodent Control

- ☐ Contract with a specialized company to regularly monitor the occurrence of pests and rodents.
- ☐ Check work reports to confirm the occurrence status and items requiring improvement.
  - * Keep work reports in a dedicated file.
- ☐ Implement necessary improvement activities if issues are found.
  - Tasks for the specialized company:
    Extermination of pests and rodents, and cleaning/repair of areas that cannot be handled internally.
  - Tasks for the store/factory:
    Cleaning and repair of areas that can be handled internally.

Knowledge

Characteristics of Major Pests and Rodents

Small flies (e.g., drain flies)

Breed from sludge accumulated in drain pipes, sewage, and under sinks or fixtures. Cleaning drains and grease traps is crucial.

German cockroach

Prefer warm places and inhabit heat sources like equipment motors. Areas around water sources or leaks easily become nests. Cleaning food residue and repairing water leaks are crucial.

Rodents (Mice/Rats)

Carry various pathogens causing food poisoning. Because they are highly intelligent and cautious, extermination is difficult once they enter the kitchen. Intrusion prevention measures, such as closing and sealing doors and gaps, are crucial.

Knowledge **Key points for preventing pests and rodents**

1. Share sighting information with the specialized company

   Employees should report to the manager immediately if they see pests or rodents.

   The manager must share the information received from employees with the specialized company.

   * Tackle them before they multiply through accurate information and prompt countermeasures!

2. Preventive measures

   (1) Eliminate odors → Clean garbage storage areas, drainage equipment, and grease traps.

   (2) Eliminate hiding places → Keep areas near entrances organized and prohibit the secondary use of cardboard boxes.

   (3) Eliminate food sources → Leave no food residue behind! Clean hard-to-reach areas, such as underneath, behind, and in corners.

Cleaning Planning and Implementation

- ☐ Create a cleaning schedule to keep workspaces and tools clean.
- ☐ Remove daily dirt and grime through daily washing and cleaning.
- ☐ Remove accumulated dirt and grime from areas where they build up over time through regular washing and cleaning.
- ☐ Wash and sanitize tools that come into direct contact with food items using chemicals or heat, following established frequencies and methods.
- ☐ Disinfect high-risk areas for virus and bacteria contamination, such as high-touch surfaces and toilets, using chemicals, following established frequencies and methods.
- ☐ Outsource the washing and cleaning of areas that are difficult to handle internally to a specialized company.

Key point! **Preparation of cleaning manuals**

Prepare manuals for tasks where the method is hard to understand, where individual variations easily occur, or where specific procedures, such as sanitization and disinfection, must be strictly followed.

Cleaning Inspection and Recording

- ☐ The manager must verify whether cleaning is performed according to the schedule, whether any dirt remains, and whether sanitization and disinfection are performed using the correct procedures.
- ☐ For sanitization and disinfection tasks where recording is mandatory, sign off after confirming there are no issues with the chemical concentration, processing time, and procedures.
- ☐ If there are deficiencies, record them in the special notes section of the hygiene management record sheet.
- ☐ For any issues found, provide timely guidance and share them with employees through morning meetings or communication notebooks to implement improvement activities.

Maintenance Planning, Implementation, and Recording for Equipment

- ☐ Create a maintenance plan for the equipment within the facility.
  - * Calibrate thermometers, weighing equipment, etc., as necessary.
- ☐ Perform equipment maintenance according to the plan.
- ☐ Keep the implementation records.

Chapter 2	Product Quality Management standards	(4)-2 Facility and Equipment Management: 5S Methodology

Overview

The 5S Methodology (Sort, Set in order, Shine, Standardize, Sustain) is a prerequisite for manufacturing safe products. Furthermore, it is adopted in a wide range of industries because it leads to reduced loss, improved work efficiency, prevention of occupational accidents, and increased employee satisfaction. Continue these efforts until they become a habit (Sustain).

Management standards

1) Sort and Set in Order

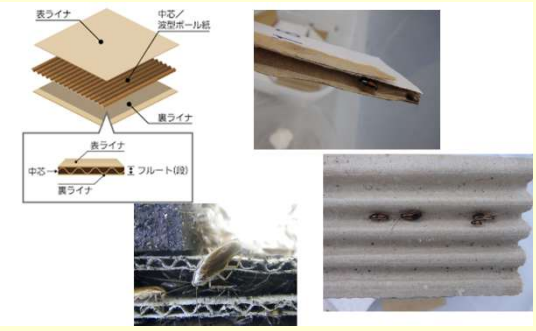
Sort (Seiri): Do not keep unnecessary items

- ☐ Do not leave unnecessary items unattended.
- ☐ Do not bring prohibited items into the manufacturing area.
- ☐ Do not bring cardboard boxes into the manufacturing area.
- ☐ Do not secondary use (reuse) cardboard boxes.

Why? **Why is the secondary use of cardboard boxes prohibited?**

Because there is a high risk that they will become "cockroach nests." The multi-layered structure of cardboard is an environment that cockroaches, which prefer tight spaces, naturally want to enter! The adhesive paste also serves as food.

For cockroaches, cardboard is a place where hiding spots and food come as a set.



Set in order (Seiton): Store items neatly in designated locations

- ☐ Store all items in their designated locations.
- ☐ Segregate storage areas for:
  - Personal belongings
  - Clean/Sanitary items, contaminated items, and hazardous items
  - Conforming items, defective items, and discarded items
  - Items belonging in clean areas and items belonging in contaminated areas

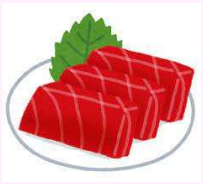
Key point! **Establishing storage areas for personal belongings**

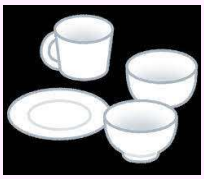
Store personal lunches, drinks, etc., brought in by individuals separately from food ingredients.

When bringing beverages into the manufacturing area to prevent heatstroke, set up a dedicated storage area and do not leave them unattended in the manufacturing area.

Knowledge What are clean/sanitary items?

1. Food ingredients eaten as-is (ready-to-eat).
2. Utensils/tools that come into contact with food ingredients.
3. Containers and packaging materials for products.




Knowledge What are contaminated items? - Items carrying many viruses/bacteria

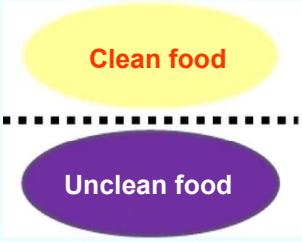
1. Items touched by an unspecified number of people (Items brought in from the outside).

2. Unwashed/ unsanitized raw ingredients, ingredients to be eaten after heating
3. Items placed on the floor or in low positions

4. Trash cans, cleaning utensils/tools.

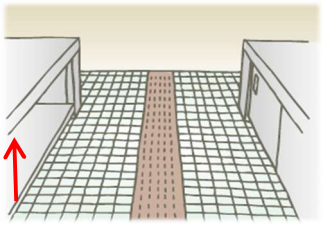
Key point! Methods of segregation

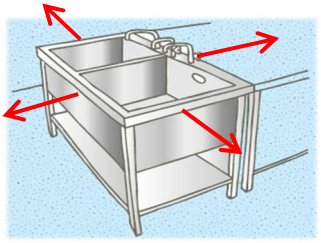
- Separate by location.
- Store vertically.
- When storing at the same height, prevent contact by placing items in containers with lids, etc.



☐ Store clean/sanitary items in hygienic locations:

- Inside clean areas
- Locations free from contamination such as wastewater (e.g., at least 60cm above wet floors, 30cm above dry floors, 30cm away from sinks).





2) Shine (Cleaning)

- ☐ Perform cleaning according to the cleaning schedule.
- ☐ Perform cleaning using appropriate methods.
- ☐ Ensure there is no dirt and grime that could lead to the contamination of food ingredients.
- ☐ Ensure there is no accumulated food residue and grime that could lead to the breeding of pests and rodents.

3) Wash and Sanitize

- ☐ Wash and sanitize items that come into direct contact with food.
- ☐ Wash and sanitize at appropriate timings.
- ☐ Wash and sanitize using appropriate methods.
- ☐ Ensure there is no food residue left behind that could lead to bacterial growth.
- ☐ Ensure that results from swabbing tests after washing and sanitizing are within standard values.

Key point!

Methods of Sanitization

- **Eliminate with chemicals:**
  - -Sodium hypochlorite
  - -Alcohol, etc.
- **Eliminate with heat:**
  - -Boiling
  - -Dishwashing machines

4) Repair and Replacement

- ☐ Check for damage to areas and tools used before and after work.
- ☐ If there is damage that could lead to foreign matter contamination, repair or replace it.
- ☐ If there is damage that could lead to the breeding of pests and rodents, repair or replace it.
- ☐ If repair or replacement is not possible, take measures to mitigate the risks.

5) Chemical Management

- ☐ Management Systems
  - Appoint a management representative who has received necessary training on chemical management as needed.
  - Keep track of all chemicals used.
    *Obtain information on chemicals used by external specialized companies at the store or factory.
  - Obtain Safety Data Sheets (SDS), etc., to check safety, grade, and usage methods.
  - Create necessary manuals for chemical management.
  - Provide necessary training to employees who may handle chemicals.

☐ Storage

- Store chemicals in locations where they will not contaminate food ingredients and other sanitary items.
- Set up a dedicated storage area for items classified as hazardous chemicals or toxic substances (e.g., strong alkaline chemicals, insecticides, herbicides, rodenticides) and strictly control access and usage.
  * To control access and usage, implement locking, access restrictions, and maintain usage and inventory records.
- Place chemicals in dedicated containers and label them clearly so the contents are identifiable.

☐ Usage

- When using chemicals, comply with the rules stated in the manual.
- When using chemicals, be careful not to contaminate food ingredients and other sanitary items.
- After using chemicals, confirm that there is no chemical residue left behind.

Key point! **<u>Precautions when using chemicals</u>**

- Wear designated protective equipment to prevent occupational accidents caused by chemicals.
  -Gloves
  -Protective glasses, etc.
- Transfer or dilute chemicals using dedicated containers in locations where they will not contaminate food ingredients and other sanitary items.
- Take measures such as moving food ingredients and other sanitary items to places where chemicals will not splash, or covering them.
- Follow the intended use, concentration, and usage methods stated in the manual.