APPLICATION OF HACCP PRINCIPLES FOR THE MEAT INDUSTRY

GUIDANCE SHEET NO: 3

INTERNATIONAL REQUIREMENT FOR HACCP SYSTEMS

IMPORTANCE OF FOOD SAFETY IN INTERNATIONAL TRADE

International trade in food products involves complex market chains with many links, long distances and time intervals between production and consumption of the product. There are many opportunities for food safety risks to arise.   For effective trade there needs to be trust and confidence between trading partners, national governments and consumers of the food products.

The development and implementation of modern risk-based food safety management systems such as HACCP has created standardised (via the Codex Alimentarius Commission Guidelines on Food Hygiene) and internationally recognised approaches for management of food safety risks.

Many countries and economic blocs have developed regulatory frameworks for food safety management that include HACCP as an essential component with compliance mandated by law.

The development and implementation of a successful HACCP system can act as door opener for access to important markets for your food products.

DO NATIONAL LAWS APPLY INTERNATIONALLY?

National laws and regulations have no legal basis beyond a countries' borders. However, many countries and trading blocs do require all imports of food products to comply with their national food safety regulations and standards.

If you wish to export your products to a market with very food safety standards, you make the business decision to comply with the requirements to access the desired market. Implementation of a HACCP system will require a major investment in time, capital, financial and personnel resources but will provide a dividend in giving unhindered access to the target market and a high level of confidence that potential food safety risks are under control.

This guidance sheet provides a brief overview of the food safety regulatory requirements for access to the Chinese, Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU), European Union and Turkish markets.

PEOPLES REPUBLIC OF CHINA

The status of the food safety regulatory framework is rapidly evolving as the state seeks to provide a high-level of protection for domestic consumers and build international confidence in China's ability to control food safety risks throughout the supply chain. For our purposes it will be sufficient to look at relevant articles in just three of China's food safety regulations.

1. Food Safety Law of 2015 – This is the general regulation that establishes the framework of law for ensuring food safety in China. The most relevant articles are as follows:

Article 33: Food producers must comply with the PRC food safety standards.

Article 48 The state **encourages** food producers and distributors to comply with good manufacturing practices and implement a HACCP system.

This is an interesting article as it states that HACCP is not mandatory for food products entering the Chinese market. However, China does recognise the importance of HACCP. There is a Chinese national standard "HACCP general requirements for food processing plants – GB/T:27341-2009" and national authorities for certification and inspection of HACCP systems. Overseas food business operators can obtain GHP and HACCP certification from the Chinese HACCP authority known as the Certification and Accreditation Administration of China (CNCA). China HACCP certified companies can use the China HACCP quality mark and should have easier access to Chinese markets.

Article 92 Imported food products must comply with the national food safety standards of China.

2. Food Safety Implementing Regulation Order 721 of the State Council of 2019 – This is the main food safety implementing regulation deriving from the Food Safety Law of 2015. The most relevant articles are as follows:

Article 2: A risk-based food safety management system is mandatory (HACCP is **NOT** specified as it is not a legal requirement in China).

Article 51: Overseas producers with GMP and HACCP systems certified by PRC HACCP authorities, must expect follow-up by the authorities to demonstrate that the HACCP system is still meeting requirements.

3. Revised Administrative Measures on Import and Export Food Safety GACC Decree No 249 of 2020 – This regulation states specific food safety requirements for food businesses wishing to export their food products for sale on the Chinese market. **This regulation comes into force on the 1st of January 2022**. The most relevant articles are as follows:

Article 3: Food producers must implement a safety-first, prevention orientated, risk-based, whole process control management system. This sounds very like HACCP but HACCP is not mentioned as HACCP is not mandatory under Chinese law.

Article 9: Imported food products must comply with Chinese food safety laws, regulations and food safety standard.

Article 10: Overseas producers food safety management systems are subject to review by Chinese authorities as part of the registration process for businesses wishing to export to China.

EURASIAN ECONOMIC UNION (EAEU)

The EAEU has a specific regulation for **safety of meat and meat products (Technical Regulation TR/034/2013)**. This regulation is useful as it defines the microbiological criteria and maximum levels for chemicals such as heavy metals, veterinary medical drugs, pesticides, processing contaminants and food additives such as preservatives. On a more general level, article 8 of TR/034/2013 states that all meat and meat products must meet with the food safety requirements given in TR/021/2011.

TR/021/2011 is the Technical Regulation on Food Safety has the highest level of importance for our purposes. The following articles are important for food businesses wishing to export to member states of the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU):

Articles 10-11 & 14-18: GHP & HACCP is mandatory for all food businesses.

Article 5 Food products (including imports) can only be placed on the EAEU market if they comply with all EAEU technical regulations for food safety and other requirements.

It is clear from these articles that any food business wishing to export to a member state of the EAEU needs to provide evidence that they have implemented GHP and HACCP and met the food safety requirements of the EAEU. These food safety requirements include microbiological and chemical criteria (TR/021/2011 annexes 1-4), food packaging (TR/005/2011) and food additives (TR/029/2012).

EUROPEAN UNION (EU)

The EU has a sophisticated regulatory framework for management of food safety risks. The most relevant regulation for this brief summary is the **General Regulation on Hygiene of Foodstuffs EC/852/2004.** The following articles are important for food businesses wishing to export to member states of the European Union:

Article 3: Food business operators are responsible for food safety.

Article 5: HACCP (& GHP) is mandatory for all food businesses.

Article 10: Imported food products must comply with EU or equivalent standards.

On the basis of the above articles, it is clear that any food business wishing to export to the EU market must provide evidence that they have implemented and operate an effective HACCP system that meets all of the requirements of the EU. The basic requirements detailed in Article 5 and Annex II of EC/852/2004 are standardised and match the requirements of the Codex food hygiene texts. However, it is essential to check other supporting regulations to determine the values of requirements such as microbiological criteria and maximum residue levels for chemical contaminants etc.

TURKEY

Turkish food law is harmonised with the regulatory framework of the European Union (EU) as a result most of the strict requirements pertaining in the EU are reflected in Turkish law.

Veterinary, Phytosanitary, Food & Feed Law 5996 of 2010. This is the main Turkish regulation for Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures (SPS) and combines the main elements of the harmonised regulatory framework of the EU.

Food Hygiene Regulation 28145 of 2011. Regulation 28145 is the enabling regulation for food safety and hygiene in Turkey. The requirements of Regulation 28145 are identical with those of the EU regulation EC/852/2004 although the contents have been rearranged and GHP requirements moved into the main body of the text (articles 10-21). The following articles are important for food businesses wishing to export to Turkey:

Article 6: Food business is responsible for food safety. This means that a Turkish importer of your products cannot ignore their legal responsibility for ensuring food safety just because the product is imported.

Articles 7 & 10-21 Good Hygienic Practices are mandatory and Article 22 HACCP is mandatory for all food businesses.

Article 26 Imported food products must comply with the requirements of articles 6, 7 & 22 (GHP & HACCP).

On the basis of articles 26, 7, 10-21 and 22 it is clearly an essential requirement for food businesses exporting to Turkey to have GHP and HACCP in place and to be able to provide evidence of the effective operation of the system.