

Food Safety Terms and Definitions

Adenosine Triphosphate Testing (ATP) – ATP is found in all animal, plant, bacterial, yeast, and mold cells. It occurs in food and in microbial contamination. The ATP test uses bioluminescence to detect the presence of ATP left on a surface after cleaning to verify the removal of product that could contribute to microbiological contamination on product contact surfaces.

Adulteration – To make imperfect by adding extraneous, improper, or inferior ingredients.

American National Standards Institute (ANSI) - ANSI facilitates the development of American National Standards (ANS) by accrediting the procedures of standards developing organizations (SDOs).

Audit – A systematic, independent, and documented examination (through observation, investigation, records review, discussions with employees of the audited entity, and, as appropriate, sampling and laboratory analysis) to assess an entity's food safety processes and procedures.

Auditor – A person who conducts an audit.

Back Siphonage – The flowing back of used, contaminated, or polluted water from plumbing fixture or vessel into the pipe which feeds it; caused by reduced pressure in the pipe.

Certificate of Analysis (COA) – A document containing test results that are provided to the customer by the supplier to demonstrate that product meets the defined test.

Control Point – Any step in the process at which biological, chemical or physical hazards can be controlled, reduced or eliminated.

Corrective Action – Documented procedures followed when a process or product deviation occurs.

Critical Control Points (CCP) – A point, step, or procedure in a food process at which control can be applied and is essential to prevent or eliminate a food safety hazard or reduce such a hazard to an acceptable level.

Critical Limit – A maximum and/or minimum value, or combination of values, to which a biological, chemical or physical parameter must be controlled to significantly minimize or prevent a hazard requiring a process preventive control or at a CCP.

Current Good Manufacturing Practices (cGMP) – See Good Manufacturing Practices (GMP).

Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) – The US government agency tasked with developing and enforcing regulations that implement environmental laws enacted by Congress. This includes, but is not limited to, regulations such as: pesticide laws and registration, the Clean Water Act, and drinking water requirements.

Food and Drug Administration (FDA) – The Food and Drug Administration is responsible for protecting the public health by ensuring the safety, efficacy, and security of human and veterinary drugs, biological products, and medical devices; and by ensuring the safety of our nation's food supply, cosmetics, and products that emit radiation.

Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA) – The act signed into law on January 4, 2011 that aims to ensure the safety of the US food supply by shifting the focus from responding to contamination to preventing it.

Food Safety Plan – A plan which identifies, evaluates, and proactively controls hazards which are significant for food safety.

Foreign Supplier Approval program (FSVP) – The import requirements of FSMA that deals with verification of the safety of food offered for import into the United States. Importers that fail to comply with this program are prohibited from importing food into the United States.

Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) – are the basic environmental and operational conditions necessary for the production of safe, wholesome fruits and vegetables.

Good aquaculture Practices (GAQP) – are a series of considerations, procedures, and protocols designed to foster efficient and responsible aquaculture production and expansion and to help ensure final product quality, safety, and environmental sustainability.

Good Distribution Practices (GDP) – are the basic operational conditions and practices necessary for the storage and distribution of safe food.

Global Food Safety Initiative (GFSI) – GFSI is the organization/technical committee that has established the criteria against which benchmark certification standards. The criteria are also used to benchmark food safety management schemes.

Good Manufacturing Practice (GMP) – The regulation (117 Subpart B) that outlines the conditions and practices the regulated food industry must follow for processing safe food under sanitary conditions, including personnel, plant and grounds, sanitary operations, sanitary facilities and controls, equipment and utensils, processes and controls, warehousing and distribution, and defect action levels considerations.

Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point (HACCP) – A systematic approach that identifies, evaluates and controls hazards significant to food safety.

Integrated pest Management (IPM) – An effective and environmentally sensitive approach to pest management that relies on a combination of common sense practices. The information in combination with available pest control methods is used to manage pest damage by the most economical means and with the least possible hazard to the people, property, and environment.

International Organization for Standardization (ISO) – an international standard-setting body composed of representatives from various national standards organizations. Founded on 23 February 1947, the organization promotes worldwide proprietary, industrial and commercial standards.

Less Than Load (LTL) – A shipment that contains materials that will be delivered to multiple sites.

Pathogen – a bacterium, virus, or other microorganism that can cause disease.

Pest Harborage – Any condition or structural defect that provides a place for pests to live and reproduce.

Prerequisite Program (PRP) – All procedures used in the site, which address operational conditions providing the foundation for the HACCP plan. Examples include; Cleaning & Sanitation Programs, Good Manufacturing Practices Program, Pest Management Programs, etc.

Preventive Action – Action taken to eliminate the causes of a potential non-conformity, defect or other undesirable situation in order to prevent occurrence.

Preventive Control – Risk-based, reasonably appropriate procedures, practices, and processes that a person knowledgeable about the safe manufacturing, processing, packaging, or holding of food would employ to significantly minimize or prevent the hazards identified under the hazard analysis that are consistent with the current scientific understanding of safe food manufacturing, processing, packaging, or holding at the time of analysis.

Preventive Controls Qualified Individual (PCQI) – A qualified individual who has successfully completed training in the development and application of risk-based preventive controls at least equivalent to that received under a standardized curriculum recognized as adequate by the FDA or is otherwise qualified through job experience to develop and apply a food safety system.

Rework – Clean, unadulterated product that has been removed from processing for reasons other than insanitary conditions or that has been successfully reconditioned by reprocessing and is suitable for use as packaging material.

Ready-to-Eat (RTE) – Any food that is normally eaten in its raw state or any other food, including a processed food, for which it is reasonably foreseeable that the food will be eaten without further processing that would significantly minimize biological hazards.

Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) – A set of step-by-step instructions compiled by a site to help employees carry out operations.

Safe Quality Food Institute (SQFI) – a division of the Food Marketing Institute (FMI) and the SQF scheme owner.

Traceability – The identification of any suspect ingredient of finished product and its initial shipment location.

United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) – The USDA provides leadership on food, agriculture, natural resources, rural development, nutrition, and related issues based on public policy, the best available science, and effective management.

Validation – Obtaining and evaluating scientific and technical evidence that a control measure, combination of control measures, or the food safety plan as a whole, when properly implemented, is capable of effectively controlling the identified hazards.

Verification – The application of methods, procedures, tests, and other evaluations, in addition to monitoring, to determine whether a control measure or combination of control measures is or has been operating as intended and to establish the validity of the food safety plan.