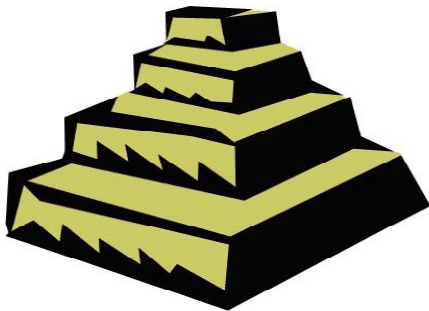


Will Your HACCP Foundation

CRUMBLE?



Food manufacturing companies can experience significant challenges without the proper tools in place to ensure HACCP compliance. One specific tool that facilitates cGMP compliance for manufacturers is a solid ERP software solution. With quality control features of a qualified ERP, manufacturers are sure to have the basic necessity in place so that all other critical control points and regulations are easy to maintain.

ERP: *The Solid Foundation to your HACCP Compliance*



So often a manufacturing company will strive for HACCP compliance only to fail because the company has not laid the proper foundation.

HACCP, Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points, is a management system that requires each segment of the food processing industry, from the farmer to the consumer, to provide the conditions necessary to protect food while it is under their control. For the manufacturer, that means providing adequate facilities and equipment, trained personnel, but most importantly, it means maintaining compliance with cGMP (current Good Manufacturing Practices). Compliance with cGMP requires Quality Control procedures, audit trails, lot tracking, and a validation plan.

The application of an integrated ERP software solution is key to laying a solid foundation for cGMP and, ultimately, HACCP compliance. An ERP, Enterprise Resource Planning, software solution designed for the food manufacturer can help companies meet security and regulatory needs from beginning order entry to product completion. A fully integrated system will provide supplier control, production specifications, product traceability and recall capabilities, and more.

Principal 2: Identify Critical Control Points

A critical control point (CCP) is a point, step, or procedure in a food process at which control can be applied as, as a result, a food safety hazard can be prevented, eliminated, or reduced to an acceptable level.

Principle 2 of the seven HACCP principles, Determine the Critical Control Points, is the step that determines where controls are needed to prevent or eliminate a food safety hazard, or at least reduce it to an acceptable level. These points are located at any step where a potential hazard has been established, and will be different from company to company. Once a manufacturing company's CCP team had identified its critical control points, it then determines what measure of control is needed at each point and how the control is going to be executed. With the right ERP software, the manufacturing control points are easy to facilitate and maintain.

One example of a Critical Control Point for many manufacturers is the incoming goods or raw materials for use in their products must first be in compliance with HACCP and cGMP. Consequently, a company striving for supplier control must have proper tools in place to ensure the quality of the product received. An effective ERP solution provides

the controls necessary to quarantine purchased products or raw materials until they are tested. This type of quality control software should allow only authorized users to define test ranges and target values. Once the raw material or purchased product has been deemed acceptable in quality, it can then move on to the next stage of production. Again, only authorized personnel should be able to enter the passing or failing results. In the event that the product fails the quality testing, the company can avoid the use of that material or product. Thus, the company remains in compliance with cGMP and HACCP principles, and relieves themselves of a large recall headache later on or other potentially dangerous outcomes.

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Another Critical Control Point common to food manufacturers, is the ability to define, control, and regulate product specifications that apply to all ingredients, products, and packaging materials. Specifications provided in writing are required for HACCP. However, a successful ERP solution will do more than just write the specifications, it will create formulas with exact ingredient percentages or actual quantities, manage and record intermediate mixtures, provide manufacturing instructions with embedded mixture formulas, and list ingredients in the filling sequence. The software should also follow the product instructions through to packaging and allow for multiple packaging combinations.

Finally and most importantly, another example of a Critical Control Point universal for food manufacturers is the traceability and recall capability of their products. All raw materials and products should be lot-coded with a recall system in place so that rapid and complete traces and recalls can be done when product retrieval is necessary. Each batch, when using an ERP system, will automatically be given a lot number, bin location, and date. This information is saved and/or printed in the form of a Transaction Audit Log or a Lot Tracking Report. These reports provide the user with information about where

items have been used in the manufacturing process. Also, these reports typically include information about where the product originated and where it was subsequently shipped, providing a complete audit trail of activity.

“To date, Stir Foods has never been required to perform a recall on its products,” says Glenn Weber, VP of Finance & Administration at Stir Foods. “But after the success of this mock recall, we are exceptionally confident that any of our products could be located before a catastrophic situation occurs.”

Stir Foods, a specialty food manufacturer in Orange, CA, recently underwent a Good Manufacturing Practices and Food Safety Systems Audit. Every product since the inception of this company has been logged into their integrated ERP system. The auditor from a local food safety and quality inspection organization was amazed at Stir Foods’ ability to locate any randomly selected product by lot number. In fact, the minimum time requirement to locate a product is 2 hours, but Stir Foods was able to locate the products in less than 15 minutes! A record as never had been seen by the individual auditor. While Stir Foods has never been required to do a recall on its products for safety reasons, they are exceptionally confident that if a recall was ever necessary, their ERP software would help them track their products before disaster strikes.

How strong is your company’s foundation? Will your company face the potential catastrophe of failure to maintain cGMP and HACCP compliance? Or, will your company secure its foundation with the implementation of successful ERP software? Taking action to ensure product quality control, audit trails, and lot tracking will lay the solid foundation your company needs to follow the HACCP principles as well as provide your company with a solid future.

Resources:

“Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point Principles and Application Guidelines,” US Food and Drug Administration, US Department of Agriculture, and National Advisory Committee on Microbiological Criteria for Foods, August 14, 1997.

“Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points,” Wikipedia, September 20, 2007.

“Key Facts: The Seven HACCP Principles,” Food Safety and Inspection Service, January 1998.

About the Author

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ProcessPro software Mission

ProcessPro is dedicated to providing quality ERP software solutions and services for process manufacturers. For more information visit www.processpromfg.com

About Stir Foods

Stir Foods, LLC, located in Orange, CA, is the ultimate resource for anything that is stirred, ladled, or spooned. Their unique combinations are dependably delicious. For more information visit www.stirfoods.com