PIQCS – HACCP Minimum Certification Standards

In the EU, requirements for the hygiene of food is laid down in *Regulation (EC) 852/2004.* This regulation establishes general hygiene procedures for food at all stages of the production, storage, and delivery process and requires operators to put into place permanent standard operating procedures that are based on the HACCP methodology.

The following items represent the minimum standards required for EPIA HACCP Certification for EPIA membership.

1H	**Preliminary Tasks: Is there a list of the HACCP team members and their responsibilities?**	**MAJOR**

Meets requirement: YES/NO _____
Company Attesting Agent: _____ Date: _____
Certification Auditor: _____Company: _____Date: _____

The facility must have a HACCP team in place. The main function of the team is to initially construct and implement the HACCP system, then routinely meet to discuss the HACCP plan and any changes that may have occurred or may be occurring in the future. The HACCP plan will then need to be changed or adjusted to meet the changes.

There should be a list of all the members of the team. In a small facility, this may consist of the owner, partner and/or a full-time or part-time worker. In a large corporate-owned facility, the team may include personnel from different departments.

As part of the preliminary step, the HACCP team should be familiar with the full scope of the HACCP plan. The HACCP plan must identify what products and processes it covers. At what point in the process does the HACCP system start and at what point does it end?

2H	**Is there a written description of the product(s)?**	**MAJOR**

Meets requirement: YES/NO _____
Company Attesting Agent: _____ Date: _____
Certification Auditor: _____Company: _____Date: _____

The HACCP plan must list all products for which the plan was written.

A full description of the product should be written, including relevant safety information such as: raw materials and ingredients, processing, packaging, storage conditions, and methods and conditions of distribution. This information is used to identify all potential hazards associated with the products or processes covered by the HACCP plan.

The intended end users of the product should be identified. It can be as simple as stating "general public" or identifying the specific or sensitive population to which the product is marketed to.

3H	Is there a process flow diagram covering all the steps in the operation?	MAJOR

Meets requirement: YES/NO _____
Company Attesting Agent: _____ Date: _____
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The flow diagram must outline each step in the facility's process covered by the HACCP plan. There is no specific format necessary. The important thing is that all process steps are covered and the flow chart is correct and current.

When the flow diagram is completed, the HACCP team must walk through the facility and observe the processes to confirm that all the steps are identified and accurately described by the flow diagram.

4H	Is the HACCP plan signed by the HACCP coordinator and the facility manager?	Minor

Meets requirement: YES/NO _____
Company Attesting Agent: _____ Date: _____
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The HACCP coordinator has the responsibility of developing, organizing, and managing the HACCP program.

5H	**Principle 1: Are all potential biological, chemical and physical food safety hazards associated with each step in the process flow identified and listed?**	**MAJOR**

Meets requirement: YES/NO _____
Company Attesting Agent: _____ Date: _____
Certification Auditor: _____Company: _____Date: _____

The HACCP team must document all hazards that may be reasonably expected to occur at each step in the process.

Once all of the hazards are identified and documented, the team must identify which hazards must be prevented, eliminated, or reduced to acceptable levels to ensure the production of safe food. These hazards are deemed significant and must be addressed by the plan.

6H	**Are preventative measures for each hazard determined?**	**MAJOR**

Meets requirement: YES/NO _____
Company Attesting Agent: _____ Date: _____
Certification Auditor: _____Company: _____Date: _____

Specific control measures for each hazard must be identified. If there are no controls at this point, it must be indicated and identified. If no control measures can be identified for a hazard, the product or process must be changed to provide control measures.

Control measures may include temperature controls or visual inspections.

7H	**Is there supporting documentation for the selection of hazards and preventative measures?**	**MAJOR**

Meets requirement: YES/NO _____
Company Attesting Agent: _____ Date: _____
Certification Auditor: _____Company: _____Date: _____

There must be a rationale, evidence, history, or scientific based reason why hazards are or are not included in the HACCP plan.

8H	**Principle 2: Are CCPs identified from the list of hazards? Are CCPs limited to only those specific steps in the process where loss of control will result in a risk to the safety of the product?**	**MAJOR**

Meets requirement: YES/NO _____
Company Attesting Agent: _____ Date: _____
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Each control measure must be analyzed to determine whether that control eliminates, prevents or reduces the hazard to an acceptable level. If it doesn't meet this definition, it is not a CCP.

All significant hazards identified by the HACCP team during the hazard analysis must be addressed. Every significant hazard identified must have at least one CCP assigned to it. The CCP is the control.

9H	**Principle 3: Are critical limits or tolerance levels established for each CCP to prevent, eliminate or reduce the occurrence of the food safety hazard to an acceptable level? Are the limits measurable?**	**MAJOR**

Meets requirement: YES/NO _____
Company Attesting Agent: _____ Date: _____
Certification Auditor: _____Company: _____Date: _____

For each CCP, a critical limit must be defined. A critical limit is a measurement or observation that separates what is acceptable from what is not acceptable. The critical limit must be effective at keeping the hazard under control.

Critical limits must be measurable. They can be quantitative (numerical) or qualitative (descriptive). Critical limits are set in terms of maximum, minimum, or both.

10H	**Principle 4: Is there a documented monitoring procedure in place to include what CCP will be monitored, what critical limits and control measures will be monitored, how they will be monitored, the frequency, what to do when limits are out of control, and who will be monitoring?**	**MAJOR**

Meets requirement: YES/NO _____
Company Attesting Agent: _____ Date: _____
Certification Auditor: _____Company: _____Date: _____

Monitoring is the scheduled measurement or observation of a CCP relative to its critical limits. The monitoring procedures should be able to detect loss of control at the CCP. Monitoring should be able to provide information in time to make adjustments to ensure control of the process to prevent violation of the critical limits.

Monitoring can be continuous or at scheduled intervals. If it is not continuous, the frequency of monitoring must be sufficient to guarantee that CCP is under control. It must be scheduled and not done on a random basis.

Each CCP must have a written corrective action procedure to follow if the CCP limits are breached. The corrective action should include disposition of the affected product, root cause analysis, and correction of the problem to assure it will not happen again.

The person designated to perform the monitoring and recordkeeping must be identified.

11H	**Principle 5: Are corrective actions documented when a CCP fails to meet a critical limit?**	**MAJOR**

Meets requirement: YES/NO _____
Company Attesting Agent: _____ Date: _____
Certification Auditor: _____Company: _____Date: _____

All deviations from critical limits and the corresponding corrective action must be documented.

12H	**Does the corrective action identify, correct, and eliminate the cause of the critical limit deviation?**	**MAJOR**

Meets requirement: YES/NO _____
Company Attesting Agent: _____ Date: _____
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The corrective action put in place must correspond to the critical limit deviation. The goal is to put the process back in control.

13H	**Principle 6: At a minimum, is there an annual review to determine if the information and data used to control food safety hazards is valid and that the plan is being followed?**	**MAJOR**

Meets requirement: YES/NO _____
Company Attesting Agent: _____ Date: _____
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The HACCP team must, at a minimum, conduct annual verification and validation of the HACCP plan.

Verification is an activity designed to make sure that the facility is using the HACCP plan. This is through review of systems and records, direct observation of monitoring and recording of CCPs, review of product dispositions, and confirmation that CCPs are kept under control. It also includes equipment calibration and sample analysis. Verification is a systematic, periodic check of the entire operation to ensure that the plan is implemented and properly working.

Validation is an activity designed to make sure that the HACCP system will work to address all of the known hazards. It is intended to confirm that the HACCP plan, if implemented as designed, will be effective in controlling significant hazards. It includes review of hazard analysis, review of HACCP records and documentation, and on-site audits conducted by the HACCP team or by external auditors.

14H	**Principle 7: Is the HACCP plan documented and customized for the facility presenting the plan?**	**MAJOR**

Meets requirement: YES/NO _____
Company Attesting Agent: _____ Date: _____
Certification Auditor: _____Company: _____Date: _____

The HACCP plan should be designed specific to the facility using it. No two facilities will necessarily have identical HACCP plans.

15H	Are there records of CCP monitoring results, corrective actions if necessary, with dates and signatures or initials of operator/reviewer? Are records retained for at least one year?	Minor

Meets requirement: YES/NO _____
Company Attesting Agent: _____ Date: _____
Certification Auditor: _____Company: _____Date: _____

A system for record keeping must be established. Documentation provides evidence of compliance to the established requirements. All HACCP activities must be documented, filed and retained for at least one year

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Deficiencies noted with remedial action date: (auditor notation and company agent correction made date)

1. (Deficiency item number) Correction made date: _____

   Correction attested by: _____

2. (Deficiency item number) Correction made date: _____
Correction attested by: _____

3. (Deficiency item number) Correction made date: _____
Correction attested by: _____

4. (Deficiency item number) Correction made date: _____

Correction attested by: _____