

ALBERTA HACCP ADVANTAGE RECOGNITION PROTOCOL

Food Safety Division Alberta Agriculture and Food

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Alberta HACCP Advantage
Recognition Protocol

Canada

The Agricultural Policy Framework (APF)
A FEDERAL-PROVINCIAL-TERRITORIAL INITIATIVE
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Alberta

The Food Safety Division of Alberta Agriculture and Food (AF), in cooperation with the HACCP systems recognition technical committee of the Canadian Food Inspection System Implementation Group has developed a national protocol for HACCP system recognition. This protocol has been used to develop the recognition protocol for the Alberta HACCP Advantage (AHA!) Program.

AHA! is a program established by AF to assist Alberta food processors in implementing a government-recognized food safety program through advice, services and resource materials. Developed in cooperation with Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC), the AHA! program follows national guidelines and is part of a Canada-wide initiative focusing on food safety. This voluntary program is made up of three components:

1. The AHA! Standard, which states the requirements for developing and implementing the AHA! food safety system.
2. The AHA! reference manuals to assist in development and implementation of the standard.
3. This manual, the recognition protocol, which outlines the process for achieving certification and recognition under the AHA! program.

While the AHA! program was developed for non-federally registered Alberta food processors, it can be used by any food processor who wishes to adopt an Alberta government-recognized food safety program, or who wishes to receive Alberta government recognition of their existing food safety program. Auditing costs will be paid by the applicant, and will be dependent on the applicants facility (i.e., size, number of employees, number of lines, complexity, risk).

If you have any questions or require further clarification regarding this manual please contact a Food Safety Specialist at:

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Terms and Definitions

Applicant: the operator or facility who seeks certification/recognition.

Audit: systematic, independent and documented processes for obtaining audit evidence and evaluating it objectively to determine the extent to which audit criteria are fulfilled.

Certification: the status obtained after a successful Alberta HACCP Advantage (AHA!) certification audit.

Certification agency: an organization recognized by AF that conducts audits and provides certification of compliance to certain standards.

Codex Alimentarius Commission: also known as CAC, the international agency responsible for creating the single standard for HACCP systems and for other standards related to food safety.

Critical Control Point (CCP): a step at which control can be applied and is essential to prevent or eliminate a food safety hazard or reduce it to an acceptable level.

Documentation review: a "paper audit" to verify the applicant has developed and provided all necessary documentation for the certification process to proceed.

Food Safety System: a science-based system that complies with all legislated food safety requirements and consists of risk-based written programs to ensure food is processed safely.

Good Manufacturing Practices (GMPs): the activities and procedures used to ensure that personnel, the manufacturing environment and other factors that are not directly related to food are monitored and controlled to create favorable conditions for the production of safe food products.

HACCP plans: the documents, programs and activities prepared in accordance with the principles of HACCP (Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point) to ensure control of significant hazards to food safety.

HACCP reference standard: a written standard that provides all of the details necessary to implement a food safety program and is effective in assuring food safety. In Alberta this standard is known as the Alberta HACCP Advantage (AHA!) Standard.

HACCP system: a system that includes HACCP prerequisite programs and HACCP plans. The HACCP system is a science-based and systematic strategy that identifies specific hazards and measures for their control to ensure food safety through control points or critical control points.

ISO: International Organization for Standardization.

Non-conformity: non-fulfilment of a requirement (where a requirement is a need or expectation that is stated).

On-site verification audit: verifies that the food safety system in the establishment has been implemented as written. This requires an audit of the operating HACCP system to verify it is implemented as designed and that the system is effective in meeting the requirements as set out in the AHA! Standard.

Prerequisite programs: the activities and procedures used to ensure that personnel, the manufacturing environment, and other factors that are not directly related to food are monitored and controlled to create favorable conditions for the production of safe food products.

Product protection program: program or procedures documented and implemented to ensure critical factors to food safety are controlled.

Recognition: the status obtained from Alberta Agriculture and Food after a certification agency has granted Alberta HACCP Advantage (AHA!) Certification.

Record: documented evidence that a specific action or procedure has been performed (e.g., Premises Inspection Record, Pre-operational Inspection Record, Incoming Materials Receiving Record).

Standards Council of Canada: carries out a variety of functions intended to ensure the effective and coordinated operation of standardization in Canada. It also represents Canada's interests in standards-related matters in foreign and international forums such as the ISO.

Systems audit: verifies that the applicant's written food safety system contains all of the required components and that each component meets or exceeds the requirements in the reference standard. This requires an audit of the applicant's documented prerequisite programs and HACCP plan against the Alberta HACCP Advantage (AHA!) Standard.

Recognition under the Alberta HACCP Advantage (AHA!) Program

Background

There are two forms of certification available under the AHA! program.

1. AHA! GMP Certification – achieved by implementing and maintaining the AHA! Standard Prerequisite Programs (GMPs) and Product Protection Program.
2. AHA! HACCP System Certification – achieved by implementing and maintaining the AHA! Standard Prerequisite Programs (GMPs) and HACCP Plans. (Note: When implementing a full HACCP system, the HACCP plans replace the Product Protection Program.)

Obtaining recognition for implementation of the AHA! Standard is a two-stage process. First, a third party certification agency conducts an audit of the applicant's food safety system to determine if it meets the requirements of the AHA! Standard. The second phase is recognition of the certification by Alberta Agriculture and Food (AF). Applicants who achieve AHA! GMP Certification will gain AHA! GMP Recognition. Applicants who achieve AHA! HACCP System Certification will gain AHA! HACCP System Recognition.

The AHA! Standard meets the guidelines set out by the Codex Alimentarius document, *Recommended International Code of Practice – General Principles of Food Hygiene*.

Responsibilities of the Applicant

Each applicant must develop, document, implement and maintain a food safety system that:

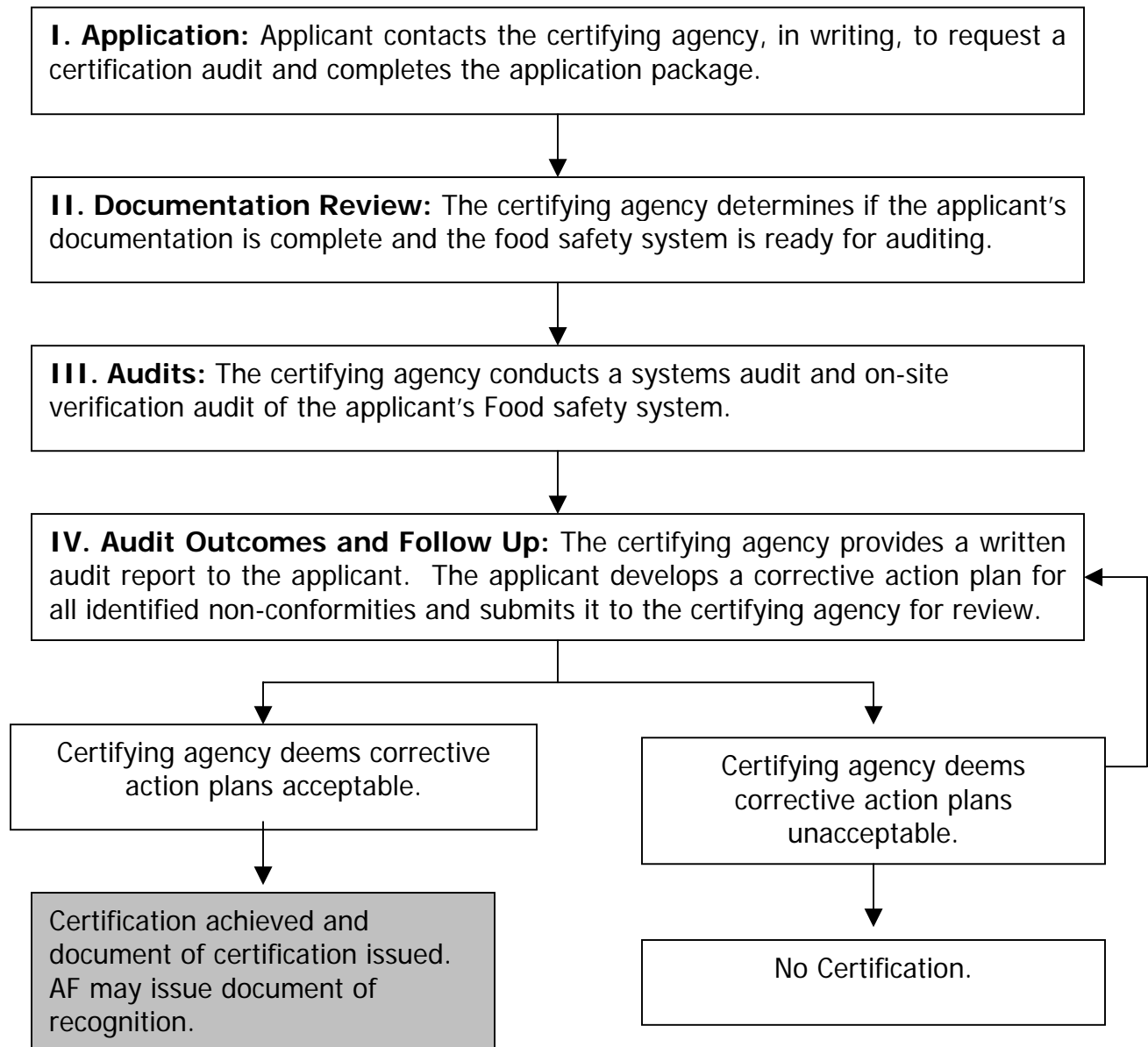
- Meets all the requirements of the AHA! Standard for all products and processes carried out in the applicant's establishment; and
- Fulfills all the food safety legislative and regulatory requirements and applicable Codes of Practice.

Certification Procedures Summary

1. The applicant contacts the certifying agency to request an audit and submits a documentation package.
2. The certifying agency ensures that the documentation for the food safety system is complete.
3. The certifying agency conducts a systems audit of the food safety system.
4. The certifying agency conducts an on-site verification audit of the food safety system.
5. The certifying agency presents a written audit report to the applicant, which may contain non-conformities.
6. The applicant develops a corrective action plan to address the non-conformities and returns it to the certifying agency for review.

7. Once the corrective action plan has been deemed acceptable a document of certification is provided to the successful applicant.
8. The certifying agency provides AF with the identification of successful certified applicants.
9. AF issues a document of recognition to the certified applicant.

Flow Diagram of General Steps to Certification



Certification Procedures

A. Documentation Review – Off Site

Applicants must submit a documentation package that is accurate, thorough and complete to permit a realistic evaluation of their food safety system. By submitting the documentation package the applicant indicates that the food safety system has been implemented and is prepared for full review. The applicant's food safety system must have been in operation for a length of time sufficient for all documented monitoring and verification procedures to be completed at least once.

The auditor(s) will perform a review of the applicant's documentation package to ensure that the following documentation requirements are met. (Note: This documentation review measures the completeness of the submission package only and in no way guarantees the completion of the systems audit portion. The criteria for completion of the Systems Audit are detailed in section B.)

A1. Letter of Intent

The documentation package must include a letter of intent, signed by a senior manager and must contain a clear statement of management commitment to the food safety system. It must also confirm the accuracy of the information included in the documentation package.

A1.1. Policy to Meet Legal Requirements

Auditors will verify that the applicant has:

- i. A policy statement that commits to complying with all applicable legal requirements,
- ii. A documented method for identifying all applicable laws,
- iii. A documented method for tracking and keeping informed about all changes in legal requirements, and
- iv. A person/position designated by senior management to be responsible for ensuring compliance to all legal requirements.

Important Note: Because they have no regulatory authority, certifying agency auditors will not undertake a legal compliance audit.

A2. Food Safety System Documentation

During the review of documentation the auditor(s) will verify that the food safety system includes the following information (Some of these points may require the applicant to provide a written statement indicating how the criteria are met):

AHA! GMP Certification	AHA! HACCP System Certification
The names of the food safety system team leader and, if applicable, the team members.	The names of the HACCP team leader and, if applicable, the HACCP team members.
A list of the products produced.	A list of the products produced and how the products are grouped into HACCP plans.
A bibliography of scientific literature and background materials used to support decisions made regarding the food safety system.	A bibliography of scientific literature and background materials used to support decisions made regarding the HACCP system.
Documented Prerequisite Programs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Procedures and records necessary to meet the requirements of the AHA! Prerequisite Programs. • Documentation indicating that all written AHA! Prerequisite Programs are implemented. 	Documented Prerequisite Programs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Procedures and records necessary to meet the requirements of the AHA! Prerequisite Programs. • Documentation indicating that all written AHA! Prerequisite Programs are implemented.
Documented Product Protection Program: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Procedures and records necessary to meet the requirements of the AHA! Product Protection section. • Documentation indicating that the written product protection procedures/programs are implemented. 	Documented HACCP Plans: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Procedures and records necessary to demonstrate completion and implementation of all required HACCP plan forms as per the requirements of the AHA! HACCP Plans. • Documentation indicating that all written AHA! HACCP Plans are implemented.
A list of all applicable records.	A list of all applicable records.
Written procedures for maintenance and update of the food safety system (i.e. logbook methodology).	Written procedures for maintenance and update of the HACCP system (i.e. logbook methodology).

The written AHA! Prerequisite Programs must be numbered as per the AHA! Standard. When a different food safety system is used, the AHA! Standard Prerequisite Programs must be clearly cross-referenced.

If the documentation package is found to be incomplete, it will be returned to the applicant with a covering letter explaining the areas requiring amendment.

Once the documentation package is considered complete, the auditor(s) will notify the applicant that the systems audits can begin.

B. Systems Audits (Off Site)

The systems audit is an in-depth evaluation of the written components of the food safety system in the submission package, as diagrammed below:

AHA! GMP Certification	AHA! HACCP System Certification
Evaluation of management commitment	Evaluation of management commitment
Evaluation of prerequisite programs	Evaluation of prerequisite programs
Evaluation of product protection program	Evaluation of HACCP plans

Certifying agency auditors complete the systems audit process off site, i.e., not at the applicant's facility.

The systems audits will begin with an opening meeting (likely via teleconference) with the applicant and the certifying agency auditor(s) to explain the scope and objectives of the audits. The applicant will provide a contact person to assist the auditor(s) during the systems audits of the submission package (which includes the letter of intent, policy to meet legal requirements, the prerequisite programs and the product protection program or HACCP plan(s)).

Note: During the opening meeting of all certification audits, the lead auditor will be mandated to state that the audit will serve only to establish adherence to the AHA! Standard during the duration of the audit. Applicant activities that take place before or after the audit are outside the audit review. Certification by the certifying agency will indicate that the program standards were met on the day(s) of the audit. This certification does not indicate that the program will function effectively following the audit or that the requirements of the audit continue to be met by the applicant after the audit date. Following the audit, it is the Applicant's responsibility to maintain their food safety system to audit standards. Applicants will indicate their agreement in writing.

To verify that the written programs meet or exceed the requirements of the AHA! Standard, the systems audits will be conducted as follows.

B1. Systems Audit – Management Commitment/Policies to Meet Legal Requirements

The auditor(s) will verify that the letter of commitment contains the following information:

- Signature of senior management and date it was signed,
- Confirmation that the materials in the submission package are accurate and represent what is being done on site,
- A clear statement indicating that management is committed to providing resources, training and support for the food safety system,
- A description of how the food safety system will be maintained, how changes to the system will be documented and how internal audits will be conducted, and
- Under a separate cover:
 - An effective policy statement that commits to complying with all applicable legal requirements,
 - A documented method for identifying all applicable laws,

- A documented method for tracking and keeping informed about all changes in legal requirements, and
- A person/position designated by senior management to be responsible for ensuring compliance to all legal requirements.

B2. Systems Audit - Prerequisite Program Requirements

(Required for AHA! GMP Certification **and** AHA! HACCP System Certification)

The auditor(s) will verify that:

- All prerequisite program requirements have been addressed,
- Control measures are adequate for each prerequisite requirement,
- Monitoring procedures are adequate for each prerequisite requirement,
- Appropriate record-keeping forms have been generated, and
- Prerequisite program documentation is signed and dated, and appropriate documentation controls are in place.

For each requirement in the written prerequisite programs, the applicant must document:

- Monitoring procedures that include:
 - Employee name(s) or position(s) who is/are responsible for monitoring,
 - What and how monitoring is conducted,
 - Frequency of monitoring,
 - Records for documenting the monitoring activity,
- Deviation procedures (or corrective actions) that include:
 - Employee name(s) or position(s) responsible for carrying out deviation procedures,
 - How the deviation procedures are conducted,
 - Records for documenting deviation procedures,
 - Note that deviation procedures are carried out when a deviation occurs (i.e., as needed),
- Verification procedures that include:
 - Employee name(s) or position(s) responsible for conducting verification procedures,
 - How verification procedures are conducted,
 - Frequency of verification procedures, and
 - Records for documenting verification procedures.

Where prerequisite programs are found to be incomplete or require modification, deficiencies will be noted. This information will be communicated to the applicant for corrective action. If the audit results show the deficiencies are sufficient to negatively impact the integrity of the overall food safety system, a second systems audit must take place prior to proceeding with the on-site verification audit.

B3. Systems Audit – Product Protection Requirements (Required for AHA! GMP Certification)

The auditor(s) will verify that all product protection requirements have been addressed including:

- All products have been listed and all processes have been described,
- All critical factors in the production process have been determined,
- Control measures are effective to prevent, eliminate or reduce to an acceptable level of risk the food safety hazard associated with the product(s) or process(s) in question,
- All pages of the product protection program are signed and dated, and appropriate documentation controls are in place,
- Where applicable, reference is made to scientific literature or other background to support the decisions made.

For each critical factor, the applicant must document:

- Critical limits,
- Monitoring procedures that include:
 - Employee name(s) or position(s) who is/are responsible for monitoring,
 - What and how monitoring is conducted,
 - Frequency of monitoring,
 - Records for documenting the monitoring activity,
- Deviation procedures (or corrective actions) that include:
 - Employee name(s) or position(s) responsible for carrying out deviation procedures,
 - How the deviation procedures are conducted,
 - Records for documenting deviation procedures,
 - Note that deviation procedures are carried out when a deviation occurs (i.e., as needed),
- Verification procedures that include:
 - Employee name(s) or position(s) responsible for conducting verification procedures,
 - How verification procedures are conducted,
 - Frequency of verification procedures, and
 - Records for documenting verification procedures.

Where product protection procedures/programs are found to be incomplete or require modification, deficiencies will be noted. This information will be communicated to the applicant for corrective action. If the audit results show the deficiencies are sufficient to negatively impact the integrity of the overall food safety system, a second systems audit must take place prior to proceeding with the on-site verification audit.

B4. Systems Audit - HACCP Plan(s) Requirements (Required for AHA! HACCP System Certification)

The auditor(s) will verify that:

- Written HACCP plan(s) contain(s) all the necessary material as defined in the AHA! Standard, as well as any supporting protocols and documents,
- All products produced fall under a documented HACCP plan,
- Control measures are sufficient to effectively prevent, eliminate or reduce to an acceptable level of risk any commonly accepted food safety hazards associated with the product(s) or process(s) in question,
- Record-keeping forms for all monitoring, corrective action and verification procedures have been developed,
- All pages of the HACCP plan(s) are signed and dated, and appropriate documentation controls are in place,
- Critical Control Points (CCP's) within the HACCP plan(s) follow a numbering or lettering system. This system will be used when referencing CCP's within the overall HACCP system, and
- Where applicable, reference is made to scientific literature or background to support the decisions made in the HACCP plan(s).
- CCP's are validated to ensure they effectively and consistently control the hazard.

For each critical control point, the applicant must document:

- Critical limits,
- Monitoring procedures that include:
 - Employee name(s) or position(s) who is/are responsible for monitoring,
 - What and how monitoring is conducted,
 - Frequency of monitoring,
 - Records for documenting the monitoring activity,
- Deviation procedures (or corrective actions) that include:
 - Employee name(s) or position(s) responsible for carrying out deviation procedures,
 - How the deviation procedures are conducted,
 - Records for documenting deviation procedures,
 - Note that deviation procedures are carried out when a deviation occurs (i.e., as needed),
- Verification procedures that include:
 - Employee name(s) or position(s) responsible for conducting verification procedures,
 - How verification procedures are conducted,
 - Frequency of verification procedures, and
 - Records for documenting verification procedures.

Where HACCP plan(s) are found to be incomplete or require modification, deficiencies will be noted. This information will be communicated to the applicant for corrective action. If the audit results show the deficiencies are sufficient to negatively impact the

integrity of the overall HACCP system, a second systems audit must take place prior to proceeding with the on-site verification.

If deficiencies do not impact the integrity of the overall food safety system, the on-site verification audit may proceed. Following completion of the systems audit, the auditor(s) will schedule the on-site verification audit.

C. On Site Verification Audit

The on-site verification audit will begin with an opening meeting in which the scope and objectives of the audit are explained to the applicant. The applicant will provide a person to accompany the auditor(s) during the on-site verification audit. Any deficiencies that were identified during the System Audit will be addressed during the opening meeting of the On Site Verification Audit.

If, during the on site audit, the auditor(s) identifies a situation that, in the opinion of the auditor(s), constitutes an imminent threat to public health, the certifying agency or applicant must contact the appropriate regulatory authority immediately to discuss the nature of the threat and obtain further direction. The action(s) taken must follow, but is not limited to the following:

- **The auditor(s) must adequately describe the threat and document the results of the notification to the applicant,**
- **The auditor(s) must provide notification to the applicant that they must contact the regulatory agency of concern and determine if there is a need to initiate action, such as a product recall, or**
- **If the applicant fails to contact the regulatory agency, the auditor must notify the regulatory agency of concern and may request the applicant to cease operation, and advise on what immediate corrective actions to take to restore sanitary conditions,**
- **All activities must be documented by the auditor and also the applicant to indicate due diligence in actions to prevent adverse human health effects.**

To verify the food safety system is implemented as written, the on-site verification audit will be conducted in the manner described in the following sections.

C1. Prerequisite Programs Requirements for On-Site Audit

(Required for AHA! GMP Certification **and** AHA! HACCP System Certification)

The on-site audit of prerequisite program implementation will include a review of:

- Prerequisite program records,
- Implementation of the written program,
- The facility, and
- Employees' level of knowledge and training.

To be considered acceptable, the on-site audit of prerequisite program implementation must confirm that:

- Programs and protocols are adhered to as written and reflect current establishment conditions,
- Records are complete and accurate,
- Control measures are effective,
- Personnel responsible for prerequisite program activities are adequately trained, are knowledgeable about their duties and are following the written program,
- The physical establishment meets all design, construction, and maintenance requirements described in the AHA! Standard Prerequisite Programs, and
- The corrective actions for deficiencies noted during the systems audit are deemed acceptable.

C2. Product Protection Requirements for On-Site Audit (Required for AHA! GMP Certification)

The on-site audit of product protection implementation will include a review of:

- Product protection records,
- Implementation of the written program, and
- Employees' level of knowledge and training.

To be considered acceptable, the on-site audit of product protection implementation must confirm that:

- Programs/procedures are adhered to as written and reflect current establishment conditions,
- Records are complete and accurate,
- Control measures are effective,
- Personnel responsible for product protection activities are adequately trained, are knowledgeable about their duties and are following the written program, and
- The corrective actions for deficiencies noted during the systems audit are deemed acceptable.

C3. HACCP Plan(s) Requirements for On-site Audit (Required for AHA! HACCP System Certification)

The on-site audit of the HACCP plan(s) implementation will include a review of:

- HACCP plan(s) records,
- Implementation of the written plan, and
- Level of knowledge and training of the facility employees responsible for HACCP plan tasks.

To be considered acceptable, the on-site audit of HACCP plan(s) implementation must confirm that:

- Programs and protocols are adhered to as written and reflect current establishment conditions,
- Records are complete and accurate,

- Control measures are effective,
- Personnel responsible for CCP activities are adequately trained, are knowledgeable about their duties and are following the written program, and
- The corrective actions for deficiencies noted during the systems audit are deemed acceptable.

The audit team's findings will be classified according to severity/risk.

C4. Closing Meeting

At the conclusion of the on-site audit, a closing meeting will be held and the applicant will be provided with a summary of the audit findings. The summary will include a list of audit findings that impact food safety.

During the closing meeting the applicant will have the opportunity to respond to the findings. Where information provided by the applicant impacts on the auditor(s) findings, the audit findings will be amended before the audit report is finalized.

C5. Certifying Agency Final Audit Report

Within 30 days of the completion of the audit-closing meeting, the certifying agency will forward a final written audit report to the applicant detailing all audit findings.

If no deficiencies were noted, a document of certification will follow.

If deficiencies were noted, the applicant will be required to revise areas of deficiency (prerequisite programs and/or product protection programs/procedures and/or HACCP plan(s)) to address non-conformities identified in the written audit report. The applicant must submit a written corrective action response within 30 days for review by the certifying agency. Each corrective action response must include detailed activities to correct the non-conformity, the date they will be completed, and must be signed off by a representative of management. The certifying agency will review the written corrective action response. If the response is not deemed effective or timely, the response will be returned to the applicant for changes and certification will be withheld.

The audit will be closed once the applicant has prepared a suitable and effective corrective action response for all non-conformities.

If the certifying agency deems there is a significant number of, or severity of, non-conformities, certification will be denied. This will be detailed in the final audit report.

C6. Certification and Recognition

When certification requirements have been met, the applicant will receive a document of certification from the certifying agency and the certifying agency will notify AF.

Recognition will be provided to certified applicants by acknowledging (posting) the applicant on AF's website.

C7. Suspension or Withdrawal of Certification/Recognition

Certification and/or recognition may be suspended/withdrawn at any time if failure to meet the requirements of the food safety system is demonstrated. When certification has been suspended/withdrawn, the certifying agency will notify AF.

The applicant may appeal any decision regarding certification to the certifying agency. A process for appeals has been developed by the certifying agency to include a fair and impartial method for resolving disputes resulting from audits or activities leading to suspension/withdrawal of certification.

At any time, applicants may request to be removed from the auditing sequence (resulting in voluntary decertification).

C8. Ongoing Documentation and Modifications to an Applicant's Food Safety System

In the event that there are changes to the food safety system, or to the establishment's products and processes (e.g. product formulations, equipment, new technologies) that may impact the food safety system, these changes must be incorporated into the food safety system. A record or logbook of such changes must be maintained. The certifying agency must be informed of any significant changes to the food safety system.

The certifying agency must review all changes and implemented corrective actions from previous audits during the next systems and on-site audit.

The applicant has the responsibility to provide the auditor(s) with evidence that the required corrective actions have been completed.

D. Audit Cycle

D1. Full Audits

The initial audit for certification under the AHA! program requires a complete evaluation of the applicants food safety system. Once successfully completed, the facility is identified as following an effective and complete system to ensure food safety.

Full audits will be conducted on a three-year cycle. After initial certification, a full audit will be conducted at year four.

D2. Partial audits

A partial audit will be conducted in years two and three and will include a set of randomly selected requirements of the AHA! Standard.

If, during the partial audit, the audit findings are significant enough to indicate that the system is not effective or functioning properly, a full audit may be deemed necessary.

E. Food Safety System Auditor Criteria

Auditors employed or contracted by certifying agencies must meet the criteria in the following section in order to perform audits of food safety systems attempting to meet AHA! Standard requirements.

An auditor must possess and provide documented evidence of sufficient understanding to conduct audits of establishments, including:

- Auditor certification/accreditation acceptable to the certification agency,
- Thorough understanding of the AHA! Standard,
- Demonstrated understanding and experience of particular industry/commodity area(s),
- Food safety and HACCP knowledge demonstrated by successful completion of a recognized HACCP training course or equivalent experience with designing and implementing HACCP programs, and
- Appropriate education as demonstrated by a diploma or degree in food safety, food microbiology, food science, veterinary science or a related field.

An auditor must be free from any conflict of interest that might cause him/her to act in other than an impartial or non-discriminatory manner. For example, the auditor must not:

- Have direct or indirect ownership or other financial interest in an establishment which the auditor is appointed to audit,
- Directly provide, or belong to a business or organization which provides, goods and/or services to the establishment being audited,
- Have any immediate family relationship with the ownership or management of the establishment being audited,
- Have any direct or indirect financial interest in the products produced or marketed by the establishment being audited, and
- Have been directly or indirectly involved in the development or implementation of any aspect of the applicant's food safety system or HACCP system.

To continue to maintain their qualified auditor status, an auditor must agree to:

- Maintain all the requirements of certification/accreditation qualification status as outlined by the certifying agency, and
- Demonstrate proficiency in food safety system auditing by performing a minimum number of audits annually as determined by the certifying agency.

F. Requirements of Certifying Agencies

Certifying agencies must meet the following criteria in order to be recognized by AF to conduct certification functions in relation to food safety systems:

- Be accredited by Standards Council of Canada (SCC) as a certifying agency or be acceptable to AF as a certifying agency,
- Show demonstrated compliance to auditor certification/accreditation requirements as outlined in Section E,
- Be able to communicate in both official languages where circumstances warrant,
- Have a documented procedure for verifying the competence and performance of their own staff and any outside experts they employ by way of sub-contract, or any other persons whose competence or performance they audit,
- Maintain and keep comprehensive records of audits and internal activities related to audits,
- Have an identified process to report, in an expedient manner, through to AF any situation that constitutes an imminent threat to public health, and
- Develop and maintain a management system to manage the certification program.

REFERENCES

Codex. Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) System and Guidelines for Its Application. Recommended International Code of Practice – General Principles of Food Hygiene. CAC/RCP 1-1969, Rev. 4 2003.

Food Safety Enhancement Program Manual. Canadian Food Inspection Agency. Final Version, July 2006.

English: <http://www.inspection.gc.ca/english/fssa/polstrat/haccp/manue/tablee.shtml>

French: <http://www.inspection.gc.ca/francais/fssa/polstrat/haccp/manue/tablef.shtml>

HACCP System Technical Manual. Canadian Food Inspection System Implementation Group. HACCP systems working group technical committee on HACCP systems recognition. Final Version, May 4, 2005.