

impact

University of Idaho Extension programs that are making a difference in Idaho.

HACCP and food safety — important for Idaho's food manufacturers

AT A GLANCE

For food processors food safety is very important. Ensuring you are following industry and regulatory guidelines is not always intuitive.

The Situation

For those manufacturing food products in Idaho, food safety is very important. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimates that in the U.S. 48 million people, 128,000 are hospitalized and 3,000 people die each year from eating and drinking contaminated food and beverages. Food manufacturing facilities must practice strict controls to ensure their product is not going to make someone ill or even kill someone. One program that processors use to ensure food safety is Hazard Analysis Critical Control Points (HACCP). HACCP is not a new program; it was developed in the 60's with the U.S. space program. How was NASA going to ensure the food sent with the astronauts was not going to cause foodborne illness in space? The answer — the HACCP program. HACCP utilizes five preliminary steps and seven principles to help a food facility ensure their product is safe to consume. Having a food safety program is required by both local and federal regulatory bodies.

Our Response

We offer HACCP certification courses and help food facilities develop their food safety plans that are compliant with local and federal regulations. We offer certification courses and services several times a year and all



An example of food manufacturing equipment and facility. Photo by Adobe Stock.

over the state to ensure food processors can attend with minimal disruption to their businesses. We also offer them online via Zoom for those that can't travel. The course and its instructor are certified by the International HACCP Alliance, a program that ensures quality and is recognized by third party auditors. As needed, we have also customized the courses to specific food products, for example meat products, potato products and grain products.

Food facilities of all sizes can take advantage of the course and information. Existing facilities with robust food safety and quality programs can send people for professional development and to ensure their programs meet current industry standard. New companies or food entrepreneurs can use the materials to develop

their food safety protocols as they develop their product and business.

Program Outcomes

Since 2021 243 people have attended our Introduction to HACCP courses. Participants find the courses very helpful. On self-reported surveys they have reported the following impacts:

- \$30,412,501 total impact
- \$46,543,502 in sales total
- \$62,908,819 in cost savings and avoidance
- \$30,543,017 in investment total

Results are from surveys from 2021 to the second quarter of 2023.

Among the comments made by participants and their management include:

- “...Our company recognizes that without a solid QA/QC department we would **not** be able to retain our existing clients or bring on any new clients. Those factors alone are priceless! This HACCP training was a huge benefit for me personally as well as our company as this helped us to be more prepared for our daily operations, make HACCP plan improvements and also to be ready for our most recent BRC audit. Janna and her team are excellent and made this learning opportunity much more interesting than I would have ever imagined.”

- “...The class was useful as it provided training necessary to pass our GFSI audit and critically think through the HACCP plan we have in place, so it is invaluable in that regard... I did appreciate the class. We do want to be a great company and having a solid HACCP plan to help us provide a safe and quality product is worth the money and time to be trained correctly. I feel that the TechHelp instructor was well educated and prepared to give good advice. I enjoyed the online availability of the course.”
- “It is very beneficial for the food manufacturing industry to have access to a local source for HACCP, GMP, SQF and other food safety training. This saves lots of money for travel because those courses are required in this business. I think it is something that likely helps land those manufacturing facilities in Idaho as is it shows a commitment to the industry.”

The Future

We will continue to offer the courses to Idaho food manufacturers to help them create and maintain their food safety programs.

Cooperators and Co-Sponsors

TechHelp is Idaho’s Manufacturing Extension Partnership Center (MEP) and their mission is to help manufacturers succeed. These courses and others are offered in partnership with TechHelp.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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