

HACCP PLAN REQUIREMENTS FOR BOTTLING JUICES AT RETAIL STORES FOR OFF-SITE SALES

Background

Raw juices, cherished for their natural flavor and nutritional value, lack a "kill step" like cooking, leaving them vulnerable to potential contaminants from their journey from field to glass. The absence of this protective step makes the bottling process susceptible to pathogens such as E. coli, Salmonella, and Clostridium botulinum. Given these risks, the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health requires the submission of a HACCP plan from retail operations bottling juice for off-site sales.

What is HACCP?

HACCP stands for Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point. It's a systematic approach to identifying, evaluating, and controlling food safety hazards throughout the food production process.

Why is HACCP Important for Bottling of Juices?

- 1. Consumer Safety and Potential Contaminants:** The primary goal of HACCP is to protect consumers from foodborne illnesses. With fresh juices, there's a significant risk of microbial contamination if proper controls aren't in place. For example:
 - **Acidic Juices (pH 4.6 or less):** These can harbor pathogens like E. coli O157:H7, various Salmonella species, and Cryptosporidium parvum, which may originate from animal feces and contaminate produce directly or through intermediaries like water.
 - **Low Acid Juices:** These require careful handling, with toxins from strains of Clostridium botulinum being potential hazards.
- 2. Regulatory Compliance:** Los Angeles County mandates the use of HACCP plans for retail food stores who bottle juices for off-site sale. Non-compliance can lead to regulatory actions, fines, and recalls.
- 3. Brand Reputation:** A single outbreak of foodborne illness linked to a product can tarnish a brand's reputation. Implementing a HACCP plan demonstrates a company's commitment to producing safe products.
- 4. Economic Benefits:** HACCP can lead to cost savings over time. By preventing foodborne disease outbreaks, it minimizes potential liabilities and associated expenses.

Implementing a HACCP Plan for Bottling Juices

- 1. Hazard Analysis:** Identify potential hazards in the bottling process, from raw material sourcing to final product distribution.

2. **Determine Critical Control Points (CCPs):** Pinpoint steps in the process where hazards can be prevented, eliminated, or reduced to acceptable levels.
3. **Set Critical Limits:** Establish maximum and/or minimum values to which a hazard must be controlled at a CCP.
4. **Monitor CCPs:** Develop procedures to monitor the CCPs to ensure they remain within the set critical limits.
5. **Establish Corrective Actions:** Decide on actions to be taken when monitoring indicates a deviation from an established critical limit.
6. **Verification Procedures:** Establish procedures to verify that the HACCP system is working correctly, including periodic checking of the system itself and the end product.
7. **Record-keeping:** Maintain documentation that showcases the working and effectiveness of the HACCP system.

What Does This Mean for You?

If you bottle or package juices from your retail food facility in Los Angeles County, for off-site sales, you must adhere to a Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP) plan. You need to contact us at (626) 813-3477 to submit your HACCP plan for review before engaging on juice packaging and bottling, per [Section 114419 \(a\)\(6\) of the California Retail Food Code](#).

HACCP Review Fees:

A fee of \$167 per hour will be charged for the HACCP plan review, payable to the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health – Environmental Health Division.

We're Here to Help!

For HACCP plan queries or reviews:

Wholesale Food and Safety Program

Phone: (626) 813-3477

Website: bit.ly/wfsla