



GAMBIAN STANDARD ON GENERAL PRINCIPLES OF FOOD HYGIENE

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TABLE OF CONTENT

SECTION I - OBJECTIVES.....	3
THE CODEX GENERAL PRINCIPLES OF FOOD HYGIENE:.....	3
SECTION II - SCOPE, USE AND DEFINITION.....	3
2.1 SCOPE	3
2.2 USE.....	4
2.3 DEFINITIONS	5
SECTION III - PRIMARY PRODUCTION	5
3.1 ENVIRONMENTAL HYGIENE	6
3.2 HYGIENIC PRODUCTION OF FOOD SOURCES.....	6
3.3 HANDLING, STORAGE AND TRANSPORT	6
3.4 CLEANING, MAINTENANCE AND PERSONNEL HYGIENE AT PRIMARY PRODUCTION	6
SECTION IV - ESTABLISHMENT: DESIGN AND FACILITIES	7
4.1 LOCATION	7
4.2 PREMISES AND ROOMS	8
4.3 EQUIPMENT	8
4.4 FACILITIES	9
SECTION V - CONTROL OF OPERATION.....	11
5.1 CONTROL OF FOOD HAZARDS	11
5.2 KEY ASPECTS OF HYGIENE CONTROL SYSTEMS	11
5.3 INCOMING MATERIAL REQUIREMENTS	13
5.4 PACKAGING	13
5.5 WATER	13
5.6 MANAGEMENT AND SUPERVISION	13
5.7 DOCUMENTATION AND RECORDS.....	14
5.8	
SECTION VI - ESTABLISHMENT: MAINTENANCE AND SANITATION	14
6.1 MAINTENANCE AND CLEANING	14
6.2 CLEANING PROGRAMMES	15
6.3 PEST CONTROL SYSTEMS	15
6.4 WASTE MANAGEMENT	16
6.5 MONITORING EFFECTIVENESS.....	16
SECTION VII - ESTABLISHMENT: PERSONAL HYGIENE	16
7.1 HEALTH STATUS	17
7.2 ILLNESS AND INJURIES	17
7.3 PERSONAL CLEANLINESS	17
7.4 PERSONAL BEHAVIOUR	17
7.5 VISITORS	18
SECTION VIII - TRANSPORTATION	18
8.1 GENERAL	18
8.2 REQUIREMENTS	18
8.3 USE AND MAINTENANCE	18
SECTION IX - PRODUCT INFORMATION AND CONSUMER AWARENESS.....	19
9.1 LOT IDENTIFICATION	19

9.2	PRODUCT INFORMATION	19
9.3	LABELLING	19
9.4	CONSUMER EDUCATION	19
SECTION X - TRAINING		20
10.1	AWARENESS AND RESPONSIBILITIES	20
10.2	TRAINING PROGRAMMES	20
10.3	INSTRUCTION AND SUPERVISION	20
10.4	REFRESHER TRAINING	20
HAZARD ANALYSIS AND CRITICAL CONTROL POINT (HACCP) SYSTEM AND GUIDELINES FOR ITS APPLICATION.....		21
PREAMBLE.....		21
DEFINITIONS		21
PRINCIPLES OF THE HACCP SYSTEM		22
GUIDELINES FOR THE APPLICATION OF THE HACCP SYSTEM.....		24
INTRODUCTION.....		24
APPLICATION.....		24
TRAINING		28

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THE GAMBIA STANDARDS BUREAU

The Gambia Standards Bureau is a statutory Government specialized Agency established by The Gambia Standards Bureau Act 2010 to standardize products, methods, systems and for connected matters. Hence, the Bureau is the sole National Standardization Body. As such, it has been a member of International Standardization Bodies such as the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) since 2011, International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC) and the Standards and Metrology Institute for Islamic Countries (SMIIC) from 2012.

The objectives of the Bureau, as specified in its Act, are to: establish and promulgate standards for imported and locally-produced goods; facilitate domestic and international trade; foster and promote standards both for industrial efficiency and advancing economic development; promote the health and safety of consumers; enhance international cooperation in relation to standards and standardization. Thus, the National Quality Policy details the responsibilities of the Bureau in Standardization, Metrology and Conformity Assessment services in Testing, Inspection and Certification.

Therefore, the functions, of the Bureau are to define, prepare, publish, modify or amend Standards Specifications as well information-dissemination of standards. In addition to providing Testing, Inspection and Certification services for goods, systems and processes independently or in relation to conformity with its Standards Mark, the Bureau also conducts training and research. In Metrology, the Bureau serves as the custodian of primary national reference measurement standards through its National Metrology Laboratories and conducts calibration of measurement devices and physical standards.

The development of Gambian Standards (GAMS) is carried out by the Bureau through Technical Committees composed of a balanced representation of stakeholders, as may be appropriate to the subject in question. The Bureau ensures that Standards are developed in accordance with the *ISO/IEC Guide 21-1:2005: Regional or National adoption of International Standards and other International deliverables* and the *World Trade Organization Code of good practice for the preparation, adoption and application of standards*. To the greatest extent possible, Gambian Standards are aligned to or are adoptions of relevant international standards.

For further information on and copies of Gambian Standards, please contact The Gambia Standards Bureau.

COMMITTEE REPRESENTATIVES

The Technical Committee on National Food Standards which supervised the development of this Gambian Standard consists of representatives from the following organizations:

National Codex, Sanitary and Phytosanitary Committee (NCSPSC)

Food Safety and Quality Authority of The Gambia (FSQA)

National Nutrition Agency (NaNA)

Food Technology Unit of Department of Agriculture (FTU-DOA)

Animal Health and Production Services (AHPS)

Plant Protection Services (PPS)

National Agricultural Research Institute (NARI)

National Association of Food Processors (NAFP)

National Poultry Farmers Association of The Gambia (NPFA)

National Women Farmers Association (NAWFA)

Consumer Protection Association of The Gambia (CPAG)

Jawneh and Family Cashew Farm (JFCF)

Agribusiness Services and Production Association (ASPA)

Gambia Livestock Marketing Agency (GLMA)

Fisheries Department

Association of Fishing Companies

The working group on Good Hygienic Practices Standard which developed this Gambian Standard consists of representatives from the following Organizations:

Food Safety and Quality Authority of The Gambia (FSQA)

The Gambian Quality Association (TGQA)

Consumer Protection Association of The Gambia (CPAG)

Private Expert

FOREWORD

The Gambia Standards Bureau (TGSB), in conformity with international best practice, coopted the National CODEX, Sanitary and Phytosanitary Committee (NCSPSC) as its Technical Committee (TC) on Food Standards. The Secretariat for this TC is the Bureau. This TC adopted the CODEX Standard on General Principles of Food Hygiene. The Procedure for adoption was the *ISO/IEC Guide 21-1 - Regional or national adoption of International Standards and other International Deliverables - Part 1: Adoption of International Standards*. The method of adoption was Direct Adoption.

This Standard can be obtained from The Gambia Standards Bureau.

INTRODUCTION

People have the right to expect the food they eat to be safe and suitable for consumption. Foodborne illness and foodborne injury are at best unpleasant; at worst, they can be fatal. But there are also other consequences. Outbreaks of foodborne illness can damage trade and tourism, and lead to loss of earnings, unemployment and litigation. Food spoilage is wasteful, costly and can adversely affect trade and consumer confidence.

International food trade, and foreign travel, are increasing, bringing important social and economic benefits. But this also makes the spread of illness around the world easier. Eating habits too, have undergone major change in many countries over the last two decades and new food production, preparation and distribution techniques have developed to reflect this. Effective hygiene control, therefore, is vital to avoid the adverse human health and economic consequences of foodborne illness, foodborne injury, and food spoilage. Everyone, including farmers and growers, manufacturers and processors, food handlers and consumers, has a responsibility to assure that food is safe and suitable for consumption.

These General Principles lay a firm foundation for ensuring food hygiene and should be used in conjunction with each specific code of hygienic practice, where appropriate, and the guidelines on microbiological criteria. The document follows the food chain from primary production through to final consumption, highlighting the key hygiene controls at each stage. It recommends a HACCP-based approach wherever possible to enhance food safety as described in Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) System and Guidelines for its Application (Annex).

The controls described in this General Principles document are internationally recognized as essential to ensure the safety and suitability of food for consumption. The General Principles are recommended to Governments, industry (including individual primary producers, manufacturers, processors, food service operators and retailers) and consumers alike.

SCOPE

This document follows the food chain from primary production to the final consumer, setting out the necessary hygiene conditions for producing food which is safe and suitable for consumption. The document provides a base-line structure for other, more specific, codes applicable to particular sectors. Such specific codes and guidelines should be read in conjunction with this document and Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) System and Guidelines for its Application (Annex).

DEFINITIONS

For the purpose of this Code, the following expressions have the meaning stated:

Cleaning - the removal of soil, food residue, dirt, grease or other objectionable matter.

Contaminant - any biological or chemical agent, foreign matter, or other substances not intentionally added to food which may compromise food safety or suitability.

Contamination - the introduction or occurrence of a contaminant in food or food environment.

Disinfection - the reduction, by means of chemical agents and/or physical methods, of the number of micro-organisms in the environment, to a level that does not compromise food safety or suitability.

Establishment - any building or area in which food is handled and the surroundings under the control of the same management.

Food hygiene - all conditions and measures necessary to ensure the safety and suitability of food at all stages of the food chain.

Hazard - a biological, chemical or physical agent in, or condition of, food with the potential to cause an adverse health effect.

HACCP - a system which identifies, evaluates, and controls hazards which are significant for food safety.


Food handler - any person who directly handles packaged or unpackaged food, food equipment and utensils, or food contact surfaces and is therefore expected to comply with food hygiene requirements

Food safety - assurance that food will not cause harm to the consumer when it is prepared and/or

eaten according to its intended use.

Food suitability - assurance that food is acceptable for human consumption according to its intended use.

Primary production - those steps in the food chain up to and including, for example, harvesting, slaughter, milking, fishing.



Only the informative sections of standards are publicly available. To have access to the full standard, you will need to purchase the standard from The Gambia Standards Bureau. You can contact the Bureau on **TEL: 4464210**, **Email: info@tgsb.gm**