

HACCPEuropa.com	QUALITY SYSTEMS MANUAL	Issue: 1	Ref No:
		Issued by:	
	Approved by:		
	Plastic Contamination Prevention Management		Issue date:
			Approval date:
		Page: 1 of 3	

PURPOSE: The purpose of this procedure is to ensure appropriate risk assessments, preventative measures and controls are in place to prevent foreign body contaminants entering products. Specific control over glass and glass like material, metal and plastic is required and a suitable complaint investigation and trend monitoring system must be in place.

RESPONSIBILITY: The Department Manager is responsible for ensuring this procedure is communicated and adhered to by all staff.

INSTRUCTIONS:

RAW MATERIAL AND WORK IN PROGRESS CONTAINERS

1. All containers in which raw materials are delivered must be inspected on arrival for any signs of damage. Where damage has occurred, appropriate corrective action must be taken and if necessary the container and its contents rejected. All inspections, faults found and action taken must be recorded and signed off.
2. Single use raw material containers are not robust in the factory environment and must not be re-used.
3. Work in progress trays and tubs should be inspected before each use (e.g. after washing) for signs of damage. Damaged items will be placed in a quarantine area and records must be kept of all rejections / replacements
4. Combinations of plastic trays and metal racks should be designed to be fully compatible to minimise the risk of plastic damage.

POLYTHENE BAGS AND LINERS

1. All direct food contact polythene bags, liners and wrapping materials, including those used for the delivery of raw materials, must be coloured to contrast with the product and conform to the packaging specification.
2. Polythene wrapping must be completely removed from blocks of butter, fat, cheese etc before any sampling or cutting takes place.
3. Where frozen raw materials or work in progress in polythene bags are decanted prior to defrosting, the decanting and inspection method must ensure that any entrapped polythene is removed.

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			Approval date:
		Page: 2 of 3	

PLASTIC FINISHED PRODUCT PACKAGING MATERIALS

1. Direct contact finished product packaging materials will be delivered in polythene bags or liners which are coloured. The bags and liners should be folded closed and not tape sealed.
2. Plastic finished product packaging must be handled strictly according to the manufacturers' specification. Factors such as load and stacking limits and performance at low temperatures must be understood and taken into account.
3. When selecting a new plastic packaging product, the packaging supplier will review filling and sealing equipment which will be used at the food manufacturing site to ensure that the plastic container is compatible. Any modifications to food production machinery or the container design will be completed and assessed on-line before the first production run.
4. Plastic finished product containers must be inverted, visually inspected prior to use to ensure the removal of any potential foreign body contamination.

OTHER SOURCES OF PLASTIC

1. There will be a daily recorded inspection, as part of the line start up inspection system, of plastic utensils, shovels, mixing paddles and brushes to ensure that any damaged articles are replaced immediately.
2. Spare plastic items must be held in stock.
3. Plastic conveyors and elevators carrying unwrapped materials will be inspected at least daily for signs of damage and trimmed/replaced where necessary. A sufficient stock of spare components for plastic conveyors and elevators must be on site. The daily inspections and actions arising must be recorded and signed off.

PLASTIC COMPLAINTS

1. Any plastic foreign bodies returned as a customer complaint or found in raw materials, work in progress or finished products on site must be investigated to identify the source.
2. The customer complaint trend analysis system must break down plastic complaints according to the type of plastic materials commonly used in the site.
3. Any plastic foreign body found in raw materials (including packaging materials) must be returned to the relevant supplier. A written investigation report together with relevant action plan must be obtained from the supplier.

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		Issued by:	
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	Plastic Contamination Prevention Management		Issue date:
			Approval date:
		Page: 3 of 3	

MONITORING:

Regular audits / inspections of manufacturing areas and controls must be in place to ensure that procedures are effective and working.

VERIFICATION AND RECORD KEEPING:

Regular audits / inspections of manufacturing areas and controls must be in place to ensure that procedures are effective and working.

Internal audits records must be completed, which will include:

- non-conformances
- corrective action
- responsibility
- date of completion

RECORDS APPLIED TO THIS PROCEDURE:

- Internal Audit records
- Customer Complaints log
- Customer Complaints records

DOCUMENTATION RETENTION:

The records applied to this procedure are to be kept on file for a minimum of 3 years.