

**Invitation Letter to BTSF National Contact Points seeking applications for BTSF training activities on  
Auditing general hygiene requirements and control procedures  
based on the HACCP principles developed by FBOs**

**Service Contract 2017 96 03**

**Phase 2**

*Valid as of 28/09/2023*

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## **1. Course objectives**

### **General objective**

The project aims to develop the ability of control officials working in the food sector to perform audits in order to verify the proper implementation of HACCP-based systems by food business operators, taking into account their specificities and with a flexible approach. The training will also assist the need to harmonise the control techniques, developing a consistent approach across the Member States and providing assurances that the audit findings in different reports are of comparable value.

### **Specific objectives**

- Improve the level of consumer protection and food safety
- Harmonize the understanding and implementation of the EU food legislation
- Exchange good control practices and procedures between the different countries
- Help participants overcome barriers or solve problems in their day-to-day work
- Train trainers who will disseminate the obtained knowledge
- Support the networking among people working in the same field in different countries

## 2. Training dates and locations

Four face-to-face training sessions will be delivered in the period November 2023 - February 2024 with approximately 25 people in each session.

An introductory session in the morning of the first day will be followed by 5 days of training. The course agenda is attached (Annex 3).

**Table 1: Training Dates and Location**

Year	Training session	Course title	Location	Dates	Registration deadline
2023	TS10	HACCP	Prague, Czech Republic	13 – 17 November 2023	12 Oct 2023
2023	TS11	HACCP	Lisbon, Portugal	11 – 15 December 2023	06 Nov 2023
2024	TS12	HACCP	Athens, Greece	29 January – 2 February 2024	08 Dec 2023
2024	TS13	HACCP	Lisbon, Portugal	26 February - 1 March 2024	15 Jan 2024

For organisational purposes, names of participants should be communicated at the latest 30 days before each workshop. A reminder will be sent to NCPs before each event.

### 3. Selection criteria for participants

- Participant must:
1. Fulfil the eligibility criteria
  2. Meet the minimum requirements
  3. Be selected using the evaluation criteria

#### 1. Eligibility criteria for the course on HACCP

Applicants must be:

- staff of competent authorities performing planning and control activities in the food sector (preferably at central level)

and/or

- field inspectors involved in official control activities in food establishments.

Only **eligible participants** should be further assessed against the minimum requirements below.

Participants must meet the minimum requirements below to ensure they can follow and fully participate in this course. Participants who do not meet the minimum requirements should not be proposed for the training.

#### 2. Minimum requirements for the course on HACCP

Yes/No

Participants must:

- have worked in functional areas of official controls with a minimum of 3 years of professional experience
- be familiar with the relevant EU legislation in the food sector
- have a good working level of English

The evaluation criteria should be used as a tool to prioritise participation (higher score indicates higher priority), but there is no minimum score necessary.

#### 3. Evaluation criteria for the course on HACCP

Enter Score

a) Experience in official controls performing planning and control activities and/or as field inspectors within a competent authority in areas of food/feed safety, animal health or animal welfare

Scoring

less than 3 years = 0 points; ≥ 3 years = 5 points; 5 - 10 years = 10 points; > 10 years = 12.5 points

b) Experience in implementing EU Legislation within a competent authorities in areas of food/feed safety, animal health or animal welfare

Scoring

no experience = 0 points; < 2 years = 5 points; 2-5 years = 7.5 points; > 5 years = 10 points

c) Contribution towards very specific advanced outcomes in the food safety sector

	<p><u>Scoring</u></p> <p>no experience = 0 points; &lt; 2 years = 5 points; 2-4 years = 10 points; &gt; 4 years = 12.5 points</p>	
d)	<p>During the course, participants will be provided with a training package to be used as support dissemination material. Commitment to disseminate the knowledge received is a prerequisite for course participation.</p> <p><u>Scoring</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Commitment to distribute the training material among their colleagues = 5 points;</li> <li>2. Point 1 plus preparing and giving presentations based on the training material for the staff of national competent authorities/uploading training material to national competent authorities' intranets/websites = 10 points;</li> <li>3. Points 1, 2 plus preparing informative articles in the professional national journals = 15 points;</li> <li>4. no commitment = <b>NO INVITATION</b></li> </ol>	
<b>Maximum total score</b>		<b>50</b>

#### 4. Country allocations

A total of 100 seats (in total for the four face-to-face training sessions – TS10, TS11, TS12 and TS13) will be allocated according to the tables below. Please note that the number of allocated seats per country is indicative.

All NCPs are encouraged to provide as many applicants as possible for each training event. Even if a country does not have allocated seats for the period per the tables below, the NCP may still send applicants. Any excess applicants will be considered as reserves and activated as feasible.

**Table 2: Suggested seat allocation for EU Member States and Candidate Countries**

Country group	Country	TS10 - Prague	TS11 - Lisbon	TS12 - Athens	TS13 - Lisbon
		13-17 November 2023	11-15 December 2023	29 January - 2 February 2024	26 February - 1 March 2024
Member States	Austria	1	1	1	1
	Belgium	1	1	1	1
	Bulgaria			1	1
	Croatia	1		1	1
	Cyprus	1			
	Czech Republic	2			
	Denmark	1	1		
	Estonia	1	1	1	1
	Finland	1	2	2	
	France	1	2		1
	Germany		1		2
	Greece		1	2	1
	Hungary	1	1		1
	Ireland				
	Italy	1	1	1	1
	Latvia	1		1	
	Lithuania			2	
	Luxembourg		1	1	1
	Malta		1		1
	Netherlands			1	1
	Poland			1	
	Portugal	1			
	Romania				
	Slovakia			2	1
Slovenia			1	1	
Spain					
Sweden	2	1			

		TS10 - Prague	TS11 - Lisbon	TS12 - Athens	TS13- Lisbon
Country group	Country	13-17 November 2023	11-15 December 2023	29 January - 2 February 2024	26 February - 1 March 2024
Candidate Countries	Albania				1
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	1	1		
	Montenegro	1	1	1	
	North Macedonia		1	1	2
	Serbia		1		1
	Türkiye	1	1	1	2
	Ukraine			2	
<b>Total MS &amp; CC</b>		<b>19</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>22</b>

**Table 3: Suggested allocation for other non-EU Countries**

		TS10 - Prague	TS11 - Lisbon	TS12 - Athens	TS13- Lisbon
Country group	Country	13-17 November 2023	11-15 December 2023	29 January - 2 February 2024	26 February - 1 March 2024
EFTA/EEA/ Countries with special agreements	Iceland	1			
	Norway				
	UK/ Northern Ireland				
Other non- EU European Countries	Switzerland	1			
	UK (GB)	2			2
Potential Candidate Countries, Eastern Partnership and Southern Neighbourhood Countries	Egypt				
	Israel		1	1	
	Jordan			1	
	Kosovo	1			
	Moldova	1			
	Morocco		1	1	
Asian Countries	Tunisia				
	China				
	India				
	Indonesia				
	Malaysia				
	the Phillipines			1	
	Thailand				
Vietnam					

		TS10 - Prague	TS11 - Lisbon	TS12 - Athens	TS13- Lisbon
Country group	Country	13-17 November 2023	11-15 December 2023	29 January - 2 February 2024	26 February - 1 March 2024
Latin American Countries	Argentina				
	Brazil				
	Colombia				
	Chile				
	Mexico				
	Peru				
African Countries	Ethiopia				1
	Ghana				
	Namibia				
	Nigeria				
	South Africa				
<b>Total non-EU</b>		<b>6</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>

You are welcome to nominate more participants for the reserve list than indicated in the table above. If seats will become available, you will be informed in due time.

#### ***5. Face-to-face logistical arrangements***

In the case of face-to-face training sessions, the European Commission will fund in full the visa, travel, accommodation, meals, and field visit costs for all training participants. No daily allowance will be paid on top of this. Any other costs are to be paid by the participants themselves.

Participants will arrive at the training venues on Sunday before the events starts and training will commence on Monday morning. Return travel will be on Friday afternoon/evening or exceptionally on Saturday morning after the training has finished, depending on the flight connections.

The NSF Euro Consultants event management team will liaise further with the nominated participants for all logistics and practical aspects.



## **Annex 1: Background and main topics covered in training**

### **Background**

Food safety is a key aspect in achieving a high level of consumer protection, a major policy and societal concern in the EU. Therefore, the European Commission has developed the integrated “From Farm to Fork” approach. This approach aims at guaranteeing food safety and constitutes a lever for developing the internal market. One element of this approach is the definition of harmonized and flexible legislation for all Member States. In this framework, the “Hygiene Package” came into force in 2006. It requires in particular the establishment, implementation and maintenance of procedures based on Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP) principles at all stages of the food chain (except primary production), adapted to the activities of each food business operator.

Another equally important aspect is the need for Member States to verify the correct application of legal requirements by the food business operators, and to assess and ensure the level of food safety provided by each link in the chain.

The single market calls for harmonization of competent authorities’ practices as a fundamental need, which is reflected in the development of integrated inspection programs. However, it is established that the implementation and evaluation of HACCP system approaches may vary between Member States or even within the same country at the level of inspections which are key component of official control. In addition, inspection nowadays cannot just be a verification of the regulatory requirements but shall be complemented by the performance of an audit of the food safety management system. This new audit approach allows not only to assess the compliance of the system in place with the specific legal requirements, but also to ensure the proper implementation of this system and its effectiveness in ensuring food safety.

The HACCP is a real corner stone of the food safety for feed and food business operators, and its assessment in the frame of official controls is essential. Since their conception, the HACCP principles have grown to become a universally accepted method for ensuring food safety. Widely explored, the HACCP method has varying interpretations, and faces challenges in its adaptation to the specificities of each operator. It is clear the mastery of its use by operators and control staff is rather heterogeneous. In addition, difficulties may be encountered in understanding its positioning in relation to other elements such as prerequisite programs or flexibility measures.

The guides are key tools to facilitate the interpretation and application of legal requirements, particularly for small and very small food safety operators. Their increased use requires a special assessment approach during the official control activities. The integration of training activities on auditing general hygiene requirements and control procedures based on the HACCP principles developed by food business operators in the BTSF initiative is a means to promote the advancement of control agents’ skills as well as to improve the effectiveness and harmonization of official controls.

### **Main topics**

- Topic 1: HACCP overview

The topic presents an overview of the background and timeline of the HACCP system from its concept to its

incorporation into the Codex Alimentarius Food Hygiene General Principles and subsequently into EC Regulations. It also explains the important position of HACCP regarding food hygiene in general and the management of food safety and provides knowledge of EU requirements related to HACCP. By providing an overview of HACCP, Topic 1 helps to create a deeper understanding of the remaining topics of the training course.

- Topic 2: Prerequisites programmes

The purpose of this topic is to present the importance of general hygiene requirements (GHR) and their role in the process of ensuring food safety by food business operators. Good hygiene practice (GHP) includes all practices regarding the conditions and measures necessary to ensure the safety and suitability of food at all stages of the food chain. Prerequisite programmes are procedures, including Good Manufacturing Practices (GMPs), that address operational conditions providing the foundation for a Food Safety Management System (FSMS) which can be achieved by correct implementation of prerequisite requirements and GHP, application of HACCP principles (possibly in a simplified way), using Guide to Good Practice or combination of the above. Specific attention shall be paid to the auditing of food safety culture.

- Topic 3: HACCP method and plan

The main objective of Topic 3 is that participants obtain a deeper knowledge of the HACCP methodology, the necessary preparatory work and its different approaches focusing on Principle 1 (hazard analysis), Principle 2 (establishing CCP) and Principle 6 (verification) which seem to be the most difficult elements to understand, and generate more doubts according to the Final Overview Report on the State of Implementation of HACCP in the EU and Areas for Improvement. Theoretical presentations and practical exercises for each principle will be used for a better understanding of the theory.

- Topic 4: The audit process

The theoretical auditing modules of the course focus on the performance of audits according to recognised principles and the application of appropriate audit techniques. Relevant definitions, guidance and EU requirements are also covered as well as the different interlinking and interdependent stages of an audit. The classical auditing process is outlined. Important aspects and requirements in relation to auditor competence and training are also covered. Checklists can also be a useful tool for auditors when appropriately and uniformly applied.

- Topic 5: Guides and flexibility

Flexibility in the application of HACCP principles is considered in Regulation (EC) N° 852/2004 on the hygiene of foodstuffs. Some related requirements are set up in the mentioned regulation, some more detailed guidance and recommendations about flexibility can be found in the Commission Notice on the implementation of food safety management systems (FSMS) covering prerequisite programs (PRPs) and procedures based on the HACCP principles, including the facilitation/flexibility of the implementation in certain food businesses (CNHACCP) and in the COMMISSION NOTICE providing guidance on food safety management systems for food retail activities, including food donations.

## Annex 2: Legislation and guidance

- Commission Notice on the implementation of food safety management systems covering prerequisite programs (PRPs) and procedures based on the HACCP principles, including the facilitation/flexibility of the implementation in certain food businesses, C/2016/4608 of 30.7.2016 (CNHACCP)
- Commission Notice providing guidance on food safety management systems for food retail activities, including food donations 2020/C 199/01
- Regulation (EU) 2017/625 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 15 March 2017 on official controls and other official activities performed to ensure the application of food and feed law, rules on animal health and welfare, plant health and plant protection products
- Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2019/627 of 15 March 2019 laying down uniform practical arrangements for the performance of official controls on products of animal origin intended for human consumption in accordance with Regulation (EU) 2017/625 of the European Parliament and of the Council and amending Commission Regulation (EC) No 2074/2005 as regards official control
- Regulation (EU) No 528/2012 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 22 May 2012 concerning the making available on the market and use of biocidal product
- Regulation (EC) No 852/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 29 April 2004 on the hygiene of foodstuffs, including the amendments by Regulation (EU) 2021/382.
- Regulation (EC) No 853/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 29 April 2004 laying down specific hygiene rules for food of animal origin
- Commission Regulation (EC) No 2073/2005 of 15 November 2005 on microbiological criteria for foodstuffs
- Regulation (EC) No 178/2002 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 28 January 2002 laying down the general principles and requirements of food law, establishing the European Food Safety Authority and laying down procedures in matters of food safety
- Council Directive 98/83/EC of 3 November 1998 on the quality of water intended for human consumption
- Commission Notice on guidance document on addressing microbiological risks in fresh fruits and vegetables at primary production through good hygiene
- Final overview report. Report on the State of Implementation of HACCP in the EU and Areas for Improvement. European Commission. Directorate-General For Health And Food Safety. Directorate F - Food and Veterinary Office. 2015. (FVO Report on HACCP)
- IFS 7
- ISO 22000:2018 and ISO/TS 22002-1:2009
- Codex Alimentarius (CAC/RCP 1-1969, Rev.2020)
- IFS vs 6.1, BRC Issue 7, ISO 22000:2018

# Annex 3: Agenda

## Face-to-face Training Programme



### Auditing general hygiene requirements and control procedures based on the HACCP principles developed by food business operators - Phase 2

Training Coordinators (TC) DUO: Plinio Simon / Andreas Wunsch  
 Tutors: DUO 1: Elizabeta Micovic / Lisa-Marie Hedberg; DUO 2: Panagiotis Katoikos / Sylvie Mialet; DUO 3: Franciscus Henderix / Roberto Valcarce; DUO 4: Donal Cousins / Patrick Farrell; DUO 5: Ita White / Gerard Barry  
 NE: National Expert

	Day 1: Monday		Day 2: Tuesday		Day 3: Wednesday		Day 4: Thursday		Day 5: Friday				
	Topic 1: HACCP overview Topic 2: Prerequisites programmes Topic 3: HACCP method and plan		Topic 3: HACCP method and plan		Topic 4: The audit process		Topic 4: The audit process		Topic 5: Guides and flexibility				
8:00											8:00		
8:15											8:15		
8:30	Opening & welcome. BTSF initiative presentation.		3.4 DUO 2 Case study principles 1 and 2: hazards analysis and determining CCPs - part 2		4.1 DUO 4 Principles of an audit and exercises on audit techniques		Trip to the FBO		5.1 TC Flexibility		8:30		
8:45	Training objectives & presentation of the training programme										8:45		
9:00	Presentation & expectations of each participant										9:00		
9:15	Initial test of knowledge										9:15		
9:30											9:30		
9:45	1.1 DUO 1 Background to HACCP and FSM systems. EU legislation related to HACCP		3.5 DUO 2 Principles 1 and 2: Q&A and debriefing		Coffee break		Coffee break		9:45				
10:00			3.6 DUO 2 Discussion on specific situations related to CCPs						5.1 TC Flexibility - EFSA opinions		10:00		
10:15	Coffee break						4.5 NE / TC Field visit				10:15		
10:30			Coffee break		4.1 DUO 4 Principles of an audit and exercises on audit techniques				5.2 TC Case study - Commission Notice on guidance on FSMS for food retail activities including food donation		10:30		
10:45	2.1 DUO 1 General hygiene requirements: prerequisites		3.7 TC Flexibility on principles 1 and 2		4.2 DUO 4 Case study on an audit report		Field visit		5.3 TC Examples of flexibility and guides to good practice		10:45		
11:00											11:00		
11:15	2.2 TC Virtual visit to an FBO. Exercise on auditing prerequisites programmes.		3.8 DUO 3 Principle 3, 4 and 5: establishing critical limits, monitoring CCPs and establishing corrective actions								5.4 TC Q&A and closing discussion on flexibility		11:15
11:30											Dissemination module		11:30
11:45	2.3 DUO 1 Case study on a prerequisite				4.3 DUO 5/ TC Audit simulation								11:45
12:00									Dissemination module		12:00		
12:15									Final test of knowledge		12:15		
12:30									Online evaluation for CHAFAEA and training session conclusions		12:30		
12:45									Closure & certificates		12:45		
13:00	Lunch		Lunch		Lunch		Trip to the hotel + lunch				13:00		
13:15									Lunch		13:15		
13:30											13:30		
13:45	3.1 DUO 1 Preparatory stages of HACCP		3.9 DUO 3 Case study on Principles 3, 4 and 5		4.3 DUO 5/ TC Audit simulation		4.6 TC Field visit: exercise				13:45		
14:00													14:00
14:15	3.2 DUO 1 Practical activity on flow diagram												14:15
14:30											14:30		
14:45											14:45		
15:00	3.3 DUO 2 Principles 1 and 2: hazard analysis and determining CCPs		3.10 DUO 3 Principle 6: validation and verification of the system				4.7 TC Field visit: exchange of views and debriefing				15:00		
15:15											15:15		
15:30											15:30		
15:45											15:45		
16:00	Coffee break		3.11 DUO 3 Principle 7: documentation and records		Coffee break						16:00		
16:15											16:15		
16:30	3.4 DUO 2 Case study Principles 1 and 2: hazards analysis and determining CCPs - part 1		3.12 DUO 3 Case study on Principle 6		4.4 NE/ TC Field visit preparation		4.8 TC Practical activity on harmonisation of audit tools and guidelines				16:30		
16:45									Feedback and day conclusions Q&A		16:45		
17:00			3.13 DUO 3 Case study on Principle 7								17:00		
17:15	Feedback and day conclusions Q&A		Feedback and day conclusions Q&A		Feedback and day conclusions Q&A						17:15		
17:30											17:30		
17:45											17:45		
18:00											18:00		
18:30			Social activity (visit of the city and dinner)								18:30		
	Welcome cocktail												
			General points in orange		Plenary sessions and theoretical modules in white		Working group sessions, discussions and practical modules in green		Field visit in blue				

## **Annex 4: Training material, outcomes and dissemination activities**

### Training material

#### Face-to-face format

Participants will receive in advance the training material to be used during the F2F training sessions. The following materials of relevance to the course will be uploaded and made accessible on the BTSF Academy:

- Modules Description & Syllabus
- all theoretical presentations
- any materials needed to prepare for the practical modules

**Printed training material can be provided upon participants' request received at least 30 days before the training week. The paperless BTSF trainings are in accordance with the European Commission's policy on "going paperless", and with the Commission's Green Deal.**

During the training week, participants will be regularly divided to work on different exercises and case studies within smaller groups. All results from the practical activities (case studies, exercises, open discussions) will be shared with the group right after the end of the training.

All participants will receive a Dissemination Kit electronically to enable them to actively disseminate course knowledge upon their return from BTSF training.

#### Dissemination kit

This contains the following training materials:

- All course presentations
- Study notes on field trips and group activities/discussions and conclusions thereof
- The course syllabus
- The training information sheet
- Glossary of terms and abbreviations used in the course
- Additional references for further study
- Written guidance on how to actively disseminate course knowledge to colleagues upon participants' return to their home countries, different methodologies/examples/best practice
- Other information and material delivered at the course such as quizzes, FAQs etc.

#### Dissemination questionnaire

Two to three months after the respective training session, participants will receive a standard questionnaire requesting information on the dissemination activities of the participant after the training, and details on differences in the approach adopted in day-to-day work following the training.

#### Self-assessment test

Furthermore, the programme will include an anonymous knowledge test to be carried out at the beginning and at the end of each training session in order to measure the impact of the training on the understanding of the participants of the subjects taught.

Participants are expected to agree to carry out the above tests and to reply to the surveys and questionnaires.

## HaDEA Online Evaluation

Feedback on each virtual training session will be collected through the HADEA online evaluation survey, completed by all participants at the end of the training. The Event Management Team will provide instructions to the participants how to access and fill out the survey through the BTSF Academy. Trainees will be asked to evaluate the course in several aspects: performance of tutors, technical coverage and training materials, networking and interaction opportunities provided during the training, relevance of the topics to the everyday work, reaching the training objectives.

## Personal data protection

Consent to carry out the above tests and to reply to the surveys is a prerequisite for participation in the training. Participants agree to be registered in the BTSF Academy and to take a group photo of the participants and tutors at the end of the training. Photos will be published in the BTSF Academy in the corresponding training course section and will be visible only to registered users of the BTSF ACADEMY.

NSF EC will process personal data only with the explicit prior consent of each applicant/participant. A specific Personal Data Consent Form will be provided to each BTSF applicant at the outset of their communication with the EMT.

Please find more information regarding data protection here:

<https://better-training-for-safer-food.ec.europa.eu/training/mod/page/view.php?id=417>

## **Annex 5: Contractor contact details**

The Project is managed by: NSF Euro Consultants Consortium

Project Manager: Ms. Ogniana Glavoussanova - Mereteva

Training Coordinators: Mr. Plinio Simon and Mr. Andreas Wunsch

Separate notifications will be sent to National Contact Points for each course and will contain the names and contact details of the Event Manager and Assistant Event Manager as well as logistical details on the event.

All official communication between National Contact Points and the Project team will be maintained through the functional e-mail address [2017.63.03-haccp@nsf-ecg.com](mailto:2017.63.03-haccp@nsf-ecg.com).

All information on the BTSF training can be found at the [BTSF Academy](#) website. This website will be regularly updated with details of forthcoming courses.