



## Microbiological Testing and Food Safety Management

### Specifically for those auditing or managing food production

Managing food safety has undergone a paradigm shift in the last 30 years, with a move away from reactive end product testing for "accepting or rejecting" foods to a preventative approach based upon Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point (HACCP) principles. This has meant a different, but still very important role for food microbiological data. This innovative workshop discusses the rationale for sampling including how samples should be taken, sampling plans and some of the pitfalls in sampling and their transportation. It continues with an overview of the detection and enumeration of microorganisms in food, including "general counts". It covers sampling for indicator organisms and specific pathogens using both traditional and "rapid" methods. The application of microbiological data to HACCP validation and verification, as well as the setting of microbiological and performance criteria are discussed. Key differences, including the advantages and disadvantages, between the microbiological assessment of foods and sampling the food environment are examined.

How to maximise the benefits of routine testing

#### Aim

To explain and demonstrate the application of microbiological data to the improved management of food safety and quality

#### Learning Outcomes

After completing the course, participants will be able to:

- Explain the need for, and benefits of, three types of microbiological testing
- Discuss how samples should be taken and describe some of the problems in obtaining a representative and legal sample
- Describe the processes and procedures using traditional and rapid methods involved in microbiological analysis including identification and enumeration
- Distinguish between sampling for general counts, indicator organisms and pathogens
- Define and explain validation, verification and performance criteria and their relevance to HACCP
- Explain microbiological specifications and criteria and their relationship to testing
- Interpret microbiological data and trend analysis and their relationship to food safety
- Distinguish between the end product testing of food and the microbiological testing of the food environment and the potential benefits of the latter



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