



Microbial Control Procedures

Document Number	QM 140-010	Manual Number	140
Date Issued	09-03-25	Revision Number	01

PURPOSE

These guidelines are established to minimize the potential for pathogenic and non-pathogenic bacterial contaminants from entering the facility, proliferating, and compromising the safety and quality of food products. Management is committed to reducing the likelihood of bacterial contamination and to maintaining strict controls so that pathogens cannot grow to levels that may threaten product integrity. All employees and visitors must follow these guidelines to reduce the risk of contamination and to help control any bacteria that may inadvertently be introduced into the plant.

APPLICATION

These guidelines apply during both production and non-production periods to all hourly and salaried employees, as well as to visitors entering warehouse, manufacturing, plant maintenance, or construction areas.

CONTROL OF BACTERIA

- Employees are responsible for keeping footwear clean and in good repair. Any individual entering the plant must wear clean footwear. Contaminated footwear must be changed before entry or covered with clean protective boots.
- Tour groups, including sales or office personnel, may enter production areas only if their attire meets all current Good Manufacturing Practice (GMP) requirements.
- Any person hauling trash to the outside compactor must wash and sanitize their hands immediately upon re-entering production areas unless exiting only to retrieve another load. Smocks or production clothing are strictly prohibited in the compactor area to prevent cross-contamination.
- Any spillage or damaged product must be disposed of immediately. Forklifts and other equipment must not track contaminants through processing rooms.



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PREVENTION OF PRODUCT CONTAMINATION FROM PATHOGENIC BACTERIA

- Employees must wash and sanitize their hands after touching unsanitized surfaces (e.g., face, hair, street clothing, floor, dirty equipment, tools, or hoses) before resuming work on production lines.
- Tools, hoses, pipe fittings, or wrenches that touch the floor or come into contact with raw materials must be thoroughly washed and sanitized before being used again with clean equipment.
- Floor rinsing and in-process clean-up must be performed in a manner that avoids splashing onto food contact surfaces, products, or packaging materials.

REDUCTION AND CONTROL OF BACTERIA IN THE PLANT

- Production floor drains will be washed and sanitized weekly. Drains, grates, and baskets in support areas must be cleaned and sanitized on a periodic schedule. Precautions, such as covering equipment with plastic, must be taken to prevent splashing during drain cleaning.
- Sewer pipes may be plugged and treated with sanitizer as needed to control microbial buildup. Any contamination of nearby equipment during this process must be corrected by recleaning and resanitizing. If products or packaging are contaminated, they must be destroyed, and QA and plant management notified immediately.
- Standing water must be squeegeed into drains promptly to prevent bacterial harborage.
- All growth media used in microbial testing must be decontaminated before disposal by treatment with a 1:10 hypochlorite (chlorine bleach) and water solution for at least one hour.



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ADMINISTRATION & RESPONSIBILITY

- All employees and visitors are responsible for following these procedures.
- Management, Quality Assurance (QA), supervisors, and team leads must monitor compliance and take corrective action when unsafe practices are observed.
- All cleaning supplies must be securely stored after use. Line Leads are responsible for inventory and accountability of cleaning materials.
- Failure to comply with this policy will result in disciplinary action, including written warnings for repeated violations.

TRAINING FREQUENCY

All employees must receive documented training on this policy upon hire and annually thereafter. Attendance must be recorded with a signed training acknowledgment sheet.