



FOOD HYGIENE LEGISLATION

On 28 June 1998, entered into force the Italian Law 26 May 1997 n.155, enforcing the Directives 96/3/EEC and 43/93/CEE about **the food hygiene**. This law decrees that all Companies operating in the food industry implements a **Self-control System**, based on the so-called **HACCP method**, in order to ensure and maintain specific standards of products hygiene and healthiness in all activity stages.

HACCP (Hazards Analysis Critical Control Point)

This law involves any public or private entity, engaged in one or more of the following activities: manufacture, processing, preparation, packaging, storage, transport, distribution, administering or sale of human consumption products.

However, enforcing the self-control system doesn't introduce new duties related to the minimum requirements of production hygiene: in fact, the Law 30/04/62, n. 283, implemented by the Laws 02/26/63, n.441 and 327/80, decrees the required hygiene standards and they are still the reference standards in hygiene for food industry .

The Self-control System, planned according to the HACCP method principles, provides information that can be quickly processed and therefore it allows to immediately and effectively intervene on the production cycle through the application of suitable preventive and corrective actions. This is the feature that mostly differentiates the HACCP control system from the traditional foods control system.

Ultimately, the Self-control System is a legal institution adopted by the EU Legislator to aware and to make more responsible the food Companies about the so-called products "food quality", preferring the production line controls instead of the traditional ones, made on the finished product only.

In this sense, the Law 155/97 highlights the "food quality", and, in particular, the food "health" and "safety". it goes beyond the simple concept of "customer satisfaction" and adds a primary purpose: the "public health protection".

The focus point of the HACCP system application is to analyze the whole Company production process, to identify the hazards (food contamination) that could potentially occur to the product and that are closely connected with the process itself.