

# Showcase your commitment to quality to your customers!

Seafood retailers, which include supermarkets and restaurants, come face-to-face with customers that have become more educated about seafood. Let your customers know that the U.S. Department of Commerce (USDC) Seafood Inspection Program has approved your facility's sanitation and handling practices, and has confidence that your seafood products are safe, wholesome, and properly labeled. Our Retail Programs are the **ONLY** Federal programs that have official marks for seafood that you can advertise in your store or restaurant.

Two programs, with their own special marks, are available to you—the Retail HACCP Program and the Basic Retail Program. Choose the one that suits your needs.

## THE RETAIL HACCP PROGRAM

The USDC Retail HACCP Program is available to retail chains as well as individual stores. What follows is an overview for retail chains. Individual stores receive the same benefits and follow the same steps except that the validation and audits will be at the individual store rather than at randomly selected stores within a chain.

### The Benefits

Your company will benefit by participating in the Retail HACCP Program in two important ways. Your company will:

- have a system in place that standardizes your seafood handling and sanitation procedures. Standardization ensures that your employees know what to do and when to do it—resulting in consistency among your seafood departments.
- receive the marketing benefits of using the HACCP mark on brochures, banners, and company labels. This distinctive mark tells your customers that the U.S. Department of

Commerce has certified your quality control program.

### The First Steps

To facilitate development and ensure the success of your USDC Retail HACCP Program, we recommend that:

- Program personnel meet with you and your first-level management to obtain their commitment to support your efforts.
- We jointly identify a team to develop the HACCP plan(s) and coordinate implementation of the Program – we will work together as partners throughout the process.

### The Next Steps

Program personnel work with you to develop and approve your HACCP plans, get your personnel trained, review your labels and specifications. Then we'll validate your plan (to make sure what's on paper works in practice). Details of each of these steps are contained in our manual entitled "Development, Assessment, Approval, and Continuing Compliance Evaluation of HACCP-based Inspection Systems." In brief, the particulars about each step are:

### The HACCP Plan

A HACCP plan is a document that describes your HACCP-based inspection system. To facilitate development of the HACCP plan, our approach is to adapt your existing forms into the plan. Use of specific USDC forms is not required. We'll help answer your questions!

### Training

This is a very important element to ensure success. If your HACCP planning team is unfamiliar with HACCP, we recommend our 2-1/2 day HACCP course or a similar course to learn the principles and begin to apply those principles to the HACCP plan. Personnel accountable for proper management of the HACCP plan must be certified by USDC by

passing our HACCP exam. Not all of your seafood personnel need to be USDC HACCP-certified. We can assist you in identifying your specific training and certification needs.

### Label and Specification Review

We will review and approve your labels and specifications covered under the plan to ensure they meet regulatory requirements and to assist you in designing your labels bearing the HACCP mark. We are also available to work with you on your advertising and promotion plan.



### Validation

The number of stores within your chain to be validated is dependent upon the size of the chain. The duration of the validation is dependent upon the complexity of your plan and the proximity of one store to another.

### Audits

Our systems audits are designed to capture inconsistencies and present opportunities to your management on how to improve your procedures. Each audit ends with a meeting with your management team. The audits also afford us an opportunity to acknowledge management for a job well done. The better job you do, the less we need to be there!



## THE BASIC RETAIL PROGRAM

**About the Program** – This program is ideal for independent supermarkets. Our USDC Inspection personnel will conduct weekly sanitation inspections to verify your store's safety and handling practices.

**Who can participate?** This program is open to all supermarkets and is an ideal, cost effective option for independent supermarkets or small chains.

### Requirements

- All products your stores receives, handles and sells must be USDC inspected in processing facilities that participate in one of our approved USDC seafood inspection programs.
- Your company's SOP's detailing sanitation and seafood handling practices must be reviewed and approved.
- Your product labels must be reviewed and approved.

### USDC/NOAA Role

USDC Inspection personnel will conduct weekly sanitation inspections to verify your safety and quality practices are implemented and are effective.

### Benefits

- Each store under this program will receive a USDC Sanitation Certificate that can be displayed for your customers.
- The special Retail Mark may be used on advertisements and promotional literature (it may not be used on seafood products.)
- Products that have already been certified by the USDC at your supplier's plant may bear the related quality seal in your seafood case.



For more information contact:

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Visit Our Web Site:  
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U.S. Department of Commerce  
Seafood Inspection Program