

FREE HACCP LIMIT REVIEW TEMPLATE

Critical Limit Checklist

Use this 60-point checklist to establish, validate, communicate, approve, review, and change critical limits for food-safety control points without relying on generic values.

Site / process

Review date

Reviewer / approver

Product / HACCP plan

1. Critical-limit register, scope, hazards, and ownership

1

Confirm the site, product, process, HACCP plan, review date, reviewer, approver, and critical control points included in the critical-limit review.

CRITICAL LIMIT

CCP / LIMIT | Enter

DATE / TIME | Enter

APPROVAL | Enter

Execution tip: Use only the current approved HACCP plan and clearly distinguish critical limits from operating targets and quality specifications.

2

Link every critical limit to the correct CCP, significant hazard, control measure, product or process boundary, and approved HACCP-plan revision.

CRITICAL LIMIT

Requirement / source	Approved value	Owner	Evidence	Action

Execution tip: Use only the current approved HACCP plan and clearly distinguish critical limits from operating targets and quality specifications.

3

Confirm each limit clearly separates acceptable operation from loss of control and is expressed as a measurable minimum, maximum, range, or required condition.

CRITICAL

CRITICAL LIMIT

APPROVED LIMIT | Enter

UNIT | Enter

SOURCE / DEVICE | Enter

Execution tip: Use only the current approved HACCP plan and clearly distinguish critical limits from operating targets and quality specifications.

4

Record the parameter, unit, sample location, product state, equipment, method, and exact point in the process where the limit applies.

CRITICAL LIMIT

Requirement / source	Approved value	Owner	Evidence	Action

Execution tip: Use only the current approved HACCP plan and clearly distinguish critical limits from operating targets and quality specifications.

5

Review previous deviations, product holds, complaints, verification failures, process changes, recalls, and overdue actions that may affect the limit.

CRITICAL LIMIT

Approved

Needs review

Not supported

N/A

Execution tip: Use only the current approved HACCP plan and clearly distinguish critical limits from operating targets and quality specifications.

6

Confirm ownership for scientific support, regulatory review, validation, monitoring instructions, deviation response, verification, approval, and change control.

CRITICAL LIMIT

Requirement / source	Approved value	Owner	Evidence	Action

Execution tip: Use only the current approved HACCP plan and clearly distinguish critical limits from operating targets and quality specifications.

2. Scientific, regulatory, customer, and supplier basis

7

Identify the scientific, regulatory, industry, customer, supplier, or process-authority source supporting each proposed critical limit.

CRITICAL

CRITICAL LIMIT

Requirement / source	Approved value	Owner	Evidence	Action

Execution tip: Keep the exact source and applicability of every limit available so reviewers can see why it is suitable for the hazard and process.

8

Confirm the source applies to the exact hazard, food, formulation, process, package, equipment, and intended storage or distribution condition.

CRITICAL LIMIT

Approved

Needs review

Not supported

N/A

Execution tip: Keep the exact source and applicability of every limit available so reviewers can see why it is suitable for the hazard and process.

9

Verify the supporting reference is current, controlled, retrievable, and reviewed by a competent food-safety or process authority.

CRITICAL

CRITICAL LIMIT

APPROVED LIMIT | Enter

UNIT | Enter

SOURCE / DEVICE | Enter

Execution tip: Keep the exact source and applicability of every limit available so reviewers can see why it is suitable for the hazard and process.

10

Document any assumptions, safety margins, worst-case conditions, product variability, and limitations used when translating the source into an operational limit.

CRITICAL LIMIT

Requirement / source	Approved value	Owner	Evidence	Action

Execution tip: Keep the exact source and applicability of every limit available so reviewers can see why it is suitable for the hazard and process.

11

Confirm legal limits and customer requirements have not been weakened by internal operating targets, equipment capability, or local practice.

CRITICAL LIMIT

Approved

Needs review

Not supported

N/A

Execution tip: Keep the exact source and applicability of every limit available so reviewers can see why it is suitable for the hazard and process.

12

Escalate any limit that lacks adequate support, conflicts with another requirement, or depends on evidence that cannot be verified.

CRITICAL LIMIT

Requirement / source	Approved value	Owner	Evidence	Action

Execution tip: Keep the exact source and applicability of every limit available so reviewers can see why it is suitable for the hazard and process.

3. Validation, challenge evidence, and process capability

13 Confirm validation demonstrates that the control measure and proposed limit prevent, eliminate, or reduce the identified hazard to the required level.

CRITICAL

CRITICAL LIMIT

Approved Needs review Not supported N/A

Execution tip: Validate limits under worst-case conditions and revalidate whenever a change could affect hazard control or process capability.

14 Review challenge studies, thermal-process calculations, laboratory results, supplier validation, published data, or competent-authority approval used as evidence.

CRITICAL LIMIT

Requirement / source	Approved value	Owner	Evidence	Action

Execution tip: Validate limits under worst-case conditions and revalidate whenever a change could affect hazard control or process capability.

15 Confirm validation covers worst-case product composition, size, load, starting condition, equipment setting, line speed, environmental condition, and expected variability.

CRITICAL LIMIT

APPROVED LIMIT | Enter

UNIT | Enter

SOURCE / DEVICE | Enter

Execution tip: Validate limits under worst-case conditions and revalidate whenever a change could affect hazard control or process capability.

16 Verify the limit is achievable consistently without depending on unrecorded operator judgement or equipment performance outside validated capability.

CRITICAL LIMIT

Approved Needs review Not supported N/A

Execution tip: Validate limits under worst-case conditions and revalidate whenever a change could affect hazard control or process capability.

17 Distinguish the true critical limit from tighter operating, warning, or action limits used to keep the process away from failure.

CRITICAL LIMIT

Requirement / source	Approved value	Owner	Evidence	Action

Execution tip: Validate limits under worst-case conditions and revalidate whenever a change could affect hazard control or process capability.

18 Require revalidation when formulation, supplier, equipment, packaging, process flow, batch size, line speed, shelf life, or intended use changes.

CRITICAL

CRITICAL LIMIT

Requirement / source	Approved value	Owner	Evidence	Action

Execution tip: Validate limits under worst-case conditions and revalidate whenever a change could affect hazard control or process capability.

4. Time, temperature, cooling, heating, and cold-chain limits

19

Define the exact time-temperature combination, product location, start and end points, and permitted sequence for each thermal or cold-chain control.

CRITICAL

CRITICAL LIMIT

APPROVED LIMIT | Enter

UNIT | Enter

SOURCE / DEVICE | Enter

Execution tip: State time, temperature, product location, sequence, and measurement method together. A number without its operating context is incomplete.

20

Confirm cooking, pasteurization, reheating, cooling, chilling, freezing, thawing, holding, transport, and receiving limits are product and process specific.

CRITICAL LIMIT

Approved

Needs review

Not supported

N/A

Execution tip: State time, temperature, product location, sequence, and measurement method together. A number without its operating context is incomplete.

21

Identify the coldest, warmest, slowest-heating, slowest-cooling, or otherwise worst-case monitoring location supported by validation.

CRITICAL LIMIT

Acceptable

Needs action

Critical gap

EVIDENCE | Add

Execution tip: State time, temperature, product location, sequence, and measurement method together. A number without its operating context is incomplete.

22

Clarify whether the limit applies to a single reading, cumulative exposure, continuous record, average, minimum dwell time, or complete time-temperature profile.

CRITICAL

CRITICAL LIMIT

APPROVED LIMIT | Enter

UNIT | Enter

SOURCE / DEVICE | Enter

Execution tip: State time, temperature, product location, sequence, and measurement method together. A number without its operating context is incomplete.

23

Confirm the measurement method, probe placement, response time, stabilization time, and device accuracy are suitable for the approved limit.

CRITICAL LIMIT

Approved

Needs review

Not supported

N/A

Execution tip: State time, temperature, product location, sequence, and measurement method together. A number without its operating context is incomplete.

24

Define immediate product and process actions when time or temperature evidence is missing, incomplete, unreliable, or outside the approved limit.

CRITICAL LIMIT

Requirement / source	Approved value	Owner	Evidence	Action

Execution tip: State time, temperature, product location, sequence, and measurement method together. A number without its operating context is incomplete.

5. pH, water activity, concentration, chemistry, and formulation limits

- 25

Define approved limits for pH, water activity, salt, sugar, preservative, sanitizer, chlorine, acidity, moisture, concentration, or other chemical parameters used as controls.

CRITICAL

CRITICAL LIMIT

APPROVED LIMIT | Enter

UNIT | Enter

SOURCE / DEVICE | Enter

Execution tip: Control sampling, calibration, formulation, and test conditions because chemical limits are only reliable when the method is repeatable.

- 26

Confirm sample preparation, temperature correction, calibration buffers, reagent condition, test method, and reading endpoint are controlled.

CRITICAL LIMIT

Approved

Needs review

Not supported

N/A

Execution tip: Control sampling, calibration, formulation, and test conditions because chemical limits are only reliable when the method is repeatable.

- 27

Identify where and when the sample must be taken so the result represents the least-controlled portion of the batch or process.

CRITICAL LIMIT

Requirement / source	Approved value	Owner	Evidence	Action

Execution tip: Control sampling, calibration, formulation, and test conditions because chemical limits are only reliable when the method is repeatable.

- 28

Confirm formulation-based limits include ingredient identity, quantity, sequence, mixing time, homogeneity, rework rules, and batch-size boundaries.

CRITICAL LIMIT

APPROVED LIMIT | Enter

UNIT | Enter

SOURCE / DEVICE | Enter

Execution tip: Control sampling, calibration, formulation, and test conditions because chemical limits are only reliable when the method is repeatable.

- 29

Verify combined-control or hurdle limits state how multiple parameters work together and what happens if one parameter is unavailable or outside range.

CRITICAL

CRITICAL LIMIT

Approved

Needs review

Not supported

N/A

Execution tip: Control sampling, calibration, formulation, and test conditions because chemical limits are only reliable when the method is repeatable.

- 30

Define hold, adjustment, reprocessing, disposal, retesting, and release rules for any chemical or formulation deviation.

CRITICAL LIMIT

Requirement / source	Approved value	Owner	Evidence	Action

Execution tip: Control sampling, calibration, formulation, and test conditions because chemical limits are only reliable when the method is repeatable.

6. Physical, dimensional, pressure, flow, and detection limits

31

Define physical limits such as sieve size, filter integrity, metal-detector sensitivity, X-ray standard, magnet strength, pressure, flow, vacuum, weight, or package-seal criteria.

CRITICAL

CRITICAL LIMIT

APPROVED LIMIT | Enter

UNIT | Enter

SOURCE / DEVICE | Enter

Execution tip: Test physical controls under normal and worst-case product conditions and define the product boundary whenever a challenge fails.

32

Confirm test pieces, standards, units, orientation, product effect, line speed, sample frequency, and reject challenge represent normal and worst-case operation.

CRITICAL LIMIT

Acceptable

Needs action

Critical gap

EVIDENCE | Add

Execution tip: Test physical controls under normal and worst-case product conditions and define the product boundary whenever a challenge fails.

33

Verify detection or rejection systems fail safely, stop or alarm as required, and prevent rejected or untested product from re-entering the process.

CRITICAL

CRITICAL LIMIT

APPROVED LIMIT | Enter

UNIT | Enter

SOURCE / DEVICE | Enter

Execution tip: Test physical controls under normal and worst-case product conditions and define the product boundary whenever a challenge fails.

34

Clarify whether the limit applies to equipment setting, actual product result, inspection outcome, defect absence, or another measurable acceptance criterion.

CRITICAL LIMIT

Approved

Needs review

Not supported

N/A

Execution tip: Test physical controls under normal and worst-case product conditions and define the product boundary whenever a challenge fails.

35

Confirm physical limits account for product size, density, packaging, temperature, moisture, orientation, and other factors that affect detection or performance.

CRITICAL LIMIT

Requirement / source	Approved value	Owner	Evidence	Action

Execution tip: Test physical controls under normal and worst-case product conditions and define the product boundary whenever a challenge fails.

36

Define the affected product boundary and required recheck when a test fails, a device is bypassed, or the last satisfactory check cannot be confirmed.

CRITICAL LIMIT

Requirement / source	Approved value	Owner	Evidence	Action

Execution tip: Test physical controls under normal and worst-case product conditions and define the product boundary whenever a challenge fails.

7. Devices, sensors, calibration, uncertainty, and data integrity

37 List the approved device, sensor, software, probe, meter, test kit, reference standard, range, resolution, and unique identification used for each limit.

CRITICAL

CRITICAL LIMIT

Requirement / source	Approved value	Owner	Evidence	Action

Execution tip: Choose devices whose accuracy and resolution are suitable for the limit and evaluate affected product whenever measurement reliability is lost.

38 Confirm calibration and verification frequency, method, tolerance, reference traceability, acceptance criteria, and authorized response to failure.

CRITICAL LIMIT

APPROVED LIMIT | Enter

UNIT | Enter

SOURCE / DEVICE | Enter

Execution tip: Choose devices whose accuracy and resolution are suitable for the limit and evaluate affected product whenever measurement reliability is lost.

39 Verify device accuracy, resolution, response time, drift, measurement uncertainty, and environmental suitability are adequate for the gap around the critical limit.

CRITICAL LIMIT

APPROVED LIMIT | Enter

UNIT | Enter

SOURCE / DEVICE | Enter

Execution tip: Choose devices whose accuracy and resolution are suitable for the limit and evaluate affected product whenever measurement reliability is lost.

40 Prevent use of damaged, expired, out-of-calibration, incorrectly configured, or unauthorized devices and identify suitable backup equipment.

CRITICAL

CRITICAL LIMIT

Acceptable

Needs action

Critical gap

EVIDENCE | Add

Execution tip: Choose devices whose accuracy and resolution are suitable for the limit and evaluate affected product whenever measurement reliability is lost.

41 Confirm automated data, alarms, timestamps, user access, edits, missing values, downtime, interfaces, and electronic records are protected and reviewable.

CRITICAL LIMIT

Approved

Needs review

Not supported

N/A

Execution tip: Choose devices whose accuracy and resolution are suitable for the limit and evaluate affected product whenever measurement reliability is lost.

42 Define how affected product and records are evaluated when a device fails calibration or data integrity cannot be trusted.

CRITICAL LIMIT

Requirement / source	Approved value	Owner	Evidence	Action

Execution tip: Choose devices whose accuracy and resolution are suitable for the limit and evaluate affected product whenever measurement reliability is lost.

8. Operational instructions, monitoring boundaries, and communication

43 Translate each approved critical limit into clear monitoring instructions showing what, where, how, when, by whom, and on which record it is checked.

CRITICAL

CRITICAL LIMIT

Approved Needs review Not supported N/A

Execution tip: Make the approved value unmistakable at the point of use and train monitors to act before a warning becomes a critical deviation.

44 Display the correct parameter, unit, critical limit, operating target, alert threshold, action threshold, and escalation route without creating conflicting values.

CRITICAL LIMIT

Requirement / source	Approved value	Owner	Evidence	Action

Execution tip: Make the approved value unmistakable at the point of use and train monitors to act before a warning becomes a critical deviation.

45 Confirm monitors can explain the difference between a critical limit, an operating target, a warning limit, and a quality specification.

CRITICAL LIMIT

Approved Needs review Not supported N/A

Execution tip: Make the approved value unmistakable at the point of use and train monitors to act before a warning becomes a critical deviation.

46 Verify instructions cover sampling location, sample size, frequency, continuous-monitoring review, shift handoff, missed checks, and backup monitoring.

CRITICAL LIMIT

Requirement / source	Approved value	Owner	Evidence	Action

Execution tip: Make the approved value unmistakable at the point of use and train monitors to act before a warning becomes a critical deviation.

47 Confirm training and competency checks demonstrate that employees can take valid readings, interpret results, stop the process, hold product, and document action.

CRITICAL

CRITICAL LIMIT

Approved Needs review Not supported N/A

Execution tip: Make the approved value unmistakable at the point of use and train monitors to act before a warning becomes a critical deviation.

48 Control printed sheets, digital forms, dashboards, equipment displays, SOPs, recipes, and wall notices so only the current approved limit is visible.

CRITICAL LIMIT

Requirement / source	Approved value	Owner	Evidence	Action

Execution tip: Make the approved value unmistakable at the point of use and train monitors to act before a warning becomes a critical deviation.

9. Deviation response, product hold, disposition, and verification

- 49 Define the exact condition that constitutes a critical-limit deviation, including exceeded values, missed checks, invalid readings, device failure, or incomplete evidence.

CRITICAL

CRITICAL LIMIT

Acceptable

Needs action

Critical gap

EVIDENCE | Add

Execution tip: Keep product on hold until authorized evidence supports disposition and verification confirms both the product and process are controlled.

- 50 Require immediate process control and identification, segregation, or electronic hold of all product produced since the last confirmed acceptable result.

CRITICAL

CRITICAL LIMIT

Requirement / source	Approved value	Owner	Evidence	Action

Execution tip: Keep product on hold until authorized evidence supports disposition and verification confirms both the product and process are controlled.

- 51 Assign authorized roles for correction, root-cause review, product evaluation, reprocessing, release, diversion, return, or disposal.

CRITICAL LIMIT

Approved

Needs review

Not supported

N/A

Execution tip: Keep product on hold until authorized evidence supports disposition and verification confirms both the product and process are controlled.

- 52 Confirm disposition decisions use documented safety evidence and do not rely only on a later passing reading or visual inspection.

CRITICAL LIMIT

Requirement / source	Approved value	Owner	Evidence	Action

Execution tip: Keep product on hold until authorized evidence supports disposition and verification confirms both the product and process are controlled.

- 53 Verify the process returned to control, monitoring resumed correctly, affected product was resolved, records were completed, and required notifications occurred.

CRITICAL LIMIT

Approved

Needs review

Not supported

N/A

Execution tip: Keep product on hold until authorized evidence supports disposition and verification confirms both the product and process are controlled.

- 54 Trend deviations by CCP, parameter, product, line, shift, device, cause, disposition, recurrence, and closure time to identify weak limits or controls.

CRITICAL LIMIT

Requirement / source	Approved value	Owner	Evidence	Action

Execution tip: Keep product on hold until authorized evidence supports disposition and verification confirms both the product and process are controlled.

10. Change control, periodic review, records, approval, and sign-off

55 Review critical limits at the planned frequency and after new hazards, incidents, complaints, recalls, regulatory changes, validation findings, or repeated deviations.

CRITICAL

CRITICAL LIMIT

Requirement / source	Approved value	Owner	Evidence	Action

Execution tip: Use change control to update every connected document, device, form, alarm, training record, and approval before the revised limit becomes

56 Assess changes to ingredients, suppliers, formulation, equipment, software, packaging, process flow, batch size, line speed, storage, distribution, or intended use before approval.

CRITICAL

CRITICAL LIMIT

Approved Needs review Not supported N/A

Execution tip: Use change control to update every connected document, device, form, alarm, training record, and approval before the revised limit becomes

57 Update the HACCP plan, monitoring forms, SOPs, training, device settings, alarms, dashboards, and verification activities through controlled change management.

CRITICAL LIMIT

Requirement / source	Approved value	Owner	Evidence	Action

Execution tip: Use change control to update every connected document, device, form, alarm, training record, and approval before the revised limit becomes

58 Verify obsolete limits are removed from all paper and digital locations and historical records remain traceable to the version used at the time.

CRITICAL LIMIT

Acceptable Needs action Critical gap EVIDENCE | Add

Execution tip: Use change control to update every connected document, device, form, alarm, training record, and approval before the revised limit becomes

59 Confirm records include the basis, validation, approved value, unit, applicability, reviewer, approval date, effective date, revision, and next review date.

CRITICAL LIMIT

Approved Needs review Not supported N/A

Execution tip: Use change control to update every connected document, device, form, alarm, training record, and approval before the revised limit becomes

60 Record final approval, unresolved limitations, required revalidation, action owners, due dates, food-safety reviewer, operations owner, and management sign-off.

CRITICAL

CRITICAL LIMIT

CCP / LIMIT | Enter

DATE / TIME | Enter

APPROVAL | Enter

Execution tip: Use change control to update every connected document, device, form, alarm, training record, and approval before the revised limit becomes

RUN THIS CHECKLIST DIGITALLY

Keep critical limits controlled across every site

Use Taqtics to control approved values, validation evidence, changes, deviations, verification, and sign-off.

Try This Checklist
in Taqtics