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CHAPTER 25

Food safety in chocolate manufacture and processing

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25.1 Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to present the major potential food safety hazards to be considered during chocolate manufacture and use, and to suggest methods of their control. Although it is not intended to be an exhaustive account, it should provide the reader with an overview of the breadth of this subject and of the importance and wide scope of the different food safety controls within the chocolate processing industry.

25.2 The importance of food safety management in chocolate processing

According to ISO (2005), a food safety hazard is a biological, chemical or physical agent in food, or condition of food, with the potential to cause an adverse health effect. In other words, it can be defined as anything related to the food that might cause harm to the consumer. Implementation of a food safety management system and control of such hazards in chocolate processes is essential; the consequences of its failure can be illustrated by a number of serious and high-profile incidents and recalls over recent decades. Such incidents can cause illness, injury, or, in the most severe cases, death to the consumer. Chocolate manufacturing companies must strive to maintain the consumer's trust in their products, as the consequences of a major food safety incident not only affect their own business, but can also have a negative impact on the reputation of the confectionery, and the food industry, as a whole.