

Comprehensive Training Outline.

1. Introduction to Food Safety Auditing

1.1 What is a Food Safety Audit?

A **systematic, independent and documented evaluation** to determine whether activities and results related to food safety comply with planned arrangements (laws, standards, HACCP plans, SOPs).

1.2 Purpose of Audits

- Protect consumer health
- Ensure food businesses meet Tonga's Food Act 2020
- Verify compliance with HACCP, GMP, and Codex standards
- Ensure export food meets importing country requirements
- Improve operations and reduce risk

2. Legal Framework (Tonga)

2.1 Food Act 2020

Auditors must understand:

- Food safety requirements
- Labelling standards
- Traceability
- Packaging & hygiene obligations
- Enforcement powers (inspection, sampling, seizure)

2.2 Relevant Standards

- **Codex Alimentarius**
 - **GMP (Good Manufacturing Practices)**
 - **HACCP – Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points**
 - **Importing country standards** (e.g., NZ, Australia, USA)
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3. Types of Food Safety Audits

3.1 Internal Audit

Conducted by the food business to check compliance.

3.2 External Regulatory Audit

Performed by Food Division / MAFF inspectors.

3.3 Third-Party Certification Audit

Conducted for certifications (ISO 22000, HACCP, BRC).

3.4 Supplier Audit

Done before approving a supplier/exporter.

4. Auditor Skills & Responsibilities

4.1 Key Skills Required

- Knowledge of food processing & hazards
- Understanding of laws and standards
- Interview and observation techniques
- Report writing
- Professional conduct

4.2 Responsibilities

- Maintain impartiality
 - Collect objective evidence
 - Protect confidential information
 - Follow audit protocol
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5. Audit Process (Step-by-Step)

5.1 Pre-Audit

- ✓ Review business information
 - ✓ Review previous audit reports
 - ✓ Confirm scope (e.g., “fish processing export facility”)
 - ✓ Prepare checklist
 - ✓ Communicate audit plan to facility
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5.2 On-Site Audit

A. Opening Meeting

- Introduce team
 - Confirm scope & timetable
 - Explain method
 - Confirm safety rules
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B. Facility Walkthrough (Inspection)

Inspect:

- Production areas
 - Storage (dry, chilled, frozen)
 - Receiving & dispatch
 - Personal hygiene facilities
 - Waste management
 - Pest control
 - Cleaning & sanitation activities
 - Equipment & calibration
 - Documentation room
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C. Evidence Collection

- Observation
 - Interviews
 - Reviewing documents
 - Sampling (swabs, food samples if required)
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D. Review of Documentation

Check:

- HACCP plan
 - GMP SOPs
 - Training records
 - Cleaning schedules
 - Pest control logs
 - Maintenance records
 - Temperature logs
 - Traceability records
 - Water quality certificates
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E. Identifying Non-Conformities

Category levels:

- **Critical:** Immediate risk to food safety
 - **Major:** System failure likely to cause risk
 - **Minor:** Small deviation, low risk
 - **Observation:** No action required but worth noting
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5.3 Post-Audit

Closing Meeting

- Present audit findings
- Discuss corrective actions
- Agree on timelines

Audit Report

Includes:

- Scope
 - Audit summary
 - Non-conformities
 - Evidence collected
 - Recommendations
 - Follow-up schedule
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6. HACCP-Based Auditing

6.1 Auditor Checks for:

- Proper hazard analysis
 - CCPs identified correctly
 - Validated critical limits
 - Monitoring procedures
 - Corrective actions
 - Verification activities
 - Record-keeping system
 - Annual HACCP review
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7. Good Manufacturing Practices (GMP) Audit Areas

7.1 Personnel Hygiene

- Handwashing
- PPE (gloves, hairnets, aprons)
- Sickness reporting

7.2 Premises & Facilities

- Layout preventing cross-contamination
- Adequate water & lighting

7.3 Equipment

- Sanitary design
- Maintained & calibrated

7.4 Sanitation

- Cleaning plan
- Disinfection
- Chemical storage

7.5 Pest Control

- External proofing
 - Internal monitoring traps
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8. Export-Focused Audit Elements (Tonga)

For exporters, auditors verify:

- Export packaging meets hygiene requirements
 - Labels comply with Tongan & importing country laws
 - Traceability system works (one up, one down)
 - Phytosanitary or health certificates if required
 - Export facility hygiene & temperature control
 - Documentation matches export consignment
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9. Practical Exercises (Training Activities)

Exercise 1: Identify Non-Conformities

Show photos/videos of facility issues and ask trainees to identify NCs.

Exercise 2: HACCP Plan Review

Audit a sample HACCP plan and identify gaps.

Exercise 3: Mock Audit

Conduct a simulated on-site audit of a food business.

Exercise 4: Writing an Audit Report

Participants write a full audit report using templates.