



Food and Agriculture Organization
of the United Nations

HACCP – STEP 1

ASSEMBLE THE HACCP TEAM AND IDENTIFY SCOPE

FAO Good Hygiene Practices (GHP) and
Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point
(HACCP) Toolbox for Food Safety

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Technical note for readers

This PDF file has been designed for use of handheld mobile devices in horizontal view.

This PDF file includes interactive options and links to better browse the document. Clicking on the title icon on the top right corner of each page will bring you either the Content page or the Mind map within the PDF file.

ASSEMBLE THE HACCP TEAM AND IDENTIFY SCOPE

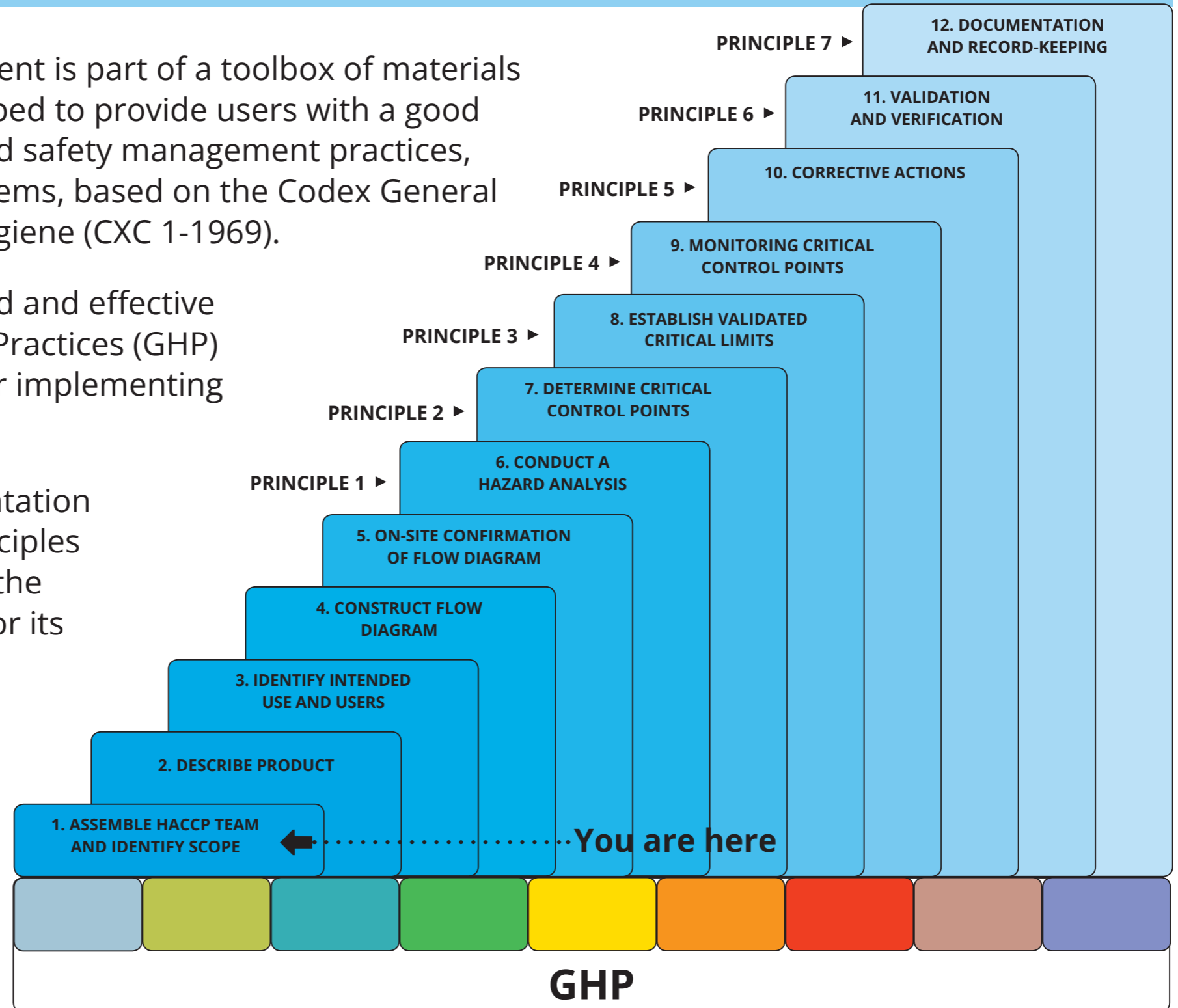
INTRODUCTION

This guidance document is part of a toolbox of materials and has been developed to provide users with a good understanding of food safety management practices, including HACCP systems, based on the Codex General Principles of Food Hygiene (CXC 1-1969).



Well established and effective Good Hygiene Practices (GHP) set the foundation for implementing a HACCP system.

This graphic representation shows the seven principles of HACCP along with the 12 successive steps for its application.



CONTEXT

The effectiveness of a HACCP team depends on individuals with the appropriate knowledge and expertise of the food operation to ensure that an effective HACCP system can be developed, implemented and maintained.

The team members must be able to identify hazards and describe and design the appropriate measures to prevent food safety issues for consumers.

Without a strong HACCP team, a food business's HACCP system will not succeed.

Learning objectives

This document provides guidance on how to:

- assemble a multidisciplinary HACCP team with the necessary capacities;
- define the roles and responsibilities of the HACCP team; and
- identify the scope of the HACCP system and the applicable prerequisite or GHP programmes.

**ASSEMBLE THE
HACCP TEAM AND
IDENTIFY SCOPE**

CONTEXT

Codex definitions:

Food business operator (FBO): The entity responsible for operating a business at any step in the food chain.



Competent authority: The government authority or official body authorized by the government that is responsible for the setting of regulatory food safety requirements and/or for the organization of official controls including enforcement.

HACCP Plan: Documentation or set of documents, prepared in accordance with the principles of HACCP to ensure control of significant hazards in the food business.

HACCP System: The development of a HACCP plan and the implementation of the procedures in accordance with that plan.

HACCP STEP 1

Assembling a HACCP team

In order to develop an effective HACCP system, **the HACCP team should be multidisciplinary** and comprise people with knowledge and expertise appropriate to the particular product and process being addressed.

People with expertise in different areas and who perform different activities within the operation, such as engineering, quality assurance, production, warehouse and sanitization, should be considered for membership on the HACCP team.


The advantage of a having a multidisciplinary team is that hazards will be analysed from different perspectives, thus ensuring effective prevention of such hazards throughout the scope of operations considered for HACCP implementation. In addition, the workload can be distributed between members based on their area of expertise.

HACCP STEP 1

The responsibilities of the HACCP team

The HACCP team is responsible for developing the HACCP plan. Members apply their diverse knowledge and experiences to jointly evaluate information, solve problems, conduct training, lead by example and ensure that the HACCP program is working over the long term.

Specific technical tasks will include:

- ➔ identifying the scope of the HACCP system and applicable prerequisite programmes;
- ➔ deciding upon the potential hazards of relevance to the process and product;
- ➔ ensuring that the identified hazards are effectively controlled;
- ➔ determining Critical Control Points (CCPs), if any;
- ➔ establishing monitoring and verification systems of the HACCP system; and
- ➔ establishing an effective system of documentation. 

In order to successfully carry out these tasks, it is necessary to have knowledge and expertise specific to the product and hazards under consideration. Generally, no single person will possess all the needed knowledge and expertise, so a team-based approach to HACCP is recommended.

HACCP STEP 1

Selecting a HACCP coordinator

When embarking on establishing a HACCP system for the first time, the leadership of the FBO has to appoint staff, and if needed external experts, to form the HACCP team. One team member should be assigned to function as a coordinator to lead the team and report to management. **The team coordinator** will also be responsible for:

- ensuring the composition of the team meets the needs and suggesting changes if necessary;
- planning, coordinating all team tasks and meetings;
- distributing the work and responsibilities among team members;
- ensuring that a systematic approach is used;
- ensuring targets are set and met; and
- representing the team before management.

It is essential to assemble the right blend of expertise and experience, as the team will collect, collate and evaluate technical data and identify hazards and critical control points. If the internal staff does not have the necessary knowledge, **external expert advice** should be obtained.



Competence

The **food business operator** (FBO) should ensure that the appropriate knowledge and expertise are available for developing an effective HACCP system.

HACCP STEP 1

The need of the HACCP team → Knowledge

Collectively, the team members should be able to provide the following:

- knowledge and judgement on biological, chemical and physical food safety hazards;
- knowledge regarding the science and technology of the process, beginning with the raw materials and ingredients;
- knowledge regarding safety elements that pertain to a specific process (pasteurization safety criteria);
- knowledge regarding practical aspects of unit operations and process flow; and
- knowledge of food safety, GHP and HACCP principles and techniques.

HACCP STEP 1

The need of the HACCP team → Authority

The team coordinator must have a clear understanding of HACCP, leadership skills and some level of authority within the organization.

The HACCP team members should also be recognised within the FBO and have the necessary authority to obtain the information required to develop and implement the HACCP plan and to adjust and implement measures as required.

The need of the HACCP team → Availability

All HACCP team members, especially the coordinator, must be available to participate in team meetings, audits and reviews. They should be available to participate in regularly scheduled meeting and impromptu meetings when particular needs arise, such as changes in processes, the emergence of problems or the implementation of new technologies. For this reason, the team members' responsibilities to the HACCP team should be included in their respective terms of reference.



This type of documentation may be something that auditors will want to see included as part of employee records.

HACCP STEP 1

The HACCP team

The HACCP team must be able to identify food safety hazards.

In order to be able to develop and maintain a HACCP plan the ideal team is made up of individuals who:

- know and understand processing operations and the cleaning and sanitation processes (for example, the production manager);
- understand the facilities and processing equipment and how it is to be maintained and cleaned (for example, the person(s) responsible for maintenance and sanitation);
- understand the food products, potential hazards and their related risks (for example, the person responsible for food safety and quality);
- know the customers and how the product will be used when it leaves the factory (for example, someone involved in sales); and
- know what inputs are used in the processes and where they come from (such as the procurement manager).

In smaller companies, several of the above-mentioned profiles might be covered by a single person, while in larger companies the identification of hazards might require the input of different teams.

HACCP STEP 1

External expertise and advice

External experts can be included in a team or expert advice can be sought if in-house expertise is lacking. Suitable experts can be co-opted into the team for limited periods or consulted periodically.

➔ Advice can and should be sought from:

- industry colleagues
- competent authorities
- industry associations
- universities and other scientific institutions

➔ Inquire whether any of the above-mentioned organizations offer practical HACCP training.

➔ Students enrolled in food-safety related programmes often are required to do internships. Developing a HACCP programme as part of a thesis would benefit both the student and the business.

HACCP STEP 1

A sector-wide approach

Sometimes an entire business sector (such as street food vendors) or type of business in a country or region lack the resources and capacities needed to develop their own HACCP systems.

In such cases, collaborative efforts initiated by private sector or national authorities have proven effective. Sector-specific comprehensive teams of experts can provide support to businesses facing difficulties in implementing HACCP or HACCP-based requirements.

HACCP STEP 1

Outputs of a HACCP team

In addition to developing and implementing the HACCP system and being a source of HACCP-related know-how, the HACCP team will be responsible for developing and maintaining specific documented outputs:

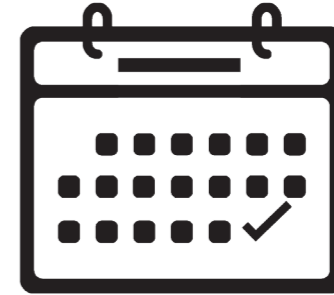
- HACCP plan(s);
- records of decisions making;
- documented procedures and forms for monitoring;
- training materials to support the implementation of HACCP and maintenance of the HACCP system; and
- a record-keeping system to control measures described in the HACCP plan.

HACCP STEP 1

Set clear goals with achievable deadlines

To be effective in improving food safety, clear goals with clearly defined time frames must be established. Examples of such goals are:

- Hazard analysis completed **within three months**.
- HACCP-relevant documents developed and in use **within six months**.
- Verification of HACCP system implemented **within one year**.



For additional information, please consult the **Further reading** section accessible from the [SECTION LANDING PAGE](#).

HACCP STEP 1

Understanding the scope of the HACCP system

One of the first tasks of the HACCP team should be to identify the scope of the HACCP plan. The team should:


- decide what specific product and process will be included as part of the HACCP plan(s) and system;
- define the type(s) of hazards to be included (e.g. biological, chemical, physical); and
- define the part of the food chain to be included in the HACCP plan(s) and system.

One food business might have multiple production lines, of which only one or two are high risk. They may decide to include only those that are high risk in the scope of their HACCP plan. In other cases, food regulations might require that certain food businesses develop a HACCP system for their entire operations.

If sub-contracting is involved in the process, the HACCP team should ensure that the subcontractor has a HACCP system in place. Ideally, the HACCP team should visit the premises where subcontracting is taking place to ensure that this is the case. If this is not possible, the minimum requirement is for the HACCP team to obtain and review the subcontractor's HACCP plan.

ASSEMBLE THE HACCP TEAM AND IDENTIFY SCOPE

EXERCISE: FOOD SAFETY FOR THOUGHT

| | | |
|--|--|--|
| <p>This is the little “game” we created. This will apply to all HACCP steps, except the intro.</p> | <p>GHP PROGRAMMES </p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="990 615 1511 711">1. INTRODUCTION AND CONTROL OF FOOD HAZARDS <input type="checkbox"/> <li data-bbox="990 748 1511 844">2. PRIMARY PRODUCTION <input type="checkbox"/> <li data-bbox="990 880 1511 977">3. ESTABLISHMENT - DESIGN OF FACILITIES AND EQUIPMENT <input type="checkbox"/> <li data-bbox="990 1013 1511 1109">4. TRAINING AND COMPETENCE <input type="checkbox"/> <li data-bbox="990 1146 1511 1242">5. ESTABLISHMENT MAINTENANCE, DISINFECTION, AND PEST CONTROL <input type="checkbox"/> <li data-bbox="990 1279 1511 1375">6. PERSONAL HYGIENE <input type="checkbox"/> <li data-bbox="990 1412 1511 1508">7. CONTROL OF OPERATION <input type="checkbox"/> <li data-bbox="990 1545 1511 1641">8. PRODUCT INFORMATION AND CONSUMER AWARENESS <input type="checkbox"/> <li data-bbox="990 1678 1511 1774">9. TRANSPORTATION <input type="checkbox"/> | <p>Please explain your choices.</p> |
| <p>1. ASSEMBLE HACCP TEAM AND IDENTIFY SCOPE</p> | | |
| <p>GHP are fundamental to the successful application of HACCP.</p> <p>Think of a food operation that you are familiar with, and select those GHP elements that you feel are most relevant for the application of HACCP step 1.</p> | | |

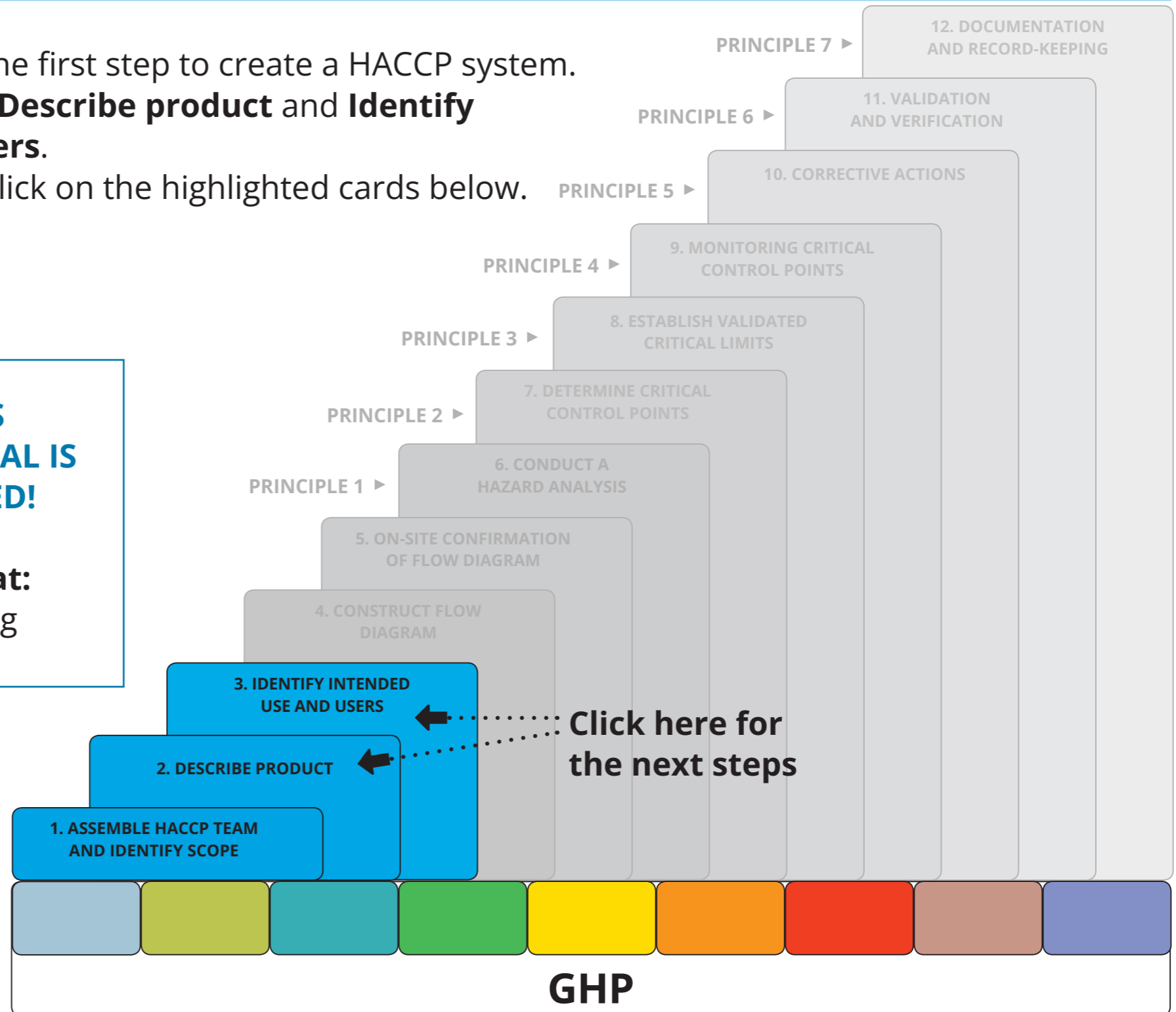
ASSEMBLE THE HACCP TEAM AND IDENTIFY SCOPE

KEEP READING

You have completed the first step to create a HACCP system. The next steps will be **Describe product** and **Identify intended use and users**. To continue reading, click on the highlighted cards below.

FEEDBACK ON THIS GUIDANCE MATERIAL IS ALWAYS WELCOMED!

Please contact us at:
food-quality@fao.org



KEEP READING

[GHP and HACCP Toolbox for Food Safety](http://www.fao.org/good-hygiene-practices-haccp-toolbox)

www.fao.org/good-hygiene-practices-haccp-toolbox

FOOD SYSTEMS AND FOOD SAFETY –
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