

# HACCP International Food-safe Equipment Materials and Services



## Food Zone Classification System

HACCP International offers certification for equipment, materials and services that are suitable for use in food facilities that operate in accordance with a HACCP-based food safety programme.

Each item which is evaluated for certification is classified as being suitable for use in one of four types of areas or 'zones' of a food handling facility. The classification is based on the intended or expected use of the item. For example, scouring pads are classified as being suitable for cleaning of surfaces and they are certified as such, whereas disposable gloves are classified and certified as being suitable for direct contact with food.

The classification, special conditions for use and any limitations are described in the statement which accompanies each certificate.

The following pages describe the classifications.

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## Food Zone Classifications

**FZP (Food Zone Primary)** items are suitable for use in the *food zone* and are suitable for contact with *food*.

Examples of products that may be classified FZP:

Disposable gloves, probe thermometers, conveyor belts, crate covers, cutting machinery, piping bags, utensils, cutting boards, servingware, ice making equipment, generators of ozonated water (where the ozonated water will come into contact with food), food vending machinery.

**FZS (Food Zone Secondary)** items are suitable for touching *food contact surfaces* but are not expected to touch *food* during normal conditions of use.

Examples of products that may be classified FZS:

Cleaning cloths and non-woven wipes, Infra-red thermometers, scour pads, surface sanitisers, washing-up detergent, barrier-style hand creams.

**SSZ (Splash or Spill Zone)** items are suitable for use in *food handling areas* such as kitchens, production areas and processing areas, but are not suitable for coming directly into contact with *food* or items that will touch food.

Examples of products that may be classified SSZ:

High performance mats, hand-soap dispensers for use in food production areas, rapid-closing doors, process instrumentation panels, chemicals for cleaning windows, extraction hoods, trolleys, floor cleaning equipment, air treatment equipment, mops, floor surfacing materials, shatterproof lamps.

**NFZ (Non Food Zone)** items are items that are suitable for use in *food handling facilities* and that make a contribution to food safety but that are not suitable for use in areas where *open* (unpackaged) food is handled.

Examples of products that may be classified NFZ:

Hand hygiene equipment for use in bathrooms, rodent bait stations for use in food storage warehouses, thermal doors for walk-in cool rooms in retail stores, analytical equipment, racking for warehouses, shatter-resistant high-bay lamps for use in warehouses, comfort matting for supermarket checkout areas.

## Background

HACCP International offers certification for equipment, materials and services that are suitable for use in food facilities that operate in accordance with a HACCP-based food safety programme.

To be eligible for certification, items must have an impact on food safety, or must make a contribution to food safety. The terms of certification, as specified on the Certification Statement, depend on the intended function of the item. For example, an item that is intended to be used for cleaning hard surfaces is certified as an aid to cleaning, and this does not mean that the item is suitable for use as a food wash.

The HACCP International Food Zone Classification System describes four physical areas and/or applications for which an item may be found suitable for use within a *food handling facility*. Definitions for each class and for terms in italics can be found below.

## Definitions – Food Zone Classes

### FZP

FZP (Food Zone Primary) items are;

- equipment, devices and/or materials suitable for use in the *food zone* which are suitable for use as *primary contact items* when used as intended, instructed or recommended by the manufacturer or supplier;

or

- equipment, devices or materials which contain parts or which generate material/s or which dispense materials that could come into contact with *food* when used as intended, instructed or recommended by the manufacturer or supplier.

All FZP items are also suitable as *secondary contact items* and most are also suitable for use in the *splash/spill zone* and *non-food zones* of food facilities. For example, gloves that are classified as FZP also meet the criteria for FZS, SSZ and NFZ.

### FZS

FZS (Food Zone Secondary) items are;

- equipment, devices and/or materials suitable for use in the *food zone* that are suitable for use as *secondary contact items* and which are not suitable for use as *primary contact items* when used as intended, instructed or recommended by the manufacturer or supplier

or

- equipment, devices or materials which contain parts or which generate material/s or which dispense materials that could come into contact with *secondary contact items* when used as intended, instructed or recommended by the manufacturer or supplier.

Most FZS items are also suitable for use in the *splash/spill zone* and *non-food zones* of food facilities. For example, cleaning consumables that are classified as FZS also meet the criteria for SSZ and NFZ.

## SSZ

SSZ (Splash or Spill Zone) items are;

- equipment, devices and/or materials suitable for use in the *splash/spill zone* that are not suitable for use in the *food zone* when used as intended, instructed or recommended by the manufacturer or supplier.

Most SSZ items are also suitable for use in *non-food zones* of food facilities. For example, hand-soap dispensers that are classified as SSZ also meet the criteria for NFZ.

## NFZ

NFZ (Non Food Zone) items are;

- equipment, devices and/or materials suitable for use in *non-food zones* of *food handling facilities* that have the potential to make an impact on food safety and/or make a contribution to food safety
- and
- are not suitable for use in the *food zone* or the *splash/spill zone* when used as intended, instructed or recommended by the manufacturer or supplier.

## Glossary

<b>Food</b>	In this document, food includes, but is not limited to human foods, beverages, animal feed, food ingredients and agricultural products for use in human or animal feed. Food that is not part of the <i>food product stream</i> , such as debris, garbage and waste are not considered 'food' for the purposes of this document.
<b>Food Contact Surfaces</b>	Food contact surfaces are the parts of <i>primary contact items</i> that are expected to come into contact with <i>food</i> .
<b>Food Handling Area</b>	A food handling area is a location such as a room or a zone within a <i>food handling facility</i> in which <i>open</i> , unpackaged food is processed, prepared, packed, conveyed, held or displayed.
<b>Food Handling Device</b>	A food handling device is a machine or other device which contains food, but is not food packaging and that is typically used outside a food handling facility, such as an ice machine or a food vending machine.
<b>Food Handling Facility</b>	A food handling facility is any place where <i>food</i> is stored, produced, packed, consumed, displayed or transported. Food handling facilities may operate a food safety programme, which is a formal, documented and certified management system based on the principles of HACCP and known variously as a HACCP Programme, ISO 22000, BRC, SQF, Dutch HACCP or another proprietary system.

<b>Food Product Stream</b>	A food product stream is a <i>food</i> product of a liquid or particulate nature, which is moving continuously through a pipeline or aperture, or along a conveyor, or is otherwise part of a food processing or food preparation process. Food in the food product stream is food which is intended to be consumed in the future.
<b>Food Zone</b>	<p>The food zone is any area of a <i>food handling facility</i>, or any part of a food handling device that could come into contact with <i>food</i> in the <i>food product stream</i>. The food zone includes areas from which splashed or spilled food could drip or fall to rejoin the product stream.</p> <p>Equipment and materials that are suitable for the food zone may be designated as <i>primary contact items</i> or <i>secondary contact items</i>.</p>
<b>Non-food zone</b>	Non-food zones are areas of a <i>food handling facility</i> or parts of a <i>food handling device</i> that do not come into direct contact with food of any kind, including food debris, during expected conditions.
<b>Open Food</b>	Open (unpackaged) food refers to <i>food</i> that is not contained within a sealed package or container.
<b>Primary Contact Items</b>	Primary contact items are devices, materials or equipment which come into contact with <i>food</i> in the <i>food product stream</i> during expected conditions of use.
<b>Secondary Contact Items</b>	Secondary contact items are devices, materials, equipment or surfaces in the <i>food zone</i> which come into contact with <i>primary contact items</i> during ordinary expected use. To be classified as a secondary contact item, the item would be expected to touch the <i>food contact surface/s</i> of a primary contact item - some primary contact items have both food contact surfaces and non-food contact surfaces, such as the inside and the outside of an ice machine.
<b>Splash/Spill Zone</b>	The splash/spill zone is any area in a <i>food handling facility</i> , or any part of a <i>food handling device</i> , which could come into contact with splashed or spilled <i>food</i> that cannot re-enter the <i>food product stream</i> .