



Washington
State Department of
Agriculture

FOOD SAFETY PROGRAM

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Acidified Foods Overview



You may be making an Acidified Food if your product meets all these aspects:

- ✓ Shelf stable
- ✓ Jarred/Bottled
- ✓ Not refrigerated
- ✓ pH below 4.6
- ✓ Not fermented



Acidified Foods Examples:

- Pickled vegetables
- Salsas
- Non-standard Jams (onion, pepper)
- Sauces



Clostridium botulinum, which produces a lethal toxin, is a major concern in these types of products.



Prior to WSDA Food Processing Plant licensing, these types of products need to be evaluated by a Process Authority (PA) to ensure the safety of the food. WSDA cannot recommend Process Authorities, but see our WSDA Industry Guidance for advice.



The Process Authority will provide you with a product evaluation letter that determines if the food is either:

- an Acidified Food
- or a Low Acid Canned Food (LACF)
- or an Acid Food

The Process Authority Letter(s) needs to be included with your Food Processing Plant application or license amendment form.

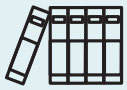


If the Process Authority letter identifies your product as an Acidified Food, you must meet additional Acidified Foods rules along with all the Food Processing Plant license requirements.



Acidified Foods makers must:

- Attend a training course called Better Process Control School — Acidified Foods portion, before making Acidified Foods.
- Register with FDA to obtain a Food Canning Establishment (FCE) number.
- File a scheduled process (processing procedures) with FDA for each acidified product.
- Use accurate equipment (thermometers, pH meters).
- Label each product with a code that shows:
 - Where the product was packed
 - The product contained
 - The year and day product was packed
 - The period it is was packed to identify different lots or batches
- Have a written Recall Plan.



Acidified Foods are also subject to Preventive Controls and Food Safety Plan requirements for businesses with over \$1.3 million in annual sales.



Keep copies of your Better Process Control School Training Course Certificate, Process Authority Letters, Proof of FDA Food Canning Establishment (FCE) registration, and FDA Filed Scheduled Processes available for your inspector to review.



Refrigerated products, fermented food products, and products the Process Authority defines as “Acid Foods” are not required to follow these additional Acidified Foods requirements.

These types of products only need to meet the standard Food Processing Plant license requirements.

Acidified Foods makers must keep detailed records including:

- Production records showing every batch follows the Process Authority's requirements like: cook time/temperature, pH levels, fill time/temperature, holding period, etc.
- Examinations of raw materials, packaging materials, and finished products and suppliers' guarantees or certifications.
- Documenting corrective actions taken for products that did not meet all the requirements.
- Identifying the initial distribution of all acidified products.



WSDA Industry Guidance: Acidified Foods

In-depth guidance to meet Acidified Foods requirements.

<https://cms.agr.wa.gov/WSDAKentico/Imported/657-AcidifiedFoodsIndustryGuidance.pdf>



21 CFR Part 114 Acidified Foods:

Regulation Acidified Foods processors must follow.

<https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-21/chapter-I/subchapter-B/part-114>



21 CFR Part 108.25 Acidified Foods:

Regulation Acidified Foods processors must follow.

<https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-21/chapter-I/subchapter-B/part-108/subpart-B/section-108.25>



Hazard Analysis and Risk-Based Preventive Controls for Human Food: Draft Guidance for Industry Chapter 16:

Acidified Foods: How to satisfy both Preventive Controls and Acidified Foods requirements with minimal duplicative effort.

<https://www.fda.gov/media/172317/download?attachment>



Establishment Registration and Process Filing for Acidified and Low-Acid Canned Foods (LACF):

Electronic Submissions: How to register Acidified Foods with FDA.

<https://www.fda.gov/food/establishment-registration-process-filing-acidified-and-low-acid-canned-foods-lacf/establishment-registration-and-process-filing-acidified-and-low-acid-canned-foods-lacf-electronic>

