

**Botswana
Meat
Commission**
Meat Perfection Defined

GUIDELINES ON HYGIENE PROTOCOLS IN FOOD PROCESSING AREAS



PURPOSE

The purpose of these guidelines is to share measures taken and implemented in the Botswana Meat Commission (BMC) production of safe food in compliance with the WHO and Government protocols.

BACKGROUND

As the world is facing a threat from the COVID-19 pandemic, essential services such as the food industry is required to continue operations hence personnel is required to continue to work in their usual workplaces. Therefore, keeping all workers healthy and safe, maintaining a high standard of hygiene becomes so critical partly to maintain trust and consumer confidence in the safety and wholesomeness of food produced.

This can be achieved by having in place a Food Safety Management System (FSMS) (herein referred to as Quality Management System) based on the Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) principles to manage food safety risks and prevent food contamination. Production of safe food must be based on solid programs intended to control cross-contamination by physical, chemical, biological and allergenic contaminants, and these are referred to as pre-requisite programs which include, but not be limited to, personnel hygiene, cleaning and disinfection, transport, provision of facilities at entrances to processing areas for hand washing, boots washing, detergents, paper towels, provision of masks for all employees and provision of alcohol-based hand sanitizers at strategic area throughout the plant, allergen management.

In implementing business continuity management system as per ISO 22301, BMC has set up a crisis management team led by the Acting CEO to ensure compliance with laid down precautionary measures and ensure compliance, liaise with the Health Ministry to feedback to the government, to prevent exposure to or transmission of the virus, and to strengthen food hygiene and sanitation practices.

The current evidence indicates that the virus can spread directly from person-to-person when a COVID-19 case coughs or sneezes, producing droplets that reach the nose, mouth, or eyes of another person. As the respiratory droplets are too heavy to be airborne, they land on objects and surfaces surrounding the infected person. Someone may become infected by touching a contaminated surface, for instance, when touching doorknobs or shaking hands and then touching the face. Recent research indicates that the COVID-19 virus can survive on surfaces and remain viable for up to 72 hours on plastic and stainless steel, up to four hours on copper, and up to 24 hours on cardboard.

It is therefore for this reason that BMC put measures in place to reinforce hygiene measures and refresher training programs that have already been in place on food hygiene principles to eliminate or reduce the risk of becoming contaminated with the virus from surfaces and packaging material via cross-contamination from food workers.

PREVENTION IN THE WORKPLACE

BMC introduced the following high level of security and staff management to maintain a disease-free working environment to ensure the protection of staff from spreading COVID-19 in the workplace, and maintain a healthy workforce:

- Personal protective equipment (PPE): respiratory masks (to cover mouth and nose when coughing or sneezing; dispose of tissues and wash hands
- Placing COVID-19 signs at strategic points in the plant to sensitize employees and people entering the plant.
- Physical distancing, where practical, following WHO guidelines and Government protocol.
- Stringent hygiene and sanitation measures
- Frequent and effective handwashing,
- Frequent use of approved alcohol-based hand sanitizers for those not handling products
- Temperature checks in the different entry point to the plant to detect and exclude infected food handlers, visitors, contractors, drivers delivering goods from the workplace.
- Cleaning/disinfection of work surfaces and touchpoints such as door handles, using food grade approved chemicals



- Stagger production on either side of processing lines
- Limit the number of staff in canteens
- Hold meetings through Microsoft Teams, zoom to facilitate reduced interaction.
- Drivers and other staff delivering goods to premises discouraged to leave their vehicles during delivery.
- Drivers and other staff delivering goods to the premises are provided with separate toilets and a shower.
- Covid-19 verification documents from border controls confirmed for drivers and other staff delivering goods to the premises
- Drivers and other staff use hand sanitizer before passing delivery documents to BMC staff.
- Regulating the numbers of customers who enter offices to avoid overcrowding;
- Manage queue control consistent with physical social distancing advice
- Provide hand sanitizers at entry points and other strategic points in the plant.
- Use floor markings inside the plant to facilitate compliance with Covid-19 protocols e.g. washing hands.



CANTEENS:

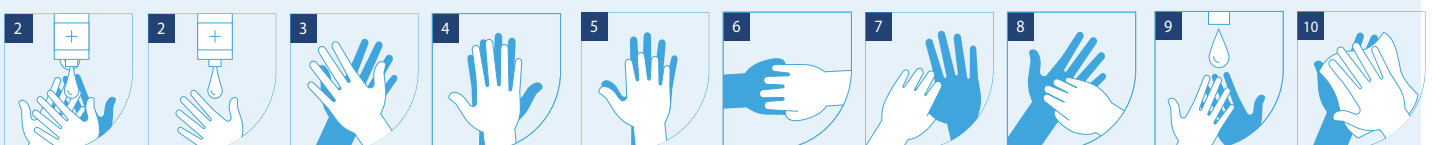
- Maintain a physical distance of at least 1 meter between an individual and other worker, including in seating arrangements.
- Stagger staff work and break times to reduce staff numbers in a canteen at any one time;
- Restrict non-essential physical contact as much as possible;
- Visible notices for staff promoting hand hygiene and physical distancing;
- Cleaning and disinfection procedures for equipment, premises, contact surfaces/ high touchpoints, e.g. countertops/tongs/service utensils/open self-service displays/door handles.

Proper handwashing: Step-by-step guide as seen to be one of the most effective to prevent the spread Covid-19

The key times to wash the hands include:

- when they are visibly dirty
- before and after preparing food
- before eating
- after using the toilet
- after changing a diaper
- after helping a child who has used the potty or toilet
- before inserting or removing contact lenses
- before touching the face
- before and after treating wounds
- after coughing, sneezing, or blowing the nose
- before and after taking care of someone who is ill
- after touching an animal or their food or waste
- after handling garbage

Below is a visual illustration of proper handwashing with a more in-depth step by step procedure guide. after handling garbage. Wash for at least 20 seconds: In the absence of a timer, sing the "Happy Birthday" song twice while washing.





STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE

To wash the hands, follow the simple steps in the diagram on page 2 . For a more in-depth guide to hand washing, follow the following steps:

- Wet your hands with plenty of clean water
- Cover all the surfaces of your hands in soap.
- Rub the palms together to form a lather.
- Rub the palm of one hand over the back of the other hand, making sure to clean in between your fingers. Repeat with the other hand.
- Rub the palms together again, and clean in between the fingers again.
- Rub the backs of the fingers against the opposite palm, interlocking the fingers as you do this.
- Grasp the thumb of one hand with the other hand and rotate the closed hand around the thumb to clean it. Repeat with the other thumb and hand.
- Rub the tips of the fingers of one hand on the palm of the other hand. Repeat with the other hand.
- If a clean nail brush is available, scrub gently under the nails.
- Rinse the hands under clean, running water.
- Dry them thoroughly, ideally, with a disposable towel.

Alternatively, allow them to air dry.

- Use the towel (if you have one) to turn off the tap and then dispose of it in a dust bin (in case of non-foot operated tap).

HEAD OFFICE

Botswana Meat Commission

Private Bag 4, Lobatse

Botswana

Tel: 534 0000

Fax: 533 2504

Email: communications@bmc.bw

