

# HACCP\* COORDINATOR

*"Food safety is the job of every person in this plant. That's the only way it can work."*

\*Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point

## WHAT I LIKE BEST ABOUT THE CAREER

*"I love the diversity of this job - every day is different, and there are so many places you can go with this job - dairy, meat, any part of the industry. "*

## THE WORKING WORLD

*"Get involved with as many groups and volunteer activities as you can. It looks good on a resume, broadens your social skills and proves you are a team player."*

## EMPLOYER

XL Foods Inc.

## EDUCATION

Bachelor of Science in Agriculture

## YEARS IN WORKFORCE

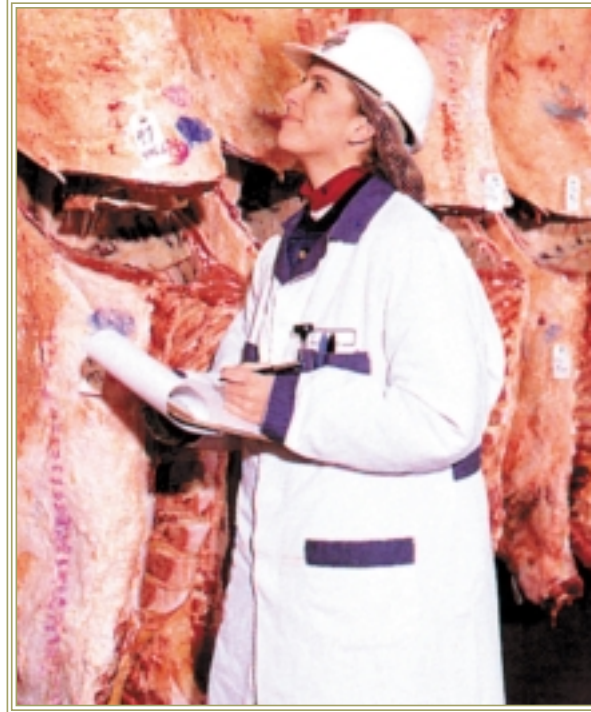
5 years

## SALARY RANGE

\$25,000 - \$40,000

## CAREER PATH

Quality Assurance (QA) Technician,  
Promotions Manager,  
Quality Assurance (QA) Manager,  
HACCP Coordinator



• Jacci • Holowath •

## WHAT IS A HACCP COORDINATOR?

A Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point (HACCP) system is a food safety program that focuses on the identification, evaluation, control and prevention of hazards at all stages of the food production process. The work of a HACCP Coordinator is closely tied to the job of a Quality Assurance Manager, because both systems define procedures for the entire production process. This is the case for Jacci Holowath, who currently wears both hats at XL Foods Inc. Jacci is responsible for four different HACCP plans running at the company's two Calgary plants: a primary processor and a manufacturer of packaged beef products.

## WHAT DOES A HACCP COORDINATOR DO?

HACCP Coordinators have one awesome

responsibility: food safety. The health and even the life of a consumer may depend on the plans this person makes and the diligence and consistency with which they are carried out. While Jacci acknowledges this primary goal she stresses that it is of necessity a shared responsibility. "Food safety is the job of every person in this plant," she stresses. "That's the only way it can work."

**Architect, Builder, Jury and Judge** "HACCP Coordinators can easily spend two years setting up a HACCP program," says Jacci, starting with the development of prerequisite programs that are the foundation of the HACCP plan. Standards need to be set and addressed for all areas of the operation, including premises, transportation and storage, personnel, sanitation, pest control and equipment. In the event that something goes wrong, recall procedures and detailed record keeping must also be established. Once the system is up and running, the



HACCP Coordinator continuously monitors and trouble-shoots to ensure the system is doing its job.

**Product of the Space Age** HACCP was originally developed by Pillsbury Company, NASA and the U.S. army to ensure the safety of food for the Gemini and Apollo space flights. Since then, HACCP has gained international recognition as an effective way of ensuring product safety. Recently, the U.S. passed legislation that all companies producing or importing meat products to the U.S. must have a recognized HACCP program in place. Jacci is proud of the fact that under her direction, XL Foods achieved HACCP recognition well ahead of the deadline and the competition.

## HOW TO BECOME A HACCP COORDINATOR

Although Jacci has a Bachelor of Science in Agriculture, she maintains that a university degree is a bonus, not a requirement for the job. HACCP coordinators are usually drawn from the Quality Assurance side of a plant operation, and need several years of experience plus a solid background in

microbiology. HACCP certification, achieved through a two-to-three-day training program, is also required to hold this position.

People wishing to become HACCP coordinators should have good organizational abilities, stress management and time management skills and a proven ability to solve problems, says Jacci, noting that "if a customer complains about our product, I own that problem".

## THE FUTURE

"HACCP is only going to grow," maintains Jacci, who predicts that it is only a matter of time before HACCP programs become mandatory in Canada and foodservice establishments embrace the system as well. Therefore, she foresees a growing need for more HACCP coordinators in Canada, and good career opportunities for those in the field. Personally, Jacci knows she can take what she has learned about HACCP and work in almost any sector of the industry, or consider moving into plant management. "I have lots of options open to me," she observes "that's what I like about this work."

## RELATED CAREERS

### Quality Assurance (QA) Technician

A QA technician often reports to a HACCP coordinator, conducting the range of tests required to verify that procedures are being followed.

### Product Developer

Product developers conduct market analysis on products before they are produced. Developing recipes, labels and field testing new products is a part of this job.

### Quality Assurance (QA) Manager

The QA manager ensures the quality and safety of all products in a processing plant by establishing, verifying and validating quality assurance systems and procedures. Depending on the plant, this person may oversee the operation of the laboratory, including the work of the Quality Assurance technicians and work closely with the Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point (HACCP) coordinator to ensure the product is not only safe but consistent and high quality in nature.

• • •

Produced by

**ALBERTA**  
FOOD PROCESSORS  
ASSOCIATION

With support from

**Alberta**  
ADVANCED EDUCATION AND  
CAREER DEVELOPMENT

For more info, check with Janet Henderson,  
Alberta Food Processors Association  
at (403) 201-1044  
or visit the website at [www.afpa.com](http://www.afpa.com)