

BIA
INNOVATOR CAMPUS



STEP BY STEP GUIDE

Starting a Food Business – *'A Technical Perspective'*

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Introduction

Taking your food product from concept to completion requires many key steps. Our technical support team have put together a few top tips to help budding food entrepreneurs get started on their food business journey. The BIA Innovator Campus offers food businesses a range of food-specific facilities, supports and services in one central location. The Campus was purpose built with food operators in mind and designed to de-risk the set-up costs when starting a food business.



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Starting a Food Business

A Technical Perspective

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OUR COMPANY

01

BIA Innovator Campus is Ireland's leading food incubation and innovation campus supporting ambitious food businesses through state-of-the-art food production facilities coupled with the technological and business supports needed to promote innovation and scaling. Located at the Teagasc campus in Athenry, we offer a new generation of food innovation, production and entrepreneurial

supports. Start up and scaling food businesses will benefit from fully equipped pay-per-use production units, long lease "own door" production units, business engagement zone, hot desking, food tourism demonstration auditorium, a buyer showcase room, culinary training unit, a dynamic offering of training, development and acceleration programmes.

Our aim is to be a constant **support for Food Producers** to lean on as they grow through different stages;



NATIONAL CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE

BIA Innovator Campus is a one stop shop for everything you need and a **national centre of excellence**.



FASTRACK

We work across all agencies and help by signposting and connecting entrepreneurs to who and what they need faster.



FOOD EXPERTS

We provide expertise from those that have rolled up their sleeves and done it before. We provide timely engagement, robust advice and up to date industry insights.



FULL BUSINESS SUPPORT FROM FARM TO FORK

We give support across all aspects of food businesses to ensure a more rounded approach to sustainability.



OPEN DOOR WELCOME

We work with individuals, entrepreneurs, farmers, food producers, chefs, students and anyone that wants to progress themselves or their business in the food industry

MEET OUR TEAM

02



COLM FOLEY

Food Technologist

Colm Foley joined BIA in 2021 as our in-house food technologist. While working full time on the BIA Innovator Campus, Colm is a vital link to the services, resources and knowledge base within Teagasc. Colm holds a higher diploma in Food Science and Technology, an M.Sc in Food & Wine Management, and a Bachelor of Business in Culinary Arts. Through his considerable years' experience in the food industry with Kinsale Bay Food Company and Fillière Charcuteries (France), Colm has gained extensive experience in food manufacturing and processing, recipe formulation, new product development, food safety, food safety management systems, food standards auditing, HACCP, process flow, fit out consulting, and lean manufacturing principles.



DR. ANITA FUREY

Food Technologist

Anita has over 20 year's professional scientific experience in water, environmental and food science. Anita has a PhD in Food Science & Nutrition; a first class honours bachelor's degree in Business in Culinary Arts Management; an M.Sc in Groundwater Resources; a post graduate diploma in Environmental Science; and a primary B.Sc in Natural Science (Hons). Anita has worked as a researcher in food science for both the Culinary Arts Department at Atlantic Technological University (ATU) in Galway City, and Science Department at ATU, Donegal. Anita has also worked with many Irish food companies in new food product development, shelf-life analysis, physical and chemical analysis, consumer acceptance testing, and food safety.



SANDRA REGAN

Food Sector Project Manager

Sandra Regan has more than 20 years' experience working within the food manufacturing and retail sector in Ireland, specialising in procurement, product development and change management. A graduate of Atlantic Technological University (Letterkenny), University of Huddersfield and University College Cork, her academic background is in Food Science and Technology. Sandra brings a broad spectrum of knowledge both professionally and academically to the Campus, where her experience lies in buying, retail, manufacturing, strategy and negotiations across manufacturing, food service and retail. She brings a strong commercial focus to BIA Innovator Campus and its clients. Having started her career with Dawn Farm Foods and honed her commercial skills as group buyer for O'Brien's Irish Sandwich Bars, and more recently as a senior buyer with Smyth's Toys, Sandra has extensive knowledge of commercialisation in the food industry.

HOW CAN BIA INNOVATOR 03 CAMPUS HELP?

Consider BIA Innovator Campus as your one-stop-shop for finding business and technical supports for your food business journey. We offer the perfect environment by providing fully equipped food-grade production spaces to rent and the advice needed to develop and grow your food business. Develop prototypes or customise your HACCP plan with our two on-site Teagasc food technologists; avail of our in-house training and networking events with our in-house business engagement team.



State of the art pay-per-use food production units at BIA Innovator Campus

MARKET RESEARCH, PROTOTYPES & COSTS



Before you even register your company with Revenue or the Companies Registration Office, ensuring there is a market for your product is crucial. It's critical to verify that your food product is needed and has the potential to be profitable. Market research is the process in which you evaluate how viable your product will be through research with potential consumers. During this stage, you could include the production of a prototype to gather feedback from potential customers. You may need to notify your 'Competent Authority' before you test your prototype with members of the public (see more details below on 'Competent Authority'). There are

many set-up costs to consider when starting any business, including: suitable food-grade production premises and equipment costs; ingredient & packaging costs; distribution costs; staff and training costs (e.g. food safety, manual handling etc.); rent; rates, water and waste disposal charges; branding & marketing, legal and accountancy fees; insurance covering: product and public liability, professional indemnity and employers' liability etc.

The equipment and design of the Pay-Per-Use production units at BIA Innovator Campus were designed to help de-risk the set up costs for food start-ups.

FOOD SAFETY

A legal requirement

At BIA, we are here to help you navigate through the myriad of EU related food law. As the Food Business Operator, you are personally responsible for ensuring the food you produce is safe. Under EU law, and food or drinks product which is placed on the market must be safe for consumption. Anyone producing, processing and distributing food must be aware of the requirements for food hygiene and food safety.

The Food Safety Authority of Ireland (FSAI) is the 'go-to' website in Ireland for everything you need to know about food legislation (www.fsai.ie). The following webpages are two good starting points:

1. <https://www.fsai.ie/business-advice/starting-a-food-business>
2. <https://www.fsai.ie/publications/business-start-up-information>

In terms of legislation (of which there are many), these are our top three legal documents that you should become familiar with as you start on your food safety journey:

•**General food law:** Regulation (EC) No. 178 of 2002, as amended, covers general principles of food safety and traceability requirements for you, the food business operator. In terms of traceability, you must be able to trace your food one step back and, if you supply another food business, one step forward (see FSAI <https://www.fsai.ie/business-advice/starting-a-food-business/traceability>).

•**Hygiene Rules - HACCP System / Food Safety Management System:** Regulation (EC) No. 852/2004 (general food) and 853/2004 (food of animal origin) cover the legal requirement for implementation of food safety management systems including procedures based on HACCP principles, good hygiene practices, premises layout, temperature control, equipment, transport, waste, personal hygiene, record keeping, food safety training and food safety culture etc. See also FSAI: [https://www.fsai.ie/business-advice/starting-a-food-business/food-safety-management-system-\(haccp\)](https://www.fsai.ie/business-advice/starting-a-food-business/food-safety-management-system-(haccp)) and <https://www.fsai.ie/business-advice/running-a-food-business/training-and-online-learning/webinars/food-safety-training>.

•**Labelling:** Regulation (EU) No. 1169/2011, on the provision of food information to consumers, as amended, contains all the information you need regarding what can and cannot legally be stated on your label (including 'use-by' date, nutritional information, allergens, ingredients etc). See also FSAI <https://www.fsai.ie/business-advice/labelling>

Registration or Approval?

Important steps before commencing operations are as follows:

- **Talk** to your local Environmental Health Office (EHO) about general queries of opening a food business, testing prototypes, and to determine which 'Competent Authority' you need to register with (a list of these can be found on the HSE website: <https://www.hse.ie/eng/services/list/1/environ/contact.html>).
- **Registration:** You have to register your food business with a 'Competent Authority' before you start operating your food business. A 'Competent Authority' carries out official controls in the area of food safety on behalf of the Food Safety Authority of Ireland. Competent Authorities include the:
 - Local Environmental Health Office (of the Health Service Executive, HSE)
 - Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine
 - Local Authority Veterinary Service
 - Sea-Fisheries Protection Authority (SFPA)
- To register your business with your local HSE Environmental Health Office use their online portal available at <https://ehonline.hse.ie/>. For more information on registration, visit their webpage: <https://www.hse.ie/eng/services/list/1/environ/opening-a-new-food-business/>.
- **Approval:** For foods of animal origin, your business may also need 'approval' from either the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine; your Local Authority Veterinarian; or the Sea-Fisheries Protection of Ireland (e.g. for businesses including meat and fish processors; and those making meat, fish, egg, milk and dairy products).



As stated, it is a legal requirement for your business to have a food safety management system in place based on the principles of HACCP. HACCP stands for 'Hazard Analysis & Critical Control Point' and refers to procedures you must put in place to ensure the food you produce is safe and does not cause illness or death due to hazards such as microbes causing food borne diseases or contamination from allergens, chemicals or physical materials. Procedures based on HACCP provide a structured systematic approach to

food safety, which involves identifying potential hazards and planning for their monitoring and control. HACCP based procedures provide businesses with a cost-effective system for control of food safety, from ingredients right through to production, storage and distribution to sale and service of the final consumer. The preventive approach of HACCP based procedures not only improves food safety management but also complements other quality management systems.

THE MAIN BENEFITS OF HACCP BASED PROCEDURES

01

Prevents the risk of poisoning, injuring, or causing death or injury to your customers

02

Ensures you are compliant with the law

03

General food quality standards increase

04

Organises your process to produce safe food

05

Acts as due diligence defence in court



Your food safety management system allows you to identify and control any hazards that could pose a significant risk to the preparation of safe food.



IT HELPS YOU TO



If you are responsible for developing and maintaining your business's HACCP based procedures, then you must undertake adequate training in the application of HACCP principles. The FSAI has a very useful online learning portal: <https://learningportal.fsai.ie/>.

PREREQUISITE PROGRAMME08

At BIA Innovator Campus, our food grade premises is designed with state-of-the-art prerequisite programme (PRP) at its core. Before operating your food business, you must have in place an appropriate PRP's. These are the basic conditions and activities that are necessary to maintain a hygienic environment throughout the premises.



The PRPs do not in themselves control specific food safety hazards but target the environment in which the food is prepared and stored. Within the PRP, consideration is given to:

- Food premises construction, lay-out of buildings, lighting, drainage, ventilation
- Structures in food processing areas, including floors, walls, ceilings, doors, surfaces
- Supply of water, power, gas
- Wastewater discharge and sewage disposal and supporting services
- Control of physical, chemical, allergen and biological contamination
- Employee facilities, canteen, toilets, hand washing facilities
- Supply of air, water, energy and other utilities
- Cleaning and disinfection
- Pest control
- Equipment maintenance and calibration
- Waste management including animal by-products
- Supplier approval
- Reception of incoming materials, storage, dispatch, transportation and handling of products
- Measures for the prevention of cross contamination
- Personnel including personal hygiene, fitness to handle food, PPE, hand washing
- Approval and control of suppliers, non-conforming products
- Maintenance of the cold chain

FOOD SAFETY STANDARDS 09

Some useful standards are listed below:

National standards

- I.S. 340:2007 - **Hygiene in the Catering Sector**
- I.S. 341:2007 - **Hygiene in Food Retailing and Wholesaling**
- I.S. 342:2022 - **Hygiene for Food Processors**

International standards

- British Retail Consortium Global Standard (2022). BRCGS Global Standard Food Safety Issue 9. London: BRCGS. <https://www.brcgs.com/>
- ISO 22000:2018 Food safety management systems – Requirement for any organization in the food chain.

Other useful Websites

- **Teagasc** Food Industry Development Department supports the Irish Agri-food industry through the provision of advice, consultancy and specialist technical services to the food industry. Visit <https://www.teagasc.ie/food/food-industry-development/> and <https://www.teagasc.ie/rural-economy/rural-development/diversification/starting-a-food-business/>
- **Bord Bia** offers really useful market trend and consumer insights and information on routes to market <https://www.bordbia.ie/industry/business-assistance/> and <https://www.bordbia.ie/industry/insights/>

Contact Us

Starting a food business requires careful planning and execution, but with the right support and resources, you can turn your idea into a successful market-ready product. At BIA Innovator Campus, we are committed to helping you every step of the way.

For further information on how we can help your start-up business, contact our team by emailing hello@biainnovatorcampus.ie or calling 091-373571.