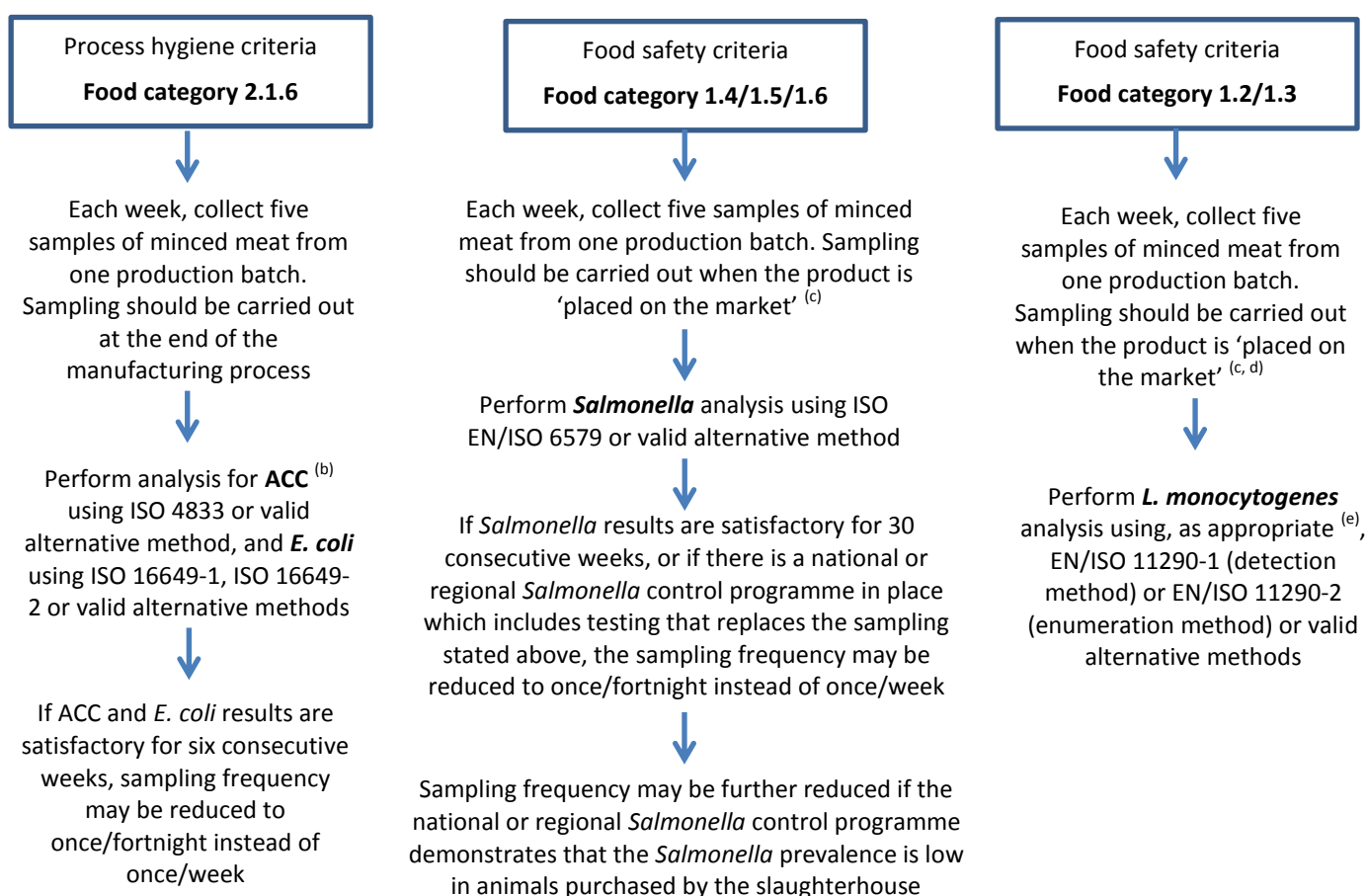


Sampling rules and frequencies for minced meat set in Commission Regulation (EC) No 2073/2005, as amended

Relevant criteria for minced meat:

- **Intended to be eaten raw**
 - Process hygiene criterion **2.1.6** (ACC and *E. coli*)
 - Food safety criterion **1.2/1.3** (*Listeria monocytogenes*)
 - Food safety criterion **1.4** (*Salmonella* spp.)
- **Intended to be cooked and made from poultry meat**
 - Process hygiene criterion **2.1.6** (ACC and *E. coli*)
 - Food safety criterion **1.5** (*Salmonella* spp.)
- **Intended to be cooked and made from species other than poultry**
 - Process hygiene criterion **2.1.6** (ACC and *E. coli*)
 - Food safety criterion **1.6** (*Salmonella* spp.)

Food business operators that produce minced meat must carry out sampling at least once per week ^(a). The day of sampling must be changed each week to ensure that each day of the week is covered.



^(a) When justified on the basis of a risk analysis and consequently authorised by the competent authority, small slaughterhouses may be exempted from these sampling frequencies. The FSAI has produced guidance on reduced sampling frequencies for low through-put slaughterhouses and meat manufacturing premises and also for butcher shops producing minced meat and meat preparations in small quantities. Both guidance documents are available at: www.fsai.ie/food_businesses/micro_criteria/legal_criteria/sampling_frequency.html

^(b) The ACC criterion does not apply to minced meat produced at retail level when the shelf-life of the product is less than 24 hours (footnote 7, Annex I, Chapter 2 of the Regulation)

^(c) Food safety criteria apply when the minced meat is placed on the market. Food business operators that produce minced meat may sample to test against food safety criteria once the manufacturing and packaging is complete and the product is ready for sale. The product does not need to have left the manufacturing establishment before it is considered 'placed on the market'. According to Regulation (EC) No 178/2002, 'placing on the market' means "the holding of food or feed for the purpose of sale, including offering for sale or any other form of transfer, whether free of charge or not, and the sale, distribution, and other forms of transfer themselves;"

^(d) With respect to food category 1.2, the limit requiring absence of *L. monocytogenes* in 25g applies before the food has left the immediate control of the food business operator that has produced it

^(e) For food category 1.3 the enumeration method is used. For food category 1.2 either the enumeration method or detection method is used depending on whether the food business operator has conducted studies which are sufficient to show how *L. monocytogenes* will grow in their product so that it can be determined if the 100 cfu/g limit could be exceeded during the shelf-life (see footnotes 5 and 7 of Annex I, Chapter 1 of the Regulation and pages 58 and 59 of FSAI's Guidance Note 27)