



THE HAPPINESS FARM

Bhutan's First Organic, Regenerative Farm-to-Table Experience

8 Rooms · Working Organic Farm · Natural Spring Water

STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES

Simple, Plain-Language Guide to Food Safety & Hygiene

Written to match the Bhutan Food and Drug Authority (BFDA)
Good Hygiene and Manufacturing Practices (GHP/GMP) Criteria, Version 3, 2024

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About This Manual

The Happiness Farm is Bhutan's first organic, regenerative farm-to-table experience — a working farm, a kitchen that cooks with what we grow, and 8 guest rooms, all in one place. Because our food travels a short distance, from our own fields to the guest's plate, we look after safety at every one of those steps, not just in the kitchen.

This manual is written in plain language on purpose, so that every team member can read it, understand it, and follow it — no technical background needed. It turns the Bhutan Food and Drug Authority's Good Hygiene and Manufacturing Practices (GHP/GMP) Criteria, Version 3, 2024, into simple daily steps for our farm and kitchen. It is also the working document behind our Food Safety Licence (FSL).

Each SOP (Standard Operating Procedure) below has three parts: a plain-language summary of why it matters, the steps our team follows, and the records we keep as proof. New staff should read the SOPs that apply to their role when they join, and every staff member should read the full manual again once a year.

We keep this manual current — reviewing it at least once a year, and sooner if BFDA rules change, the farm grows, or we learn something new. It works alongside, not instead of, Bhutan's Food Act (2005) and Food Rules and Regulations (2017).

What This Manual Covers

This manual covers:

- **Our farm:** the vegetable, herb and fruit gardens, and any dairy, poultry, honey or tea we produce ourselves, up to the point it reaches the kitchen
- **Our kitchen and dining room:** all storage, cooking and serving of food to our guests, our own staff meals, and anything sold at the farm gate
- **Our 8 guest rooms:** wherever food touches guest service, such as welcome drinks, breakfast trays and in-room refreshments
- **Any farm products we package:** honey, jam, dried herbs or fruit tea that guests buy or take home, which also need safe packaging and clear labels

Growing crops and keeping animals is not something BFDA licenses directly. But because our own farm feeds our own licensed kitchen, we still apply careful, simple controls from the moment something is harvested (see SOP 1), so nothing unsafe ever starts its journey toward a guest's plate.

SOP 1: From Farm to Kitchen: Handling Our Produce

In simple terms: Everything we grow — vegetables, herbs, fruit, eggs, milk, honey — should arrive in the kitchen clean and safe, with nothing added along the way.

- **Clean hands, clean tools:** Farm staff wash their hands and wear clean gloves or aprons before picking anything; harvest baskets and tools are washed and dried before use, and are never used for waste or soil
- **Straight into clean containers:** Produce goes straight into clean, food-safe crates — never placed on bare ground — and is kept out of direct sun and away from animals on the way to the kitchen
- **Washed and checked on arrival:** The kitchen washes every batch of farm produce in clean water and checks it for damage, pests or spoilage; anything that does not pass is set aside for compost, not used in cooking
- **Eggs, milk and honey handled with extra care:** These go into clean, dedicated containers and are cooled or used quickly, always kept apart from raw vegetables and any cleaning products
- **Fully organic — nothing synthetic:** The Happiness Farm does not use synthetic pesticides, chemical fertilisers or artificial growth aids of any kind; we feed our soil with our own compost and natural methods only, which removes this risk entirely rather than just managing it
- **A simple daily record:** Each day we note what was harvested, how much, by whom, and when it reached the kitchen — the first step in being able to trace any dish back to the field it came from (see SOP 13)

Keep these records: Daily harvest notes; compost/rejected-produce notes.

SOP 2: Bringing In Ingredients We Don't Grow Ourselves

In simple terms: For the few things we don't grow ourselves — rice, oil, spices, and similar staples — we make sure they are safe and come from people we trust.

- **We buy from suppliers we trust:** We only buy from suppliers who show good, clean practices; anyone new is checked by the Farm Manager first
- **Every delivery is checked:** When something arrives, kitchen staff check the packaging isn't damaged, chilled or frozen items are still cold, and nothing is past its date — anything that fails is sent back
- **Straight to the right place:** Meat, dairy, dry goods and any chemicals are put away in their proper storage spot right away, not left sitting together
- **A simple written note for each delivery:** We note the date, supplier, item, amount, and who received it
- **Keeping outside ingredients to a minimum:** Because most of what we serve comes from our own fields, the list of bought-in ingredients stays short and easy to manage

Keep these records: Delivery notes; list of approved suppliers; notes on anything sent back.

SOP 3: Our Water: Fresh Spring Water

In simple terms: The water we drink, cook with and wash food in comes from a natural spring, and we make sure it stays safe the whole way to our taps.

- **Natural spring source:** Our water comes from a fresh natural spring about 27 kilometres away, piped directly to the farm — no town supply and no chemical treatment along the way
- **Still tested regularly:** Even though it's a natural source, we test it against WHO and Bhutan drinking water standards, and again any time something unusual happens along the pipeline
- **Storage tanks kept clean and covered:** Our water tanks are covered and locked, so animals, dust and pests can't get in; we clean them at least every 3 months and disinfect them at least twice a year, and we note the dates
- **Separate pipes for separate jobs:** Water used for irrigation or general outdoor cleaning runs through its own clearly marked pipes, kept completely separate from our drinking and kitchen water
- **Pipes checked for damage:** We check pipes now and then for leaks or cracks, and fix any problem quickly so nothing can get into the water on its way to the kitchen

Keep these records: Water test results; tank cleaning dates; notes on any pipe repairs.

SOP 4: Keeping Our Kitchen and Equipment in Good Shape

In simple terms: A kitchen that is well-built and well-kept is much easier to keep clean and safe.

- **A clear, one-way flow:** Deliveries, food prep, cooking, plating and dishwashing happen in a logical order, so raw ingredients never cross paths with food that's ready to serve
- **Floors, walls and surfaces in good repair:** Any crack, damage or wear on a food-contact surface is reported and fixed quickly, before it becomes a hiding place for dirt or germs
- **Equipment checked on a schedule:** Cooking and cooling equipment used every day is checked weekly; everything else is checked monthly; thermometers and scales are checked for accuracy at least once a year
- **Doors and windows kept sealed:** Insect screens on windows are checked monthly for tears, and kitchen doors close themselves or stay screened, to keep out insects, birds and animals

Keep these records: Repair notes; equipment check dates; screen and door checks.

SOP 5: Staying Clean and Healthy at Work

In simple terms: Everyone who touches food or works closely with guests needs to stay clean, healthy, and mindful of simple habits that keep food safe.

- **A yearly health check:** Everyone who handles food sees a doctor once a year for a basic health check.
- **A quick self-check before every shift:** Before starting work, staff check themselves for fever, cough, upset stomach, sore throat, or an infected cut — and tell their supervisor right away instead of starting work
- **Cuts covered properly:** Any cut is covered with a waterproof bandage, and a glove on top if the person is preparing food; if it can't be covered safely, that person is moved away from food work until it heals
- **Hand-washing, often:** Hands are washed with soap before starting work, after breaks, after the toilet, and after touching raw food, money, farm produce or waste
- **Simple grooming rules:** Clean clothes, hair tied back, short clean nails with no polish, no jewellery or watches in the kitchen, and separate shoes for kitchen and outdoor/farm work
- **Good habits at all times:** No smoking, spitting, chewing or eating over food that's uncovered; visitors in the kitchen follow the same rules as staff
- **Two staff trained in First Aid:** Two of our team members have completed First Aid training and are certified, so help is always close by if someone is hurt or unwell

Keep these records: Health certificates; daily self-check notes; First Aid certificates.

SOP 6: Storing Food the Right Way

In simple terms: Food, farm produce and cleaning chemicals each need their own kind of storage, kept apart from one another.

- **Oldest first:** Everything is dated when it arrives or is harvested, and older stock is used before newer stock; anything past its date is thrown out and noted
- **Off the floor:** Food is kept on shelves or racks, not directly on the floor or pushed against the wall, so air can move and cleaning is easy
- **The right temperature:** Chilled food stays at 5°C or below, frozen food at -18°C or below; we check and note fridge and freezer temperatures twice a day
- **Kept apart:** Raw meat is stored below and separate from ready-to-eat food; anything with a known allergen is clearly labelled and stored on its own
- **Chemicals locked away:** Cleaning products, and anything used on the farm, are kept in a locked space, well away from all food, and only trusted staff have the key

Keep these records: Fridge and freezer temperature notes; stock checks; chemical storage list.

SOP 7: Cooking Food Safely

In simple terms: Food should be cooked, held and cooled at the right temperature every single time, so it's always safe to eat.

- **Cooked all the way through:** Meat, poultry and egg dishes are cooked to a safe temperature all the way through before they are served
- **Kept hot or kept cold:** Hot food waiting to be served stays above 60°C, cold food stays below 5°C; if food sits between these temperatures for more than 2 hours, it is thrown out
- **Cooled quickly:** Cooked food we plan to use later is cooled quickly — within about 2 hours — before it goes in the fridge, rather than left to cool slowly on the counter
- **Menus built around the day's harvest:** We plan meals around what was actually picked and checked that day, so nothing sits around unused
- **Careful tasting and reheating:** Tasting spoons are used once, then washed; reheated food is brought back to a safe, thorough heat before it's served again

Keep these records: Cooking and holding temperature notes.

SOP 8: Avoiding Cross-Contamination & Managing Allergens

In simple terms: Simple separation — of boards, hands, and dishes — keeps germs and allergens from moving where they shouldn't.

- **Separate boards and knives:** Different chopping boards and utensils are used for raw meat, raw vegetables, and food that's ready to eat, and they're washed before being swapped
- **Wash in between:** Hands, surfaces and tools are washed between handling raw food and handling cooked or ready-to-eat food
- **Vegetarian and non-vegetarian kept apart:** These are prepared with separate equipment, or at different times with a full clean in between
- **We know what's in our food:** Common allergens we use — nuts, dairy, gluten and so on — are noted on our internal recipe cards, so any staff member can answer a guest's question correctly
- **Honest with guests:** If we can't fully rule out a trace of an allergen in a dish, we tell the guest plainly rather than guess

Keep these records: Allergen notes per dish; cleaning checks between raw and cooked tasks.

SOP 9: Cleaning the Kitchen and Dining Areas

In simple terms: A clean kitchen, cleaned the same way every time, is one of the simplest ways we protect our guests.

- **A cleaning plan:** We know what gets cleaned, how often, with what, and by whom — covering surfaces, equipment, floors, drains and storerooms twice a week.
- **Gentle, food-safe products:** We use food-safe cleaning products, stored away from food, and follow the instructions on the label for how much to use
- **Checked daily:** A supervisor checks cleanliness every day and fixes anything that's missed straight away; bigger deep-cleans are noted down
- **Dishes done properly:** Plates, cutlery and pots are washed in hot soapy water, rinsed, and air-dried or dried with a clean cloth

Keep these records: Cleaning schedule with sign-off; notes on deep-cleans.

SOP 10: Pest Control — The Natural Way

In simple terms: As an organic farm, we keep pests away using simple, physical methods — never pesticides or chemical sprays.

- **No pesticides, ever:** In keeping with our organic, chemical-free farming, we do not use pesticides, chemical rodenticides, or any sprayed chemical pest control anywhere on the property — this is a firm rule, not just a preference
- **Rat traps, checked regularly:** We use simple physical rat traps around the farm and storage areas; these are checked on a regular schedule, and anything caught is removed and the trap reset
- **Insect nets on every window:** All our windows are fitted with insect nets, keeping flies and insects out of the kitchen and guest rooms without needing any spray
- **A tidy property keeps pests away naturally:** We don't let waste pile up, we seal any gaps in walls or floors, and we keep the farm and kitchen surroundings tidy — pests are far less likely to settle in a clean, well-kept space
- **Someone is responsible:** One team member is responsible for checking traps and window nets on a set schedule and noting what they find

Keep these records: Trap-check notes; window net inspection notes.

SOP 11: Managing Waste, the Regenerative Way

In simple terms: Waste is sorted thoughtfully, so food scraps go back into the farm as compost, and nothing builds up where it could attract pests.

- **Sorted from the start:** Food and farm waste, recyclables, and general waste are separated as soon as they are thrown away, not sorted later
- **Bins, emptied daily:** Bins in food areas are emptied at least once a day
- **Back to the soil:** Food and farm waste goes to our composting area promptly, feeding back into the regenerative farm cycle, but is moved well away from the kitchen and guest areas so it never becomes a pest or smell problem
- **Hazardous items kept apart:** Anything hazardous, like empty chemical containers, is stored and disposed of separately from food and compost waste

Keep these records: Waste and composting notes; hazardous waste disposal notes.

SOP 12: Packaging & Labelling Our Farm Products

In simple terms: When we package honey, jam, dried herbs or fruit tea for guests, the packaging and label need to be safe and clear.

- **Food-safe packaging:** We only use packaging made for food, kept clean and stored away from raw materials and chemicals until it's used
- **Clear, honest labels:** Every label shows the product name, ingredients, allergens, weight, production and best-before dates, a batch number, and The Happiness Farm as the maker, following Bhutan's labelling standard
- **Every batch numbered:** Each batch gets its own number, linking it back to the harvest and production notes so we can trace it if we ever need to (see SOP 13)

Keep these records: Packaging stock notes; product label file; batch numbers.

SOP 13: Tracing Our Food & Handling a Recall

In simple terms: If something ever needs to be traced or pulled back, we can do it quickly because our records connect every step.

- **Every step is connected:** From the harvest or delivery note, through storage, to the plate or the shop shelf, our records let us trace where any product came from
- **A clear recall plan:** If a safety issue ever comes up with a packaged product, we use the batch number to find the affected stock, pull it back, and hold it safely until it's either destroyed or confirmed safe
- **A yearly practice run:** Once a year, even if we have never needed a real recall, we run a practice recall to make sure the system actually works, and we write down what we learned

Keep these records: Traceability notes; recall or practice-recall report.

SOP 14: Training Our Team

In simple terms: Everyone handling food or working on the farm should know how to do it safely, and know it well.

- **Proper licensing:** Every food handler holds a valid Food Handler's Licence, or registers within 30 days of starting
- **A proper welcome:** New staff get simple hygiene and farm-safety training before working on their own
- **A yearly refresher:** All food and farm staff go through this manual again once a year, so nothing is forgotten
- **First Aid certified team members:** Two of our staff are trained and certified in First Aid, and we keep their certificates current so guests and colleagues are always looked after
- **Managers know their stuff:** Supervisors and managers understand the basics of GHP/GMP well enough to spot a problem and fix it on the spot

Keep these records: Food Handler Licences; training records; First Aid certificates.

SOP 15: Keeping Good Records

In simple terms: Simple, honest records are what let us prove our food is safe, and let us catch small problems before they grow.

- **How long we keep records:** We keep food safety records for at least 1 year after a product's shelf life ends
- **What we track:** At minimum: deliveries, storage temperatures, cleaning, pest checks, staff health, training, equipment checks, traceability, and guest feedback
- **Someone checks them:** The Farm/Kitchen Manager looks over the records regularly, to spot a pattern - like a fridge running warm too often — before it turns into a real problem

Keep these records: All the logs listed throughout this manual, kept together by the Farm/Kitchen Manager.

SOP 16: Responding to a Medical Emergency

In simple terms: If a guest or staff member is unwell or hurt, we act quickly, calmly, and keep them looked after.

- **Notice and alert:** Any staff member who finds someone unwell or hurt tells the Duty Manager or front desk right away
- **Call for help fast:** The Duty Manager calls local medical services or an ambulance without delay if it's serious, and lets management know as soon as possible
- **Stay with them:** A staff member stays with the person until help arrives or they're safely settled
- **Two staff trained in First Aid:** Two team members are trained and certified in First Aid, so basic emergency care is always available on-site while help is on the way
- **Report it properly:** Every incident is written down — what happened, when, and who was involved — with a full report reaching management within 24 hours
- **Keep it private:** Any medical details about a guest or staff member are kept confidential, shared only with those who need to know to help

Keep these records: Incident reports; daily staff health self-checks; First Aid certificates.

SOP 17: Checking Our Own Work

In simple terms: We regularly check ourselves against this manual and BFDA's standards, so problems are caught early, by us, not by an inspector.

- **A full review once a year:** Management checks the whole property against every part of this manual and the BFDA GHP/GMP Criteria at least once a year, before any official inspection
- **Quick monthly checks:** The Farm/Kitchen Manager does an informal walk-through — hygiene, temperatures, tidiness — at least once a month in between

- **Fixing what we find:** Anything that needs improving gets written down with a clear owner and a deadline, and is closed out before the next check

Keep these records: Yearly self-check report; monthly walk-through notes; list of fixes made.

Appendix: All Our Records, in One Place

Here is the full list of records described in this manual. We keep them together — on paper or digitally — so they are easy to find if BFDA ever asks to see them:

- Daily harvest notes (SOP 1)
- Delivery notes and approved supplier list (SOP 2)
- Water test results and tank cleaning dates (SOP 3)
- Equipment checks and repair notes (SOP 4)
- Staff health certificates and daily self-checks (SOP 5, SOP 16)
- Fridge and freezer temperature notes (SOP 6)
- Cooking and cooling temperature notes (SOP 7)
- Cleaning schedule with sign-off (SOP 9)
- Rat trap and window net checks (SOP 10)
- Waste and composting notes (SOP 11)
- Product batch and label file (SOP 12)
- Traceability and recall notes (SOP 13)
- Training records and Food Handler Licences (SOP 14)
- First Aid certificates for trained staff (SOP 5, SOP 14, SOP 16)
- Incident and guest feedback notes (SOP 15, SOP 16)
- Yearly self-check report and list of fixes (SOP 17)

Based on: *Bhutan Food and Drug Authority, Good Hygiene and Manufacturing Practices Criteria, Version 3, 2024; Food Act of Bhutan (2005); Food Rules and Regulations of Bhutan (2017).*