

Food Manufacturing Cleaning Melbourne: Hygiene-Grade Cleaning for Food Production Facilities

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Description:

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Details:

Food manufacturing is one of the most regulated industries in Australia, and cleaning is at the centre of that regulatory framework. The Food Standards Australia New Zealand (FSANZ) standards require documented cleaning programs, approved chemicals, and verifiable outcomes — not just a facility that looks clean, but one that can demonstrate it is microbiologically safe. The consequences of getting this wrong range from failed audits and production shutdowns to product recalls, regulatory prosecution, and catastrophic reputational damage.

Realcorp Commercial Cleaning has an active contract cleaning a 24/7 food manufacturing facility for McCain Foods in Ballarat. We operate across multiple daily shifts, coordinate with production teams, deploy food-grade cleaning and sanitising chemicals, and maintain the documentation required for food safety audits. Food manufacturing cleaning is not a sideline for us — it is a core competency backed by real, ongoing operational experience.

What Makes Food Manufacturing Cleaning Different

Not all industrial cleaning is equal, and food manufacturing sits at the most demanding end of the spectrum. Here is what separates specialist food manufacturing cleaning from general industrial or commercial cleaning:

FSANZ Compliance Requirements

Food Standards Australia New Zealand Standard 3.2.2 (Food Safety Practices and General Requirements) requires food businesses to take all practicable measures to ensure their premises and equipment are clean and sanitary. This is not a suggestion — it is a legal requirement with teeth. Standard 3.2.3 (Food Premises and Equipment) specifies requirements for the design and maintenance of food premises, including surfaces that must be able to be effectively cleaned and sanitised.

For food manufacturers, this translates into a formal cleaning program that includes: a documented schedule of what gets cleaned, when, and how; the specific chemicals to be used and at what concentrations; verification procedures to confirm cleaning has been effective; and records that can be produced to an auditor on demand.

The Distinction Between Cleaning and Sanitising

In food manufacturing, these are two distinct and sequential steps — and conflating them is a food safety failure.

Cleaning removes visible soiling: food residue, grease, dust, and debris. Sanitising reduces microbial contamination — bacteria, yeasts, and moulds — to levels that are safe for food contact. The critical point: you cannot effectively sanitise a dirty surface. Organic matter (food residue, protein, fat) chemically neutralises sanitisers, preventing them from making contact with the microorganisms on the surface. The correct sequence is always clean first, then sanitise.

Realcorp cleaning programs for food manufacturing environments are built around this sequence, with appropriate dwell times, rinse requirements, and verification steps for each.

Allergen Cross-Contamination Prevention

For food facilities that handle multiple product lines — particularly those with allergenic ingredients such as nuts, gluten, dairy, or sesame — cleaning between production runs is a critical allergen control measure. Inadequate cleaning of production equipment, utensils, or food contact surfaces can result in allergen carryover from one product to the next. In Australia, undeclared allergens are the leading cause of food recalls.

Allergen cleaning programs require specific procedures: physical removal of allergen residues before chemical cleaning, validated cleaning methods that reduce allergen levels to below detection thresholds, and documentation that demonstrates allergen control to auditors and customers.

High-Care Zone Cleaning

High-care zones — areas where open food products are handled — require a higher standard of cleanliness than other parts of a food facility. These include:

- **Production lines** handling ready-to-eat or minimally processed foods - **Food contact surfaces** — conveyor belts, slicers, packaging equipment - **Cold storage and cool rooms** used for product storage between processing steps - **Air handling and ventilation** in high-care areas

Cleaning in high-care zones requires specialist equipment, chemicals approved for food contact surface use, and staff who understand the heightened hygiene requirements of these areas.

Clean-in-Place vs Clean-out-of-Place

Modern food manufacturing equipment often incorporates Clean-in-Place (CIP) systems — automated chemical cleaning circuits that clean internal pipework, tanks, and process equipment without disassembly. CIP systems handle cleaning of the equipment internals, but they do not clean the external surfaces, surrounding floors, walls, drains, or ancillary equipment.

Clean-out-of-Place (COP) cleaning — manual or semi-automated cleaning of removable equipment parts — addresses utensils, small components, and removable machine parts. External cleaning of production equipment, surrounding floors, walls, drains, and non-process surfaces is where your contract cleaning team operates.

Understanding this division of responsibility is essential for any cleaning contractor operating in a food manufacturing environment. Realcorp staff are trained to work within established CIP/COP frameworks without interfering with process equipment cleaning schedules.

TGA-Listed and Food-Grade Chemicals

The chemicals used in food manufacturing cleaning must be appropriate for the task and, where used on food contact surfaces, approved for food contact application. In Australia, sanitisers and disinfectants for food manufacturing use are regulated by the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA). Realcorp uses hospital-grade, TGA-listed disinfectants and food-grade sanitisers appropriate to the

surfaces and conditions in each facility. We maintain chemical registers for every site, including Safety Data Sheets, dilution rates, and application procedures.

The McCain Foods Credential

Realcorp holds an active cleaning contract at McCain Foods' Ballarat facility — one of Australia's significant food manufacturing operations. McCain Foods produces frozen food products for retail and foodservice markets and operates continuous production across multiple daily shifts.

Cleaning at this facility requires: - Integration with 24/7 production schedules across multiple shift changeovers - Food-grade cleaning and sanitising of production equipment surrounds, floors, drains, and welfare facilities - Strict chemical control and documentation - Staff who understand food manufacturing hygiene requirements and work safely in an active production environment - Real-time reporting and accountability through the Realcorp App

This is not a reference site visit or a pilot program. It is an ongoing, demanding industrial account that we execute every day.

Why Realcorp for Food Manufacturing Cleaning

****Direct employment, no subcontracting.**** In a food manufacturing environment, you need absolute certainty about who is on your site, what they know, and what they are authorised to do. Every Realcorp staff member is directly employed by us — not labour hire, not subcontractors, not franchise operators. Each person has been through our screening process and received our training before setting foot in a food facility.

****Police-cleared staff.**** All Realcorp employees hold current police clearances. This supports your site induction and access control requirements.

****Infection control training.**** Realcorp staff are trained in infection control principles — understanding of microbial contamination, hygiene barriers, and the importance of correct chemical use. This training is directly applicable to food manufacturing hygiene requirements.

****The Realcorp App — audit-ready documentation.**** When your food safety auditor asks for cleaning records, the Realcorp App delivers. GPS-verified attendance records, digital cleaning checklists completed in real time, timestamped task completion records, and photographic evidence of completed work. Every cleaning shift generates an audit trail.

****Money-back guarantee.**** We guarantee the quality of our work. If a clean does not meet the agreed standard, we fix it.

Coverage

Realcorp services Melbourne metro food manufacturing facilities, regional Victoria including Ballarat and the broader western districts, and Adelaide. We understand that food manufacturing is not confined to the city — and neither are we.

Frequently Asked Questions

****What are the cleaning requirements for food manufacturing in Australia?***

Australian food manufacturing cleaning requirements are primarily governed by FSANZ Food Safety Standards — specifically Standard 3.2.2 (Food Safety Practices) and Standard 3.2.3 (Food Premises and Equipment). These standards require food businesses to maintain premises and equipment in a clean and sanitary condition, implement documented cleaning and sanitising programs, use appropriate chemicals at correct concentrations, and maintain records that demonstrate compliance. Additionally, many food manufacturers operate under quality management systems such as HACCP (Hazard

Analysis and Critical Control Points) or GFSI-benchmarked schemes like SQF or FSSC 22000, which impose additional requirements for cleaning documentation, verification, and corrective actions. Your cleaning contractor should be familiar with these frameworks and able to support your compliance requirements.

****What chemicals are approved for food manufacturing cleaning?***

Chemicals used in food manufacturing cleaning fall into several categories: alkaline detergents (for removing fat and protein residues), acid cleaners (for mineral scale and metal oxides), and sanitisers (for microbial reduction). For food contact surfaces, sanitisers must be suitable for food contact use — chlorine-based (hypochlorite), quaternary ammonium compounds (QACs), or peracetic acid-based products are commonly used. In Australia, sanitisers used in food manufacturing should be TGA-listed and used at manufacturer-specified concentrations. Food manufacturers should require their cleaning contractor to provide a chemical register listing every product used on site, including Safety Data Sheets, food contact suitability data, and dilution rates. Realcorp maintains this documentation as a standard part of our service.

****How often should food production facilities be cleaned?***

Cleaning frequency in food manufacturing depends on the type of production, the risk level of the product, and regulatory or customer requirements. As a general framework: food contact surfaces should be cleaned and sanitised between production runs and at minimum at the end of each production day; production floors, drains, and equipment surrounds should be cleaned at each shift changeover or at minimum daily; cool rooms, cold storage, and amenity areas require daily cleaning; and deep cleaning of equipment, walls, ceilings, and hard-to-reach areas should be scheduled on a periodic basis (weekly, monthly, or quarterly depending on the area). High-care zones handling ready-to-eat products will require more frequent cleaning than ambient processing areas. Realcorp works with facility managers to develop a cleaning schedule appropriate to the specific operation.

****What is allergen cleaning and why does it matter?***

Allergen cleaning refers to cleaning procedures specifically designed to remove allergen-containing food residues from production equipment and food contact surfaces between production runs involving different allergen profiles. In Australia, undeclared allergens are the most common cause of food product recalls. If your facility produces products with and without nut, gluten, dairy, or other allergenic ingredients on shared equipment, effective allergen cleaning between runs is a legal requirement and a critical food safety control. Allergen cleaning programs require physical removal of residues, validated chemical cleaning, and verification steps (often using allergen test kits) to confirm the surface has been adequately cleaned. Realcorp can implement allergen cleaning programs as part of a comprehensive food manufacturing cleaning service.

****Can food manufacturing cleaners work during production?***

Yes, with appropriate planning and training. Food manufacturing facilities typically require cleaning during shift changeovers, production downtime, and between product runs rather than only after full shutdown. This requires cleaning staff who understand the production environment, know which areas are active and which are accessible, and can work safely and hygienically in proximity to food production. Realcorp's experience at McCain Foods — a 24/7 operation with multiple daily shifts — demonstrates our capability to integrate cleaning into active production schedules. We coordinate directly with production supervisors and shift managers to ensure cleaning happens at the right time without disrupting output.

****How does the Realcorp App support food safety audits?***

The Realcorp App generates a timestamped digital record of every cleaning activity: who completed the task, when, where (GPS-verified), and what was done (via digital checklist). This creates an audit trail

that food safety auditors expect to see. Rather than paper-based cleaning records that can be lost, backdated, or incomplete, the Realcorp App provides verifiable electronic records accessible to facility managers in real time. For food safety audits under HACCP, SQF, or FSSC 22000, being able to produce complete, verifiable cleaning records for any requested period is a significant compliance advantage.

Talk to Realcorp About Your Food Manufacturing Facility

Food manufacturing cleaning is not a service you can afford to get wrong. The right contractor brings specialist knowledge, appropriate equipment, correct chemicals, and the documentation infrastructure your compliance framework requires.

****Call:**** 1300 307 298 ****Email:**** sales@realcorp.net.au ****Web:**** realcorp.net.au

Realcorp Commercial Cleaning. Specialist food manufacturing cleaning, backed by real operational experience.