

Sources of hair contamination and how to solve them

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With hair being the number one source of food contamination in many factories, it is important to review all potential sources and adopt best practice to control, reduce and monitor the impact hair contamination has on consumers – and in turn your relationship with your customers.

This can be achieved by a three pronged strategy without incurring additional costs involving:

- Fit for purpose product.
- Practical policies for your staff handbook.
- Simple on line auditing with graphical reporting to demonstrate staff compliance and identify areas for continual improvement.

Fit for purpose hair coverings

Many leading food processors now recognise that the material used in mob caps is

relatively ineffective at containing the hundred plus hairs each of us shed throughout every day.

This was proven in research conducted by the University of Bolton in the UK involving 144 recorded wears of different headwear items/headwear combinations over a wide cross section of people.

New HairBarrier fabrics, developed in conjunction with the University of Bolton, work to help limit the passage of hair that occurs through any fabric, but particularly the large gaps inherent in non-woven fabrics such as those used in mob caps.

HairBarrier fabrics, used in KleenCaps, Neck Shields, Beard Shields and Arm Shields feature both a positive attraction to the keratin found in hair, a uniform gripping action and an anti-slide inner – all working to help hold shed hairs.

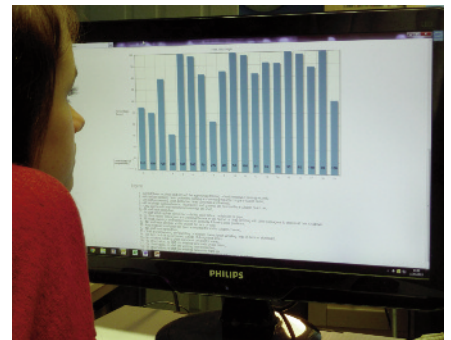
The StayCool feature, similar to performance sportswear and outdoor clothing, helps workers keep cool in hot work environments or where performing higher levels of physical activity, whilst also keeping workers warmer in cold environments. This, in turn, helps reduce the incidence of fidgeting and disturbed shed hair contaminating food.

HairTite HygieNets have been shown to have 2X hair containment of traditional mesh hairnets for the same cost and are now widely used across the food industry after just 16 months on the market.

Practical policies

You will need to consider both your staff and their work environment when selecting head coverings:

- Does your staff profile include any special requirements such as religious head coverings or longer beards?
- Do your staff tie up longer hair effectively?
- Do staff come to work with good personal hygiene?
- Is the work environment hot or cold?
- Do workers get hot from periods of excessive activity?



Online audit with graphical reporting.

- Do workers move from hot to cold, or varying levels of physical activity?
- There are many practical steps that you can take and incorporate into your staff handbook to safeguard compliance and ABurnet offer free HairBarrier Tools including:
- GMP advice taken from across the industry.
 - Free staff training videos with optional competency testing and certificate.
 - Visual best practice posters.

Free on-line auditing

Monitoring individual performance to best practice and educating large numbers of staff – many of whom may be temporary or with limited English has never been easy.

Help is at hand with ABurnet's free HairBarrier Tools on line auditing with graphical reporting. Producers can simply record best practice compliance using a hand held device such a mobile phone or tablet over time and report compliance by section or line as a KPI and identify areas to improve. The free pictorial best practice posters and training videos can be used to educate staff, rotating messages to retain staff interest and awareness.

By selecting fit for purpose head coverings appropriate for both your work environment and work activity, monitoring staff compliance and using free visual tools to keep educating staff, many leading food processors are making reductions in hair contamination and fines with an improved customer relationship.

