**Principle 2: Determine Critical Control Points**

For each significant hazard that was identified in the Hazard Analysis, there are one or more steps where the hazards can be controlled. These steps are considered critical control points. A **critical control point (CCP)** is a step “at which control can be applied and is essential to prevent or eliminate a food safety hazard or reduce it to an acceptable level.” *NACMCF 1997*

CCPs must be thoughtfully developed and closely monitored. Additionally, they must be used only for the purposes of product safety such as a specified heat treatment or refrigeration temperature. A tool to help determining whether a process is a CCP is the CCP Decision Tree:

Identifying the appropriate step which contains the CCP is essential. If there is not an adequate control measure at a particular process step, this step would not be considered the CCP for that significant hazard. In other cases, control measures could be applied at a particular step, but that step may not be the best place to control the hazard. Additionally, there may be different control options for a single hazard. However, only one of these processing steps would be likely be the best CCP to control this hazard. Some additional items to keep in mind:

- A single CCP may be used to control more than one hazard.
- More than one CCP may be needed to control a hazard.