

3 simple steps to find your Food ERP

Totally Food

Looking for Food Software is like trying to choose from a large menu. With many flavorful options out there, how do you choose what's healthiest for your business?

Here's a short & sweet guide to finding the most appetizing ERP for your business.



3 simple steps:

1. **Evaluate** your specific pain points and needs (Internal)
2. **Compare** software solutions (External)
3. **Choose** a vendor/partner that will help you succeed (Collaborative)

Each of the 3 steps is categorized by focus:

- Internal - look into your company processes, problems, and personnel
- External - look outward for a solution
- Collaborative - look for a trusted partner

Step 1: How to evaluate your business' ERP needs

Evaluating your Pain Points:

Do any of these resonate with you?

- Have multiple systems that aren't integrated?
- Need real-time and accurate data from all departments?
- Fed up with confusing and unfriendly user interfaces?
- Lack of cloud and mobile capabilities?
- Dissatisfied with your reporting and costing data?
- Need accurate traceability for regulatory compliance?
- Have doubts about your current ERP provider's future?
- Need a solid ERP partner for ongoing support?

You may have additional reasons for deciding to look for a new ERP. Make sure you take your pain points into account, and how they will be addressed by a new solution, during the selection process.

Choose Your Teammates

Who's going to be on your project team? All participants will need to have the time and resources to assess, purchase, implement, and optimize your new ERP software.

Check for Process Automation Opportunities

Take a look at your various daily processes.

Which processes stand to gain the most from automation, in terms of efficiency and gains?

Determine Your Needs

What specific features, functionality, and capabilities does your business require for a new solution? Be sure to include an evaluation of your existing tools and whether they need to be replaced in the context of a new ERP system.

Use Tools for Your Evaluation

Use a simple matrix or spreadsheet to determine the criteria for evaluating vendors. It should include desired items (features), that are weighted in terms of “need to have” or “nice to have”. Rank vendors’ ability to deliver on each item.

Step 2: How to find the right software solution for you

Why food is different

I don't have to tell you how important food safety is. It's at the heart of your business.

Consumers are concerned about where their food comes from and how it's handled. They want to be sure the food they eat is safe.

The government has responded to consumer demands and has implemented more regulatory compliance.

Having an ERP system that tracks and traces is a must, so you can:

- Be able to identify specific batches in the event of a recall.
- Make sure you get the best product from your growers and processors so that it makes it fresh to your consumer's hands.
- Provide products of the highest quality.
- Limit food waste that hurts your bottom line.

Having the right Food ERP Software lets you account for all of these things. All within one system that delivers recommendations to save your business money and boost profits.

Choose industry-specific software

You'll want to choose an ERP that's specifically designed to meet the unique needs of a company in the food industry. You can even go beyond that and look for a solution tailored to your specific industry.

There are several solutions out there for Food Companies. You can drill deeper and find solutions for food distributors, processors, and manufacturers. Drill deeper still and you'll find solutions made just for dairy producers, produce growers, meat distributors, and seafood processors.

The deeper you drill down, the more likely you'll find software that meets your specific needs. With tailored functionality right out of the box. And less need for customization.

The bottom line?

Look for an ERP that caters exactly to your specific type of Food Business.

Cloud or on-premise?

Cloud

Cloud means that your database and files are hosted on external servers that someone else manages.

Pros

- **Flexibility:** Cloud-based ERP allows you to easily scale as your business needs change.
- **Cost-effective:** Reduces upfront costs with this pay-as-you-go pricing model. It also eliminates the need to buy hardware and the expense of a dedicated IT team.
- **Accessibility:** Access your data and applications from anywhere with an internet connection.
- **Automatic updates:** Software updates happen automatically and in the background. Your system stays up to date with the latest security and performance enhancements.
- **Speed:** Cloud ERP deployment can be done within 3 to 6 months, whereas on-premise can take up to 12 months. Cloud ERP also offers faster performance when using the application.

Cons

- **Security:** Data stored in the cloud can be at risk for cyber-attacks.
- **Dependency on internet connection:** Cloud applications require an internet connection for real-time data transfer. This can cause disruptions in accessing data and applications.
- **Limited control:** You don't have control of the physical infrastructure and configuration of the cloud environment.

On-Premise

On-premise means that your ERP runs on your company servers. You have the servers at one (or more) of your physical locations and have staff to maintain them.

Pros

- **Control:** You have full control over the infrastructure and configuration of your server environment.
- **Security:** Some people feel more comfortable having control of security. Although studies have shown that the most common way attackers get into networks is through phishing and email-borne threats. These attacks almost always enter through user workstations.
- **Customization:** Many people feel that having their system on-premise means they have unlimited customization options. All software has limitations no matter where it's hosted.

Cons

- **Cost:** Factor in the cost to maintain your servers and support staff.
- **Limited scalability:** Difficult to adjust resources to changing business needs.
- **Maintenance:** Maintenance and updates can be disruptive. Not keeping a regular update regime can lead to loss of functionality and opening vulnerabilities.

Out of the box, custom, or a mix of both?

This is where you see the true advantage an industry-specific solution. Every business is unique in its own way. But companies in your particular food industry have similar needs.

For example:

- Dairy Producers share the same needs such as FFMO price adjustments.
- Fisheries need to manage their fleets.
- Meat Processors have to account for variable or fixed weight products.
- Produce Growers require field and greenhouse management.

There's far less customization needed when you choose a solution that has built-in functionality for your particular needs.

Go with an established software maker

Implementing a new ERP is a big investment, in time and money.

The last thing you want is someone closing up shop, and leaving you hanging.

You'll want to choose a software maker that is established, secure, reliable, and has a strong roadmap for the future.

User interface and adoption

Ease of use is a big factor to consider. Look for an ERP with a clean, uncluttered user interface.

One of the biggest hurdles in an ERP implementation is getting people to actually use the software. People are resistant to change. However, a proper training program and a user-friendly interface can make company-wide adoption easier.

Step 3: How to choose a Partner/Vendor for immediate and ongoing success

Choosing the right ERP Partner is one of the most important things you can do to ensure success today and in the future.

Your ERP Partner should:

- Be an expert in working with your type of business.
- Offer a solution that works for you and covers all areas of your business.
- Guide you through the implementation process, really taking the time to understand your processes, needs, and objectives,
- Support your plans for growth.
- Keep you updated on the latest methods to improve your system processes.
- Be a long-term partner

Recap:

- First, you'll want to look internally. What's your current setup? What are your problems and needs? For today and for future growth?
(Look Internally)
- Look for an established solution that's already tailored to your specific type of Food Business. (Look Externally)
- Choose a partner with lots of experience with the solution and that you feel you can count on for the next few years as you grow.
(Look for a Partnership)

Hope this helped you to get on track to finding the right Food ERP for your business.

If you need any help in the process, please reach out, we'd be happy to help.

About Inecta Food

Inecta is an ERP software provider and partner. We only work with Food Businesses, like yours.

We have several out-of-the-box solutions tailored just for your needs:

Food

- Food Distributor
- Food Trader
- Food Manufacturer
- Beverage
- Wine & Spirits
- Foodservice & Catering
- Slaughterhouse
- Meat Processor
- Egg Producer

Seafood

- Seafood Processor
- Seafood Trader
- Aquaculture
- Fishery

Produce

- Produce Grower
- Produce Packer / Shipper
- Vertical Farming

Want to check out the software?

Contact us for a demo



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