

# Food Safety Standards Fact Sheets *for* Charities and Community Organisations

## 1 Introduction to new food safety standards

Charities and community organisations play an important role in our community, and fundraising events are a major contribution to the work of the community. But no one wants people to get sick from the food they eat at these events.

In Australia, the food law places many responsibilities on the proprietor of a food business. If you are the organiser of an event or an official of a charity or community organisation that is selling food, you need to be aware of these responsibilities.

If you understand your legal responsibilities and plan your events properly and in good time, complying with the law is straightforward.

### What the law says

The Food Safety Standards, which apply to Australia only, include requirements for the handling, storage, transport and display of food. The Standards are in the process of being adopted by each State and Territory and, when adopted, will specify requirements that are consistent across Australia for the first time. A copy of the Food Safety Standards is available from the FSANZ website at [www.foodstandards.gov.au](http://www.foodstandards.gov.au) and may also be available from your local council or health authority.

In the Standards, a food business is identified as a business, enterprise or activity (other than primary food production) that involves:

- (a) the handling of food for sale, or
- (b) the sale of food,

regardless of whether the business, enterprise or activity concerned is of a commercial, charitable or community nature or whether it involves the handling or sale of food on one occasion only. (clause 1, Standard 3.1.1 *Interpretation and Application*).

This definition of a 'food business' includes all food activities involved in fundraising, including preparation of the food before it is sold. The definition of 'sale' covers fundraising activities. Food has been sold even if you just ask for a donation.

## **How to use this guide**

The decision path on the back page of this guide leads you through the different types of events. Next to each question is a list of fact sheets containing the information that you need to consider for your activity. The fact sheets are:

- 1 Notification
- 2 Skills and knowledge
- 3 Labelling
- 4 Temperature control
- 5 Sausage sizzles and barbecues
- 6 Preparing and cooking food
- 7 Transporting food
- 8 Camping
- 9 Health and hygiene for food handlers

The event organiser should read the fact sheets that are relevant to the type of event and should ensure that the people helping with the event also read them.

## **Acknowledgements and feedback**

The Australia New Zealand Food Authority and Laister Consulting Services prepared these fact sheets with help from charities and community organisations, and the State and Territory health authorities of Australia. FSANZ expresses its appreciation of the assistance received from Laister Consulting Services and from these organisations and authorities. FSANZ acknowledges that the views contained in these fact sheets do not necessarily represent their views.

FSANZ invites feedback on these fact sheets from individuals, organisations and government agencies. The feedback must be in writing and can be faxed, mailed or e-mailed to the Food Safety Program, FSANZ (see the contact details below). Your feedback will be taken into account when the fact sheets are reviewed.

These fact sheets, unlike the Food Standards, are not legally binding. If you have any doubts about the interpretation of the Standards or your legal responsibilities under the Standards, seek independent legal advice.

## Checklist

It is very easy to forget to do things when you are busy trying to organise events. If you tick the boxes of this checklist for each activity you will be less likely to miss important jobs.

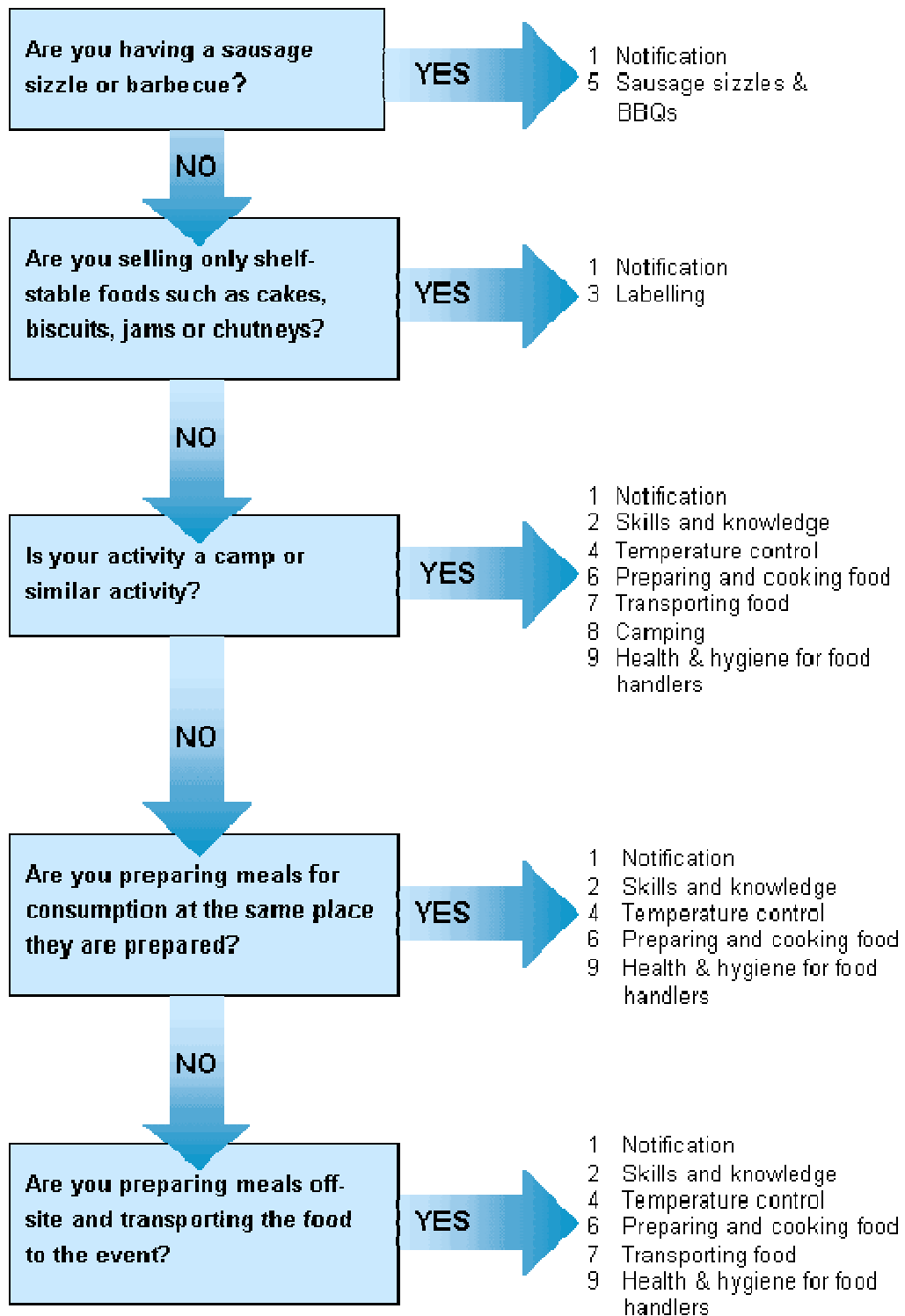
Event: ..... Date: .....

Have you...	YES	NO
• decided which activity on the decision path covers the event?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• notified your enforcement agency about the event?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• identified all volunteers participating in the event?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• provided volunteers with the appropriate information sheets?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• checked that handwashing facilities will be provided?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• checked that drinkable water will be available at the site or an adequate supply will be transported to the site?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• checked whether power or gas will be available (if needed)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• determined how to dispose of waste water and rubbish?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• checked that premises and temporary stalls are clean and appropriate for the activity being undertaken?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• checked that adequate temperature control equipment will be available?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• checked that a thermometer will be available if potentially hazardous foods will be handled?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Talk to your local enforcement agency if you have any concerns.

If you have answered **NO** to any question, you need to consider what can be done to ensure that your charity or community organisation meets the Food Safety Standards.

## Decision Tree



## **2 Notification**

It is important that all businesses that make or sell food are known to enforcement agencies so that these agencies can ensure that food businesses are handling food safely.

The Food Safety Standards require all food businesses to provide the following information to the appropriate enforcement agency before any food handling begins:

- contact details for the business, including the name of the business and the name and address of the proprietor;
- the nature of the business; and
- the location of all food premises that are within the jurisdiction of the enforcement agency.

Any changes must also be notified to the enforcement agency.

### **What is a food business?**

The definition of a food business includes any activity where food is sold and specifically includes activities undertaken by charities and community organisations.

### **What is the enforcement agency?**

If your business is located in a State, that is, New South Wales, Queensland, Victoria, Tasmania, South Australia or Western Australia, the enforcement agency is likely to be your local council. If your business is located in the Northern Territory or the Australian Capital Territory, the enforcement agency will be your local health department.

### **How to notify**

Contact your local council or health department for information on how to notify. It may be easier for your charity or community organisation to nominate one person to deal with notification requirements. This person can then discuss the requirements with the local council or health department. Simplified notification arrangements may be in place for businesses operated by charities and community organisations in your State or Territory.

## **3 Skills and knowledge**

The Food Safety Standards require proprietors of food businesses to ensure that food handlers and supervisors of food handlers have the skills and knowledge they need to handle food safely.

This means that food handlers and supervisors must have the 'skills' to do those tasks that are necessary to ensure the safety of the food being handled and 'knowledge' of food safety and hygiene matters. For example, a food handler who is responsible for cooling cooked food must have the knowledge that the food must be cooled within a certain time to ensure it

remains safe and the skills to do this (for example, by placing the food in shallow containers for cooling).

However, charities and community organisations are exempt from this requirement if:

- there is no personal financial gain, that is, all the moneys raised are used for charitable or community purposes; **and**
- the food sold is shelf-stable (for example, biscuits, cakes without cream, jams or chutneys); or
- the food is consumed immediately after thorough cooking (for example, sausages sold straight from the barbecue).

This means that in the above circumstances the event organiser does **not** need to ensure that each food handler has the skills and knowledge to handle food safely. However, these food handlers must still comply with the health and hygiene requirements of the Food Safety Standards, see Fact Sheet 10 *Health and hygiene for food handlers*.

If the exemption does not apply, the event organiser should ensure that all food handlers and supervisors have the skills and knowledge they need to handle food safely. The exemption does not apply if the activity involves:

- selling potentially hazardous foods that have not been cooked, such as salads or cream cakes; or
- selling potentially hazardous foods that are not served immediately after cooking, such as when food is pre-cooked and then heated for sale.

## **How to ensure your food handlers and supervisors have the appropriate skills and knowledge**

The event organiser should first determine if the food handlers and supervisors already have the skills and knowledge, as some may have previously received food safety training. If training is needed, the event organiser will need to work out the best way of providing this training.

Food handlers and supervisors are not required to attend formal training courses. Food handlers and supervisors can obtain the skills and knowledge they need by:

- attending 'in-house' training programs;
- reading food safety and hygiene information (such as these fact sheets);
- following food safety procedures that relate to the activities of the charitable or community organisation; or
- attending food safety courses.

The event organiser can check whether food handlers and supervisors have the required knowledge and understand their obligations by talking to them or asking questions. Assessing skills is much harder but if, for example, food handlers are seen to do the right thing at all times when preparing food, it is reasonable to assume that they have the necessary skills.

Event organisers should consider whether:

- all food handlers know how the business expects food to be handled;
- food handlers understand their health and hygiene responsibilities (see Fact Sheet 10 *Health and hygiene for food handlers*);

- there is someone in the organisation who is responsible for ensuring that food handlers handle food safely; and
- the necessary equipment is available so that food handlers can handle food safely, for example handwashing facilities.

## 4 Labelling food sold at fundraising events

The rules for the labelling of all foods sold or prepared for sale in Australia and New Zealand are set out in the [Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code](#).

A **fund raising event** means an event that raises money solely for charitable or community causes and not for personal financial gain.

Food sold at fund raising events is exempt from most of these labelling requirements.

However despite these general exemptions, certain information must always be provided when relevant. Other information must be provided if the customer requests it.

There are specific ways that the required information must be provided, depending on the type of information and whether the food is packaged or not. In some cases the information must be provided on a label on the food. In other cases, it can be provided in connection with the display of the food, for example, on a sign, or it could be provided verbally upon request by the customer.

In addition, you may decide to voluntarily provide other information that could be useful to your customers, for example, an ingredient list and a best before date.

There may also be requirements under other legislation not regulated by FSANZ e.g. for the weight or volume of a packaged product to be marked on the label.

Fund raising event organisers should be aware that there may be New Zealand, State, Territory or Commonwealth legislative requirements that need to be complied with in order to conduct the event. See [here](#) for Australian State and Territory requirements. For New Zealand legislation refer to the [Charities Act 2005](#).

For detailed information about which labelling requirements apply to foods sold at fund raising events, refer to Standard 1.2.1 – Application of Labelling and Other Information Requirements of the [Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code](#).

### Information that must be always provided

Some labelling information must always be provided, if relevant to the food. This includes:

- *Directions for use and/or storage of the food, if required for health or safety reasons* - Refer to Standard 1.2.6 – Directions for Use and Storage
- *Country of origin information (in Australia only)* -Refer to Standard 1.2.11 – Country of Origin Requirements

- *Genetically modified foods* -Refer to Standard 1.5.2 – Food Produced Using Gene Technology
- *Irradiated foods* -Refer to Standard 1.5.3 – Irradiation of Food
- *Royal jelly* -Refer to Standard 1.2.3 – Mandatory Warning and Advisory Statements and Declarations .
- *Certain fish, meat and meat products, and offal* -Refer to Standard 2.2.1 – Meat and Meat Products, and Standard 2.2.3 – Fish and Fish Products
- *Kava* -Refer to Standard 2.6.3 – Kava

## **Information that must be provided if requested by the customer**

There is also some basic information that you need to either provide if asked by the customer, or display with the food:

- *Name of the food* -Refer to Standard 1.2.2 – Food Identification Requirements
- *Declaration of allergenic substances* -Refer to Standard 1.2.3 – Mandatory Warning and Advisory Statements and Declarations
- *Advisory statements* -Refer to clause 2 of Standard 1.2.3 for further information
- *Nutrition information panels* -Refer to Standard 1.2.8 – Nutrition Information Requirements

## **Providing information voluntarily**

Despite the exemption from a number of the labelling requirements, you may still decide to voluntarily label your food for fund raising events. In addition to the information that must be provided (as outlined above), you may also choose to provide additional information that would be useful to your customers, such as a list of ingredients, a contact name and address and a best-before date.

## **Further Information on Labelling Requirements**

The name of the food must either be displayed with the food or provided to the consumer if they request it. Refer to Standard 1.2.2 – Food Identification Requirement

### **Directions for use and/or storage of the food**

The directions for use and/or storage of the food must be provided if required for health or safety reasons. An example is ‘keep refrigerated at or below 4 ° C’. This information must be included on the label of packaged foods, or accompanying unpackaged foods. Refer to Standard 1.2.6 – Directions for Use and Storage.

### **Contact details, ingredient list, expiry date**

There is no mandatory requirement to provide the contact details of the supplier of the food, an ingredient list (except for any ingredients required to be declared as listed in the section below), or an expiry date (such as a ‘best before’ or ‘use by’ date), however you may choose to voluntarily provide this information.



## **Declaration of allergenic substances**

A declaration of the following substances is required if present in the food (as these may cause allergic reactions in some people):

- cereals containing gluten and their products (wheat, rye, barley, oats and spelt and their hybridised strains) (except in beer and spirits)
- crustacea and their products
- egg and egg products,
- fish and fish products (except for isinglass derived from swim bladders and used as clarifying agent in beer and wine)
- milk and milk products
- peanuts and soybeans and their products
- tree nuts and sesame seeds and their products
- added sulphites in concentrations of 10 mg/kg or more.

The information listed above could either be provided if requested by the customer, or you could display this information with the food, for example, on a label on the food, or on a sign with the food. Refer to Standard 1.2.3 – Mandatory Warning and Advisory Statements and Declarations

## **Nutrition information panels**

A nutrition information panel (NIP) must be provided if a nutrition claim is made about the food. Standard 1.2.8 – Nutrition Information Requirements, defines nutrition claims, including claims such as ‘low fat’, ‘gluten free’ and ‘high fibre’. Standard 1.2.8 also describes how the NIP must be set out and displayed, either with the food or provided to the customer if requested.

## **Country of origin information (in Australia only)**

Country of origin information is required on some unpackaged foods sold at fund raising events in Australia, for example, pork, fish, fruit, and vegetables. This information can be provided on or in connection with the display of the food, for example, on a label on the food or on a sign with the food. Refer to Standard 1.2.11 – Country of Origin Requirements , to see whether this is applicable for your event.

# **5 Temperature control**

The Food Safety Standards specify that potentially hazardous foods must be stored, displayed and transported at safe temperatures and, where possible, prepared at safe temperatures. However, you can also use time, rather than temperature, to keep food safe. This method is explained under ' The 2 hour/4 hour guide' .

Safe temperatures are 5°C or colder, or 60°C or hotter. Potentially hazardous food needs to be kept at these temperatures to prevent food-poisoning bacteria, which may be present in the food, from multiplying to dangerous levels. These bacteria can grow at temperatures between

5°C and 60°C, which is known as the temperature danger zone. The fastest rate of growth is at around 37°C, the temperature of the human body.

The Food Safety Standards also require you to have a thermometer if you prepare, handle or sell potentially hazardous food. This will enable you to check that safe temperatures are being maintained.

## **What foods are potentially hazardous?**

Foods normally considered to be potentially hazardous are:

- raw meats, cooked meats and food containing meat, such as casseroles, curries, lasagne and meat pies;
- dairy products and foods containing dairy products, such as milk, cream, custard and dairy-based desserts;
- seafood (excluding live seafood) and food containing seafood, such as seafood salad;
- processed fruits and vegetables, such as prepared salads and ready-to-eat fruit packs;
- cooked rice and pasta;
- processed foods containing eggs, beans, nuts or other protein-rich food, such as quiche and soya bean products; and
- foods that contain any of the above foods, such as sandwiches, rice salads and pasta salads.

## **Keeping food cold**

When you are preparing food, make sure that you have enough refrigerator space or insulated boxes with ice bricks to store the food. It is important to remember that refrigerators do not work properly when they are overloaded or when food is packed tightly, because the cold air cannot circulate.

If you are running out of room in your refrigerator, remove foods that are not potentially hazardous, such as drinks. The temperature of these foods is not critical and they can be kept cool in insulated containers with ice or ice blocks.

## **Cooling foods**

If potentially hazardous foods have to be cooled, their temperature should be reduced as quickly as possible. The temperature should fall from 60°C to 21°C in less than two hours and be reduced to 5°C or colder in the next four hours. It is difficult to cool food within these times unless you put food into shallow containers.

## **Keeping food hot**

If you are keeping food hot on cooktops, in ovens or in bain marie units, the equipment needs to be set high enough to ensure that the food remains hot ( 60 ° C or hotter).

## The 2 hour / 4 hour guide

Although potentially hazardous food should be kept at 5°C or colder or 60°C or hotter wherever possible, this food can be safely between 5°C and 60°C provided it is between these temperatures **for less than four hours**. This is because it takes more than four hours for food-poisoning bacteria to grow to dangerous levels.

The 2 hour/4 hour guide applies to ready-to-eat potentially hazardous food. It provides guidance on how long this type of food can be held safely at temperatures between 5°C and 60°C and what should happen to it after certain times. The times refer to the life of the food, including preparation and cooling, not just to display times, so remember to add up the total time that the food has been between 5°C and 60°C.

Total time limit between 5°C and 60°C	What you should do
Less than 2 hours	Refrigerate or use immediately
Between 2 hours and 4 hours	Use immediately
More than 4 hours	Throw out

## Why have a thermometer?

A thermometer is essential in ensuring that food is kept at safe temperatures. If your organisation prepares, handles or sells any potentially hazardous food, it must have a thermometer which is accurate to  $\pm 1^\circ\text{C}$ . This means that when the thermometer shows a temperature of 5°C, the actual temperature will be between 4°C and 6°C. The thermometer must be available for use when foods are being prepared, so you may need more than one if foods are prepared in different places.

## How to clean and sanitise your thermometer

As the probe of the thermometer will be inserted into food, the probe must be cleaned and sanitised before it is used to measure the temperature of the food. This is especially important when the thermometer is used to measure the temperature of raw food and then ready-to-eat food, for example raw chicken and cooked chicken. To clean and sanitise your thermometer:

- wash the probe to remove any grease and food particles;
- sanitise the probe using alcohol wipes or very hot water; and
- thoroughly dry the probe using a disposable towel or let it air dry.

## Checking temperatures of food

- Determine the warmest area of a cool room or the coldest area of a hot display unit.
- Insert the clean, dry probe into the food.
- Remember that temperature readings are not instant- wait until the temperature has stabilised before reading.

- Stabilise the thermometer between measuring hot and cold foods by allowing the thermometer to come back to room temperature.
- If the food is packaged or frozen, place the length of the probe between two packages of the food.

Remember that the temperature at the centre of food may be different from the surface temperature. For example, when cooked food is being cooled in the refrigerator, the centre of the food will take the longest to cool. Therefore, when checking the temperature of this food, make sure that you check the centre.

## **How to check the accuracy of your thermometer**

Thermometers have to be accurate to ensure that temperatures are correctly measured. Ask the company that supplied your thermometer how often the thermometer should be checked for accuracy. It is best to have your thermometer regularly checked and maintained by the supplier of the thermometer. However, if you would like to check the accuracy of your thermometer yourself, use the following method.

- Place some ice into a container with a small amount of cold water. The ice should not float if the correct amount of water is used.
- Mix into a slurry and insert the thermometer probe.
- Leave it for about three minutes.
- Check and note the temperature. It should read 0°C.
- Do this three times and compare the temperatures recorded.
- If they vary by more than 1°C, get your thermometer checked by the supplier.

## **6 Sausage sizzles and barbecues**

Sausage sizzles and barbecues are a popular way to raise money for charities and community organisations. They are often held outdoors to take advantage of Australia's good weather and open spaces.

Provided you take some simple food safety precautions and sell freshly cooked food straight from the barbecue, the food should be safe.

### **Preparing and cooking food safely**

Take the following precautions at sausage sizzles and barbecues to ensure that food is safe.

- Finish preparing raw meat before leaving for the site such as slicing, marinating or skewering.
- Pack raw meat into insulated boxes with ice bricks for transportation.
- Handle food with tongs or other equipment. Use separate equipment to handle raw and cooked meats. Hands should not be used unless absolutely necessary, and then handwashing facilities must be available. Hands must be washed after handling raw meats.
- Keep cooked meat and salads separate from raw meat at all times to prevent contamination.
- Cover food to protect it from contamination.

- Use clean and dry utensils for serving the food -**never** place cooked meat back on the trays that held the raw meat.
- Cook chicken, sausages and hamburgers until juices run clear - steaks can be cooked to preference.
- Throw left-over food away unless refrigeration equipment is available to rapidly cool the food.

## **Disposable utensils**

Wherever possible, single-use (disposable) utensils such as knives, forks, plates and cups should be used and thrown away after use. These items should be kept covered until required and should be handled carefully to minimise any risk of contamination. Re-useable items such as mugs should not be used unless there are facilities available on-site to wash and sanitise them, or there are enough items for the duration of the event.

## **Water**

If water is needed for hand washing or for washing up, a supply adequate to last the event must be provided. The water must be of drinkable quality. If using containers to transport water to the event, make sure that they are clean and have not been used to store chemicals.

If you do not have access to hot water for washing up, make sure that you take enough utensils so that you can use separate utensils for the raw and the cooked food at the event.

## **Handwashing facilities**

Unless a written exemption has been obtained from your local council or health authority, food handlers must wash their hands with warm running water. An exemption is only likely to be issued where enough water is not available for handwashing. In such circumstances the local council or health authority may permit the use of alternatives such as cleaning creams or gels, or sanitising wipes.

If you have access to water, you should set up a temporary handwashing facility that provides running water. You can do this by using a large water container with a tap at its base. Another container, such as a bucket, should collect the waste water, to keep the site dry and clean.

A supply of soap and paper towels must be provided at the handwashing facility so that handwashing can be undertaken properly. Supply a bin for used towels. This helps to keep the site tidy and prevents contamination from used towels.

## **7 Preparing and cooking food**

In addition to this fact sheet, all people involved in the preparation and cooking of food need to read Fact Sheet 10 *Health and hygiene for food handlers*. It is particularly important that you do not prepare or cook food if you are ill with diarrhoea and/or vomiting.

### **Buying food**

When you buy potentially hazardous food, place it in insulated bags or boxes for transporting to the preparation place if it is not close to your shops. Place your potentially hazardous food in a refrigerator or freezer as soon as possible. See Fact Sheet 5 *Temperature control* for a list of foods that are potentially hazardous.

### **Preparing food**

Before preparing food, make sure that hands, clothes, equipment and kitchen surfaces are clean. They will also need to be kept clean throughout food preparation.

If your event is to be held outdoors with limited facilities, prepare the food in a kitchen and then transport it to the event. This does not mean that you need to cook food before you take it to the event but, for example, you should slice the raw meat ready for cooking. In fact, food that is freshly cooked at the event and served straight away, such as occurs with barbecues, has less chance of becoming unsafe than food that is pre-cooked and then taken to the event. Therefore, wherever possible, try to cook food at the event rather than pre-cooking it.

### **Preventing food from becoming contaminated during preparation**

The most important step to remember before preparing food is to wash and dry your hands thoroughly.

Try to use tongs and other utensils when preparing food that will not be cooked before it is eaten, such as salads and sandwiches. You may prefer to wear gloves, but remember that they should be used for one task only (for example, breaking up a cooked chicken for sandwiches). When you start the next task, wear new gloves.

Never use the same utensils for raw meats and foods that are ready to eat, such as cooked meats, unless they have been thoroughly cleaned, sanitised and dried.

Cooked food and other food that is ready to eat, such as salads, should always be placed on clean and dry serving dishes.

### **Cleaning and sanitising utensils**

There are three steps needed to effectively clean and sanitise utensils:

- washing;
- sanitising; and
- drying.

Utensils such as cutting boards, bowls and knives need to be thoroughly washed in warm soapy water. After washing, the utensils should look clean and there should be no food or anything else visible on them. Effective cleaning will remove most of the dangerous bacteria present. Sanitising will then kill any that might remain.

A dishwasher is very effective at sanitising if it has a hot wash and drying cycle. If you do not have a dishwasher, you will need to sanitise in a sink using a chemical sanitiser or very hot water. If using a chemical sanitiser such as a sodium hypochlorite - or quaternary ammonium - based solution, ensure that it can be safely used for sanitising eating, drinking and cooking utensils. Follow the instructions on the container carefully, as different sanitisers work in different ways. If you are using very hot water, take extra care to avoid being scalded.

All utensils must then be thoroughly dried before they are re-used. Air-drying is best but tea towels can be used if they are clean.

If you are washing up at an event being held outdoors, make sure you have access to plenty of hot water. If hot water is not available, disposable eating and drinking utensils should be used and enough cooking utensils provided to last the duration of the event so that washing up is not necessary.

## **Cooking**

Always cook food thoroughly. Do not partially cook food and then warm it up later. Cook chicken, sausages and hamburgers until juices run clear - beef steaks can be cooked to preference. Cooking will reduce dangerous bacteria to safe levels if it is done properly. Remember that some food-poisoning bacteria can protect themselves from cooking and while they will not be present in enough numbers to make someone sick just after the food is cooked, they can start growing again if the cooked food is left at temperatures between 5°C and 60°C for too long. This is why cooling cooked food quickly is so important.

Wherever possible, try to cook food as close to the time that you will be serving or selling it. For example, if you can, take the food to the event and cook it there. This reduces the chance of the food becoming contaminated after it has been cooked. It also means that there won't be enough time for food-poisoning bacteria to grow to dangerous levels on the cooked food before it is eaten.

If it isn't practical to cook food at the event, you will need to pre-cook the food and transport it hot, or alternatively cook it, cool it and then transport it cold. See Fact Sheet 8 *Transporting food*.

## **Cooling food**

If you decide you want to pre-cook food and then cool it, you will need to ensure that the food is cooled rapidly to 5°C. If a large container of cooked food, for example a beef curry, is placed in a refrigerator for cooling, it can take as long as 24 hours to cool to 5°C. This is very dangerous as the centre of the food will remain warm and allow food-poisoning bacteria to grow to dangerous levels.

The Food Safety Standards require cooked food to be cooled to 5°C within 6 hours. The food must be cooled from 60°C to 21°C within 2 hours and from 21°C to 5°C within a further 4 hours. Safe cooling can be achieved by:

- removing the food from the stove top, oven or other heat source after it has cooked;
- allowing the food to initially cool outside the refrigerator - but make sure it is placed in the refrigerator as soon as any part of it drops to a temperature of 60°C; and
- placing the food in shallow containers.

You will need to use your thermometer to check that the cooked food is being cooled within the 6-hour time limit.

## **Reheating food**

Cold food (which is to be served hot) will need to be quickly and thoroughly heated at the event until it is steaming hot and then kept hot until it is served. It is best to re-heat the food to a temperature of 70°C and hold the food at this temperature for at least two minutes. Use your thermometer to check that all of the food reaches at least this temperature.

## **Keeping food hot**

Hot food will need to be kept hot (60 ° C or above) at the event. This could be achieved by using gas or electric appliances.

## **Making sandwiches**

Sandwiches are a popular product for community and fundraising events. Making them usually involves a lot of handling, which makes personal hygiene very important.

Sandwiches are often filled with potentially hazardous food and should be handled and stored like any other high-risk food. They should be made fresh as close to the start of the event as possible. If this is not practical, they should be kept in a refrigerator. Make sure that you have enough refrigerator space to store them safely - they may take up a lot of room.

Because sandwiches require a lot of handling, the contact time with the person making them is increased. Because of this, it is very important that people who are ill do not make the sandwiches.

Sandwiches should be kept under temperature control when they are transported and displayed for sale. Alternatively, you could use time, rather than temperature, to keep the sandwiches safe. For more advice see Fact Sheet 5 *Temperature control*.

# **8 Transporting food**

When you are transporting food, you need to consider two main food safety issues: keeping the food protected from contamination and, if the food is potentially hazardous, keeping it cold (5°C or colder) or hot (60°C or hotter).



## Protecting food from contamination

It is important to protect food from contamination by keeping it covered at all times. You can achieve this by using containers with lids or by applying plastic film over containers. Materials used to cover food should be suitable for food contact, to ensure that they do not contain any chemicals that could leach into the food. Aluminium foil, plastic film and clean paper may be used, and food should be completely covered. Packaged products should not need additional covering.

Previously used materials and newspaper may contaminate food and should not be used.

## Temperature control

When potentially hazardous foods are transported they should be kept cold (5°C or colder) or hot (60°C or hotter) during the journey. Alternatively, you could use time, rather than temperature, to keep the food safe while it is being transported. See Fact Sheet 5 *Temperature control* for more information.

If the journey is short, insulated containers may keep the food cold. If the journey is longer, you may need to use ice bricks to keep food cold and heat packs to keep food hot.

Place only pre-heated or pre-cooled food in an insulated container, which should have a lid to help maintain safe temperatures.

Insulated containers must be:

- in good condition and kept clean at all times;
- used only for food;
- kept away from other items such as chemicals, pet food, fuel and paint;
- be filled as quickly as possible and closed as soon as they have been filled; and
- kept closed until immediately before the food is needed or is placed in other temperature-controlled equipment.

## Transport considerations

- Containers of cool food should be placed in the coolest part of the vehicle.
- If the inside of the vehicle is air-conditioned, cold food may be transported better here rather than in the boot.
- Vehicles should be clean. If the vehicle is normally used for carrying pets or dirty equipment, the food carrying area should be thoroughly cleaned or lined to prevent any contamination. This may not be necessary if food is transported in an insulated container with a tightly fitting lid.
- The journey should be properly planned and should be kept as short as possible.
- When collecting ingredients, cold foods should be collected last and immediately placed in insulated containers or cool bags for transporting to the preparation facility.
- When taking prepared foods to a venue, pack the food into insulated boxes as your last job.
- When you arrive at the venue, make it your first job to unload any hot or cold food and place it in temperature-controlled equipment.

## 9 Camping

Preparing food for camps can be very challenging because facilities found in the home or commercial food premises are not generally available. You need to properly plan to ensure food safety. The camp should be memorable only for the outdoor experience and not the food poisoning outbreak that could occur.

The five main considerations for keeping food safe in camps are:

- temperature control of food;
- water supply;
- handwashing facilities;
- protecting food from contamination; and
- disposal of rubbish and waste water to prevent the contamination of food.

### Temperature control

The use of potentially hazardous foods when camping should be kept to a minimum unless the food can be kept cold (5°C or colder). Potentially hazardous foods support the growth of bacteria that can cause illness if large numbers of bacteria are present. For a list of potentially hazardous foods see Fact Sheet 5 *Temperature control*.

If your camp is catering for a large number of people, it may be practical to hire gas-powered refrigeration equipment or to use similar facilities close to the campsite.

If you only have limited equipment to keep food cold, buy potentially hazardous foods fresh daily and throw away any leftover food.

You could also consider purchasing foods that are shelf-stable. These are foods that do not need temperature-controlled storage until they are opened. Examples include long-life milk (heat-treated in the carton); canned meats, fish and dairy products; and dried and dehydrated foods.

### Water supply

A safe water supply is probably the most important requirement when camping because water is necessary for preparing and cooking food, cleaning utensils and helping to maintain personal hygiene. Your camp will need access to water of drinking quality.

If water at the site is not suitable for drinking, it will need to be treated. The easiest way to treat this water is to boil it, but it has to be protected from contamination during cooling and storage. It is not always practical to boil the amount of water needed for food preparation and personal hygiene and you may wish to use chemical sterilisation. Always follow the manufacturers' instructions when using these chemicals.

Water filters may also be an option but they can be slow and must be maintained in good working condition. You will also need to check with the supplier of the filter to find out

whether it will be effective for your purposes. Filters should not be damaged and they may need to be cleaned or replaced regularly.

Sources of drinking water, such as streams, wells and bores, should be protected. Access to the water collection point should be restricted and the area protected from animals and foreign matter.

Use only clean containers that are specifically kept for drinking water. Store them carefully at all times, whether they are full or empty, with their lids fastened.

## **Hand washing**

For effective hand washing, clean warm running water is needed so that soap can function correctly and hands can be rinsed before they are dried. During camping, clean running water is not always readily available. A suitable alternative must be provided to ensure that hands do not contaminate food. You will need to obtain approval to use alternative hand washing methods from your local council or health authority. Alternative methods include the use of sterile wipes or cleaning gels.

If you have access to water of drinking quality, you should set up a temporary hand washing facility that provides running water. You can do this by using a large water container with a tap at its base. Another container, such as a bucket, should collect the waste water, to keep the site dry and clean.

A supply of soap and paper towels must be provided at the hand washing facilities so that hand washing can be undertaken properly. Supply a bin for used towels. This helps to keep the site tidy and prevents contamination from used towels.

## **Protecting food from contamination**

It is very important to protect food from contamination. Bacteria cannot move from place to place by themselves<sup>¶</sup> they need help from poor food-handling practices. Poor food handling often allows bacteria to be transferred from a non-food source to food, and from one food to another. The risk of contamination is often greater when camping because only basic equipment and amenities may be available.

To protect food from contamination:

- wash your hands before preparing or handling food;
- keep food covered;
- use separate utensils such as knives and chopping boards for different foods;
- keep raw meat and raw fruits and vegetables well away from foods which are ready to eat, such as cooked meat and salads;
- always thoroughly wash and dry your hands after handling raw meat; and
- thoroughly wash and dry eating and drinking utensils and store in a clean place.

## **Disposal of rubbish and waste water**

The disposal of rubbish and waste water needs careful planning because they attract pests and contaminate food if they are not properly stored and disposed of. Rubbish should be bagged and tied, and kept well away from food preparation areas.

There may be a designated disposal area for waste water at your camping site. Always use this - do not dispose of waste water in or near water sources.

## **10 Health and hygiene for food handlers**

The Food Safety Standards contain requirements that apply only to food handlers. These requirements relate to health and hygiene and have been included to ensure that food handlers take steps to avoid contaminating food. A food handler is anyone who handles food or items that may come into contact with food, such as eating and drinking utensils. All food handlers are legally obliged to comply with the health and hygiene requirements set out in the Food Safety Standards.

Food businesses must inform all food handlers of their health and hygiene obligations under the Food Safety Standards. To help food businesses comply with the requirement, a copy of the health and hygiene requirements has been included as part of this fact sheet. You could ask all food handlers to sign a form, to say that they have received this fact sheet and the attached requirements. This is a good way of keeping checks on who has been advised. It also provides evidence that this requirement has been fulfilled. You may want to delegate this responsibility to one person in your organisation so that a consistent approach is taken and no volunteers are missed.

### **Health requirements**

If you are ill or have an infection you can easily transfer harmful bacteria or viruses to food.

Do not handle food if:

- you are ill with vomiting, diarrhoea, fever or sore throat with fever; or
- your doctor has diagnosed that you have or carry a foodborne illness.

If you have volunteered for an event and then become ill with any of the above symptoms, let the event organiser know that you can no longer work. This is very important, no matter how short-staffed the event may be. Food handlers who are ill can easily make food unsafe. Not only is it against the law, it is not worth the risk. If you start to feel unwell while you are at an event, stop handling food and let the event organiser know immediately.

If you have:

- infected sores on your hands, arm or face; or
- any discharges from your ear, nose or eyes (such as a cold)

you can continue to handle food provided you take extra precautions to prevent food being contaminated. For example, cover the skin sore or take medication to dry up the discharge.

# Hygiene requirements

## General hygiene

Each food handler must take all precautions to ensure that food or surfaces that come in contact with food are not contaminated by his or her body or anything he or she is wearing. This includes hair, saliva, mucus, sweat, blood, fingernails, clothes, jewellery or bandages.

You are required to:

- avoid handling ready-to-eat food such as salads and cooked food<sup>¶</sup> use tongs or other implements instead;
- wear clean outer clothing;
- make sure bandages and dressings on exposed parts of your body (such as the hands, arms or face) are covered with waterproof coverings;
- not eat over uncovered food or equipment and utensils;
- not sneeze, blow or cough over uncovered food or equipment and utensils; and
- not spit, smoke or chew tobacco where food is handled.

## Hand washing

The most important measure to protect food from contamination is proper hand washing because clean and dry hands limit the transfer of harmful organisms to food. The Food Safety Standards require food handlers to wash their hands whenever hands are likely to be a source of contamination of food, including:

- before handling food;
- between handling raw food and food that is ready to eat, such as cooked food and salads;
- after using the toilet;
- after smoking, coughing, sneezing, blowing the nose, eating or drinking;
- after touching hair, scalp, mouth, nose or ear canal; and
- after handling rubbish and other waste.

There are five steps that should be followed when washing hands. These are:

- wet hands under warm running water;
- soap hands, lathering well;
- rub thoroughly, including the wrists and between the fingers;
- rinse in clean water; and
- dry thoroughly on paper towel, leaving no moisture on the hands.

## Division 4 - Health and hygiene requirements

### Subdivision 1 - Requirements for food handlers

#### General requirement

A food handler must take all reasonable measures not to handle food or surfaces likely to come into contact with food in a way that is likely to compromise the safety and suitability of food.

## **Health of food handlers**

- (1) A food handler who has a symptom that indicates the handler may be suffering from a food-borne disease, or knows he or she is suffering from a food-borne disease, or is a carrier of a food-borne disease, must, if at work:
  - (a) report that he or she is or may be suffering from the disease, or knows that he or she is carrying the disease, to his or her supervisor, as the case may be;
  - (b) not engage in any handling of food where there is a reasonable likelihood of food contamination as a result of the disease; and
  - (c) if continuing to engage in other work on the food premises - take all practicable measures to prevent food from being contaminated as a result of the disease.
  
- (2) A food handler who suffers from a condition must, if at work:
  - (a) if there is a reasonable likelihood of food contamination as a result of suffering the condition - report that he or she is suffering from the condition to his or her supervisor; and
  - (b) if continuing to engage in the handling of food or other work - take all practicable measures to prevent food being contaminated as a result of the condition.
  
- (3) A food handler must notify his or her supervisor if the food handler knows or suspects that he or she may have contaminated food whilst handling food.

## **Hygiene of food handlers**

- (1) A food handler must, when engaging in any food handling operation:
  - (a) take all practicable measures to ensure his or her body, anything from his or her body, and anything he or she is wearing does not contaminate food or surfaces likely to come into contact with food;
  - (b) take all practicable measures to prevent unnecessary contact with ready-to-eat food;
  - (c) ensure outer clothing is of a level of cleanliness that is appropriate for the handling of food that is being conducted.
  - (d) only use on exposed parts of his or her body bandages and dressings that are completely covered with a waterproofed covering;
  - (e) not eat over unprotected food or surfaces likely to come into contact with food;
  - (f) not sneeze, blow or cough over unprotected food or surfaces likely to come into contact with food;
  - (g) not spit, smoke or use tobacco or similar preparations in areas in which food is handled; and
  - (h) not urinate or defecate except in a toilet.
  
- (2) A food handler must wash his or her hands in accordance with subclause (4):
  - (a) whenever his or her hands are likely to be a source of contamination of food;
  - (b) immediately before working with ready-to-eat food after handling raw food; and
  - (c) immediately after using the toilet.
  
- (3) A food handler must, when engaging in a food handling operation that involves unprotected food or surfaces likely to come into contact with food, wash his or her hands in accordance with subclause (4):
  - (a) before commencing or re-commencing handling food;

(b) immediately after smoking, coughing, sneezing, using a handkerchief or disposable tissue, eating, drinking or using tobacco or similar substances; and  
(c) after touching his or her hair, scalp or a body opening.

(4) A food handler must, whenever washing his or her hands:

(a) use the hand washing facilities provided;

(b) thoroughly clean his or her hands using soap or other effective means, and warm running water; and

(c) thoroughly dry his or her hands on a single use towel or in another way that is not likely to transfer pathogenic micro-organisms to the hands.

(5) A food handler who handles food at temporary food premises does not have to clean his or her hands with warm running water, or comply with paragraph (4)(c), if the appropriate enforcement agency has provided the food business operating from the temporary food premises with approval in writing for this purpose.