Text, logo

Description automatically generated**Food Safety & Hygiene**

As a food business you must ensure that your practices minimise the risk of harm to the consumers.  Millions of people in the UK are affected by food poisoning each year, so food hygiene is a key priority if you prepare or handle food.

There are a number of key risks, including illness or death from food poisoning, increased consumer complaints, loss of reputation, legal action and fines.

There are seven issues that you need to consider if you're intending to prepare and handle food:

* Contamination
* Temperature controls
* Storage and preservation
* Personal Hygiene
* Pest Control
* Cleaning and disinfection
* Food Safety Management

Food safety is normally regulated by Environmental Health at your local authority (District or City Council) although in some cases this is done by the Food Standards Agency.

Text, logo

Description automatically generated

If you are planning to produce, store or sell food and drink, in virtually all cases you will need to register your business with your local authority in advance and you will need to have written food safety management procedures in place.

Anyone handling food must also have appropriate training, supervision and instruction in food hygiene.

For full details of the Food Safety Act 1990 click [here](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/nisi/1991/762/contents/made)

**What you'll need to do:**

* Complete the relevant Food Standards Agency Management Pack; Safer Food, Better Business.  This gives essential advice and will help you assess whether you or your employees require food hygiene training. <https://www.food.gov.uk/sites/default/files/media/document/sfbb-caterers-pack-fixed.pdf>
* Develop and document food safety management procedures relating to the specific circumstances of your business.
* Complete the registration form available via the website of your local authority (please see below contact details for all the Lincolnshire District Councils and Lincoln City Council)
* Submit the registration form to your local authority at least 28 days before your business starts trading.  Registration carries no charge and cannot be refused.
* If you are intending to process food of animal origin – including meat, fish, milk, dairy and egg products – contact your local authority to discuss whether your premises requires approval.
* Text, logo

  Description automatically generatedIf you plan to sell food from a van/kiosk you may need to apply for a peddler’s licence.  Your local authority will be able to advise you.

**Top Ten Tips:**

1. Make sure your food preparation space is large enough to prevent cross-contamination and that the surfaces are designed to allow effective cleaning
2. Store and handle raw foods and ready to eat foods separately
3. Provide separate facilities for washing hands to that where food and equipment will be washed
4. Cook food thoroughly, cool food quickly, keep chilled foods below 8°C
5. Date foods that you prepare on site so they are not kept for too long. Use all foods by the use by date.
6. Do not handle food when unwell
7. Make sure you know what ingredients can cause allergic reactions and ensure that you make allergen information available to your customers, either by giving them full allergen information or by making it clear how they can get the information (signposting).
8. Surfaces should be cleaned regularly with hot soapy water followed by a sanitiser
9. It’s really important to provide regular training for your staff so that they know and are continually reminded how to handle food safety.
10. If you intend to sell alcohol or hot food between 11pm and 5am, you will need to apply for a licence.

Text, logo

Description automatically generated**Best Before, Use By and Sell By durability dates**

* Best Before date relates to the quality of the food and is an indication of the period for which a food can reasonably be expected to retain its optimal condition.  You are allowed to sell food after the Best-Before date provided the food is safe to eat but you'll take responsibility for the quality of the food.
* Use By dates are for foods that are highly perishable.  These foods present a microbiological risk to the consumer if sold after the Use By date and so this mark relates to the safety of the food.  You cannot sell food after its Use By date.
* Sell By dates and Display Until dates are not required by law and are used mainly for stock control purposes within business premises.  A Sell By date cannot replace a Best Before or Use By date. (There are different rules for eggs)

Once your business is up and running you should also be prepared for food safety inspections; both announced and unannounced. This is a great opportunity for you to demonstrate the care you take with food safety and hygiene, and you can use the food hygiene certification to help promote your business.

**Food Standards**

It’s important that you understand the legislation around the preparation, composition and labelling of food supplied for human consumption.  In broad terms:

* The quality must meet the expectations of the consumer
* Text, logo

  Description automatically generatedIt must be as described and not presented in a way that misleads the consumer
* Nothing may be added or removed that would make it harmful to health

Full details can be found [here](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1990/16/contents).

**Food Labelling**

The law sets out what is required to be shown on food packaging.  This is to allow the consumer to make an informed choice.  There are different labelling requirements for food which is:

* "Prepacked” =  Food that is supplied to you already packaged
* "Non-Prepacked"   = Food that is sold unwrapped – for example, in restaurants, bakeries, deli counters or salad bars.
* "Prepacked for Direct Sale" = Food that is wrapped on the same premises as they are sold, such as meat pies or sandwiches packed on site.

The full regulations can be read [here](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/1996/1499/contents/made) but our advice is to contact your local Trading Standards team for food labelling advice and guidance relevant to your particular business.

Text, logo

Description automatically generatedOn 1st October 2021 new regulations came into force with specific requirements for food allergen labelling. The full details can be found [here.](https://www.food.gov.uk/business-guidance/introduction-to-allergen-labelling-changes-ppds) This legislation applies to any business that produces pre-packaged food for direct sale and requires the business to label the food with the name of the food and full ingredients list, with allergenic ingredients highlighted on the list.

For generic Food Safety advice and information please visit the Food Standards Agency (FSA) website:  <https://www.food.gov.uk/business-guidance>

**For help and advice from your local authority contact:-**

**Boston Borough Council**

Website: <http://www.boston.gov.uk/>

Email: [info@boston.gov.uk](mailto:info@boston.gov.uk)

**City of Lincoln Council**

Website: <http://www.lincoln.gov.uk/>

**East Lindsey District Council**

Website: <https://www.e-lindsey.gov.uk/>

Text, logo

Description automatically generatedEmail: [customerservices@e-lindsey.gov.uk](mailto:customerservices@e-lindsey.gov.uk)

**North East Lincolnshire Council**

Website: <https://www.nelincs.gov.uk/>

Email for business rates: [BusinessRates@nelincs.gov.uk](mailto:BusinessRates@nelincs.gov.uk)

**North Kesteven District Council**

Website: <https://www.n-kesteven.gov.uk/>

Email: [customer\_services@n-kesteven.gov.uk](mailto:customer_services@n-kesteven.gov.uk)

**North Lincolnshire Council**

Website: <http://www.northlincs.gov.uk/>

Email: [businessinfo@northlincs.gov.uk](mailto:businessinfo@northlincs.gov.uk)

**Rutland County Council**

Website: https://www.rutland.gov.uk/my-business/food-health-and-safety/food-safety-for-businesses/

Text, logo

Description automatically generatedEmail: enquiries@rutland.gov.uk

**South Holland District Council**

Website: <https://www.sholland.gov.uk/>

Email for business rates: [info@sholland.gov.uk](mailto:info@sholland.gov.uk)

**South Kesteven District Council**

Website: <http://www.southkesteven.gov.uk/>

Email: [customerservices@southkesteven.gov.uk](mailto:customerservices@southkesteven.gov.uk)

**West Lindsey District Council**

Website: <https://www.west-lindsey.gov.uk/>

Email: [customer.services@west-lindsey.gov.uk](mailto:customer.services@west-lindsey.gov.uk)