Food Safety Programs

Provisions under the *Food Act 2006* (the Act) relating to food safety programs for food businesses have now commenced.

Licensed food businesses are required to have an accredited food safety program if:

(a) the food business involves off-site catering;

(b) the primary activity of the food business is on-site catering at the premises stated in the licence;

(c) the primary activity of the food business is on-site catering at part of the premises stated in the licence (eg. a function room used for on-site catering on the premises of a large hotel) catering to 200 or more people on 12 or more times per year; or

(d) the food business is carried on as part of the operations of a private hospital under the *Private Health Facilities Act 1999*; or

(e) the food business processes or serves potentially hazardous food for vulnerable populations including hospital patients, aged care recipients, children in child care centres and vulnerable people receiving other services such as meals on wheels.

If your food business undertakes one or more of the activities listed above, you are required to develop a food safety program and submit it to Fraser Coast Regional Council for accreditation.

A food safety program is a documented program that ensures food safety through the identification, monitoring and control of food safety hazards in the handling of food in a food business. The food safety program must:

- systematically identify the food safety hazards that are reasonably likely to occur in food handling operations of the food business, and
- identify where, in a food handling operation of the food business, each hazard identified can be controlled and the means of control, and
- provide for the systematic monitoring of the means of control, and
- provide for appropriate corrective action to be taken when a hazard identified is not under control, and
- provide for the regular review of the program to ensure it is appropriate for the food business, and
- provide for the keeping of appropriate records for the food business, including records about action taken to ensure the business is carried on in compliance with the program, and
- contain other information, relating to the control of food safety hazards, prescribed under a regulation.

Templates to assist businesses have been developed and are available on the Queensland Health website at www.health.qld.gov.au/industry/food. Templates specific to other food industry sectors are currently under development and will also be available at this website shortly.

These templates are available to be downloaded, free of charge and provide sufficient information and resources to assist food businesses to develop their own food safety program. However, food businesses are able to use any template for the creation of a food safety program, provided it meets the necessary standard outlined in the Act.

Queensland Health is also in the final stages of releasing an electronic development tool, *FSP Master* which will allow businesses to develop a customised food safety program over the internet, using drop down menus and step by step processes.

Once the food safety program has been developed and implemented, your food businesses must submit a copy to the Fraser Coast Regional Council for it to be accredited.

The accredited food safety program must be regularly audited by an auditor approved under the Act for compliance with the program, the Act and the *Food Standards Code*. The first audit must be undertaken within six months of the program being accredited and thereafter, at a frequency decided by the local government.

A register of approved auditors will be available from the Queensland Health website, www.health.qld.gov.au/foodsafety to assist food businesses to find an auditor. The register contains the name and contact details of the approved auditor, the conditions of the auditor's approval and the term of the approval.

Further information can also be found on the following sites:
Food Safety Standards 3.2.1 *Food Safety Programs*
http://www.foodstandards.gov.au/_srcfiles/Standard_3_2_1_FS_Programs_v92.doc

Food Safety Standards 3.3.1 *Food Safety Programs for food service to vulnerable populations*
http://www.foodstandards.gov.au/_srcfiles/Standard_3_3_1_FSPs_%20Vulnerable_pops_v95.doc

Food Safety Templates
http://www.health.qld.gov.au/industry/food/#9
or
http://foodsmart.vic.gov.au

Fees
The fees for approving and auditing Food Safety Programs by the Fraser Coast Regional Council are as follows:

Food Safety Plans

Food Act 2006 Section 102 application for accreditation must be made to the local Government

Accreditation of Food Safety Plans Amendment of accredited Food Safety Plan Auditing of Food Safety plans	**Please refer to current Fees & Charges Schedule for relevant fees**

Definitions
On-site catering
Means preparing and serving potentially hazardous food, to all consumers of the food at the premises from which the business is carried on, under an agreement where the food is
a) of a predetermined type; and
b) for a predetermined number of persons; and
c) served at a predetermined time; and
d) for a predetermined cost.

On-site catering does not include preparing and serving of food on the order of a person for immediate consumption (restaurant / café / take away meals) or merely displaying food for self-service by consumers.

Off-site catering
Means serving potentially hazardous food at a place other than the principal place of business for the food business.

Off site catering does not include merely delivering food under and arrangement with, or on the order of a consumer. It also does not include the sale of food from mobile premises.

Contacts
Should you have any further queries relating to food safety programs or wish to discuss your businesses individual requirements, please contact your Environmental Health Officer at Fraser Coast Regional Council on 1300 79 49 29.