

FOOD FOCUS

Food Services Newsletter

Issue 40 – September 2017



EAST RIDING
OF YORKSHIRE COUNCIL

Editorial

By Andrew Buxton, Food Services Manager

Welcome to the Autumn 2017 edition of *FOOD FOCUS*. This is our 40th edition of *FOOD FOCUS*, and as one looks through our back catalogue over the last 15 years, it's striking how perennial and enduring some of the issues raised are. In this edition, there is the usual wide range of topics on the menu; including some I guess we could not have imagined 15 years ago would be matters of concern in 2017. Such as the need for us to include a guest article on Modern Day Slavery, surely our saddest article yet. Or, for instance, the FSA's proposals for the development of a completely new framework for food regulation by 2020 and after the UK's exit from the EU. Or, looking at the challenges presented by emergent 'food trends' that run counter to traditional cooking techniques and conventions, yet retain inherent risks to consumers which have still to be strictly controlled.

Concerning the latter, sometimes such trends emerge from dangerously wrong information presented by the media. An example being the recent suggestion by a 'celebrity chef' that raw chicken prepared Japanese 'Sashimi' style may be safe to eat. The article states that "If birds have been free range, kept in quality conditions, and processed in a clean environment, there's not so much to worry about" but this is not the case. **All raw chicken is unsafe to eat, regardless of the conditions that the birds have been kept in.** Further information is available on the [FSA website](#), but it must be clear that any food business operator making such a dangerous offer to their customers would be subject to immediate enforcement action.

One change which is inescapable in the last 15 years is digitisation and the huge influence of the internet and social media on how we work in 2017. For Food Services, one of the greatest impacts of digitisation and social media has been in the increased levels of consumer complaint reporting now being received. In 2016-17 there was a 31% rise in consumer food safety/hygiene complaints, which is believed to reflect increased customer expectations, a readiness to report problems and the ease of reporting allowed by smartphone/internet. Food business operators need to be alert to this if they are to keep their customers happy, avoid negative social media feedback and possibly the inconvenient attention of food service officers.

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Food Hygiene Rating Scheme - Update

The Food Hygiene Rating Scheme (FHRS) helps consumers choose where to eat out or shop for food by giving them information about the hygiene standards at a food premises. The FSA's FHRS website provides for each premises details of the individual component scores and findings making up the overall rating, in terms of 'Hygienic food handling', 'Cleanliness and condition of facilities and building', and 'Management of food safety'. Consumers are able to make their choices based not only on the overall scores, but also based on the nature of any shortfalls in non-compliances identified by officers.



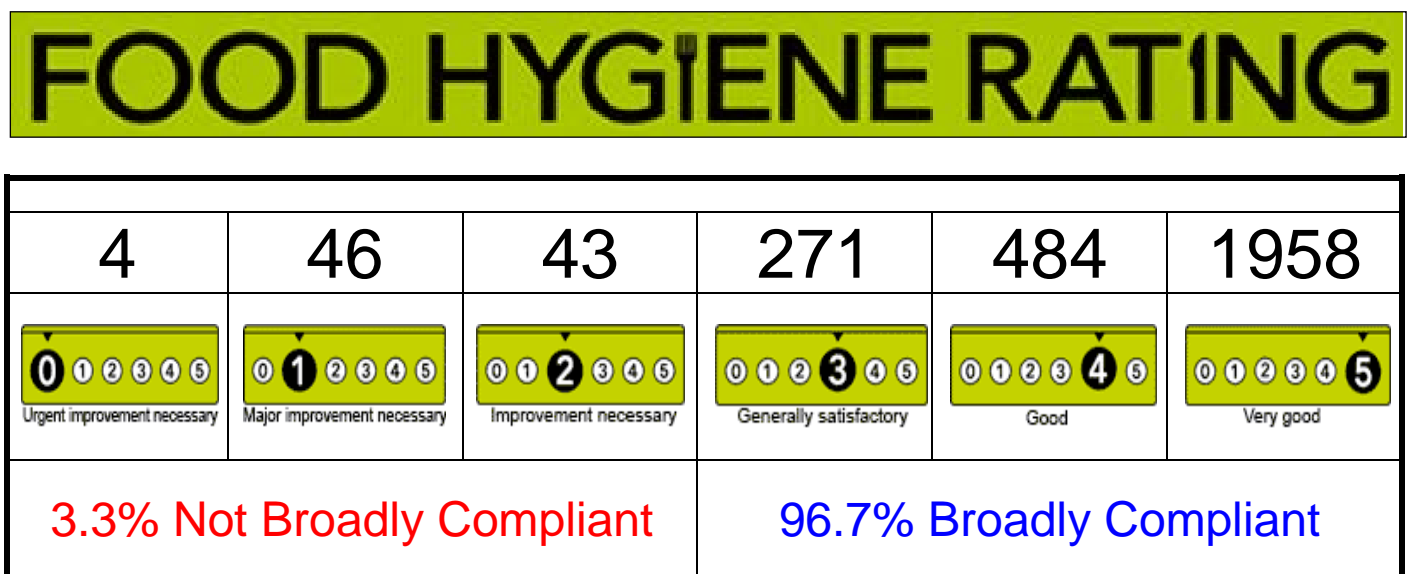
We encourage discerning consumers to use the premises FHRS score as an indicator and to use this information when making their choices about where they eat out or buy their groceries. Naturally, we would also expect that premises with 'Satisfactory' to 'Very Good' ratings should wish to facilitate this by proudly displaying their FHRS score for the benefit of their customers.

To make sure food business operators are making the most of their scores they can use the Food Hygiene Rating toolkit from the Food Standards Agency. The kit includes a range of promotional material including web banners to advertise the score and can be found by following the link below:

<http://www.food.gov.uk/business-industry/caterers/hygieneratings/toolkit>

Earlier this year, the FSA amended the 'Brand Standard' under which FHRS operates to introduce the scope for local authorities to recover costs incurred through their response to business requests for FHRS re-inspection. The East Riding of Yorkshire Council is currently considering this option and it is likely that in the coming months businesses requesting a FHRS re-inspection will be required to pay an up-front re-inspection charge before any re-inspection takes place. We will publish further details about any FHRS re-inspection charging arrangements in due course on the Food Service webpages and in the next edition of *FOOD FOCUS*.

At the time of publication East Riding food businesses currently have the following ratings:



The Food Standard Agency's national FHRS website can be found at: <http://ratings.food.gov.uk/>



The FSA's strategic 'Regulating Our Future' (ROF) programme was launched in February 2016 to deliver a new regulatory model for food businesses in England by 2020. The programme was considered ambitious at the time, but will now need to be developed concurrently and is integral to any preparations and arrangements for 'Brexit' in March 2019. Nevertheless, the FSA has maintained its commitment to ROF as key to providing post 'Brexit' food regulation that is sustainable and designed to be better tailored and proportionate to ensure business compliance.

ROF now falls within the scope of the government's wider agenda for regulatory review, launched in January this year in its 'Regulatory Futures Review', concerned to address:

- the future of regulation
- regulated self-assurance and earned recognition
- charging for regulation
- collaboration between regulators; and
- burdens on regulators.

The FSA's consultation with stakeholder partners, local authorities, businesses and consumers has now been on-going for over 18 months. We urge food business operators to engage with this process and contribute to the consultation either directly or through their respective trade associations or industry bodies. The changes being proposed will impact on all food businesses and on the regulators themselves. It is therefore felt particularly important that nano or micro sized businesses should keep informed and where possible have their say.

In July the FSA published the latest ROF update paper:

[Regulating Our Future - Why food regulation needs to change and how we are going to do it](#)

This provides insight to the FSA's proposed direction and shape for the regulatory framework in future. The headline issues arising thus far are summarised below and we will continue in future editions of FOOD FOCUS to provide ROF summary information and links....



STAY INFORMED:

In order that you receive the latest edition of Food Focus we need to ensure that we have your current e-mail address. You can keep us up to date by any of the following means:

- Visiting our website and subscribing to our mailing list here:
<http://www2.eastriding.gov.uk/EasySiteWeb/GatewayLink.aspx?allId=101079>
- E-mailing us at Food.Services@eastriding.gov.uk

From its initial ROF work and consultations the FSA has determined working principles for reform of exiting food regulation. The FSA has also developed a 'Target Operating Model' (see below) to describe its proposed approach to future regulation. This includes:

- increased focus on business start-up support and administration of enhanced registration arrangements; which will allow,
- better assessment of inherent risks and appropriate segmentation of different business types/sizes; which will inform and appropriately determine,
- the nature and frequency of proportionate assurance compliance monitoring or surveillance by regulators; which will also take account of,
- information and data provided by businesses to provide regulatory assurance of compliance, including mechanisms to recognise third party assurance arrangements, providing an expanded, formal role for the private assurance schemes already operating in food safety and standards; whilst,
- maintaining and enhancing the capability to take appropriate and timely action against non-compliant businesses, including additional sanctions that could complement existing enforcement tools, encouraging a quick return to the right behaviour by businesses. For example, using civil sanctions such as fixed penalty notices could incentivise the right behaviour, and reduce the burden on regulatory authorities and the legal system.

The FSA's Five Principles for Regulating Our Future

1. Businesses are responsible for producing food that is safe and what it says it is, and should be able to demonstrate that they do so. Consumers have a right to information to help them make informed choices about the food they buy – businesses have a responsibility to be transparent and honest in their provision of that information.
2. FSA and regulatory partners' decisions should be tailored, proportionate and based on a clear picture of UK food businesses.
3. The regulator should take into account all available sources of information.
4. Businesses doing the right thing for consumers should be recognised; action will be taken against those that do not.
5. Businesses should meet the costs of regulation, which should be no more than they need to be.

These issues are set out in detail in the paper presented to the FSA Board on 21 June by Nina Purcell the FSA's Director of Regulatory Delivery available on the FSA website at:

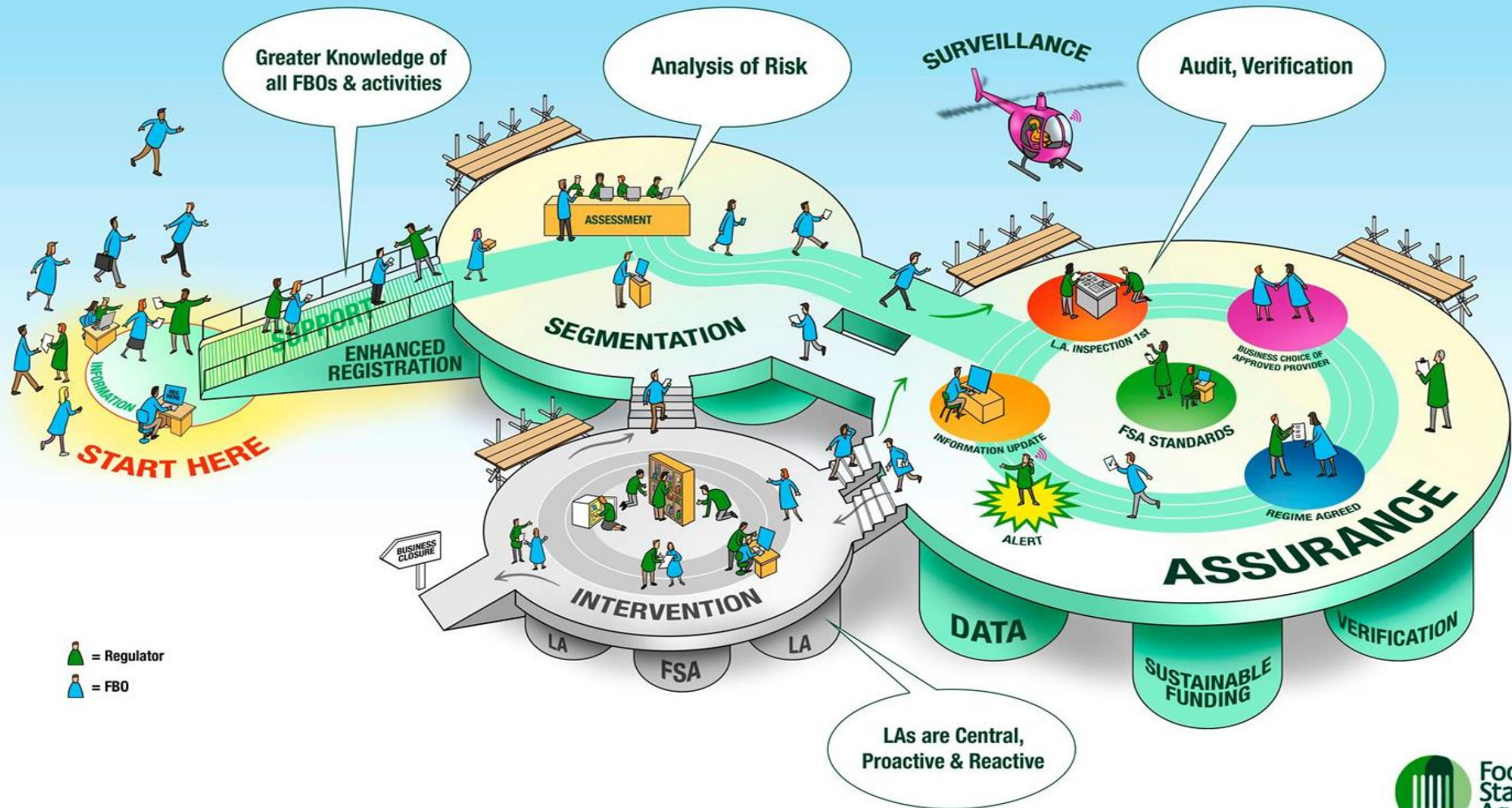
<https://www.food.gov.uk/sites/default/files/fsa170610.pdf>

To find out more about ROF visit the FSA ROF webpage at:

<https://www.food.gov.uk/enforcement/regulation/regulating-our-future>

Here you can also find a link to subscribe to the [Regulating Our Future newsletter](#), so you'll be able to monitor future developments.

Target Operating Model 2017 - 2018



To find out more about ROF go to the FSA 'Regulating Our Future' webpage at: <https://www.food.gov.uk/enforcement/regulation/regulating-our-future> where you can also find a link to subscribe to the Regulating Our Future newsletter, so you'll be able to monitor future developments.



Fighting Human Trafficking and all forms of Exploitation

Modern slavery is real. It is happening in our communities across the Humber area. An unseen crime, it hides in take-aways, hotels, car washes, nail bars and private homes. The Home Office predicts that there may be as many as 13,000 victims in the UK alone. There is no typical victim of slavery. **Victims can be men, women and children of all ages and cut across the population**, but it is normally more prevalent amongst the most vulnerable, minority or socially excluded groups.

Slavery is an umbrella term for activities involved when one person obtains or holds another person in compelled service.

Someone is in slavery if they are:

- forced to work through mental or physical threat
- owned or controlled by an 'employer', usually through mental or physical abuse or the threat of abuse
- dehumanised, treated as a commodity or bought and sold as 'property'
- physically constrained or have restrictions placed on his/her freedom

Spotting the signs of Modern Slavery:

It's important that people are aware of how to spot the signs of someone who may have been trafficked and is being exploited.

Victims may:

- **Look malnourished or unkempt**
- **Be withdrawn, anxious and** unwilling to interact
- Be under the control and influence of others
- Live in cramped, dirty, overcrowded accommodation
- Have no access or control of their passport or identity documents
- Appear scared, avoid eye contact, and be untrusting
- Show signs of abuse and/or have health issues

Typical kinds of employment that victims may be forced into:

- Factories and farm work
- Restaurants, in particular fast food outlets
- Domestic service and hospitality
- Hand car washes and nail bars

If you have any concerns over Modern Slavery you can email them to the following Humber Police email addresses:

PublicProtectionEastRiding@humberside.pnn.police.uk
PublicProtectionHull@humberside.pnn.police.uk

If you require a Police response then ring 101

Further information is available on the Humber Modern Slavery Partnership website

www.humberantislave.com

and on Facebook @humberantislave or on Twitter @HMSP

Email enquiries to humberantislave@gmail.com

Non-traditional Cooking Techniques

Innovative, non-traditional cooking methods are a different way to prepare and cook foods, designed to provide food products that retain as much flavour and nutrition as possible. However, such techniques can present inherent increased food safety risks compared to traditional methods. Food business operators need to be alert to the risks and ensure they are adequately controlled.

Traditional cooking processes use an industry standard high temperature for a short period of time. Generally FSA guidance establishes safe reference temperature/time of 70°C for 2 minutes (pasteurisation). The aim of the process being to reduce the level of potential food poisoning bacteria to make the food safe for consumers.

The food services team always advises that food is cooked until it is steaming hot and to temperatures that have been proven to destroy food poisoning organisms. Where lower temperatures are used the following equivalent time and temperature combinations should be followed:

Temperature (°C) at the slowest heating point	Number of minutes required at the reference temperature to achieve an equivalent process
80	0.09 (6 seconds)
75	0.43 (26 seconds)
70	2 minutes
65	9.30 (9 minutes 18 seconds)
60	43.48 (43 minutes 29 seconds)

*Effective pasteurisation may not occur at equivalent temperature-times below 60°C. Any food business operator using lower temperatures must use scientific validation of the method to demonstrate it is consistently safe to do so. Dependent on the food product, consideration will also need to be given to the potential for growth of heat-tolerant vegetative pathogens such as *Cl. perfringens* at temperatures below 55°C.*

Increasingly popular methods of non-traditional cooking involve cooking at low temperatures and sous-vide.

Low temperature cooking is defined as any process where the maximum temperature attained during the cooking process of the slowest heating part of the product is below 70°C.

Sous vide cooking (as illustrated) requires vacuum-sealed foods in plastic pouches to be placed in low temperature water baths or a steam environment for longer than normal cooking times at a precisely regulated temperature, much lower than normally used for cooking. It may be used to extend shelf lives of food to reduce the burden on caterers.



When lower temperatures are used to cook food for prolonged periods of time there is a significant risk that a range of food poisoning bacteria such as Salmonella, E. coli, Listeria monocytogenes, Campylobacter and Clostridium perfringens may survive and even grow if the process is not implemented correctly and safely. Multiplication of pathogens can be so great that re-heating may be ineffective in making the product safe. Toxigenic bacteria can release toxins into the products. Some of these toxins such as Staphylococcus aureus and Bacillus cereus are very heat stable and not inactivated by normal cooking.

There are further risks associated with using the sous-vide method because the vacuum packaging process involves storage of food under low oxygen conditions. This creates an environment in which anaerobic

bacteria such as *Clostridium botulinum* can survive. The Food Standards Agency's [guidance on the safety and shelf-life of vacuum and modified atmosphere packed chilled foods with respect to non-proteolytic *Clostridium botulinum*](#) must be consulted when vacuum packing is practiced in your business. It prescribes the conditions which must be met to ensure product safety.

In addition to full implementation of the guidance, further controls are necessary when cooking using the sous vide method such as the purchase of specialist commercial grade equipment including a water bath, food grade pouches and a sous vide thermometer. Regard must be had to the manufacturer's instructions about the use of the equipment and pouches, and only fresh, good quality products from a reputable supplier should be used. There must be complete separation between raw and ready to eat foods throughout, including vacuum equipment and utensils.

Detailed information about sous vide is available from Campden BRI in the publication "Validation and optimisation of thermal processing systems: cookers, pasteurisers and sous vide systems 2015" (Campden BRI) at <https://www.campdenbri.co.uk/publications/pubDetails.php?pubsID=4647>

All food business operators must ensure that food they place on the market is safe and that the business is compliant with food hygiene legislation. Any food business considering using non-traditional cooking methods should ensure the following:

- the equipment in use is suitable for the intended method of cooking
- staff using the technique have been properly trained and are aware of the inherent increased risks associated with the process
- Identification of food safety hazards that must be prevented, eliminated or reduced to acceptable levels
- Identification of critical control points and safe limits within each step of the process such as precision temperature / time controls
- strict monitoring procedures to ensure the process is consistently safe
- corrective actions when problems have been identified
- readily available documentation is prepared to support the method, including a Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point plan, training records, monitoring records, microbiological sampling results etc.

Use of any non-traditional cooking technique must have the same scientific validation as traditional cooking to prove that the food produced is safe to eat. This will require appropriate HACCP based food safety management procedures, controls, monitoring and records to be put in place, implemented and maintained. Due to the increased inherent risks involved, any food business found to be using non-traditional cooking methods which have not been implemented safely are liable to an appropriately robust enforcement response by food service officers.

STOP PRESS... STOP PRESS... STOP PRESS... STOP PRESS...STOP PRESS...STOP PRESS...STOP PRESS

SFBB Pack and Diary Orders:

Any caterers or retailers requiring diary refills for the Safer Food Better Business (SFBB) Pack can obtain them directly from the Foods Standards Agency website via the following link:

<https://www.food.gov.uk/business-industry/sfbb>

What isn't a 'gourmet burger'?

'Gourmet burger' is not a term defined in law, so one person's idea of what represents a 'gourmet burger' is as good as another. For some people, placing a piece of melted blue cheese on a burger with a slither of bacon in a stacked bun pinned together with a stick is sufficient to warrant the 'gourmet' tag. However, by definition an 'unsafe' burger is not a 'gourmet' food product.

One concerning trend that has emerged is to call a burger 'gourmet' because it is less-than-thoroughly-cooked (LTTC) i.e., it is offered as 'medium rare' or 'rare', similar to how a steak may be offered. Yet a burger is not the same as a good steak that is only potentially contaminated on the surface. No, a burger may be contaminated throughout the meat with bugs such as E.coliO157 and so is a potentially lethal if it is served LTTC, rather than 'well-done', as is traditional in the UK.

Recognising this trend and the dangers it presents, last year the FSA issued food businesses and local authorities strict enforcement guidance on the service of LTTC burgers:

<https://www.food.gov.uk/business-industry/guidancenotes/meatregsguid/less-than-thoroughly-cooked-beef-burgers>

This guidance is essential reading for any caterer wishing to jump on the LTTC burger band-wagon. The FSA have established very stringent conditions under which local authorities might allow LTTC burgers to be supplied without presenting imminent risk to health that would otherwise warrant formal enforcement by emergency prohibition. Firstly, there is a requirement for prior local authority notification and verification that valid food safety controls have been established. Then, food business operators have to demonstrate various specific controls are in place and implemented throughout the process from original approved supplier controls, through restaurant preparation and production controls, to appropriate customer messaging which alerts customers to the inherent increased risks associated with LTTC burgers.

It would be considered **reckless** for any caterer to offer or serve LTTC burgers without due regard to the FSA guidance. Accordingly, food service officers have been directed to have a robust and timely enforcement response in such circumstances. Rather, any caterers thinking of offering LTTC burgers must first alert food services to discuss their proposals and the measures necessary to meet the FSA guidance to avoid unacceptable risks to consumers.



For a more light-hearted consideration of the issues involved with serving LTTC burgers, and to gain an Irish perspective, check out the [Irish Safe Food – Burger Fever campaign webpage](#) and the comedic 'Viper' video.

Is your food packaging suitable?

Any food businesses that package foods must ensure that the packaging used is suitable for food use.



Suitable packaging will be marked 'for food contact' or have a symbol on it that looks like a wine glass and a fork. This includes materials such as cling film, ceramic and plastic containers.

Food contact materials are those that:

- are intended to be brought into contact with food
- are already in contact with food and were intended for that purpose
- can reasonably be expected to be brought into contact with food or transfer constituents to food under normal or foreseeable use. This includes direct or indirect contact.

What is required?

Food businesses should ask their suppliers of food contact materials to supply written evidence that the materials comply with the relevant requirements. This is known as a 'declaration of compliance' and is available from the packaging supplier.

The declaration of compliance will normally contain information about:

- who manufactured or imported the materials or articles or the substances intended for their manufacture
- what they are
- when the declaration was made
- confirmation that the materials or articles meet relevant requirements laid down in EU Regulation (EC) No 1935/2004 *on materials and articles intended to come into contact with food*
- the compliance of substances used that are subject to any restrictions and/or specifications
- the use of the material or article, such as:
 - type or types of food it is intended to be put in contact with
 - time and temperature of treatment and storage whilst in contact with the food
 - ratio of food-contact surface area to volume used to establish the compliance of the material or article.



Food businesses are advised to keep declarations as these may be asked for by food services officers when they visit you. It is an offence to sell food that does not comply with the Materials and Articles in Contact with Food (England) Regulations 2012.

Systems to Ensure the Integrity of Spirits



It is important that businesses have systems in place to maintain the quality of the spirits they are selling and prevent potentially fraudulent issues arising.

Different systems will work for different businesses but ultimately it is the food business operator's responsibility to ensure the quality of the spirits they are selling.

The advice below should help businesses ensure their spirit sales remain legal:

- Ensure reputable suppliers are used and that a record is kept of their name and address.
- Ensure spirits are checked upon delivery and that you keep a record of such checks.
- It is important that all invoices are retained to ensure full traceability of the products being sold.
- Keep stock spirits in a locked store and make sure that managing staff are the only people with a key.
- Management should be the only people who are responsible for changing spirits on the bar. In the absence of management it is acceptable for delegated staff to do this.
- Staff should be trained in relation to their responsibilities and managing the bar. Training should include topics such as the illegality of substituting/adulterating spirits and discouraging the process of decanting. Food business operators need to ensure that staff have understood their training. An examination paper or written confirmation can be used as evidence that they have received the training and understood it.
- Consider conducting stock takes on a regular basis to reconcile stock. Tills that recognise the specific product which has been sold (e.g. Smirnoff Vodka 35ml x 1) are a good way of monitoring sales and stock levels.
- A hydrometer can be used to conduct random tests of spirits to check the alcoholic strength – keep records of these.
- Spirit pourers should be used with care. Over time alcohol evaporates from the spirit, reducing its strength. This is particularly important for bottles that are slow moving and likely to be stood for a long period of time.
- Businesses should never practise the decanting of spirits into different bottles, unless they have stringent management procedures in place and maintain appropriate records. Otherwise, firstly essential product traceability (lot codes) will be lost, secondly, it risks staff putting the wrong spirits in the wrong bottles and finally, it provides scope for staff to substitute or water down products.



FREE Seminar for Small and Medium Enterprises

How to Build a Resilient Business

Can your business cope?

As the frequency of extreme events increase, think about how vulnerable your business is to unforeseen disruption. In the current climate, small and medium sized (SME) businesses are finding it increasingly difficult to simply hope for the best when the worst happens. The time has come to be proactive in your approach to managing these threats.

Protect your bottom-line, satisfy your customers and insurers and stand out from your competitors – ensure you can continue to operate when faced with disruption.

Half Day Workshop for SMEs

Date: Friday, 13th October 2017

Time: 10:00 - 13:00

Venue: [The Guildhall, Hull, HU1 2AA](#)

Price: Free of Charge

Overview

This seminar is for managers in Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) who are responsible for ensuring their businesses can continue to survive following a business interruption. This seminar provides SME managers with the underpinning knowledge to develop a business resilience capability. This workshop also addresses what you should consider when developing cyber resilience.

Aim

To provide delegates with the underpinning knowledge to manage the implementation of your business continuity management arrangements.

Objectives

By the end of the event you will be able to:

- State the six elements of the business continuity management lifecycle and how this can be applied within your business
- Explain the function of the Business Impact Analysis (BIA) and the methods that can be used to implement a BIA
- Describe the 3 levels of an incident response structure
- Analyse the importance of exercising business continuity plans
- Evaluate methods for embedding business resilience within your business

Get that competitive edge

We are seeing situations where customers ultimately refuse to buy from, or contract with businesses that cannot demonstrate they have business continuity arrangements in place.

This seminar is free of charge, so you really can't afford to miss it.

Visit <http://www.epcresilience.com/closed-events/resilience-for-smes-humber/> to reserve your place today