

Burwater Bulletin, October 2009

- **Introduction of Food Control Plans** (The times they are a changing)

Drafting of the Food Bill is well underway. It is intended that the Food Bill will proceed through the Parliamentary process during 2009/2010, dependent on the Government's priorities after the election. As the Food Bill was not be able to be commenced in mid 2008 as originally planned, NZFSA is working to find ways to implement components of the system voluntarily under the existing legislation. A voluntary implementation to the extent possible under the existing law has the advantage of allowing NZFSA, Territorial Authorities and food business operators more time to develop skills and systems to support the new environment that will be in place when the Bill is passed and to identify areas that might be improved.

- An off-the-peg Food Control Plan is a ready-to-use Food Safety Programme designed to meet the needs of small-to-medium sized businesses, including cafés and restaurants that a food business operator fills out to record how each food safety aspect of their business is managed.
- Voluntary Implementation Programme (VIP) will be voluntary because the Food Act does not enable NZFSA to make off-the-peg Food Control Plans mandatory. Operators continue to have a choice whether to comply with the Food Hygiene Regulations or to seek an exemption from them by having a Food Safety Programme.
- A food business may still choose to adopt an off-the-peg Food Control Plan as a Food Safety Programme and to have the premises audited by a Third Party Auditor. In this situation the FSP would be registered by NZFSA and would not be considered part of the VIP. Businesses that choose to implement the off-the-peg Food Control Plan will be able to access a copy from the NZFSA website, or obtain a free hardcopy from a participating local Territorial Authority or by attending a Territorial Authority training session.
- If significant variations to the off-the-peg Food Control Plan are required for a business, the business may contact Burwater Pacific directly to discuss registering a custom-made Food Safety Programme. If a business adopts a significant variation to the off-the-peg Food Control Plan it will no longer be part of VIP.

Burwater Pacific strongly suggest that if you don't have a Food Safety Programme/ Food Control Plan contact us, info@burwater.co.nz to ensure all food legislation & food safety requirements regarding your products, packaging, nutritional information and labelling are correct. We can look after all your food safety needs, leaving you to get on with what you do best.

- **Is that Safe to Eat?** (Staff.....are they trained to produce safe food?)

With the introduction of the new legislation and Food Control Plans, businesses will have to be more accountable for their staff Food Safety Training. Many people in the industry see training as a waste of money, but well trained staff may produce much safer food, in a cleaner environment, which may lead to more repeat custom. Changes occur in the industry all the time, staff may benefit from re-training, can you afford not to?

Will my staff need food safety training?

There are a number of proposed options for training and educating food workers to suit the risks posed by the range of food activities, from manufacture through transport, to serving food in a café or at a fundraiser. This is a crucial area to ensure safe and suitable food, and the intention is that skills/ competencies be required for specific people involved in the preparation, processing, storage and handling of food. Some training will therefore be required.

One of the main areas we are involved in is **food safety training** in the workplace. We offer regular public courses in Auckland and Christchurch. The course takes just over 4 hours to complete and includes course notes in English, Chinese, Cambodian and Korean. Please check the website for training courses for 2009.

- **'Tis the Season to be jolly:** (Don't light that Barbie until you've read the instructions.)

It's that time of year again, throw off the coat, put on a t-shirt, slip slap slop, grab a beer or a wine, get out in the sun and light up that Barbie. But wait, have you read the instructions. No, not the lighting instructions, the food safety instructions. For this may be the season to be jolly, but also may be the season to be melancholy, especially with a bout of food-borne illness, or as most of you know it..... food poisoning.

Warm summer temperatures and the trend towards cooking food outdoors, provide an ideal situation for germs to multiply and cause food borne illness. A feature in the outbreaks has been the inadequate cooking of meat and poultry. The thorough cooking of poultry, burgers, sausages and pork is essential. The barbecue cook represents a critical last line in the defence against food borne illness, providing a few basic rules are observed.

These rules are:

Clean

- Wash and dry hands thoroughly before starting to prepare food and every time after touching raw meat or poultry.
- Before cooking, make sure that all barbecue tools and surfaces, on which food is put, are spotlessly clean.



Cook

- Make sure burgers, sausages, pork and poultry are cooked until the juices run clear and there is no pink flesh.
- Use one set of utensils for raw meats and poultry and another set for cooked.
- Place cooked items on a clean plate, not one that holds raw foods.
- Eat food as soon as possible after it is cooked.
- Keep food hot on the side of the grill rack or oven until it is eaten.

Cover

- Cover and refrigerate/chill leftovers as soon as possible after cooking.
- Discard perishable food that has been left at room temperature for more than 2 hours.



Chill

- Store meat, poultry and other perishable foods cold until ready to cook. Once outdoors, use an icepack and cool bag or chilly-bin to keep food cold.
- Store raw meat and poultry away from other foods and below ready to eat foods in the refrigerator.
- Defrost meat and poultry fully so it cooks evenly on the barbecue.
- Marinating food should be kept in the refrigerator.



Most of all, don't forget, have a good time and enjoy yourself during the holiday season. The team at Burwater Pacific wishes you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

- **Parting shot:** Quote from Jay Leno

"I went into a McDonald's yesterday and said, 'I'd like some fries.' The girl at the counter said, 'Would you like some fries with that?'"