

Guidelines for Food Stalls at Markets and Events

Introduction

Preparing and selling foods at events with limited facilities has some inherent risks. Time and temperature abuse, inadequate reheating or cooking practices, poor personal hygiene practices and cross contamination issues are the biggest dangers to food safety. This sheet aims to give you some practical tips to manage these risks and comply with Council requirements.

This is an informational document only, if you plan to operate a food stall at an event or market you must complete an Food Stall application form and ensure you comply with the minimum standards outlined in that document (available on our website or from any Council office).

Keeping Food Safe

Readily perishable foods (especially those that contain poultry, meat, seafood, egg and dairy products) can contain harmful microbes, and if they are not cooked or reheated properly they can make people sick.

Food held in the temperature danger zone, between 4°C and 60°C for even a short time can encourage the growth of harmful microbes and make people sick.

Sick food handlers, dirty hands, utensils, other food and the environment can contaminate food and make people sick.

Food Safety Prior to and During an Event

- always check use-by or best before dates when shopping to ensure you don't buy or sell any products that are past their expiry dates
- after purchasing your ingredients make sure all perishable products are stored in fridges or freezers while awaiting preparation

- keep raw foods separate from cooked foods, preparing them on separate boards, using different knives and storing in separate containers
- people who have had cold or flu, diarrhoea or vomiting in the last 48 hours must not help with food preparation and must be excluded from the kitchen or food stall
- all food should be stored in covered washable containers
- wear an apron and tie long hair back
- wearing gloves is not always essential but hand washing is. Gloves if worn should be changed as often as you would need to wash your hands, and gloves should only be put on clean hands.
- always wash and thoroughly dry your hands before and after handling different types of foods, after going to the toilet, after blowing your nose, smoking or handling the refuse bin.
- place ice in both the top and bottom of your chilly bin to achieve more even temperatures.
- divide food into small manageable portions and work from the chilly bin or refrigerator.
- if you need to cleanse utensils at the event you should thoroughly wash in running water, dry with a paper towel and rinse or spray with sanitiser and allow to air dry. A simple sanitiser can be made by mixing 1 teaspoon of household bleach mixed with 2 litres of water.

Reheating Food at the Event

Food intended to be served hot must be reheated rapidly to steaming hot (or around 75°C) before being placed in a pre-heated Bain Marie.

Food that is cooked just prior to transporting to the event will still need to be heated on a hot plate or microwave before being placed in a Bain Marie.

It is not recommended that you bring large containers of hot/warm food to an event, because you will be required to rapidly cool any food that is being held in storage awaiting reheating or sale.

Food will not be allowed to be kept in the danger zone, regardless of whether you have recently cooked it.

If you intend to reheat foods you will need an oven, hot plate or microwave.

Preparation of Food at an Event

Preparing food at the event increases the risk of contamination of the food from the environment, surfaces and hands.

Preparation of food (as opposed to cooking of food) at the event should be kept to a minimum.

Where possible complete all chopping of meats, vegetables, salads and other foods prior to the event and pack in separate containers for final assembly at the time of cooking or service.

Hot and Cold Holding of Food at the Event

Readily perishable foods must be stored and displayed at either below 4 degrees Celsius for cold food and above 60 degrees Celsius for hot food.

Once food has been reheated or cooked it must be stored in a pre-heated Bain Marie or Pie Warmer capable of holding foods at above 60°C, unless you are cooking to order.

Site Set Up

- It is easier to protect your stall from customer contamination if you use a tent or barricade of some kind to prevent entry by the public. If using cooking appliances with open flames they should be placed to the rear of the stall to protect customers from accidents and burns.
- Bring plenty of tables; all food and food storage containers must be kept up off the ground.
- Bring plenty of tongs and other utensils if you are not providing utensil washing facilities.
- Remember to bring a refuse bin with a lid.
- Appoint a cash handler who won't be handling food.
- Food on display must be protected from contamination by customers and the environment.
- Ensure there is someone at your stall at all times who knows the ingredients in the products you are selling and can advise customers of this.

Hand Washing Facilities

If you are handling unpackaged food at the stall site then you must have a hand wash facility, which **as a minimum**, can consist of a 20L container of water fitted with a tap and placed high on a table. Hands can be washed in running water and a bucket provided to catch waste water. Soap, paper towels, gloves and hand sanitiser should be provided.

When you arrive at the site ask the event organiser for directions to:

- water tap to refill water bottles
- gully trap or sink for disposal of waste water