

# Food & Safety Bulletin



Food & Safety Bulletin - Summer 2010

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## Feedback

If you would like to comment on any of the articles in this bulletin or would like to offer any ideas for inclusion in future editions please contact me:

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I would be pleased to receive your views and ideas.

**Welcome** - We hope you have had a busy summer so far and that the season has been good for you. The Food and Safety Team has had a busy six months since the last newsletter. As well as carrying out food inspections and dealing with the routine work we have been involved with educating schoolchildren at an event called Junior Life Skills - food safety is an important life skill that can be taught at an early age.

We hope you enjoy this newsletter. If you have any suggestions for information and articles you would like to see included in future editions of the newsletter then please let us know on 01803 208010.

**Frances Hughes, Executive Head - Community Safety**

## There's a rat in my kitchen, what am I gonna do?

Pest control involves preventing pest access to your food premises. This is to avoid the contamination of food stuffs both directly (access to food) and indirectly (access to food preparation areas). Pests include rats, mice, cockroaches, ants, seagulls and flies.

It is not a legal requirement to have a pest control contract but it is a legal requirement to take all reasonable steps to prevent pests gaining entry into your food business. It is enough for you to carry out your own routine checks to determine whether any works are necessary, for example if your back door is ill-fitting and there is a gap to the bottom you may need to affix a brush strip.

When assessing your premises for pest entry points a good rule of thumb is that if you can push a pen through a hole then it is highly likely that a mouse will be able to enter the premises at this point.

Good tips to minimise the risk of pests are:

- Keep all outdoor bin areas clean and free from food debris
- Routinely check your premises for pest entry points
- Do not leave food out
- Keep open packets of food in sealed containers
- Ensure that your premises are maintained in a clean condition
- Keep lids on your used oil
- Make sure that outdoor drainage areas are kept clean
- Consider the use of fly screens on windows and doors
- Change the bulb on electric insect killers annually



**For further information contact  
Torbay Council's Food and Safety Team on 01803 208010.**

# The UK's 'BIGGEST, Newest & Best'

Later this year Brixham will see the formal opening of its brand new Fish Market. At the time of opening it will arguably be the most modern and advanced facility of its kind in the whole of Europe, something for which the community of Torbay should be justly proud.

By the time the development is completed approximately £12 million will have been spent on fish market related facilities. The auction hall is now housed in a highly insulated temperature controlled building. Fish from the Brixham fishing fleet are landed through the night and then moved into two enormous walk-in refrigerators which hold landed stocks of fresh fish at between 0°C and 4°C. The separate fish auction hall (which measures almost the size of an entire football pitch) is also temperature controlled, in order that fish is kept in the best possible condition, using state of the art energy efficient cooling technology.

The Food & Safety Team are required to have a presence at the fish market to help ensure that fish that enters the UK food chain via Brixham is of an acceptable quality and that during the auction appropriate hygiene standards are maintained.

The Food & Safety Team have been heavily involved at key stages of the fish market redevelopment,

offering design advice and giving their professional input into key issues as the project has progressed. The goal has been to help build a facility capable of providing the highest possible standards of modern day food handling.

Although the Fish Market raises significant levels of revenue for the local authority, most of this is reinvested into helping to sustain Brixham's fishing industry and the port's infrastructure. In doing so the facility helps to sustain and promote jobs, not just in fishing but also in related industries such as fish processing, marine engineering, transportation & logistics, chandlery, and marine electronics.

As well as its importance to the local economy, Brixham fish contributes to the UK's economy via the millions of pounds worth of fish which are daily exported to numerous EU countries, the Middle East and the USA.

Brixham is now the UK's biggest Fish Market (by value), and arguably the best wholesale market for direct landed fish. The Food & Safety Team are committed to continually providing sound professional guidance and input for the local fish industry so that this UK economic success story continues for many years to come.



## Sam and Ella, the dirty chefs, return to Junior Life Skills



Although the Food & Safety Team's main role is to make sure that the large numbers of commercial food businesses in Torbay comply with food and safety requirements, we also get involved in a number of proactive educational events.

In May the Food & Safety Team was involved in the biannual Junior Life Skills week organised by Torbay Council with the support of several other local organisations including Torbay Care Trust and the Fire & Rescue Service. The week involved 10 minute scenario presentations to more than 700 10 and 11-year-olds on a range of safety issues in the home and on the street.

The Food & Safety Team, under the guise of Sam and Ella the dirty chefs, ran a successful interactive fridge scenario highlighting the risks associated with the incorrect storage of

# Make Outdoor Catering a Walk in the Park!

The Bay comes to life at this time of year with numerous outdoor fetes, festivals and markets providing a whole range of goods, particularly food. Catering at outdoor events can be a high risk activity because of the large numbers of people being catered for, the frequent use of temporary staff, the temporary nature of the premises, restricted storage capacity and limited preparation areas. The uncertainty of the British weather can also mean that environmental conditions are an added challenge to traders!

If you are catering outdoors you must ensure the safety of the food that you sell by maintaining good levels of personal hygiene and safe preparation and storage practices.

Here are some tips to help you ensure safe catering at outdoor events:

## Design & construction of stalls & vans

- Ensure that your stall or vehicle can easily be kept clean and will minimise pest access
- Stalls should be screened at the top, rear and sides to protect food and catering equipment from contamination
- Work surfaces, cooking and storage facilities must be smooth and easily cleanable. Any bare wood should be sealed with a wood varnish or washable paint
- Adequate lighting and ventilation should be provided.

## Equipment

- It is unlikely that you will have a mains water supply of hot and cold running water so make sure you take a flask of hot and a flask of cold water and a washing up bowl with you for hand washing (water is preferable to hand gels and wipes)
- Change the water in the washing up bowl regularly throughout the day
- You will need enough hand soap (preferably antibacterial) and hand towels (preferably disposable paper towels) to last the day
- You will need separate facilities for washing equipment
- Don't forget your sanitiser or antibacterial spray

food and how to prevent food poisoning in the home. For the scenario a fridge was filled with a variety of foods and the children had to spot the dangers, such as cross-contamination and out of date food. We then discussed with them the correct methods of storage and how to minimise any potential food safety issues in the home. Personal hygiene and correct hand washing procedures were also talked about.

Resources were given to the pupils and teachers to enable follow on work for the issues raised. It is hoped that this practical learning experience will give each young person the opportunity to learn essential skills that will assist them in their journey through life.

and a good supply of clean cloths for regular cleaning of work surfaces

- Make sure you have a plentiful supply of bin bags for disposing of rubbish and food waste
- Take a first aid kit with you just in case, especially coloured plasters

## Food handling practices & temperature control

- Cover food as best you can to prevent pests such as flies, wasps and seagulls contaminating it
- Use separate cooking utensils for raw and cooked foods to prevent cross contamination
- Put an independent thermometer in your fridge(s) so that you can monitor the temperature and make sure that chilled foods are stored at or below 8°C (ideally 5°C )
- Cook small quantities at a time to ensure that food is thoroughly cooked all the way through
- Carry out visual checks to make sure high risk food such as meat products is piping hot and any juices run clear
- Once cooked, food should be sold straight away or hot-held at or above 63°C.
- Any leftovers at the end of the day should be thrown away and not reheated again for sale the next day
- Partial cooking off-site is not recommended because of the difficulties with temperature control over prolonged periods of time.

## Personal hygiene

- Wash hands before handling food, after using the toilet, after handling raw meat or waste and after smoking
- Wear clean clothing
- Ensure cuts and sores are covered with a coloured waterproof dressing
- Avoid unnecessary handling of food

## Training

- The food business operator must ensure that staff who handle food are supervised and instructed, and/or trained in food hygiene. Details of local food hygiene trainers can be found at: [www.torbay.gov.uk/foodsafety-trainingcourses.pdf](http://www.torbay.gov.uk/foodsafety-trainingcourses.pdf)

# Are you in a pickle over making food at home?

The Food & Safety Team has noticed a dramatic increase in the number of new food businesses that are starting up at home producing homemade treats such as jams, chutneys, cakes and biscuits.

As consumers become more conscious of what goes into their food and how far it has travelled, it is likely that the demand for homemade foods will increase. As a result of this growing trend, established businesses have begun making similar goods; a winner with tourists looking for authentic, locally produced token goods to take home.

There are specific labelling requirements to consider if you decide to venture into this market. You must remember that you cannot make claims that are untrue and may mislead consumers; if you are calling a product homemade then it must have been made from scratch in your kitchen.

If you are selling food directly to the actual people who will eat it, at the place where the food was produced, for example hotel reception, or from your own vehicle or market stall then the only things you need to label the food with are:

- A food name
- An indication of any additives in the product such as antioxidants, colours, flavours, flavour enhancers, preservatives (e.g. sulphur dioxide in dried fruits) or sweeteners.
- An indication of any irradiated ingredients

If you are selling loose, unpackaged products such as fairy cakes or individual slices of flapjack then the labelling information can be displayed near to the product on a sale ticket or blackboard. If the product is pre-packaged for the above type of direct sale, then the information should be on or attached to the packaging.

Please be aware that if you wish to label a food as a 'jam', 'jelly',

'marmalade', 'curd' or 'mincemeat' then additional specific labelling requirements exist that must be met.

If you are selling pre-packed foods to others to sell on, for example via a local shop, then the labelling requirements are more extensive and the information must be included on any product label as follows:

- A food name
- A list of ingredients, in descending order, by weight
- An indication of any additives in the product such as antioxidants, colours, flavours, flavour enhancers, preservatives (e.g. sulphur dioxide in dried fruits) or sweeteners
- An indication of any irradiated ingredients
- An indication of durability
- A 'use by' date is placed on fresh produce that can deteriorate and even become unsafe to eat over short periods of time, for example fish, fresh meat, meat products and milk. It is illegal to sell foods past their use by date
- A 'best before' refers to the quality rather than the safety of the product and tends to appear on more stable or non-perishable goods, such as canned, frozen and dried produce. It is not good practice to sell food past its best before date
- A percentage quantity indication is required for certain ingredients contained in the name of the food product, for example if you make a cherry and almond cake then you will need to declare the amount of cherry and almond as a percentage in the ingredients list
- Any special storage or use conditions
- Your name and address as the manufacturer
- Place of origin if there's a possibility a purchaser may be misled e.g. if the product is made in Torbay but from berries imported from Eastern Europe
- Any instructions that are necessary to use the food
- Specified allergenic ingredients must be declared. These are cereals containing gluten, crustaceans, eggs, fish, peanuts, soybeans, milk, nuts, celery, mustard, sesame seeds, sulphur dioxide and sulphites at concentrations of more than 10mg/litre
- A quantity mark

Please remember that you will need to register your business as a food business with Environmental Health if you are preparing food from home and a form can be downloaded from [www.torbay.gov.uk/foodsafety](http://www.torbay.gov.uk/foodsafety)

If you require any further advice or information about labelling then please do not hesitate to contact the Food & Safety Team on 01803 208009.

