

Food Safety Guidance for Markets and Farmers' Market Traders

London Borough of Hackney - 2017

HOW THIS LEAFLET WILL HELP YOU

This advice sheet will explain how to meet the food safety laws that apply to you while trading at a market or a farmers' market. This is not a detailed guide to legal requirements, but it covers the basics.

All markets within the borough are routinely inspected by the Council's Food Team Officers as part of our programme of food hygiene inspections for all types of food business. The officers will always be pleased to assist you with advice and guidance during their visit.

1. HYGIENE - CONTROLLING HAZARDS



The law requires you to identify possible hazards to food safety, know which of these is actually important for the type of food that you prepare or sell, and to provide suitable controls to stop the problems occurring. Simple measures are all that is required for most traders at a market. The most important of these are described below.

i. Transportation



Food transported to a market must be wrapped, covered or placed in suitable containers to prevent contamination. Vehicles used to transport food to and from a market should be kept clean and in good repair, so that the risks of food becoming contaminated are minimised.

- Simple cardboard boxes and paper-lined crates are fine for fruit and vegetables, but for ready to eat foods, bakery products and meats you should use containers that can be thoroughly cleaned and disinfected e.g. plastic trays or insulated boxes.
- Some foods must be kept cold (**below 8°C**) to control the growth of food poisoning bacteria. These include soft or semi-hard cheeses, most dairy products, cooked meat and vegetable products, most smoked or cured meat. Insulated containers with icepacks and a thermometer are usually sufficient for this purpose. Temperatures should be checked from time to time and this can easily be done by leaving a fridge thermometer in the container. It is good practice to keep a written log of the temperatures and the time they were noted. Larger volume traders should consider using refrigerated vehicles. Fish and shellfish must be kept at or below **4°C**, regularly iced with the melt water (defrosted ice) free to constantly drain from the fish. There are strict temperature controls required for fish intended to be consumed raw (sashimi), we strongly advise you contact our team prior to trading.

ii. Preparation

- The surface that you lay out or prepare food on must be smooth and impervious so that it can be thoroughly cleaned. If you are using wooden tables, you must provide plastic sheeting or other suitable covering material.

iii. Hand washing facilities

There must be hand washing facilities for hand washing only, provided with hot and cold water or water at a suitable temperature, soap or detergent and means of drying hands. Liquid soap and paper towels in dispensers are a more hygienic option than the traditional bars of soap and cloth towels.

Where the source of hot water is a hot water urn, there should be a safe and quick method of transferring boiling water to the wash basin and a means of mixing the hot with cold water, without the risk of injury or cross-contamination.

You may be required to have more than one hand wash unit depending on the type of food handling activities and the number of staff involved. The number of units required is to be determined by the stall/mobile unit.

Where only low risk open foods such as biscuits, sweets, olives etc are for sale and utensils are used for handling food, or where food is fully wrapped, a wash basin may not be justified; in this instance it may be acceptable to provide and use antiseptic wipes and/or disposable gloves (to be changed at regular intervals) as an alternative

The use of disposable gloves, tongs or antibacterial hand gel/wipes does not remove the requirement for you to provide hand washing facilities for the service/handling/preparation of ready to eat foods.

Ready to eat foods

Sandwiches	cooked meats/fish
Sausages/burgers/meat products	open bread
cooked bakery products	diary products including milk and cheese
containing eggs, meat and cheeses	salads
handling of raw fish/meat	cooked pies

The supply of hot water to the wash hand basin must be provided by the following methods:

- A direct supply of hot water to a fixed wash hand basin with instantaneous water heater (gas, electric or similar) and a piped cold water supply (hand, foot pumped or electric pumped) from a container to a wash hand basin.
This will allow for the water to be thermostatically controlled or mixed to a temperature that hands can be safely immersed for hand washing.
Water heaters must be of sufficient capacity and capable of holding the water at a hot enough temperature for hand washing.
- An insulated container with a suitable capacity or storing hot water at a hot enough temperature for hand washing.

Suitable types of hand washing units. Please note there are other suitable means of hand washing available. Providing they do not compromise food safety officers may deem it compliant.



IV Sinks

- If you are using knives or other serving implements you will need washing facilities for these, which must not be the same as those used for hand-washing - separate bowls or sinks must be used.



- Wear clean protective over clothing while handling unwrapped food and ensure they are changed in between preparing raw and ready to eat foods.



V . Display and Service

- To avoid possible contamination, food must **not** be placed directly onto the floor. It is best to keep all unwrapped food off the ground.

- To reduce the risk of ready to eat foods becoming cross-contaminated by contact with raw foods they should be kept apart. Open ready to eat foods e.g. pies should be protected from the public touching, coughing or sneezing on them by a sneeze guard.

- Check the temperature of chilled foods from time to time and preferably keep a record of this in a logbook. Make sure you know the correct temperature for the food that you are selling.
- Ice packs can be used to keep food chilled whilst it is on display. This is done by placing the tray or plate of food on several ice packs.

- Regularly clean surfaces using a suitable anti-bacterial kitchen surface cleaner and a clean (preferably disposable) cloth or paper towel. Ensure you follow the instructions for the antibacterial spray and ensure it has a British Standard Code; BS EN 1276:1997 or BS EN 13697:2001
- If the market does not have refuse services, make sure you have sacks or containers for waste food and water.
- It is strictly prohibited to dispose of waste cooking oil down public drains. It must be collected in a suitable container, removed from the market and collected by a waste carrier licenced by the Environment Agency.

VI. Cooking



Raw ingredients and cooked food must be adequately separated to avoid cross-contamination. Food must be thoroughly cooked to ensure that harmful bacteria is destroyed. If food is to be kept hot whilst on display or awaiting serving, it should be kept at a temperature of at least **63°C**.

A food probe thermometer should be used to confirm this, with regular temperature checks being carried out and recorded.



VII. Training and basic hygiene measures

It is not obligatory in law for all market traders to have attended courses on training in food hygiene but you must at least be aware of the basic principles that apply to the safe handling and preparation of food. However, if you have no experience of running a retail food stall or business, or if you are manufacturing food at home or from other premises, you will need some specific training. Food hygiene training courses are always strongly recommended for anyone involved in the running of a food business. Indeed, you may find that your local market will require evidence of such training

before allowing you to join.

For basic retailing operations, such as selling fruit and vegetables, or bakery products that do not contain meat or cream, the following advice should be of help.

- Keep yourself clean and wear protective clothing.
- Always wash your hands thoroughly before handling food, after using the toilet, handling raw food or waste and after every break.
- If you have a skin, nose or throat problem or an infected wound, do not handle unwrapped food.
- If you have a stomach upset, do not handle food for at least 48 hours after you are free of symptoms.
- Ensure that cuts, spots or sores are covered with a brightly coloured waterproof plaster.
- Do not smoke, eat or drink where open food is handled.
- Clean as you go - keep all equipment and surfaces clean and disinfected.
- Avoid unnecessary handling of food.

Hackney Council runs a one day Level 2 Award in Food Safety in Catering certified by the Royal Society of Public Health which gives staff and understanding and knowledge of good food hygiene practices. For more information please contact the Environmental Health department on 0208 365 4911 or www.hackney.gov.uk/environmental-health

VII. Food Safety Management System

All food businesses must have some documentation which explains what food safety hazards are relevant to their operation and how these will be controlled and monitored. This documentation is called a food safety management system. If you are handling low risk food such as cakes, preserves or vegetables this documentation only needs to be very simple. If you are handling high risk foods then the recommended system is the Food Standards Agency's Safer Food Better Business pack - Catering. You can download a free pack from <http://tinyurl.com/pgjooux>.



2. DO I NEED TO BE REGISTERED?

You must register with Hackney council 28 days **prior** to trading

If Hackney is where the majority of your businesses is held you will need to register with us.

If you have more than one stall/mobile vehicle you must indicate where they are located and which local authorities they are registered with.

It is a legal requirement for food businesses (including markets) to be registered with their local authority. Registration is free of charge. The form you need can be obtained from the Council. For markets, you do not need to register each market site you will be attending, but only the premises where you normally keep the stall overnight. In most cases, this will be your home, farm or smallholding.

3. SELLING YOUR FARM-PRODUCED MEAT



Many aspects of the sale of meat have their own sets of rules and regulations. The issues usually relating to farmers markets are covered below.

i. Getting your meat cut for you

You may well be used to having some of your animals sent to a local slaughterhouse and the meat cut up there or at a local butcher, before being sent back to you for your own consumption. However, you may need to do things differently if you intend to sell this meat from your own premises or stall.

If you have a local meat cutting plant that will cut your meat for you at a reasonable price, you must use it. However, if there is no local cutting plant or the plant is just not interested in cutting small quantities for you, it is acceptable for a local butcher to cut your meats at their shop. You must sell meat cut at a local butchers directly to the public, and not supply it to any other food businesses.

ii. Cutting up meat yourself

You may cut the meat yourself at your farm or other premises you own, providing it is only going to be sold from your farmers market stall. You may not supply the meat to any other food businesses.

4. MANUFACTURING FOOD AT HOME FOR SALE FROM YOUR MARKET STALL



i. Making low risk items such as cakes and jams

Generally these present few problems and many people safely produce a range of jams and non-dairy cakes from home. You must make sure you know about the basics of food hygiene and law and also the labelling and shelf-life requirements that apply. For guidance on labelling requirements contact the Food Safety Team.

ii. Making high risk items such as meat, dairy and fish products

These foods are much higher risk because they support the growth of harmful bacteria and are often sold ready to eat without further cooking. A mistake in their preparation and handling can have serious consequences for public health. If you intend to produce such products which include hams, pates, ice-cream, cheeses, yoghurts, Indian sweets, butter and prepared foods such as meat pies, lasagne, shepherds pies etc. you should contact the Council's Food Team for advice before you start. You will almost certainly need to undertake some formal training in food hygiene and you will be required to prepare a detailed documented food safety management system for the operation, as mentioned above in Section 1 (vi).



5. GIVING AWAY FREE SAMPLES

You may want to introduce your customers to as wide a range of your foods as possible and having tasting samples available is a good way to get their attention. Bear in mind that even though you may give samples away free of charge, the law sees this transaction as a sale, and their production and handling is still subject to legal control. Samples need to be protected from contamination especially from the public. If your customers have to handle your food, try and make sure they don't touch other samples on the plate - cocktail sticks or tongs help to stop this. Most importantly, don't leave food that must be chilled for safety reasons out of temperature control for long periods, especially during hot weather.

You may find your local market has its own conditions about food samples and they may not be permitted. This is at the discretion of the market organiser rather than any national legal requirement.

6. ALLERGENS

There are fourteen major allergens food businesses are legally required to declare to customers,

- **cereals** containing gluten (this includes wheat, barley and rye)

- **crustaceans**, for example prawns, crabs, lobster and crayfish
- **eggs**
- **fish**
- **peanuts**
- **soybeans**
- **milk**
- **nuts**, such as almonds, hazelnuts, walnuts, pecan nuts, Brazil nuts, pistachio, cashew and macadamia (Queensland) nuts
- **celery** (and celeriac)
- **mustard**
- **sesame**
- **sulphur dioxide**, which is a preservative found in some dried fruit
- **lupin**
- **molluscs**, for example clams, mussels, whelks, oysters, snails and squid

As a general rule, if you are selling prepacked food with the ingredients listed, the above allergens must be stated in **bold**.

If you are selling non prepacked foods you are advised to list the foods which contain any of the fourteen allergens and make this information readily available to the public.

More information can be found on the Food Standards Agency website <https://tinyurl.com/yazccoul>

7. GAS SAFETY (Liquefied petroleum gas (LPG))

Once mixed with air in small quantities LPG can become highly explosive. If there is a leak in a confined space, there may also be a risk of asphyxiation. LPG is heavier than air and will sink to the floor of a mobile unit and could therefore be undetected so floor level venting is essential.

Managing the risk

- The maximum quantity of LPG in cylinders on any stand, including LPG connected to appliances or equipment should not exceed a day's supply. If it is proposed to use or store greater quantities then prior discussion and agreement with the event organisers should take place.
- So called "empty" cylinders still contain gas and therefore should be carefully handled. The "empty" cylinders should be stored in the open air with the shut off valve in the closed position.
- Gas appliances including pipework must be installed and regularly serviced and maintained by a competent person (Gas Safe registered for LPG in commercial setting www.gassaferegister.co.uk).
- Annual gas safety checks are required for all appliances and pipework. Gas Safety Certificates must be presented to the Council when requested.
- Cylinders should be fitted with automatic cut-off valves and be protected from tampering.
- Cylinders must be stored upright so that they cannot fall, and be positioned away from heat and ignition sources.
- Gas storage compartments in trailers must have half an hour fire protection between the gas compartment and the inside of the unit. Access must be from the outside of the unit and there should be adequate ventilation at high and low levels. The cylinder must be secured in an upright position and be securely fastened during transit.
- All pipes and fittings should be to the correct British Standard for LPG and kept as short as possible with appropriate crimp or compression fittings (not slip-on fittings).
- All pipes should be protected from abrasion or mechanical damage (armoured if subject to temperatures over 50°C)
- Flexible piping must be checked regularly and replaced if damaged or worn.
- All gas appliances must be fitted with a flame failure device and be adequately ventilated.
- All fryers should be fitted with an automatic high temperature-limiting device (operates at a fat temperature of 250°C or lower).
- Suitable signs indicating '**Caution – LPG**' and '**Highly Flammable**' should be displayed.

Licensing & Regulatory Services

Hackney Service Centre

1 Hillman Street London, E8 1DY

Tel Number: 020 8356 4911 Fax Number: 020 8356 4916 E-mail: technicalbusinesssupport@hackney.gov.uk



- People who change the cylinders should be properly trained and a safety notice on how to connect and disconnect LPG bottles should be displayed in the gas compartment.
- Cylinder valves and gas appliances must be turned off when not in use.

All gas equipment must be EC marked and routinely checked, serviced and installed by a gas safe registered engineer who is competent to carry out works on commercial appliances (www.gassaferegister.co.uk)
For more information on safe installation and use of LPG as a fuel source please visit the Nationwide Caterers Association <https://tinyurl.com/y8z5a9cy>
Camping equipment is strictly prohibited for use in all Hackney Markets.

8. FOOD INSPECTIONS (inc FHRs)

Hackney council Environmental Health Officers regularly inspect food businesses (including market stalls) to make sure that food is handled and produced hygienically. We will also investigate if a customer complains about a business to us.

Please visit <https://www.hackney.gov.uk/food-safety-inspections> to find out more about food hygiene inspections.

The food hygiene rating scheme helps people choose where to eat out or shop for food by giving them information about the hygiene standards in businesses that sell food.

We inspect businesses and give them a rating of 0-5 to show how closely they meet food hygiene law standards. Food businesses are also given a sticker, which should be displayed on the premises.

Customers can search food business scores via the Food Hygiene Rating Scheme Website or mobile app. Should you receive a score you are not happy with you can appeal the score, post a right to reply to the website or request a re-inspection for a fee of £175.

Please visit <https://www.hackney.gov.uk/food-hygiene-rating> for more information.

9. Useful contacts:

Hackney Environmental Health

Tel: 020 8356 4911

Fax: 020 8356 4916

E-mail: technicalbusinesssupport@hackney.gov.uk

Website: <https://hackney.gov.uk/environmental-health>

Hackney Markets

Tel: 020 8356 5300

Email: marketsservice@hackney.gov.uk

Website: <https://hackney.gov.uk/markets-traders>

Gas Safe Register

Consumers: 0800 408 5500

Engineers: 0800 408 5577

Website: <https://www.gassaferegister.co.uk/>

The Food Standards Agency

Telephone: 020 7276 8829

Website: www.food.gov.uk

The Nationwide Caterers Association

<https://www.ncass.org.uk/home>

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