

Carmarthenshire Food Network

Food Safety Guidance



This information is intended to provide an overview of general food safety guidance for food banks and charitable food provision where the vast majority of the foods will be pre-packed ambient/dry/tinned products

All food businesses whether donating or receiving, and handling donated food, must be aware of their legal responsibilities under food safety legislation and where appropriate these must be considered within the food safety management system; and it depends on the nature of the activity in terms of what would be expected in a documented food safety management system.

Foodbanks: receiving, holding, storing, and distributing food to be consumed off the premises - but do not generally process or serve food.

- Registration may be required as a food business with Carmarthenshire County Council. This depends on the scale of the business and the types of food being handled. If temperature-controlled foods are being handled on a regular basis eg at least once a week, then registration is likely to be required.
✉ Public Protection Team
publicprotection@carmarthenshire.gov.uk
- Donated food must be compliant with Food safety legislation
- Before accepting food, you must consider (1) your capacity for storage (2) temperature control (3) transportation of foods (4) control measures in place to ensure food is safe. Good

communication with the food donor will ensure donations are accepted.

- Businesses donating food will require a Food Hygiene Rating provided by their relevant local authority, which reflects the standards of Food Hygiene found on the date of the inspection. <https://ratings.food.gov.uk/> Look for food hygiene ratings of 3-5 and ask to see their last food hygiene inspection report
- You may accept food from premises such as: primary producers, manufacturers and packers, importers and exporters, distributors (including wholesalers, and other inter-business suppliers) and transporters, who are excluded from this rating scheme.

A documented procedure for checking deliveries should be implemented and checks would include:

- Physical checks for signs of deterioration, odours, spoilage, broken or damaged packaging that will impact shelf life or indicate contamination.
- Products are clearly labelled and within the **use by date**. Food which is passed the **best before** date may be safe to consume but may have deteriorated in quality. You must have a way of checking that food past its best before date is still of the quality demanded by the customer (WRAP pdf - [CFN resources](#)).
- The appropriate storage conditions have been adhered to by the donor (High Risk chilled food must only be accepted if it is at a temperature

of 8 degrees Celsius or below or if it is in packaging that it has been stored according to instructions on the package which may say a lower temperature).

- Any unsafe food must be rejected and disposed of.
- You must keep records of where you have obtained your food donations from to ensure traceability in case of any problems. Food donors must also keep records of who they have donated to. Food product recalls can occur at any time, and you must legally be able to recall food or remove food from the market that has been deemed unsafe to eat.

Freezing Food Before Its Use By Date

If you are freezing foods before their use by dates, you must have a procedure for doing this which ensures that the food you supply to customers is safe. The date the foods are frozen should be recorded and the food should now be given a best before date that has been verified i.e. you apply date product frozen on day/month/year and a Best before date day/month/year and note eat within 24 hours of defrosting. The product would need to comply with food labelling legislation also. (Notably Regulation (EU) No. 1169/2011 and the Food Information Regulations 2014). Advice would need to be given to the consumer to consume the food within 24 hours of defrosting. Your Food Safety Management system would need to address this.

If this is something you are considering please contact and discuss your controls with the Food Safety Team.

www.lovefoodhatewaste.com/article/be-freezer-hero

Suitability of your Premises

All premises and equipment used for food preparation should be able to be cleaned easily and keep food safe.

- Can food be stored in a safe and hygienic way?
- If foods are to be stored in fridges/freezers you must have a way of regularly checking that they are kept at the correct temperature and you must have a procedure re; what to do if there is an issue with the temperature.
- Can the premises be properly cleaned - are wall/floor surfaces etc cleanable?
- Is the premises pest proof and free from pests?
- Are there a suitable number of sinks with hot and cold running water for cleaning purposes and wash hand basins for staff to wash their hands?

Training and recruitment of staff

You must ensure that all employees and volunteers are trained to a level appropriate for their work activity. It is expected that any volunteers have a basic understanding of food hygiene and a good knowledge of internal food safety procedures. Ongoing supervision should be in place to ensure the safety of food provision. Persons who prepare and handle high risk food e.g. ready to eat food, hot lunches should be supervised, instructed and/or trained in food hygiene matters.

*Level 2 food hygiene trained member of staff may supervise other staff whilst they complete induction and training. All food handlers handling high risk foods should be trained to Food Hygiene Level 2 within 3 months of starting work.

Allergen Management & procedures to be considered

Suppliers must be able to identify and declare the presence of allergens in their products.

- Receiving goods - obtaining accurate allergen information from product labels and/or directly from the supplier - in the case of any missing information or unclear labelling the product must not be used due to the risk of an undeclared allergen.
You must also capture any **“may contain”** allergen statements from packages to be able to pass this on to customers.
- Storage - contamination with allergens due to failure in segregation between allergen containing and non-allergenic containing products. Avoid decanting foods or splitting foods from their original packaging.
- Transportation - contamination from delivery vehicle, personal hygiene, damaged packaging.

Telephone/Internet Orders

- If you take any telephone/internet orders, you must have a way of capturing any food allergies/intolerances or any dietary requirements e.g. kosher, halal etc . If any customers have any allergies/intolerances, they must not receive any foods that contain such allergens either as ingredients or as “may contain” allergens.
- It is advisable to establish if anyone in the household where a delivery is to be made is exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19 infection/has COVID-19 infection. Also, whether anyone in the household is from a vulnerable group ie being shielded or self-isolating due to being in a vulnerable group. This information MUST be conveyed to the person doing the delivery so that extra precautions can be taken at point of delivery.

Deliveries

- Durability dates must be available i.e. use by dates and best before dates on all foods supplied to customers.
www.food.gov.uk/business-guidance/food-safety-for-food-delivery
- Review and make clearer allergy risks and dietary requirements are different things and not sure relevance of durability dates here or is this about customers being happy with the time they have to use the product ie. Shelf life

High Risk Food Preparation

High risk food activities such as cooking, chilling, providing ready to eat foods (sandwiches or hot meals) require more stringent food hygiene procedures be in place. *Please be aware packaging and repackaging of foods poses food safety risks and must comply with both food hygiene and food standard legal requirements.*

Useful websites/links

- ≥ [Register a food business | Food Standards Agency](#)
- ≥ [Setting up a food business | Food Standards Agency](#)
- ≥ [Food safety for community cooking and food banks | Food Standards Agency](#)

- You must register with Carmarthenshire County Council **environmental health department** before commencing any work, and you must comply with relevant Food Hygiene law and Food information regulations law in relation to food hygiene/ safety including allergen controls and other food labelling.
www.food.gov.uk/business-guidance

Personal Hygiene and Coronavirus (COVID-19)

Although it is unlikely that coronavirus is transmitted through food, as a matter of good hygiene practice anyone handling food should wash their hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. This should be done as a matter of routine, on entering the food premises, before and after handling food, after being in a public place, blowing their nose, coughing, or sneezing.

All food businesses have to provide wash hand basins in food preparation areas, these are separate to the sinks. All food handlers must be able to access a wash hand basin and all food handlers must be supervised to ensure they wash their hands at the wash hand basin with hot and cold running water and soap. There is no option to just use an alcohol gel. An alcohol sanitiser can be used after washing hands and drying hands.

- All staff and volunteers should practice a high level of personal hygiene and avoid touching their face. It is recommended that a daily staffing list is kept, and daily checks are made to ensure all individuals are not symptomatic and good hygiene is maintained across all steps.
- It is advisable that handwashing signage is displayed to encourage compliance. Please see link re: how to wash hands properly: www.nhs.uk/live-well/healthy-body/best-way-to-wash-your-hands

- ≥ [Allergen guidance for food businesses | Food Standards Agency](#)
- ≥ [Safer food, better business \(SFBB\) | Food Standards Agency](#)
- ≥ [Online food safety training | Food Standards Agency](#)

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