



Food Safety Training

A legal requirement for everyone
in the food industry

Food Safety Training

It is a legal requirement that staff involved in a food environment are trained and/or supervised, commensurate with their work activity. The responsibility for the supervision and training of staff lies with the proprietor of the food business.

From 1st January 2006, staff responsible for the development and maintenance of the food businesses Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point (HACCP) system must have received adequate training in the application of the HACCP principles.

Food safety training is essential to the commercial viability of a company/organisation as it:

- Assists companies in becoming more efficient, competitive and profitable
- Raises performance standards
- Reduces wastage
- Assists in the production of safe food
- Complies with food legislation requirements
- Promotes a good company image
- Increases staff morale
- Improves staff retention

The implementation of knowledge acquired during food safety training requires the provision of the appropriate resources and motivational support by management.

What Makes Training Work?

Results of several studies have shown no direct link between training, knowledge and practice, unless the training is relevant to what trainees do in their everyday jobs, and is supported by management.

Trainees should be given assistance to help them successfully implement the training in the workplace. This can be achieved by using a Training Application Plan.

A Training Application Plan is a written document that describes the steps that trainees need to put into action in order to assist them implement the training in their workplace. The Training Application Plan breaks down what must be done in a step by step manner thereby making it more manageable for the trainee(s) to apply. An example of a Training Application Plan is shown on the next page.

Work with Your Supervisor to Plan Putting Your Training into Action

Training Application Plan

Name: _____ Date: _____

	Trainee's Action Plan	Manager's Action Plan	Completion Date
Personal Hygiene	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Wash your hands using the correct hand washing procedure ■ Wear protective clothing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Provide soap, sink and disposable towels ■ Provide protective clothing and adequate changing facilities 	Date: _____ Signed by you: _____ Signed by manager: _____
Cross Contamination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Store high-risk foods at the correct temperature ■ Keep raw and ready-to-eat foods separate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Provide separate storage areas for raw and ready-to-eat foods ■ Provide a colour coding system as appropriate, e.g. utensils, clothing, equipment etc. 	Date: _____ Signed by you: _____ Signed by manager: _____
Food Safety Hazards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Know the physical, chemical and biological hazards associated with your job activity ■ Demonstrate how hazards can be controlled 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Ensure controls are in place to prevent, eliminate or reduce hazards in the food operation 	Date: _____ Signed by you: _____ Signed by manager: _____



Food Safety Training

The Role of Management, the Trainer and Trainee(s) in the Implementation of Training

For food safety training to be successful, the Food Safety Authority of Ireland (FSAI) recommends a training approach which proactively encourages the implementation of skills and knowledge in the food business. This requires the involvement and commitment from management (owner/manager/supervisor), the trainer and the trainees.

The table below outlines the role of management, trainer and the trainee(s) before, during and after training.

	Before Training	During Training	After Training
Management (owner/manager/supervisor)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Understand the importance of food safety training ■ Meet with the trainee(s) and explain about the training that they will receive ■ Meet with the trainee(s) and set their training goals ■ Ensure the trainer has appropriate qualification/experience to provide training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Protect trainee(s) from interruptions, e.g. phone calls 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Demonstrate good food safety practices ■ Encourage employees to implement training ■ Provide resources to assist the trainee(s) implement the training
Trainer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Familiarise themselves with the food business training needs ■ Inform management of the course objectives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Deliver training that is relevant to the food business and trainee(s) training need(s) ■ Encourage trainee(s) to participate in the training programme ■ Develop realistic training application plans with trainee(s) for transferring learning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Liaise with management and trainee(s) to ensure that the training is being implemented in the workplace
Trainee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Understand that food safety training will assist them to produce safe food for the consumer ■ Meet with management and agree training goals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Participate in training ■ Develop realistic Training Application Plans with trainer transferring learning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Implement and apply new skills outlined in the Training Application Plan

Adapted from Transfer of Learning - A Guide for Strengthening the Performance of Health Care Workers, Harber and Sullivan *et al*, (March, 2002)

Training Guides

To assist food businesses meet their legal obligation, the FSAI, in consultation with industry representatives, authorised officers and training providers, has produced Guides to Food Safety Training. These guides detail the food safety skills that food handlers and non-food handlers should be able to demonstrate in the workplace. There are two guides in the series:

- Level 1 (Induction Skills) and Level 2 (Additional Skills)
- Level 3 (Food Safety Skills for Management)

Level 1 outlines the basic food safety skills that all staff should demonstrate within the first month of employment while Level 2 outlines additional food safety skills that staff should be able to demonstrate within three to 12 months of commencing employment.

Level 3 outlines food safety skills that managers and supervisors in food operations should demonstrate.

These guides are available on the FSAI website (www.fsai.ie) or through the FSAI advice line on 1890 336677.

Training Options

There are a number of ways that food businesses can meet their legal obligation regarding training of employees. These options include:

- Designing, developing and delivering their own in-house training programme using the relevant training guides. The guides contain relevant information, checklists and records that can help businesses meet their legal requirements for training. This requires companies to have the necessary in-house food safety and training expertise
- Recruiting the services of a training provider to either design or deliver training specifically for their businesses needs*
- Attending training courses which are offered by training providers and training companies*
- Availing of various e-learning programmes - **please note: these programmes must be used in conjunction with management support and follow-up**
- Using 'off the shelf' packages for in-house trainers - **please note: these packages will require individuals have the necessary training to deliver the training appropriately**

* When choosing the option of a training provider/company, food business operators should consult the information overleaf to ensure the training provider/company selected is best suited to their business needs.



Food Safety Training

What should I look for in the trainer who is to deliver my training?

Many food businesses are looking to build competence within their organisation by equipping management with the necessary knowledge and skills to provide their staff with the required training. One benefit of having an in-house trainer is that they can support and encourage the transfer of knowledge to the workplace on a continuous basis.

Some food businesses may prefer to recruit an external training provider to assist them meet their legal requirement. Outlined below are a few guidelines to assist a food business when seeking a trainer, whether in-house or external:

Do they have an appropriate food safety qualification?

The person delivering the training must have:

1. A background in food safety. The FSAI Level 3 Training Guide (Food Safety Skills for Managers) provides information on the level of food safety knowledge that a food safety trainer requires
2. Relevant experience in the food industry
3. Knowledge of how people learn and
4. Training skills

Can they provide follow-up support?

The success of training depends on how it is implemented in the workplace. Post training follow-up is beneficial as it assists in the implementation of the knowledge and helps clarify any issues that have arisen since the training was provided.

Is management participation encouraged?

Proprietors/managers should be familiar with and have ownership of the food safety training programme for their staff. It is important that the trainer and management work together to ensure that all food safety aspects relating to their business are addressed in the course.

Additional Considerations If Selecting an External Training Provider

What do some of their previous clients say about them?

Talking to some of the trainer's previous clients will inform you of the quality of the service you may receive. It must however, be kept in mind that the success of the service is dependent on the training provider's and the food businesses input.

Is the training provider interested in identifying your company's specific needs?

Are they willing to spend time with you, listen to you and explain the best method of meeting your food businesses requirements?

How will the training provider assess your training needs?

Will they:

- i. Visit your company - are you happy they will visit for the right reasons e.g. assess your current practices etc.?
- ii. Meet with key representatives - what do they want to achieve by doing this?

Will they adapt their material and delivery method to meet your needs?

The success of the training provided is dependent on how relevant the materials and delivery method are to your food business.

Are they willing to show you some of their training aids or previous work?

This will give you an indication of the quality of work you can expect to receive. It also allows you to assess whether the training provided is generic, or tailored to suit your needs.

Note: It is advisable that you contact a number of training providers and discuss your requirements with them. This discussion will enable you to make an informed decision on your choice of trainer. The ability of the trainer to meet your expectations is dependent on both parties having a clear understanding of the desired outcome.

Assisting the delivery of training

The food industry employs an increased number of non Irish national employees who, due to language barriers, may be at a disadvantage in a conventional training situation. The FSAI has compiled a database of “Food Safety Training Materials in Foreign Languages” which is available on the FSAI website at www.fsai.ie.

This database provides information on food safety training materials, including publications, videos, posters, translation services and useful website addresses. The database gives a brief description of the item, the language(s) in which it is available and where it is available from.

This document is merely intended to provide information and is not an endorsement or recommendation for any or all of the training materials listed. It does not purport to be comprehensive or to constitute legal or other professional advice.

Inspection of food safety training

Enforcement officers may assess food safety training when conducting a food safety inspection in your premises. They may observe hygiene practice and verify the food safety knowledge of staff. They may also enquire as to whether you maintain food safety records or ask about the food safety training that has been provided.





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