Food Safety Newsletter

Local Environmental Health Officers have created this newsletter to assist food businesses comply with requirements under the SA Food Act 2001 and the Food Safety Standards. Below is information on some of the key areas where non-compliance is currently being observed. If you require any further information please contact your Local Council's Environmental Health Officer.

Food Grade Sanitising

What is the difference between cleaning and sanitising?

Cleaning means the removal of visible dirt or residual food matter. It may leave behind bacteria that are too small to be seen.
Sanitising is using heat or chemicals to destroy any dangerous bacteria that might remain.
Cleaning and sanitising should usually be done as a separate processes.

A surface needs to be thoroughly cleaned before it is sanitised, as sanitisers effectiveness is reduced in the presence of food residues and detergents.

What needs to be sanitised?

- Eating and drinking utensils such as glasses, cups, plates and cutlery;
- Food contact surfaces i.e. cutting boards, benches and knives used for ready-to-eat foods;
- Equipment such as mixers and slicers which are used for ready-to-eat foods.

Methods of sanitising

1. USING HOT WATER

Generally this is done using a dishwasher. Dishwashers are an effective means of using hot water to sanitise eating and drinking utensils and other heat resistant equipment.

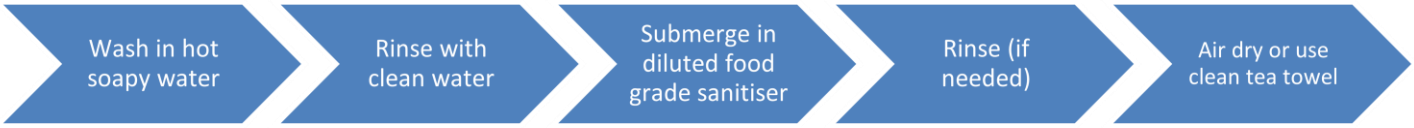
2. USING CHEMICALS

For items that are too large or delicate to go through a dishwasher or benchtops – these items must be food grade sanitised using a compliant chemical.

The most commonly used sanitisers in food businesses use either chlorine or QATs (quaternary ammonium compounds) as active ingredients. These can not be purchased at a supermarket. Hospitality suppliers can provide advice on:

- suitability of food grade sanitiser for a food business,
- correct dilution ratios – i.e. how much sanitiser to mix with how much water. Ensure your business has measuring equipment that accurately measures these amounts!
- contact time - how long the chemical needs to stay on surface of equipment to work,
- diluted shelf life - how long does it last once mixed with water, for example in a spray bottle for benches.

Generally food grade sanitising equipment or utensils requires the following:
(always check manufacturers instructions):



Benchtops can be sanitised with the correctly diluted mixture in a spray bottle as the surface is nice and flat. Benchtops should be cleaned first and then have sanitiser applied.

Food Safety Supervisor

Does your business require a Food Safety Supervisor? From December 2023 the below requirements came into effect. This means certain businesses must have at least one food safety supervisor (depending on size of the business). Some businesses are also required to keep mandatory records.

Environmental Health Officers will ask to sight certificates and records during inspections.



For more information on how to comply or become a Food Safety Supervisor go to:
Food Safety Management Tools - Standard 3.2.2A | SA Health

Or use the SA Health checklist to self-assess if your business complies:
Food Safety Standard 3.2.2A Management Tools Checklist - category 1
Food Safety Standard 3.2.2A Management Tools Checklist - category 2

Thermometers for Temperature Checking

If you store, transport, prepare, cook or sell potentially hazardous foods you **must have a working probe thermometer available at all times.**

- Do the batteries work?
- Is it accurate? Have you ever calibrated the probe thermometer?
- How do you clean and food grade sanitise it before inserting it into food?
- Do staff know what temperatures are needed for cold or hot food and cooling down timeframes?

Infrared thermometers and display fridge temperatures are a guide only

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