February 2021

This newsletter provides information for the food industry, regulators and the general public about recent developments in food standards, food legislation and other food safety matters on interest.

Pregnancy Warning Labels

New requirements for mandatory pregnancy warning labels on packaged alcoholic beverages were gazetted in the [Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code](#) on 31 July 2020.

Businesses have three years from 31 July 2020 to implement these requirements. Further information is available on the Food Standards Australia New Zealand [website](#), including:

- design elements of the label and downloadable labels
- questions and answers on Code requirements.

COVID-19 and Food Safety

Key points:

- There is no currently available evidence that COVID-19 is transmitted through food
- Maintaining good hygiene practices is recommended
- Stay home if you are sick, don't attend the workplace and get tested if you have COVID-19 symptoms
- Businesses need to follow any social distancing requirements requested by the Australian and Queensland Government

For general advice and frequently asked questions relating to COVID-19 and food safety, see the Food Standards Australia New Zealand [website](#).

For information specific to Queensland businesses, see the Queensland Health COVID-19 [website](#).

Queensland Government

Food Pantry

The Food Pantry is a digital hub that aims to provide a single source of information, promoting consistency across Queensland making it easier for food businesses to operate and reduce the time it takes to find relevant information.

The Food Pantry is part of a small business regulatory reform that may contribute toward changing food businesses focus by improving Queensland's food safety culture, reducing regulatory and administrative burden on food businesses, and help to reduce foodborne illness in Queensland.

As part of the Food Pantry development, a number of interactive online tools are also under development to assist food businesses with food safety requirements and to improve their food safety culture within their business.

In addition to the new tools, the Food Pantry also provides access to free online food safety training.

The Food Pantry and interactive tools are expected to be live on the Queensland Health website in the coming months. Further information on the new tools is provided below.
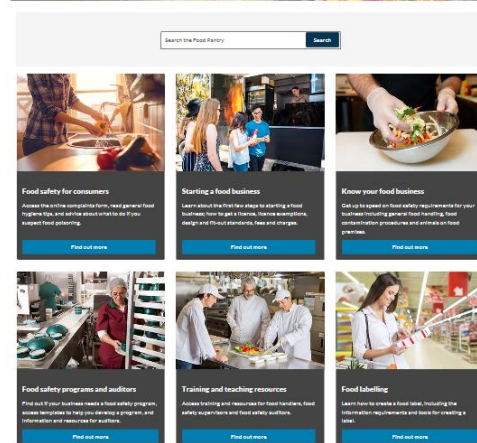
Online food complaint form

The new online complaint form allows users to lodge complaints using simple drop-down menus and free text fields, automatically triaging the complaint to the appropriate enforcement agency based on legislative functions and location.

The form has been developed so that it also educates consumers around matters which are either not valid complaints (e.g. not wearing hair nets or gloves) or fall outside of food regulation (e.g. poor customer service). It is hoped that this functionality will reduce the number of complaints received and provide efficiencies to regulators by referring the complaint to the correct agency in the first instance.

Know your Food Business

Know Your Food Business allows small to medium food businesses to self-assess whether their business is meeting the requirements of the *Food Act 2006* and the Food Safety Standards.

The tool contains 11 topics that can be completed individually and includes advice on how to improve compliance with legislative requirements along with links to further information and resources.

Label Buster

Label Buster online is a step-by-step guide for small to medium food businesses to identify the information they need to include on a food label.

The online tool aims to make the process of developing a food label as simple as possible with the inclusion of lists with pre-populated options and the use of plain English throughout.

If users have no or limited knowledge about labelling requirements, the process will take around two hours to complete. However, after completing the process, the tool will generate a product sheet containing all the information that needs to be included on a food label along with specific information to ensure the label is compliant i.e. minimum font size required for warning statements.

DoFoodSafely

DoFoodSafely is a FREE online learning program designed to help food handlers understand how to safely work with, and handle, food.

While food safety training is not mandatory for food handlers, the program is available in several languages other than English including Vietnamese, Chinese (Traditional) and Arabic and will continue to be translated into additional languages over time.

It takes approximately 30 minutes to complete the seven topics and users can choose to undertake an assessment quiz to gain a certificate of completion.

2020 HACCP Codex Changes

In December 2020 the Codex Alimentarius Commission has made some significant changes to the Codex HACCP including:

- The seven principles of HACCP have changed and has resulted in food businesses needing to implement more prescriptive control measures along with far more detailed validation and verification requirements.
- Food Safety Culture has now been included.
- Maintenance and cleaning now includes allergens.
- More focus on personal cleanliness, behaviour and visitors.
- Training and Competence section has been strengthened.
- There are new sections on 'Allergen Management' and 'Lot Identification and Traceability.'

While the *Food Act 2006* does not give effect to Codex HACCP, there are many food businesses who operate to HACCP requirements and will need to update their practices and procedures.

New Nutrition Panel Calculator

The Nutrition Panel Calculator (NPC) is a tool to help food manufacturers calculate the average nutrient content of their food products and prepare a nutrition information panel.

Food Standards Australia New Zealand have updated the NPC available on their website, some of the new features include:

- improved stability for uninterrupted access
- streamlined process to create recipes using three easy steps
- easier access to tips and guidance.