

Welcome to Maranoa Regional Council's first Food Safety Newsletter, to help keep you informed on current food safety matters. Please keep Council up to date with your email contact details so you do not miss out on important information on local food safety issues.

FOCUS ON EGGS

Food safety with eggs is as important as it is with chicken, meat, seafood and dairy products. Recent foodborne illness outbreaks in Queensland have been associated with foods that have been prepared using raw and lightly cooked eggs and egg products.

SALE AND USE OF HOMEGROWN EGGS

In Queensland it is a requirement that anyone wishing to sell eggs is accredited with *Safe Food Production Queensland*. This accreditation ensures that suppliers have appropriate food safety controls and are reducing the significant food safety hazards throughout the production of their eggs. It is important that you are only purchasing eggs from an accredited supplier.

WHEN USING EGGS:

DO

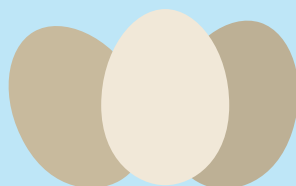
- Wash hands before and after handling
- Keep eggs and egg products refrigerated until needed
- Only make food that contains raw eggs products on the day you plan to eat it.

DO NOT

- Use the shells to separate the egg white from the yolk (as salmonella bacteria on the surface of the shell can be transferred to the contents of the egg)
- Use cracked or dirty eggs
- Wash eggs – washing eggs allows bacteria to move from the outside of the shell to inside the egg.

SALMONELLA AND EGGS

Salmonella is the most commonly reported bacteria responsible for foodborne illness outbreaks and is often associated with eggs and egg products. There's no way to tell if an egg contains salmonella. It won't look or smell any different from a non-infected egg.



DID YOU KNOW?

- Approximately 5,000 cases of food poisoning caused by salmonella are reported each year in Queensland alone.
- More cases of Salmonella infections are seen during summer.
- Symptoms of Salmonella infection include headaches, fever, stomach cramps, diarrhea, nausea and vomiting. Consumption of ready-to-eat foods containing raw eggs has been identified as a major cause of Salmonella infections.
- Symptoms usually develop 6 - 72 hours after exposure to the bacteria, but can sometimes occur up to 2 weeks later. Symptoms typically last between four to seven days but can sometimes last much longer.

PEST & VERMIN CONTROL

EXCLUSION

This is the most effective way to control the entry of pest insects and rodents into your premises. It may be costly in the first place but will provide long last protection and minimal upkeep in the future.

RESTRICTION

Create unfavourable conditions for pests to harbour and breed. This includes:

- Sealing gaps between tiles
- Replacing broken tiles
- Removing all food and liquid waste
- Not leaving dirty crockery and cutlery exposed overnight
- Storing food in sealed containers overnight or inside a cool room and regular cleaning and sanitation of all surfaces.

DESTRUCTION

Undertake pest control using chemicals and non-chemical methods.

Have regular pest control services by a licensed operator and keep records and receipts of services.

INTEREST FOR BASIC FOOD SAFETY COURSE

Council is seeking expressions of interest from food businesses to attend a 2-hour Basic Food Safety Course for food handlers. The aim of the course is to provide participants with food safety skills and knowledge that satisfies the requirements of the FSANZ: Food Standard Code. This free course will be run by Council's Environmental Health Officers; and it is not an accredited food safety course.

To register your interest, please email environmental.health@maranoa.qld.gov.au - by Friday, 6 April 2018 with your business name, contact name and details, a day and time of the week that would suit you to attend the course and the number of staff able to attend. If there are sufficient numbers, we will run multiple courses across the region.

Food safety topics that will be covered in the course include temperature control, food storage, cross contamination, and cleaning schedules.

FOOD BUSINESS INSPECTIONS COMMON ISSUES IDENTIFIED

Council's Environmental Health Officers (EHOs) are currently undertaking inspections of all licensed food businesses within the Maranoa. Here are some of the common issues we have identified during these inspections.

The followings areas are not being cleaned regularly:

- Grease traps (regular cleaning will help with pest control)
- Exhaust canopy filters and ducting (reduces fire risk)
- Ledges around doors and windows – build up of dirt and dust
- Under microwaves, fridges, freezers and dishwashers.

The development of a cleaning schedule for your food business will help ensure all areas within your kitchen are not overlooked or missed and are cleaned or activities organised on a routine basis.

FOOD BUSINESS CATERING

Over the past 12 months Council has become aware that a number of food business are undertaking catering activities. The *Food Act 2006* defines the meaning of a catering activity.

A catering activity can be either on-site catering or off-site catering. These activities are explained below.

ONSITE CATERING

On-site catering refers to preparing and serving food that has the potential to be hazardous to consumers at the premises where the food business is carried out. This is usually carried out under an agreement where the food is of a predetermined type, for a predetermined number of persons, served at a predetermined time, for a predetermined cost.

An example of on-site catering is where a restaurant in a hotel has an additional dining room with extra seating. The room is used primarily for catered functions separate to the remainder of the business.

OFFSITE CATERING

Off-site catering refers to a business serving food that has the potential to be hazardous, at a place other than the principal place of operation for the food business.

An example of off-site catering is where a spit-roast catering company partially prepares food at one place (their principal place of business), then finishes preparations and serves potentially hazardous food at another place (such as in a local park, or in a hired hall).

If your business falls into one of these categories a Food Safety Program (FSP) is required.

A Food Safety Program is a documented system that identifies the food safety hazards in the handling of food in a food business and details the way the hazards will be controlled in that business.

If you believe you are undertaking catering activities or wish to do so in the future and don't have an accredited food safety program, please contact Council's Environmental Health Team for further information.

