

# Food and Safety Advice for Market Stalls and Mobile Vendors in Solihull

This information sheet provides guidelines on how to meet the food safety and health & safety laws that apply to you while trading at a market or as a mobile vendor in Solihull. Food stalls at markets are the subject of routine checking by officers from your local Environmental Health and Trading Standards Department, who may visit you on the day a market is held. Fire Officers will also visit and some additional fire safety advice is therefore also included.



## Do I need to be registered?

Registration involves contacting your local authority for a form which you fill in and return. For market stalls, you do not need to register each market site, only the premises where you normally keep the stall and its materials overnight. It is a good idea to bring with you and display your Food Hygiene Rating certificate/sticker (FHRS) as this will give your customers confidence in your produce.

## Food Safety Management system

Food safety management is about how you comply with food hygiene and food standards legislation. All food business operators should have in place a food management system appropriate for the size and nature of your food business based on the principles of Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP). To assist small businesses with putting these procedures in place the Food Standards Agency (FSA) has produced Safer Food Better Business (SFBB).

<https://www.food.gov.uk/business-guidance/safer-food-better-business-sfbb>

## Basic cleanliness

Simple measures are all that are required for most traders at a market. The most important are described below:

- Hand washing facilities: if you are selling open foods, such as meats, or high risk unwrapped foods such as cooked meats, dairy products and sea foods, there must be hand washing facilities on your stall including a supply of hot water, towels, bowl and soap. For hot water, insulated flasks would be accepted but it should be ensured that a large enough volume is available to your trading hours. Anti-bacterial hand gels are NOT regarded as an acceptable alternative to hot water. (Hand gels are accepted for low risk products).

- If there is open food, staff should wear appropriate clean protective clothing, including hats, or a hairnet and remove watches and jewellery.
- Use disposable cloths wherever possible and dispose of them after use.

## Transportation

- Food transported to a market must be wrapped, covered or placed in suitable containers to prevent contamination. Simple cardboard boxes and paper-lined crates are fine for most agricultural produce but you will need higher grade materials, such as metal or plastic crates, for bakery products and meats.
- Some foods\* must be kept cold below 8°C to prevent the growth of dangerous bacteria these include soft or semi-hard cheeses, most other dairy products, cooked meat and vegetable products, most smoked or cured meat and fish and shellfish. Insulated containers with icepacks and a thermometer are usually sufficient. The temperature must be checked from time to time (and preferably written down in a log book). Larger volume traders should consider using refrigerated vehicles.

## Preparation

- The surface that you lay out or prepare food on must be smooth and impervious so that it can be thoroughly cleaned. Wooden surfaces must be covered with plastic sheeting. You should organise your preparation activities so that cross contamination is avoided.
- If you are using knives or other serving implements you will need to ensure you have washing facilities for these, which must NOT be the same as those used for hand washing - separate bowls or sinks must be used.

## Display and service

- To avoid possible contamination, food must not be placed directly onto the floor.
- Make sure that high risk and low risk foods are well separated, for example, keep raw foods away from cooked foods to prevent cross contamination. High risk foods should be protected from the public touching, coughing or sneezing in the display area.
- Check the temperature of chilled foods from time to time to ensure it is below 8°C and preferably keep a record of this in a log book. If chilled food is displayed out of temperature control, this should be for short periods only, and should not exceed 4 hours, after which time it should be disposed of.
- All hot food must be kept at a temperature of 63°C or above. If hot/warm food is displayed below 63°C for more than 2 hours it should then be disposed of.
- Regularly wipe down surfaces with a clean (preferably disposable) cloth using a food grade cleaner / disinfectant and sanitiser compliant to either BS EN 1276 or 13697 British Standards.



## Training and basic hygiene measures

- Whoever mans your stall should have current food hygiene knowledge, and at least one person should have attended a food hygiene course\* to ensure the basic principles of safe handling and preparation of food are adhered to.
- Food handlers should be supervised and instructed and/or trained in food hygiene matters

appropriate to their work activity therefore where open high risk food is handled the supervisor must have Level 2 food training.

## Waste materials

- You should find out from the market organiser what arrangements have been made for disposing of waste. If there are no market arrangements, ensure you have sacks or containers for packaging and waste food.
- Waste water should be contained and removed from site – it should not be discharged into storm drains.

## Low risk products

For basic retailing operations, such as for selling fruit and vegetables, or for bakery products that do not contain meat or cream, the following advice should be of help.

- Keep yourself clean and wear protective clothing.
- Always wash your hands thoroughly before handling food, after using the toilet, handling raw food or waste and after every break. Hand gels will be accepted.
- If you have a skin, nose or throat problem or an infected wound, do not handle unwrapped food.
- If you have a stomach upset, do not handle food for at least 48hrs after you are free of symptoms.
- Ensure that cuts, spots or sores are covered with a brightly coloured waterproof plaster or by wearing gloves.
- Do not smoke, eat or drink where open food is handled.
- Clean as you go - keep all equipment and surfaces clean and disinfected.
- Avoid unnecessary handling of food.

## Giving away free food samples

- Even though you may give samples away free of charge, the law sees this transaction as a sale, and their production and handling is therefore still subject to legal control.
- Samples need to be protected from contamination such as undue handling e.g. inquisitive children, so ensure samples are stored high up. If your customers have to handle your food, try and make sure they don't touch other samples on the plate - cocktail sticks or tongs help to stop this.
- Food should be cut into small pieces to prevent customers breaking foods into "taster sized" pieces.
- Most importantly, don't leave food that must be chilled for safety reasons out of temperature control for long periods, so keep quantities to a minimum and throw out uneaten food if it has been out of refrigeration for a long time. The law permits a maximum of 4 hours in most cases but it is best if high risk food is disposed of after 1 hour out of temperature control.

## Allergen Management

- Food businesses are required to provide allergen information and ensure they comply with food labelling rules as set in out in food law. To find out more about providing food allergen information and best practice for handling allergens click here:  
<https://www.food.gov.uk/business-guidance/allergen-guidance-for-food-businesses>

- From the 1st October 2021 the requirements for prepacked for direct sale (PPDS) food labelling changed in England. Food business operators will now be required to provide labeling on packaging with potentially life-saving allergen information. To find out more about PPDS and identify if your business provides PPDS food click on this link to the Food Standard Agency website: <https://www.food.gov.uk/allergen-labelling-changes-for-prepacked-for-direct-sale-ppds-food>

## General Health & Safety

- The floor of your market stall should be well organised to prevent tripping accidents.
- Cables must not be a tripping hazard and should be protected from accidental damage. Outdoor use cables should be of industrial grade and resistant to abrasion and water.

## Electrical safety

- All electrical temporary installations & equipment must be inspected after assembly at a new location.
- All fixed electrical installations must be periodically checked.
- Portable electrical equipment must be in good order and condition and covered by a current electrical safety certificate. You should have a copy of the certificate with you.
- A CO2 extinguisher should be readily available at all times, serviced and ready for use.

## Generator safety

- Petrol fueled generators will not be accepted – diesel only should be used.
- Generators are a noise source and can produce fumes – this should be considered when siting the equipment. Ideally super silent diesel or LPG powered generators should be used.
- Generators must be sited away from the public and on a hard standing or firm ground.
- Where necessary, generators should be earthed.
- External plugs & sockets must be waterproof and the circuit breakers must work effectively.
- Where generators are used, a suitable spillage kit should be available to absorb any spilled fuels.
- Generators should be protected against inclement weather but have good ventilation at all times.
- Generators should not be refueled whilst still running and only trained staff should refuel them.
- Generators must not be overloaded by connecting appliances that require higher wattage than can be delivered.
- Many events supply power from a centralised generator together with a qualified electrician – care should be taken to ensure that a fault in one operation does not affect others on site.
- A CO2 extinguisher should be readily available at all times, serviced and ready for use.

## **LPG and Gas safety**

- It is essential that permanent ventilation is provided to areas using gas appliances.
- All gas appliances should be installed and regularly serviced by a competent person.
- All gas appliances should be fitted with flame failure devices.
- All hose connections to appliance should be of a permanent nature, and not by use of jubilee clips.
- Only the connected cylinder and one spare should be stored on your stand.
- Staff should be trained to connect the cylinders safely and check that all connections are safe following set up of your stall.
- Cylinders should be fitted with pressure relief valves and an emergency shut off valve.
- Cylinders (empty or full) must be stored upright so that they cannot fall over and be stored away from any ignition source.
- Cylinders should be stored securely away from possible tampering.
- Cylinders should be located away from entrances/exits & circulation areas.
- The correct size generator should be used to fit the size of operation.

## **Fire safety**

- You should undertake a fire risk assessment of your stall.
- Any fuels being stored for generators must be stored in an approved container away from any ignition source and the generator itself. Diesel only should be used.
- Suitable fire extinguishers should be readily available.

**Further information and useful links can be found in the accompanying 'Event Safety Guide' that can be found on Solihull MBC Events page <https://www.solihull.gov.uk/About-Solihull/Events>**