

PRACTICAL GUIDE

# Food safety and churches

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## 1.0 Introduction

Almost every church building has a kitchen; whether a small one for serving tea, coffee and biscuits after a church meeting or one of a size and with equipment for cooking and serving meals on a par with a restaurant. Whether you just serve the occasional tea and biscuits or hearty meals to the multitudes, you will want to ensure the food is safe and does not harm anyone. The law about food hygiene is derived from European Law<sup>1</sup> enacted into UK law by the Food Hygiene Regulations 2006. The Regulations apply to “food placed on the market” and that includes food served by churches to its members, visitors and anyone else. Food Hygiene Regulations apply whether or not a charge is made for refreshments. The requirements of the law will vary depending on the extent to which food is handled on your premises and how often activities include an element of catering.



Food is deemed to be unsafe if it injurious to health and/or unfit for human consumption. The Food Standards Agency (FSA) has stated in its guidance<sup>2</sup> that the Food Hygiene Regulations are not limited to commercial ‘food business operators’. They include all who supply food, including food produced by individuals for charitable and similar events (e.g. someone running a one-off food event such as a buffet at a dance). The aim of the Regulations is to protect public health by covering all eventualities, with the exception of private domestic consumption, which is exempted by Article 1(3) of the Regulations.

More helpfully for churches the FSA has published a booklet that can be downloaded from the Food Standards Agency website “Food Hygiene – a Guide for Businesses” June 2013 edition<sup>3</sup> (“the FSA Food Hygiene Guide”), that sets out in a readily understandable way what the law says, how it is enforced and what is good food hygiene. It does however, as the name implies, relate to business, so not everything is relevant to churches.

## 2.0 Purpose of Paper

The purpose of this practical guide is to make churches aware of the law and some of the practical provisions relating to food safety. It is meant to reassure you that it is possible and practical to meet the Regulations, rather than frighten you, so you do not want to do anything relating to food!

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<sup>1</sup> Regulation (EC) No. 853/2004 on the hygiene of foodstuffs and Regulation (EC) 1831/2003 Article 14, which contains the food safety requirements.

<sup>2</sup> Guidance Notes for Food Business Operators on Food Safety, Traceability, Product Withdrawal and Recall, which can be found at <https://www.food.gov.uk/sites/default/files/media/document/fsa1782002guidance.pdf>.

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.food.gov.uk/food-hygiene>.

This paper does not replicate everything stated in the FSA Food Hygiene Guide, so it is recommended that you read the guide. Those ultimately responsible for food safety in your church, that is the stated trustees or de facto trustees (such as elders, deacons and pastors) of the church charity, should be aware of the law regarding food hygiene and what they have to do about it. Key requirements to meet the Regulations are set out below.



### 3.0 Food safety management systems

The key to good food hygiene practice is having food safety management systems in place. These are procedures to make sure hazards are controlled and reduced. A hazard in relation to food is anything that could make food served or produced on site unsafe to eat. This includes harmful bacteria (e.g. when certain food is kept out of the fridge for too long and bacteria grow in it), chemicals getting into food (e.g. cleaning products or pest control chemicals) or foreign objects getting into food (e.g. broken glass or pieces of packaging).

The FSA provides a resource called “Safer Food; Better Business”, which includes an excellent pack for caterers that covers all the key areas of food safety management systems. These are also considered in in section 8 below, but not in as much detail of the Safer Food; Better Business pack<sup>4</sup>.

### 4.0 Registration

Do you need to register with your local authority? If you run a food business such as a church café, you must register with your local authority (usually District or Borough Council Environmental Health Department), which has the responsibility of ensuring a business complies with the law. If you only provide tea, coffee and biscuits after your church meetings, you do not need to register. If you are holding a one-off event, such as a Christmas lunch for pensioners, a barbecue & rugby evening, a ladies breakfast or a bring & share lunch, you do not need to register. The difficulty is deciding what activities in between these extremes would require registration. The simplest way of finding out is to ask your local Environmental Health Officer. However, be warned, their views do seem to vary! See the Appendix to this paper for more information on this and some examples.

It is important to note that, even if you as a church do not fall within the requirement to register with your local authority, you are still legally required to ensure food you supply to members and visitors is safe. The FSA Guidance provides a link to the FSA website for guidance for charity and community groups providing food<sup>5</sup>. There are a number of common questions and guidance answers, including “I’m making food for lots of people at a fundraising event. What general safety advice can you give me?”.

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<sup>4</sup>[https://www.food.gov.uk/sites/default/files/media/document/sfbb-introduction-december-2019\\_1\\_0.pdf](https://www.food.gov.uk/sites/default/files/media/document/sfbb-introduction-december-2019_1_0.pdf).

<sup>5</sup><https://www.food.gov.uk/business-industry/caterers/food-hygiene/charity-community-groups/>

## 5.0 Premises

The FSA Food Hygiene Guide advises on the suitability and condition of premises where food is prepared or provided. Good hygiene practices are important. These include keeping the premises clean and maintaining them in good repair and condition, ensuring there is no build up of dirt and toxic materials that would contaminate food, as well as eliminating pests. Old kitchen units and equipment may be adequate, providing they are in good condition and can be kept clean.



### 5.1 Fridges and freezers

Having enough fridges and freezers for your activities is important. This includes storing food for events such as bring & share lunches, which often take place after church meetings, allowing food to become too warm before consumption. Try to avoid high risk food (e.g. fresh cream) for such occasions. The fridges and freezers should be checked regularly to ensure they are sealed properly against pests and temperatures are correct.

### 5.2 Pests

Pests such as mice, insects and birds can carry and spread bacteria. Precautions need to be taken to keep pests out of kitchens, by filling holes and ensuring doors, windows and vents are sealed. Check regularly for any signs of pests (e.g. droppings, gnawed packaging, eggs or feathers). Keep food stuffs in sealed pest-proof containers and do not leave food waste on the premises overnight or in open containers, as this attracts pests.



### 5.3 Ventilation

The kitchen should have enough ventilation (natural and/or mechanical) and lighting (natural and/or electric).

### 5.4 WCs

The premises must provide an adequate number of clean flush toilets and a toilet should ideally not lead directly into rooms where food is handled. This is mainly for smells, rather than bacteria. If a WC is directly off the kitchen or servery, ensure it has an extractor fan and a self-closing door. Clean handles daily when used.

### 5.5 Basins and sinks

There must be a wash basin, used only for cleaning hands (with hot and cold running water, soap and materials for hygienic drying), and a separate sink for washing food. Sinks for washing food must have an adequate supply of hot and cold water and must be potable (drinking quality). They must be kept clean and, where necessary, disinfected. Washing equipment, such as a dishwasher, needs to be made of corrosion-resistant materials and be easy to clean.

### 5.6 Kitchens

There are specific requirements for rooms, typically kitchens, where food is prepared, treated or processed. The FSA Food Hygiene Guide summarises the requirements for floors, walls, ceilings, windows, doors and surfaces (see section 6 below).

### 5.7 Vehicles

If you are transporting food, ensure the vehicle is kept clean and ideally the food should be kept in sealed containers.

## 6.0 What do you need to consider for your church premises?

Minimum requirement that you should consider whatever your church kitchen is like would include:

### 6.1 Cleaning

Regular cleaning (and disinfecting) of all parts of the kitchen should be the routine practice, including work surfaces, floor, walls, ceiling, cupboards and equipment.

### 6.2 Work surfaces

Work surfaces do not always have to be stainless steel, but should be in sound condition, sealable and easy to clean. They should be of materials that are smooth, washable, corrosion-resistant and non-toxic. Edges and joints should be sealed (usually with mastic) to prevent build up of dirt.

### 6.3 Ceilings

Any overhead fixtures such as lighting units (which should be sealed) should be constructed and maintained in a way that prevents dirt from building up and reduces condensation and the growth of mould.

### 6.4 Walls

Wall surfaces should be kept in sound condition and be easy to wash (and disinfect). The surface nearest the work surface should be impervious (fluids cannot pass through), non-absorbent, washable and non-toxic. Tiles are often acceptable, providing they are not chipped and the grouting is in good condition. Wet wall panels are better as they do not have joints. Uneven surfaces or ledges should be avoided as dirt can build up.



## **6.5 Floors**

As with walls, floors should be kept in sound condition and be easy to wash (and disinfect). The surface should be impervious, non-absorbent, washable and non-toxic. Sealed vinyl with curved edges, joined to wall tiles/boards are ideal, but cushion flooring or ceramic tiles are also acceptable. The edges around the skirting boards and kickboards to the kitchen units need to be sealed with mastic to prevent build up of dirt.

## **6.6 Kitchen improvements**

Many churches have inherited kitchens which may be relatively small and were designed only for serving light refreshments. The kitchen units may be old “domestic” type units. The floor coverings may be old, worn or impractical for a modern kitchen (e.g. carpet).

You may want to improve your catering provisions by extending an inadequate kitchen, planning to build an extension to the property that will have a kitchen, or planning a new church building with a fully equipped kitchen. In such circumstances plans for the construction and fittings must take into account food hygiene regulations for the kitchen and the areas where food will be served (e.g. the church café). Your architect should consider this.

# **7.0 Personal hygiene**

## **7.1 General hygiene**

People prepare food for church members and visitors to enjoy. They are essential to staff your kitchens and also for your food safety. On the whole churches probably have more volunteers working in the kitchens and serving food than professional employees. A staff member, whether a volunteer or an employee, engaged with food must understand that personal hygiene is essential to keep food from being contaminated. This means all staff should:

- wear suitable clean clothing for use only in a kitchen;
- tie back long hair (or for businesses wear a head covering), to prevent loose hair dropping into food or drinks;
- wear an apron when preparing food;
- remove watches and jewellery (except perhaps a plain wedding band);
- put a waterproof coloured plaster over any cut.

If a staff member is unwell, especially from an illness likely to transmit a disease (especially diarrhoea and/or vomiting) through food, he or she is not allowed to handle food or enter a food handling area. They should not smoke, drink or eat while handling food and should avoid touching their face and coughing or sneezing over the food.

## 7.2 Handwashing

Handwashing must be practised in order to prevent harmful bacteria from spreading from people's hands to food, work surfaces, equipment etc. Make sure that everyone working with food washes their hands properly:



- when entering the food handling area (e.g. after a break or going to the toilet);
- before preparing food;
- after touching raw food, such as meat/poultry, fish, eggs and unwashed fruit and vegetables;
- after handling food waste or emptying a bin (a pedal operated bin does not need to be touched by hand);
- after cleaning;
- after blowing their nose;
- after touching phones, light switches, door handles and cash registers, or other surfaces that could come into contact with staff handling raw food;
- before and after handling food that is likely to cause allergies.

Do not forget to dry hands thoroughly on a disposable towel – harmful bacteria can spread more easily if your hands are wet or damp. Use the disposable towel to turn off the tap.

## 8.0 Bacteria, food preparation and temperature

### 8.1 Bacteria

Poisoning can be caused by bacteria. Often this cannot be seen or smelt, so knowing the history of the food and its preparation is important.

Some bacteria multiply with moisture and warmth (temperatures between 5°C and 63°C are known as the danger zone). Food should be prepared as soon as practicable before cooking, because bacteria will multiply during the danger zone time. Cooking at high temperatures kills most bacteria and food should be cooked for at least two minutes at 75°C to the centre of the thickest part of the food. Using a temperature probe helps to be certain.

Bacteria also make food perish. For example, bread left for a few days develops a mould and, if there is any sign of mould, must be disposed of.

Good food hygiene is all about controlling harmful bacteria, which can cause serious illness. The four main things to remember for good hygiene are the “fours Cs”:

- Cross-contamination;
- Cleaning;
- Chilling;
- Cooking.



The FSA’s Safer Food; Better Business pack covers this subject well and gives some very practical guidance. It is recommended that anyone responsible for catering in the church reads this. The list of checks, the records for training and the daily diaries are all excellent in their simplicity, as they are very easy to use and enable staff to cover the various areas of management within a few minutes. The tables and diaries can be printed out and hand recorded.

## **8.2 Cross-contamination**

Cross-contamination occurs when bacteria are spread between food, surfaces or equipment. It is most likely to happen when raw food touches (or drips onto) ready-to-eat food, equipment or surfaces. Allergen cross-contamination during the preparation of food can also be a problem. See section 9 below. Cross-contamination is one of the most common causes of food poisoning. The following precautions should help to avoid cross contamination:

- Clean and disinfect work surfaces, chopping boards and equipment thoroughly before you start preparing food and after you have used them to prepare raw food.
- Use different equipment (including chopping boards and knives) for raw meat/poultry and ready-to-eat food unless they can be heat disinfected in, for example, a commercial dishwasher.
- Wash your hands before preparing food.
- Wash your hands thoroughly after touching raw food.
- Keep raw and ready-to-eat food apart at all times, including packaging material for ready-to-eat food.
- Store raw food below ready-to-eat food in the fridge. If possible, use separate fridges for raw and ready-to-eat food. In most church kitchens this will not be possible.
- Ideally, where practical, provide separate working areas, storage facilities, clothing and staff for the handling of ready-to-eat food. In most church kitchens this will not be possible.

- Cleaning materials, including cloths, sponges and mops, used in areas where ready-to-eat foods are stored, handled and prepared, should not be used in any other areas of the premises and vice-versa.
- Make sure that your staff (including volunteers) know how to avoid cross-contamination

### **8.3 Cleaning**

Effective cleaning gets rid of bacteria on hands, equipment and surfaces and helps to stop harmful bacteria from spreading onto food. This includes:

- Making sure that all your staff wash and dry their hands thoroughly before handling food.
- Cleaning and disinfecting food areas and equipment between different tasks, especially after handling raw food.
- Clearing and cleaning as you go; that is clearing away used equipment, spilt food etc. as you work and cleaning work surfaces thoroughly.
- Using cleaning and disinfection products that are suitable for the job (e.g. Jif Power & Shine Sprays or Dettol Anti-bacterial Surface Cleansers), and following the manufacturer's instructions.
- Avoiding the build up of food waste and never leaving food waste in the building overnight.

### **8.4 Chilling**

Chilling food properly helps to stop harmful bacteria from growing. Some food needs to be kept chilled to keep it safe; for example food with a 'use by' date, cooked dishes and other ready-to-eat food, such as prepared salads and desserts. It is very important not to leave these types of food standing around at room temperature. Ensure you do the following:

- Chilled food is checked on arrival to make sure it is cool enough.
- Food that needs to be kept chilled is put in the fridge straight away.
- Cooked food is cooled as quickly as possible and then put it in the fridge (e.g. divide food into smaller portions and/or place in well-sealed containers and run under cold water or stand it in a shallow tray of cold water).
- Chilled food is kept out of the fridge for the shortest time possible during preparation.
- Your fridge and display units (if you have any) are regularly checked to be sure that they are cold enough.

### **8.5 Cooking**

Thorough cooking kills harmful bacteria in food. So it is extremely important to make sure that food is cooked properly. When cooking or reheating food, always check that it is steaming hot all the way through (cooked for at least two minutes at 75°C (or 82°C in Scotland) to the centre of the thickest part of the food).

It is especially important to make sure that you thoroughly cook poultry, pork, rolled joints and products made from minced meat, such as burgers and sausages. This is because there could be bacteria in the middle of these types of products. They should not be served pink or rare. Whole cuts of beef and lamb, such as steaks, cutlets and whole joints, can be served pink/rare as long as they are fully sealed on the outside.

## **8.6 Temperature control**

Temperature control is important for storing and cooking food.

- **Hot & cold food**

Cold food must be stored at 8°C or below. This is a legal requirement in England, Wales and Northern Ireland, and recommended in Scotland. In Scotland, food must be kept in a fridge or cool ventilated place.

Hot food must be kept at 63°C or above, after it has been cooked to 75°C (82°C in Scotland). This is a legal requirement throughout the UK. When you reheat food, make sure that it is steaming hot all the way through. In Scotland, there is a legal requirement for reheated food to reach at least 82°C and in the rest of the UK at least 75°C.

- **Service and display**

When serving or displaying food, it can be kept out of temperature control for a limited period of time. Cold food can be kept above 8°C for up to four hours. You should only do this once. If any food is left after this time, it should be thrown away.

Hot food can be kept below 63°C for up to two hours but you should only do this once. If any food is left after this time, you should reheat it until it is steaming hot (i.e. 75°C or 85°C in Scotland) and then keep it above 63°C until served, or cool it as quickly as possible to 8°C or below, or throw it away. Remember to keep the food at a safe temperature until it is used. Only reheat once.

- **Defrosting**

If you defrost any food you must do this in a way that minimises the risk of harmful bacteria growing, or toxins forming, in the food. While they are being defrosted, you must keep food at a temperature that would not result in a risk to health.

Where liquid coming from the defrosting food may present a risk to health (e.g. when defrosting raw meat) you must drain it off adequately.

Following defrosting, food must be handled in a way that minimises the risk of harmful bacteria growing or toxins forming (e.g. keeping it in the fridge).

## **9.0 Allergens**

### **9.1 Food hypersensitivity**

The term food hypersensitivity is used to describe people who experience an adverse physical reaction to food, which is otherwise harmless. This includes the conditions of food allergy, food intolerance and coeliac disease.

### **9.2 Food allergy**

A food allergy is when the body's immune system (which is the body's defence against

infection) mistakenly treats the protein in food as a threat. The body responds to this threat by releasing a number of chemicals in the body. These chemicals cause the symptoms of an allergic reaction. People with a food allergy can react differently when they are exposed to allergens. The type and severity of the reaction depends on a number of factors including:

- The severity of the allergy;
- How much of the allergen they are exposed to;
- Lack of sleep and/or exercise;
- Medications.

Very small amounts of allergens can cause severe adverse reactions. The most severe and potentially life-threatening reaction to an allergen is anaphylaxis. Someone who has a food allergy can go into anaphylactic shock when their body's immune system mistakenly treats the protein in food as a threat. Anaphylaxis is a potentially life-threatening allergic reaction. The symptoms of anaphylaxis include:

- Persistent cough;
- Vocal changes;
- Breathing difficulties – such as fast, shallow breathing;
- Wheezing;
- A fast heartbeat;
- Feeling lightheaded or faint confusion and anxiety;
- Clammy (sweaty) skin;
- Collapsing or losing consciousness.

### **9.3 Food intolerance**

A food intolerance involves the digestive system and can cause difficulty digesting certain foods leading to symptoms such as abdominal pain, gas and diarrhoea.

### **9.4 Coeliac Disease**

Coeliac disease is a serious auto-immune condition triggered by consuming gluten, which leads to damage of the gut lining. Gluten are proteins found in wheat, rye, barley, oats, spelt and kamut (a commercial name for Khorasan wheat).

### **9.5 Natasha's Law**

Following the tragic death of Natasha Ednan-Laperouse in 2016, after she had consumed what she considered to be an allergen-free sandwich at a Pret a Manger store, a new law on allergen labelling, known as Natasha's Law came into force in October 2021. The new law says that freshly prepared, packaged food put on display must be labelled in such a way as to highlight any of the 14 allergens it might contain. Businesses that serve freshly prepared food that is not in packaging must still provide allergen information when asked either in writing or verbally, but the foods do not have to be labelled.

As a result, church events where food is served, such as the family lunches, community cafés, men's breakfasts and refreshments served on a Sunday morning, all fall within the remit of Natasha's Law and at these events you must be able to provide allergen information upon request. Natasha's Law does not apply to church picnics in the park where people bring their own food, or meetings in people's homes where food is served.

Apart from the possibility of making someone seriously ill, you could also face the risk of financial and reputational damage to the church if you fail to comply with allergen information requirements. Local Authorities enforce allergen information regulations. Failure to comply can result in action from the Local Authority. If you fail to act on advice given by the Local Authority, an improvement notice may be issued. If you do not meet the requirements of this notice, you will be issued with a penalty.

The following 14 allergens must be declared (see Appendix for details):

- **Cereals** containing gluten, namely wheat (such as spelt and Khorasan wheat), rye, barley and oats;
- **Crustaceans;**
- **Egg;**
- **Fish;**
- **Peanuts;**
- **Soybeans;**
- **Milk;**
- **Nuts** namely almond, hazelnut, walnut, cashew, pecan nut, Brazil nut, pistachio nut and macadamia nut (Queensland nut);
- **Celery;**
- **Mustard;**
- **Sesame seeds;**
- **Sulphur dioxide and/ or sulphites** (if they are at concentrations of more than 10 parts per million);
- **Lupin;**
- **Molluscs.**

Natasha's Law requires you to provide allergen information to the consumer for both prepacked and non-prepacked food and drink served on the church premises. It also requires you to handle and manage foods in such a way as to reduce the risk of there being cross-contamination of allergens between different foods.



In order to provide allergen information for the foods you are serving you must be able to show which of the 14 allergens are present in the food you are serving. You can provide this information by labelling the allergens contained in individual dishes, or by displaying a sign directing consumers to ask you for allergen information. You are not required to provide a full ingredients list.

### 9.6 How should allergen information be provided for the foods you are serving?

If anyone does ask about allergens, all you have to do is either point them to the written information, or, you say, “I’ll just check for you.” Then look at a checklist detailing the allergens in each food item, go back to the person asking and say, “These are the allergens and they are in these items on this table”.

Example of signposting to obtain oral information

## FOOD ALLERGIES and INTOLERANCES

Please speak to our staff about the ingredients  
in your meal, when making your order.

Thank you.

You should be able to find out which allergens are in the food you are serving by looking at the labelling on the wrapping the food was packaged in. The wrapping on prepacked food must have an ingredients list which can be identified by a suitable heading and includes the word ‘ingredients’. Any of the 14 primary allergens must be emphasised in a way that clearly distinguishes these from the rest of the ingredients every time they appear in the ingredients list.

### INGREDIENTS

Water, Carrots, Onions, Red Lentils (4.5 %), Potatoes, Cauliflower, Leeks, Peas, Cornflower, **Wheat** Flour, Cream (**Milk**), Yeast Extract, Concentrated Tomato Paste, Garlic, Sugar, **Celery** Seed, Sunflower Oil, Herb And Spice, White Pepper, Parsley

### ALLERGY ADVICE

For allergens, see ingredients in **bold**

There may be an additional statement such as, “may contain soya”. If you see such a statement, include it in the list of allergens that are present when completing the church’s allergen checklist.

### 9.7 What about food cooked at home?

It is suggested that an allergens checklist is provided for foods cooked at home and served on your church premises (see Appendix to this paper). This checklist should be supplied to home cooks for them to complete. For each event there must be a person responsible for collating food allergen checklists and ensuring allergens notices are displayed. Each homecooked food item should be sealed in a container or clingfilm wrapping and checklist attached. For pre-packed shop bought items a checklist to be completed by the purchaser and attached. The person responsible ensures that checklists have been provided and allergen notices are in place.

### 9.8 Reducing the risk of cross contamination

Allergen cross-contamination during the preparation of food primarily occurs by different foods touching or one food dripping onto another, by handling foods from multiple

containers without washing hands in between, or by using the same utensils for foods from different containers, or using the same cutting board for different foods.

To avoid this it is recommended that foods are grouped according to allergens they contain, hands are washed between handling foods from different allergy groupings and the same utensils or chopping boards for foods from different allergy groupings are not used. Also, pre-prepared foods should be kept in a sealed container/wrapping until ready to serve, and, put out food on serving dish/platter before opening the next sealed container/wrapped food package. If storing in the refrigerator place foods that do not contain allergens above foods that do contain allergens.

## **10.0 Wrapping and packing**

Wrapping and packing may be necessary if, for example, a church is involved in a food bank ministry. You will need to take precautions to ensure that wrapping and packing materials are not a source of contamination, by keeping the wrapping and packing material away from any food (fresh, cooked or defrosted), pests (e.g. rodents) and other contaminating materials, such as bleach. Food must be wrapped and packaged in a way that avoids contamination and any containers must be clean and undamaged, particularly cans and/or glass. Any re-used wrapping or packaging must be easy to clean and where necessary disinfect.

## **11.0 Training**

The law requires that staff who handle food are supervised and instructed and/or trained in food hygiene in a way appropriate for the work they do. Staff means volunteers as well as employees. What is appropriate depends upon what is done. Training for making tea and coffee served with biscuits does not require the level of training required for a church serving hot meals five days a week to 50 members and guests.

There is no legal requirement to attend a formal training course. Where a church wants to extend its catering from a simple provision to one with regular hot meals, it must consider the training needs of staff. These training requirements might be given by someone with commercial catering experience, but that is not always possible. However, there are very good on-line food safety courses at reasonable prices, set at different levels, from assisting in serving food to food preparation and kitchen management. Level 2 Food Safety Training is usually sufficient. See section 12 for more information, training materials and courses.

Most people have home catering experience, with a general knowledge about kitchen hygiene, but are not aware of the legal requirements when food is provided in a church ministry context. They may not appreciate that volunteering to assist in the kitchen does have strict obligations and rules for food safety. It is the responsibility of the church, by way of its leadership, to ensure staff are trained appropriately and at least one church leader should have the prime responsibility to ensure this is done. The responsible leader should ensure the person in charge of supervising any catering has received suitable training, which might be in the commercial sector or from an on-line training course. The responsible leader should also ensure suitable training is given to all staff and new members of staff.

## **12.0 Conclusion**

Food poisoning at the best is uncomfortable and at the worst is fatal. It exposes a church to enforcement action and potentially to prosecution. It is also a bad witness.

This practical guide does not tell you all you need to know about good food hygiene practices, but, for the inexperienced about the law and its requirements, it is hoped this paper will help you to understand the key issues, encourage you to find out the detail of what you must do and put what you learn into action.

It is recommended that you read, as a fuller explanation, the FSA's booklet "Food Hygiene, a guide for businesses" and get hold of a copy of the FSA's Safer Food; Better Business pack. See section 12 below for details of these and other useful information.

## 13.0 Additional Information

### 13.1 Publications

Food Standards Agency (FSA) Guidance Notes for Food Business Operators on Food Safety, Traceability, Product Withdrawal and Recall, which can be found at:

<https://www.food.gov.uk/sites/default/files/media/document/fsa1782002guidance.pdf>

FSA's Food Hygiene – a Guide for Businesses (June 2013 edition):

<https://www.food.gov.uk/food-hygiene>.

FSA's Guidance on the application of EU food hygiene law to community and charity food provision (March 2016):

[https://www.food.gov.uk/sites/default/files/media/document/hall-provision-guidance%20\(2\).pdf](https://www.food.gov.uk/sites/default/files/media/document/hall-provision-guidance%20(2).pdf).

FSA's website on Catering advice for charity and community groups providing food:

<https://www.food.gov.uk/business-industry/caterers/food-hygiene/charity-community-groups/>.

'Safer food, better business', an innovative and practical approach to food safety management, has been developed by the FSA for small businesses. This includes an online guide, which is available in different languages and other helpful videos:

<https://www.food.gov.uk/business-industry/sfbb>.

The recommended catering pack can be found at:

[https://www.food.gov.uk/sites/default/files/media/document/sfbb-introduction-december-2019\\_1\\_0.pdf](https://www.food.gov.uk/sites/default/files/media/document/sfbb-introduction-december-2019_1_0.pdf).

### 13.2 Training Resources:

Highfield - <http://www.highfield.co.uk/products/sector/food-safety/>

Qualsafe

a. Courses - <https://www.qualsafe.org/qualifications/food-safety/>

b. Books - <https://www.qualsafe.com/categories/Books/Food-Safety-Books/>

Online courses - <http://food-safety.org.uk/> or <https://www.ncass.org.uk/training/>.

## Appendix – Allergens and Checklist for Homecooking

### The 14 Major Allergens



1

#### Celery

This includes celery stalks, leaves, seeds and the root called celeriac. You can find celery in celery salt, salads, some meat products, soups and stock cubes.

#### Cereals containing gluten

Wheat (such as spelt and Khorasan wheat/Kamut), rye, barley and oats is often found in foods containing flour, such as some types of baking powder, batter, breadcrumbs, bread, cakes, couscous, meat products, pasta, pastry, sauces, soups and fried foods which are dusted with flour.



2



3

#### Crustaceans

Crabs, lobster, prawns and scampi are crustaceans. Shrimp paste, often used in Thai and south-east Asian curries or salads, is an ingredient to look out for.

#### Eggs

Eggs are often found in cakes, some meat products, mayonnaise, mousses, pasta, quiche, sauces and pastries or foods brushed or glazed with egg.



4



5

#### Fish

You will find this in some fish sauces, pizzas, relishes, salad dressings, stock cubes and Worcestershire sauce.

#### Lupin

Yes, lupin is a flower, but it's also found in flour! Lupin flour and seeds can be used in some types of bread, pastries and even in pasta.



6



7

#### Milk

Milk is a common ingredient in butter, cheese, cream, milk powders and yoghurt. It can also be found in foods brushed or glazed with milk, and in powdered soups and sauces.

#### Molluscs

These include mussels, land snails, squid and whelks, but can also be commonly found in oyster sauce or as an ingredient in fish stews



8

9



### Mustard

Liquid mustard, mustard powder and mustard seeds fall into this category. This ingredient can also be found in breads, curries, marinades, meat products, salad dressings, sauces and soups.

### Nuts

10

Not to be mistaken with peanuts (which are actually a legume and grow underground), this ingredient refers to nuts which grow on trees, like cashew nuts, almonds and hazelnuts. You can find nuts in breads, biscuits, crackers, desserts, nut powders (often used in Asian curries), stir-fried dishes, ice cream, marzipan (almond paste), nut oils and sauces.



11



### Peanuts

Peanuts are actually a legume and grow underground, which is why it's sometimes called a groundnut. Peanuts are often used as an ingredient in biscuits, cakes, curries, desserts, sauces (such as satay sauce), as well as in groundnut oil and peanut flour.

### Sesame seeds

These seeds can often be found in bread (sprinkled on hamburger buns for example), breadsticks, humous, sesame oil and tahini. They are sometimes toasted and used in salads.



12

13



### Soya

Often found in bean curd, edamame beans, miso paste, textured soya protein, soya flour or tofu, soya is a staple ingredient in oriental food. It can also be found in desserts, ice cream, meat products, sauces and vegetarian products.

### Sulphur dioxide (sometimes known as sulphites)

This is an ingredient often used in dried fruit such as raisins, dried apricots and prunes. You might also find it in meat products, soft drinks, vegetables as well as in wine and beer. If you have asthma, you have a higher risk of developing a reaction to sulphur dioxide.



14

## Allergens checklist:

Name of food:

Date:

Person responsible:

Please state the name of the cereal(s) containing gluten\* AND/OR the name of the nut(s)† in the 'Notes' section below:

|                                                                                                                            |                                                                                                                                             |                                                                                                                              |                                                                                                                                    |                                                                                                                          |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <br>Celery<br><input type="checkbox"/>    | <br>Cereals containing gluten*<br><input type="checkbox"/> | <br>Crustaceans<br><input type="checkbox"/> | <br>Eggs<br><input type="checkbox"/>              | <br>Fish<br><input type="checkbox"/>  |
| <br>Lupin<br><input type="checkbox"/>     | <br>Milk<br><input type="checkbox"/>                       | <br>Molluscs<br><input type="checkbox"/>    | <br>Mustard<br><input type="checkbox"/>           | <br>Nuts†<br><input type="checkbox"/> |
| <br>Peanuts<br><input type="checkbox"/> | <br>Sesame seeds<br><input type="checkbox"/>             | <br>Soya<br><input type="checkbox"/>      | <br>Sulphur dioxide<br><input type="checkbox"/> | <p>Tick the allergens which are in the dish</p> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>                                      |

Notes: