

How to use this pack

Is this pack for me?

This pack is for you if small scale cake makers who produce cakes at home. It will help you comply with the law. If you are working on a large scale or producing high risk products then this pack is not designed for you and you should refer to Safer Food Better Business for caterers as this may be more appropriate for your needs.

How does this pack help me comply with the law?

Food safety and hygiene regulations say that you must be able to show what you do to make sure the food you make for your business is safe to eat. You must also have this written down and the pack helps you to do this. This pack is based on the principles of HACCP (hazard analysis critical control point), but you will not find words such as 'HACCP' or 'hazard' in the pack because we have cut out all the jargon. The pack has been developed to be practical and easy to use, with as little paperwork as possible.

Safer Food Better Baking has been developed by Braintree Council and is based on the Safer Food Better Business for caterers pack produced by the Food Standards Agency, and indeed some of the paperwork in the pack is direct from the FSA's SFBB pack. The other safe methods have been taken from the SFBB pack but have been shortened and/or some wordings have been changed to make them more specific to cake makers.

Who should take charge of the pack?

As a registered food business operator you should take charge of this pack.

Can I use Safer food, better business for caterers instead?

If you are already using Safer food, better business for caterers, you can continue using it if you prefer.

How does the pack work?

The pack contains 'safe method' sheets and a diary. The safe methods are divided into four different sections, each with a different colour and symbol. The sections are named after 'the 4 Cs', which are the four main things to remember for good food hygiene: Cross-contamination, Cleaning, Chilling and Cooking. There is also a diary section.

Cross-contamination

Cross-contamination is one of the most common causes of food poisoning. It happens when harmful bacteria are spread onto food from other food, worktops, hands or equipment/utensils. These harmful bacteria often come from raw meat/poultry and eggs. Other sources of bacteria can include people, pests, pets, nappies and laundry.

Food also needs protecting from 'chemical contamination' (where chemicals get into food, e.g. cleaning products) and from 'physical contamination' (where objects get into food e.g. broken glass).

Cleaning

Effective cleaning is essential to get rid of harmful bacteria and stop them spreading to food.

Chilling

Chilling food properly helps to stop harmful bacteria from growing. Some foods need to be kept chilled to keep them safe, such as foods with a 'use by' date.

Cooking

It is essential to cook food properly to kill any harmful bacteria.

Diary

The diary is an important part of the pack. It helps you keep the records you need to comply with the law. The diary contains 'production sheets' and 'review' sheets. You can find out more about these under 'How to use the diary' below – and in the introduction to the diary section.

How to use the safe methods

The 'Safety point' column highlights things that are important to make food safely.

The 'Why?' column tells you why the safety point is important.

The 'How do you do this?' column is for you to write down what you do. In some places you only need to tick a box or cross out 'yes' or 'no' and in other places write a small amount.

The 'What to do if things go wrong' column gives practical tips on how to tackle problems. If things go wrong, write down what happened and what you did in your diary production sheet. Each safe method reminds you to do this.

To complete the pack you need to work through each section and complete all the safe methods that are relevant to you. Fill in the date and sign each safe method when you have completed it.

How to use the diary

The diary includes production sheets and review sheets. These are an important part of the records you need to keep about food to comply with the law.

If you have any problems, or anything changes, you should make a note on the production sheet.

Every time you bake for your business you should record the date in the diary, and complete the opening and closing checks required. After 15 production days, you should complete the review.

What do I do next?

Work through the pack and fill in all of the safe methods that are relevant to you. Most cake makers will need to fill in all the safe methods.

Remember that once you have worked through the pack, you need to make sure you are following the safe methods every time you bake.

Where can I get more information?

For more information about food safety, talk to the environmental health service at your local authority