

## **Food Safety Guidance for Charity Events – A Guide for Departments and Faculties**

### General

Food supplied, sold, or provided at charity or community events must be safe to consume. This guidance applies to small one-off events organised by departments or groups of staff in aid of a charity e.g. MacMillan, Comic Relief, Children in Need.

It does not apply to large fund-raising events. Organisers of such events should follow the University Food Safety Policy.

### Planning of the event

It is essential that a documented food safety management plan is completed for any event to identify any potential food safety hazards.

At the planning stage consideration should be given to:

- Where the event will be held - what facilities are available e.g. size/number of fridges, handwashing facilities etc.
- Who will be attending - University staff and students, members of the public, young children, older people, and people with an underlying health condition.
- How long the event will last - just a couple of hours or all day.
- What type of food will be provided - low-risk or high-risk (see below).
- Who will be providing the food - an external preferred supplier or departmental staff.

### Low-risk food

Where possible, it is best to choose low-risk foods such as cakes, biscuits, and crisps that have been purchased from a reputable supplier (for example, a supermarket). This helps reduce potential hazards and keeps transport and storage requirements straightforward.

Low-risk foods can be stored in sealed containers at room temperature in a dry place (free from sources of contamination) until required.

### High-risk food

Foods considered high-risk, including sandwiches, salads, cream cakes, desserts, and meat-based items such as sausage rolls, should be avoided wherever possible due to the extra hazards and controls they require. In all cases, these foods should not be homemade.

High-risk foods, including cakes made with fresh cream, must be refrigerated at or below 8°C. If they cannot be maintained at this temperature, they should be eaten within 2 hours of removal from refrigeration or discarded, as they may no longer be safe to consume after that period.

If you choose to provide high-risk foods they should be purchased either from University Catering Service, a preferred supplier listed with the University ([External catering suppliers | University Catering](#)) or from a reputable supermarket and receipts kept. Strict controls must be implemented to ensure that the foods are stored correctly and those that require temperature control remain within safe temperature limits during transport, storage, and service.

### Cakes

Should you choose to bake low-risk cakes and biscuits at home, it is essential that the people making them follow good hygiene practices, the cakes are stored and transported safely and a list of allergens contained in each item is provided.

If you make a cake at home:

- Always wash your hands thoroughly before preparing food.
- Make sure that surfaces, bowls, utensils, and any other equipment are clean and disinfected.
- Eggs must be purchased from a reputable source and should have the Lion Brand mark on them. Raw eggs must not be used in anything that will not be thoroughly cooked e.g. icing or mousse.
- All ingredients must be purchased from a reputable supplier and be within their 'use by' and 'best before' dates. Receipts must be kept.
- Domestic pets must be kept out of the kitchen during food preparation to prevent contamination of work surfaces, food, and utensils etc.
- Cakes should be stored in a clean, sealable container, away from raw foods such as meat and unwashed vegetables.

On the day, when you bring in the cakes from home or run the stall, you should:

- Transport the cakes in a clean, sealed food-safe container to prevent contamination.
- When handling cakes use tongs or a cake slice.
- Make sure that cheesecake and any cakes containing fresh cream are left out of the fridge for the shortest time possible, no longer than 2 hours. It is safer to have smaller amounts of food on display and replenish it more frequently.

If people are to bake at home, this should be limited to personnel who have knowledge of the principles of food safety and are provided with a copy of this leaflet.

### Allergen information

You must be able to provide details of all allergens present in the food. This information must be accurate. When food has been purchased from a supermarket the packaging should be displayed or at least retained in order to provide the necessary information.

Unwrapping food items puts them at risk of contamination, including allergens, and must be taken into account when advising consumers.

If foods are prepared at home, you should record who made them, what the item is, and provide a full list of ingredients. It is also advisable to display a notice stating that homemade foods cannot be guaranteed to be entirely free from allergens.

For further information on allergens please refer to Food Safety Information leaflet number 13.

### Important information

It is important that individuals choosing to bake foods at home for these events are made aware of their personal responsibility. Should the food provided cause illness or injury to a consumer it is possible that the individual could be held personally liable and legal action taken against them.

### **Key Points to keep in mind**

- **Plan in advance and keep things straightforward.**
- **Choosing low-risk foods from a trusted supermarket is the safer option.**
- **If food is homemade, restrict it to low-risk items and make sure everyone follows food safety guidelines.**
- **High-risk foods come with increased responsibilities.**

### Further Information

On the Food Standards Agency website [www.food.gov.uk](http://www.food.gov.uk)

In other leaflets in the food safety information series

From Nick White, Head of University Catering or Jenny Clare, Food Safety Compliance Manager