



Food Safety & HACCP Training for Dairy Food Manufacturers

'Food safety training' is a systematic process of developing staff skills, knowledge and attitudes, in respect to food safety and food hygiene matters, relevant to the activities undertaken in the workplace.

What are the requirements for food safety training in the dairy industry?

Each licensed Victoria dairy manufacturing business manages food safety through the implementation of an approved Food Safety Program (FSP). This is mandatory under the 'Code of Practice (CoP) for Dairy Food Safety (2002).'¹

The 'CoP' specifies "The owner of a dairy manufacturing premises must ensure that persons employed at the premises can demonstrate competency in skills and knowledge in food safety and food hygiene matters in relevant activities undertaken in the job performed."¹

A 'skill' is the ability to carry out a task and in this case means that the dairy food handler has the ability to perform tasks, or supervise tasks, that are necessary to ensure the safety of the dairy food(s) being produced by the business.

'Knowledge' is the acquaintance with facts, truths or principles. Dairy food handlers must know the facts associated with dairy food safety and hygiene.

What is meant by "skills and knowledge in food safety matters relevant to the workplace activities?"

This indicates that some of the skills and knowledge required by, for example, a cheese-maker will be different from those of a cleaner.



Food safety skills and knowledge example:

A small company cheese-maker receives raw milk and uses it to make fresh ricotta cheese.

The skills and knowledge that the cheese-maker may need in relation to food safety matters include:

- The knowledge that the milk needs to be received from an approved supplier.
- The knowledge that the milk should not be contaminated with antibiotics or other chemicals.
- The knowledge of correct storage temperatures for both the milk and the finished ricotta. This also applies to the selling of 'fresh ricotta' and time/temperature limits.
- The skill to operate a pasteuriser.
- The knowledge of the time and temperature requirements for pasteurisation.
- The knowledge that pasteurisation is a critical control point aimed at reducing the microbial load of the milk.
- The skill to take and record the temperature of storage equipment and/or product.
- The skills and knowledge required relating to food hygiene include:
 - The skill to ensure the equipment used is clean.
 - The skill to wash hands frequently to avoid cross contamination.
 - The skill to maintain a clean work area and keep records of this.
 - The knowledge that cross-contamination between raw and pasteurised milk should be avoided and is a microbiological hazard.

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How does the 'Food Safety Supervisor' requirement of the Victorian Food Act relate/apply to my dairy business?

The 'Food Act - Victoria (1984)' was amended in May 2001 to require every Victorian Food Business to nominate a 'food safety supervisor' (FSS) as part of their Food Safety Program.²

Section 19G of the 'Food Act - Victoria (1984)' requires that a FSS:

- Knows how to recognise, prevent and alleviate the hazards associated with the handling of food at that premises; and
- Has met the appropriate food safety competency standard relevant to that business.

As a licensee with Dairy Food Safety Victoria, the 'Dairy Act (2000)' takes precedence. One may, however, wish to utilise the food safety subjects that form part of the Food Processing Training Package.³

How do I meet these requirements?

The 'CoP' does not require mandatory training as it is widely regarded that skills and knowledge may be gained in various different ways. As it is the responsibility of the dairy business to ensure that persons handling or supervising the production of dairy food have appropriate skills and knowledge in food safety and food hygiene, the business may choose the best option(s) for attaining this.

Not all staff need to have undertaken **formal training** in food safety. There must be enough competent key personnel at each premises to supervise the production and/or handling of dairy product in a safe and hygienic manner.

Obtaining the skills and knowledge required

Chapter 3 of the 'Food Standards Australia New Zealand, Safe Food Australia Guide' gives the following suggestions as approaches to obtaining the skills and knowledge required to produce safe food:⁴

- In-house training by experienced employees or the proprietor.
- Distribution of relevant documents to employees.
- Having procedures in place that clarify and document the responsibilities of food handlers.
- Attendance at external food safety training courses.
- Hiring a consultant to present a course to employees.

- Undertaking formal 'Vocational Education Training' (VET) qualifications.

On the Job Training

Most companies conduct internal training, such as induction training, to disseminate the basic principles of HACCP and GMP, and to promote awareness of the company's Food Safety Program to all their manufacturing staff. This is often carried out by quality assurance (QA) or supervisory staff, experienced and/or trained in food safety practices.

Formal Training

Possible sources of external food safety training include registered training organisations, such as TAFE institutions and private training providers. For more information on the National Training System and VET training, see the 'Dairy Food Safety Notes' listed under 'further information.'

What training records should be kept?

As part of a business's food safety program, it is advisable to record food safety training received by employees. This allows the company to ensure that all staff have training suitable for their workplace positions.

Training record example:

A dairy company requires all new staff to undergo induction training covering personal hygiene, protective clothing, good manufacturing practices (GMP) and cleaning of equipment.

The supervisor ensures that the staff carrying out particular tasks have skills and knowledge about those tasks e.g. The cleaning staff know which chemicals to use and the cleaning methods to follow. This is explained using work instructions and practical demonstrations.

A record is made of all new staff and the date they completed the induction training. Specific training content is recorded and copies of any formal training are also kept with these records.

References

1. Dairy Food Safety Victoria, (2002), 'Code of Practice for Dairy Food Safety.' Available at: www.dairysafe.vic.gov.au/pdf/DFSV_CodeOfPractice2002.pdf
2. State Government of Victoria, (1984), 'Food Act.' Available at: [www.dms.dpc.vic.gov.au/Domino/Web_Notes/LDMS/PubLawToday.nsf/a12f6f60fd56800ca256de500201e54/C7078A3123FC872CCA25720300176E13/\\$FILE/84-10082a071.pdf](http://www.dms.dpc.vic.gov.au/Domino/Web_Notes/LDMS/PubLawToday.nsf/a12f6f60fd56800ca256de500201e54/C7078A3123FC872CCA25720300176E13/$FILE/84-10082a071.pdf)

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3. State Government of Victoria, (2000), 'Dairy Act.' Available at:
[www.dms.dpc.vic.gov.au/Domino/Web_Notes/LDMS/PubLawToday.nsf/0/A755B62702A4FA66CA256FD9001B64D4/\\$FILE/00-37a013.pdf](http://www.dms.dpc.vic.gov.au/Domino/Web_Notes/LDMS/PubLawToday.nsf/0/A755B62702A4FA66CA256FD9001B64D4/$FILE/00-37a013.pdf)
4. Food Standards Australia New Zealand – Safe Food Australia, (January 2001), 'A Guide to the Food Safety Standards,' 2nd Edition. Available at:
www.foodstandards.gov.au/srcfiles/complete_safefood.pdf

Further information

For information on the National Training Framework, visit: www.ntis.com.au; www.aqf.edu.au

General training information: www.training.com.au

Food safety training: www.haccp.com.au;
www.health.vic.gov.au/foodsafety/

Training packages: www.tpatwork.com.au

Dairy Food Safety Note – 'The National Training Framework': www.dairysafe.vic.gov.au

The VET system: Dairy Food Safety Note – 'Vocational Education Training (VET)'
www.dairysafe.vic.gov.au

Other Dairy Food Safety Notes are available at
www.dairysafe.vic.gov.au

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