



## Engaging an External Food Safety Training Provider

**Many companies use an external training provider to deliver food safety training to their employees. This can be an effective way to outsource such expertise if it is carried out in a well-planned and considered manner.**

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. See Dairy Food Safety Note 14– Food Safety and HACCP Training for Dairy Food Manufacturers for more information.<sup>1</sup>

### Who should I get to deliver the food safety training?

It is common for managers, supervisors and/or quality assurance staff to deliver entry level or induction training to employees in-house.

A dairy business that chooses to do this must ensure the internal trainer has the necessary food safety knowledge to provide their staff with the required training. They must also have knowledge of how people learn and adequate training skills.

If resources permit, all food safety training may be conducted in-house. Adequate records of the training should be kept. Measures of competency in the workplace should also be undertaken. This means checking that what has been taught is understood and implemented by staff as they go about their work place duties. Recording observations on a checklist that is based on the training content is a common way of doing this.

There are various tools and resources available to conduct internal training. Some are referenced at the end of this note, such as the Food Safety Authority of Ireland's Training Guides.<sup>2</sup> These give an indication of the content for delivery of internal food safety training at various levels and checklists to record and measure competency.

Where there is a lack of time or a lack of other resources, such as expertise, the training is often outsourced to an external training organisation.

### What should we consider when deciding whether to use in-house or external trainers?

- Do you have the experience and time to devote to your own training?
- Are there subjects eg. Heat treatment, microbiology or HACCP, that would be

better delivered by specialists outside your company?

- Does the company's budget allow you to outsource food safety training?
- Has the need for a higher level of training than undertaken that in-house been identified? Eg. Through a workplace assessment, internal promotion, etc.

In many cases, it is beneficial to engage an external training provider. The most important thing is to plan this activity well, in order to obtain the best possible value from the exercise.



### What should I ask an external training provider?

In order to choose the best one to suit the needs of your company, it may help to consider these points:

#### *Is the trainer qualified?*

The person delivering the training should have an appropriate level of technical knowledge. Relevant experience in the food industry, preferably dairy, will be useful to address issues in your dairy operation.

Formal qualifications such as the Certificate IV in Assessment and Workplace Training or other training qualifications are highly desirable.

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### ***Is the training provider interested in taking your company's specific needs into account?***

They should be willing to meet with you to discuss your requirements. This may include the time of day the training is to be conducted, the number of participants, any language barriers or catering for shift workers.

### ***Will they adapt their material and delivery method to meet your needs?***

The success of the training often depends on how relevant the materials and delivery method are to your company. The trainer should aim to include examples and documents used by your employees in the workplace. Eg. Your food safety plan, forms and records sheets used to record CCP's.

### ***What type of follow up support will they provide?***

Is the trainer available to support and help with the implementation of the knowledge learned on a continuous basis? If not, can they provide you with a resource to do this?

### ***How will the trainer measure the competency of the course attendees?***

Discuss with the training provider the means of formal assessment that will be used as part of the training delivery. This means the format of the assessment eg. by written test, observation or oral questions. Also discuss the actions to be taken where staff are found to be "not yet competent". Eg. further training or explanation, workplace buddy system.

### ***Consider whether you wish your staff to obtain a nationally recognised qualification from the training.***

For example, the Certificate in Food Processing courses are very detailed and require a large commitment in time and money. Is this necessary for all of your staff? It may be that just some of the subjects are suitable for delivery.

### ***Is the training provider a Registered Training Organisation (RTO)?***

Training organisations must meet AQTF standards to become registered. Only registered training organisations (RTOs) can issue AQF qualifications and deliver training and assessment services. For example, all TAFE institutions are RTOs. See Dairy Food Safety Note 12 – The National Training Framework for more information.<sup>3</sup>

A training provider that is not an RTO, can still deliver training and may give you a certificate they have generated themselves.

### **What records should be kept?**

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

External trainers should provide you with a formal record of the content of the training, a list of attendees and a measure of competency once the training has been delivered and assessed.

### **External training record example:**

A dairy company requires staff to undergo HACCP training. An external trainer conducts the training.

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

### **How do I find an external training provider?**

There are many training providers offering courses with a food safety component.

A list of institutions delivering TAFE courses with food safety content can be found at [www.tafe.vic.gov.au/providers](http://www.tafe.vic.gov.au/providers). There are several TAFE institutions that have experience with the manufacturing sector.

Component 3 of the report on the Food Safety Supervisor program commissioned by the Department of Human Services is titled 'Food Safety Training Available in Victoria.'<sup>4</sup> Appendix 2 of that report has further information on training providers in Victoria. Training may also be delivered by private training providers, such as food industry consultants, who deliver non-accredited food safety training.

### **References**

1. Dairy Food Safety Victoria, (2006), 'Dairy Food Safety Note 14 – Food Safety and HACCP Training for Dairy Food Manufacturers'
2. Food Safety Authority of Ireland, (2006), 'Guide to Food Safety Training.' Available at: [www.fsai.ie/trainingguides](http://www.fsai.ie/trainingguides)
3. Dairy Food Safety Victoria, (2006), 'Dairy Food Safety Note 12 – The National Training Framework.'
4. The Department of Human Services (Food Safety Unit) Victoria, (2005), 'Evaluation of the Food Safety Supervisor Program.'

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### Further Information

- The National Training Framework, visit: [www.ntis.com.au](http://www.ntis.com.au); [www.aqf.edu.au](http://www.aqf.edu.au)
- General training information: [www.training.com.au](http://www.training.com.au)
- Food safety training: [www.haccp.com.au](http://www.haccp.com.au); [www.health.vic.gov.au/foodsafety/](http://www.health.vic.gov.au/foodsafety/)
- Training packages: [www.tpatwork.com.au](http://www.tpatwork.com.au)

Other Dairy Food Safety Notes are available at [www.dairysafe.vic.gov.au](http://www.dairysafe.vic.gov.au)

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