



food safety and you

The Food Safety (General Food Hygiene) Regulations 1995

Recently a lapse in food hygiene cost a Cambridge University College £33,000 under the existing food safety regulations. The new food safety regulations are due to be enforceable by September 1995. These will make hazard analysis, together with establishing critical control points and 'adequate' training a legal requirement. To meet the requirement (written) policies and procedures will be essential, especially as the main defence under the regulations is demonstrable due diligence.

Major changes in the new regulations focus on ease of cleaning, (equipment, ventilators, etc), prevention of contamination, (flyscreens), storage temperatures, compulsory food hygiene training, HACCPs. In short, a huge new reservoir of regulations to trip over the next time your premises are inspected, and they apply to ALL businesses handling food, from snackbars to major food processors.

Whilst the concept of HACCPs (Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point) has been around since the early manned space flights, it is only now due to become a legal requirement, and this should concern you if your business is to avoid huge fines and possible closure. To carry out hazard Analysis, food safety hazards will have to be identified and a solution found to eliminate the hazard. Because familiarity breeds contempt many potential hazards go unnoticed and you may well be advised to employ consultants to audit and monitor your operation as part of your due diligence.

Hazards have to be identified, classified according to risk factor and a solution found that eliminates the hazard, especially those that pose a high risk. You will need to develop a 'Food Safety Policy' that contains, among other things, a company policy statement, organisation and responsibility statement, risk assessment and control, training requirements and standards, supplier requirements and standards, etc.

If you have to do all this yourself it represents a very considerable investment in your time and money in re-inventing the wheel, developing your methods for HACCPs and developing your policy. Horwood International can cut this investment substantially using their proven technique to your advantage.

As the owner or manager of the business you will have a natural desire to ensure the best possible product reaches your customer. It is now to become mandatory that the safest possible product is produced and it is therefore important that your whole team commits to maximum food safety. The new regulations also require 'compulsory food hygiene training for all staff commensurate with their work activity'. Achieving the necessary levels of commitment and training is not always easy and here again the skills of the Horwood International consultants can be used advantageously to ensure you reach the standards necessary to provide protection for your business.

What can Horwood International offer?

- Hazard analysis and identification of critical control points
- Development of policies and policy statements
- Identification of training requirements and specification of suitable training
- Monitoring and review
- All this and more (eg is your health and safety policy properly documented in regard to the current regulations?)

Why delay? Call us today to discuss how we can make a start on improving your food safety and legal compliance.

I WOULD LIKE FURTHER INFORMATION WITHOUT OBLIGATION

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