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**November '06**

## **Food Safety Training**

by Patricia Skinner

There has never been a time when food safety training was more important. Today we have more communicable diseases, bugs and parasites than ever before to be alert for, and lack of hygiene on the part of only one food worker can result in many customers falling ill. Sometimes a person will not be able to successfully trace the cause of his or her illness--other times they will.

Many workers in the food industry come from backgrounds where they will not have had access to proper hygiene and food care information. It will be up to each employer to make sure that the people who work for them have access to the appropriate and necessary information and that they have reached a certain standard of food safety training. Failure to take such precautions could leave a business in a very precarious situation.

### **Consequences of Lack of Food Safety Training**

If someone falls ill as a result of lack of food safety training in your business, not only will you be morally responsible, but your business could suffer drastic consequences. With heightened hygiene and safety awareness in all levels of society, once word gets out that a certain business can't be relied upon, most people will simply find another place to go. There will be no second chance. Once a business loses customers, they are lost for good and the business is doomed.

Providing adequate food safety training is, in effect, investing in your staff and in your business. With the right training these individuals will each become an asset to your business instead of a liability. Quite apart from the practical considerations of good food safety information, when your employees know that you feel they are worth training, they will each become more anxious to do well at their jobs. They will feel proud to do their jobs properly.

### **Your Business and Food Safety Training**

The types of businesses that will need to consider food safety training include any that sell or process food in any way whatsoever. This will include workers in the retail food, food service, food vending and regulator industries, in addition to those who work in institutions that serve food. Failure to provide food safety instruction for workers could drastically impact your business.

If some of your workers do not speak English well, you may need to consider arranging for their instruction to take place in their native languages. This will ensure that they process the information and can use it later instead of not benefiting at all from the course. Sending a worker off to a course in a language he or she does not understand will simply be a waste of your resources.

### **Online Courses**

In situations where it is not practical to send workers off for food safety training courses, there are facilities online for distance learning, or online courses in the subject. This is a particularly good solution for many companies as less time is taken to access the information. Sometimes employees don't even need to take time off work for this kind of course.

In addition to courses there are a number of other food safety training resources that can be called upon to supplement basic food safety instruction. Videos can be employed on a regular basis to remind workers and consolidate their knowledge. Supervisors can be taught the basics of training so that they can endorse knowledge gained on courses and assess the benefits accrued from any particular course. ~