

MAY 2003

**INFORMATION SHEET FOR BED & BREAKFASTS (B&Bs)
REGARDING THE NEW FOOD SAFETY LEGISLATION**

The Department of Health (DH) has prepared this question and answer sheet to assist B&Bs understand, interpret and implement the new food safety legislation.

1. Do B&Bs qualify as a “food business” under the new Food Safety legislation?

A food business refers to a business, enterprise or activity that involves the handling of food intended for sale, or the sale of food. Sale includes food that is supplied as part of a service, including as part of accommodation. Therefore B&Bs are food businesses under the new legislation. ‘Food supplied’ includes breakfast (or other meals) provided in traditional hosted B&Bs and also includes where breakfast (or other) foods such as packaged cereals, milk, cakes etc. are left for the guests to prepare their own meals.

2. What legislation applies to B&Bs?

The Food Act 2001, Food Regulations 2002 and the Food Safety Standards apply to food businesses including B&Bs. Copies of the legislation can be accessed via the DH web site (refer end of sheet for address). A copy of Food Safety Standards 3.1.1 (*Interpretation and Application*), 3.2.2 (*Food Safety Practices and General Requirements*) & 3.2.3 (*Food Premises and Equipment*) has been included in the Food Safety Information Kits which have been distributed by local Council. If you have not received a kit contact your Council or DH to arrange supply.

3. Who and when do I notify?

The new food legislation requires food businesses to complete a notification process to their local Councils (or DH if not within a local government boundary). This can be done by completing a hard copy form available from your Council or by notifying on-line at www.fbn.sa.gov.au. Businesses have until **1 December 2003** to meet the notification requirements. The notification process is a once off requirement and there is no charge. If notification details change amendments need to be advised to Council/DH.

4. Does the host’s home kitchen where food (a meal, scones, biscuits etc.) is prepared for guests need to be inspected or accredited?

The kitchen is part of the ‘food business’ and is thus subject to inspection. Inspections focus on two areas, the physical conditions (premises, food preparation areas and equipment) and the health and hygiene practices of the food handlers. Food businesses are not ‘accredited’ under the Food legislation, they are inspected. Environmental Health Officers (EHOs) may require proprietors to meet certain standards in relation to premises and food handling practices to ‘pass’ an inspection.

5. Does the host’s home kitchen facilities need to meet all the premises requirements in Standard 3.2.3?

Most domestic kitchens that are well maintained would comply with the Standards except for the requirement to have dedicated permanent hand washing facilities. A kitchen that has a double bowl sink would comply if one bowl is used exclusively for hand washing when food is being prepared for sale. A single bowl sink that is also used for food preparation would not meet this requirement, however the Council EHO can issue an exemption that will allow the use of alternative hand washing arrangements (eg. hand-washing facilities in nearby bathroom) if they consider the facilities are adequate.

DH Food Safety Fact Sheet

6. Does the kitchen in a B&B where the guests prepare their own meals need to be inspected?

EHOs will inspect the kitchen facilities in the B&B to determine whether provisions are suitably stored. As the kitchen forms part of the 'food business' it will be subject to inspection as per question & answer No. 4.

7. How often would food business inspections occur and is there any charge?

Councils would generally inspect low to medium risk food businesses such as B&Bs about once every 12 to 18 months. This may vary to more or less frequently depending on the business's performance. Councils may charge an inspection fee of up to \$80 for small business. You will need to ask your local Council whether fees apply.

8. Can I cook scones, biscuits, bread and alike and leave them for guests?

There is no reason why B&Bs can't prepare foods for guests. Obviously good health and hygiene practices should be in place to ensure the safety of the food. The foods should be stored appropriately (eg. potentially hazardous foods into the fridge, food covered, stored in containers etc.) and kept fresh (eg. ensure stale food is disposed of).

9. Do the foods supplied to guests need to be labelled with use by dates, content listings and nutritional information panels?

Unpackaged food, food protected with cling wrap and food stored in containers to keep the food fresh does not need to be labelled. Similarly, packaged food that is made on the premises (eg. jam, biscuits etc.) does not need to be labelled.

(The labelling standards are based on the principle that consumers have the opportunity to identify ingredients that they may choose, or have a health reason to avoid. Particular care needs to be taken with foods likely to cause allergies or sensitivities such as foods containing gluten, crustacea, egg, fish, milk, tree nuts, sesame seed, peanuts, soybeans, or sulphite additives.)

10. Can I decant juices and milk into carafes or jugs, place jams, butter etc. onto dishes, bacon onto a plate, and cereals into glass jars, or does everything have to be pre-packaged?

Foods that are decanted or placed into dishes or containers should be protected from contamination, for example using plastic wrap, lids etc. Potentially hazardous foods (eg. meats and dairy products) should be kept in a refrigerator. Refer also question and answer 9 above.

11. Where can I get more information?

More information can be obtained from the Environmental Health Officer at your local Council or alternatively from DH.