

FOOD SAFETY NEWS

DECEMBER 2025



2026 FOOD SAFETY CALENDAR

As a food shop proprietor, ensuring food safety is not just a legal obligation but also a commitment to your customer's health and well-being. The Food Safety Calendar for 2026 is a valuable tool to help you stay organised and compliant with the Food Safety Standards throughout the year. Some of the topics covered in the calendar include the importance of temperature control, safe food storage and handling along with cleaning and sanitising.

The Food Safety Calendar is designed to help you plan and track food safety practices throughout the year. It includes reminders for key dates such as cleaning schedules, temperature logging and staff training sessions.

Food safety is not just a requirement – it's a responsibility that builds trust and loyalty among your customers.

HELPING BUSINESSES MEET SANITISING STANDARDS

Council's Environmental Health Officers have launched a practical initiative to support food premises in maintaining compliance with sanitising requirements. Officers are now visiting businesses to supply **water level line stickers for sinks**, helping staff establish a permanent water line for preparing sanitising solutions.

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

Food-grade sanitisers are crucial for preventing foodborne illnesses by killing microorganisms such

as bacteria, viruses and fungi on food contact surfaces. However, they only work effectively when used at the correct ratio—too weak and harmful bacteria remain, too strong and it can damage surfaces or pose health risks. Correct ratios reduce harmful bacteria, but only after food contact surfaces/equipment are thoroughly cleaned.

During visits, officers assist staff in calculating these ratios, ensuring sanitising solutions meet safety standards. This initiative aims to make compliance easier and more consistent, reducing risks and promoting confidence in food safety across the community.



Sink Volume:
(Height cm x Width cm x Length cm) / 1000 =L

1: Ratioml of Sanitiser Required

Water Level Line

Note: When changing sanitisers recalculate the dilution rate

WHAT IS POTENTIALLY HAZARDOUS FOOD

Potentially hazardous food (PHF) is food that requires temperature control for safety. Temperature control means maintaining food at a temperature of:

- 5°C or below if this is necessary to minimise the growth of pathogenic microorganisms in the food, so that the microbiological safety of the food will not be adversely affected for the time the food is at that temperature, or
- 60°C or above, or
- another temperature – if the food business demonstrates that maintenance of the food at this temperature for the period of time for which it will be so maintained, will not adversely affect the microbiological safety of the food (see NSW Food Authority 2-hour/4-hour rule).

Potentially hazardous foods are generally moist, nutrient-rich foods with a neutral pH.

Food Type	Examples
Raw and cooked meat/poultry	
Foods containing raw or cooked meat/poultry	Burgers, curries, kebabs, pate, meat pies
Foods containing eggs (cooked or raw), beans, nuts or other protein-rich food	Batter, mousse, quiche, tofu
Dairy products and foods containing dairy products	Milk, dairy-based desserts, bakery products filled with fresh cream or with fresh custard
Seafood (excluding live seafood) and foods containing seafood	Sushi
Sprouted seeds	Bean sprouts, alfalfa
Prepared fruits and vegetables	Cut melons, salads, unpasteurised juices
Cooked rice, fresh and cooked pasta	
Foods that contain any of the above foods	Sandwiches, pizzas, rice rolls

HAND WASH FACILITIES IN FOOD SHOPS: MEETING FOOD STANDARDS CODE REQUIREMENTS

Maintaining proper hand hygiene is one of the most effective ways to prevent food contamination and protect public health. Under the **Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code**, food businesses are legally required to provide and maintain appropriate hand washing facilities.

The Food Standards Code requires food premises to provide accessible hand washing facilities wherever food handlers work. These facilities must:

- Be permanent fixtures connected to warm running potable water.
- Include soap and single-use towels or an air dryer.
- Be clearly designated for washing hands, arms, and face only—not for any other purpose.

Hand wash basins must be **immediately accessible**. Do not store garbage bins, trolleys or any other items in front of them. Obstructing access can lead to non-compliance and increase the risk of foodborne illness.

Hand wash basins are **only for washing hands, arms and face**. They must not be used to wash utensils, rinse food items or dispose of waste. Misuse can compromise hygiene and breach the Food Standards Code.

Hands are a major source of contamination in food businesses. Proper facilities and practices reduce the risk of foodborne illness and help maintain compliance with legal requirements.



For more information go to [penrith.city](https://www.penrith.city) or phone 4732 7777