Safer food, better business case study: chinese sfbb

Local authority: Gloucestershire SFBB project

During January - April 2007, over 90 catering businesses in Gloucestershire attended a series of Safer food, better business (SFBB) workshops that were translated into 5 different languages - Cantonese, Mandarin, Bengali, Urdu and Turkish. The workshops were followed up by coaching sessions attended by a CMI coach and an interpreter from Tapestry Translation and Interpreting Services.

Mr Ming Cheun Tsoi, proprietor of the Peking Chef takeaway in Gloucester, responded to a direct call, in Cantonese, from Tapestry inviting participation at the workshop. Local environmental health practitioners (EHPs) also contacted businesses directly to encourage them to take advantage of the free training available. Mr Tsoi said: 'The translated workshop was very useful and was a good reminder of what good practice should be. It was essential to me to have an interpreter for the workshop and coaching because they know our culture and understand how the Chinese cook.'

Mrs Mui Fing Li from the Golden Star takeaway also participated in the workshops. She said: 'The SFBB pack is very good, it helped me to identify what I needed to do in my business and also helped me to reinforce what I had been telling my staff.' Mrs Li completed the pack in English but is using the Cantonese translation of the pack to instruct and train her staff.

EHP Rachel Wilmot inspected the takeaway after the coaching sessions had been completed. She felt that it would have been very difficult to introduce SFBB in these premises without the help of interpreters. She said: 'SFBB has really made a difference. It is much easier to have confidence in the food safety management of a business, where communication is difficult, if there is a written system in place.'

CMI coach Cheryl Herbert ran the workshops and coaching sessions and was very impressed with the variations of the SFBB pack for ethnic cuisine. She said: 'To begin with I didn't know a lot about Chinese cooking methods, but the safe methods for Chinese cuisine were spot on and made the whole exercise far more relevant.'

Ka-Lee Wong, Chinese interpreter, said: 'The success of the bilingual SFBB workshops was based on the excellent partnership between district councils, Tapestry and the local Chinese community. It is a fine example of how local authorities can help non-English speaking communities to get access to training and information on new legislation.'

The Gloucestershire SFBB project was a collaboration between Cheltenham Borough Council; Cotswold District Council; Forest of Dean District Council; Gloucester City Council; Stroud District Council; Tewkesbury Borough Council and the Gloucestershire Food Vision. In all, 85 workshops were held and attended by 1300 businesses. One-to-one coaching was carried out in over 1000 businesses.

The photograph shows Mr Ming Cheun Tsoi of the Peking Chef, 234 Barton St, Gloucester and Ka-lee Wong of Tapestry Translation and Interpreting Service.