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# Use and re-use guidance for Food Standards Agency Safer Food, Better Business (SFBB)

## Background

Safer food, better business (SFBB) was developed by the Food Standards Agency (FSA) to assist small food businesses to comply with the requirements for documented HACCP-based procedures. The use of SFBB has benefits for businesses, their staff and enforcement officers.

SFBB for caterers and SFBB for retailers were designed to work in most small catering and food retail businesses (excluding specialist retailers such as butchers, fishmongers and bakers). The food business operator completes the 'safe methods' in the pack and tailors them to become specific to their particular business.

This guidance aims to provide assistance to those LAs, or private companies, who are considering developing adaptations. A number of local authorities (LAs) have produced adaptations of SFBB or additional safe methods.

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Any changes made should add complete safe methods. It is not appropriate to partially re-write a safe method, as each of the existing safe methods has been validated by the FSA.

As SFBB is a well-established brand you should not change the style, including the icons, layout of the pages and the colours used, to ensure the quality of any product produced.

It must be acknowledged that the material used is Crown copyright and has been used with permission under the terms of the OGL. The following statement should appear on the front of the document or clearly within the document produced in a font size that is easily readable.

### **The statement:**

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## Thinking of producing an adaptation of SFBB

Before changing or adding information to the SFBB pack, please consider whether the change is necessary or whether it could be achieved by the business tailoring the existing safe methods (by completing the 'How do you do this?' column) or by adding safe methods from another pack. For example, SFBB for retailers has a section on Cooking and preparation, developed with the industry to reflect the most common foods cooked or prepared in the small retail sector. It was not intended to cover the complete range of possible foods being prepared. If small retailers are cooking or preparing foods that are not covered, then they could use selected safe methods from SFBB for caterers, where appropriate.

For some businesses, the language used in the pack may not be familiar for example, home caterers, but with support, these businesses may be able to use the existing packs successfully.

SFBB is designed to be a simple system that does not impose undue burdens on businesses. It is very important that any new methods retain this simplicity. In particular, proposed changes should:

- retain options for using sensory information (for example, colour changes or food steaming) as an indicator of critical controls, and not insist on temperature monitoring through the use of probe thermometers.
- retain the 'reporting by exception' approach of the diary.

SFBB is designed to take account of the seven principles of HACCP, but in a way that hides the complexity of HACCP from the end user. Any adaptations must retain this approach.

No systems analysis or flow-charts should be included. Any new material should be developed within the 4 Cs/Management framework of the pack.

Any additional material developed should retain the SFBB approach, identifying:

- the overall purpose of the method – included below the name of the safe method
- brief, simple safety points
- a description of why each safety point is important
- the key step/steps that make the food safe – for example, cooking for a certain time or until thoroughly cooked
- space to allow the business to confirm if they follow the advice in the safe method or describe their own procedures to control the hazard
- what to do if things go wrong – the corrective action
- how to manage the hazards in the business
- a reminder to make a note of any problems in their diary

You will need to validate any new safe methods that you produce.

## **Can food businesses adapt SFBB?**

Food business operators are responsible for demonstrating that they produce safe food and comply with the requirements for documented food safety management procedures. This may be achieved in many ways – SFBB is just one example of a HACCP-based system.

Businesses may use the SFBB packs as the basis for their food safety management procedures, adding material or merging existing guidance to suit their own circumstances. Where this is done, it is recommended that the SFBB pack is used to check against, to ensure that any changes made, or material added, at least covers the same ground as the SFBB materials.

Any new safe methods, developed by a business, will need to be validated, following the 'Prove it' safe method in the Management section of the pack and documented in the 'Prove it: records' sheet in the diary, where relevant.

Businesses should be aware that the level of record keeping required by SFBB is suggested as the minimum required for complying with the legislation. Businesses may add further records if they find this helpful or to provide further evidence of due diligence. However, the additional burden that this places on the business is their responsibility.

## **As a private consultant, can I adapt to SFBB?**

As a private consultant, working for a specific business and adapting the pack for that business, you should follow the guidelines for food businesses in the section above. If you are adapting the pack for any other purpose, you should follow the guidelines on formatting, content and translations and pay particular attention to the information on copyright.

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- **Don't swear**, use hate-speech or make obscene or vulgar comments.
- **Don't break the law.** This includes libel, condoning illegal activity and contempt of court (comments which might affect the outcome of an approaching court case).
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- **If you are under 16, please get permission from a parent or guardian before commenting on this blog.**
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- **Don't post in a language other than English or Welsh.**
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