Food for Thought
A publication prepared by the Food Unit Department of Health WA

Issue 23, Special Edition for Local Governments

Inside this issue
Staff changes within the Food Unit .......................................................... 1
Management of temporary and mobile food businesses and food prepared in residential environments................................. 1
Local government roles and responsibilities................................. 2
Emerging food trends – raw and fermented foods ...................... 2

Staff changes within the Food Unit
The month of June 2016 saw us say a sad farewell to several staff members that have been part of the Department of Health for many years. These staff members are Kim Marks, Bill Kellow and Terry Mazzucchelli. Combined, all three staff members have been with the Department of Health for over 60 years and have all provided the Department of Health, industry and the public with first class service. Kim, Bill and Terry have always been very helpful and obliging to anyone who required assistance in any way and will be sorely missed. We wish Kim, Bill and Terry all the best as they move into retirement.

Management of temporary and mobile food businesses and food prepared in residential environments
Earlier this year, the Department of Health in conjunction with local governments has commenced a project to address administrative and compliance challenges relating to:

- Temporary and mobile food businesses, including at public events; and
- Food prepared in residential environments, as well as small-scale and boutique manufacturers

As part of the project, the Department of Health is progressing with the development of a centralised database that will streamline food safety management for temporary and mobile food businesses within Western Australia.

The Department of Health maintains its commitment to a centralised state wide register for temporary and mobile food businesses and food safety risk assessment guidelines for administering to small scale food manufacturers, including residential based food businesses.

Due to staffing changes, these two projects have been delayed with expected completion by the end of this year.

Contacts
For contributions, enquiries or feedback regarding the newsletter please feel more than welcome to contact a member of the team.

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Delivering a Healthy WA
Local government roles and responsibilities

Local governments are reminded of the roles and responsibilities as the enforcement agency for meat and poultry food businesses that are not export registered. The Department of Health’s role in relation to these food businesses is to audit against various Australian Standards as the Controlling Authority under Division 2 of the Food Regulations 2009. The Department of Health does not have compliance and enforcement powers for these food businesses – these powers belong to local government enforcement agencies. Local governments are encouraged to ensure that these food businesses are included in current surveillance programs and the Department of Health will continue to provide copies of audit reports to local governments. The Department of Health remains the enforcement agency for dairy primary production and processing food businesses.

Emerging food trends – raw and fermented foods

Raw and fermented food manufacturing are two growing trends within the food industry. Apart from being associated with ambiguous health claims, these products have been linked to food recalls due to the presence of Salmonella, Listeria and Clostridium botulinum.

The Department of Health recognises these are growing trends within the food industry. In order to ensure appropriate resources are directed to assisting local governments with the management of these food businesses, local governments are encouraged to advise the Department of Health of the number of these types of food businesses that have been registered, including the types of food each food business is producing. All feedback can be sent to foodsafety@health.wa.gov.au.

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