The South Australian Food Business Risk Classification

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1.0	October 2013	August 2015	Original version
2.0	November 2018	December 2022	Modifications after use
3.0	December 2022	December 2023	Addition of Std 3.2.2A categories
4.0	December 2023	Current	Amend error in *Food Service* table

Contents

Food Business Risk Classification Overview

The Food Regulation Standing Committee (FRSC) and later the Australian Government's Productivity Commission endorsed a national risk profiling tool, the Risk Profiling Framework (the Framework). The Framework is located on the Food Regulation Secretariat web site at http://www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/risk-profiling-framework

The Framework is a series of decision trees, with supporting documentation to assist its use. The approach in the decision trees is to consider: the nature of the potential risk from products sold by the business sector and considering both the inherent risk, (i.e. in the absence of existing controls) and the reliability of existing risk management actions, i.e. managed risk, and whether there are steps that are susceptible to introduction of hazards, or processes that are critical to the safety of the product at the time it is consumed.

The result from using the Framework is classification of food businesses or industry sectors into one of four classifications, from the highest risk category of Priority 1 (P1) through P2 and P3 to the lowest risk category of P4.

Priority 1
Priority 2

This classification relates to business sectors that will, characteristically handle foods that support the growth of pathogenic micro-organisms and where such pathogens are present or could, from experience or literature reports, be expected to be present. Their handling of food will, characteristically, also involve at least one step at which control actions must be implemented to ensure the safety of the food. Priority 1 business sectors are further characterised by known risk-increasing factors, such as potential for inadequate/incorrect temperature control (e.g. reheating or 'hot holding' of food), a consumer base that includes predominantly immunocompromised populations, the scale of production/service and others factors identified in the National Risk Validation Project (FSA & ME, 2002).

Priority 3

This classification relates to business sectors that will only handle "low risk" or "medium risk" foods. A medium risk food is one that may contain harmful natural toxins or chemicals introduced at steps earlier in the food supply chain, or that: – may contain pathogenic microorganisms but will not normally support the formation of toxins or growth of pathogenic microorganisms due to food characteristics; or – is unlikely to contain pathogenic microorganisms due to food type or processing but may support the formation of toxins or growth of pathogenic microorganisms.

Priority 4

Business sectors that will normally handle only "low risk" foods, i.e. those that are unlikely to contain pathogenic organisms and will not support their growth, and will not introduce microbial, physical or chemical hazards to the foods they sell or handle.

How to determine the risk classification

1. What types of foods are handled by the business?

- List the food types handled by the food business to determine the highest risk foods.

2. What processes are undertaken by the business?

- List all the food processes used by the food business to assist in classifying the sector of business.

3. What is the highest risk food/process handled/undertaken by the business?

- Determine the highest risk food and/or process handled and/or undertaken by the business.

4. What sector does the business belong to?

a) Retail

b) Food Service

c) Processor/Manufacturer

d) Transporter

5. Determine risk classification

- Review the table for the sector the business falls into.
- Assign the type of business and classification based on the highest risk food and process.

Note:

- If a food business operates across more than one activity, the activity that has the highest risk determines the classification.
- For a food business that is a processor/manufacturer, the size of the processor/manufacturer is also used to determine the risk classification in some categories (as indicated in the tables).

Change of risk classification

- Risk classification is set and remains unchanged unless the type of food or business activity changes the risk - NOT performance.

Adjustment of inspection frequency

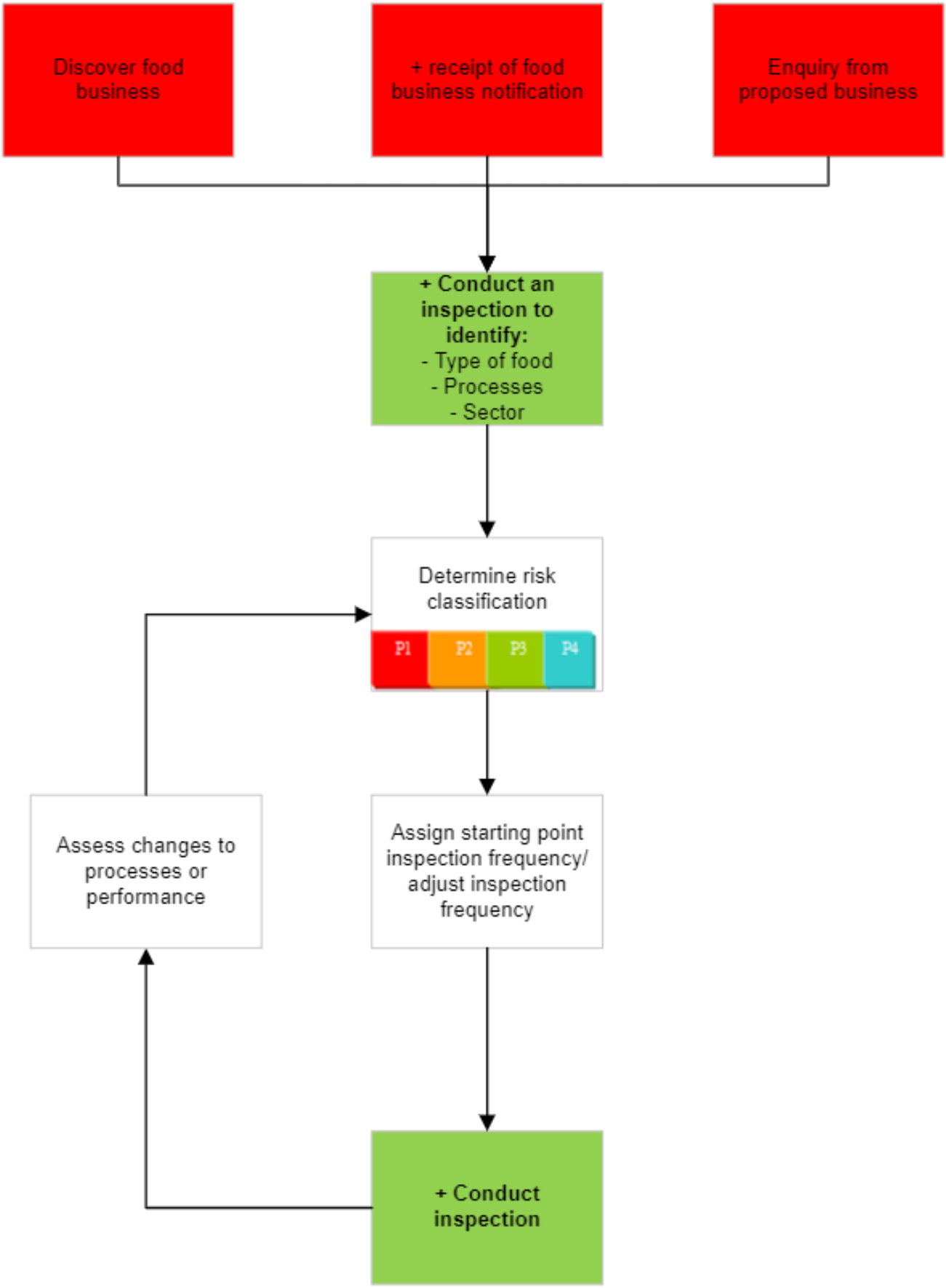
- Performance of the food business is used to adjust the inspection frequency within the range for that risk classification.

For advice

Contact SA Health Food Safety and Regulation Branch (08 8226 7100) where:

- There is uncertainty or difficulty in determining a risk classification; or
- New processes or products are identified during inspections that do not fit within the current risk classification system.

Risk classification process



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Definitions

Category one business a food service or caterer business who processes unpackaged potentially hazardous food into food that is both potentially hazardous and ready-to-eat (see Standard 3.2.2A).

Category two business a food retailer who handles and sells (but does not make) unpackaged, potentially hazardous, ready to eat food (see Standard 3.2.2A).

Catering event involves the provision of food under an agreement where the food is predetermined in type and quantity, for a predetermined group of persons and served at a predetermined time and date.

Cold holding means storing or displaying foods at or below 5°C.

Cook-chill a process where meals or meal components are fully cooked then cooled by controlled chilling (e.g. blast chilling) and subsequent storage at a temperature above freezing point (e.g. 3°C) prior to regeneration and/or service (the meals are expected to be reheated prior to consumption). Cook-chill processes can include:

- The products are assembled after separate cooking of individual components, chilling and then packing in the final container.
- The components are cooked individually, packaged, sealed and chilled in the final container.
- The meal components are packed, and then receive a pasteurisation process which gives the potential for a longer shelf life under chill storage conditions because of the reduced risk of post-process contamination (the sous-vide process).

These foods are not sterile, and their safety is based on a combination of:

- a minimal heat treatment (usually at 75°C or time/temp equivalent) intended to minimise loss of sensory and nutritional quality product formulation
- refrigerated storage
- limited shelf-life
- packaging systems (e.g., vacuum [VP] or modified atmosphere [MAP] packaging)
- intrinsic properties of the foods (such as reduced pH or water activity, addition of bacteriocins, etc.

Food business means a business, enterprise or activity (other than primary food production) that involves the handling of food intended for sale and/or the sale of food; regardless of whether the business, enterprise or activity concerned is of a commercial, charitable or community nature or whether it involves the handling or sale of food on one occasion only (see South Australia Food Act 2001).

Food handler training means food handlers must complete a food safety training course that provides training in or demonstrate skills and knowledge in safe handling of food, food contamination, cleaning and sanitising and personal hygiene (see Standard 3.2.2A).

Food safety supervisor means a business must appoint a food safety supervisor with appropriate qualifications to oversee food handlers and food safety management within the business, and ensure they are reasonably available (see Standard 3.2.2A).

Food premises means any premises including land, vehicles, parts of structures, tents, stalls and other temporary structures, boats, pontoons and any other place declared by the relevant authority to be premises under the Food Act kept or used for the handling of food for sale, regardless of whether those premises are owned by the proprietor, including premises used principally as a private dwelling, but does not mean food vending machines or vehicles used only to transport food.

Food service business means businesses that make and/or serve food for immediate consumption (may include transport) regardless of whether the food is consumed onsite or elsewhere.

Handling means the making, manufacturing, producing, collecting, extracting, processing, storing, transporting, delivering, preparing, treating, preserving, packing, cooking, thawing, serving or displaying of food. This is intended to cover all the activities that take place in relation to food before it is sold and is not restricted to the activities listed.

High risk foods are foods that may contain pathogenic microorganisms and will support formation of toxins or growth of pathogenic microorganisms.

Hot holding means storing or displaying foods at or above 60°C.

Inherent risk relates to the possibility for a food to contain a hazard that could be present at levels that could cause human illness whether due to the nature of the food itself or the processing and handling it undergoes.

Low risk food is food that is unlikely to contain pathogenic organisms and will not support their growth, and will not introduce microbial, physical or chemical hazards to other foods the business sells or handles.

Medium risk foods are those that may contain harmful natural toxins or chemicals introduced at steps earlier in the food supply chain, or that: may contain pathogenic microorganisms but will not normally support the formation of toxins or growth of pathogens due to food characteristics; or, are unlikely to contain pathogenic microorganisms due to food type or processing but may support the formation of toxins or growth of pathogenic microorganisms.

Perishable foods are foods that allow microbial growth and so will eventually deteriorate and spoil. Typically, such foods require storage under refrigeration to extend shelf life i.e. foods that are not shelf stable or are potentially hazardous.

Potentially hazardous foods are foods that meet both of the criteria below:

- They might contain the types of food-poisoning bacteria that need to multiply to large numbers to cause food poisoning, and
- The food will allow the food-poisoning bacteria to multiply.

Potentially hazardous food has to be kept at certain temperatures to minimise the growth of any pathogenic microorganism that might be present in the food or to prevent the formation of toxins in the food.

Processing in relation to food means activity conducted to prepare food for sale including cooking, drying, fermenting, pasteurising, preserving and washing, or a combination of these activities.

Processor/manufacturer businesses are engaged in the physical or chemical transformation of food, food ingredients, substances or components into new products. Their food can be sold via wholesaler or direct to business and can include minimal or widespread distribution.

Ready-to-eat food is normally consumed in the same state as that in which it is sold (without further cooking or preparation) but does not include nuts in the shell and whole, raw, fruits and vegetables that are intended for hulling, processing, peeling or washing by the consumer.

Retail business is a businesses that sell food to the public which is not processed on site (can include slicing & weighing of delicatessen products and reheating/hot holding of RTE cooked foods). Generally not intended to be consumed on site and can include supermarkets, convenience stores or specialty retail stores (e.g. bakery, butcher.)

Small producer a business that employs less than 50 people in the ‘manufacturing’ sector or which employs less than 10 people in the ‘food services’ sector.

Substantiation of matters means a business must either demonstrate to an authorised officer or keep a record to show that key food safety controls are being managed (see Standard 3.2.2A).

Transporter is a businesses engaged in transport or pre-retail distribution activities (particularly importation, wholesaling, wholesale storage and multipurpose wholesalers who distribute not only to retailers but also to restaurant owners or consumers). Transporters do not process foods.

Retailer	**Food for retail sale - food for sale to the public which is not processed on site (can include slicing & weighing of delicatessen products and reheating/hot holding of RTE cooked foods). *Generally not intended to be consumed on site and can include supermarkets, convenience stores or specialty retail stores (e.g. bakery, butcher).***					
Food	**Description**	**Example foods/ business**	**Risk/ hazard**	**Comment**	**FSM category**	**Required FSM tools**
Alcoholic beverages packaged	Outlets selling alcohol to the public for consumption off the premises only.	– Packaged or bottled beer, wine or spirits – Bottle shop	**P4** Chemical	Products are usually pre-packaged. Exception - port from a port barrel.	N/A	N/A
Bakery products	Retailer of bread and baked goods. Not manufacturing. Does not include retail sale of bakery products that contain perishable fillings (P2).	– Bakery products that may contain non-perishable fillings e.g. jam – Bread – Biscuits – Cakes	**P3** Microbial	May contain pathogenic microorganisms but will not normally support the formation of toxins or growth of pathogenic microorganisms due to food characteristics.	N/A	N/A
Bakery products ***Perishable fillings***	Baked goods that contain perishable fillings that are not manufactured on the premises but can include reheating. If manufactured on premises the classification becomes P1. See *Processor Manufacturer - Bakery products Perishable fillings processing*.	– Cream filled cakes – Custard filled pastries – Meat pies – Sausage rolls – Egg-based fillings – Egg glazes	**P2** Microbial	Classified P2 on the basis that the retail outlet does not contribute significantly to the safety of the product. Perishable fillings may encourage pathogen growth.	If the RTE food is handled unpackaged Category 2. If the food is packaged N/A.	Food handler training (FHT) & food safety supervisor (FSS).
Continental type delicatessen food	Retailer of products which are high risk, processed (heat or non-heat treatment), ready to eat, requiring refrigeration or reheating) such as smallgoods, cheeses, antipasto. Can include portioning, slicing, and weighing.	– Antipasto – Caviar – Cheese – Cured meats – Fermented products – Pate – Smoked or Pickled products – Smallgoods	**P2** Microbial	Many of the foods sold in a delicatessen require refrigeration for control of microbial growth. Prevention of recontamination is critical to the safety of the product sold by the business.	If the RTE food is handled unpackaged Category 2. If the food is packaged N/A.	Food handler training (FHT) & food safety supervisor (FSS).
High risk food ***Perishable***	Business that sells but has not prepared high risk foods. (See definition pg. 7). Ready to eat, refrigerated storage or reheated / hot held for sale. Generally packaged.	– Supermarkets – Sandwiches – Fresh cut fruit and veg – Pastries containing meat or egg – Vending machines	**P2** Microbial	Many of the foods require refrigeration for control of microbial growth. Prevention of recontamination is critical to the safety of the product sold by the business.	If the RTE food is handled unpackaged Category 2. If the food is packaged N/A.	Food handler training (FHT) & food safety supervisor (FSS).

Retailer	Food for retail sale - food for sale to the public which is not processed on site (can include slicing & weighing of delicatessen products and reheating/hot holding of RTE cooked foods). *Generally not intended to be consumed on site and can include supermarkets, convenience stores or specialty retail stores (e.g. bakery, butcher).*					
Food	**Description**	**Example foods/ business**	**Risk/ hazard**	**Comment**	**FSM category**	**Required FSM tools**
Low risk packaged food	Business that sells only low risk pre-packaged foods.	– Newsagent – Chemist – Vending machine – Chewing gum – Potato crisps – Soft drinks	**P4** Microbial and chemical	Low risk foods only, packaging provides protection against recontamination.	N/A	N/A
Low risk food unpackaged	Business that sells only low risk unpackaged foods.	– Packing dry ingredients from bulk e.g. spices, flours, grains, nuts, tea – Wine tasting – Cellar door – Bar serving alcohol – Bar serving (hot) food from another vendor – Service station coffee vendor	**P3** Microbial and chemical	Low risk foods only. Handling glasses, food, alcohol. Potential for physical, chemical or microbial contamination.	N/A	N/A
Medium risk food ***Perishable***	Business that sells medium risk foods. (See *Definitions*). Ready to eat, refrigerated storage. Can be packaged or unpackaged.	– Ice-cream – Milk-based confectionary – Yoghurt – Fresh whole and single cut fruit & vegetables – Pasteurised milk – Dried fruit & nut vendor – Health food shops – Bed & Breakfast (providing low-medium risk breakfast supplies only)	**P3** Microbial	May contain pathogenic microorganisms but will not normally support the formation of toxins or growth of pathogenic microorganisms due to food characteristics. Other considerations include hygiene, temperature control, and stock rotation.	N/A	N/A
Raw Meat & poultry	High risk, processed food (chopping, no heat treatment), refrigerated, not intended to be eaten raw. Does not include cooked chicken outlets which are regarded as a takeaway (see *Food Service*).	– Beef – Lamb – Mutton – Pork – Fresh poultry – Fresh chicken – Fresh duck – Butcher	**P2** Microbial	Classified P2 on the basis that the retail outlet does not contribute significantly to the safety of the product.	N/A – not selling RTE food.	N/A
Seafood **Excludes processing of bi-valve mollusc**	High risk, processed (raw and heat treated) fish and seafood, refrigerated storage. Processing of bivalve molluscs on site is P1 (see *Mollusc processing*).	– Crustaceans – Fish – Mollusc retailing (already processed) – Seafood, fresh or frozen	**P2** Microbial	Classified P2 on the basis that the retail outlet does not contribute significantly to the safety of the product.	If the RTE food is handled unpackaged Category 2. If the food is packaged N/A.	Food handler training (FHT) & food safety supervisor (FSS).

Food Service

Food Service	Businesses that make and/or serve food for consumption on site, taken away for immediate consumption or at a catering event (may include transport).					
Food type	**Description**	**Example Foods/ businesses**	**Risk/ hazard**	**Comment**	**FSM category**	**Required FSM tools**
Catering ***Offsite activity***	High risk, processed (e.g. cooking), pre-prepared ready to eat food (possible cooling), transported to another location, refrigerated storage, reheating or hot holding before serving.	– Airline, rail, sea Transport – Motor racing	**P1** Microbial	For large catering operations exposure is relevant.	Category 1	Food handler training (FHT), food safety supervisor (FSS) & substantiation of matters.
Catering ***Onsite activity***	High risk, processed (e.g. cooking), pre-prepared ready to eat food, possible cooling, refrigerated storage, reheating or hot holding.	– Vulnerable population facilities – Sporting and major event venues – Correctional facilities	**P1** Microbial	Vulnerable population businesses required to comply with Std 3.3.1. A childcare centre serving a snack only is classified P3.	Category 1	Food handler training (FHT), food safety supervisor (FSS) & substantiation of matters.
Medium Risk Foods ***Perishable***	Business that make/serves medium risk foods (see definition). Ready to eat, refrigerated storage.	– Ice cream vans – Strawberries& cream vendors – Popcorn/fairy floss makers – Childcare - Lunch box centre – Coffee vans – Bubble tea	**P3** Microbial, chemical and physical	May contain pathogenic microorganisms but will not normally support the formation of toxins or growth of pathogenic microorganisms due to food characteristics.	N/A	N/A
Restaurants and takeaway ***RTE food prepared in advance >4 hours***	High risk, processed on site from raw (e.g. cooking), time delay before serving (cooling, hot or cold holding) **Raw preparation increases cross contamination risks.** Food can be consumed on the premises, taken away by the customer or delivered.	– Bar – Cafe – Clubs – Hotel – Night club – Pub – Restaurant – Tavern – Mobile food van – Sushi – Chicken shop – Supermarket hot chicken – Soft serve ice-cream (no in situ pasteuriser)	**P1** Microbial	Outbreaks amongst restaurants from pre-prepared ready to eat meals (e.g. *Salmonella* and *Campylobacter*). Hot holding or poor cooling of foods supporting spore forming pathogen growth identified as a relatively common cause of food-borne disease outbreaks. Consider left-overs.	Category 1	Food handler training (FHT), food safety supervisor (FSS) & substantiation of matters.

Food Service	Businesses that make and/or serve food for consumption on site, taken away for immediate consumption or at a catering event (may include transport).					
Food type	**Description**	**Example Foods/ businesses**	**Risk/ hazard**	**Comment**	**FSM category**	**Required FSM tools**
Restaurants and takeaway food ***RTE food - express order <4 hours***	High risk, processed from raw (e.g. cooking), direct cook/serve or make/serve operation, anticipated for immediate consumption. Food can be consumed on the premises, taken away by the customer or delivered.	– Deli – Fast food – Juice bar – Mobile food van – Soft serve ice-cream (in situ pasteuriser) –	**P2** Microbial	High risk food but no hot holding and no simultaneous servings. Cross contamination risks still exist from raw prep on site i.e. campylobacter.	Category 1	Food handler training (FHT), food safety supervisor (FSS) & substantiation of matters.
Restaurants and takeaway food ***RTE food - no raw prep***	High risk, purchased pre-prepared/cooked. Food can be held cold or hot for sale and or consumption on site. Food intended to be consumed in short period of time (i.e. <4 hrs).	– Subway – Hot dogs/dim sims – Soup – Sandwiches –	**P2** Microbial	Could also be covered under P2 retailer of HR foods if no option to consume on site.	Category 2	Food handler training (FHT) & food safety supervisor (FSS).

Processor/ Manufacturer	**Mainly engaged in the physical or chemical transformation of food, food ingredients, substances, or components into new products. Can be sold via wholesaler, direct to business or direct to the public. Can include minimal or widespread distribution.**			
Food type	**Description**	**Example foods**	**Risk/ hazard**	**Comment**
Bakery products ***Perishable fillings processing***	Applies to baked goods that contain perishable high risk fillings (including frozen bakery products). Can include either factory based premises or home based activities. For bakery items (non-perishable) *see Cereal processing & medium/low risk bakery.*	– Cake or pastry, fresh or frozen – Pie/Pasty (including meat, fruit or vegetable) – Quiche – Some ganache's (depends on a_w)	**P1** Microbial	Control unreliable as evidenced by repeated problems with *Salmonella.* Product requires low temperature storage to minimise pathogen growth, that remain in the product or a component of the product e.g. (filling) and to prevent the formation of toxins.
Baby food processing	Food that is intended or represented for use as a source of nourishment for infants, but does not include infant formula products, formulated meal replacements, and formulated supplementary foods (see Infant Formula P1). Pasteurised and hermetically sealed in a can, glass jar or retort pouches.	– Fruit gel in glass jars – Canned egg custard – Pasta in jar – Mashed fruit and vegetable in can or retort pouch.	**P2** Microbial	Canned baby food retorting is an effective control of microbial hazards.
Beverage processing	Applies to the processing operations of beverages including alcoholic, fermented teas, carbonated and bottled water. Also applies to ice making. Does not include manufacturing milk and milk product or fruit and vegetable juices.	– Beer – Spirit, Wine and Other Alcoholic Beverage Soft Drink, Cordial and Syrup – Packaged water – Powder flavour – Purified water – Tonic water – Wine vinegar – Kombucha – Ice making	**P3** Microbial and chemical	Carbonated beverage processing and acidity means pathogens unlikely to be present or to grow. For alcoholic beverages chemicals that cause acute illness (methanol) are unlikely. Physical contamination is the greatest risk associated with ice making as frozen water does not support microbial growth.
Beverage processing ***Small producer***	Applies to small businesses producing fermented beverages.	– Kombucha – Water-based & nut-based kefirs – Rejuvelac – Kvass – Fermented sodas	**P3** Chemical	Acidity means pathogens unlikely to grow. If pH is too low, can cause injury with acid burns to the oesophagus. Uncontrolled fermentation or secondary fermentation may increase alcohol content and breach the *South Australia Liquor Licensing Act 1997*.
Canned food processing	Preparing food (including processing) by appropriate heating before or after hermetically sealing the food in a container to prevent spoiling. The commercial sterilisation of fish, meats, fruits & vegetables, soups & sauces in metal or glass containers or retort pouches.	– Cans – Bottles – Sterile retort pouches – All low acid foods (pH>4.5)	**P2** Microbial	Canned foods are usually heat treated to be stored indefinitely at ambient temperature. The heat process severity is dependent on the pH of the food. Unopened, heat-treated canned foods are not potentially hazardous foods.

Processor/ Manufacturer	Mainly engaged in the physical or chemical transformation of food, food ingredients, substances, or components into new products. Can be sold via wholesaler, direct to business or direct to the public. Can include minimal or widespread distribution.			
Food type	**Description**	**Example foods**	**Risk/ hazard**	**Comment**
Canned food processing ***Very small producer & high acid food***	Very small producer of high acid product. The size and type of food of the manufacturer may be used to alter the risk classification.	– Few kilograms per week of canned tomatoes	**P3** Microbial	Classified level P3 due to size and type of food. High acid (pH< 4.5) precludes germination and outgrowth of *Clostridium botulinum* spores.
Chocolate processing	A large manufacturer of chocolate and similar confectionary.	– National producer of chocolate	**P2** Microbial	The size of the chocolate manufacture determines the classification level. Raw ingredients can introduce contamination to finished product.
Chocolate processing ***Small producer***	Small business making chocolates is classified as P3.	– Local producer of chocolate – Carob producer	**P3** Microbial	Classified level P3 due to size. Less risk due to smaller distribution.
Cereal processing & medium/low risk bakery	**Bread Manufacturing** **Biscuit Manufacturing** **Cakes** (including fillings or decorations) **Flour and Starch products manufacturing** Includes arrowroot, rice, corn, barley, malt, wheat germ etc. Also includes pulses/ legumes. **Cereal, Pasta and Baking Mix Manufacturing** Manufacturing prepared cereal foods (including oatmeal), fresh and dried pasta, and prepared baking mixes.	– Bread, inc. pita – Baking powder – Breakfast cereal – Cake mix – Coatings – Custard powder – Dessert, dried – Dextrin, dextrose – English muffin – Glucose, gluten – Ice cream cone – Dry noodle – Pasta, fresh or dried – Pastry mix – Rye, sago, tapioca – Semolina – Un-popped corn – Repacking/down packing of flours or dried grains – Perishable fillings if validated as shelf stable – Shelf stable cakes & cake decorations/ fillings/icings e.g. cream cheese & icing sugar, royal icing, lemon curd, ganache (depends on a_w)	**P3** Microbial and chemical	Processing, baking and low water activity mean pathogens unlikely to be present or to grow. Decorations, fillings and icing that have a low water activity do not support the growth of pathogens. Physical contamination to be considered when repacking flours and grains.

Processor/ Manufacturer	Mainly engaged in the physical or chemical transformation of food, food ingredients, substances, or components into new products. Can be sold via wholesaler, direct to business or direct to the public. Can include minimal or widespread distribution.			
Food type	**Description**	**Example foods**	**Risk/ hazard**	**Comment**
Confectionary processing	**Sweets/sugar confectionary** **High sugar spreads/ condiments** **High sugar snack foods**	– Chewing gum – Crystallised or glace fruit – Liquorice – Marshmallow – Nut, candied, – Popcorn, candied – Jams, conserves, spreads – Honey packing – 'Protein/bliss' balls with high sugar syrup or dried fruit content – Carob products – Some ganache's (depends on a_w)	**P3** Microbial	Low water activity and processing mitigate against microbial contamination or growth. Low water activity of 'protein' balls due to amount of sugar syrups & dried fruit added to bind them. NOTE – honey packing is inspected by LG, but all hives must be registered with PIRSA for hive health.
Cook-chill food ***Short shelf-life processing***	**Cook chill - Short Shelf Life** perishable foods which have undergone a mild heat or pasteurisation process (generally equivalent to 70°C for 2 minutes). This process delivers a 6 log reduction in Listeria monocytogenes and has a refrigerated shelf life of no more than 10 days at ≤ 5°C including the days of production and consumption.	– Pre-prepared meals – Pre-prepared pasta – Pre-prepared rice – Pre-prepared soups and sauces	**P1** Microbial	Cold chain for chilled transport and storage unreliable with significant potential for microbial growth or recontamination. Generally packaged.
Cook-chill food ***Extended shelf life processing*** ***Non-aseptic***	**Cook chill - Extended Shelf Life** (ESL) means food that is given a cooking process equivalent to 90°C for 10 minutes. This process delivers a 6 log reduction of non-proteolytic *Clostridium botulinum*, and a refrigerated shelf life of more than 10 days if validated.	– Pre-prepared meals – Pre-prepared pasta – Pre-prepared rice – Pre-prepared soups and sauces	**P1** Microbial	Evidence of pathogens in long shelf life cook-chill products in Australia has increased due to inadequate process controls used by inexperienced operators. Potential for recontamination during packing.
Cook-chill food ***Extended shelf life processing*** ***Aseptic packaging***	**Cook chill - Extended Shelf Life** (ESL) means food that is given a cooking process equivalent to 90°C for 10 minutes. This process delivers a 6 log reduction of non-proteolytic *Clostridium botulinum*, and a refrigerated shelf life of more than 10 days if validated.	– Pre-prepared meals – Pre-prepared pasta – Pre-prepared rice – Pre-prepared soups and sauces	**P2** Microbial	No evidence of botulism from cook-chill products in Australia where process and risks are well managed and understood. Generally industrial scale manufacturing
Cook-frozen food processing	Cook-frozen food means foods which has undergone a mild heat or pasteurisation process and are intended to be frozen with the intent of reheating prior to eating.	– Pre-prepared meals – Pre-prepared pasta – Pre-prepared rice – Pre-prepared soups and sauces	**P2** Microbial	Substantial documented evidence that cook-freeze reliably controls pathogens in food in the community.

Processor/ Manufacturer	Mainly engaged in the physical or chemical transformation of food, food ingredients, substances, or components into new products. Can be sold via wholesaler, direct to business or direct to the public. Can include minimal or widespread distribution.			
Food type	**Description**	**Example foods**	**Risk/ hazard**	**Comment**
Dairy processing ***(excluding soft cheese)***	Includes – milk; cream, butter, buttermilk, margarine, ghee, casein, cheese; whey, cultured milk and yoghurt; ice-cream and ice-cream mix, powdered milk etc.	– Cheese (not soft) – Condensed milk – Confections, frozen – Evaporated milk – Flavoured milk – Gelato – Ice-cream – Sour cream – Ultra-heat treatment milk – Yoghurt – Dairy kefir – Probiotic dairy beverages – Desserts made with milk powder	**P2** Microbial	Pasteurisation is generally considered as reliable and pasteurised milk is considered a medium risk.
Dairy processing ***Soft cheese processing***	A manufacturer or processor of soft and semi-soft cheese (moisture content > 39%) with pH >5.0.	– Brie – Camembert – Feta – Ricotta	**P1** Microbial	*Listeria monocytogenes* multiplication on soft cheese during long term cold storage. Cross contamination risks during processing/handling.
Egg processing	**Egg product** means the content of egg, as part or whole, in liquid, frozen or dried form. Processed and pasteurised. Includes grading of eggs.	– Fresh shell eggs – Value added products where egg is the major ingredient. – Basic egg products include whole eggs, whites, yolks, and various blends- with or without non-egg ingredient.	**P2** Microbial	Cracked eggs have *Salmonella* risk. No evidence of outbreaks associated with pasteurised/ processed egg products, but major risk associated with businesses using unpasteurised egg pulp.
Fruit and vegetable processing	**Fruit and vegetable processing** Peeling, cutting or combining ingredients to make fruit and vegetable salads or similar products, including washed and or sanitised & bagged leafy greens.	– Fruit salad – Salad – Tabouli – Raw processed fruit and vegetables (e.g. mousses, slices)	**P1** Microbial	*Listeria* and *Salmonella* uncontrolled or control steps are potentially unreliable.
Fruit and vegetable processing ***Frozen***	Manufacturer **freezes** the produce and is continuously maintained at -18°C or below. Includes businesses where – processing includes peeling, slicing – not all products blanched i.e. berries – large volumes are produced	– Fruit, frozen – Vegetable, frozen	**P2** Microbial	Time/temperature control to limit microbial growth during processing and the blanching process are strong controls against microbial hazards. Frozen storage at less than -18ºC is recommended.

Processor/ Manufacturer	Mainly engaged in the physical or chemical transformation of food, food ingredients, substances, or components into new products. Can be sold via wholesaler, direct to business or direct to the public. Can include minimal or widespread distribution.			
Food type	**Description**	**Example foods**	**Risk/ hazard**	**Comment**
Fruit and vegetable processing ***Frozen blanch*** ***Wash/pack*** ***Dehydrating*** ***Condiments*** ***Small producer***	Small manufacturers that blanch all products. Small manufacturers that dehydrate fruit and vegetables. Manufacturing low pH/ low water activity condiments. Growers that wash or pack low risk whole fruit and vegetables	– Fruit, frozen – Vegetable, frozen – Packing low risk whole fruit and vegetables e.g. citrus, potatoes, onion, carrots etc. – Washing low risk whole fruit and vegetables – Dehydrating – Chutneys, sauces, relishes	**P3** Microbial	The size of the manufacturer is used to determine the risk classification. Pre-preparation e.g. blanching, peeling, of fruit and vegetables may reduce risk of dehydrated products. Pickles etc. are usually cooked & hot filled and or have low pH/low water activity. For extra or high risk processing, refer to P1 Fruit and vegetable processing.
Fruit and vegetable Juice ***Unpasteurised processing***	**Unpasteurised fruit juice or vegetable juice** means juice that has not been heat treated to commercial sterility. Product is intended to be kept under refrigerated storage.	– Unpasteurised juice	**P1** Microbial	Unpasteurised juice is classified as a high risk product as it may contain pathogens and support their growth.
Fruit juice ***Pasteurisation processing*** ***Shelf stable processing***	**Pasteurised fruit or vegetable juice** Has undergone a mild heat treatment that will not eliminate all spores, so it requires refrigerated storage. **Shelf-stable fruit juice and purees** has undergone an ultra-heat treatment and therefore does not require refrigeration. Medium or large processor.	– Pasteurised and shelf-stable fruit juice, purees and nectars	**P2** Microbial	Pasteurised fruit juice may support the growth of pathogens and toxin formation, but the actions during production (e.g. pasteurisation and low temperature storage) manages the risk. Shelf-stable fruit juice is not potentially hazardous since ultra-heat treatment of the product inactivates vegetative cells and spores and therefore low temperature storage is not necessary.
Fruit juice ***Pasteurisation processing*** ***Shelf stable processing*** ***Small producer***	Small manufacturer with activities as above.	– Pasteurised and shelf-stable fruit juice, purees and nectars	**P3** Microbial	The size of the manufacturer is used to determine the risk classification, small manufacturers are classified P3.
Infant formula product processing	Processor or manufacturer of infant formula.	– Infant formula – Follow-on formula – Lactose free formula – Low Lactose formula – Pre-term formula – Baby formula	**P1** Microbial	Baby formula is specifically made for infants – vulnerable populations – critical control unreliable as evidenced by repeated problems with infant formula – e.g. *Salmonella* and *Enterobacter sakazakii.*

Processor/ Manufacturer	Mainly engaged in the physical or chemical transformation of food, food ingredients, substances, or components into new products. Can be sold via wholesaler, direct to business or direct to the public. Can include minimal or widespread distribution.			
Food type	**Description**	**Example foods**	**Risk/ hazard**	**Comment**
Meat Processing ***Abattoir/ Boning Room***	**Abattoir** - Includes receival and slaughter of animals, dressing of carcases for meat or meat products from animals subject to AS4696:2007. **Boning room** – includes processing, packaging, handling and storage of for meat or meat products from animals subject to AS4696:2007.	– Abattoir operation (except poultry) – Lard, tallow rendering – Animal meat packing and freezing	**P2** Microbial	Red meat is considered a high risk food as it may contain pathogenic microorganisms that are able to grow if temperature is not controlled.
Meat Processing ***Fermented meat processing*** ***Smallgoods processing***	**Fermented, cured meat and smallgoods manufacturing** Manufacturing fermented (salami), cured and preserved meats, such as bacon or ham, and in manufacturing smallgoods or prepared meat products not elsewhere classified.	– Bacon – Corned meat – Pate – Poultry smallgoods – Smallgoods. – Salami – Dried meats	**P1** Microbial	*E.coli* (EHEC/STEC) in fermented meat products and Listeria in long shelf life manufactured meat products demonstrates risk associated with these products. Meat can be cured by salting, drying, pickling or smoking.
Oils and fats processing	**Oil and Fat Manufacturing** means manufacturing crude vegetable or marine animal oil, fat, cake or meal, margarine, compound cooking oil or fat, blended table or salad oil, or refined or hydrogenated oil or fat.	– Animal oil, refined, – vegetable oil – Edible oil or fat, – Fish or other marine animal oil or meal – Lard or tallow, refined, – Margarine – Olive oil – Oil based marinades/ dressings (pH & a_w)	**P3** Microbial	Low water activity precludes microbial growth. Marinades and dressings with other ingredients. Depends on pH <4.6, water activity, cooking or cooling steps.
Peanut Butter processing **Nut processing**	**Peanut butter** means a peanut based spread containing no less than 850 g/kg of peanuts.	– Peanut butter manufacturing – Other nut butters and pastes – Nut processing/ packing	**P2** Microbial	*Salmonella* can be eliminated from nuts by roasting process. However, if recontamination of finished product by Salmonella occurs, there can be prolonged survival of the pathogen. Peanut butter does not support pathogen growth because of its low water activity and does not require refrigeration.
Peanut Butter processing **Nut processing** ***Small producer***	The size of the manufacturer is used to determine this risk classification, small manufacturers are classified level P3.	– Peanut butter manufacturing (small or retail premise) – Other nut butters and pastes – Nut processing/ packing	**P3** Microbial	
Poultry processing	Slaughtering and dressing birds (including poultry and game birds) and/or preparing and processing, boning, chilling, freezing or packaging (including canning) the whole or selected parts of bird carcasses.	– Poultry abattoir operation – Frozen poultry manufacturing – Game bird (e.g. pheasant, quail) slaughtering – Poultry meat processing & packing	**P1** Microbial	Substantial evidence of failure in the community – residual contamination *Salmonella* and *Campylobacter.*

Processor/ Manufacturer	Mainly engaged in the physical or chemical transformation of food, food ingredients, substances, or components into new products. Can be sold via wholesaler, direct to business or direct to the public. Can include minimal or widespread distribution.			
Food type	**Description**	**Example foods**	**Risk/ hazard**	**Comment**
Prepared foods ***Not ready to eat food processing***	**Not ready-to-eat products (NRTE**) are identified as "raw" although some products may have received partial heat treatment and can contain the presence of pathogens that could cause foodborne illness. Not-ready-to-eat meals require frozen or refrigerated storage and require the consumer to cook thoroughly for safe consumption.	– Frozen food entrees (pizzas, pies, TV dinners, etc.) – Marinated, stuffed and/or breaded fish or meat	**P2** Microbial, chemical, physical	The foods are described as requiring frozen or refrigerated storage and not intended to be consumed without cooking.
Prepared foods ***Ready to eat food processing***	The food is normally consumed in the same state as that in which it is sold (i.e. without further cooking or preparation). This is a generic category, if ready to eat food products are classified specifically in the table, that risk profile should be used. Refrigerated high risk foods and non-refrigerated medium risk foods included.	– Sandwich/salad manufacturing – Wet noodles/tofu – Fresh cut fruit and vegetable processing – Pesto – Non-dairy dip/dressing processing – Non-dairy beverages e.g. almond milk (unpasteurised) – Food for catering purposes – Manufactured meats – Salami	**P1** Microbial	Demonstrated uncontrolled hazard *Salmonella* in manufactured salads. Reheating is generally not regarded as a preparation step. Many ready to eat foods require refrigeration. For fruit and vegetable processing *Listeria* and *Salmonella* uncontrolled or control steps are potentially unreliable.
Salt & other low risk ingredients/ additives processor	Manufactures or down-packs ingredients.	– Salt production/ packing – Sugar packing – Food acids (liquid/ powder) – Colours – Calcium chloride – Preservatives – Artificial sweeteners	**P3** Physical	The inherit nature of these products does not support the growth of pathogens. Physical contamination needs to be considered.
Seafood processing	Includes killing, dismembering, filleting or cutting into portions, gill or gutting, or skinning of seafood; and the brining of seafood; and the packing, treating, washing, freezing, refrigeration or storing of seafood.	– Uncooked fish product – Whole fish – Fish fillets – Reformed fish cakes	**P2** Microbial	Fish fillet and deboning operations do not contribute significantly to microbial food safety
Seafood processing ***Ready to eat and shelf stable***	Includes smoking, cooking and collecting caviar. It does not include sushi processing (see sushi below) and mollusc processing**.**	– Caviar – Seafood salad products – Smoked cooked fish – Smoked salmon – Fish sauce – Canned fish – Pickled Shellfish	**P2** Microbial	Chilled or frozen, requires no further cooking prior to consumption. Shelf stable stored at ambient.

Processor/ Manufacturer	Mainly engaged in the physical or chemical transformation of food, food ingredients, substances, or components into new products. Can be sold via wholesaler, direct to business or direct to the public. Can include minimal or widespread distribution.			
Food type	**Description**	**Example foods**	**Risk/ hazard**	**Comment**
Seafood processing **Mollusc processing**	**Bivalve molluscs** intended for human consumption	– Cockles – Clams – Mussels – Oysters – Pipis – Scallops	**P1** Microbial	Considerable debate regarding cross contamination regarding marine *Vibrios.* Refer to PP Std 4.2.1 for hazard controls.
Snack chips processing	**Potato, Corn and Other Crisp Manufacturing**. Making potato crisps, corn chips and other crisps.	– Corn chip – Crisp – Potato crisp – Taco, tortilla or tostada shell	**P3** Microbial	Frying and low water activity mitigate against microbial hazards being present or being able to grow.
Spices and dried herbs processing	Manufacturers of dehydrated culinary herbs and spices.	– Dried Herbs and spices – Repacking of herbs and spices – Tea and coffee repacking – Coffee bean roasting – Seeds	**P2** Microbial	Low water activity but may contain heavy microbial load.
Spices and dried herbs processing ***Small producer***	Small manufacturers of dehydrated culinary herbs and spices are classified level 3	– Dried Herbs and spices – Repacking of herbs and spices – Tea and coffee repacking – Coffee bean roasting – Seeds	**P3** Microbial and physical	The size of the manufacturer is used to determine the risk classification. The production of salt has low microbial risk, but physical contamination must be considered.
Sprout processing	A **sprout producer** means a business, enterprise or activity that involves any or all of the following – a) receipt or storage of seed; b) decontamination of seed or seed sprouts; c) soaking of seed; d) germination or growth of seed; e) harvest of seed sprouts; f) washing, drying or packing of seed sprouts; g) chilling or storage of seed sprouts; or h) transport of seed sprouts. Usually sold as ready to eat, refrigerated storage.	– Alfalfa – Fenugreek – Mung bean – Pea sprouts	**P1** Microbial	High risk. Sprout seeds may be contaminated with pathogens at low levels but the sprouting process (at ambient temperature in water) will support their growth to high levels. Critical control actions include: using certified seed, pre-screening seeds before germination, process verification through pathogen and testing; using potable water during germination and harvest; and storing finished product in refrigerated conditions.
Sushi processing	**Sushi** is rice, acidified with vinegar, and usually combined with other ingredients such as raw fish.	– Nigiri – Gunkan – Norimaki – Temaki – Temakizushi – Oshizushi – Inari	**P1** Microbial	Controls - limitation on storage time, storage and display temperature, appropriate cooling and storage of rice to minimise *Bacillus cereus* and acidification to prevent other pathogen growth. P1 based on widespread consumption.

Processor/ Manufacturer	Mainly engaged in the physical or chemical transformation of food, food ingredients, substances, or components into new products. Can be sold via wholesaler, direct to business or direct to the public. Can include minimal or widespread distribution.			
Food type	**Description**	**Example foods**	**Risk/ hazard**	**Comment**
Vegetables in oil processing **Vegetable fermentation**	The use of **oil, brine, water and vinegar** to preserve vegetables. Acidified, submerged in oil etc., ambient or refrigerated storage. Fermentation of vegetables is included here as the fermentation process drops the pH.	– Chopped garlic – Garlic cloves – Sun-dried tomatoes – Chilli – Ginger – Eggplant – Capsicum – Mushrooms – Olives – Kimchi – Sauerkraut – Marinades containing garlic or other vegetables if pH or water activity unknown/not hot filled	**P1** Microbial	The Food Standards Code Std 2.3.1 specifies this class of product must not have a pH greater than 4.6. Fruit & vegetables are considered to be the same in this Standard. Possible acidifying agents include vinegar, acetic acid, citric acid, and lemon juice. Increased risk of spore former toxin production i.e. *Clostridium botulinum.*

Food Transporters

Food Transporter	Pre-retail distribution activities (particularly importation, wholesaling, wholesale storage and multipurpose wholesalers who distribute not only to retailers but also to restaurant owners or consumers). Transport activities are also included.			
Food type	**Description**	**Example foods**	**Risk/ Hazard**	**Comment**
Bulk flour storage distributor	**Bulk flour storage** means wholesale distribution, transport and storage of flour in large consignments.	– Bulk flour	**P3** Microbial	Low water activity, packaging minimises recontamination; storage unlikely to affect risk.
Bulk milk collection distributor	**Dairy transport business** means a business, enterprise or activity involving the collection and transport of milk from the dairy primary production business to the processing business or the transport of bulk milk or dairy products between dairy processors.	– Bulk milk	**P2** Microbial	Pasteurisation occurs later
Dairy produce distributor	Mainly engaged in wholesaling dairy produce, ice cream and other frozen dairy desserts. Does not include distributors of soft cheese (see High risk food P2).	– Butter – Cheese but not soft cheese. – Cream – Yoghurt – Frozen dairy dessert – Ice cream – Milk	**P3** Microbial	Pasteurisation is effective; packaging provides safety against recontamination.
Dry goods and beverages distributor	**Dry goods** are wholesale products that are generally solid and dry that does not require refrigeration or freezing to maintain.	– Bottled water – Canned food – Cereal food – Condiment – Confectionery – Cooking oil or fat – Cordial – Honey – Margarine – Nuts, potato crisps	**P4** Microbial	Product unlikely to be contaminated and does not support growth. Distribution does not affect risk.
Frozen food distributor	Food preserved by **freezing** and packaged for wholesale distribution. Medium risk foods, large volumes.	– Frozen fruit – Frozen vegetables – Frozen fish/seafood – Frozen ready meals	**P3** Microbial	Cook-freeze reliably controls pathogens in food
Fruit and vegetables distributor	Consists of businesses mainly engaged in **wholesaling fresh fruit or vegetables.**	– Fruit, fresh – Vegetable, fresh	**P3** Microbial and chemical	Uncut fruit and vegetables unlikely to become undetectably contaminated with microorganisms or chemicals.
Perishable ready to eat, packaged, medium risk food distributor	**Medium risk foods** are those that may contain harmful natural toxin or chemicals introduced at steps earlier in the food supply chain.	– Salami – Vegetables stored in oil – Peanut butter – Shell eggs – Milk-based confectionary – Hard frozen ice-cream	**P3** Microbial	Distribution does not affect risk.

Food Transporter	Pre-retail distribution activities (particularly importation, wholesaling, wholesale storage and multipurpose wholesalers who distribute not only to retailers but also to restaurant owners or consumers). Transport activities are also included.			
Food type	**Description**	**Example foods**	**Risk/ Hazard**	**Comment**
Perishable, ready to eat, packaged, high risk food distributor	High risk food, ready-to-eat food, refrigerated storage, consumed cold, packaged product	– Fresh cut fruits and vegetables, ready to eat, packaged. – Smallgoods – Soft cheeses	**P2** Microbial	Prior processing in the supply chain of food is important for safety. The safety also relies on the integrity of the cold chain. Distributor has a responsibility to maintain refrigerated storage.
Processed meat distributor	Mainly engaged in wholesaling fresh or frozen meat, bacon, ham, poultry or rabbit meat. Does not include fermented meats.	– Bacon – Frozen meat – Ham – Meat – Poultry – Rabbit meat – Sausage	**P2** Microbial	Products may harbour pathogens; temperature control is important to minimise potential for growth.
Seafood distributor	Mainly engaged in wholesaling fresh or frozen fish or other seafood (except canned).	– Crustacean wholesaling (including processed, – Fish – Mollusc (including processed) – Seafood, fresh or frozen	**P2** Microbial	Products may harbour pathogens; temperature control is important to minimise potential for growth.

Guidelines for Setting and Adjusting Inspection Frequency

Food Business Risk Classification and the following inspection frequency model provide Environmental Health Practitioners with guidance to make an objective determination of food business inspection frequency.

A business in a higher risk classification that fails to comply with Food Safety Standards presents a greater likelihood of serious consequences or harm to the consumer. As a result businesses in higher classifications require higher levels of surveillance than those in a lower classification.

Inspection frequency may further vary depending on the results of the previous inspection of the food business. By taking account of both risk classification and compliance history, food business inspection can be prioritised as suggested here (FAO, 2008).

1. Top inspection priority – when business compliance is low and the risk classification is high.
2. Medium inspection priority – when business compliance is high and the risk classification is high. Also, when business compliance is low and the risk classification is low.
3. Low inspection priority – when business compliance is high and the risk classification is low.

Business compliance	**Risk classification**	**Inspection priority***
Low	High (P1, P2)	1
High	High (P1, P2)	2
Low	Low (P3)	2
High	Low (P3)	3

*Inspection priority: 1 = top priority; 2 = medium priority; 3 = low priority.

The following matrix is based upon these principles.

Once the Environmental Health Practitioner has established the risk classification, the business should be inspected within the applicable frequency range for that risk. However, the frequency of inspection may be reduced or increased depending on whether or not compliance is satisfactory during the inspection.

Classification	**Frequencies (every x months)**		
	Starting point	Maximum	Minimum
P1	6	3	12
P2	12	6	18
P3	18	12	24

P4 classification food businesses are low risk. They require an inspection to confirm risk classification and may require a subsequent inspection upon notification of change in activity or complaint.

P4	Initial inspection to confirm risk level	Re-inspect on complaint, recall or risk change only

New business/operator or no history

The initial frequency of inspection should be that of the starting point for the risk classification. Results of two inspections should be taken into consideration to form an objective judgement before the inspection frequency of a new food business is adjusted.

Existing business/operator

If there is a documented compliance history available, this should be taken into consideration after one inspection and frequency adjusted accordingly. The initial inspection using this system can take into account previous inspection timeframes but must not be longer than the minimum for the appropriate risk. It may not need to commence at the starting point.

General guidance

The level of confidence in the business should be considered when determining the frequency of inspection. The question of confidence is meant to elicit a judgement from the Environmental Health Practitioner on the likelihood of satisfactory compliance in the future.

Several factors will influence the Environmental Health Practitioner's judgement including:

(a) the "track record" of the business, its willingness to act on previous advice and enforcement and the complaint history of the business

(b) the attitude of the present management towards hygiene and food safety

(c) the technical knowledge within or available to the business on hygiene and food safety matters

(d) the types of non-compliances - those with no direct impact on food safety would be considered to present less risk than those impacting directly on the safety of the food.

A food business may incur additional inspections to the starting point of inspection frequency if the Environmental Health Practitioner has a low level of confidence in the business. Conversely, inspections may be less frequent if there is a high level of confidence, although inspections should not occur less frequently than shown under the heading 'Minimum' of the matrix.

High Confidence – good record of compliance. A business with good food hygiene performance and is well understood by the workforce.

Moderate Confidence – satisfactory record of compliance with few non-compliances that do not have a direct impact on food safety.

Little Confidence – varying record of compliance. Poor appreciation of hazards and control measures.

No Confidence – poor track record of compliance. Little or no technical knowledge. Little or no appreciation of hazards or control.

Extra inspections may be prompted by the need to address outstanding non-compliances, reports of food related illness of other food safety related complaints.

References

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Restaurants & takeaway – RTE food – no raw prep	11
Catering – Off-site activity	10
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Processor/Manufacturer	
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For more information

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