Ministry for Primary Industries
Manatū Ahu Matua

Food Notice

New Zealand Food Safety Template for the Production, Storage and Sale of Cheese

16 May 2018

Issued under the Food Act 2014

New Zealand Government

TITLE

Food Notice: New Zealand Food Safety Template for the Production, Storage and Sale of Cheese

COMMENCEMENT

This Food Notice comes into force on 16 May 2018

ISSUING AUTHORITY

This Food Notice is issued under sections 39 and 405 of the Food Act 2014.

Dated at Wellington, 16 May 2018

[signed and dated]

Paul Dansted
Director Food Regulation
Regulation & Assurance
Ministry for Primary Industries
(acting under delegated authority of the Director-General)

Contact for further information
Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI)
Regulation & Assurance Branch
Food and Beverage
PO Box 2526
Wellington 6140

Email: foodact.2014@mpi.govt.nz

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Introduction

This introduction is not part of the Food Notice, but is intended to indicate its general effect.

Purpose

The purpose of this Notice is for the chief executive (CE) of the Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI) to issue an official template to enable persons who make and/or sell cheese in New Zealand and/or Australia, to develop and operate under a food control plan (FCP).

Background

The purpose of the Food Act 2014 (the Act) is to achieve the safety and suitability of food for sale, maintain and improve confidence in New Zealand's food safety regime and provide for risk-based measures that minimise and manage risks to public health.

Cheesemakers must operate under a registered FCP or registered risk management programme (RMP). Cheesemongers who have the option of operating under a registered national programme, can choose to operate under an FCP.

The Act allows for the CE of MPI to issue template FCPs for different types of food sectors or food businesses. By this Notice, the CE issues the Food Safety Template for Cheesemakers (the Template).

The Template is designed to ensure that cheese produced in accordance with the template is safe and suitable. The Template is a plan for cheesemakers and cheesemongers to identify, control, manage, eliminate or minimise food safety hazards or other relevant factors so as to ensure that cheese is safe and suitable. The Template covers the following situations cheesemaking and/or cheesemongering operations:

- cheesemakers that make cheese for sale in New Zealand and/or Australia;
- cheesemongers that buy and store cheese to sell in New Zealand and/or Australia.

A cheesemaker or cheesemonger only needs to register the parts of the Template that are relevant to their business. The Template is made up of a number of modular components to make it easy for the cheesemaker or cheesemonger to select the components that are relevant to their particular business. However, if a person opts to register an FCP based on the Template, the cheesemaker or cheesemonger cannot amend the template or add additional material to the Template.

All farm dairy operators, and some cheesemakers or cheesemongers (e.g. who milk their own animals or when the cheese will be exported other than to Australia), need to operate under a registered risk management programme (RMP) under the Animal Products Act 1999.

These persons are:

- farmers that sell their milk to cheesemakers;
- farmers that mostly supply their milk to a dairy co-operative with a small amount supplied to cheesemakers making raw milk cheese for sale that is not covered by the co-operatives RMP;
- cheesemakers that milk their own animals
- cheesemakers that buy milk and make cheese for export (other than to Australia);
- cheesemongers that buy, store and sell cheese for export (other than to Australia).

A cheesemaker who milks their own animals and makes cheese for sale in New Zealand (and Australia) must operate under an RMP for the milk production side, but may then choose whether to conduct their cheesemaking operation under a registered RMP or under a registered FCP.

Registration of the FCP based on a template

As set out in section 52 of the Act, food businesses' FCPs that are based on a template must be registered with the Territorial Authority (TA) where the business is based. If the FCP applies to more than one place of business, all within the one TA district, then the same applies.

If the business has multiple sites across a number of TA districts then the operator of the business can choose either to register all places of food business with the CE of MPI or to register all places of food business that are within one TA district with the relevant TA.

Who should read this Food Notice?

The persons who should read this Notice are:

- cheesemakers or cheesemongers who would like to register an FCP based on this official template food control plan for cheesemakers.
- registration authorities that are responsible for registering FCPs that are based on based on this official template food control plan for cheesemakers.
- verifiers who will verify this official template food control plan for cheesemakers.

Why is this important?

All cheesemakers must operate under an FCP unless operating under or required to operate under an RMP. This Notice issues a template that can be used by cheesemakers, or cheesemongers who choose to operate under an FCP, as the basis for registration under the Food Act.

Document History

No.	Version Date	Section Changed	Change(s) Description
1.	16 May 2018	NA	New Notice

Part 1: Requirements

1.1 Application

(1) This Notice applies to the following businesses if they choose to register an FCP based on the template issued under this notice:

a) cheesemakers that make cheese for sale in New Zealand and/or Australia;
b) cheesemongers that buy, store and sell cheese in New Zealand and/or Australia.

Guidance

- Cheesemakers that milk their own animals must register their milking and milk harvesting activities under an RMP. They can then choose to either include their cheesemaking activities under a registered RMP, or, if making cheese to be sold in New Zealand and/or Australia only under a registered FCP.

1.2 Definitions

(1) All terms used in this Notice that are defined in the Food Act 2014 (the Act) or Food Regulations 2015, but not defined in this Notice, have the same meaning as in that Act or Regulations.

1.3 Template

(1) The Food Safety Template for Cheesemakers outlined in Schedule 1 of this Notice is issued under this Notice by the Chief Executive of MPI.

Schedule 1 – Food Safety Template for Cheesemakers

1 Parts of the template that are issued under this Notice

(1) Introduction

(2) Setting up

(3) Cleaning and maintaining

(4) Making cheese

(5) Preparing cheese for sale

(6) Troubleshooting