



15 October 2013

To all SAGE Farmers Market Stall Holders

Food Safety requirements for all stall holders

The market has been notified that we are required to meet certain obligations under the NSW Food Act. These are mandatory obligations that effect ALL stall holders who sell food *of any kind in any form*. Even if your main business is *not* food, but you still sell *some* food, you will need to comply.

Stall holders selling shelf stable food, including fresh fruit & vegetables, preserves etc (basically anything that does not require temperature control) are subject to fewer requirements, but nonetheless have various obligations under the Act.

I have spoken to Mathew Ganderton, Food Surveillance Officer at the Eurobodalla Shire Council to confirm the minimum requirements that are common to ALL stall holders and I have summarised them below.

Mathew recently visited the market and spoke to some stall holders about their specific circumstances and products. In my experience to date, Mathew's attitude is open-minded and cooperative, but stall holders will have to accept that there are certain minimum requirements under the Act that will be enforced as time goes by.

While the market's responsibility is to make sure stall holders are informed and aware of the requirements, it is chiefly the stall holder's responsibility to comply with the Act and therefore, face any consequences of not adhering to the Act in the future. How stall holders choose to respond to these requirements is a matter of individual choice, but keep in mind non-compliance may bring consequences at some stage.

I recommend you read and familiarise yourself with the NSW Food Authority guidelines for stall holders at temporary events here:

http://www.foodauthority.nsw.gov.au/_Documents/industry_pdf/temp_events_guideline.pdf

The basic requirements for ALL stall holders are:

- business is registered with NSW Food Authority via their website (please provide your notification number to me also) **<http://www.foodnotify.nsw.gov.au/index.cfm?action=business>**
- marquee **with 3 walls and a floor**
 - the walls may be mesh and are preferred to solid walls, given the propensity for windy afternoons at Riverside Park
 - the floor may be either a tarpaulin (canvas is best) or interlocking rubber matting.

For stall holders selling food that requires temperature control (hot or cold):

- appoint a Food Safety Supervisor and notify Mathew Ganderton at Council of who the FSS is for your business. The FSS must undertake accredited training to obtain the certification. I believe this training is available through Moruya TAFE from time to time.

More information about Food Safety Supervisors is available on the NSW Food Authority's website here:

http://www.foodauthority.nsw.gov.au/_Documents/industry_pdf/fss_guidelines.pdf

Some stall holders may have special requirements for food safety. It is the stall holder's responsibility to ensure they comply with all requirements. If you have any questions on this issue, please contact Mathew Ganderton at Eurobodalla Shire Council on 4474 1058.

One final note on this issue: the SAGE Farmers Market is not without its critics. It is in all our interests that we collectively and individually address all issues that attract scrutiny and food safety is perhaps the biggest issue. The SFM Committee hopes that all stall holders will give due attention to the food safety legislation that affects their enterprise, so that our market will be beyond reproach on this matter.

“Our Shared Table” Fundraiser 22 October 2013

This will be held next Tuesday, so if you are going to contribute a dish to the “meal”, please let me know today, so we can finalise our arrangements for next week.

The idea is to promote shopping at farmers markets by inviting people to share a meal and inspire ideas for creating meals using the delicious food available. All while raising money to support Ugandan communities as they strive to improve their daily life.

We will be promoting the event during the week leading up to the market, so knowing what will be on offer would help enormously.

Thanks in advance to those who support this fundraising and promotional opportunity.

Regards,

Kate Raymond
Site Coordinator
on behalf of the
SAGE Farmers Market Committee

m: 0413 920 620
e: markets@sageproject.org.au