



What happens next?

1. NZFSA will receive submissions on the position paper until 28 April 2006. During that period, NZFSA will hold a series of public workshops around the country to explain and discuss issues raised in the paper. You are most welcome to attend any of these.
2. All written and oral submissions will then be analysed and NZFSA will prepare its final recommendations for Government. All points made at the workshops will be treated as oral submissions, so you don't have to write in to us if you can attend a workshop.
3. Drafting any changes to legislation to reflect Government's decisions is expected to commence in the later part of 2006.
4. Some work will begin early in 2006, such as development of codes of practice and templates, review of the Food Hygiene Regulations (as a transitional measure), work on compliance matters and the development of information.

Workshops

Workshops will be held in the following locations. To register to attend the workshops, please phone 0800 NZFSA1 (0800 693 721), or email info@nzfsa.govt.nz

Date	Day	City
20 Feb	Monday	Auckland
21 Feb	Tuesday	Hamilton
21 Feb	Tuesday	Tauranga
22 Feb	Wednesday	Palmerston North
22 Feb	Wednesday	Napier
23 Feb	Thursday	New Plymouth
24 Feb	Friday	Wellington
27 Feb	Monday	Christchurch
27 Feb	Monday	Dunedin
28 Feb	Tuesday	Invercargill
1 Mar	Wednesday	Nelson

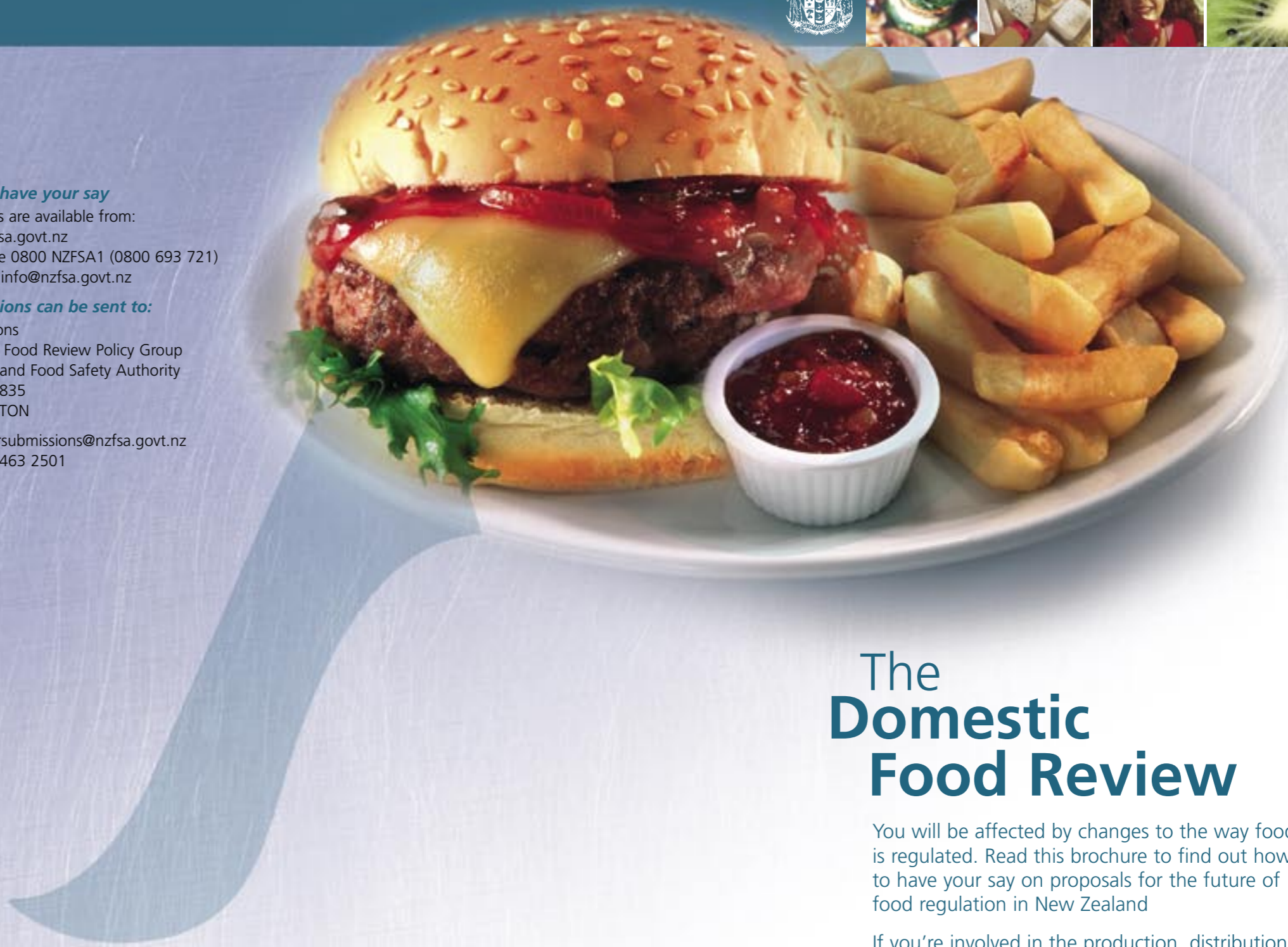
How to have your say

All papers are available from:
www.nzfsa.govt.nz
 freephone 0800 NZFSA1 (0800 693 721)
 email to: info@nzfsa.govt.nz

Submissions can be sent to:

Submissions
 Domestic Food Review Policy Group
 New Zealand Food Safety Authority
 PO Box 2835
 WELLINGTON

Email: dfesubmissions@nzfsa.govt.nz
 Fax: (04) 463 2501



The Domestic Food Review

You will be affected by changes to the way food is regulated. Read this brochure to find out how to have your say on proposals for the future of food regulation in New Zealand

If you're involved in the production, distribution or sale of food you need to read this



February 2006

Te Pou Oranga Kai O Aotearoa



Decisions made as a result of the Domestic Food Review have the potential to affect every food business in New Zealand – from large factories to the local dairy, through restaurants and takeaways, to fundraising events where food is sold. It covers all food sold in New Zealand – whether for profit or for charity.

Please read this brochure and consider whether you need to get a copy of the full position paper or its accompanying summary paper. There is no charge for either of these. Contact details are provided on the back page (see *How to have your say*).

The story so far...

The laws relating to the sale of food have not been reviewed in many years. Throughout New Zealand, there are a number of differing requirements, both those made locally by Councils, and national laws and regulations, including the Food Act 1981 and the Food Hygiene Regulations 1974. Thirty years on, it is time to review these to ensure high standards of food safety across New Zealand, and to remove inconsistencies and duplication.

The Review is also taking into account the needs of modern industry, consumers, and the government. It will review the roles of all groups involved in regulating food in New Zealand (Local Authorities, Public Health Units, NZFSA), and what tools (food safety management programmes) are used to control food safety and suitability (mainly labelling).

This means that the outcomes will affect you – whether you are currently registered with your local Council and have regular inspections, have a food safety programme or similar, or are currently in an exempt category (eg, school, rest home, daycare centre, some accommodation providers, some food storers, producers and transporters etc).

The latest development is...

NZFSA has been consulting on the Review for more than a year, and seven public discussion papers have been released. The feedback has been incorporated into a new document (a Position Paper) for a final round of public comment. This is your chance to have a say on the proposals and to influence the future direction of food safety regulation in New Zealand. We encourage you to read this brochure and get a copy of the Position Paper (or the shorter Summary Paper) if you want to make a submission.

The position paper covers all of the issues raised in the seven discussion papers, as well as several new ones. The summary paper provides general information on the proposals and some detail on key areas that will affect most businesses.

All seven discussion papers, and other documents released previously, are available from the NZFSA website, or can be sent to you, if you need even more information. You can also call NZFSA for more help or clarification, or to register for one of the public workshops being held (see the back page for contact details).

This brochure briefly describes what the proposed food regulatory system will look like for food businesses. It also tells you how you can:

- get the position paper, or the summary paper for more detailed information
- have your say
- register for the final round of consultation workshops, to be held in February 2006.

What does the position paper say?

The position paper covers a range of topics, each previously the subject of a discussion paper, plus a few extra things that were identified as important during the earlier consultation. It includes an updated glossary on the terms used in the food system and detail about the background and scope of, and the reasons for, the Review. It also explains the problems with current systems – mainly that many people find the current regime uneven and unfair across the country and across different food sectors.

How do these changes in the food area affect me?

Everybody selling food will apply some level of food safety management. Where your activity fits will be relative to the risk your products pose to the public; generally the smaller the risk, the less government involvement and the simpler the system. There are two main levels:

1. Risk-based management programmes called Food Control Plans will be used for most food businesses

There will be two types of Food Control Plan – off-the-peg template and custom-made. A small business, such as a café, is likely to simply fill in a template to show how they will manage food safety and suitability. Often, this will be as easy as ticking boxes, or recording the names of staff responsible for certain tasks etc. A more complex operation, such as some food manufacturers, will develop their own Plan to suit their particular activities, or modify an off-the-peg one. All businesses that can use an off-the-peg template will have the choice to modify it, or to develop their own Plan.

2. Food Handler Guidance

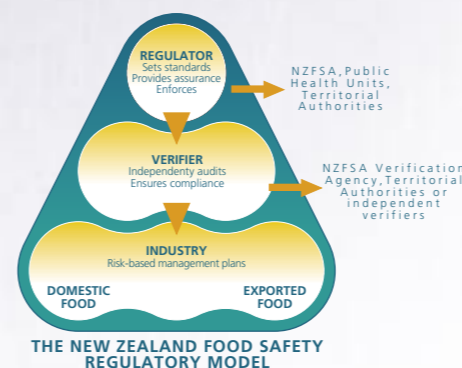
This will be used for very small, one-off events such as fundraisers. It will be educational information for people involved in a fundraiser stall where food is sold. As is currently the practice, it will be up to each local government how they get this information to the right people.

Who will I deal with?

NZFSA proposes to keep the current three levels of food regulation in New Zealand (see diagram), and the three government groups involved: central government, local government and public health units. The aim is to get consistency across the country and retain a local point of contact.

NZFSA and the Public Health Units will work more closely together on activities such as compliance, investigation, calibration, systems audit, and evaluating and approving Food Control Plans.

Territorial Authorities will be the first place new food businesses go. They will provide you with advice on the level of food management needed for your business; eg, whether a Food Control Plan is required, and if an off-the-peg template is available and appropriate for your business. Territorial Authorities will also undertake registrations and permitting, investigations, enforcement, and verification.



How do I get a Food Control Plan?

Off-the-peg Plans will be available free from a number of sources, including the NZFSA website and your Territorial Authority. You will be able to download an electronic copy, or ask for a paper copy. Once you have filled in the template, your Plan will be registered with your Territorial Authority. Once approved, you will follow your Plan to ensure that food safety and suitability outcomes are met. From time-to-time your Plan will be verified (checked to ensure it is being followed).

Each custom-made and altered off-the-peg Plan will be individually evaluated to make sure that the proposed food safety measures will be effective. It will then be verified on a regular basis.

Will my staff need food safety training?

There are a number of proposed options for training and educating food workers to suit the risks posed by the range of food activities, from manufacture through transport to serving food in a café or at a fundraiser. This is a crucial area to ensure safe and suitable food, and NZFSA is proposing:

- voluntary training schemes for many people involved in the preparation, processing, storage and handling of food are encouraged
- recognition of skills (which may require training) will be required for some individuals and businesses.

NZFSA especially welcomes your feedback on this area, as this is something that is new, and there are currently no national requirements.

Who will pay?

As is currently the case, the costs of implementing Food Control Plans and initiatives will be recovered in line with government's stated policies. Where practicable:

- the cost of services that are primarily for public good (eg, public food safety promotions) will be met by central Government
- the cost of services that more directly benefit industry collectively, or businesses individually, will be met by the relevant industry or persons.

NZFSA proposes to recover actual or estimated costs associated with Plans through industry levies, one-off fees or charges, or fees based on hourly rates or on a formula. NZFSA will consult on setting cost-recovery charges.

Territorial Authorities can set their own charges within the limits of reasonableness established by the Local Government Act 2002. Guidance on charging for specific and common services will be considered. Most Territorial Authorities currently charge for registrations, inspections and permits.

What if I fail to provide safe food?

To protect public health, and create a fair system, it is important that non-compliances with food safety requirements are dealt with consistently. It is proposed:

- to carry out awareness campaigns to help all those involved in food for sale to understand the proposed changes and how a non-compliance could impact them
- to develop guidelines for regulators who manage compliance and sanctions to ensure they are handled appropriately and consistently across New Zealand
- that a range of tools be available to regulators, including: incentive schemes, public notification and grading schemes, public apologies, a universal system of improvement notices, infringement notices, a narrowly-defined diversion provision, and prohibition notices.