Invercargill
CITY COUNCIL

August 1, 2014

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

ATTENTION: CHIEF REPORTERS
CIVIC REPORTERS

Environmental Health staff offer free help to meet food safety changes

The Council is urging local food premises to act now to get Food Control Plans in place before the Food Act 2014 is fully implemented on March 1, 2016.

The new legislation replaces the Food Hygiene Regulations and the Food Act 1981. While other provisions of the Food Act 2014 will be implemented immediately, the Council recommends that businesses start transitioning from working under the Food Hygiene Regulations and Food Act 1981 by getting their businesses to operate either under the Food Control Plan (high risk activities) or under one of the three levels of the National Programmes (lower risk activities) to get used to their application before it becomes mandatory.

Council Environmental Health Team Leader Muriel Rusike said the changes were welcome as they would close gaps and cover various aspects of food hygiene that were not covered in the Food Act 1981. The new risk-based approach to food safety would be applied nationwide.

“People will see a great improvement in areas that weren’t covered, making it safer, and defining how businesses can do better in the area of food hygiene,” she said.

The new Act throws the responsibility of food safety back on businesses. “Previously, most businesses would just let the inspectors check their premises annually but now they have to take ownership of how the business is run,” Ms Rusike said.

“The law gives food businesses the tools to manage food safety themselves, based on the level of risk associated with the types of food activities undertaken and in a way that suits their businesses. It also allows businesses to be more

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adaptable to changes in technology, oversees access requirements, and consumer demands."

The Council is offering food businesses free mentoring sessions and workshops to help them to introduce a Food Control Plan or National Programme. Operating with a Food Control Plan or National Programme will help the businesses to meet their food safety and suitability requirements.

•To find out more or for assistance with mentoring, contact the Environmental Health Team on (03) 211 1777 during business hours or email service@icc.govt.nz

ENDS

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