



Media release

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## **New law for businesses that sell food**

A new law for all businesses that sell food comes into effect this month.

“The Food Act 2014 is designed to modernise food safety in New Zealand. It will make it easier for businesses to make sure their food is safe,” says Scott Gallacher, Deputy Director-General Regulation and Assurance, at the Ministry for Primary Industries.

From 1 March 2016, anyone who starts a business that involves food must follow the new law. This includes businesses like restaurants, corner dairies and market stalls.

Existing businesses also need to make changes, although they have longer to do so.

The new law applies to a wide range of businesses, and includes any businesses which make, sell, grow or transport food commercially. It also includes organisations that serve food as part of their business, such as education providers or care homes. The Ministry for Primary Industries has developed a new online tool to explain how the new rules apply to different types of businesses and organisations – to use this tool visit [www.mpi.govt.nz/foodact](http://www.mpi.govt.nz/foodact) and select ‘Where do I fit?.’

“The new law regulates businesses according to risk. Businesses that are performing well under the new system will need less regular checks from inspectors,” says Selwyn District Council’s Environmental Services Manager Tim Harris.

The new rules in the Food Act will apply to existing food businesses at different times over a three year transition period.

One of the main changes in the new legislation is the introduction of Food Control Plans by businesses to guide how food is prepared, handled, served and storage and other hygiene requirements.

In Selwyn, although most businesses are not yet required to have adopted Food Control Plans, around 100 businesses have already registered their plans. The district received government funding to trial a training programme which was open to local businesses on how to develop and implement Food Control Plans.

“The Council has also developed an achievement and excellence award for businesses that have demonstrated good performance in developing and implementing food control plans and a number of businesses have received awards over the past year,” says Mr Harris.

The Council also offers a mentoring service to assist businesses to understand and meet the new requirements relating to Food Control Plans. Anyone who would like advice on the new legislation should visit [www.mpi.govt.nz/foodact](http://www.mpi.govt.nz/foodact) or phone Food and Health Standards (the Council's health contractor) on 03 365 1667.

Ends

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