

SAFE HANDLING OF RAFFLED MEAT TRAYS

A meat raffle has the same requirements for safety and cleanliness as any business selling food. The meat sold must be safe to eat, and properly stored and handled.

Storage and display of meat trays

Clubs or organisations that want to hold a meat tray raffle should make sure the meat they receive is from a licensed supplier and has been handled correctly.

Meat trays should:

- be at a temperature of 5°C or less when received,
- not contain excessive liquid as this may indicate temperature abuse or excessive storage time, and
- be tightly wrapped and have no tears or punctures.

The raffle organiser should refrigerate the meat tray as soon as they receive it.

If they want to promote the competition for a few hours either before or after the raffle or competition, they should consider:

- keeping the meat tray in a refrigerated display,
- taking a photo of the meat tray to put on display, or

- raffling a gift voucher to the local butcher.

Organisers should keep meat trays refrigerated for as long as possible prior to raffling to avoid any potential food safety issues.

Meat should not be allowed to sit in the 'temperature danger zone' (between 5°C and 60°C) for more than two hours, as this allows the growth of bacteria that can cause food poisoning.

Laws on labelling

Food sold at a fundraising event for community or charity causes, and not for personal gain, is exempt from some labelling requirements but must comply with requirements that could impact health and safety.

Raffled meat trays must be labelled in accordance with the Food Standards Code for packaged meat products. As with any product for sale, the labelling must include the:

- name and address of the premises where the meat was packed,

- trade name or the description of the meat or meat products contained in the package, and
- 'use-by' date or 'best before' date.

For any mixed ingredient food (e.g. rissoles and sausages), additional information is required:

- nutrition information panel
- ingredients list
- allergen information

Allergen information means an advisory statement that declares if certain allergens are present in the food. The common allergens that must be declared are: egg, milk, crustaceans, fish, tree nuts (almonds, Brazil nuts etc.), sesame seeds, soybeans, peanuts, gluten and lupin. Added sulphites in concentrations of 10 mg/kg or more must also be declared.

A simple way to comply is to leave on the label attached by the licensed supplier.

For more information see the FSANZ guide *Information requirements for foods exempt from bearing a label* available at www.foodstandards.gov.au/code/userguide/Pages/default.aspx

Some of this information will change if the food handler training legislation currently before parliament is passed.

More information

- visit the NSW Food Authority's website at www.foodauthority.nsw.gov.au/industry
- phone the helpline on 1300 552 406

About the NSW Food Authority: The NSW Food Authority is the government organisation that helps ensure NSW food is safe and correctly labelled. It works with consumers, industry and other government organisations to minimise food poisoning by providing information about and regulating the safe production, storage, transport, promotion and preparation of food.

Note: This information is a general summary and cannot cover all situations. Food businesses are required to comply with all of the provisions of the Food Standards Code and the *Food Act 2003* (NSW).



6 Avenue of the Americas, Newington NSW 2127
PO Box 6682, Silverwater NSW 1811
T 1300 552 406
contact@foodauthority.nsw.gov.au
ABN 47 080 404 416

More resources at foodauthority.nsw.gov.au



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