

'Follow
through'

Step 3

Track and improve

Purpose

This resource has been drafted with the aim of helping food businesses measure their food safety culture in more detail. It has been developed by Food Standards Australia New Zealand (FSANZ) and is for information only – it is not a validated tool for auditing or regulatory purposes.

This draft resource was updated in July 2019.

Feedback

FSANZ welcomes your feedback on this draft resource (email foodsafetyculture@foodstandards.gov.au):

- Did you use this resource? Was it helpful?
- Is there something that can be added or changed?
- Share your story.

We also encourage you to talk with your state/territory food regulator about food safety culture and using this resource.

Measuring the food safety culture in a business

The aim of measuring a business's food safety culture is to understand the way things are being done, to see if changes may be needed and to track progress of any changes made.

Because food safety culture is driven by people's behaviour, it can be affected by many factors including:

- the knowledge and abilities of the staff present at the time
- the activities being carried out at that time
- whether all staff commit to upholding and maintaining a behaviour-based food safety management system.

Any measurement will be a snapshot in time for a particular business. It's a good idea to measure the culture regularly to check how it performs over time. That way, you can continually improve it and also be aware if the business needs to adapt to situations such as new activities or staff.

Guidance for food businesses

- The attached *Business self-assessment guide – Staff questionnaire* is intended for the business owner or manager to gain anonymous feedback from staff. It will give a detailed picture of how staff view the business's food safety culture.
- The food safety culture matrix provided below can be used together with the questionnaire to help identify areas that may need to be strengthened.
- You are also encouraged to talk with your food regulator to see where they think improvements could be made.

The food safety culture maturity matrix

The food safety culture maturity matrix below contains information on five categories or stages of food safety culture maturity, from 'unintended or deliberate non-compliance' through to 'food safety champions'.

The matrix is based on nine general criteria (or 'capability areas') for measuring food safety culture:

1. Knowledge of food safety
2. Workplace culture
3. Management behaviour
4. Staff behaviour
5. Day-to-day operations
6. Communication
7. Use of technology and tools
8. Approach to problem solving
9. Engagement with regulators

These nine criteria are listed from top to bottom in the matrix. Reading across the rows from left to right shows how the culture can be strengthened for each of the criteria.

Food safety culture maturity matrix

Category	Unintended or deliberate non-compliance	Unprepared and uncoordinated	Compliant with room for improvement	Responsible and accountable	Food safety champions
Knowledge of food safety	Management and staff have little to no knowledge of food safety requirements and obligations. Reliance on experience in absence of knowledge.	Little understanding of food safety performance. Food safety is a hot issue after an incident.	Understanding of the importance of food safety systems where responsibilities are clearly defined and communicated.	Reoccurrence of food safety issues is prevented by use of knowledge and leading indicators.	Strategic direction is set across the complete organisation with defined accountabilities, responsibilities and food safety as one of the business enablers.
Workplace culture	Culture of controlling the workforce through blame and punishment.	Blame culture - belief that failures are caused by individuals.	Environment of command and control. Consequences are mostly managed when mistakes occur. Workforce rewards on positive and negative performance.	Responsibilities and accountabilities are discussed, communicated and assessed with patience. Processes are developed including positive and negative consequences. Prevention is managed through communication and assessment.	Culture of improvement. Ongoing business improvement and growth is enabled by food safety. FSP/MS review involves all levels of the workforce. Workforce has a lot of freedom due to trust – monitoring and verification prove the system is working.
Management behaviour	Management don't know about food safety and don't prioritise it. Focus is on profit and not food safety. Management must certify the accuracy of food safety information (no belief or trust).	Management know about food safety but aren't motivated to prioritise it. Management say they take food safety seriously but evidence suggests otherwise. Management need to train workforce after issues.	Management care about prioritising food safety but don't always know what to do. Management not seen to walk the talk. Focus on detail and believe company is doing well despite any non-conformances raised.	Management care and know about prioritising food safety. Management know the risks, place importance on procedures and culture of the organization over profits.	Management care, know and are actively involved in prioritising food safety. Management know that food safety is more important than profit. Management share knowledge and experience with others.
Staff behaviour	Staff members have no understanding of responsibility, the tasks or why they are important.	Varying levels of food safety knowledge among staff. Individual staff are responsible for data and associated information. It is widely accepted that issues will occur and then training will be deployed after the issue.	Workforce more involved. FSP well accepted. Procedures exist but staff have not read/used them. Few checks on use/knowledge of procedures.	Workforce involvement is promoted but rules are not clearly understood. Some procedures are written by the workforce. Some procedures are integrated into training.	FSS/QA advise management on strategy. Workforce keeps itself up to date. Procedures written by workforce. Procedures integrated in training.
Day-to-day operations	Business is stagnant – not open to change or improvement. Tasks are only completed when senior leaders demand. Motivation through fear of negative consequences. Poor housekeeping.	Monitoring is done but no one understands or analyses the information. Temporary housekeeping improves audits.	Monitoring is done with no follow-up. Good housekeeping and record keeping.	Separate FSS/QA advisor promoting improvement. Other meetings have quality and food safety discussions.	No threshold between management/workforce. Integrated, global information systems are in place in the organisation making it quick to adapt, improve, and use automated workflows.
Communication	Little to no internal communication. Lack of information sharing. No feedback.	Management demand data on non-conformances and failures. Top-down information flow.	Little top-down feedback.	Management seek and discuss issues. Bottom-up and top-down communication. Lots of management communication and walkabouts.	Enthusiastic communication between management and workforce. Food safety is integrated into other meetings.
Use of technology, tools and resources	No data collection, analysis or reports on the food safety performance of the business. Little to no adoption of technology and where this is deployed only a few individuals are competent in the use of these.	Little to no investment in systems to prevent food safety 'firefighting'. Tools are sourced or invented as issues arise and are rarely incorporated for future use. Has implemented record maintenance.	Strong, data-based understanding of true food safety performance. Investment and adoption of standard tools/technology and standardised training provided to individuals as needed. Issue prevention through use of data/information is unlikely.	Develop and assess tools for improving processes through knowledge and data. Data is collected in a precise and accurate manner to constantly improve processes. Food safety tools and infrastructure are in place and continuously improved for ease of use and cost to the organisation.	Preventive definition and continuous improvement of specific food safety behaviours, consequences and tools. Investment in tools and infrastructure is evaluated long-term and prioritised along with other business investments.
Approach to problem solving	Denial of the issue/s. Unstructured and unplanned response. No learnings from previous issues and therefore no improvement.	Responsibility is assigned as issues arise and motivation to resolve issues is through the use of negative consequences. There is an expectation of an immediate 100% perfect solution. Procedures only change after an incident/non-conformance with no improvement.	Issues are solved one at a time identifying the source/s of the issue to protect the business. Structured problem solving with a significant risk of overanalysing. Corrective actions put in place but not verified.	Problem solving is accepted as a continual process with an emphasis on studying the issue instead of controlling the issue. Management involved with non-conformance corrective actions and preventative actions. Improvements not a priority due to time and resources.	Workforce identify and fix problems. Horizon scanning and continuous improvement are used to identify risks. Risks inform the development and/or improvement of mitigation plans. Mitigation plans are integrated in the global business management system.
Engagement with regulators	No licence/accreditation and/or FSP/Management Statement (MS). Meets the minimum requirements. Only completes tasks because the regulator makes them.	Business has licence/accreditation and FSP/MS but no real understanding of food safety. Meets legal requirements.	Business has licence/accreditation and FSP/MS. Meets the minimum Standard. FSS/QA personnel engage with regulator/s and manage non-conformance corrective actions.	Business has licence/accreditation and FSP/MS. Meets the minimum Standard and promotes improvement within the business. FSS/QA personnel engage with regulator/s with Management involvement at audit outcome and non-conformance corrective actions.	Business has licence/accreditation and FSP/MS. Meets and exceeds the minimum Standard. All staff actively involved in food safety and exhibit a willingness to engage with the regulator/s.

Abbreviations: FSP – Food Safety Program, FSS - Food Safety Supervisor, QA – Quality Assurance, MS – Management Statement

Business self-assessment guide — Staff questionnaire

What is this guide?

This guide has been created to help owners or managers of businesses in industry and the food service sectors to seek detailed feedback from staff about the business's food safety culture.

It includes:

- a questionnaire for staff to complete anonymously, giving them a chance to provide honest feedback about the business's people, procedures and environment
- instructions for you to assess the responses.

How do I use it?

- The following pages contain a questionnaire for your staff to answer anonymously. To get an accurate picture of your staff's feedback, it's recommended that you aim to have at least half your workforce complete and return questionnaires.
- Once you've received the responses, you can score them using the instructions below.
- You can then use the food safety culture matrix provided to learn more about how well the business is tracking and identify ways to create, shape or improve the culture and overall food safety performance.
- The results can also be used as a benchmark for future surveys, as part of an ongoing cycle of reviewing and improving the culture.
- You could also discuss your findings with your food regulator, to seek their perspective on whether and how improvements could be made.

DRAFT DOCUMENT developed by FSANZ - Please send comments or suggested changes to: foodsafetyculture@foodstandards.gov.au

Tallying the scores

To work out how strong your business's food safety culture is, you can add up the scores for each question and compare the result to the food safety culture matrix scores, as described below.

Score **questions 1 – 22** for each selected answer as shown:

- a) 1 point
- b) 2 points
- c) 3 points
- d) 4 points
- e) 5 points

Score the **6 statements in the final table of the questionnaire** as shown:

Strongly disagree = 1 point

Disagree = 2 points

Agree = 3 points

Strongly agree = 4 points

Not applicable = 0 points

Food safety culture matrix scores

Scoring range	Food safety culture category/ stage
1 - 22	Unintended or deliberate non-compliance
23 - 50	Unprepared and uncoordinated
51 - 78	Compliant with room for improvement
79 - 106	Responsible and accountable
107 - 134	Food safety champions

Identifying the category/stage and opportunities to improve

Once you've seen which category/ stage your employees believe the business fits into, you can use the details in the matrix to learn more about where and how you could make improvements.

Staff questionnaire

Please answer the following questions about food safety in your workplace.

Knowledge of food safety

Q1. Who is responsible for food safety in the business?

- a) The owner
- b) The manager
- c) The QA (quality assurance) manager or food safety supervisor
- d) Staff that have contact with the food products
- e) All staff within the business

Q2. How well does the business meet requirements and obligations for food safety?

- a) The business doesn't have a licence (or other accreditation) or a food safety plan/ program that I know of
- b) The business has a licence (or other accreditation), but doesn't have a food safety plan/ program
- c) The business has a licence (or other accreditation) as well as a food safety plan/ program and the food safety supervisor/QA staff are responsible for food safety
- d) The business has a licence (or other accreditation) and a food safety plan/ program and the food safety supervisor/QA staff along with management are responsible for food safety
- e) The business has a licence (or other accreditation) and a food safety plan/ program and all staff are responsible for food safety

Q3. What is in the business's food safety program, Management Statement or other food safety plan? (*select all that apply*)

- a) The business doesn't have a food safety document
- b) It has a detailed description of the business's food-related activities
- c) It shows how the business meets the requirements of the Food Standards Code
- d) It shows how the business complies with their obligations under the state's/territory's Acts and regulations
- e) It identifies hazards and controls, monitoring activities, corrective actions and reviews

Q4. Who knows where the food safety program or equivalent document is?

- a) I don't know who would know this
- b) The owner/manager
- c) The QA manager/food safety supervisor
- d) The senior staffers
- e) It's in a central location where all staff can find it

Workplace culture

Q5. How would you describe the culture in your workplace?

- a) They control everything around here and there's lots of blame and punishment

- b) It's a blame culture — management believes that individuals are to blame when something goes wrong and staff are punished for it
- c) This place is run like the military — command and control with punishments and rewards
- d) People's responsibilities and what they are accountable for are patiently discussed, communicated and assessed
- e) The focus is on monitoring and checking that things are going well, aiming to continually make things better — the workforce has a lot of freedom and trust

Management behaviour

Q6. When the owner/manager/boss is present, how do they usually interact with staff?

- a) They don't interact with staff
- b) They only talk with staff that are higher up
- c) They like to tell people what to do
- d) They want to know what's happening in the workplace
- e) They understand what's happening in the workplace and mentor staff by sharing their knowledge and experience

Q7. What do you think of management's attitude to day-to-day business?

- a) They're not interested and don't care
- b) They know, but don't care
- c) They care, but don't always know
- d) They care and know
- e) They care, know and are actively involved

Staff behaviour

Q8. How often do you follow the business's food safety program/ rules?

- a) Rarely
- b) When the boss is around
- c) When it's not too busy
- d) Most of the time
- e) All of the time

Q9. How often do other staff follow the business's food safety program/ rules?

- a) Rarely
- b) When the boss is around
- c) When it's not too busy
- d) Most of the time
- e) All of the time

Q10. When and how is food safety-related training provided?

- a) When staff first start in a new job (during induction)
- b) When staff first start in a new job, and then more training is available if more training is needed
- c) When staff first start in a new job, and then also routinely

- d) Frequently, mostly through in-house training and with some training from outside expertise
- e) Ongoing, through external courses, an internal education program and also mentoring on the job

Q11. How involved are staff with procedures and the food safety program (or equivalent document)?

- a) Staff have no involvement
- b) Senior management are responsible for these procedures and staff have no involvement
- c) The program is well accepted and procedures exist but staff have not read or used them
- d) Staff are encouraged to be involved and write some of the procedures, and some of these procedures are included in training
- e) Staff write the procedures and these are included in training

Day-to-day operations

Q12. What is the main focus of the business?

- a) Profit and not food safety
- b) Mostly profit with little understanding of how food safety influences it
- c) The focus is on detail and management believes the company is doing well even if food safety problems come up during audits or assessments
- d) Understanding food safety risks, and the importance of procedures and the organisation's culture over profits
- e) Food safety and the business's reputation is more important than profit

Q13. Which option best describes food safety monitoring in your workplace?

- a) Management is stuck in their ways and not open to change — no monitoring is done
- b) Production and systems are monitored but nothing is done with the information
- c) Production and systems are monitored but with very little follow up
- d) Food safety supervisor/QA staff collect and use monitoring data to promote improvement of food safety matters
- e) Staff are actively involved in collecting monitoring data across the whole business, and this is used by the food safety supervisor/QA staff to advise management on food safety matters

Q14. How would you rate the business's hygiene practices and record keeping?

- a) Poor
- b) A clean up is only done just before audits
- c) Generally good hygiene practices and record keeping
- d) The food safety supervisor/QA staff make sure hygiene practices and record keeping are good
- e) The food safety supervisor/QA staff as well as the whole-business information systems in place make sure the hygiene practices and record keeping are good

Communication

Q15. How is food safety promoted at your workplace?

- a) It's not promoted – they just expect us to do our jobs
- b) We have a noticeboard where information is shared
- c) Information including posters on hygiene and safety information, and work instructions are displayed around the workplace
- d) It's something we discuss at staff meetings
- e) We have a meeting every week that focuses on food safety matters

Q16. What sort of communication about food safety do you have in the workplace?

- a) Little or no communication and no way to give feedback
- b) Management communicate to staff, but staff can't communicate back (one-way information flow)
- c) Management and staff communicate with each other, but there's little feedback from management about staff's suggestions and practices
- d) Management and staff communicate with each other, and management are present in the workplace for staff to talk with
- e) Enthusiastic communication between management and staff, especially about food safety

Use of technology and tools

Q17. Does your workplace use technology (systems and IT equipment) to help with food safety?

- a) No, we don't collect data or report on food safety
- b) Technology is usually used or brought in when something goes wrong
- c) We have some systems in place but not many people know how to use them
- d) The business has invested in systems and technology tools and the knowledge and data that's collected is used to improve the business
- e) Systems and technology are routinely used to prevent food safety problems and to continually make improvements, as a long-term strategy

Approach to problem solving

Q18. How often do food safety problems happen in the food business?

- a) Regularly
- b) Sometimes
- c) More than once a month
- d) Rarely – less than once a year
- e) Never

Q19. When a food-related problem happens, what do you usually do?

- a) Ignore it and hope it will go away
- b) Tell the boss who will decide what to do
- c) Try to work out where the problem is myself and come up with a solution

- d) Inform QA or food safety staff and work with them to identify where the problem is and how it can be fixed
- e) Use the food safety systems in place to identify the problem and consult with QA/food safety staff on the solution

Q20. How would you describe the business's response to a food-related problem?

- a) Unstructured and unplanned – we just hope for the best
- b) Unprepared and uncoordinated – responsibility is handed out as problems come up and it's expected there will be an immediate 100% perfect solution
- c) Structured problem solving, but problems are only tackled one at a time and over analysed
- d) Problem solving is accepted as part of a continual process – management are involved with actions that both fix the problem and prevent something like that happening again
- e) Staff are encouraged to continually look for food safety problems and fix them together with the food safety supervisor/QA staff, while keeping management informed of what's happening

Q21. What happens after there has been a food safety problem?

- a) There are no changes to the business's usual operations
- b) There are some changes to procedures in the workplace
- c) Corrective actions are put in place to fix that problem
- d) Management get involved and put actions in place to fix the problem as well as actions to prevent problems happening again
- e) The workforce scans for food safety issues, identifies areas that could cause problems and uses this information to come up with a business-wide plan to prevent problems from happening in the first place

Engagement with regulators

Q22. What usually happens when an auditor or environmental health officer visits the business?

- a) I'm told not to say anything to the auditor/environmental health officer
- b) the person they need to speak to is away and no one knows where the food safety program is
- c) they only speak to one person in the business (that is, the owner, manager, QA manager or food safety supervisor)
- d) they talk to staff and I'm prepared to answer any questions they have for me
- e) I look forward to the visit so we can show them what we do and possibly learn something from them

Q23. Rate each of the following statements about the business using the scale provided:

Clear leadership:				
The business has created a food safety vision, set clear expectations and inspired others to follow				
<input type="checkbox"/> Strongly disagree	<input type="checkbox"/> Disagree	<input type="checkbox"/> Agree	<input type="checkbox"/> Strongly agree	<input type="checkbox"/> Not applicable
Managers are visibly committed:				
The managers 'walk the talk' to show they believe food safety is important				
<input type="checkbox"/> Strongly disagree	<input type="checkbox"/> Disagree	<input type="checkbox"/> Agree	<input type="checkbox"/> Strongly agree	<input type="checkbox"/> Not applicable
Everyone can contribute:				
The business supports contributions about food safety from staff				
<input type="checkbox"/> Strongly disagree	<input type="checkbox"/> Disagree	<input type="checkbox"/> Agree	<input type="checkbox"/> Strongly agree	<input type="checkbox"/> Not applicable
Everyone's accountable:				
Everyone understands that staff at all levels are accountable for the food safety performance expectations of their job				
<input type="checkbox"/> Strongly disagree	<input type="checkbox"/> Disagree	<input type="checkbox"/> Agree	<input type="checkbox"/> Strongly agree	<input type="checkbox"/> Not applicable
People do what they know (have been trained for):				
There is a good focus on the gap between what people <u>know</u> and what they <u>do</u> in the workplace				
<input type="checkbox"/> Strongly disagree	<input type="checkbox"/> Disagree	<input type="checkbox"/> Agree	<input type="checkbox"/> Strongly agree	<input type="checkbox"/> Not applicable
Continual improvement:				
Management and staff understand how the practices might be linked together or how they might influence each other and people's behaviours				
<input type="checkbox"/> Strongly disagree	<input type="checkbox"/> Disagree	<input type="checkbox"/> Agree	<input type="checkbox"/> Strongly agree	<input type="checkbox"/> Not applicable