What is food safety culture?
Culture is ‘the way we do things around here’

Culture
- Attitudes
- Habits
- Customs
- Values
- Ideas
- Traditions
- Behaviour
Food safety culture

How everyone (owners, managers and team members) thinks and acts in their daily job to make sure the food they make or serve is safe.

More than training, programs and processes
→ behaviour

It’s what happens when no-one’s watching (good or bad!)
Taking pride in food being safe every time

A great product is a safe product

The top priority is making sure food is safe

Food safety is not a cost – it’s an investment
Why is it important?

Food safety is everyone’s responsibility

Avoid illness and other costs of mistakes

A trustworthy product & brand

Safe behaviour makes safe food
Safe food, every time

Food safety is #1

- Strong leadership
- Committed managers
- Everyone contributes
- Everyone’s accountable
- Continual improvement
- Knowing the risks and doing things right
What does a strong culture look like?

**Strong leaders**

- Openly commit to making safe food the top priority
- Schedule and lead regular meetings to openly report and discuss food safety
- Regularly review FS performance & budget, follow up on identified issues
- Encourage input from everyone, take suggestions seriously
- Reward people that show strong commitment to FS

**Committed managers**

- Dedicate time and effort
- Meet with team often (e.g. weekly) to talk about FS issues & challenges
- Encourage input from everyone, take suggestions seriously

**Everyone contributes**

- Whole organisation believes safe food is important and everyone plays a part
- Speak up if you see something done wrongly
- Suggest things that could improve food safety
- Ask questions if unsure about practices
What does a strong culture look like?

Everyone’s accountable

Everyone understands they are held responsible for ensuring food is safe

• Understand your role & responsibilities
• Understand that if things go wrong consumers can get ill or die and the business can be harmed

Knowing and doing things right

More than training – making sure people know the food safety risks and do the right thing, every time

• Assign time & money to FS training, refreshers and updates
• Put plans in place for everyone to be involved in FS observations, checking things are done correctly every time
• Reward people & teams who show a strong commitment to food safety

Continual improvement

Be proactive – monitor what goes on, look for ways to improve, prevent future problems

• Regularly review FS observations and overall performance
• Encourage suggestions for improvement
• Regularly & actively discuss these to find better ways to do things
A strong culture may take time to grow

Even small steps can make a big difference along the way
What role can regulators play?

- Be food safety coaches
- Encourage positive and proactive changes in behaviour
- Share stories and lessons learnt

*The more you educate, the less you regulate*
Where to start

1. **Know** your company’s starting point – Do a ‘health check’ of your food safety culture

2. **Do** something to make a difference – Shape and strengthen your food safety culture

3. **Follow through** for a long-lasting impact – Track and improve your food safety culture
Where to find help

FSANZ has developed some easy-to-use resources

visit the FSANZ Food Safety Hub  www.foodstandards.gov.au

e-mail FSANZ at  foodsafetyculture@foodstandards.gov.au
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