



Starting a food business - Making Cakes from Home

When starting a new business you can refer to the Trading Standards Business Companion website: <https://www.businesscompanion.info/en/quick-guides/food-and-drink> which gives free information on all aspects of starting a new business.

If you are regularly (several times a month) making homemade cakes as part of a business or for charity, you will need to meet the food safety, hygiene, labelling and traceability requirements set out in the Food Safety Act 1990 (as amended), Regulations (EC) No. 852/2004 (Hygiene of Foodstuffs) and 178/2002 (The General Food Law Regulation)

This involves the following:

1. Food Business Registration

Complete a food business registration form and return to the Local Authority where you make the cakes. There is no charge. If you live and run your business from home within Reading Borough Council area you will need to complete and submit the food registration form at www.reading.gov.uk/foodpremises

2. Food Hygiene Training

You should be able to demonstrate sound food hygiene knowledge particularly in the areas of cross contamination, cleaning and allergens. Food Hygiene training in your local area will be able to provide you with this information and it is good practice to have undertaken food hygiene training particularly if you are handling high risk products such as fresh cream.

Details of Council run local food hygiene training can be found at:

<http://www.reading.gov.uk/foodhygienecourse>

3. Food Safety Management System

Depending on the scale and the types of cakes you produce, you should have a food safety management system. The 'Safer Food Better Business' for retailers will be more than sufficient for your needs and it is available free of charge from the Food Standards Agency website <http://www.food.gov.uk/business-industry/sfbb>

This document takes you through the hazards of your food business such as use of raw egg, cloths and packaging and how to limit the contamination of your ready-to-eat product and ensuring correct temperature control of your ingredients and finished products where appropriate. You can download those parts relevant to your business.

4. Premises Structure

Consider the premises and the structure of your kitchen:

- You must have access to a flush lavatory which does not open directly into a food room.
- Walls, floors ceilings should be easy to clean and in good condition.

- Windows and doors must be well fitted, easy to clean and where necessary fitted with insect screens.
- There should be adequate hand washing facilities with hand soap, hot and cold water and a means of drying hands eg you can use the half sink on a one and a half sink unit.
- Adequate facilities to wash food equipment with a supply of hot and cold water. If food needs to be washed it is good practice to have a dishwasher to keep the cleaning of food equipment separate from food preparation.
- Surfaces (including equipment) must be maintained in a sound condition and easy to clean and disinfect. This means they must be made of materials that are non absorbent, smooth, and washable.
- Plants should be removed from the kitchen as they can attract insects which can contaminate the food.
- Fridges - in order to ensure there is sufficient space for food for domestic use and for use with the business, you should have a separate food fridge for commercial use. The temperature of the food in the fridge must be 8°C or below, ideally less than 5°C.
- Pets must be kept out of the kitchen during food preparation as their hair can carry bacteria and itself be a contaminant of food.
- Laundry - ideally the washing machine should not be in the kitchen. If the washing machine is in the kitchen any washing should be carried out when there is no food preparation.
- Food waste must be kept in lidded containers and removed from food rooms as quickly as possible. All waste must be disposed of hygienically and collected by the appropriate licensed waste carrier. Ideally, bin lids should be opened without touching, for example with a foot pedal, or lids can be removed during use.
- The water supply must be of potable (drinking water) quality.

5. Food Handlers

People working with food must maintain a high level of personal hygiene, washing hands regularly eg after handling raw eggs, wear suitable protective clothing and where necessary tell their employer if suffering from illness or symptoms of food poisoning.

Anyone suffering from diarrhoea, who has infected wounds, skin infection or sores or are suffering from or carrying a disease likely to be transmitted through food must not handle open food until they have been symptom free for a single period of 48 hours.

6. Labelling of Cakes

The fundamental rule of the labelling of foodstuffs is that consumers should not be misled. Where food is sold direct to the consumer on the premises where it is made (or from the producers own delivery van or market stall), the label should contain a descriptive name of the food, an indication of certain additives and, from December 2014, an indication if the food contains any of the 14 listed allergens. These are: Celery, Cereals containing gluten (wheat, barley, rye and oats), Crustaceans (i.e. lobster and crab), Eggs, Fish, Milk (including lactose), Mustard, Nuts (such as almonds, hazelnuts, walnuts, Brazil nuts, cashews, macadamia, pecans and pistachios), Peanuts, Sesame seeds, Soya and Soybeans, Sulphur dioxide and sulphites (eg used in dried fruits), Lupin and Molluscs. More information can be found at: <http://www.food.gov.uk/business-industry/allergy-guide>



7. Food additives

Be aware any additives used in food eg colours, preservatives, flavourings must meet European legal requirements, be on an approved list and meet conditions of use. Once approved they are given an E number and can be checked at:

<https://www.food.gov.uk/science/additives/enumberlist> where more information about them and their use can be found.

Certain food colours have been found to be associated with increased hyperactivity in children and it is recommended they are avoided. If used, a mandatory warning will need to be provided. More can be found at:

<https://www.food.gov.uk/science/additives/foodcolours>



If the product is going to be sold through a 3rd party retailer the requirements are more stringent: labelling must carry all of the mandatory information detailed in EU Regulation 1169/2011 plus a description or statutory name, a list of ingredients, an allergen declaration, an indication of percentage of certain characterizing ingredients, the net quantity, storage conditions, a minimum durability date, a business name and address etc. From 2016 a nutritional declaration will also be mandatory. If you advertise your food on the internet, this information will need to be included in your website description of the food. Further information regarding the EU regulations, including a guide to compliance, can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/food-information-regulations-fir-2013>

8. Edible and non-edible Cake Decorations: eg glitters and dust

Only permitted European Union (EU) additives or colours, see above, can be used as edible glitter or dust on cakes. Any items used in contact with cakes solely for decorative purposes must meet the requirements of food contact materials and be appropriately marked on their packaging. These items should be removed entirely from the food before consumption and appropriate advice given to those receiving the product.

More details can be found at: <http://www.food.gov.uk/news-updates/news/2014/6055/glitter-and-dust>

9. What will happen when the food business has been registered?

Details of the food business will be recorded on the Council's database. You will be contacted by one of the Environmental Health staff who will want to make an appointment to visit you when you are preparing food. When they visit they will want to see any completed records and also see that you are preparing food hygienically.

You will receive a Food Hygiene Rating for your business which will be available on the website [food.gov.uk/ratings](http://www.food.gov.uk/ratings) approximately 14 days after the visit.

After this we will contact you again if we receive a complaint about you or in a few years to see if you are still trading and how your operation has changed in any way.