



NEW SOUTH WALES

# MEDIA RELEASE

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Thursday, 26 March, 2009

## **Ian Macdonald**

Minister for Primary Industries, Minister for Energy,  
Minister for Mineral Resources, Minister for State Development

### **Tougher food training rules to better protect NSW consumers**

Tough new food safety training requirements will be in place by next year in an effort to help safeguard NSW consumers from food-borne illnesses, Minister for Primary Industries Ian Macdonald said today.

“Our aim is to have mandatory training requirements in place by 2010 to ensure each hospitality business in NSW has a designated food safety supervisor responsible for implementing safe food handling on the premises,” he said.

“This will involve individuals being trained by registered training organisations on how to properly store, prepare and handle food.”

Minister Macdonald said the new requirements would benefit both consumers and the State’s food industry members.

“About 36 per cent of food-borne illness outbreaks in NSW are the result of poor food handling in those restaurants and takeaways that don’t put food safety high on their agenda,” he said.

“These outbreaks cost the State \$150m a year in terms of lost productivity and place a significant burden on the health service.

“It’s a problem we need to address and I am pleased the food service sector has agreed that now is the time for action on this issue.”

The initiatives have been developed in collaboration with a working group consisting of Australian Hotels Association, Clubs NSW and Restaurants and Caterers NSW, with all three organisations providing support.

Mr Robert Goldman, CEO of Restaurant and Catering NSW/ACT says the initiative represents an important step forward for food service providers.

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“Restaurant and Catering believes this will be a vital initiative in making sure that safe food handling remains part of a food premise’s daily routine.

Basic food safety is not difficult, but getting it wrong can have devastating consequences, destroy reputations and put customer health at risk,” Mr Goldman said.

Minister Macdonald said the new requirements offered numerous benefits for industry employers, improving customer safety and the integrity of their businesses.

“Having a well trained and accredited food safety supervisor in each kitchen will give a huge boost to consumer confidence, which in turn can only benefit the food businesses themselves.

“For food service workers, a formal food handler qualification can only improve their employment prospects and advancement in the industry.”

The new requirements will be in place by early 2010.