



The Hon Katrina Hodgkinson MP

Minister for Primary Industries

MEDIA RELEASE

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FIFTY-FIVE DEGREES OF SEPARATION, HOW TO STAY IN THE ZONE THIS FOOD SAFETY WEEK

Knowing the “safe temperature zones” for keeping hot and cold food is the theme of this year’s Australian Food Safety Week which runs from 9-16 November, NSW Minister for Primary Industries Katrina Hodgkinson said today.

“Correct temperature control is one of the key factors in keeping food safe, a good rule of thumb is to remember the danger zone between 5°C and 60°C,” Ms Hodgkinson said.

“Food left out in temperatures either above 5°C or below 60°C can quickly grow food poisoning bacteria.

“This message is important for both consumers at home and for retailers.

“The NSW Liberals & Nationals Government is driving initiatives, through the NSW Food Authority, like Scores on Doors and the Food Safety Supervisor training requirement, to help reduce the risk of food poisoning and lift consumer confidence in the retail food sector.

“The NSW Food Authority and its local government partners are out in the market place every day working to improve food safety in NSW, but initiatives like Australian Food Safety Week are an important way of communicating messages to consumers about what they can do to help protect themselves.”

Australian Food Safety Week is an initiative of the Food Safety Information Council, and they recommend the following to avoid the temperature danger zone:

- Keep your fridge at or below 5°C. Use a fridge thermometer to check that the temperature stays around 4 to 5°C.
- Make sure you have enough fridge space as fridges won’t work properly when they are overloaded or when food is packed tightly because the cold air cannot circulate.
- If you are running out of room in your fridge, remove foods that are not potentially hazardous, such as alcoholic or soft drinks. The temperature of these foods is not critical and they can be kept cool in insulated containers with ice or cold packs.
- Freshly cooked food, not for immediate consumption, should have the temperature reduced as quickly as possible. Divide into small portions and place in containers in the fridge or freezer as soon as it stops steaming.
- Hot food needs to be kept and served at 60°C or hotter. If you are keeping it warm for someone put it in the oven at 60°C or at 100°C if that is as low as your oven will go. If you think the food will dry out, cool the plate or container until the steam stops rising, cover and put it into the fridge.

The NSW Food Authority has developed a range of online resource materials designed to educate and inform people about food safety, including a video targeting the food temperature danger zone go to www.foodauthority.nsw.gov.au