

# Winning Bids

A Programme for  
Food & Drink Manufacturers



## A FOOD & DRINK MANUFACTURERS' GUIDE

Making your business visible to supply chain opportunities  
in the current climate should be a strategic priority

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Primal Jerky,  
Birmingham



Sunshine Foods,  
Tipton, Dudley



Auntie's Sauces,  
Coventry



Chefiesta,  
Birmingham

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# INTRODUCTION



Submitting tenders to secure a contract to supply food and drink can be fruitful and profitable for many food and drink manufacturers. Raising healthy interest in your products can really help put the business on the map, and raise your visibility in the business community.

There's a lot you can do in advance to be ready for when you find such opportunities. Sometimes they just present themselves, so it's always good to have some of the work already done and the information to hand. Having some of the information that's always likely to be needed for bids already prepared means you can spend more time on a tender's specific requirements. It should also be of help when time is of the essence for responding to the tender.

This guide will provide you with the support and action you can take now to be ready for these opportunities as and when they arise. We're also providing you with the key information you need to ensure you meet the grade, make your business competitive and, ultimately, win more of these opportunities.

**Food and drink manufacturing is the UK's largest manufacturing sector, employing around 16,000 people across the West Midlands; from bakeries to meat processors and gin distillers. Food and drink manufacturers large and small have a multitude of opportunities to grow their business in the West Midlands, and at the Greater Birmingham and Solihull Local Enterprise Partnership we want to maximise these opportunities and support sector growth.**

**This guide is designed to help our local food and drink manufacturers to think about how to scale their business through winning new contracts. On behalf of the Greater Birmingham and Solihull Local Enterprise Partnership, I look forward to seeing how manufacturers use this information to reach their potential, making the most of opportunities both now and in the future.**



Tim Pile, Chair of Greater Birmingham and Solihull Local Enterprise Partnership

# HOW TO INCREASE SALES THROUGH A PROCESS OF TENDERING & BIDDING



**Business growth can come in many forms and public sector contracts can provide such an opportunity. Large and third sector organisations are increasingly using a bid or tender process to ensure due diligence and value and there is an increasing wish from Government to engage more food and drink businesses in public procurement. Many businesses do not consider this route until they see an opportunity. This often leaves them without the time for proper preparation to submit a winning application. Being fit to tender and able to assess your chances of success helps you to grow your business.**

Rachel Mallows MBE DL, The Mallows Company Limited

## BE SELECTIVE ABOUT WHICH TENDERS YOU GO FOR

Read the tender document three times before you decide. Firstly, have a quick read to ascertain if you meet the requirements that are listed as 'pass/fail'. If you meet these, read it a second time and highlight the key aspects of what you are required to do. Finally, read a third time to understand and ensure you can meet the demands and start to think about the impact on your business.

## INVEST RESOURCES AND TIME IN THE TENDERING PROCESS

When you start, building up several standard answers may be useful for future bids. Do not underestimate just how long it takes to write a successful bid.

## ASK FOR HELP

Get someone else in the business to check the assumptions about your ability to meet the tender requirements. It always helps to have any potential issues flagged early in your tender writing process. There may be issues and concerns, some of which may be insurmountable, but others will be possible to achieve with additional resources, staffing, etc. Getting someone else to read through the tender document from a different perspective will help enormously, both in winning bids but also making sure they are appropriate for sustainable business growth.

## COMMUNICATE EVERYTHING, BUT SUCCINCTLY

Do not assume there is any understanding of what you offer by the reader. When you are completing the tender, imagine that the commissioning organisation does not know what you do, your processes, your products or service, your accreditations, your customer base etc. Once you have the details, do not forget to ensure that you meet the word count. Check for jargon, and keep your language simple but not simplistic.



## ANSWER THE QUESTION

Get inside the mind and the spirit of the tender's author; what is it they need to know? Most people, when they start to write bids or tenders, do not answer the question. To give your bid a greater chance of success, ensure that you are being clear, concise, and appropriate but always answering the question that has been asked.

## READ ALL THE ASSOCIATED FAQs, UPDATES, EMAILS AND SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

You might need to post your submission rather than email (although more unlikely now) and there may be helpful information in the FAQ's that points to an aspect that you have not covered. Don't have your bid disqualified for not doing things in the right way.

## BLOW YOUR OWN TRUMPET

This is not the time to be humble, but back everything in your answers with evidence or examples. Cleverly worded intentions or achievements without proof or examples are unlikely to win over a commissioner. If you are a new supplier, you need to prove that you can do what you say you can if you're going to have a chance of being successful.

## GET YOUR DOCUMENTS IN PLACE

Most tenders require evidence of business viability (accounts, insurances, accreditation documents) as well as policies and references. Gathering these together can take time. Do not leave getting references until the last minute.

## READ, PROOF-READ AND CHECK YOUR WORD COUNT

The most obvious of tips, but the one that we often do not do. Get someone else to proof-read for you if you can. Don't make poor spelling and grammar a reason not to be successful.

## ASK FOR FEEDBACK

If at first you do not succeed, try again! It is always better when we have some feedback, and many commissioners are happy to do this. Learn and keep going.

## MYTH VS FACT

**“Contracts are always awarded to large companies, and ones the buyer knows.”**

### MYTH

Using procurement guidelines and balanced score cards enables contracts to be awarded to businesses that can meet the contract terms and deliver.

## USEFUL RESOURCES

[How to bid for government contracts as an SME effectively - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk)

[Sell goods or services to the public sector - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk)

[Contracts Finder - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk)

[Find high value contracts in the public sector - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk)

[TED home - TED Tenders Electronic Daily \(europa.eu\)](http://europa.eu)

[Supplier registration \(due-north.com\)](http://due-north.com)



# AN INTRODUCTION TO THE SUPPLY CHAIN FOR FOOD & DRINK MANUFACTURERS



“Successful and effective management of the entire supply chain is a key aspect of winning any new business. Providing potential customers with confidence that you can and will deliver their requirements can be the difference between winning or losing business.

Below you will see a range of top tips to help strengthen your position within a supply chain, ensuring you don't let your customers down and, just as importantly, your suppliers don't let you down.”

Andy Neilson FCIPS FCILT, Twisted Orange Ltd

1. Invest time and effort in making yourself stand out in your submission if you want results. Provide examples of successful delivery and resilience.

2. Align your supply chain and delivery performance with your customers goals and requirements.

3. Make sure your supply chain offers true agility – providing flexibility to fulfil all customer requirements.

4. Manage your suppliers – consider spend, risk and contingency.

5. Stress test your supply chains. Offer clients confidence in the contingencies within your supply chain partnerships and processes.

6. Understand your market and your options for supply.

7. Develop your customer relationships – make yourself invaluable!

8. Be innovative – offer solutions not problems.

9. Mitigate risk and be clear about how you will manage this.

10. Use your recent knowledge from Covid-19 impacts to show you can and have adapted.

TOP  
TIPS

MYTH  
VS  
FACT

“The best results are born out of positive, proactive and mutually beneficial relationships.”

FACT

“Any problem is unique.”

MYTH

No problem is unique; somebody, somewhere has solved it or has the answer, you just need to find them!

“Supply chain and procurement is NOT about cutting costs, it is about adding value.”

FACT

# FOOD TRENDS, NEW PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT AND PRODUCT COSTING



“When tendering for a contract to supply your food and drink products into large organisations or for major events, keeping ahead of the curve of new product development gives you a strong position in the supply chain. You need to also ensure you have a rigorous costing method to ensure you cover your product cost and any additional specific costs associated with supplying the product for this tender.

There are many online tools that provide a great starting point when looking at food trends. This supports and underpins the development and innovation of your products, before embarking upon developing recipes and a range of new products. Making sure your food products are relevant to the contract you are looking to secure is essential and of course to the end users of your products. For example if you are tendering to supply food to a music event you will understand that there may be limited seating space. Your food offering may need to be reduced to quick wins and food that can be eaten on the go.

The final part of this jigsaw is the pricing of your products. This is a crucial process NPD managers go through to ensure that the pricing covers all elements of production and supply of the product. A costing tool will support you with ensuring that all costs are covered and help you to see instantly the profit available for the product/s you are looking to supply.”

Zoe Plant, The Food WorksSW

## USE RELIABLE RESOURCES

Prior to submitting a tender to secure a contract, always use a reliable resource for your research into food trends. For example, The Food People, Kantar and Mintel are reliable and well-respected. You'll find links to them all below.

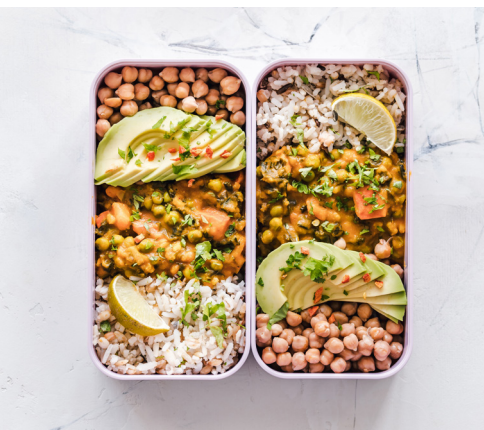
## ENSURE IT WORKS FOR YOUR PRODUCT

When researching food trends, make sure they work for your products – remember not every flavour profile will work for you.

## CONSIDER PROVENANCE

Is provenance an important part of the tender opportunity? This may be the perfect time to connect with other local manufacturers.

## TOP TIPS



## READ THE TENDER DOCUMENTS

Ensure you fully read the tender documents and guidance before completion, ensuring you have an accurate understanding of the end consumer of the product. For example if you are tendering for an event consider the demographic of the visitors that will be looking to purchase your products. If it is a sporting event for elite athletes, maybe you need to reconsider your more indulgent products.

## COMPETITOR RESEARCH

Look at what your competition are doing and who else may be tendering for the same contract. You may well complement their offering, but you certainly do not want to clash. Also, consider manufacturers that may have supplied such events previously. Do not be afraid to ask other producers for their insights based on previous attendance.

## USE THE FUNNEL METHOD

Use the funnel method to reduce the amount of time spent developing products in your kitchen. If you have costed your product before cooking, does it fit the brief? If the answer is no, do not waste time and ingredients cooking this recipe.

## MARKET RESEARCH

Ensure you try out your new products (and packaging) outside of family and friends. Try to choose people from the same demographic as the end consumer for the product you'd be supplying if you win the contract. Learn to welcome constructive criticism.

## COVER YOUR COSTS

When costing products to win contracts for the first time, have everything to hand to enable you to do this successfully (cost of ingredients, labour, distribution, utilities, rent, business rates etc). Ensure you cover all costs associated with supplying your product. Nothing should be missed off.

## COST BEFORE COOKING

Cost your products before cooking them. This will help you to reduce waste, time, and money. Make sure that the cost of your products is reasonable for the kind of tender opportunity. If you are tendering to supply products to a local authority, they may well be working with a very low price per head. This may mean cutting your ingredient costs.

## SHOP AROUND

Prior to tendering you must be confident that you have shopped around for the best price and quality of raw ingredients. You need to ensure you've got commitment from your supplier that they are able to supply in the quantities you would need. The organisation you are looking to secure a contract with will need to see that you are a strong link within the supply chain.

## CONSIDER THE ESSENTIALS

Consider the other essential things you procure to manufacture your products for example utilities, equipment, and packaging. Ensure your suppliers are reliable and will not let you down.

## USEFUL RESOURCES

<https://www.kantar.com/uki>  
<https://www.mintel.com/>  
<https://thefoodpeople.co.uk/>  
<https://www.food.gov.uk/>  
<https://www.foodworks-sw.co.uk/food-technical-support/>  
<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/d/online/food-and-drink-forum/>

**“NPD does not necessarily mean new products. It could be the reinvention of old recipes, tweaking and changing them to keep them relevant.”**

**FACT**

**MYTH  
VS  
FACT**



# FOOD HYGIENE STANDARDS & HACCP PLANNING TO MAKE YOUR SUPPLY CHAIN MORE EFFECTIVE



“ Good food hygiene standards and food safety management are essential to ensure the food you manufacture is consistently safe to eat (throughout its shelf life) while meeting all legal obligations. This will ensure the safety of your customers, protect the reputation of your company as well as its profits and employees.

**HACCP (Hazard Analysis Critical Control Points) is a legal requirement that benefits your business by effectively validating your product safety and providing evidence of legal due-diligence and managing your supply chain.**

**When submitting a tender to win a contract it is essential that you score highly to be in with a chance of winning. Use the top tips below to help ensure you meet the criteria.**”

Richard Wigley BSc, MIFST, RSCi, AIOSH, The Food & Drink Forum Ltd

## TOP TIPS

### What does the law require?

Food business operators must put in place, implement, and maintain a permanent procedure or procedures based on the principles of Hazard Analysis Critical Control Points (HACCP).

### Know your responsibilities

The regulations apply to food business operators at all stages of the food chain. However, primary responsibility lies with the business under whose name the food is marketed or the importer if that business is not established in the EU.

### What is a Hazard?

A hazard is anything that could cause harm. Hazards must be identified for all steps in the food activities. The hazards of particular concern when looking at a hazard analysis are: Physical, Chemical, Microbiological, Allergen.



### **HACCP Team**

The hazard analysis is best undertaken by a team. It is important that each area of the business, such as buying and engineering, has a representative in the team. This ensures all areas of the business are represented. There should be at least one member of the team with a formal qualification in HACCP. Each team member needs to understand how to use the HACCP principles to assess the process/es. This may involve further training and development.

### **Flow Chart**

Creating a flow chart of business processes can be a useful first step when setting up a Food Safety Management System.

### **CCP (Critical Control Points) Management**

Monitoring is the method by which you will confirm that critical limits at each CCP are being met. The selected monitoring method should be sensitive and made so that the corrective action can be taken quickly

### **Corrective Measures**

If monitoring shows that the critical limits are not being met, then corrective action should be taken immediately to ensure no one is at risk of harm. The corrective action should take into consideration the worst-case scenario, yet also be based on an accurate risk assessment.

### **HACCP Review and Maintenance**

Review the plan formally on a regular basis and when you add a new type of product or change the production process.

### **Record Keeping**

Efficient record keeping is essential to the implementation of an effective FSMS (Food Safety Management System). HACCP procedures should be documented for the benefit of staff, customers, and local authority environmental health enforcement officers.

### **Validation & Verification**

Validation and verification of processes should be carried out by someone other than the person responsible for monitoring a CCP, and, if necessary, by a qualified external person.

### **HACCP and Supply Chain**

Apply HACCP throughout the supply chain, to ensure when you apply for tender opportunities that you score highly on the key points that show you are a strong link within the chain.

## **MYTH VS FACT**

### **“Cooked food can’t cause food-borne illness.”**

#### **MYTH**

It is true that properly cooked food — that is, food that has been cooked to the minimum required temperature required to kill bacteria, viruses and other microorganisms that can cause food-borne illness — is unlikely to cause food poisoning, but there are plenty of ways that cooked food can become contaminated after cooking. This can happen if; food is not stored properly, if food is prepared on a contaminated surface or using contaminated equipment, if food handlers do not practice good personal hygiene, if food handlers are not trained to prevent cross-contamination.

## **USEFUL RESOURCE**

<https://myhaccp.food.gov.uk/help/guidance/introduction-myhaccp>

# HOW FOOD STANDARDS & ACCREDITATIONS ARE REQUIRED FOR SUCCESSFUL TENDERING OPPORTUNITIES

“Gaining certification to a recognised UK or international food standards can often be a prerequisite to supplying larger retailers, food service distributors and public sector tenders, for instance hospitals, schools & universities.

Without such standards, businesses may find themselves unable to apply for tenders that can hold them back from lucrative contracts. Using recognised standards can ‘open the door’ to new markets and sales and provide businesses with confidence in their production methods.”

Richard Wigley BSc, MIFST, RSCi, AIOSH, The Food & Drink Forum Ltd



TOP  
TIPS

## DECIDE WHICH CERTIFICATION TO ACHIEVE

Visit the BRC Global Standards, SALSA standard, or STS standard website. Obtain a copy of the Standard and study it. Interpretation Guidelines may also be useful.

## PROJECT MANAGEMENT APPROACH

A project management approach is required to pull all the requirements together e.g., GANNT Charts & Certification Standards Systems Audit documents.

## CARRY OUT A GAP ANALYSIS

Perform a self-assessment gap analysis to find out what is missing or inadequate. Assemble and train a team. Obtain consultancy if needed.

## VERIFY YOUR SITE'S ABILITY TO ACHIEVE THE CERTIFICATION

Carry out risk assessments. Establish necessary control points. Confirm site is capable of meeting BRC/SALSA/STS requirements. Undertake internal audits.

## START THE PROCESS WITH A SUITABLE CERTIFICATION BODY

Select and contact a suitable certification body. Carry out a pre-assessment. Implement any identified corrective actions.



Auntie's Sauces, Coventry



Chefiesta, Birmingham

## ARRANGING THE AUDIT AND FOLLOW UP

Arrange an audit visit. Make sure staff are available and preparations made. Once audit is conducted, Certification body presents audit report and determines whether the site can achieve certification. Carry out corrective action.

## MAINTAIN THE STANDARD AFTER THE AUDIT

After achieving the certification, continue to meet requirements. Arrange new audit before expiry.

## COMMUNICATION IS KEY

Communicate information concerning development, implementation and updating of the food safety management system throughout the organisation.

## IT IS A JOURNEY

Development, implementation, and certification of a food safety management system is a continuous journey, with the independent audit representing one element of the total assessment process.

## CREDIBILITY OF THE BUSINESS

Certification is valuable for a company's reputation and will help to showcase the business to buyers. It can be a valuable support to any bid, with the potential to improve the chances of winning a contract.

## USEFUL RESOURCES

BRC standard - <https://www.brcgs.com/>

SALSA standard - <https://www.salsafood.co.uk/about.php?p=3>

STS standard - <https://www.elas.uk.com/about>

**“The cost for achieving the certification is high and the process is complex.”**

**MYTH**

This assumption undermines the benefits of the food safety certification that will allow you to access new business opportunities.

**MYTH  
VS  
FACT**



Sunshine Foods, Tipton, Dudley



Primal Jerky, Birmingham

# FOOD LABELLING & NUTRITIONAL INFORMATION



“

**Designing food labels is a complex and often challenging task for manufacturers, with heavy penalties for non-compliance.**

**When looking to apply for a tender to supply food or drink items it is essential that your labels make the grade before you even consider applying. The organisations you are supplying will rely on you to ensure consumers of your product have all the vital information they need prior to consuming your food or drink products, with an emphasis on keeping them safe.**

”

Richard Wigley BSc, MIFST, RSCi, AIOSH, The Food & Drink Forum Ltd

## TOP TIPS

### **Know the Law**

In the UK, the regulation governing food labelling is The Food Information Regulations 2014 (FIR) SI 2014 No.1855. This allows enforcement of EU regulation 1169/2011 (FIC) which sets out the requirements for labelling, advertising, and presentation of foodstuffs.

### **Know your responsibilities**

The regulations apply to food business operators at all stages of the food chain. However, primary responsibility lies with the business under whose name the food is marketed or the importer if that business is not established in the EU.

### **Know what information is required**

The amount of information that must be provided to the final consumer on a food label, is dependent on the how the food will be packaged for sale. In general for pre-packed food (food which has been put into packaging before being offered for sale to the customer) all mandatory information will be required.

### **Presentation of Mandatory Information**

EU FIC requires food labels to be clear and understandable to assist consumers to make better informed choices. Certain criteria must be met relating to presentation of mandatory information including legibility, font size and field of vision.

### **Name your food correctly**

You must display a legal name (prescribed or reserved description) for your food product if it exists. Otherwise, you can use a customary name (one that consumers in parts of the UK generally accept as the name of the food without it needing further explanation e.g., Bakewell Tart), or a descriptive name e.g., Macaroni in a cheese sauce. The legal name is different to the marketing name and it must not mislead the consumer.

### Do I have to give nutritional information?

Nutrition labelling is mandatory for the majority of “pre-packed” food. Exemptions apply, including if you are a small business with under 10 employees and a turnover of less than £1.4 million and you supply either direct to consumers or to local retailers - local means within your county, your neighbouring county, or up to 30 miles from your county boundary.

### Allergen Labelling

Allergenic ingredients must be declared and highlighted within the ingredient declaration e.g. in bold. Watch out for hidden allergens within compound ingredients and processing aids. Use of precautionary allergen labelling e.g., “may contain nuts” should only be applied after a thorough risk assessment shows that there is a real risk to the consumer.

### ‘Use By’ or ‘Best Before’?

A use-by date on food is about food safety. It generally relates to chilled high –risk foods e.g. meat, dairy, ready meals. Foods can be eaten until the use-by date but not after. Best before dates are an indication of quality rather than safety. You can still eat food after its best before date, but its flavour and texture are most likely not as good as before the date. It generally relates to ambient stable foods e.g., preserves, dried foods, fruit, and veg.

### Claims

A ‘Health Claim’ is any statement about a relationship between food and health e.g. ‘Risk Reduction Claims’ on reducing a risk factor in the development of a disease. A ‘Nutrition Claim’ means any claim which states, suggests, or implies that a food has beneficial nutritional properties e.g., Low fat, High Fibre. Permitted Nutrition Claims and Authorised Health Claims can only be used if they are listed in the ‘EU Register of Nutrition and Health Claims’.

### Check before printing

Always have your label information checked by your local authority or a qualified professional prior to printing for use and following any changes.

**“Information on food and drink labels is not regulated.”**

MYTH

All the information on the labels is regulated. Do not fall into the trap of thinking that no one will notice. Consider the fact that there are heavy penalties for non-compliance.

**“I don’t need to declare allergen information”**

MYTH

Know the requirement and make sure you fully understand what food products come under the heading of allergy information.

MYTH  
VS  
FACT

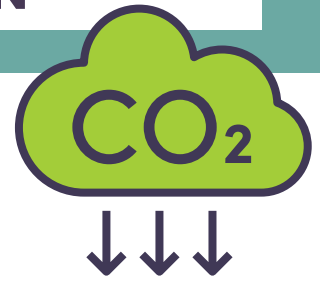
## USEFUL RESOURCES

<https://www.businesscompanion.info/>

<https://www.food.gov.uk/topic/labelling>



# REDUCING CARBON EMISSIONS TO STRENGTHEN YOUR LINK WITHIN A SUPPLY CHAIN



“There are many reasons to allocate management time in your business to reduce carbon emissions and show you are environmentally sustainable. These include increasing profits, following customer policy, and looking more desirable for new business opportunities through tenders. It has now become part of normal business activity, and will be even more so in the future. It will be part of complying with the increasing requirements to comply with Government departments. We can also expect increased taxes and levies for non-compliance.

The question is how to strategically manage this. For example where to start, where to look in the business and beyond, what actions to take and how to measure it. Use the Top Tips below to help you start on this exciting sustainable journey.”

Richard Wigley BSc, MIFST, RSCi, AIOSH, The Food & Drink Forum Ltd

## REVIEW YOUR USAGE

Take time to look at where your main energy/water usage is across production, who the providers are and how this energy is generated. This could help you make savings by swapping providers or locking down the cost of these utilities. You might want to consider putting together an energy management policy as a key document to support bids and tenders.

## GET SOME HELP

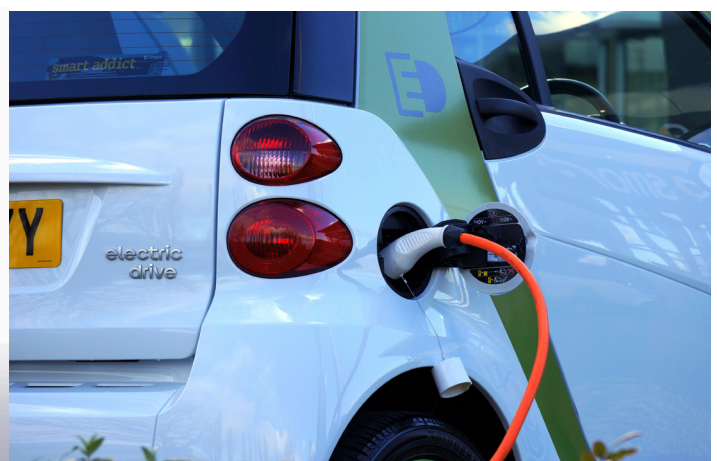
Engage with an organisation who (for no fee) will review energy usage & analyse energy usage data against time to see if there are areas of over-use for gas, electricity & water.

## INVOLVE YOUR TEAM

Ask employees if they have any ideas how to save energy usage and ensures you have buy-in across the organisation – consider passing on a percentage of the savings to staff that make reductions in their areas.

## INVEST

Invest in new machinery/vehicles with higher efficiency ratings/lower running costs. Consider electric vehicles and look for grants to support this cost.



## DON'T FORGET WATER

Analyse waste streams – why this is produced and where it goes. Look into schemes for rainwater capture and recycling. Install water tap restrictors if possible.

## SHOUT ABOUT YOUR CREDENTIALS

Promote the efficient use of water in your production environment and think of how you can evidence this when applying for tenders. Do you promote and use tap water as opposed to bottled water that may have negative environmental impacts for use?

## THINK ABOUT YOUR FOOD WASTE

How do you minimise food waste and how can you evidence this? Consider putting a food waste minimisation plan in place prior to submitting tender documents.

## EFFLUENCE

Look at effluent discharges and put simple non-bi-passable traps and interceptors in place.

## REDUCE YOUR PACKAGING

Show how you reduce packaging waste within production. If at an event do you ensure your packaging is recyclable and if so, how do you ensure it gets recycled following the event? Can you provide confidence that you use a reliable food/packaging waste service?

## CHAMPION THESE IMPROVEMENTS

Create an internal focus group to champion environment improvements in the business and look at ways of involving all staff in the journey.

## USEFUL RESOURCES

[A Plan for Public Procurement \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)

[Balanced scorecard for public food procurement \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)

MYTH  
VS  
FACT

**“Aluminium can be recycled continuously, as in forever.”**

FACT





# HOW AWARENESS OF YOUR EMPLOYEE RIGHTS & EMPLOYER RESPONSIBILITIES CAN ENSURE YOU PLAY A CONSISTENT PART WITHIN A SUPPLY CHAIN



“

**It may seem sensible that the relationship between a food or drink manufacturer and its staff is key to ensuring commercial success for the organisation. Sometimes we underestimate the impact this can truly have on our production capability. Stakeholders, including prospective customers, are on the lookout for responsible and ethical suppliers. They'll get peace of mind that if you are doing the right thing, so are they.**

**People/staff focused manufacturing environments result in your production staff being happier, more motivated, and more productive, while feeling 100% involved in the business through taking more pride in the products they are processing for your customers. Understanding the guidance around employee rights may seem intimidating to some business leaders, however going that one step further and becoming an Ethical Employer can help you secure those bigger leads and tender opportunities.**

**For an organisation to take its place in the modern supply chain it must demonstrate real and practical examples of where its ethical policies have been embedded in its everyday business activities.**

”

Leah Binney, TTK Confectionery Ltd

## TOP TIPS

1. Going one step further than basic employee rights and into employee wellbeing increases positivity which has a direct impact on your productivity. Better productivity gives you the option to facilitate more customers, knowing you have the capability to manufacture to a high standard.
2. Employees that feel respected and cared for by their peers can help to strengthen your position within a supply chain through their investment in the products and the work that they are doing for you. This will be evident in the quality of your products which gives your business better representation on the shelves.
3. Understanding employee rights means understanding their physical working environment. A well-presented and cared for environment means you can be audit ready at any given time. Visitors attending your production base will see the care that goes into every product and provide the opportunity for you to impress any potential customers/buyers, EHO's, technical managers and further their interest in your business and products.
4. There is a difference between what is legal and what is ethical in employee rights. Ethical standards are one step further than your standard legal requirements and, in our experience, most potential customers have preferred to see ethical standards in play. At a time where taking care of people is at the forefront of everyone's minds, going the extra step to be ethical has proved to be beneficial to everyone, but especially in winning large contracts to supply products.

5. Accreditations are a great way to be able to measure your standards and ensure you keep everything up to date. This provides consistency for your staff and your stakeholders in addition to providing a recognisable badge of honour for your business. They also help you keep everything evidenced.

6. Before introducing any new initiatives for your team, it might be useful to do a team survey to see what areas they consider to be important. This helps you to ensure you have their buy in and are focused on the areas that need improvement.

7. Consider setting up a committee or working group made up of representatives from across your organisation to feedback opinions and ideas from the wider workforce.

8. Get into the habit of collecting and keeping evidence when you introduce new initiatives.

9. Make a point of asking team members for feedback which you can then process, analyse, and use to make improvements. It will also show which changes have been successful.

10. When submitting bids, tenders or speaking with potential customers/stakeholders remember to showcase any work you have done to become a more responsible employer. Use the evidence and feedback you have collected to show that there are clear lines of communication between the senior team and your employees. Detail improvements in productivity as well evidence of improved employee job satisfaction, health, and wellbeing.

## ● USEFUL RESOURCES

Links to Employee rights and responsibilities - <https://croner.co.uk/resources/business-advice/hr-responsibilities-employer-and-employee-rights/>

Links for Staff wellbeing - <https://www.mind.org.uk/workplace/mental-health-at-work/taking-care-of-your-staff/> and <https://www.wellbeingcharter.org.uk/>

Introducing new initiatives in the workplace - <https://www.edgecumbe.co.uk/how-to-make-your-employee-survey-make-a-difference/> and <https://engageforsuccess.org/what-is-employee-engagement>

Employee Committee - <https://www.cipd.co.uk/knowledge/fundamentals/relations/communication/voice-factsheet#gref> and <https://engageforsuccess.org/>

Inclusive Workplace - <https://www.cipd.co.uk/knowledge/fundamentals/relations/diversity/building-inclusive-workplaces#gref>

Accreditations - <https://www.investorsinpeople.com/>

## MYTH VS FACT

**“It’s OK that they haven’t started yet, I don’t want to employ them, so I’ll just tell them the job is no longer available.”**

### MYTH

If you have made an offer of employment to somebody, you have formed a contract. An offer of employment should always be conditional based on references, but if you have made an unconditional offer or simply changed your mind about a potential new hire without good reason, it is not as easy as you might think to break off the process. This could be interpreted as breaking a contract, which could mean you are liable for damages such as loss of earnings if they have put in their notice at their current employment.

# CYBERSECURITY - KEEPING YOUR STAFF, YOUR SUPPLIERS & CUSTOMERS SAFE



“All organisations have a supply chain, with all links relying on the one above and below to play their part and not create problems. But be aware, someone or an organisation in this chain could be a hacker’s target. If they cannot penetrate their target’s defences, they will attack them by proxy through their associated suppliers. A well-known example of this includes the 40 million customer credit card details stolen from Target, an American supermarket. The hackers were able to do this through the weak security in their air conditioning supplier.

Any of your third-party service providers, from cleaning services to software engineering, with physical or virtual access to your systems can expose you to potential risk.

When entering a supply chain, its essential that you take care of your own security. This will not only keep you safe but also your suppliers and customers. Many small manufacturers think “it won’t happen to us”, but if the systems and security of large multi-nationals can be beaten, then so can yours. Strengthen your position by being aware and acting now.”

Rebecca Chapman, North East Business Resilience Centre (NEBRC)

## CYBER ESSENTIALS

Organisations that have Cyber essentials certifications have technically shored up their basic defences to defend against common untargeted attacks. If they have CE+ this means they have been independently tested and approved. Many supply chains now stipulate CE certification as a minimum requirement to enter that chain.



## THE SCOPE OF CYBER ESSENTIALS

Some organisations will only certify a part of their business, leaving the other parts non mandated. Remember to ask for the scope of the certification, and to check if the certification has elapsed (it must be renewed annually).



## SECURITY TESTING

Organisations can undertake security testing of their networks and websites, to see how easily they might be hacked. This type of testing is called vulnerability testing, and you can ask your supplier if they have ever undertaken such testing, what the results were, and when they plan to repeat it.

## POLICIES

Ask what cyber security policies other businesses have in place and how they identify and mitigate their cyber risks. How do they mitigate them? Do not accept the default answer of “I outsource that to my IT person”. Remember cyber security is not just about technology, it is a processes and people problem. The IT person can only do so much.

## SUPPLIERS

How do your suppliers keep up to date with the current cyber threats? Cyber threats and scams constantly change, and if they do not know about them, how can they defend against them? Ask if they get their updates from cyber resilience centres, or if their IT person uses the NCSCs CiSP (Cyber Information sharing partnership).

## MANDATE FRAUD

Mandate fraud is one of the greatest risks supply chains face. The bad guy sends a spoof email, pretending to be a supplier, requesting payments be made to a new bank account. You **MUST** stipulate to your suppliers what this threat is, and how you will manage it i.e., absolutely no monies are to be paid into bank accounts nominated in emails without verbal confirmation from you first.

## SHOUT ABOUT IT

When applying for tenders to supply, ensure you showcase the measures you have taken to show how strong you are in a supply chain situation. Be proud of your achievements and inspire other businesses to follow suit.

## WORK WITH YOUR SUPPLIERS

Ask the question of your suppliers to ensure breaches of their security system will not affect you negatively. Provide them with the necessary information to ensure you are kept safe and insist they take measures to protect the supply chain. It is not an unreasonable request.

## USEFUL RESOURCES

<https://www.nebrcentre.co.uk>

<https://www.nebrcentre.co.uk/meet-the-protect-network>

<https://www.ncsc.gov.uk/section/keep-up-to-date/cisp>

<https://www.ncsc.gov.uk>

<https://www.ncsc.gov.uk/cyberessentials/overview>

MYTH  
VS  
FACT

**“Our business is too small to be attacked!”**

MYTH

Do not fall into the trap of thinking your business is too small to be attacked or you have nothing of value worth attacking. The threat is real and so treat it like any other threat to your business. If you have difficulty quantifying your risk, remember you can contact your cyber resilience centre or police cyber protect network for free impartial advice.

# KNOW YOUR ALLERGENS





### **CELERY**

This includes celery stalks, leaves, seeds and the root celeriac. You can find celery in salt, salads, some meat products, soup and stock cubes.

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### **CEREALS**

Cereals containing gluten Wheat (such as spelt and Khorasan wheat/Kamut), rye, barley and oats is often found in foods containing flour, such as some types of baking powder, batter, breadcrumbs, bread, cakes, cous cous, meat products, pasta, pastry, sauces, soups and fried foods which are dusted with flour.

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### **CRUSTACEANS**

Crabs, lobster, prawns and scampi are crustaceans. Shrimp paste, often used in Thai and South-East Asian curries or salads, is an ingredient to look out for.

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### **EGGS**

Eggs are often found in cakes, some meat products, mayonnaise, mousses, pasta, quiche, sauces and pastries or foods brushed or glazed with egg.

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### **FISH**

You will find this in some fish sauces, pizzas, relishes, salad dressings, stock cubes and Worcestershire sauce.

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### **LUPIN**

Yes, lupin is a flower, but it's also found in flour! Lupin flour and seeds can be used in some types of bread, pastries and even in pasta.

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### **MILK**

Milk is a common ingredient in butter, cheese, cream, milk powders and yoghurt. It can also be found in foods brushed or glazed with milk, and in powdered soups and sauces.

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### **MOLLUSCS**

These include mussels, land snails, squid and whelks, but can also be commonly found in oyster sauce or as an ingredient in fish stews.

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### **MUSTARD**

Liquid mustard, mustard powder and mustard seeds fall into this category. This ingredient can also be found in bread, curries, marinades, meat products, salad dressings, sauces and soups.

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### **NUTS**

Not to be mistaken with peanuts, this ingredient refers to nuts which grow on trees like cashew nuts, almonds and hazelnuts. You can find in breads, biscuits, crackers, desserts, nut powders (often used in Asian curries), stir-fried dishes, ice cream, marzipan (almond paste), nut oils and sauces.

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### **PEANUTS**

Peanuts are actually a legume and grow underground, which is why it's sometimes called a groundnut. Peanuts are often used as an ingredient in biscuits, cakes, curries, desserts, sauces (such as satay sauce), as well as in groundnut oil and peanut flour.

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### **SESAME SEEDS**

These seeds can often be found in bread (sprinkled on hamburger buns for example), breadsticks, houmous, sesame oil and tahini. They are sometimes toasted and used in salads.

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### **SOYA**

Often found in bean curd, edamame beans, miso paste, textured soya protein, soya flour or tofu, soya is a staple ingredient in oriental food. It can also be found in dessert, ice cream, meat products, sauces and vegetarian products.

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### **SULPHUR DIOXIDE (SOMETIMES KNOWN AS SULPHITES)**

This is an ingredient often used in dried fruit such as raisins, dried apricots and prunes. You might also find it in meat products, soft drinks, vegetables as well as in wine and beer. If you have asthma, you have a higher risk of developing a reaction to sulphur dioxide.

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