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A good food hygiene rating from your  
local authority can help you keep your customers

## Food hygiene ratings:

Telling your customers how well you're doing

### The national food hygiene rating scheme is coming to your area soon

In 2010, the Food Standards Agency, in partnership with local authorities, plans to roll out a national food hygiene rating scheme for England, Wales and Northern Ireland. The scheme will provide consumers with at-a-glance information about hygiene standards in food businesses, to help them to make informed choices about where they buy and eat food.

**We want your business to get the best possible rating. A good food hygiene rating is good for your business.**

### Will your business be given a rating?

Restaurants, takeaways, cafés, sandwich shops, pubs, hotels, supermarkets and other retail food outlets, as well as any other business where consumers can eat or buy food, will be given a rating.

### How will your rating be calculated?

After your planned local authority food hygiene inspection, your business will be given a rating for the standards of hygiene found at that time. This will cover:

- How hygienically the food is handled – safe food preparation, cooking, re-heating, cooling and storage.
- The condition of the structure of your premises – cleanliness, layout, lighting, ventilation and other facilities.



### What should you be doing now?

- How you manage and document food safety using a system such as 'Safer food, better business' or 'Safe Catering'.

You'll be given one of six ratings – the top rating means that you've achieved a very good standard of compliance with the law. Any business, no matter how small, should be able to achieve the top rating.

The scheme will include safeguards to make sure that the rating you're given is fair.

### How will your customers know what your rating is?

Your rating will be published on a national website, so your customers can look it up. You're also encouraged to display the certificate or sticker, which you'll be given by your local authority, and which will show your rating, in a place that your customers can easily see it when they visit your premises. Our aim is that, in time, consumers will come to expect such certificates and stickers to be displayed.

### What are the benefits to you and your customers?

The scheme will be a good advertisement for those businesses that comply with food hygiene law. Good food hygiene means a good hygiene rating, and a good hygiene rating is good for business.

- When you receive your next routine food hygiene inspection, ask about your current rating or future rating under the national scheme. If you've any queries about the improvements you need to make to get a better rating, then the food safety officer should be able to give advice.
- Make sure that you and your staff continue to comply fully with all aspects of food hygiene law.

Poor food hygiene means a poor hygiene rating, and a poor hygiene rating is bad for your business. Fortunately, the Food Standards Agency has a range of tools that can help you manage food hygiene and keep your customers. Check these out at [food.gov.uk/goodbusiness](http://food.gov.uk/goodbusiness)

### Where can you find out more?

- Contact your local authority environmental health department. To find the contact details, you could use the Agency's online search tool at: [food.gov.uk/yourarea](http://food.gov.uk/yourarea)
- Check out the Agency's website for more information on the national food hygiene rating information scheme: [food.gov.uk/hygeneratings](http://food.gov.uk/hygeneratings)

