

# TECHNICAL GUIDANCE DOCUMENT

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Health & Safety in a Farm Retail Business



**NFU Mutual**  
Risk Management Services



# Health & Safety in a Farm Retail Business

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## Scope of this Document

This document has been produced by NFU Mutual Risk Management Services Ltd, in partnership with FARMA. It is intended to identify just some of the key risks which should be considered, and included within your documentation, to keep everyone safe and healthy on your premises

NFU Mutual Risk Management Services Ltd support FARMA, and their qualified Health and Safety consultants are happy to take any queries you may have on Health and Safety management issues. They can also outline the range of support services available to FARMA members at competitive rates. Please call Becky Collen on 078141 30920.

This document is prepared on the strict understanding that any business accepts, without limitation, that (a) it retains sole responsibility for compliance with all / any relevant health and safety legislation and / or regulations and / or guidance which is in force / has been provided at the date that this document was

produced and (b) the provision of this document by NFU Mutual RMS Ltd does not in any way amount to / evidence compliance of any such legislation and / or regulations and / or guidance.

A Farm Shop is a great opportunity to directly sell food and other produce to the general public. As well as a shop, many businesses may also offer a café, play areas and amenities for their clients to enjoy. As with any business though, there are key risks to the health and safety of; your staff, and any visitors / others who may be affected by your undertaking, and numerous legislative requirements to which you must adhere.

This guide aims to identify just some of the key risks which should be considered, and included within your documentation, to keep everyone healthy and safe on your premises. It focusses on typical areas which should be covered by the risk assessment process.

Whilst not covered in the guidance, adequate insurance cover, whether for employers liability, products and or public liability, should also be in place, where relevant.

## **Legal Requirements**

The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 require employers to put in place arrangements to control health and safety risks. As a minimum, a business must be able to demonstrate that it meets the legal requirements, including:

- A written health and safety policy (if five or more people are employed);
- An assessment of the risks to employees, and third parties from work activities (the significant findings must be recorded if five or more people are employed);
- Arrangements for the effective planning, organisation, control, monitoring and review of control measures;
- Access to competent health and safety advice;
- Instruction and training for employees on risks and control measures;
- Ensuring adequate supervision is in place; and
- Consulting with employees about risks and current control measures.

Although the Regulations place an emphasis on those employers with 5 or more employees keeping written documentation, it is not only good practice to keep documentation whatever the size of business but it is also the only way any business can prove that it is meeting its responsibilities. Therefore it is recommended that all employers keep records.

Other legal requirements, under associated regulations, may also be required, including:

- Fire Risk Assessment
- Asbestos Survey and Management Plan
- COSHH (Control of Substances Hazardous to Health) Assessment

## **Competent Advice**

The law also requires that organisations have competent advice. A competent person is someone with the necessary skills, knowledge and experience to manage health and safety. That advice can be in-house, for example a

competent employee, or it can be external, for example through a Health and Safety Consultancy such as NFU Mutual Risk Management Services. For many businesses that may mean a combination of the two with the employer managing health and safety on a day to day basis, delegating responsibilities to some key staff, and getting external competent advice for the initial set up and regular reviews.

## **Risk Assessments**

To enable suitable and sufficient risk assessments to be completed, consider what the real risks are, what you are already doing to control them, and what further controls could, or should, be introduced to reduce the risks even further. Detailed below are some the risk assessment entries that a typical farm retail business should include, together with ideas about existing, or additional controls. An example risk assessment template is also included as an appendix to this guide.

### **Car parks, Deliveries and Access Routes.**

- Consider access and egress from the public road, is there sufficient space at the entrance and is visibility in both directions adequate?
- Ensure visitors are well segregated from the working areas of the yard.
- Can a one way system be put into place?
- As far as possible, keep parked vehicles out of the flow of traffic and people.
- Consider staff car parking areas and delivery vehicles.
- Clear and adequate signage for both visitors and deliveries is important.
- Avoid the need for reversing vehicles.
- Ensure any operators of vehicles on site, particularly forklifts, have completed formal training.
- Provide a firm, level, well drained, non- slippery, and well lit parking area, with a safe route to and from the shop.
- Ensure you have a policy for gritting / salting pedestrian areas in cold weather, to reduce the risk of slips in icy conditions.

## **Buildings**

- Buildings to which staff and / or visitors have access should be fit for purpose, safe and structurally sound. Clear barriers and signage should be in place to highlight where access is not permitted.
- Ensure an asbestos survey and management plan is in place.
- Ensure a fire risk assessment has been done and any necessary action taken, including clear escape routes and fire action notices. See [www.gov.uk/workplace-fire-safety-your-responsibilities](http://www.gov.uk/workplace-fire-safety-your-responsibilities).
- Ensure all gas fuelled appliances and associated pipework are regularly checked by a competent Gas Safe Registered engineer.
- Clean ductwork within cooking Equipment regularly to prevent build-up of grease and fat which can act as a combustion source.



- All staff that use gas equipment should be trained in how to use it and in how to carry out visual checks for obvious faults.
- Introduce, and enforce, a clear no smoking policy.

### Access and Facilities

- Keep all pedestrian routes free from vehicle movements (where possible), well lit, and clear of slip / trip hazards such as trailing cables or uneven surfaces.
- Clear spillages as soon as possible.
- Keep signage available, and use where necessary, e.g to highlight 'No Entry' areas or where surfaces may be slippery.
- Ensure your staff wear sensible, non-slip footwear.
- Provide suitable toilets and hand washing facilities.
- Ensure a good supply of drinking water for staff, and a suitable rest area for them to take their breaks.

### Emergency Procedures

Plan for all emergencies, including fire, accident or illness. Thinking about what action should be taken, who should be contacted (and their contact numbers), how to direct the emergency services, and where to disconnect services, e.g gas or electricity in the event of a fire.

Document your procedures and test them to ensure they are suitably robust.

Emergency procedures should then be clearly communicated to staff, and copies displayed on site for reference at any time.

### Merchandise

All goods on offer on your premises should of course meet modern safety standards, and be fit for purpose / human consumption, but you also need to consider:

- Safe displays – ensuring no items could fall and cause injury, and that display stands are suitably strong and secured.
- Keep items which may be a risk to children out of their reach. This could include matches or knives.

### First Aid and Accident Reporting

Ensure there are sufficient first aid trained staff on the premises at all times whilst there are people at work. Well stocked first aid kits and an accident book should also be retained, record any incidents / near misses on site, whether to staff or third parties.

Be mindful of the reporting requirements for certain incidents (RIDDOR Regulations); and ensure you investigate all accidents, as evidence that any lessons have been learnt, to avoid a reoccurrence.

## Food safety

If you are involved with preparing and selling food, such as a café, then you will most certainly need to ensure that staff hold suitable food hygiene training, and a HACCP - Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points Assessment is in place and followed.

## Minimising Manual Handling Injuries

Tasks involving significant manual effort should be individually risk assessed; such as handling deliveries, to ensure the risks are reduced to an acceptable level. This could include:

- Reduce the risks by organising the layout of the work areas to avoid unnecessary stretching and/or lifting.
- Provide training in safe lifting techniques to relevant staff.
- When handling big loads use mechanical solutions (e.g. sack trucks or pallet trucks).
- Where a job may be a risk, look at having breaks or using job rotation to minimise the time each individual spends.
- Provide trolley ramps at changes in floor level;

## Third Parties

All safety related information should be shared with all relevant persons. In particular, any staff or contractors working on your premises should be given adequate information about any risks, e.g location of services, and what policies / procedures you expect them to follow, e.g speed limits.

Before inviting contractors to work on your site, you should also have evidence that they are competent to do so, e.g that they hold adequate liability insurance cover, and that they complete relevant risk assessments.

## Potential Violence

Whilst, hopefully, highly unlikely, make sure you consider the potential risk to staff from aggressive persons. For example, have a clear and safe cash handling policy, perhaps training staff in conflict handling, maybe install panic alarms, and ensure staff are aware that they should never put themselves at risk.

## Electrical Risks

Fixed wiring should be examined by a competent person every 3-5 years on average, and RCD protection, rated at 30Ma, is recommended for all socket outlets. PAT testing should also be undertaken on any portable electrical appliances, at intervals recommended by your contractor.

## **Machinery and Equipment**

All machinery / equipment on site should be maintained in a safe, working condition, and all operators suitably trained and instructed in its correct and safe use. Safety features, such as guards and emergency stop buttons, are particularly important, and should be regularly checked / tested, to ensure they remain in working order.

Be vigilant to the increased risks of having children or vulnerable persons on your site, and avoid accidents with equipment, for example, by removing any keys from the ignition of unoccupied vehicles, e.g forklifts.

## **Further Information**

The HSE website provides useful information on Health and Safety Law, and how to comply, together with case studies. [www.hse.gov.uk](http://www.hse.gov.uk). We are also happy to help provide basic information or advice; and can also outline the range of products / services available to support you in managing Health and Safety within your business. Please call Becky Collen on 078141 30920.



## Appendix – Example Risk Assessment Template

Source – HSE website - <http://www.hse.gov.uk/risk/index.htm>

**All employers must conduct a risk assessment. Employers with five or more employees have to record the significant findings of their risk assessment.**

We have started off the risk assessment for you by including a sample entry for a common hazard to illustrate what is expected (the sample entry is taken from an office-based business). Look at how this might apply to your business, continue by identifying the hazards that are the real priorities in your case and complete the table to suit. You can print and save this template so you can easily review and update the information as and when required. You may find our example risk assessments a useful guide ([www.hse.gov.uk/risk/casestudies/](http://www.hse.gov.uk/risk/casestudies/)). Simply choose the example closest to your business.

**Organisation name:**

<b>What are the hazards?</b>	<b>Who might be harmed and how?</b>	<b>What are you already doing?</b>	<b>Do you need to do anything else to manage this risk?</b>	<b>Action by whom?</b>	<b>Action by when?</b>	<b>Done</b>
<i>Slips and trips</i>	<i>Staff and visitors may be injured if they trip over objects or slip on spillages</i>	<i>We carry out general good housekeeping. All areas are well lit including stairs. There are no trailing leads or cables. Staff keep work areas clear, eg no boxes left in walkways, deliveries stored immediately, offices cleaned each evening</i>	<i>Better housekeeping is needed in staff kitchen, eg on spills</i>	<i>All staff, supervisor to monitor</i>	<i>01/10/2010</i>	<i>01/10/2010</i>

Employers with five or more employees must have a written health and safety policy and risk assessment.

It is important you discuss your assessment and proposed actions with staff or their representatives.

You should review your risk assessment if you think it might no longer be valid, eg following an accident in the workplace, or if there are any significant changes to the hazards in your workplace, such as new equipment or work activities.

For further information and to view our example risk assessments go to <http://www.hse.gov.uk/risk/casestudies/>

Combined risk assessment and policy template published by the Health and Safety Executive 11/11

