

June Forum

“Do you Always Know What You Eat?”

Presenter: Dr Chris Brendon, Academician, International Academy for Quality, on Food Industry Standards and Compliance. (www.iqs.com.au)

Abstract: Increased awareness is a vital factor in reducing the risk of food poisoning in Australia. With food growing and food processing industries continuously improving their approaches to food safety there is a need for greater emphasis and reliance on consumers and the food service sector to ensure that their hygiene practices and food handling standards are highly effective. Implementation of the HACCP code has produced significant improvements but is it enough?

The publication of ISO 22000 has gone even further and encapsulated the HACCP and Quality Management System in one single standard. The invent of the SQF and BRC global Standards for Food Safety is further indication that we still have some distance to go before we get our food safety right, if we can ever get it right. Numerous allergens ever present around us affecting many more people now than 30 years ago, in particular children and some elderly are becoming a nightmare for many food processing businesses. Global climate changes, food changes, healthy lifestyle foods all contribute to new challenges in ensuring that we eat healthy food and do not get food poisoning.

According to Food Safety Information Council there are estimated 5.4 million cases of food poisoning in Australia each year. Can these be prevented? The short answer is-Yes. This presentation is about what we eat, how safe is our food, where food contamination is most frequent and what management systems and quality assurance systems can we use to eliminate, prevent or reduce chances of food poisoning. When one considers that in Australia there are 20 million people eating three meals per day this converts into 60 million of 'eating opportunities' for food poisoning each day. How can we minimise or reduce the risk of contaminated food?

This presentation offers 'a food for thought' and a greater awareness of risk associated with food we consume. It further outlines key components of the international standards for food safety aimed at improving food safety practices.

Date and time: 6:00 for 6:30 pm start, Tuesday 24th June 2009

Location: AOQ Vic, level 2, AIM Building, 181 Fitzroy St, St Kilda.