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MEDIA RELEASE

FOOD FOR THOUGHT WITH COUNCIL'S LATEST CUSTOMER INITIATIVE

Coonamble Shire Council will invite food preparation businesses to take part in the Scores on Doors program to boost customer confidence.

The local food industry Council plays a vital role in the economy and the community. Consumers have every right to expect food premises to have the highest levels of compliance with hygiene and food safety standards.

This is where Scores on Doors comes in. It is a state-wide voluntary program, first piloted in 2010. It is founded on a risk-based priority system and encourages the on-site display of the results of a food business's most recent inspection for hygiene and food safety.

Mayor Tim Horan said, "Scores on Doors is part of a broad suite of measures to reduce foodborne illness in NSW. Scores on Doors provides a public face for the work that Council is already doing in food safety, and I am very pleased to see this important initiative rolling out."

Council officers already conduct food inspections to ensure compliance with hygiene and food safety requirements. Where necessary, officers undertake enforcement action.

Adding in this Scores on Doors program provides transparency around the inspections and is an incentive for businesses to maintain and increase their inspection results, thereby improving local food standards.

The program is focused on retail food service businesses that process and sell food that is ready-to-eat, intended for immediate consumption, and potentially hazardous if not handled correctly and under the right conditions.

These are the higher risk premises that have the greatest potential to cause foodborne illness if food is not handled correctly. These businesses include restaurants, pub bistros, hotels, cafes, and takeaway outlets.

The participation of individual food premises is voluntary. Each business will be issued a certificate based on the outcome of the inspection, which they can choose to display. Certificates are issued in good faith, intended as a general guide only.

Increasing transparency around food inspections is beneficial for consumers and businesses. Food businesses that do the right thing are rewarded and can, by displaying their high-score certificate, theoretically attract more customers.

The program offers incentives to food businesses to raise food safety standards that, in turn, lead to fewer consumer complaints and fewer compliance issues that need follow-up.

The program will also help provide the community with a high standard of value-for-money food products and services.

General Manager Paul Gallagher said, "Participation in the program is voluntary and does not require additional resources, as it is based around Council's existing food surveillance program."

“At a routine inspection, eligible food premises receive a hygiene and food safety rating, based on points allocated under the Scores on Doors guidelines.”

Paul Gallagher
GENERAL MANAGER