



SMALL FOOD PRODUCERS

The variety of artisan foods available in farmers markets continues to tickle a growing number of taste buds. Additionally the downturn in the economy has seen an increasing number of people turn to the kitchen hob as a potential opportunity to start-up a food business. To cope with the increasing number of enquiries the Food Safety Authority of Ireland (FSAI) have recently launched a guide to food law for artisan and small food producers who would like to start a food business.

The guide covers the legal requirements needed for operating a food business, including safety, traceability, training, hygiene, packaging and additives. It will allow new members of the food industry to be self-sufficient in setting up their food business in the correct way.

The guide is available on the authority's website.

Many small time farmers market producers often dream of hitting the "big time" by supplying into supermarkets and the good news is:-

For the fourth year a scheme which offers small food firms a supermarket footing has been launched by SuperValu and Enterprise Ireland

The programme has been designed to help small Irish food firms get their products onto supermarket shelves and has so far has helped participants achieve €12m in direct sales to SuperValu.

The Enterprise Ireland SuperValu Supplier Development Programme, which was developed by Enterprise Ireland in partnership with SuperValu and assisted by Bord Bia and Teagasc, aims to help small food-processing companies reach the levels of product quality, service and innovation required to get their product sold in the country's supermarkets.

The food industry is one of Ireland's largest indigenous sectors and is a key contributor to the Irish economy. Encouraging and supporting the creation of Irish food companies is a key priority for Enterprise Ireland.

The 2010 Enterprise Ireland SuperValu Supplier Development programme is a highly innovative scheme, which enables small start-up food companies to fully understand the workings of the retail sector and the best approach to take in order for them to secure a listing with a retailer such as SuperValu

The Enterprise Ireland SuperValu Supplier Development Programme is a six-month long programme consisting of a combination of workshops, which are delivered by both SuperValu and food industry experts and also one-to-one mentoring.

It is offered to companies that have the potential to meet Enterprise Ireland's criteria for high potential start-ups and also have the potential to offer SuperValu and its retail partners a product or service that adds value and difference for its customers.

This is a highly practical industry-led programme that has already opened doors for early-stage Irish food companies.

The companies participating in this year's scheme have a wide range of products from environmentally friendly straw fire logs from Strog's in Dublin and artisan, specialist, gluten free cakes, breads and sweet

treats from the Delicious Gluten Free Bakery in Cork.

Sixteen Irish food companies, including Sunshine Juice, Dunhill Cuisine, Kohinoor, and Fresh Cut, have so far participated in the scheme since it began in 2005.

Further details are available from Enterprise Ireland