

REQUEST FOR TENDERS

**For the provision of interactive workshops on Gluten-free
Living to the coeliac and gluten sensitive community in
Northern Ireland**

SafeFood

7 Eastgate Avenue,
Eastgate,
Little Island,
Co. Cork,
T45 RX01

1: Introduction

SafeFood was established in 1999 under the British-Irish Agreement Act (1999) and is one of the six North-South Implementation Bodies jointly managed by the British and Irish Governments. SafeFood's functions are carried out by the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) under the policy direction of the North-South Ministerial Council. An Advisory Board with members drawn from both jurisdictions, and an Advisory Committee, assist and advise the CEO in the discharge of these functions. SafeFood headquarters are located at 7 Eastgate Avenue, Eastgate, Little Island, Co. Cork, with an additional in the Irish Life Centre, Abbey Court, Lower Abbey Street, Dublin. For more information on SafeFood, please see our web site at www.SafeFood.net.

Among our many functions is the promotion of food safety issues across the entire food chain from producers and processors to retailers and the final consumer. This includes raising awareness of food hypersensitivity (food allergy, food intolerance and coeliac disease) and augmenting/enhancing current food allergen control capacity, as well as life skills for those who have a food hypersensitivity. This is critical for protecting their health and improving their quality of life.

2: Requirements

As part of its 2026 Business Plan, SafeFood will deliver five in-person (not online) workshops on *Gluten-free living* in association with the District and Borough Councils of Northern Ireland (Table 1). The primary audience for these workshops will be coeliacs and those with gluten sensitivity in Northern Ireland.

Table 1: 2026 Gluten-free living workshop programme

Location	Venue	Date
Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council	TBC	TBC
Ards and North Down Borough Council	TBC	TBC
Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council	TBC	TBC
Derry and Strabane District Council	TBC	TBC
Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council	TBC	TBC

NOTE: If the opportunity to provide further Gluten-free living workshops arises during the 2026 workshop programme, and once the final cost for the extra workshops does not exceed 50% of the total value of the contract for 2026, the successful tender applicant will deliver these within the calendar year 2026 and in the specified format. The dates for the workshops listed in Table 1, and any extra workshops, will be agreed with SafeFood.

SafeFood is seeking tender submissions from suitably qualified and experienced food safety trainers to deliver these *Gluten-free living* workshops. One successful tender application will be appointed to deliver the workshops for the calendar year 2026. Following a successful

evaluation of the 2026 workshop programme, Safefood may exercise the option to extend the contract to deliver a similar programme of workshops in 2027 and maybe again in 2028.

3: Workshop content

Each workshop will address issues around gluten-free living including, but not limited to:

- A live demonstration of gluten-free cooking
- Preparing the kitchen for a gluten free diet
- Tips and trips for coeliacs on gluten-free cooking and adding key nutrients, particularly with reference to lower-income households
- Key sources of cross contamination in the home, restaurants, schools, creche, workplaces, etc.
- Symptoms, diagnosis, and treatment aspects of coeliac disease and gluten sensitivity
- Issues concerning a gluten free diet, cross contact, common mistakes, hidden sources of gluten, and what to do if the gluten free diet isn't working
- Nutrient deficiencies in coeliac disease and gluten sensitivity
- Other health conditions associated with coeliac disease and gluten sensitivity

The duration of the workshop will be a maximum of 2½ hours. The tone, energy and pitch must be appropriate for a non-technical audience. The exact timing of a workshop will be agreed with the successful tender applicant and the District or Borough Council who will be assisting in the organisation of the workshop. However, it is envisaged that the workshops will be evening events and run from 19:00 – 21:30.

Note: Since the emphasis of the workshops will be on augmenting/improving the life skills of coeliacs and those with gluten sensitivity, they must be fully interactive. The trainers will be expected to engage with the audience and encourage their questions throughout the workshop.

Note: It is essential that the workshops take into account local conditions for coeliacs and those with gluten sensitivity in Northern Ireland (legislation, support structures, etc.)

Note: Safefood will be responsible for all aspects of arranging venues, catering, delegate registration and communication, as well as the promotion and marketing of the workshops in association with the District and Borough Councils of Northern Ireland. Safefood will be anxious to group the workshops together, inasmuch as this will be possible, to avoid excess travel costs.

4: Trainer requirements

SafeFood wishes to procure the services of two suitably qualified and experienced persons to deliver the series of workshops outlined in Table 1. Each workshop will consist of the content set out in Section 3 in which information on life skills will run concurrently with a practical demonstration on gluten-free cooking, together with tips and tricks on ensuring a nutritious gluten-free diet. Essential requirements from a prospective service provider combination include:

Trainer 1

- A chef / culinary arts qualification with at least 10 years' experience working as a chef.
- At least 5 years' experience with gluten free cookery, in providing advice on same, and instructing coeliacs and those with gluten sensitivity.
- A qualification in nutritional aspects of gluten-free cooking.
- Previous experience working in this capacity in Northern Ireland is highly desirable.

Trainer 2

- A registered dietitian with at least 10 years' experience.
- At least 5 years' experience in dealing with coeliac disease and gluten sensitivity.
- A proven track record in the delivery of information/training workshops to coeliacs and those with gluten sensitivity.
- Previous experience working in this capacity in Northern Ireland is highly desirable.

Both trainers must have excellent communications and presentation skills and be able to work in Northern Ireland (i.e. work legally in the UK).

5: Information required

All tender applications must include the following:

- a) Fully address the requirements set out in Sections 3 and 4.
- b) Full name of both trainers' business/institution and contact details including business name and telephone number, full address, telephone number, web site address (where available). A contact person for dealing with this request (including contact details) should be nominated.
- c) Details of relevant prior experience of the stated trainers with responsibility for delivering the tender requirements.
- d) The full cost of the proposal including appropriate cost breakdown. Costs should indicate rates per day, including and excluding VAT, and should be submitted in Euro only. Costs must include:
 - i. The cost to deliver a single workshop (including any associated VAT).
 - ii. The cost to prepare the workshop content and/or materials.
 - iii. Other expenses associated with the delivery of the workshops.
- e) Environmental and social considerations: SafeFood welcomes information on any environmentally sustainable and/or socially responsible practices followed by the

tenderer as an organisation, and where relevant how these are reflected in the delivery of the workshops. This might include, for example:

- i. General approaches to reducing environmental impact, such as minimising unnecessary travel or making efficient use of resources
- ii. A preference for digital communication and materials, with printed copies provided where needed for accessibility
- iii. Sensible approaches to food preparation and demonstrations that avoid unnecessary waste, while always maintaining gluten-free safety
- iv. Inclusive practices that support participants, including those on lower incomes or with varying levels of experience

The examples above are provided for guidance only. Tenderers are expected, as a minimum, to comply with applicable environmental and employment legislation in Ireland and/or Northern Ireland.

Note: SafeFood will pay subsistence and appropriate mileage costs at no more than the prevailing civil service rates (to be agreed in advance of the contract). SafeFood will reimburse the trainers for other expenses associated with travel to and from the training venue including car parking, tolls, etc. SafeFood will arrange and pay for overnight accommodation for the trainers, when necessary.

6: Evaluation of tenders

SafeFood will ensure a confidential, fair, and equitable evaluation of tender applications.

6.1: Qualification Criteria

Tender applicants will initially be evaluated on their demonstrated ability to meet the requirements set out in Section 5 (a to d) of this tender. Only proposals that satisfy all of these requirements will be considered for further evaluation.

6.2: Award Criteria

The contract will be awarded from the qualifying tenders on the basis of the most economically advantageous tender by applying the following award criteria:

a)	A comprehensive understanding of the requirements outlined in Section 3 of this document.	20%
b)	Appropriate qualifications and proven experience in working with coeliacs and those with gluten sensitivity as specified in Section 4 of this document.	25%
c)	Previous experience in the delivery of information/training workshops to coeliacs and those with gluten sensitivity.	20%
d)	A demonstrated knowledge of current issues and difficulties faced by coeliacs and those with gluten sensitivity.	10%
e)	The overall cost of the proposal on offer (Section 5).	20%
f)	Proposals on the incorporation of environmentally sustainable and/or social considerations into the delivery of the service.	5%

Award of contract may be subject to a clarification meeting.

7: Conditions of tender

- a) SafeFood requires that all information provided pursuant to this invitation to tender be treated in strict confidence by tender applicants.
- b) Information supplied by tender applicants will be treated as contractually binding. However, SafeFood reserves the right to seek clarification or verification of any such information.
- c) Before any tender is awarded, the successful tender applicants will be required to provide a valid Tax Clearance Certificate from the Revenue Commissioners.
- d) SafeFood will not be liable in respect of any costs incurred by tender applicants in the preparation of proposals or any associated work effort.
- e) Any conflict or potential conflict of interest must be fully disclosed when submitting the tender application.
- f) Tender applications should be emailed to jmcintosh@SafeFood.net on or before 17.00 on Wednesday, 11th of February 2026. No postal tender applications will be accepted.
- g) Any queries on this tender should be emailed to Dr James McIntosh at jmcintosh@SafeFood.net.
- h) Tender applicants may be required to attend a presentation / clarification meeting at our Cork office.
- i) Tender applications delivered late will not be considered. Incomplete applications will be rejected.

SafeFood is committed to equality, diversity and inclusion throughout its work. SafeFood is required to comply with Equality and Human Rights legislation in both Ireland and Northern Ireland with equality objectives and commitments mainstreamed into its main strategic and operational business plans. It is fully committed to fulfilling these obligations through a proactive approach to equality and human rights issues in all aspects of its work and by providing a working environment that is free from unlawful discrimination, victimisation or harassment.

SafeFood is committed to meeting our environmental and sustainability obligations to combat climate change by driving down our energy and carbon impacts. We have implemented several initiatives across our offices as part of our Climate Action Plan to recycle, reduce waste, and minimise paper usage. Additionally, by embracing hybrid working arrangements and technology, we have reduced the environmental footprint of our office spaces and lessened the need for many of our employees to commute and travel.