

Allergen Information for Non-Prepacked Foods Best Practice: Approach

Approach to providing written allergen information for non-prepacked food.

Approach

21. The overarching approach in this guidance is designed to meet the expectation from consumers that allergen information should be:

- easily available in writing
- and be underpinned with a conversation

22. The following sections set out how best to deliver this expectation for the 14 regulated allergens along with additional best practice for conversations regarding other allergens. This best practice has been developed following extensive discussions with both consumers and businesses. Recognising the wide range of businesses this guidance is designed to cover, it also sets out circumstances where it may be necessary to deviate from the approach set out above and how to minimise the impact of doing so.

23. The approach set out in this document represents a change in best practice to meet the expectation for there to be both written allergen information and a conversation. The minimum legislative requirement for information to be provided by any means (with a sign indicating when it will be provided verbally) has not changed.

The 14 allergens

24. There are 14 allergens that food businesses must tell consumers about if they are used as ingredients or processing aids in food. The 14 allergens (which will be referred to as 'allergens' throughout this document) are:

- cereals containing gluten namely wheat (such as spelt and Khorasan wheat), rye, barley, oats and their hybridised strains and products thereof, except:
 - a) wheat based glucose syrups including dextrose
 - b) wheat based maltodextrins
 - c) glucose syrups based on barley
 - d) cereals used for making alcoholic distillates including ethyl alcohol of agricultural origin
- crustaceans and products thereof (for example prawns, lobster, crabs and crayfish)
- Egg and products thereof
- Fish and products thereof, except:
 - a) fish gelatine used as carrier for vitamin or carotenoid
 - b) preparations of fish gelatine or Isinglass used as a fining agent in beer and wine
- Peanuts and products thereof

- Soybeans and products thereof, except:
 - a) fully refined soybean oil and fat
 - b) natural mixed tocopherols (E306), natural D-alpha tocopherols, natural D-alpha tocopherol acetate and natural D-alpha tocopherol succinate from soybean sources
 - c) vegetable oils derived phytosterols and phytosterol esters from soybean sources
 - d) plant stanol ester produced from vegetable oil sterols from soybean sources
- Milk and products thereof (including lactose), except:
 - a) whey used for making alcoholic distillates including ethyl alcohol of agricultural origin
 - b) lactitol
- Nuts (namely almond, hazelnut, walnut, cashew, pecan nut, Brazil nut, pistachio nut and Macadamia nut (Queensland nut)) and products thereof except for nuts used for making alcoholic distillates (e.g. spirits such as vodka or whisky) including ethyl alcohol of agricultural origin
- Celery and products thereof
- Mustard and products thereof
- Sesame seeds and products thereof
- Sulphur dioxide and/ or sulphites at concentrations of more than 10 mg/kg or 10 mg/ (litre) in terms of the total SO₂ which are to be calculated for products as proposed ready for consumption or as reconstituted according to the instructions of the manufacturers.
- Lupin and products thereof
- Molluscs and products thereof (for example mussels, clams, oysters, scallops, snails, and squid)

25. More information on these allergens can be found in our [Food allergen labelling and information requirements technical guidance](#).

Allergen information cycle

26. It is extremely important that consumers receive the information they need about the presence of allergens in food. For consumers to receive a safe meal, it is just as important that food businesses are aware of consumers allergen requirements and act on these appropriately.

27. An example of an effective flow of information is shown here:

Consumer and staff discuss allergen requirements. This could be in person or via telephone for orders that are not in person

Consumer is aware of allergen ingredients and the risk of allergens being unintentionally present (e.g. 'may contain' and potential cross contact in the kitchen)

Consumer is able to make an informed choice about what to eat

Consumer places their order and their allergen requirements are noted. For digital orders there could be clearly defined space for consumers to input this information

Person preparing the food is made aware of the order and allergen requirements

Action taken to meet requirements when preparing the meal e.g. leaving out ingredients or minimising cross contact (if this is possible and has been agreed with the consumer)

The meal is easily identifiable to staff

The correct meal is served to the consumer

Consumer receives confirmation that the allergen requirements have been met, this could be with a flag in the meal, verbally or a sticker on takeaway food