

Allergen Information for Non-Prepacked Foods Best Practice: Distance selling and pre-ordering

Distance selling, pre-ordering and voluntary information

Distance selling and pre-ordering

46. Food businesses providing non-prepacked food through distance selling such as online or by telephone should make written allergen information available to the consumer both before the food is ordered and when it is delivered. This will help the consumer decide what is safe to order and allow them to check and identify the right item upon delivery and before eating.

47. Businesses who choose to provide written allergen information online through their own webpage could place this on the main menu. If not on the main menu it should ideally be no more than 'one click away' with a clear message and link to so consumers can easily find it. When selling through a third-party website, consumers should be clearly advised where allergen information can be found, before the order is placed. This could be by referring the customer to the food business's own website, or directly on the third-party website (where this is possible).

48. If a food business cannot provide up to date and accurate allergen information online, such as the business does not have a website or cannot readily update online allergen information, consumers must still be able to access this information easily. Food businesses should let the consumer know where they can get it, such as verbally by speaking directly to staff on the telephone. Food businesses should also ask consumers whether allergen information is required before taking the order.

49. Written allergen information should also be provided upon delivery so the consumer can review it before eating the food. This could be a sticker on food containers or a menu with allergen information. Where customisations have been made, this should also be indicated. Care should be taken to avoid cross contamination during transit and the consumer should be informed if this is a risk.

50. Where food in a restaurant has been pre-ordered (e.g. for a large group booking) allergen information should also be discussed with individuals on the day, before the food is served. It may not be sufficient to rely only on information supplied in advance as ingredients could have changed or details been missed in the original order.

Tips

Example

Ways of providing allergen information at the time of order include:

- in writing on an online menu
- staff provide the allergen information verbally by telephone, clearly notifying consumers that they can obtain the information this way

Ways of providing written allergen information at the time of delivery include:

- placing stickers on food containers to clearly identify any allergens used in that food (e.g., Chicken satay: 'Contains: wheat, soy, fish, peanut'); or
- a menu is provided with the order which allows the customer to clearly identify allergens in the food, along with clear names, or other appropriate cross references on food containers