



# Food Information Regulations 2014

## – Allergen Labelling

On December 13<sup>th</sup> 2014 the new Food Information Regulations 2014 come into force. These place the European Union Food Information for Consumers Regulation into UK law. This paper provides a synopsis of the relevant stands that impact on the supply of school meals and local authority catering.

### Key issues

- Caterers must make consumers aware of the presence of 14 specified allergens, either by visually listing or signposting
- Recipes must be checked for potential allergens and documented
- Ingredients must be consistent and substitutions re-checked before use.

### Introduction

The rates of allergy are increasing throughout the world, affecting up to 30-35% of people at some stage in their lives. This increase was initially seen in countries such as the UK, Europe and USA, but can now be found in all developing countries. The pattern of allergy is also changing with an initial increase in asthma and hay fever. Recent studies have however confirmed a significant increase in the incidence of food allergies, in particular amongst children. Allergy UK estimate that in the UK, up to 50% of children are diagnosed with an allergic condition

### The Regulations

On December 13<sup>th</sup> 2014 the new Food Information Regulations 2014 (SI 2014/1855) come into force. These place the European Union Food Information for Consumers Regulation (EU Reg 1169/2011) into UK law. The regulations place a new requirement on those selling food in a canteen or restaurant and those wrapping loose food such as sandwiches.

The EU law has listed 14 allergens that need to be identified if they are used in ingredients in a dish (listed later). From 13<sup>th</sup> December, caterers will be required to provide information on the allergenic ingredients use in the food prepared by them.

Details of the allergens should be listed in an obvious place such as:

- a menu ( e.g. contains egg, wheat etc)
- chalkboard
- Information pack

If not explicit, there will need to be a signpost to where the information can be obtained in either written or oral form

If the allergen information is provided orally there must be a way for:

- this information to be verifiable if checked by others
- it to be confirmed as accurate
- the same information to be consistently given every time

If ingredients are to be reported verbally then suggested best practice would be to nominate one member of the catering staff to field enquiries

### **The 14 Allergens**

<b>Celery</b>	This includes celery stalks, leaves and seeds and celeriac. It is often found in celery salt, salads, some meat products, soups and stock cubes.
<b>Cereals containing gluten</b>	This includes wheat (such as spelt and Khorasan wheat/Kamut), rye, barley and oats. It is often found in foods containing flour, such as some baking powders, batter, breadcrumbs, bread, cakes, couscous, meat products, pasta, pastry, sauces, soups and foods dusted with flour. The cereal will need to be declared. However, it is up to you if you want to declare the presence of gluten with this.
<b>Crustaceans</b>	This includes crabs, lobster, prawns and scampi. It is often found in shrimp paste used in Thai curries or salads.
<b>Eggs</b>	This is often found in cakes, some meat products, mayonnaise, mousses, pasta, quiche, sauces and foods brushed or glazed with egg
<b>Fish</b>	This is often found in some fish sauces, pizzas, relishes, salad dressings, stock cubes and in Worcestershire sauce.
<b>Lupin</b>	This includes lupin seeds and flour, and can be found in some types of bread, pastries and pasta.
<b>Milk</b>	This is found in butter, cheese, cream, milk powders and yoghurt. It is often used in foods glazed with milk, powdered soups and sauces.
<b>Molluscs</b>	This includes mussels, land snails, squid and whelks. It is often found in oyster sauce or as an ingredient in fish stews.
<b>Mustard</b>	This includes liquid mustard, mustard powder and mustard seeds. It is often found in breads, curries, marinades, meat products, salad dressing, sauces and soups.

<b>Nuts</b>	This includes almonds, hazelnuts, walnuts, cashews, pecan nuts, Brazil nuts, pistachio nuts, macadamia or Queensland nuts. These can be found in breads, biscuits, crackers, desserts, ice cream, marzipan (almond paste), nut oils and sauces. Ground, crushed or flaked almonds are often used in Asian dishes such as curries or stir fries.
<b>Peanuts</b>	This can be found in biscuits, cakes, curries, desserts and sauces such as for satay. It is also found in groundnut oil and peanut flour.
<b>Sesame seeds</b>	This can be found in bread, breadsticks, houmous, sesame oil and tahini (sesame paste).
<b>Soya</b>	This can be found in bean curd, edamame beans, miso paste, textured soya protein, soya flour or tofu. It is often used in some desserts, ice cream, meat products, sauces and vegetarian products.
<b>Sulphur dioxide</b>	This is often used as a preservative in dried fruit, meat products, soft drinks and vegetables as well as in wine and beer.

*(Food Standards Agency – Allergen information for loose foods 2014)*

### Recording Information

When preparing a menu, it is important to record the ingredients for every dish. Reference to the specific ingredients, product and manufacturer should be kept as ingredients can be reformulated and different manufacturers may use slightly different constituents

Particular care should be taken during the period around implementation as old ingredients may not list all the allergens

### Examples of dishes and their allergen content

Dish	Cereals containing gluten	Crustaceans	Eggs	Fish	Peanuts	Soya beans	Milk	Nuts	Celery	Mustard	Sesame	Sulphites	Lupin	Molluscs
Chicken korma							✓	✓almonds						
Seafood risotto		✓prawn		✓			✓		✓					✓mussels,squid
Lemon cheese-cake	✓wheat		✓				✓							
Pizza Cheese & Tomato	✓wheat						✓cheese							

The Food Standards Agency has suggested the following check list to help identify which dishes contain allergens:

- make sure that kitchen staff use the same recipes every time
- keep a copy of the ingredient information on labels of pre-packed foods for example, sauces, desserts etc.
- keep ingredients in the original containers where possible, or keep a copy of the labelling information in a central place (either on paper or stored electronically)
- ensure that containers are clearly labelled, for ingredients which are delivered in bulk, and then transferred or stored in smaller containers
- make sure that staff are aware of where this allergen information is stored and how it is kept
- ensure that the allergen information is kept up to date (for example, if recipes are changed or products substituted)
- always check deliveries to make sure what is delivered is what was ordered. Ensure that the relevant labelling information is provided with the order
- make sure that any records are updated, to help trace back to the source of your information
- check that the food delivered is the same brand that is normally used, as different brands might have different ingredients.

### **Consumer responsibilities**

Whilst the caterer has responsibility to make provision for signposting allergen information, the customer has a responsibility to ask for that information and inform the caterer of their dietary needs.

### **APSE Comment**

Food allergies are increasingly prevalent in children and some of this increase is likely to be a result of changing diets and a reliance on over processed food. As such the allergen regulations provide a welcome response to this increased prevalence but it is hoped that future research concentrates on tackling the cause rather than isolating the risk

Particular care should be taken in a school setting to identify those pupils who have known allergies and where necessary to provide a meal that avoids a particular ingredient group. With the implementation of universal infant free school meals in England and Scotland, this may require additional resources in the early stages to ensure all pupils can take up the free meal.

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