

Allergen Information Guidance for food businesses



Find out how to:

- 1. Comply with the new legal requirements to provide food allergen information for your customers.
- 2. Manage food allergens and develop food allergen awareness in your business.



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Major food allergens poster

Blank menu item ingredients' sheet

Blank menu items' spreadsheet



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The Food Information Regulations 2014 enable the enforcement of Regulation (EU) No 1169/2011 of the European Parliament and of the Council on the provision of food information to consumers (EU FIC).

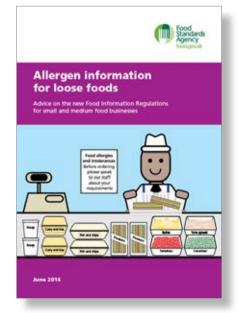
Under the Food Information Regulations 2014:

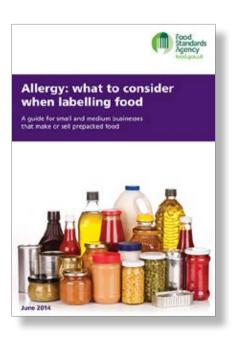
- 1. Food allergen labelling on pre-packed foods will be improved.
- 2. Food business operators will be required to provide correct information about allergens in loose (i.e. non-pre-packed) foods.

The Food Information Regulations 2014 come into force on 13 December 2014 and apply to all catering and retail businesses that serve or sell loose foods.

Click or tap to view on website









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FOOD ALLERGY

A food that is perfectly safe for one person to eat may be extremely hazardous for another. Some people experience allergic reactions to certain foods – reactions that can range from mild to life threatening.

Severe allergic reactions (anaphylaxis) can include symptoms in different parts of the body at the same time, such as:

- rashes
- severe swelling of the lips, tongue and throat
- difficulty breathing
- rapid fall in blood pressure
- loss of consciousness.

If you think a customer is having a severe allergic reaction, you must:

- call the emergency services on 999 or 112 immediately
- describe what is happening explain that you think that a customer is having a severe allergic reaction or anaphylaxis (pronounced 'anna-fill-axis')
- do not move the customer
- find out if the customer is carrying an adrenaline pen (if possible help the customer to self-administer – you should only administer an adrenaline pen if you are trained)
- send someone outside to wait for the ambulance
- stay with the customer until help arrives

It is important that everyone who prepares or handles food, in any context:

- is fully aware of the foods that may trigger an allergic reaction and
- knows what precautions need to be taken to ensure that customers do not eat a food that they are trying to avoid.

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14 MAJOR FOOD ALLERGENS

Any food can cause an allergic reaction, however EU FIC identifies 14 major food allergens.

Click or tap on the icon for more information



Celery



Cereals containing gluten



Crustaceans



Eggs



Fish



Lupin



Milk



Molluscs



Mustard



Nuts



Peanuts



Sesame seeds



Soya



Sulphur dioxide and sulphites

Most of these allergens are easy to recognise as raw ingredients — the problem arises when they are 'hidden' in multi-ingredient recipes

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Celery – including celery stalks, leaves, seeds and powder and celeriac root and celeriac powder – found in salads, soups, stock powder, celery salt and some meat products













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Cereals containing gluten – such as wheat (spelt, khorasan) rye, barley and oats – flour, starches, bran, rusk – found in bread, breadcrumbs, pasta, cakes, pastry, meat products, sauces, soups, batter, stock cubes, foods dusted with flour, semolina, couscous and some types of hydrolysed vegetable protein













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Crustaceans – such as prawns, crayfish, langoustine, lobster, scampi, crab – found in shrimp paste, fish stock and seafood flavourings













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Eggs – fresh, powdered, dried or pasteurised, albumen (egg white) – used in cakes, mousses, sauces, pasta, quiche, some meat products, mayonnaise and to glaze some foods













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Fish – all species, fish extracts, fish sauce, fish oils, fish paste, Omega-3-rich oils, fish gelatine – used in some salad dressings, pizzas, relishes, fish sauce and some soy and Worcestershire sauces













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Lupin – seeds (also called lupin beans) and flour – used in some types of bread and pastries, in diet products and as an alternative ingredient to soya in some food products, for example in vegetarian sausages, lupin tofu and lupin milk (sometimes used in chocolate)













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Milk – whey, lactose and caseinates – used in yoghurt, cream, cheese, butter, ghee, powdered soups and sauces and used to glaze foods













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Molluscs – such as mussels, squid, oysters, whelks, land snails – used in oyster sauce, fish sauce, stocks, soups and stews and dishes such as paella













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Mustard — liquid mustard, mustard paste, mustard seed, mustard leaves, mustard powder — used in salad dressings, marinades, soups, sauces, curries, fish and meat products













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Nuts – almonds, Brazil nuts, cashews, hazelnuts, pecans, pistachios, macadamia nuts and walnuts, nut oils, nut essences and flavourings, nut butters – used in curries, sauces, desserts, crackers, bread, ice cream and marzipan













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Peanuts (also called groundnuts) – peanut/ groundnut oil, peanut butter, peanut flour, peanut protein products – used in curries, sauces, cakes, desserts













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Sesame – sesame seeds, sesame oil, sesame paste – used in bread, breadsticks, tahini, houmous, halva, seasonings and dressings













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Soya – tofu or beancurd, soya flour, textured soya protein, soya milk, soya lecithin, edamame beans – used in soya sauce, some ice cream, sauces, desserts, meat and vegetarian products, chocolate













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Sulphur dioxide and sulphites (at levels above 10mg per kg or litre) – preservatives used in meat products, fruit juice drinks, dried fruit, wine and beer and also to prevent discolouration of pre-prepared peeled potatoes













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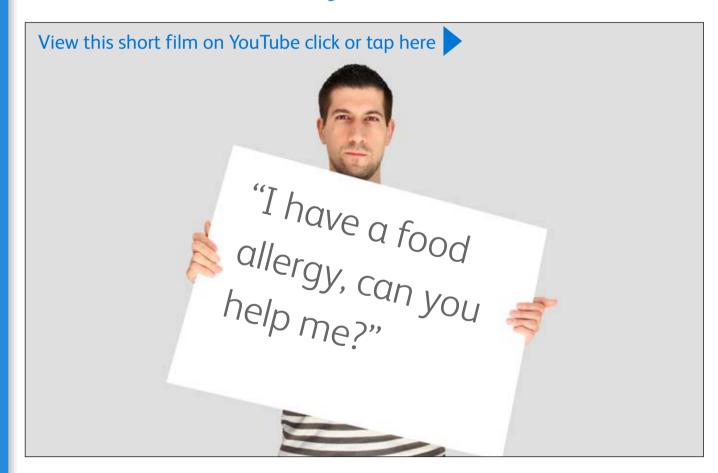
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MANAGING A FOOD ALLERGY

For people who have an identified food allergy there are three stages to managing the condition:

- 1. Avoid the cause
- 2. Recognise the symptoms of a reaction
- 3. Know what to do if it happens again

To be able to avoid the cause of their food allergy, your customers need complete and correct information to allow them to make informed choices about the food they eat.



Could you and your staff help these customers to avoid the cause of their food allergy?



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RECOGNISING ALLERGENS ON PRE-PACKED FOODS

Allergen information can be found:

- on product labels
- in product specifications (available from manufacturers and/or suppliers).

Food labelling on pre-packed food is important. The information provided helps consumers decide if a food is safe for them to eat. For this reason, pre-packed foods carry labels that include a list of ingredients and identify allergens within that list. Under the Food Information Regulations 2014, allergens must be indicated in a new way (see below).

You will see that the allergens have been identified by the use of a bold font – clearly distinguishing the allergen from the other ingredients. Instead of using a bold font, the manufacturer may, use a different style, font or colour to draw attention to the allergens.

The name of an allergen must be stated next to an ingredient, if the presence of the allergen is not obvious from the ingredient name – for example, tofu (**soya**) or tahini paste (**sesame**).

Manufacturer's may also include an advice box explaining how allergens are shown in the ingredients list – for example, 'Allergy advice: for allergens, *see* ingredients in bold'. The use of other statements – such as 'Contains: milk and celery' – are no longer allowed.

All information about allergens must be in one place only – the ingredients list.

New

INGREDIENTS: Water, Carrots, Onions, Red Lentils (4.5 %), Potato, Leeks, **Wheat** Flour, Salt, **Cream**, Yeast Extract, Concentrated Tomato Paste, Garlic, Sugar, **Celery** Seed, Vegetable Oil, Herb and Spice, White Pepper, Parsley.

Allergy advice: for allergens, see ingredients in **bold**

Old

INGREDIENTS: Water, Carrots, Onions, Red Lentils (4.5%), Potato, Leeks, Wheat Flour, Salt, Cream, Yeast Extract, Concentrated Tomato Paste, Garlic, Sugar, Celery Seed, Vegetable Oil, Herb and Spice, White Pepper, Parsley.

Allergy advice:

Contains wheat gluten, milk and celery.



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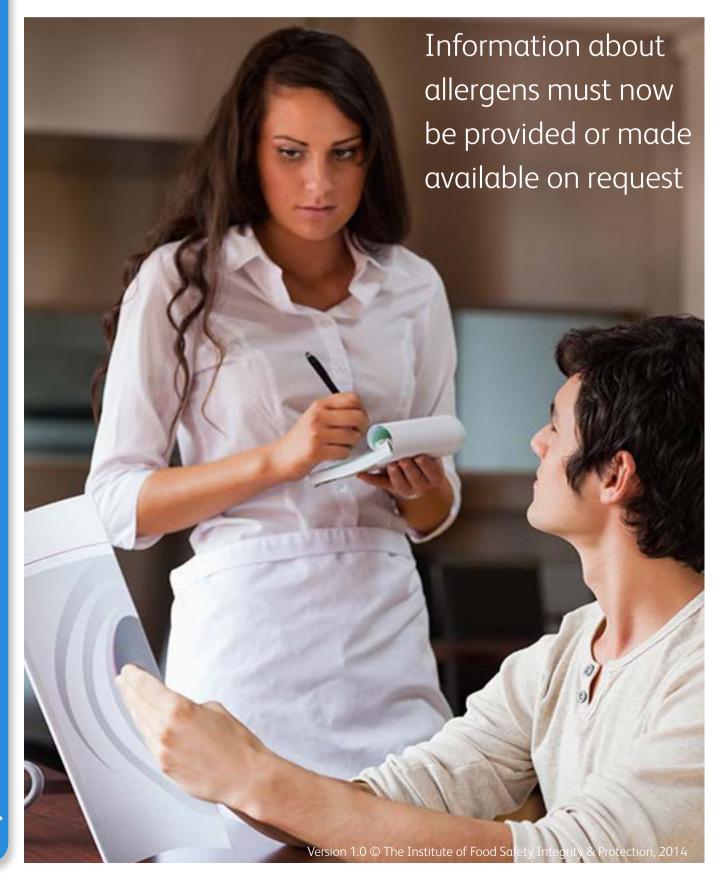
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ALLERGEN INFORMATION FOR LOOSE FOODS

Under the Food Information Regulations 2014, information about allergens as ingredients must now be provided (or made available on request) for loose foods sold or provided by all food businesses.

This means you will have to supply information for every menu item or product sold that contains any of the 14 major allergens as ingredients.

It is good practice to control the risks of allergen cross-contamination — it is, however, essential to eliminate the risk of allergen cross-contamination if you offer to provide an 'allergen-free' menu item or product.





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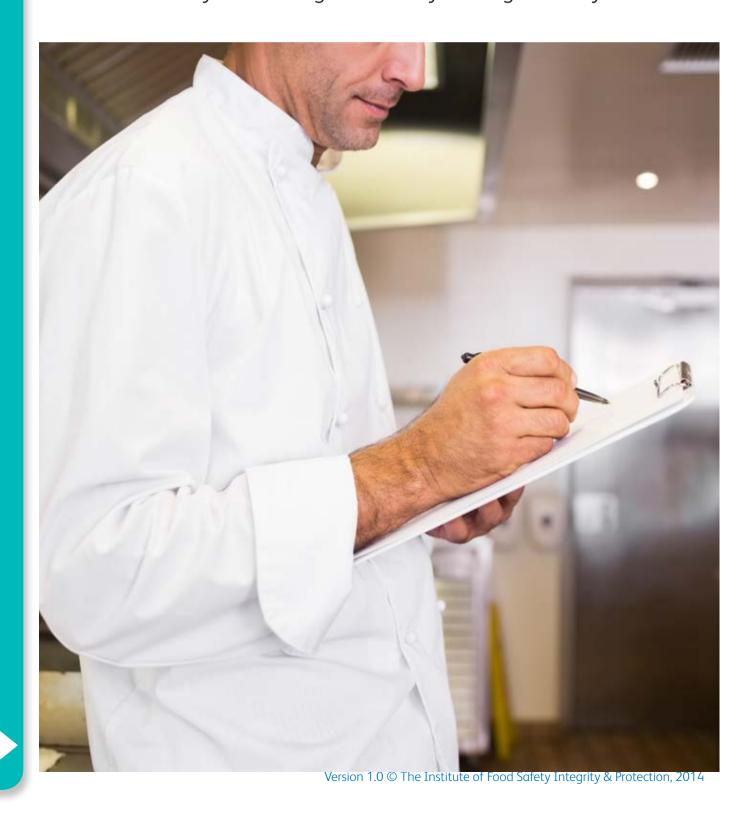
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To provide the necessary information to consumers, you and your staff need to know which food prepared by your business contains allergens.

The 14 major allergens may be used intentionally and therefore be obvious on a list of ingredients, or sometimes they may be 'hidden' as part of an ingredient that is used when preparing a dish. There is also the possibility that, if not managed correctly, food allergens might end up unintentionally in a food that is supposed to be allergen free.

As a food business operator, you are required by law to implement a food safety management system to control the risk of food causing harm to consumers. A food allergen is a food safety hazard and should be identified as such. The risks associated with food allergens can be controlled under your existing food safety management system.



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IDENTIFYING FOOD ALLERGENS

You need to identify which food prepared by your business contains allergenic ingredients so that you can:

- provide complete and correct information to customers so they can take action to avoid consuming food that is known to cause them an allergic reaction and
- manage the risks of cross-contamination.

It is only essential to eliminate the risks of cross-contamination if you are preparing food that is being sold as specifically 'allergen-free'. It is, however, good practice to identify, manage and reduce the risk of the unintentional presence of allergens wherever possible.

Remember: any food can cause an allergic reaction, but there are 14 major allergens that you must identify.

Some of these allergens are easy to identify but others are less obvious.

Don't forget the allergens in pre-packed ingredients or food items.

Some ingredients and food items may contain unexpected allergenic ingredients.

Click or tap an image below to reveal some examples.









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contains fish



be used in pesto

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PRACTICAL ALLERGEN MANAGEMENT

As well as ensuring that you are able to provide accurate and complete information about allergenic ingredients used in the food you sell, you also have a responsibility not to allow food to become contaminated during preparation with an allergen not included in the recipe.

As part of your food safety management system, you will already have control measures in place to:

- ensure that the goods you purchase are safe and
- prevent food being contaminated on receipt, in storage and during preparation and service.

All you need to do is to extend these control measures to include food allergens as a hazard and record the actions taken to prevent cross-contamination at each stage when food allergens are handled.

Examples of practical allergen management include:

- inspecting goods on delivery
- checking that deliveries correspond to the order different brands might have different ingredients
- never accepting a delivery of pre-packed food without it being fully labelled with an ingredients list
- making sure the allergen labelling information is retained with each product
- keeping a copy of the ingredient information on labels of pre-packed foods
- checking the labels for any ingredient changes
- insofar as possible, controlling the risks of cross-contamination in storage and during food preparation and service.

For every food product that you make, you must know what allergens have been added as ingredients. If possible, you should make sure staff use a standard recipe based on the same ingredients.

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RECORDING ALLERGEN INFORMATION

The presence of allergenic ingredients, and/or advice on the possible presence of allergen cross-contamination, should be recorded for each menu item or food product you prepare. This information should be stored in the most effective way so it is easily accessible for staff — for example:

 paper records stored in a file (see example of a menu item ingredients list) or



 electronic records stored on a computer (see example of a menu items spreadsheet)



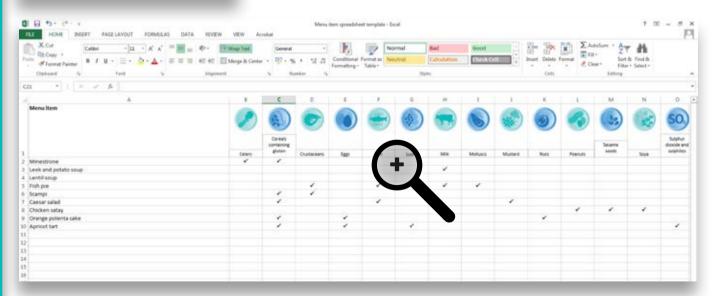
Don't forget to record the food allergens in pre-packed foods used as ingredients in your recipes — you may choose to include copies of the ingredients lists on the labels or pre-packed foods or of the product specifications.



The allergen information recorded must be complete, correct and kept up to date.

Staff who prepare food should not make recipe changes without first making a written record of the changes and communicating those changes to serving staff.

Click or tap the examples to see a record in the form of a menu item ingredients' list and menu item spreadsheet highlighting the 14 major allergens



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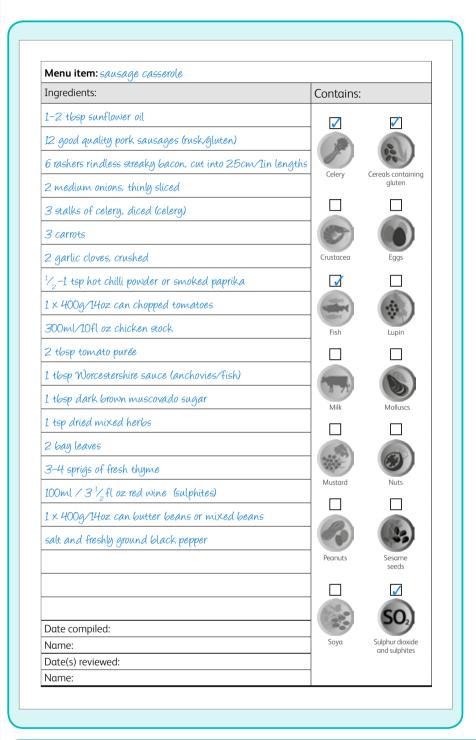
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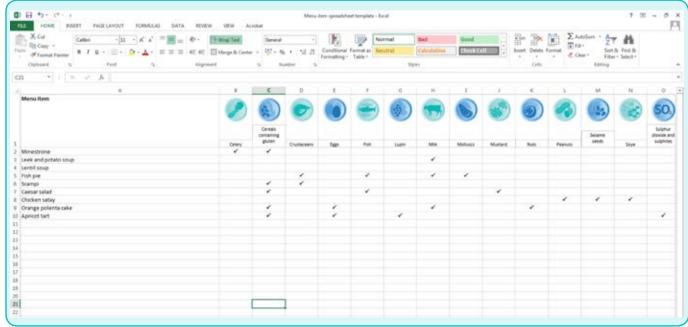
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Below are examples of a menu item ingredients' list and spreadsheet highlighting allergens.





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COMMUNICATING ALLERGEN INFORMATION

Consumers need to be presented with complete and correct information to allow them to make their own decisions about whether or not to eat certain foods.

Allergen information should be:

- displayed in an obvious place for example on a menu, chalkboard or label
- clearly expressed for example scampi (contains prawns, egg and wheat (gluten)) or orange polenta cake (contains milk, egg and ground almonds).

If the information is to be provided by a member of staff (verbally or in written form – for example an information pack), you must make this clear – for example, 'For allergen information, please speak to a member of staff'.

If information is to be provided verbally by a member of staff, you must ensure that the information provided is:

- checked
- confirmed to be accurate
- consistent complete and correct every time.



Remember, you are not allowed to say you do not know if a food contains a major allergen or that all your food may contain allergens.

It is an offence to provide inaccurate or incomplete information about allergenic ingredients used in foods.

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DEVELOPING FOOD ALLERGEN AWARENESS

To develop food allergy awareness in your business, you need to:

- train all staff about food allergens, your allergen management system, the provision of allergen information to customers and dealing with requests for specific allergen-free food
- include allergen awareness as part of your induction programme for new staff
- update staff on changes with regard to legal requirements and good practice guidance
- communicate any changes to the allergen management system and/or allergen information records.

Coming soon

CIEH Level 2 Award in Food Allergen Awareness
To register your interest in this qualification click here



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SUMMARY

The EU Food Information for Consumers Regulation No.1169/2011 and Food Information Regulations 2014 mean you will have a legal responsibility to provide the correct allergen information about the food you prepare and serve to customers. The risks associated with food allergens can be controlled within your established food safety management system.

With regard to the Food Information Regulations 2014, the key points to remember are:

- ☐ Know the ingredients used in your food
- ☐ Identify if any of the 14 major food allergens are included as ingredients
- Consider the risk of cross-contamination
- ☐ Take steps to control the risk of cross-contamination if you are preparing an 'allergen-free' food
- ☐ Make sure your staff are allergen aware
- Establish a procedure for dealing with allergen information requests
- ☐ Make sure your staff are aware of this procedure
- ☐ Make sure the information provided is always complete and correct
- ☐ Make sure staff are made aware of any changes to recipes (addition or substitution of ingredients)

USEFUL SOURCES OF INFORMATION

Allergy UK

Allergy UK is the leading national charity dedicated to supporting allergy sufferers.

Anaphylaxis Campaign

A charity providing information and support for people with severe allergies.

Food Standards Agency

The Food Standards Agency is responsible for food safety and food hygiene across the UK.

For specific information about <u>allergy and intolerance</u> and for <u>online allergy training</u>.

Appendices

MAJOR FOOD ALLERGENS POSTER

BLANK MENU ITEM INGREDIENTS' SHEET

BLANK MENU ITEMS' SPREADSHEET



Celery



Cereals containing gluten



Crustaceans



Eggs



Fish



Lupin



Milk



Molluscs



Mustard



Nuts



Peanuts



Sesame seeds



Soya



and sulphites

1

Most of these allergens are easy to recognise as raw ingredients — the problem arises when they are 'hidden' in multi-ingredient recipes







Menu item:			
Ingredients:	Contains:		
		Celery	Cereals containing gluten
		Crustacea	Eggs
		Fish	Lupin
		– Milk	Molluscs
		Mustard	Nuts
		Peanuts	Sesame seeds
			SO ₂
Date compiled:		Soya	Sulphur dioxide
Name: Date(s) reviewed:			Sulphur dioxide and sulphites
Name:		_	

Download Excel document

