

Allergen Audits – what you need to check! Pt 1

Allergen Audits - EHO & EHP's will normally check your allergen management systems as part of their food safety inspection, the 'Allergen Audit' will be just a small part of their full inspection dependent on the time and resources of each Local Authority. When Food Allergy Aware's consultants conduct an allergen management audit on site we take from 3-5 hours dependent on the venue and number of outlets & preparation areas. In the first of a series of fact sheets below we have highlighted areas which we take into consideration when we audit onsite and would advise you to review as part of your HACCP, Allergen Policy, or Food Management System.

Allergen Policy

Is there an Allergen Policy, what format does this take? Check the revision dates!

- Statement on menu
- Paragraph on the FSMS
- Full allergen policy covering all areas of the business
- Sign at the entrance door
- Sign within the venue
- Part of the HACCP plan
- Section in staff manual/handbook

Consider how you document your **Allergen Management Policy** as this could form part of your due diligence in legal proceedings! Ensure it is updated if an incident or near miss occurs!

Areas to be covered

Staff Training

Staff training records specifically for allergens

- Induction training
 - What format this takes
 - Check newest member of staff records if completed

Level 1

- FSA online
- Inhouse online
- Commercial online

Accredited courses

- Level 2 – HABC, RSPH, CIEH
- Level 3 – HABC

Ideally the training should NOT be part of food safety /food hygiene training it should be stand alone and specific.

You should note how many staff have taken each level of training, recommended 100% induction level 1 & 40/50% including Kitchen, FOH senior or full-time staff.

Are staff aware of their obligations under the FIR (1169/2011) regulations – interview /chat with staff informally?

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Signage

- Are there signs Front of House (FOH) for customers to refer too?
- Are there posters (Inhouse /FSA) Back of House (BOH) for staff to refer to of the 14 allergens?
- Is the signage adapted/appropriate to venue?
- Are there notifications on the menu? Is this appropriate/accurate for the site?
- Are there allergy tables/matrixes?
 - Manual
 - online

We would advise, where possible, to research allergen information availability online (what the customers view) and then spot check specific dishes (At least 2 or 3) which may contain one of the #14 major allergens. To verify accurate information provided in all forms:

e.g., A dish you know would contain soya, then check the menu spec (onsite), allergy tables and store cupboard ingredients to verify as accurate.

Also use the above examples to ask staff about their knowledge of allergens in the dish.

When auditing onsite arrange to speak with members of the FOH & BOH teams, choose randomly, have an informal chat around their knowledge and company process for allergen management.

Verification is vital for a good audit!

This sheet is part of a series of what to consider when auditing a Food Business Operations (FBO)