

Allergen Information for Non-Prepacked Food

Allergen Information for Non-Prepacked Foods Best Practice: Summary

Providing allergen information to consumers effectively

Summary

Purpose

This publication sets out best practice guidance for food businesses providing non-prepacked foods, on how they can provide mandatory allergen information to consumers. The guidance is intended to support businesses to comply with regulations in the most effective ways, and meet consumer expectations by adopting good practices and enabling consumers to make informed choices about the food they eat more easily.

Legal Status

Best Practice Guidance (for example, helpful examples of approaches you might employ, but which you are not legally required to follow). An approach consistent with this guidance will help you comply with and exceed your relevant responsibilities.

Who is this publication for?

This guidance is aimed at:

- retailers
- caterers
- institutional caterers
- other food businesses providing non-prepacked food in person or online

Which UK countries does this guidance apply to?

England, Wales, and Northern Ireland.

Review date

We will review this guidance by September 2026.

Key words

- allergy and intolerance
- coeliac disease
- hygiene and food safety
- out of home sector (restaurants, cafes, etc.)
- non-prepacked food

Allergen Information for Non-Prepacked Foods Best Practice: Introduction

Introduction to the Best Practice Guidance

Introduction

1. Food businesses must inform consumers if they have used any of the [14 mandated allergens](#) as an ingredient in their food.
2. This information is particularly important for consumers who have a food hypersensitivity (food allergy, intolerance or coeliac disease) and can have adverse reactions when eating certain foods (allergens). These reactions can range in severity, however, at worst can cause anaphylaxis, which can be life threatening.
3. Businesses must ensure that all mandatory food allergen information is accurate, available to, and easily accessible by the consumer. This applies to all food supplied by food businesses, including when food is offered complimentary or otherwise without charge.
4. The FSA have carried out [extensive research and engagement with consumers and food businesses](#) to understand the most effective ways allergen information can be delivered to consumers and have reflected our findings in this guidance.
5. This best practice guidance covers how to provide allergen information for non-prepacked foods in the most effective way and manner preferred by consumers which, is in writing and supported by a conversation. Non-prepacked foods include all foods that are not prepacked such as meals in cafés and restaurants, loose meat and cheese at a deli counter or drinks made to order in a coffee shop. This guidance does not cover prepacked for direct sale (PPDS) foods, [which have their own rules.](#)

6. The provision of voluntary information is also mentioned, for example precautionary allergen labelling (PAL) and 'free from' claims; this is covered in more detail in our [Food allergen labelling and information technical guidance](#).

7. This best practice guidance is strictly in relation to allergens, and does not cover other information requirements such as name of the food, the quantitative ingredients declaration (QUID) on products containing meat etc.

8. The legislative framework around the provision of food allergen information is largely contained in assimilated Regulation (EU) No. 1169/2011 (for England and Wales) and Regulation (EU) No. 1169/2011 (for Northern Ireland) and The Food Information Regulations 2014 (FIR), the Food Information (Wales) Regulations 2014 and the Food Information Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2014.

9. More information on the legal requirements for allergen information provision for all types of foods can be found in our [Food allergen labelling and information technical guidance](#) and a list of relevant legislation is provided in Annexe A.

Intended audience

10. This guidance is intended to support food businesses such as retailers and caterers in the non-prepacked food sector, such as coffee shops, cafés, restaurants, fast food outlets, delis, butchers, bakeries and market stalls, to provide allergen information to consumers in person and digitally/online.

11. The guidance is relevant to businesses of all sizes including small and micro enterprises.

Purpose of the guidance

12. The purpose of this guidance is to demonstrate how food businesses can provide accurate and up to date allergen information in a way that is most useful, meaningful and easily accessible to consumers.

13. By following best practice guidance, businesses can promote consumer confidence in their food businesses by ensuring customers can access and understand the allergen information they need to make safe and informed choices about the food they eat.

Legal status of guidance

14. Directly applicable EU legislation no longer applies in GB. EU legislation retained when the UK exited the EU became assimilated law on 1 January 2024, published on [legislation.gov.uk](#).

15. References to any legislation in FSA guidance with 'EU' or 'EC' in the title (e.g. Regulation (EC) 178/2002) should now be regarded as assimilated law where applicable to GB and as directly applicable EU law where applicable to Northern Ireland. References to 'Retained EU Law' or 'REUL' should now be regarded as references to assimilated law.

16. For businesses moving goods from Great Britain to Northern Ireland, information on [the Windsor Framework, including the NI Retail Movement Scheme \(NIRMS\)](#), is available on [GOV.UK](#).

17. These guidance notes have been produced to provide best practice guidance. You are not required by law to follow best practice guidance. While you are not required by law to follow best practice guidance, an approach consistent with this guidance should ensure you meet the relevant responsibilities and consumer expectations.

18. Businesses with specific queries may wish to seek advice from their local enforcement agency, which will usually be the trading standards department of their local authority but could be the environmental health team in some cases.

Review

19. We aim to keep all guidance up to date and undertake regular reviews to ensure guidance remains relevant. The next scheduled review date for this guidance is September 2026.

Contact us

20. We welcome your feedback on this guidance: hypersensitivitypolicy@food.gov.uk

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

Consumer is encouraged to relay any allergen requirements to the food businesses. This could be asked directly or messaging displayed within the establishment or on the webpage

26. It is extremely important that consumers receive the information they need about the

Consumer is able to access written allergen information either in hard copy or digitally

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

Allergen Information for Non-Prepacked Foods Best Practice: Providing written allergen information

Providing and presenting written allergen information.

Providing written allergen information

28. It is best practice that food businesses should make allergen information easily available in writing for consumers and ensure staff are able to support this with a conversation.

29. When deciding how to provide written allergen information, food businesses should be mindful of the following principles that will help them communicate the allergens in their food most effectively:

- **easy to use** - it should be easy for consumers to identify dishes/products that are safe for them to eat
- **clear** - it should clearly indicate which allergens are present in dishes/products
- **comprehensive** - it should provide information on all 14 allergens (as opposed to just focusing on a subset, for example those deemed by the FBO as most prevalent or severe)
- **accurate** - it can (and must) be regularly reviewed and updated to ensure that it remains accurate, correctly displaying the presence of allergens in each dish

30. With the above in mind, food businesses should choose the format of the written allergen information that best suits their business model and allows them to keep the information accurate and up to date.

How to present written allergen information

31. Food businesses can choose whether to provide the information using words or symbols with accompanying words. If symbols are used, the name of the allergen should form part of it e.g. be written underneath, however if the allergen name does not make up part of the symbol, a legend or key with the allergen name in written form, clearly defining which allergen each symbol represents, must be present allowing easy cross-referencing for consumers.

Tips

Example

Allergen information could be provided as a 'Contains' statement, for example 'Chicken Salad (Contains: **milk, egg, mustard**)'. This could be used on a menu or on a label/ticket next to foods on display at a bakery for example.

32. For groups of allergens such as tree nuts and cereals containing gluten, when expressing the allergen information in words the specific nut or cereal should be provided.

Tips

Example

Chicken Tikka Masala (Contains: **milk, nuts (almond)**).

33. If using symbols, a single symbol can be used to represent the group of allergens, for example one symbol for cereals containing gluten and one for tree nuts, however the food business should be able to advise the specific nut or cereal if a consumer requires more specific information.

Tips

Example

Knickerbocker Glory ?

A delightful and indulgent dessert featuring layers of ice cream, fresh fruit, and jelly, all topped with whipped cream, almonds, and a cherry on top. This classic treat is perfect for satisfying your sweet tooth.

Contains:



Treenuts



Milk



Sulphur Dioxide

34. To give a better service and choice to consumers, food businesses could provide a breakdown of the components within a dish, rather than just providing the information on the allergens present in the whole dish. This will allow consumers to request dishes are amended to omit or substitute their allergens (where possible) rather than discount the dish when choosing what to eat.

35. This practice could also work in instances where a consumer customises the components of a dish for example the contents of a sandwich or salad.

36. Food businesses should take appropriate steps to minimise cross-contamination risks when adjusting dishes to meet allergen requirements. Cross contact with allergens should also be considered when they are not intentional ingredients in dishes.

Tips

Example

BBQ Chicken Burger and Coleslaw (Chicken Burger: **wheat, fish, celery**; BBQ sauce: **celery, fish**; Bap: **wheat, eggs, sesame**; Coleslaw: **egg, celery, mustard**)

If a customer had an allergy to mustard for example, the dish could be served without the coleslaw.

Where should it be?

37. Written allergen information should be readily available, if possible, without consumers having to ask for it, such as on the main menu (paper or digital), allergen booklet on a counter or matrix displayed on a wall in a consumer accessible area. An example matrix can be found at Annex B.

38. Food businesses who may need to change their menu or allergen information regularly may wish to make this information available upon request in a separate document so they can more easily update it and control the information.

39. If the information is not on the main menu, food businesses should let consumers know where allergen information can be found with a clear message on the menu. Food businesses

who do not use a menu should display this message where they display their food options such as on a board or next to food in a counter.

40. Staff should be fully aware of where to find this information and be able to advise the consumer of its location or provide the written information if required.

41. There are a number of ways food businesses could provide the written information. They should choose the method that is most appropriate for their business model, such as on a menu (paper or digital), a separate matrix, a label placed next to the food where consumers choose from a counter or similar. Whichever method is chosen it must be easy for consumers to understand the information and to access, either themselves or by asking staff.

42. If written allergen information can only be made available upon request rather than upfront, such as on the main menus, then signs or messages on menus should be displayed such as: 'We have a menu with allergen information, please speak to staff who will be happy to provide it'.

43. Food businesses could choose to adopt a combination of both approaches by asking consumers if they require allergen information as well as displaying signs/messages.

44. Food businesses can decide whether to provide allergen information in paper or digital format.

45. If a food business chooses to provide allergen information in a digital format they should have an alternative way of accessing the information for those who may not be able to access the information digitally and as a backup should there be a problem with the digital information.

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

Allergen Information for Non-Prepacked Foods Best Practice: Voluntary information

Voluntary information and how to keep allergen information accurate.

Voluntary information

51. Some food businesses may wish to make claims that dishes are free from certain allergens such as 'peanut free' or 'gluten free'. There are specific rules that must be followed when making 'gluten free' claims.

52. Further guidance on making 'free from' claims can be found in the [Food allergen labelling and information requirements technical guidance](#).

53. If making 'free from' claims on the same document as telling consumers about the presence of allergens in food, food businesses must make it clear whether they are indicating the allergen is present in the food or the food is 'free from' the allergen, i.e. it must be very clear if the dish contains peanuts or is peanut free to avoid confusion.

54. Consideration should also be given to whether consumers should be informed about the potential presence of unintended allergens for example due to the risk of cross-contamination within the catering setting itself or 'may contain' warnings on the ingredients. This is often referred to as precautionary allergen labelling (PAL). Guidance on the application of PAL can be found in the [Food allergen labelling and information requirements technical guidance](#).

Tips

Example

To advise consumers about the potential presence of unintended allergens you could use a statement such as:

'May contain **egg**'

Or

'We use **peanuts, nuts, soy** and **wheat** (gluten) in our kitchen, please speak to us so we can prepare your meal safely'

Other allergens

55. People can be allergic or intolerant to foods outside of the 14 mandated allergens and therefore need to avoid eating those foods. Food businesses should be able to tell a consumer if other ingredients are present in food if asked where possible. To do this food businesses should keep records of the full ingredients in the foods they serve, such as by retaining food labels, and ensure that front of house staff can easily check these when necessary or know who to ask, allowing them to confirm to consumers whether other allergens are present in the food. It is important that staff do not guess or make assumptions based on what ingredients they think may or may not be present. There may be instances where it is not possible for a food business to provide accurate information about other ingredients e.g. when the request involves non-prepacked food supplied to the food business that does not need to be accompanied by full ingredients information.

56. If food businesses are unable to provide accurate ingredient information, they must inform the consumer so they are able to make an informed choice.

How to keep allergen information accurate

57. The allergen information provided to consumers must be accurate. This is a legal requirement as well as being vital to ensure the safety of consumers.

58. Food businesses should have procedures in place to ensure that their allergen information is accurate and up to date at all times.

59. Ways to ensure allergen information is up to date and accurate include:

- Keeping records of ingredients
- Regularly checking whether ingredients in products have changed
- Minimising the occasions where last minute substitutions are required (if this occurs, ingredients should be checked and allergen information updated accordingly)

- Regularly checking the allergen information is accurate and updating where required
- Keeping a record of recipes so they are made to the same specification each time.
- Having and using approved suppliers with supply chain assurances
- Conducting checks with suppliers to ensure they provide accurate allergen information and ask them to agree to inform the businesses of any allergen changes
- Having and implementing an allergen management policy (see [‘Safer food, better business for caterers’](#) pack)
- Allergen management training for staff (see FSA’s [Food Allergy and Intolerance Training](#))

Allergen Information for Non-Prepacked Foods Best Practice: Having a conversation about allergen requirements

Having a conversation about allergen requirements and what to do with the information received from consumers.

Having a conversation about allergen requirements

60. Having a conversation about allergen requirements is extremely important to ensure all necessary information is given to enable food businesses to prepare food and meet allergen requirements and consumers to make a safe and informed choice about what food to eat.

61. Food businesses should encourage consumers to make them aware of any allergen requirements they have and have a conversation about these requirements.

62. Staff should be sufficiently trained to have a conversation about allergens and know where to find the information they need to be able to give accurate information to the consumer. Staff should also receive training on allergens and food hypersensitivity (food allergies, intolerance and coeliac disease) to appreciate the potential consequences of providing incorrect information – which could be life threatening.

63. Food businesses should decide who is best placed to have allergen conversations. For example, are all staff trained to the same level and able to take orders with allergen requirements or are there specific staff on duty whom these orders should be deferred to such as a supervisor or head chef?

64. If a food business decides that specific staff should take these orders, all staff should be aware of this process, how to establish whether customers have allergen requirements and what to do if it is confirmed that they do.

Tips

Example

Front of house staff ask customers “does anyone have any allergen requirements?”

The customer confirms that they do.

Front of house staff reply that they will get the allergen information menu, and a supervisor will take the order when the customer is ready.

The allergen menu is provided to the customer and the supervisor is informed and takes over the order and service process for the remainder of the customer’s dining experience.

When there is only one person working in an establishment, they could do all of the above steps themselves.

65. Having a conversation is important to ensure that:

1. the person preparing the meal is aware of any additional care they may need to take when doing so
2. the consumer understands any potential risks of cross-contamination with allergens in the preparation process
3. it is understood whether meals can be adapted to suit the needs of the consumer
4. the consumer can be made aware of any last-minute changes and has the most up to date information, ensuring the allergen information they receive is accurate

66. Food businesses should ask all consumers whether they have any allergen requirements to encourage these discussions. If a food business is unable to directly ask every customer, then they should display a message on a sign or menu (a combination of both may be more effective), asking consumers to let staff know if they have a food allergy, intolerance or coeliac disease.

67. The placement of this message is extremely important. Signs should be in a prominent position, within a consumers eyeline or placed in a clearly visible place on menus (preferably at the top).

68. Food businesses who do ask consumers directly may also want to display these messages on signs and/or on menus as an additional safeguard.

Tips

Example

When encouraging consumers to discuss their allergen requirements messages such as the following could be used:

‘Please talk to us if you have a food allergy, intolerance or coeliac disease. We want to cater safely for everyone’.

69. When considering how to encourage consumers to discuss their allergen requirements the following principles should be considered:

70. Communication should be:

- **prominent** - effective in getting consumers to notice and observe the message
- **clear** - provide a clear and simple call to action, so consumers understand what is being asked of them (e.g. 'Please talk to us if you have a food allergy, intolerance or coeliac disease.')
- **simple** - concise, uses straightforward language and gets to the point (making processing cognitively easy)
- **empathetic** - demonstrates that the food business understands and will endeavour to meet consumer needs (including safety, confidence and providing as normal experience as possible)
- **motivating** - provide a reason why it is important to discuss, or reduces barriers to motivation, for example by demonstrating that staff will react constructively and sensitively

71. To maximise effectiveness when discussing allergen information and consumer needs, the information should again be clear, simple, empathetic, motivating, accurate, comprehensive and consistent.

72. Some customers may feel uncomfortable revealing personal medical information when asked whether they have "a food allergy, intolerance or coeliac disease". This language has been tested with consumers where it has been shown to be generally preferred, however, asking if they have "any allergen requirements" is a suitable alternative.

73. Once it is established there is some form of allergen requirement, a conversation should include as a minimum:

- what foods the consumer needs to avoid
- whether the consumer has received written allergen information e.g. have they seen the allergen matrix
- risk of cross contact with allergens
- whether the consumer has enough information to make an informed choice about their food e.g. are they happy with the ingredient information and details of other allergens in the kitchen?

74. A conversation could also include:

- whether any adaptations can be made to dishes to make them suitable for the consumer

75. To ensure that conversations are accurate, staff should refer to the written allergen information for consumers or use additional supporting documents providing allergen information specifically for staff such as on a chart, in a recipe book or on ingredient information sheets.

What to do with the information received from consumers

76. When you receive information about a consumer's allergen requirements, it is extremely important that the information is passed to the right people and is acted upon appropriately to ensure the consumer receives a meal that is safe for them.

77. Food businesses should have processes in place to ensure information about consumers allergen requirements are accurately recorded, easy to understand, available to the person preparing the food and the person serving the food (these could all be the same person in some circumstances).

78. One way of doing this could be a written pro forma to complete for allergen requirement information to ensure that all the information required to prepare the food is obtained and passed

on. Each business should consider their own set up and decide how best to get this information to the person preparing and serving the food.

79. If the person taking the order and receiving the allergen requirements is not the person preparing the food, or if the order is made digitally, the information should be passed directly to the person preparing the food in writing and there should be confirmation that they have received and understood the information.

80. The person preparing the food should ensure that appropriate allergen management practices are employed during the process (more information on [effective allergen management can be found on the FSA website](#)).

81. It is also crucial that the consumer receives the correct food when it is ready. The food should be easily identifiable for example by placing a label on its container, a flag can be put on top of the food or some other method to ensure it is distinguishable by the person serving the food and the consumer receiving it. The server should also verbally confirm the food meets the allergen requirements e.g. “here’s the pasta with no milk”.

Allergen Information for Non-Prepacked Foods Best Practice: Annexes

Annex A: list of relevant legislation

Annex B: Example allergen matrix indicating allergens present

Annex A: List of relevant legislation

Assimilated Regulation (EU) No. 1169/2011 on the provision of food information to consumers (“FIC”): www.legislation.gov.uk/eur/2011/1169/contents

Regulation (EU) No. 1169/2011 on the provision of food information to consumers: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/ALL/?uri=celex%3A32011R1169>

The Food Information Regulations 2014 (“FIR”): www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2014/1855/pdfs/ukxi_20141855_en.pdf

The Food Information (Wales) Regulations 2014: http://www.legislation.gov.uk/wsi/2014/2303/pdfs/wsi_20142303_mi.pdf

The Food Information Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2014: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/nisr/2014/223/contents>

The Food Information (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2022: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2022/481/contents/made>

The Food Information (Wales) (Amendment) (No. 2) Regulations 2020: www.legislation.gov.uk/wsi/2020/295/pdfs/wsi_20200295_mi.pdf

The Food Information (Amendment No. 2) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2020: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2022/481/made>

Annex B: Example allergen matrix indicating allergens present

FOOD MENU	Milk	Egg	Lupin	Sulphur Dioxide	Gluten	Celery	Crustaceans	Molluscs	Fish	Mustard	Soybean	Peanut	Sesame	Treenuts
Fish, bean and rice bowl Tilapia, black beans, slaw, guacamole and pickled onions	✓					✓			✓					
Seafood & Chorizo Paella Saffron rice, with chicken, prawns, clams and vegetables				✓			✓	✓						
Avocado & Cos Salad Mixed beans, edamame, herbs, carrots, peanuts and cashews											✓	✓	✓	✓

Download your allergen icons and posters

These allergen icon images and allergen matrices are available to download in English format for businesses in England and NI, and in a Welsh format for businesses in Wales.

Food businesses must tell consumers if they use any of the 14 regulated allergens in the food they provide.

If you sell non-prepacked or loose foods, such as a meal in a restaurant or loose brownies you can choose how to provide this information, however best practice is to have allergen information available for the consumer in writing. This works best when it is supported by a conversation with the consumer.

Allergen icons

Allergen icons are available as PNG files, and matrices are available as PDF or PPTX.

Allergen posters are available to download in an English format for businesses in England and NI, and Welsh format for businesses in Wales.

Posters are available as PDF or JPEG.



Instructions for use of allergen icons

You could choose to write **all** the allergens **present** in each food item on a menu, food ticket or label such as:

Chicken satay: contains **wheat, soy, fish, and peanut.**

Alternatively, you could choose to use symbols to represent **each allergen present** in the food. You can download individual symbols or all 14 to use on your own allergen documents.

To use the symbols effectively:

- Ensure the symbols are at least 0.6 cm x 0.6 cm in size (this is a similar size to 20 pt type font).
- Use the black and white version of the symbols if printing with a black and white printer to maximise clarity
- Download the symbols each time you wish to use them as copying and pasting could result in them becoming unclear.

The symbols can be downloaded and inserted into various programmes such as Microsoft Word to suit your business needs and have been provided in English and Welsh.

The symbols can be made larger or reduced in size, however care must be taken to ensure that the name of the allergen is clearly visible or is provided in an accessible key where the name of the allergen is clearly visible.

Extra care must be taken with nuts and cereals containing gluten, because these two food allergens are groups of foods: nuts includes all tree nuts, such as almond and hazelnut (but not peanut, which is a legume) and cereals containing gluten includes most grains, such as wheat and barley. When expressing the allergen information using symbols, a single symbol can be used to represent the allergen group. However, the food business must be able to advise on the specific nut or cereal if a consumer requires more information.

Food businesses should also be mindful when making 'free from' claims such as 'gluten free' to avoid confusion. The consumer must be able to understand whether the allergen is present or not e.g. whether a product contains a cereal/cereals containing gluten or is free from cereals containing gluten.

There is a distinction between gluten-free claims and food allergen free-from claims. This is because gluten is not an allergen, but a protein found in cereals that affects people with coeliac

disease, whilst food allergens contain a range of proteins that can cause allergic reactions. This means that all free-from claims for food allergens are a guarantee that the food will not contain that allergen, so people with that allergy are protected, e.g. a cereal-free claim is a guarantee that the food will not contain any cereals.

In contrast, a gluten-free claim is to inform people with coeliac disease that there is [less than 20ppm of gluten in the final product](#). There are rules for making gluten free claims, more information on these rules can be found in our [Food Allergen Labelling Technical Guidance](#).

Allergen icons in English:

- [Allergen icons with the allergens listed, in full colour \(English language\) - PNG files](#)
- [Allergen icons with the allergens listed, in black and white \(English language\) - PNG files](#)
- [Allergen icons without the allergens listed, in full colour \(English language\) - PNG files](#)
- [Allergen icons without the allergens listed, in black and white \(English language\) - PNG files](#)

Allergen icons in Welsh

- [Allergen icons with the allergens listed, in full colour \(Welsh language\) - PNG files](#)
- [Allergen icons with the allergens listed, in black and white \(Welsh language\) - PNG files](#)
- [Allergen icons without the allergens listed, in full colour \(Welsh language\) - PNG files](#)
- [Allergen icons without the allergens listed, in black and white \(Welsh language\) - PNG files](#)

Instructions for the use of the allergen matrix

Food businesses could choose to use an allergen matrix to provide allergen information in writing. When using a matrix must identify all of the 14 allergens that are present in the food.

This is an example of the matrix in use:

FOOD MENU	Milk	Eggs	Lupin	Sulphur Dioxide	Gluten	Celery	Crustaceans	Molluscs	Fish	Mustard	Soybean	Peanut	Sesame	Treenuts
Fish, bean and rice bowl Tilapia, black beans, slaw, guacamole and pickled onions	✓					✓			✓					
Seafood & Chorizo Paella Saffron rice, with chicken, prawns, clams and vegetables				✓			✓	✓						
Avocado & Cos Salad Mixed beans, edamame, herbs, carrots, peanuts and cashews											✓	✓	✓	✓

You can download an [editable version of this matrix](#), which can be overtyped and used for your own dishes. You can also print the matrix and handwrite dishes onto it (ensuring that it is legible and easy to understand).

Allergen matrix in English:

- [Allergen icon matrix example, full colour \(English language\) - PDF file](#)
- [Allergen icon matrix, full colour \(English language\) - PDF file](#)
- [Allergen icon matrix, full colour \(English language\) - PPTX file](#)

Allergen matrix in Welsh

- [Allergen icon matrix example, full colour \(Welsh language\) - PDF file](#)
- [Allergen icon matrix, full colour \(Welsh language\) - PDF file](#)
- [Allergen icon matrix, full colour \(Welsh language\) - PPTX file](#)

Instructions for the use of the allergen posters

It is also important to talk to consumers about their allergen requirements. Food businesses can encourage consumers to speak to staff about their needs in a number of ways such as asking consumers and/or displaying signs.

You can download a sign to display in your premises or on your website/digital platform.

There are two versions of the sign, one has a space at the bottom right-hand corner for you to personalise it with your own business logo.

To add your business logo to this version of the sign, please first download the correct poster from the FSA website. Once the poster has been downloaded, it can be edited in its JPEG format in Adobe Acrobat (the software usually used to read PDFs) by opening the file and clicking Edit > Image (select the logo image and adjust accordingly).

The working/editable version is also available on Adobe Illustrator, which would require the [Adobe Illustrator software from Adobe Creative Cloud](#).

These posters can be downloaded in English or Welsh language.

Allergen poster with space for a business logo

This is the version of the poster with a space for a business logo to be added. [You can download this poster and add your own logo.](#)

**Please talk to us if you have
a food allergy, intolerance
or coeliac disease.**

.....

We want to cater safely for everyone.

Place your logo here

Allergen poster without a space for a business logo

This version of the poster is the same, but does not include the space to add your own logo. [You can download this poster for use without adding a logo.](#)

Please talk to us if you have a food allergy, intolerance or coeliac disease.

.....

We want to cater safely for everyone.

Allergen posters in English:

- [Allergen poster with a placeholder for a company logo \(English language\) - PDF file](#)
- [Allergen poster without a logo \(English language\) - PDF file](#)
- [Allergen poster with a placeholder for a company logo \(English language\) - JPEG file](#)
- [Allergen poster without a logo \(English language\) - JPEG file](#)
- [Allergen poster with a placeholder for a company logo \(English language\) - DOCX file \(Word\)](#)
- [Instructions for editing a DOCX \(Word\) poster with a placeholder for a company logo \(English language\)](#)

Allergen posters in Welsh:

- [Allergen poster with a placeholder for a company logo \(Welsh language\) - PDF file](#)
- [Allergen poster without a logo \(Welsh language\) - PDF file](#)
- [Allergen poster with a placeholder for a company logo \(Welsh language\) - JPEG file](#)
- [Allergen poster without a logo \(Welsh language\) - JPEG file](#)
- [Allergen poster with a placeholder for a company logo \(Welsh language\) - DOCX file \(Word\)](#)

Revision log

Hide all updates

Show all updates

Published: 20 February 2025

Last updated: 5 March 2025

- **20 February 2025** Not to go live until 5th March 2025

[Back to top](#)