

Spotlight on...

Food Labelling Regulations

From December 13th 2014 business in the UK are legally required to provide allergy information on pre-packed and unpackaged foods.

How will it affect market traders?

The new regulations require traders to provide allergy information for unpackaged foods – this could be in the form of deli products, bread, cakes or sandwiches.

The regulations for pre-packed foods stay similar to the previous legislation before 13th December 2014, although amendments have been made to how information is communicated.

What are the allergens on the regulatory list?

There are 14 allergens which need to be declared when present in your product. These are:

- Celery – including stalks, leaves, seeds and celeriac
- Cereals – containing gluten, includes wheat, rye, barley and oats
- Crustaceans – such as crabs, lobster, prawns and scampi
- Eggs – often found in cakes, mayonnaise, pasta etc
- Fish – found in fish sauces, pizzas, salad dressings
- Lupin – seeds and flour, can be found in bread, pastries and pasta
- Milk – butter, cheese, cream, milk powders and yoghurt
- Molluscs – mussels, land snails, squid and whelks
- Mustard – includes liquid mustard, mustard powder and seeds
- Nuts – hazelnuts, walnuts, cashews, pecan nuts, Brazil nuts are some examples
- Peanuts – found in cakes, biscuits, curries and sauces
- Sesame seeds – bread, breadsticks, hummus and sesame oil
- Soya – can be found in miso paste, soya protein, soya flour or tofu
- Sulphur Dioxide – used as a preservative in dried fruit, meat products and soft drinks

How will this be enforced?

The new regulations will be enforced by Food Standards Agency and Trading Standards, so people with food allergies are more aware of what they eat.

Customers that are allergic to any ingredients in your food can be at risk, therefore it is important to protect both your customer and your business.

It is classed as acceptable to provide verbal communication only of the ingredients in your product, however even though providing information verbally may fulfil the requirements of the legislation, it may not protect you from a liability claim if a customer has a reaction to one of the allergens.

What to do next...

- Learn more about the new food allergen regulations and encourage your employees to do the same:
www.food.gov.uk/business-industry/allergy-guide/allergen-resources
- Keep a comprehensive record of any allergens included in your product – any changes of allergens should also be recorded
- Signpost any present allergens in your food on a menu or chalkboard
- Ensure information on any allergens in your products is readily available for your customer

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