

FA/03: Assessment of food allergens

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 Customers with food allergies have a need to take care when eating out so as to avoid consuming certain foods that could cause harm. Food businesses have a legal requirement placed upon them to ensure that any food produced and/or prepared is safe to eat.
- 1.2 Since 13th December 2014 it has been a legal requirement to present consumers with information in respect to allergenic foods, if requested.
- 1.3 The University of Warwick requires that all food businesses shall provide clear and concise information on the inclusion of allergenic foods and indeed other ingredients that are present in dishes, and of which must be up to date.

2.0 Risk assessment

- 2.1 A base-line risk assessment shall be carried out at local-level by managers to determine what control measures are in place for the mitigation of the unintentional presence of food allergens within food. Refer to **FA/04: Assessment of food allergens**.
- 2.2 The main aim of an assessment is to identify the steps within the food chain where there is potential for the unintentional introduction of food allergens into other foods. From the findings managers will need to identify, implement and manage control measures appropriate to the type of business to ensure the exclusion of allergenic ingredients where they are not required.
- 2.3 Significant factors that shall be considered in any such risk assessment are as follows:
 - has a local-system for the control of food allergens been identified and implemented;
 - are the work-force competent in food allergen matters;
 - is there a clearly defined system for obtaining allergen information from existing and potential suppliers;
 - is there a clearly defined format for the way in which food allergen information is presented to customers;
 - is there a clearly defined procedure for the acquisition of allergen information from customers
 - are there documented control measures in place for the mitigation of the unintentional inclusion of food allergens within food stuffs throughout the food chain and are they effective; and
 - where applicable food allergen information is made readily available to customers upon ordering and at point of delivery where a department provides 'distance' purchasing.
- 2.4 The management of any such risk will need to be reviewed on a regular basis and in any event if there has been a change to:
 - product and ingredient specification and recipes;
 - methods of work and cleaning procedures;

SECTION 4 - FOOD ALLERGENS

- situations that present a significant risk; and
- there has been a reported allergen-related incident.

2.5 Although a pure Hazard Analysis approach has a role to play in allergen risk assessment, it is generally recognised that it is an inadequate system for the management of allergens as they tend to be categorised as chemical hazards and as such it tends to treat all allergens as being the same when clearly they are not.

Version	Date of issue	Author	Endorsed by
V3	June 2019	Graham Day; Health & Safety Adviser	Graham Hakes; Senior Health & Safety Adviser