

# FOOD SAFETY DISCUSSION

## Allergens Awareness for Back of House Staff



### WHAT WE ARE GOING TO TALK ABOUT

In this Food Safety Discussion we will discuss allergens and the controls required within the kitchen to reduce the risk of allergic reactions.

### WHY THIS IS IMPORTANT

After this discussion we will:

- Understand the difference between an allergy and an intolerance.
- Learn how to control the risk of allergen incidents.

### WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

#### Allergy and Intolerance

People often get confused between an allergy and an intolerance but there are some clear differences. An allergy is a response by the body's immune system to a food/ingredient. Whereas an intolerance is difficulty digesting certain foods.

#### Cross-contamination

Cross-contamination is one of the most common causes of food poisoning and allergen transfer. It happens when harmful germs or allergens are spread onto food from other food, surfaces, hands or equipment. It's very important to follow food safety procedures to avoid cross-contamination when preparing, storing and serving food to stop harmful germs and allergens from spreading and growing.

#### Preventing Cross-contamination

Cross-contamination can be avoided by regular hand washing, following correct cleaning procedures, by using dedicated equipment appropriately, following recipe specifications and with clear communication with the front of house staff.

Regular hand washing is required throughout the shift, especially between tasks. Always wash your hands thoroughly after coming into contact with allergenic products to avoid cross-contamination.

Very small amounts of some allergens, such as nuts, milk or eggs, can cause adverse reactions, including potentially fatal anaphylactic shock. Therefore, thorough cleaning that is effective in reducing the risks of allergen cross-contamination should be used. Adequate procedures must be in place for cleaning production areas and machinery.

Allergen cross-contamination can also be avoided by having dedicated equipment such as scales, sieves, knives, boards, storage bins.

Ensure that ingredients used match those listed in the Source recipe card. Check allergen information on packaging matches allergens listed on the recipe card. If using a bespoke recipe or where ingredients differ to the planned Source recipe you must use the Source Allergen Builder to create the allergen information. Only in circumstances where there are IT/connectivity issues are the written allergen log sheets to be used. Remember when using the manual allergen log you must specify the type of gluten and nut.

#### Following recipe specifications is a vital part of controlling the risk of allergens.

Adding products not in the recipe specifications could have serious consequences, especially when adding an ingredient which is, or contains, a known allergen. Always follow the recipe specifications!

Finally, communication is an important part of controlling the risk of allergens. Before service, ensure you have briefed the front of house team as to what dishes contain what allergens. This information should be cross referenced with the information in the Allergens Folder. The folder must be located and displayed at, or near, the point of service to allow the customer easy access to the allergen information.

For further information refer to the Allergens Good Hygiene Practice Guide (GHP13).

### IN AN EMERGENCY

If a customer with an allergy becomes ill or you suspect a customer may be suffering from an allergic reaction:

- Always follow your unit emergency procedures in the first instance.
- Where the situation requires call 999 to summon emergency assistance.
- Advise the emergency services that you suspect your customer may be suffering from anaphylaxis.
- Do not move the customer.
- Make sure that a member of the catering team remains with them until help arrives.

### Know Your Allergens



**Celery.** This includes celery stalks, leaves, seeds and the root called celeriac. You can find celery in celery salt, salads, some meat products, soups and stock cubes.



**Cereals containing gluten.** Wheat, rye, barley and oats is often found in foods containing flour, such as some types of baking powder, batter, breadcrumbs, bread, cakes, couscous, meat products, pasta, pastry, sauces, soups and fried foods which are dusted with flour.



**Crustaceans.** Crabs, lobster, prawns and scampi are crustaceans. Shrimp paste, often used in Thai and south-east Asian curries or salads, is an ingredient to look out for.



**Eggs.** Eggs are often found in cakes, some meat products, mayonnaise, mousses, pasta, quiche, sauces and pastries or foods brushed or glazed with egg.



**Fish.** You will find this in some fish sauces, pizzas, relishes, salad dressings, stock cubes and Worcestershire sauce.



**Lupin.** Yes, lupin is a flower, but it's also found in flour! Lupin flour and seeds can be used in some types of bread, pastries and even in pasta.



**Milk.** Milk is a common ingredient in butter, cheese, cream, milk powders and yoghurt. It can also be found in foods brushed or glazed with milk, and in powdered soups and sauces.



**Molluscs.** These include mussels, land snails, squid and whelks, but can also be commonly found in oyster sauce or as an ingredient in fish stews.



**Mustard.** Liquid mustard, mustard powder and mustard seeds fall into this category. This ingredient can also be found in breads, curries, marinades, meat products, salad dressings, sauces and soups.



**Nuts.** Not to be mistaken with peanuts (which are actually a legume and grow underground), this ingredient refers to nuts which grow on trees, like cashew nuts, almonds and hazelnuts. You can find nuts in breads, biscuits, crackers, desserts, nut powders (often used in Asian curries), stir-fried dishes, ice cream, marzipan (almond paste), nut oils and sauces.



**Peanuts.** Peanuts are actually a legume and grow underground, which is why it's sometimes called a groundnut. Peanuts are often used as an ingredient in biscuits, cakes, curries, desserts, sauces (such as satay sauce), as well as in groundnut oil and peanut flour.



**Sesame seeds.** These seeds can often be found in bread (sprinkled on hamburger buns for example), breadsticks, houmous, sesame oil and tahini. They are sometimes toasted and used in salads.



**Soyabean.** Often found in bean curd, edamame beans, miso paste, textured soya protein, soya flour or tofu, soya is a staple ingredient in oriental food. It can also be found in desserts, ice cream, meat products, sauces and vegetarian products.



**Sulphur dioxide (sometimes known as sulphites).** This is an ingredient often used in dried fruit such as raisins, dried apricots and prunes. You might also find it in meat products, soft drinks, vegetables as well as in wine and beer. If you have asthma, you have a higher risk of developing a reaction to sulphur dioxide.