

Food Allergen Labels: Advice and Guidance

Allergen Labelling

Pre-packaged food must have a clear ingredients list. Allergenic ingredients must stand out in some way in the ingredients list. For example, they can be listed in bold, contrasting colours or underlined.

- 1 Allergenic ingredients must be declared with a clear reference to the allergen to ensure clear and uniform understanding. Examples of ingredients that need to be clearly referenced to the allergen are:

- tofu (soya)
- tahini paste (sesame)
- whey (milk)

Allergen advice statements can also be used on the product label to explain how allergen information is presented on a label, for example:

- 2 'Allergen Advice: for allergens, see ingredients in **bold**'
- 3 'Allergen Advice: for allergens including cereals that contain gluten see ingredients in **red**'

INGREDIENTS

Water, Carrots, Onions, Red Lentils (4.5%) Potatoes, Cauliflower, Leeks, Peas, Cornflower, **3 Wheatflour**, Cream **1 (milk)**, Yeast Extract, Concentrated Tomato Paste, Garlic, Sugar, **2 Celery** Seed, Sunflower Oil, Herb and Spice, White Pepper, Parsley

ALLERGY ADVICE

- 2 For allergens, see ingredient in **bold**.
- 4 For allergens including cereals that contain gluten see ingredients in **red**.
- 5 Not suitable for someone with Gluten allergy.

Precautionary allergen labelling

If there is a risk of a food product being affected by allergen cross-contamination, the label should include one of the following statements:

- 4 may contain X
- 5 not suitable for someone with X allergy

Precautionary allergen labelling should only be used after a thorough risk assessment. It should only be used if the risk of allergen cross-contamination is real and cannot be removed.

Free-from labelled foods

Free from food are special ranges of foods made without allergens. If a label states that your product is 'free-from milk' or, 'peanut free', it has to be based on specific and rigorous controls. These controls need to ensure that the final product is completely free of the particular allergen. This includes checking that all ingredients and packing materials do not contain this allergen and that cross-contamination from other foods made on site is prevented.

There is one exception to this rule which is gluten. Gluten-free labelled products can contain a maximum 20mg/kg of gluten.

Language on the label

The language on the labelling should be easily understood by the people of the country where the food is marketed. For food products sold in the UK, the information must be in English.

Multi-packs

Where products are sold in multi-packs, allergens must be displayed on the outer packaging.

If you provide allergen information on the packaging of individual products, then it has to be consistent with the outer packaging.

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