

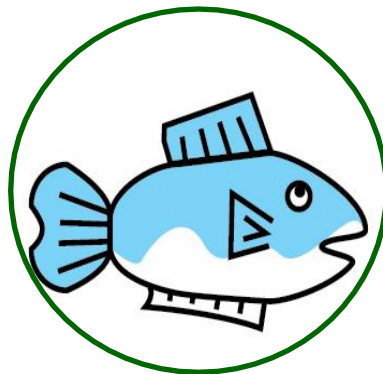
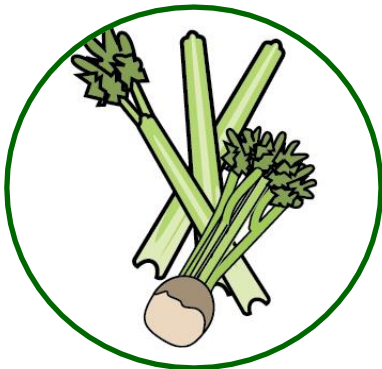
**Allergen**  
ware month 2024

**In Food Service**



© Food Service Allergen Management Ltd

## RESOURCE PACK



# CONTENTS

**Introduction**

**Training**

**Extremely Useful Links**

**About Anaphylaxis UK**

**Top Tips on allergen management**

**Digital Support for allergen and ingredient management**

**An evaluation of Natasha's Law and FSA's next steps on food hypersensitivity (FSA)**

**Don't dismiss a near miss**

**PAAS - Primary Allergen Authority Scheme - for groups**



## INTRODUCTION

**Welcome to the 2024 Resource Pack! And here's to 10 years of Allergen Accreditation that was conceived in advance of the new regulations that took effect in 2014!**



Natasha's Law, that came into effect on 1<sup>st</sup> October 2021, was the result of a campaign to ensure all pre-packed for direct sale goods had labels on them to help customers understand what allergens were in the product.

The full extent of the law -The Food Information (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2019 (SI 2019 No. 1218) was much more intense following the open consultation.

Around March 2019 the Food Standards Agency published a consultation guide for caterers, the public and any other interested bodies to state their position on the 4 choices being offered.

These 4 choices had been tabled previously following input from many people and organisations.

The fourth choice was selected which not only desired allergens being labelled but a full ingredients list was to be mandated for sandwiches and any food and drink fully or partially packaged before being sold.

Interestingly there were 1620 contributors of which only 126 food related organisations (Allergen Accreditation included) took part.

What was of greatest significance was the vast number of contributors who expressed a need for other ingredient information to be made available as there are many people intolerant and allergic to more than just the top 14 allergens.

Prior to Natasha's Law the industry best practice standard was to label all PPDS with an allergen label, but that was not widely adhered to.

In August 2023 the Food Standards Agency released its updated technical guidance on allergens in food service. This reflects the more recent consultation on PAL- Precautionary Allergen Labelling. It also deals with the use of the term NGCI- No Gluten Containing Ingredients- a term which has never been popular with best practice practitioners who profess the best terminology is always Gluten Free when referencing a product that is less than 20 parts per million of gluten. Remembering that a gluten free product that does contain barley and oats must be noted as containing these allergens. Click on the FSA link in **Extremely Useful Links** to get the very latest updated guidance.

The Owen's Law campaign started in 2021 and in May of 2023 was debated in parliament. Conversations within the FSA on this subject and where it goes next will be discussed at the end of 2023 and more will be released on this in 2024.

There are several key developments the campaign wishes to see in food service. The main thrust of Owen's Law, however, is to mandate that all menus have allergens noted on them for easy access to customers when they are selecting their foods.

Like Natasha's Law- these do take time to develop and implement.

Allergen Accreditation does work in Ireland and part of the Accreditation process there is that all allergens are noted on the menu, and this has been the case since 2014.

Overall consumer confidence is much better off with allergen regulations and eating out for food hypersensitive customers has improved.

Indeed, up until February 2020 the UK and Irish food service industry was at its very best in every respect.

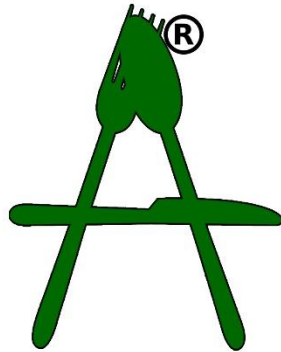
Since March 2020, however, training and maintaining qualified personnel and consistent produce from suppliers has been seriously impacted and this has resulted a decline in some operating standards when it comes to allergen management.

The next stage for allergen management is to refresh, train & develop as the market for hypersensitive customers is still growing. Cautiously, Trading Standards and local Environmental Health Officers will have far less tolerance for rules being broken that have been in place for almost 10 years.

## **FOOD ALLERGY AWARE**

**These premises comply with UK/Domestic allergy awareness legislation**

And the EU Food Information for Consumers Regulation (EU FIC) No. 1169/2011



**[www.allergenaccreditation.co.uk](http://www.allergenaccreditation.co.uk)**

January represents a great time of the year to renew, refresh and reinvigorate all your allergen training, systems, procedures, and communication methods with consumers.

Please do share with colleagues and ensure posters are properly distributed and displayed.

Please get in touch if you have any queries or questions on this content and the wider implications of safely managing allergens in your business.

Thank you for taking time out to be part of **#allerjanuary** and continuing with your Food Allergen Customer Excellence journey!

**So, here's to a safe and prosperous 2024!**

**Best Wishes from all of us here at**



## TRAINING

All staff that work in and around consumables should have a basic induction and overview of allergens.

Then, dependent on their actual job descriptions they will need to be put through a structured training delivery to ensure they fully understand:

- The 14 top allergens and where they occur in the business
- The law
- Handling procedures, PPE, and cross contamination
- Kitchen systems including HACCP and monitoring procedures
- The effects on people with allergies
- What anaphylaxis is, an auto adrenalin injector, coeliac disease etc
- Medical emergency and how to deal with it
- Communication methods with customers including PPDS.

Our experience of delivering training over several years has allowed us to recommend what type of training is best suited to businesses.

What you can do today, right now, is to log in and undertake the (free) Food Standards Agency allergen course, which includes information on PPDS and then roll this out across your entire workforce.



<https://allergytraining.food.gov.uk/>

For chefs and managers, the **Highfield Level 3 Award in Food Allergen Management for Caterers** course is best suited and a whole day is allowed to ensure all the content is delivered and understood.

For general staff **Highfield Level 2 Award in Food Allergen Awareness and Control in Catering (RQF)** course is best suited. This can be delivered over 5 hours.

For both these 'classrooms' of 10-20 work well.

One of the most acclaimed courses for allergen awareness for staff groups is the **Purple Allergen Plan** which has been designed to provide allergen training aimed at Level 2 standard. The course provides all the information required to understand the top 14 allergens and provides valuable information on how to integrate Allergen Management into the busy workplace.

On completion of a multiple-choice test, the attendees will appreciate the importance of good allergen management, will appreciate the risks of cross-contamination, and will have an overview of delivery, storage, food preparation and food service in relation to allergens.



A classroom of circa 20 candidates works for this course.

Both the Level 3 course AND Purple Allergen Plan are available online. This has worked extremely well for individuals or smaller groups who need to complete these courses but need to do it at home or at their place of work.

For more details on the above and training in general follow the link here:

<https://www.allergenaccreditation.co.uk/about-allergen-training/>

**The more we learn... the better we cater!**

## EXTREMELY USEFUL LINKS

Regulatory  
body and  
technical  
guidance



<https://www.food.gov.uk/business-guidance/allergen-guidance-for-food-businesses>

Plain English  
fact sheets,  
training, and  
resources



<https://www.allergywise.org.uk/>

A mission to  
bring about  
positive change  
by focusing on  
law and policies



<https://www.narf.org.uk/>

Allergen and  
ingredient  
platform for  
recording and  
customer  
communication



<https://www.catercloud.com/allergy/>

Rules and  
regulations in  
Ireland



<https://www.fsai.ie/home.html>

Award winning  
free from  
products



<https://www.freefromfoodawards.co.uk/>



## **Anaphylaxis UK provides essential help and assistance to those with severe allergies and their families.**

**Allergen Accreditation** is a proud supporter of the Campaign!

By accessing their web site, you will find a host of useful information and be able to learn more about allergies, the support available, training and emergency procedures as well as some compelling videos that they have campaigned to fund in order to educate the widest possible audience.

### **What is anaphylaxis?**

Anaphylaxis (pronounced ana-fill-ax-is) is a severe and potentially life-threatening allergic reaction affecting more than one body system such as the airways, heart, circulation, gut and skin. Symptoms can start within seconds or minutes of exposure to the food or substance you are allergic to and usually will progress rapidly. On rare occasions there may be a delay in the onset of a few hours.

### **And what are the causes of anaphylaxis?**

The common causes of anaphylaxis include foods such as peanuts, tree nuts, milk, eggs, shellfish, fish, sesame seeds and kiwi fruit, although many other foods have been known to trigger anaphylaxis. Non-food causes include wasp or bee stings, natural latex (rubber), and certain drugs such as penicillin. In some people exercise can trigger a severe reaction – either on its own or in combination with other factors such as food or drugs (e.g., aspirin).



*A brighter future for people with serious allergies*

### **Top Tips on allergen management**

Allergen Accreditation colleagues broadly spend most of their time on site, in a kitchen or service area. This is for official duties of training, auditing and supporting caterers as well as when we are visiting non accredited businesses.

Its fair to say that whilst immense progress has been made by the UK and Ireland food industry there is still a way to go for many organisations. Generally, the less the food industry does to improve its allergen management, the more legislation will be imposed to protect consumers.

Here's some top tips we hope that you will consider or double check that all is in order!

- Menu design- if you have added an ingredient that is slightly off the normal recipe- tell your customers in the menu!
- If you are pre-packing for direct sale (PPDS/ Natasha's Law) stick to the rules and only use may contain when there is a real risk, not just claim that your products are not suitable for people with allergies to anything! (Note: Allergen Accreditation does not allow any may contain statements for goods produced freshly by the caterer)
- Don't ignore the law: Make sure your customer allergen posters are up and easily visible.
- For tree nuts and cereals containing gluten- it's the cereal or nut that must be listed. Just noting Gluten or Nuts informs your customers you have not even read the guidance.
- If you do use a key on your menu, make sure its accurate and clear.
- If asked by a customer about allergens in your food and drinks have this written down, to hand and make it as easy as possible for the customer to see.
- Some establishments now ask customers about allergens when they take an order. It is up to the customer to raise the subject first BUT this does make perfect sense and should become part of the standard greeting and opening dialogue between server and customer.
- Delivered ready to consume foods and drinks is probably the biggest growing sector of food service and is here to stay. Accredited businesses must ensure written allergen information is provided with the delivery. Save yourself, the business and consumer the time effort and potential challenge by providing allergen information in writing at the point of handover.
- Review your whole allergen procedures and get some advice in. We do a lot of this work as a prelude to Accreditation or a stand-alone review. This works particularly well when there are conflicting views!

Allergen Accredited businesses must follow the Full Allergen Disclosure Code which ensures there is no confusion when ordering, preparing and at the point of service.

When we decant food from packaging, cook it and serve it on a plate WE take on the responsibility of telling our customer what's in the dish - no may's no but's!



*Allergens, intolerances, or coeliac disease? Please ask a member of the team. We've got this covered and will be delighted to talk you through our ingredients and processes.*

*And remember to ask each time you come as we are a creative bunch and may sometimes change our recipes!*

©Food Service Allergen Management Limited

## **DIGITAL SUPPORT FOR ALLERGEN AND INGREDIENT MANAGEMENT from CATERCLOUD**

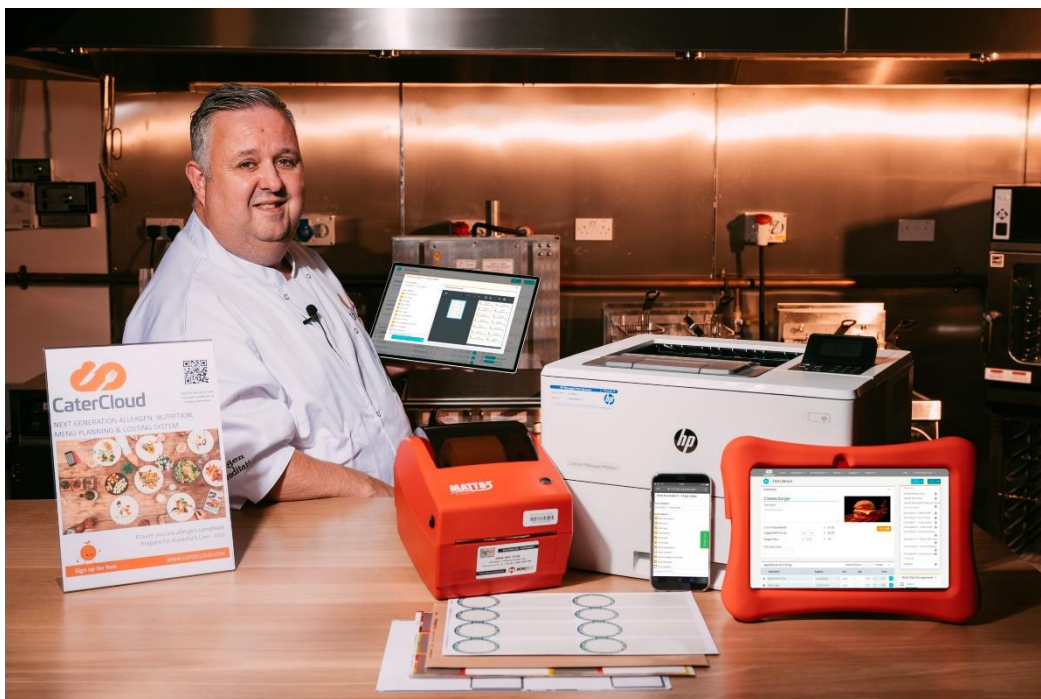
Getting tech savvy is an essential part of running a catering and hospitality business. And the bigger you are, or the more dishes and drinks you offer, the more likely you are to need to save all your recipe and allergen information on the computer!



What's the point of this?

- Centralising recipe and ingredient information that can be updated and changed on a software system at a central point allows for speedier access for multiple users and to remain up to date. Therefore, it makes perfect sense.
- The business can demonstrate it has recorded all allergens and ingredients to be shown to a customer on request, via menus and allergen matrices.
- this can also be used for storing unused seasonal recipes, methods, HACCP recording and to publish nutritional data. So, there are a lot more benefits to be achieved!
- **What about labels for Natasha's Law? Got this covered here too!**
- **What if we need to count calories and publish mandatory nutritional information for our client base? Got this covered here too!**
- Having a cloud-based system that also generates QR codes means there are no costly re-prints of menus and customers can access up to the minute ingredient and allergen information - perfect when making dietary choices and great for front of house staff!

Find a compatible system for your needs...



Book your free demonstration today and make the most of this resource!

<https://www.catercloud.com/allergy/>

## An evaluation of Natasha’s Law and FSA’s next steps on food hypersensitivity (FSA)

# Food Allergy or Intolerance?

If you have a food allergy, intolerance, or coeliac disease – please speak to the staff about the ingredients in your food and drink before you order.

Thank you.



The Food Standards Agency’s (FSA) fundamental mission is food you can trust. For some people living with a food allergy, intolerance, or coeliac disease, we know that food not being what it says it is can be fatal.

In October 2021, following the tragic death of Natasha Ednan-Laperouse, we introduced a new allergen labelling law, also known as Natasha’s Law. The new law requires businesses selling pre-packed for direct sale (PPDS) food to attach a label containing the name of the product and a full ingredients list to each individual PPDS product, with allergens emphasised within the list.

### Evaluation of Natasha’s Law

Today, we have published a report evaluating the impact of the law. I am pleased to say that our evaluation finds that 91% of businesses are aware of the law, and 68% indicated they have all the information they need to follow it. We will continue to proactively promote our tools and guidance on the law to businesses to ensure the safe and successful running of their operations.

40% of people surveyed, living with a food hypersensitivity, say their lives have been improved – and the impact has been greater among younger people aged between 18 and 34 years than older adults aged 65+years.

The evaluation found few unintended consequences following the introduction of the law. One such unintended consequence has been an increase in the application of Precautionary

Allergen Labelling (PAL). We are already working to address this with updated technical guidance on best practice for applying PAL, encouraging food businesses to be more consistent in their approach to give greater confidence to those living with a food hypersensitivity.

Half of food business operators (FBOs) surveyed reported that the new requirements had increased their costs. Interviews with businesses found that there were ongoing costs, but these were less significant than the set-up costs and did not pose an issue to the survival of the business.

We will continue to monitor the impact of the allergen labelling law and local authorities will continue to make sure businesses are complying with it to keep people with food allergies safe.

We will also be looking to take some of the lessons learned from introducing Natasha's Law into the next phase of our Food Hypersensitivity work.

Over the last year we have been gathering evidence to inform our proposals on how allergen information should be provided for non-prepacked food in the out-of-home sector. An example of this is how allergen information is provided in restaurants.

**Cown Copyright**- Full article here: <https://food.blog.gov.uk/2023/07/19/an-evaluation-of-natashas-law-and-fsas-next-steps-on-food-hypersensitivity>

## PAAS - Primary Allergen Authority Scheme - for groups



### **About:**

This approach enables organisations with multiple sites to take full advantage of a centralised control system in order to roll out and continuously monitor its safe food allergen management across its business base.

We accredit your key personnel as Senior Allergen Advisors as they will be instrumental at the test site to attain Allergen Accreditation status.

Under Allergen Accreditation's supervision you will be able to accredit your venues by ensuring the venue team are fully bought in, they have completed their framework/application and your SAA validates this - then we administer the certification.

Allergen Accreditation supports you throughout and will invite your SAA's to annual events and keep these updated with news and information. They will also help shape the Accreditation process in its continuous development.

### **Entry Requirements:**

Food Allergen Customer Excellence, Full Allergen Disclosure, Written Allergen Information, Assisted Customer Support, Allergen Advisor (on duty) as well as compliance to the EU & Domestic Legal requirements all form part of an initial meeting to explore how your company operates and the expected standards from Allergen Accreditation.

Businesses must identify a lead champion or champions eligible to become Senior Allergen Advisors (Auditing experience and food safety qualifications/experience).



**Some of the team from Kirklees Catering Services who have been tasked with accrediting 170 schools across the region!**

**These colleagues are all Senior Allergen Advisors (SAA) in Food Service and are now certified to accredit any food and drink business in the UK.**



# ...Job done!

## Don't dismiss a near miss.

Be safe... not sorry!

Don't Dismiss a

### Near Miss!

1 Recognise It

2 Report It

3 Review It

Report it to management to review the incident, improving food safety & allergen management across the UK.



Caroline & Jacqui

Have you heard about our Near Miss campaign? What is it, why are we doing this ?

Jacqui McPeake Chief Allergen Advisor at [Allergen Accreditation](#) and Director of [JACS Ltd](#) and Caroline Benjamin Director of [Food Allergy Aware](#) have collaborated together as [HASUK](#) to raise awareness of allergens across the UK.

The #Nearmiss campaign was launched to raise awareness of food safety, to improve food allergen procedures and to ensure that #Nearmiss incidents are reported, investigated and procedures updates.

### Definition of a "Near Miss"

A near miss is an undesired event that, under slightly different circumstances, could have resulted in harm to people or damage to property, materials or the environment.

Research has shown that for every 90 near misses an accident will occur. The ultimate goal of near miss reporting, is to address the incident and take action to prevent reoccurrence and remove the potential of an accident.

The coroner at the inquest for Natasha Ednan-Laperouse noted that six families had reported to Pret a Manger their concerns that the baguettes used contained sesame flour and that there was an issue with the labelling of the products.

Previously Pret did not have a system in place to capture and respond to consumer feedback, however this has now been rectified.

### Health & Safety & Near Miss

It is common practice within companies to hold regular Health & Safety meetings to review any incidents and to highlight any Near Miss incidents which could have resulted in a serious



accident or worse. The review will investigate the incident, find out the cause and review and amend procedures.

This process is not currently common practice in the hospitality industry. It would not be uncommon for a chef to be flippant when a customer reports a #NearMiss incident.

We can all imagine a scenario where the customer reports to the chef or the manager “I was lucky I didn’t eat that dish as I didn’t realise it contained xxxxx allergen and if I had eaten it I would have been very ill or had a severe anaphylactic reaction” The chef/manager may brush this off with a flippant comment- lucky you didn’t eat it then!!

Within the hospitality industry, chefs have a great sense of pride in their work, they take their role very seriously. Often, they find it difficult to accept negative feedback, however we all learn from feedback, both good and bad. Feedback from an FHS consumer will help us to improve if we review #Nearmiss incidents we will protect our customers.

### **Change**

We want to change this and highlight that all feedback must be reviewed, particularly where concerns have been raised in relation to #Nearmiss incidents.

All #Nearmiss incidents should be recorded, investigated and action taken as required. Procedures may need to be updated and all changes must be communicated to team members. It is also important to respond to the customer and reassure them that their feedback has been noted and acted upon.

### **Don’t Dismiss a Near Miss**

Now is the time to bring Food Safety back on the agenda. Following a very difficult couple of years for everyone and particularly for the hospitality industry, priorities naturally changed. Survival was key and ensuring the business survived. Food safety and allergen management slipped down the agenda. It is time now to tighten up the processes, review, retrain and make sure that the FHS customer has the confidence to eat out safely.

The Near Miss report has been published and you can download the report [here](#)

### **Next Steps**

HASUK will be launching a database which will capture near miss incidents which can be reported by the FHS consumer. They are also aiming to encourage the hospitality industry to share their experiences, anonymously if they prefer in order that best practice in Near Miss incidents can be shared. The database will enable HASUK to collect data, track trends and share knowledge across the industry.



# Food Allergen Customer Excellence

For more information, or just an informal chat about getting your premises accredited, training, auditing or to join the PAAS scheme contact:  
[office@allergenaccreditation.co.uk](mailto:office@allergenaccreditation.co.uk)



## About Allergen Accreditation:

This is the UK and Ireland (the Statutory Instrument (S.I.) No. 489 of 2014-for Ireland) Professional Standard for all catering businesses for the safe management of food allergens. Any catering business can access our validated framework and apply to have their allergen systems and procedures evaluated and verified. The scheme covers the EU FIC (European Union Food Information for Consumers 1169/2011 Regulations), UK/ Domestic regulations, Full Allergen Disclosure and Food Allergen Customer Excellence. It is a contributing organisation to Anaphylaxis UK.

Allergen Accreditation is the operational name of Food Service Allergen Management Limited

## For Food Service & Licensed Businesses

<http://allergenaccreditation.co.uk>

Email: [office@allergenaccreditation.co.uk](mailto:office@allergenaccreditation.co.uk)

X [@AllergenAwareUK](#)