

Food allergen labelling and information requirements technical guidance:

Introduction

An introduction to the guidance

1. The legislative framework around the provision of food allergen information is largely contained in assimilated Regulation (EU) No. 1169/2011 (for England and Wales) and Regulation (EU) No. 1169/2011 (for Northern Ireland). These regulations will be referred to as the Food Information to Consumers, or FIC, throughout this document. The Food Information Regulations 2014 (FIR), the Food Information ([Wales](#)) Regulations 2014 and the Food Information Regulations ([Northern Ireland](#)) 2014 establish the enforcement measures for FIC. These regulations will be referred to as the FIR throughout this document.
2. The FIC imposes a duty on food businesses to ensure that all mandatory food allergen information (relating to 14 substances listed in the FIC that are known to cause allergies) is accurate, available, and easily accessible to the consumer. The FIC applies to all food supplied by food businesses including when food is offered complimentary or otherwise without charge. The FIC allows a distinction to be made between prepacked foods and non-prepacked foods in how mandatory allergen information is provided to consumers.
3. These guidance notes cover the interpretation and application of allergen provisions for prepacked, non-prepacked and prepacked for direct sale (PPDS) foods. The provision of voluntary information is also covered. This guidance does not cover other labelling requirements (such as other general labelling (e.g., country of origin, minced meat, quantities, additives, nutrition etc.)
4. Failure to comply with the allergen provisions may result in a food business or Food Business Operator (FBO) being served with an improvement notice or a criminal prosecution.

Intended audience

5. These guidance notes are intended to help food businesses such as producers, manufacturers, packers, importers, distributors, wholesalers, retailers, caterers, and enforcement officers responsible for enforcing relevant measures.
6. Individuals who([footnote](#)) occasionally provide food at charity events or voluntary cake sales, for example, may also need to follow the legal requirements. If you are a charity or community food provider and unsure whether you should be registered as a food business, you should speak to your local authority's environmental health department. Further guidance is also available in the FSA's guidance on providing food at community and charity events which is available on the FSA's website: [Guidance on Providing Food at Community Charity Events](#).

Purpose of the guidance

7. These guidance notes have been produced to:

- provide best practice guidance on the practical application of FIC and FIR specific requirements on allergen labelling and information.
- develop understanding by providing regulatory guidance and interpretation in this area.

Legal status of guidance

8. Directly applicable EU legislation no longer applies in GB. EU legislation retained when the UK exited the EU became assimilated law on 1 January 2024, published on legislation.gov.uk. References to any legislation in FSA guidance with 'EU' or 'EC' in the title (e.g. Regulation (EC) 178/2002) should now be regarded as assimilated law where applicable to GB. References to 'Retained EU Law' or 'REUL' should now be regarded as references to assimilated law.

For businesses moving goods from Great Britain to Northern Ireland, information on [the Windsor Framework](#) including the NI Retail Movement Scheme (NIRMS) is available on GOV.UK.

9. These guidance notes have been produced to provide:

- guidance on legal requirements of the FIC and the FIR and
- best practice guidance on the application of the FIC and the FIR.

10. Businesses with specific queries should seek advice from their local enforcement agency, which will usually be the trading standards/environmental health department of their local authority.

11. The guidance notes on legal requirements cannot cover every situation and you may need to consider the relevant legislation itself to see how it applies in your circumstances. If you follow the guidance notes they will help you to comply with the law. You are not required by law to follow best practice guidance. All guidance on best practice is identified in bold text with a heading of Best Practice.

12. This guidance also uses practical examples to help explain the requirements. All examples are identified in bold text, with a heading of Example: