MenuCal - Calorie and allergen tool

MenuCal is a free online tool which helps food businesses put allergen and calorie information on their menu.

About MenuCal

The [MenuCal](#) tool helps food businesses comply with legal requirements to manage and record allergen information. It can also be used to calculate the amount of energy in food and drink on the menu.

Developed for food businesses in Northern Ireland, MenuCal is a free, practical and easy to use tool. It can be accessed online using a computer, tablet or phone and stores information safely and securely.

Allergen information

Currently, the law requires food businesses to declare if food and drink served contains any of the 14 main allergens, these include:

- celery
- cereals containing gluten – including wheat (such as spelt and Khorasan), rye, barley and oats
- crustaceans – such as prawns, crabs and lobsters
- eggs
- fish
- lupin
- milk
- molluscs – such as mussels and oysters
- mustard
- peanuts
- sesame
- soybeans
- sulphur dioxide and sulphites (if they are at a concentration of more than ten parts per million)
- tree nuts – including almonds, hazelnuts, walnuts, brazil nuts, cashews, pecans, pistachios and macadamia nuts

MenuCal supports food businesses to comply with the law by helping to identify, manage and communicate allergen information for food and drink on the menu. The tool is practical and easy to use, making it straightforward for staff to keep records up to date.

MenuCal helps food businesses provide accurate allergen information to customers and as a result, customers can feel more confident to ask about allergenic ingredients when eating out.

[Allergen Guidance for Businesses](#) includes advice on providing allergen information and best practice for handling allergens.

Calorie information

NI consumers are eating out more often (FSA, 2021). Given the increasing influence food businesses have on consumer diets, they now have a greater part to play in making the food environment healthier.

MenuCal can be used to calculate the amount of energy – in both kilojoules (KJ) and kilocalories (kcal) – in food and drink.

Calculating the amount of energy in menu items has the potential to help food businesses increase profitability through standardisation of recipes. Putting calories on the menu could also give food businesses a competitive edge as current food trends point towards a rise in demand for healthier foods and products.

Energy information can help food business operators make smarter choices about the food they serve. It can also be used to change portion sizes to reduce energy content or alter the ingredients to provide healthier options.

Through the FSA's [Calorie Wise scheme,](#) support and advice is available to food businesses to help them put energy information on the menu.

Key features of MenuCal:

- simple and free to use
- includes training and user demos
- stores information safely and securely
- confidential for user
- can be tailored to suit each business
- can be used on a web-enabled mobile device
- printable documents

Visit [MenuCal](#) to sign up.