

### Allergens

#### Some facts about allergens

All food businesses operating in the UK must tell customers if they use any of the 14 key allergens as ingredients in the food and drink that they provide. Food businesses include restaurants, cafés and takeaways, and businesses that produce, manufacture or pre-pack food.

The 14 allergens are:



#### Food allergens in the kitchen

#### Managing allergen ingredients

It is vitally important to know what is in all foods that are provided in your setting and that records of allergen ingredients are given as written information to parents, carers, staff and visitors.

Allergen ingredients information should be:

- recorded on product specification sheets
- included on ingredients labels and ingredients should be kept in original or labelled containers
- included in recipes or explanations of the dishes provided – you need to consider the impact when recipes change
- up to date

## Controlling cross contamination

There are different things you can do to prevent cross-contamination with allergens. These include:

- having separate work surfaces, chopping boards and utensils for foods prepared free from one or several allergens
- cleaning utensils before each usage, especially if they were used
- prepare meals containing allergens
- storing ingredients and prepared foods separately in closed and labelled containers
- keeping ingredients that contain allergens separate from other ingredients
- washing hands thoroughly between preparing dishes with and without certain allergens

*Source: Food Standards Agency*

## Food allergens in an early years or school setting

Handling food allergens in environments where children are served food, serve themselves snacks or use food in play and learning activities, can be challenging. The key elements that help manage these challenges include;

- Having up-to-date knowledge and information about a child's allergies and any known medical conditions including individual care plans where relevant.
- Ensuring that strategies and systems are in place and that they communicate information about allergens for specific children in the setting. This is further supported by robust risk assessment and management.
- Taking into account ingredients found in food items brought into the setting from home or elsewhere.
- Thinking about resources used in play that children come into contact with that can cause an allergic reaction i.e. oils used to make playdough that contain nuts.
- Being aware that young children may develop allergies that have previously not been recognised or identified.
- Ensuring that staff know what to do and what actions to take in an emergency.
- Providing sufficient Paediatric First Aid trained staff who are available to respond to an emergency and have immediate access to a child's emergency medication should they require it.