

Essex Food

Food Allergy Policy

Essex Food is committed to reducing the risk to staff, students and visitors with regard to the provision of food and the consumption of allergens in food which could lead to an allergic reaction. We recognise that advisory labelling is essential for people with food allergies, and that manufacturers are striving to provide helpful information. All allergenic ingredients will be identified on the label according to relevant legislation. Where cross contamination from an allergen is likely the label will include a warning message. National guidelines or codes of practice will be applied when using such a warning statement.

All new products supplied are routinely checked for allergen information and our menus are updated regularly to reflect the ingredients used in their production.

Allergy rights – what the law means for you

Under EU law, any prepacked food or drink sold in the UK must clearly state on the label if it contains the following ingredients

1. Celery
2. Cereals that contain gluten (including wheat, rye, barley and oats)
3. Crustaceans (including prawns, crabs and lobsters)
4. Eggs
5. Fish
6. Lupin (lupins are common garden plants, and the seeds from some varieties are sometimes used to make flour)
7. Milk
8. Molluscs (including mussels and oysters)
9. Mustard
10. Tree nuts – such as almonds, hazelnuts, walnuts, brazil nuts, cashews, pecans, pistachios and macadamia nuts
11. Peanuts
12. Sesame seeds
13. Soybeans
14. Sulphur dioxide and sulphites (preservatives that are used in some foods and drink)

Essex Food monitors four key factors towards the successful management of harmful allergens.

1. Supplier Information

- Working closely with suppliers to enable up to date and clear labelling of all products that may contain allergens. Any new products are routinely checked for allergen information and our menus are updated regularly.

2. Good kitchen and service practices

- All our catering team are trained as part of their induction on Allergens and food handling. As part of staff inductions they undertake a certified test <http://allergytraining.food.gov.uk/english/default.aspx> to ensure they are fully informed of the role they play in safe food practices.
- Allergen notices are in place for both our staff and customers.
- Essex Food work closely with the EHO under the Food Standards Agency to ensure we are compliant with rules and best practice in all our units on campus.
- Documented cleaning schedules are available and cover all aspects of the operation, including yards, vehicles, and personnel facilities. As a minimum, our schedules contain information about the frequency of cleaning, the materials used, methods of use, contact times, rinsing, safety and dilution rates of cleaning agents, the equipment used and the responsibility for the cleaning operation.

3. Managing cross contamination and cross contact

- Maintaining rigid food hygiene standards throughout food handling areas.
- Where allergenic ingredients are packaged openly/loosely, they are stored separately to reduce the risk of cross contamination.
- Supplier questionnaires to check the allergenic status of ingredients are used particularly with new suppliers.
- Physical segregation within the production area is sought at all times.
- All food handlers employed are trained in all areas of good food hygiene practice

4. Food hygiene and HACCP training

- All food handling staff must be trained to a level which is commensurate with their work activities, but should generally be to at least the equivalent to Level 2 Award in Food Safety. This is completed with a Local Authority Accepted Certificate, through Food Safety at Work...
- Records are kept of all training and plans are made to carry out formal refresher training at



intervals of not more than three years.

- Basic induction training is carried out on commencement of employment and then more formally within the next three months. All new food handling staff are be closely supervised and placed into areas where there is less risk.
- Procedures are in place to ensure that agency or temporary employees who handle food are also appropriately trained for the task required and are closely supervised

General communication of food safety information

Policy and other information affecting food safety or hygiene should be communicated to all staff in an appropriate manner. This may include information of food safety / quality policies, quality management, personal hygiene standards and food related diseases. Staff are trained to escalate any concerns a customer may have regarding food intolerance to a line manager if they are unsure of product content.

Advisory labelling

Manufacturers often use phrases such as 'may contain' to show that there could be small amounts of an allergen for example milk, egg, nuts etc. in a food product because it has entered the product accidentally during the production process.

It's not a legal requirement to say on the label that a food might accidentally contain small amounts of an allergen, but many manufacturers label their products in this way to warn their customers of this risk.

Specific allergy and food intolerance product information

Nut Allergy

Items known to contain nuts are directly labelled or labelled on menus. Essex Food and their suppliers are unable to guarantee that products do not contain nut derivatives, due to the potential of airborne contamination. This policy is in line with the industry standard and following advice from the Food Standard Agency and external consultants.

Lactose-Free Diet

Alternative milk for drinks is available on request. Light, dairy-free spread is used as standard in all sandwiches and baguettes.

Gluten-Free Diet

Gluten-free bread is available with any sandwich filling on request. Gluten free biscuits and cakes are available in all our units Gluten-free individual biscuits are available in snacks / sundries and finger buffet menus. Gluten-free crisps are available on snacks & sundries menu. Gluten-free biscuits are

available with tea/coffee on request. A gluten-free working lunch is available.

Low-Fat Diet

Semi-skimmed milk is used as standard for all hot drinks. Skimmed milk is available on request.
Light, dairy-free spread is used as standard in all sandwiches and baguettes.
Light mayonnaise is used as standard for applicable sandwich fillings.
A healthy working lunch is available.

Vegetarian/Vegan Diets

Items suitable for a vegetarian or vegan diet are included as standard throughout our menus and labelled where necessary.
Soya milk for hot drinks is available on request.
Light, dairy-free spread is used as standard in all sandwiches and baguettes.
A vegan working lunch is now available.

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