



**muswellbrook
shire council**



FOOD NEWSLETTER

December 2021 Edition



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BE PREPARED, BE ALLERGY AWARE

AVOID CROSS CONTAMINATION

Cross contamination occurs when food containing allergens comes into contact with food that does not. Examples might include:

- A food handler using the same cutting board to cut a peanut butter sandwich, and then a ham sandwich.
- A baker making muffins that contain eggs, then using the same unwashed mixer to mix a dough without eggs.
- A chef preparing cooked prawns on a plate and then cutting lettuce without first washing hands thoroughly.

ALL ABOUT ALLERGENS - FREE ONLINE COURSES

Free online courses are available to assist proprietors and workers in any food business to gain knowledge about food allergens, and to develop best practice procedures for making their food business safe for customers with allergies. Find out more at:

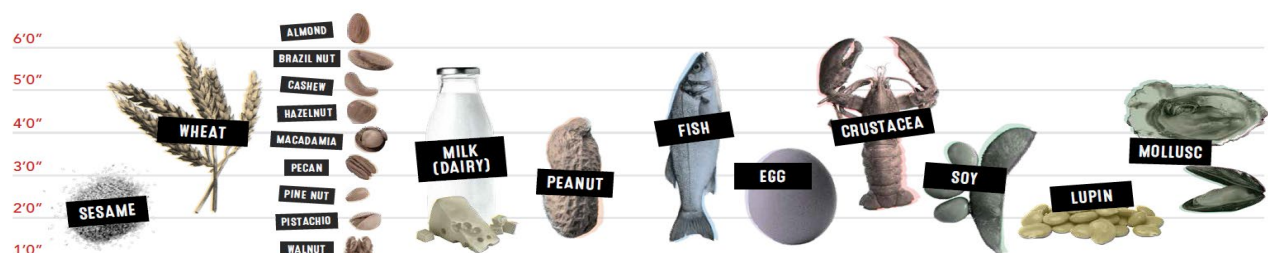
<https://foodallergytraining.org.au/>

Current training courses are available for:

- Food service workers
- Cooks and Chefs
- Camp staff Cooks and Chefs
- Hospital Kitchen Managers and Supervisors
- Hospital Kitchen Staff
- Hospital Ward Managers and Nurses
- Hospital Ward Support Staff
- Schools
- Children's education and care

THE USUAL SUSPECTS

"THE FOODS BELOW CAUSE
AROUND 90% OF FOOD
ALLERGIC REACTIONS."





BE PREPARED, BE ALLERGY AWARE

1. **KNOW** WHAT IS IN YOUR FOOD

- Only accept correctly labelled foods.
- Check all ingredients even in sauces, spices, garnishes, oils, dressings etc for allergens.
- Avoid ingredient substitution.
- Be familiar with all ingredients as some may be made from one or more of the food allergens which may not be obvious from their name.

2. **LISTEN** TO YOUR CUSTOMERS AND BE 100% TRUTHFUL

- Ask customers if they have any allergies. Take their requests seriously. Listen carefully.
- Give customers the right information about the content of meals when they ask.
- Have a specific process to follow if a customer says they have a food allergy.
- Place the name of known allergens next to menu items, if possible.
- Ensure you ALWAYS include a note asking customers to disclose their food allergy EVERY time they order food as often not all allergen content is written on the menu.

3. **PREPARE** FOOD SAFELY

- Always double check the ingredients with the chef.
- Handle food safely. Start fresh for meals that must be free of an allergen.
- Clean and sanitise work surfaces, utensils and other food-contact items between foods. Even very small amounts can be harmful.
- Have a dedicated area for preparing allergen free meals (be aware that food that is safe for one person with a food allergy may be unsafe for another person with a different food allergy).
- Whenever possible, prepare foods for customers with food allergy first.
- Have some way of identifying the meal for the customer with food allergy. (coloured plates, flag etc).
- Always take the meal to the customer with a food allergy separately, not whilst carrying other meals.
- Check the allergen free meal is given to the right customer with the food allergy.

Card' that lists what they are allergic to. The card should be given to the chef who is preparing their meal and then returned to the customer with their specially prepared meal. This assists in communication and helps ensure the right meal is given to the right person.

- Teach staff of their obligation to declare certain allergens.
- Ensure your staff are updated on new laws and legislation relating to allergen management.

WHAT TO DO IF A CUSTOMER HAS AN ALLERGIC REACTION

CALL TRIPLE ZERO 000

WHILE WAITING FOR THE AMBULANCE TO ARRIVE

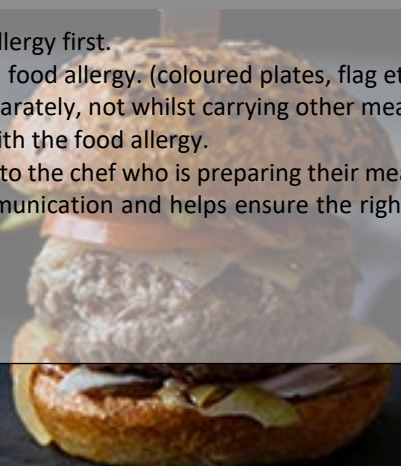
- 1 Lay person flat, do not allow them to stand or walk. If breathing is difficult allow to sit on the ground with legs outstretched.
- 2 Follow customer's ASCIA Action Plan for Anaphylaxis (if they have one) and administer adrenaline (epinephrine) injector following instructions on the Plan, if available.

FOOD SERVICE ESTABLISHMENTS CAN CONSIDER STORAGE OF AN ADRENALINE (EPINEPHRINE) INJECTOR SUCH AS THE EPIPEN® IN THEIR FIRST AID KIT ALONG WITH AN ASCIA FIRST AID PLAN FOR ANAPHYLAXIS.

This device can then be used in an emergency when an individual is showing signs of an allergic reaction as detailed on the ASCIA First Aid Plan stored with the device. For more information on obtaining an adrenaline injector and training that is required, or to access an ASCIA First Aid Plan please call 1300 728 000 or go to www.allergy.org.au

4. **EDUCATE** YOUR STAFF

- Ensure your Food Safety Supervisor's training is up to date. Recertification includes 'Allergen Management' as a required unit of competency.
- Train and test all staff regularly in food safety, hygiene, and allergen awareness. The National Allergy Strategy (foodallergytraining.org.au) offers free 'All About Allergens' food allergy e-training for food service.
- Some customers will provide waitstaff with a 'Chef





SUMMER IS COMING, IS YOUR COLD STORAGE EQUIP?

Summer is fast approaching and with the change of season, means the temperature rises. It is important to make sure that your business' cold storage units are equipped to maintain adequate temperatures.

A food business must, when storing and displaying potentially hazardous food, do so in a manner that will not affect the safety of the food. Temperature control is one simple method to achieve this.

Temperature control means maintaining cold potentially hazardous food at a temperature of 5°C or below. If the food is intended to be stored frozen, ensure the food remains hard frozen during storage.

Some tips to help keep your fridge working satisfactorily include:

- Ensuring air can circulate around the food being stored. This can be achieved by not overstocking storage fridges and display fridges
- Ensuring the cold storage units are clean and free from any cracks or damage
- Inspecting the shelving and ensuring there is no rust, water ponding, food, or other spillages
- Checking seals and ensure they close properly.
- Following manufacturers recommended maintenance plan and service the system when required

CLEANING AND SANITISING QUIZ

It is important to know the difference between cleaning and sanitising and the ways to apply both at your business. Test your knowledge!

- Sanitising should occur prior to cleaning.**
 - ☐ A. TRUE
 - ☐ B. FALSE
- Standard grocery store bought products such as pine cleaner, vinegar, and antibacterial spray and wipe are adequate for use as a sanitiser.**
 - ☐ A. TRUE
 - ☐ B. FALSE
- The stronger you mix up a sanitiser, the better it will work**
 - ☐ A. TRUE
 - ☐ B. FALSE
- To hand wash and sanitise food contact items, the correct procedure is:**
 - ☐ A. MIX SANITISER INTO WASH UP SINK AND WASH AND SANITISE TOGETHER
 - ☐ B. SCRAPE OFF ANY FOOD, GRIME ETC, WASH WITH DETERGENT, RINSE, THEN SANITISE
 - ☐ C. LIGHTLY RINSE, SANITISE, THEN TEA TOWEL DRY
- Failure to have an adequate and approved sanitisation method for food contact surfaces is a critical breach against the Food Standards.**
 - ☐ A. TRUE
 - ☐ B. FALSE

ANSWERS: 1. B. Sanitiser is less effective when a surface is dirty or unclean.

2. B. Only a product designed for sanitising food contact surfaces should be used. The words "food grade" and "sanitiser" must be on the label.

3. B. Research shows that the stronger you mix the sanitiser has no impact on its effectiveness, you will just go through more product quicker. However, making the sanitiser solution weaker than recommended will adversely impact its effectiveness! Ensure that all staff are adequately trained in how to make the sanitiser as per the manufacturer's specifications.

4. A. Cleaning must be undertaken before sanitising. It is best to let items air dry as tea towels can cause cross contamination. Be mindful that some sanitisers require rinsing after a specified contact time, so be sure to familiarise yourself with the directions of your product.

5. A. Failure to implement an appropriate sanitising method in your food business is a critical breach of the Food Standards and can result in regulatory action being undertaken against you. This includes but is not limited to reinspections with associated fees and can include penalty infringement notices.



ROUTINE FOOD INSPECTIONS AND THE RECOMMENCEMENT OF THE SCORES ON DOORS PROGRAM

Council Environmental Health Officers would like to notify food businesses that routine inspections will recommence in 2022. We understand it has been a challenging year for small businesses, so we are excited to also recommence the Scores on Doors Program. This program is a voluntary program which aims to reward businesses who achieve compliance with the Food Standards Codes by presenting them with a certificate and star rating.

Scores are based on a standard assessment checklist. To prepare for Council inspections, and to track how your business is progressing, you can do your own self-check by downloading the Food Premises Assessment Report from the NSW Food Authority's Website. For more information and a copy of this report

visit: <https://www.foodauthority.nsw.gov.au/retail/scores-on-doors/guide-for-businesses>

More information

This information is a general summary and cannot cover all situations. Food businesses are required to comply with all of the provisions of the Food Standards Code and the *Food Act 2003* (NSW).

For many great resources and fact sheets, visit the NSW Food Authority website at www.foodauthority.nsw.gov.au



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