

VITAL – Future Directions



11 September 2008

Fiona Fleming



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Overview

- Where have we come from?
- Post Launch: June 07 – July 08
- Where are we going: Next Steps



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VITAL - Timeline

July 2004	Jul 2004 – Dec 04	Jan 2005 – Dec 2006	Feb 2006 – May 2006
Project Team formed	Review of current risk assessment protocols	Development of VITAL: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• literature review was conducted to develop the levels in the grid• Decision Tree and Procedure developed	Stakeholder consultations & refinement



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VITAL – Timeline (continued)

May 2006 – Dec 2006	Dec 2006 – Feb 2007	Jan 2007 – April 2007	May 2007	June 2007
VITAL Industry Pilots	Draft for inclusion into revised AFGC Guide	Targeted consultation on Action Level Grid	Finalise for AFGC Guide	Launch of AFGC Allergen Guide

Allergen
Bureau

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VITAL – Post Launch June 2007





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VITAL Resources

The screenshot shows a web browser window displaying the Allergen Bureau website. The page title is "VITAL" and the breadcrumb trail is "Home > Allergen Guide > VITAL". The main content area includes a definition of VITAL, a list of downloadable modules with their file sizes, and several paragraphs of explanatory text. A search bar is visible in the top right corner of the page.

VITAL

The VITAL (Voluntary Incidental Trace Allergen Labelling) system is an essential standardised allergen risk assessment tool for food producers.

VITAL allows food producers to assess the impact of allergen cross contact and provide appropriate precautionary allergen labelling on their products.

Download VITAL modules:

- [VITAL Procedure PDF](#) (file size 72 KB)
- [VITAL Calculator excel document](#) (file size 525 KB)
- [VITAL Calculator Example - soup mix](#) (file size 527 KB)
- [VITAL Explanatory Notes PDF](#) (file size 60 KB)
- [VITAL Decision Tree PDF](#) (file size 30 KB)
- [VITAL Grid PDF](#) (file size 22 KB)
- [VITAL Allergen Residue Detection Table PDF](#) (file size 22 KB)
- [VITAL Allergenic Protein Levels PDF](#) (file size 28 KB)
- [VITAL Blank Template word document](#) (file size 88 KB)

Please [register now to receive more VITAL information and updates](#).

Food allergens may be present in a food due to intentional inclusion as part of a recipe, allergens but may also be present due to unintentional cross contact. This can occur at any point in the supply chain due to the type of ingredients used or through the use of shared equipment and processes during manufacture.

Even under conditions of Good Manufacturing Practice (GMP) cross-contact may be difficult to eliminate entirely, leading manufacturers to use precautionary advisory statements to advise allergic consumers.

VITAL was developed to make a single simple standardised precautionary statement available to assist food producers in presenting allergen advice consistently for allergic consumers.

VITAL not only assists food producers in assessing the potential impact of allergen cross contact in each of their products but also specifies a particular precautionary allergen statement to be used according to the level of cross contact identified.

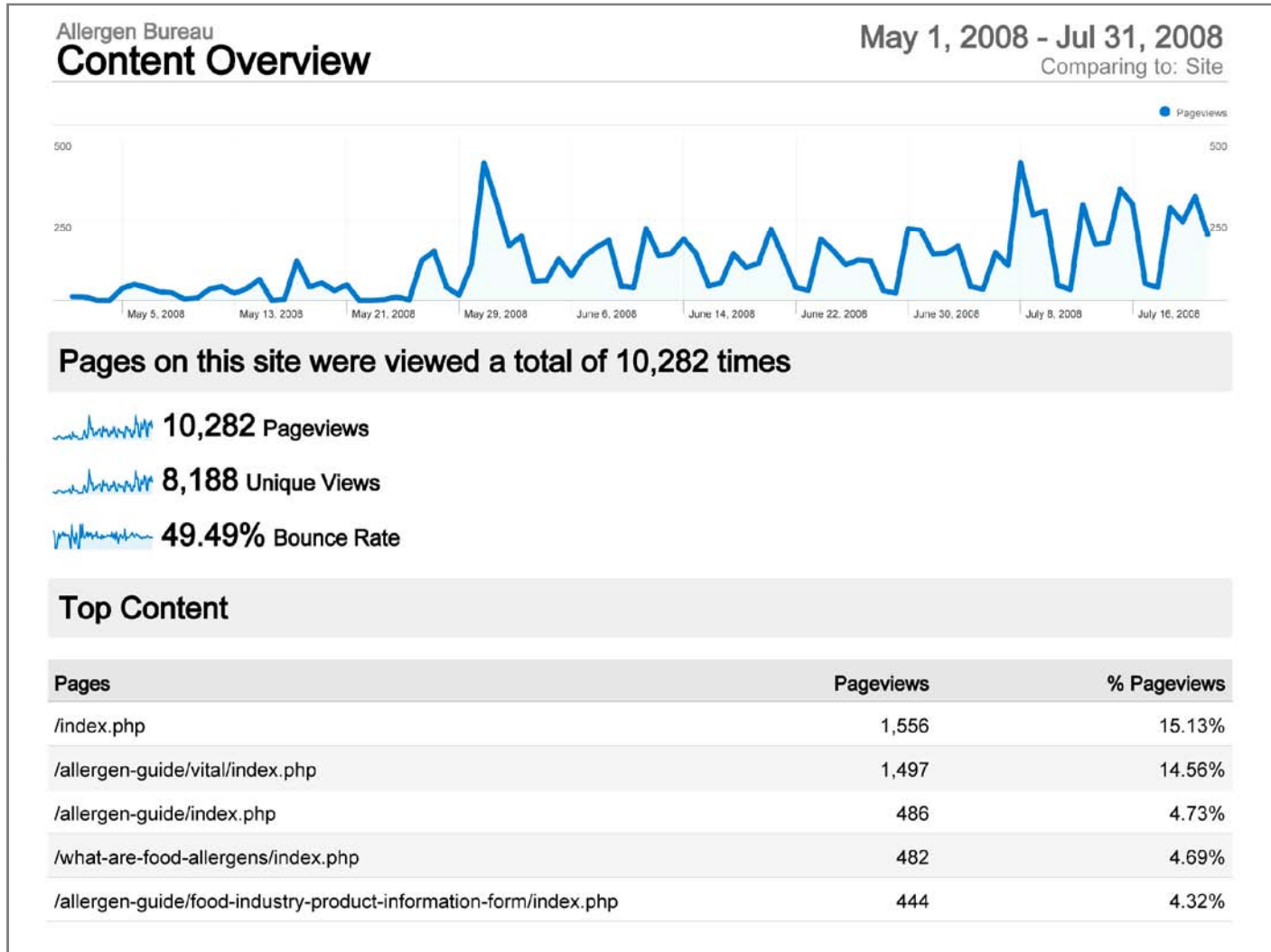
VITAL allows the assessment of likely sources of allergen cross contact from raw materials and the processing environment, plus an evaluation of the amount present and a review of the ability to reduce the allergenic material from all contributing sources.

VITAL ALSO provides for ongoing monitoring and verification of the risk assessment process to ensure any changes to the level of risk are acted upon without delay.

Thank you for using the VITAL Procedure.



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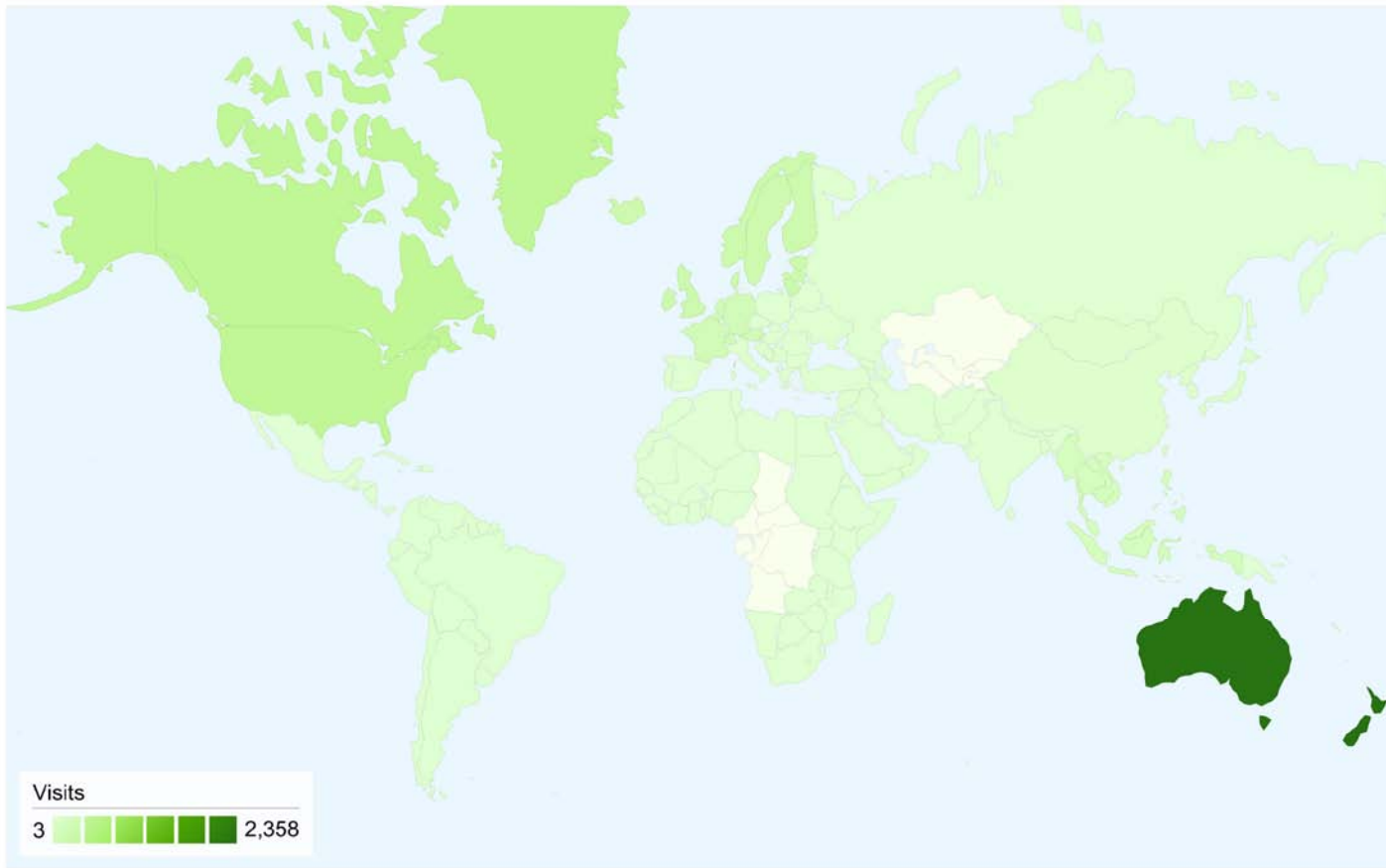


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Allergen Bureau
Map Overlay

May 1, 2008 - Jul 31, 2008

Comparing to: Site





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3,651 visits came from 18 sub continent regions

Site Usage

Visits	Pages/Visit	Avg. Time on Site	% New Visits	Bounce Rate	
3,651 % of Site Total: 100.00%	2.82 Site Avg: 2.82 (0.00%)	00:02:38 Site Avg: 00:02:38 (0.00%)	53.33% Site Avg: 53.33% (0.00%)	49.49% Site Avg: 49.49% (0.00%)	
Sub Continent Region	Visits	Pages/Visit	Avg. Time on Site	% New Visits	Bounce Rate
Australia and New Zealand	2,358	2.88	00:02:43	46.52%	46.56%
Northern America	428	2.10	00:01:06	74.30%	67.06%
Northern Europe	268	2.93	00:02:51	60.45%	56.34%
Western Europe	204	2.90	00:02:28	60.78%	42.16%
South-Eastern Asia	150	3.95	00:05:19	50.67%	39.33%
Eastern Asia	55	2.91	00:02:26	61.82%	41.82%
Southern Europe	42	2.05	00:02:10	78.57%	64.29%
South America	30	3.13	00:04:17	76.67%	36.67%
Eastern Europe	25	2.84	00:06:11	60.00%	52.00%
Western Asia	25	1.40	00:00:17	60.00%	80.00% ¹



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VITAL Pickup – Registration

To date: 200+ registrations

- Australia
- NZ
- US
- India
- Belgium
- UK
- Israel
- France
- Netherlands

The image shows a screenshot of a web page titled "VITAL Registration Form". On the left side, there are two links: "Membership List PDF (file size: 157 KB)" and "Membership Application PDF (file size: 59 KB)". Below these is an "eNewsletter" section with the text: "Receive our free eNewsletter by simply emailing your details to: news@allergembureau.net. Looking for a previous eNewsletter? [View our eNewsletter Archive](#)". The main content of the form is a registration form with the following fields: "Company Name:" (with a yellow highlight), "Types of Products:" (with a dropdown menu), "Address:" (with a yellow highlight), "State:" (with a yellow highlight), "Postcode:" (with a yellow highlight), and "Contact Name:" (with a yellow highlight). The form also includes a thank you message: "Thank you for your interest in VITAL. We would really appreciate if you could please take a few minutes to complete this registration form in order for the Allergen Bureau to maintain an up-to-date list of companies who are using VITAL. This will enable us to ensure you are updated when changes are made to VITAL."



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Training – Advancing Food Safety (AFS)



Total VITAL training

March – Aug 08 = 365

www.haccptown.com

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Communication

- Conferences

- Allergen Bureau - educating industry both in Aus and NZ in both VITAL and allergen management in general
 - 2008 – Sydney, Brisbane, Adelaide, NZ, Perth
 - FAAN - Sept 07

- E-news

- Vital updates via registration list



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Key Stakeholders

Retailers

- Coles
- Woolworths

Auditors

- NCSI



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Products in the market



Serving Suggestion
The hearty flavour of Woolworths Select Rich Beef & Mushroom Flavoured Rice is the perfect accompaniment to a warm beef and vegetable salad.

Select
At Woolworths, we're committed to selecting the best, so we've gone to great lengths to source the finest ingredients from specialist suppliers. Woolworths Select brings you a range of premium quality products with a taste that is second to none. We guarantee that if you're not 100% satisfied with this product we will refund the total purchase price from your closest store. For more information, please call 1800 103 515 (Aust), 0800 728 4299 (NZ).

Ingredients
Rice (87%), Maltodextrin (Wheat), Natural Flavouring, Hydrolyzed Vegetable Protein, Dehydrated Vegetables (Red Bell Peppers, Mushroom (1%), Dehydrated Beef (1%), Salt, Sugar, Dried Powder, Mushroom Extract (0.5%), Beverage Whitener (Milk, Soy), Sunflower Oil, Chives.

Nutrition Information

Serving Size: 4			
Per 20g (Dry)		Per 100g (Dry)	
		Per 150g (Cooked*)	
		Per 100g (Cooked*)	
Energy	488kJ	1568kJ	407kJ
Protein	2.5g	8.2g	2.4g
Fat, Total	0.5g	1.8g	1.2g
Saturated	0.2g	0.6g	0.4g
Trans	Less than 0.1g	Less than 0.1g	Less than 0.1g
Polyunsaturated	0.1g	0.3g	0.4g
Monounsaturated	0.2g	0.7g	0.4g
Carbohydrate	23.5g	79.9g	23.8g
Sugars	0.2g	1.1g	0.3g
Sodium	25.7mg	119.9mg	36.5mg

Quantities stated above are averages only.
*Percentage Daily Intakes are based on an average adult diet of 8700kJ. Your daily intakes may be higher or lower depending on your energy needs.
*When cooked in accordance with instructions.

Allergen Advice
Contains: Gluten, Milk, Soybeans.
May be present: Eggs, Tree Nuts, Sesame Seeds.

Cooking Instructions
Stove Top
1. In a medium saucepan, bring 1 1/4 cups (312mL) water and 1 teaspoon of polyunsaturated table spread to the boil.
2. Add contents of packet, stir until boiling and simmer gently for 10-12 minutes uncovered. Remove from heat, stir well and stand for 2 minutes before serving. If rice appears dry half way through cooking, add 1/4 cup boiling water and stir.

Microwave
1. Place 1 1/4 cups (312mL) boiling water and 1 teaspoon of polyunsaturated table spread and contents of packet into a large microwave safe dish.
2. Cook on HIGH for 10-12 minutes uncovered, stirring 2-3 times during cooking. Stir well and stand for 2 minutes before serving. If rice appears dry half way through cooking, add 1/4 cup boiling water and stir.
Note: Microwave cooking times are based on 1000W microwave oven, and are a guide only.

Additional Ingredients Required
Polyunsaturated table spread and water.

Storage Instructions
Store sachet in a cool, dry place prior to use.

Best Before

Made in Australia from Imported and Local Ingredients
Packed for Woolworths
1 Woolworths Way
Bella Vista NSW 2153
Australia
89 Fovena Road
Mangere Auckland
New Zealand
www.woolworths.co.nz
www.progressive.co.nz
79527

OTHER



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Next steps





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VITAL Co-ordinator

- Develop and maintain VITAL-related FAQ's and case studies
- Manage the VITAL review process
 - Conduct research to support the action levels on which VITAL is based
- Develop the vitalallergen.com website
- Maintain and develop VITAL documentation
- Maintain and develop the VITAL calculator
- Liaise with food industry retailers with respect to implementation of VITAL
- Liaise with our training provider with respect to VITAL training
- Develop an Auditor Guide for VITAL
- Conduct benchmarking on VITAL

Timeframe: September 08



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VITAL Co-ordinator



Georgina Christensen joins the Allergen Bureau most recently from the Heinz infant food factory at Echuca.



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VITAL Q&A

- Q. What is VITAL?
- Q. What is the benefit to industry to use VITAL
- Q. What is the benefit to allergic consumers if industry uses VITAL
- Q. Is it mandatory?
- Q. Who is using it – what sort of take up has occurred in the food industry?
- Q. Is there some way to indicate to consumers that the vital tool has been used to determine the risk – e.g. “V” for Vital?
- Q. Is there a Certification system for those who are using vital?



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VITAL Q&A (continued)

- Q. Are there penalties for manufacturers who claim to use VITAL, but haven't done it or haven't done it properly?
- Q. Does VITAL propose manufacturers to set up an active surveillance program to monitor how effective their labelling strategy has
- Q. Who can help me to set up VITAL in my business?
- Q. Do training companies have VITAL courses?
- Q. Are ISO/HACCP audit companies ready to audit VITAL programs?
- Q. Do Food Safety Auditors accept the use of VITAL?
- Q. Does FSANZ endorse the use of VITAL?

Timeframe: September 08



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VITAL Review

Project description:

Review of the Vital Process and supporting documentation.

Outcomes:

- Update "Development of VITAL Allergen Actions Levels Grid Explanatory Notes" to include references published since June 2007 through a comprehensive literature review
- Update values in VITAL Grid based on findings of literature review
- Review VITAL Decision Tree and Procedure

Timeframe: January 09



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VITAL Calculator

http://www.allergenbureau.net/downloads/allergen-guide/VITAL/VITAL_Template_updated_19_May_08.xls - Microsoft Internet Explorer

File Edit View Insert Format Tools Data Go To Favorites Help

Address http://www.allergenbureau.net/downloads/allergen-guide/VITAL/VITAL_Template_updated_19_May_08.xls

C:\30

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VITAL

VOLUNTARY INCIDENTAL TRACE ALLERGEN LABELLING (VITAL)

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INDEX

Last Updated on:
19-May-08

VITAL Grid, Explanatory Notes, Decision Tree, Procedure
Table showing the Allergen Advisory Action Levels
Links to Explanatory Notes, Decision Tree & Procedure on how use the Allergen Advisory Action levels

Guidelines
Guidelines, Instructions and Assumptions about using this worksheet for calculations

Assumptions
Worksheet to document any key assumptions when running this calculation

1. Raw Material Impact
Worksheet to calculate the allergen impact of the raw materials in the product

2. Raw Material Cross Contact
Worksheet to calculate the potential cross contact allergen impact of the raw materials in the product

H:\Index / VITAL / Guidelines / Assumptions / 1. RM Impact / 2. RM Cross Contact / 3. Processing Impact / 4. Summary / Chan



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Retailer requirements

Liaise with food industry retailers with respect to implementation of VITAL

Timeframe: Ongoing



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VITAL – Training

- Industry
- Auditors
 - Auditor Guide

Timeframe: Ongoing



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Market Survey – Methodology

Reference Labelling Guide: the AFGC Allergen Management and Labelling guide is to be used as the labelling reference and is provided from the Allergen Bureau website.

Surveys: Two audit surveys will be conducted over a 12 month period, six months apart. Each survey will be conducted within a two week period. A report on the findings of the survey is to be provided within one month of the completion of each part.

Supermarkets: The two surveys will be conducted with the assistance of Coles, Metcash and Woolworths in the same two large supermarkets in Melbourne (or Hobart??). Exact locations to be determined and approved in consultation with the head office of these retailers.

Products: food products on shelf will be examined in the first survey shall be shelf stable, while foods in the second survey shall be perishable. The name of each product, batch code or date mark and manufacturer is to be recorded.



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Market Survey – Outcome

After each survey combine the data from the 3 sites and provide a written report with:

- A list of all products carrying the allergen labelling; and
- Assesses the proportion of product correctly using the AFGC labelling guide and Vital.

Timeframe: February 09



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Communication Strategies Allergic Consumers



Timeframe: February 09



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Consultations

- FSANZ Allergen Issues Paper
- FDA – Public Hearing

Food Labelling; Current Trends in the use of Allergen Advisory Labelling: Its Use, Effectiveness, and Consumer Perception

- The FDA is developing a long-term strategy to assist manufacturers in using allergen advisory labelling that is truthful and not misleading, conveys a clear and uniform message, and adequately informs food allergic consumers and their care-givers

<http://www.cfsan.fda.gov/~lrd/fr080808.html>



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Challenges

- Cross contact information from suppliers of ingredients (PIF)
- Robustness of the Action Level numbers
- Assume homogenous distribution of “cross contact” allergen
- Imported products
- Does the use of the process need to be audited to ensure compliance?
- How do consumers know which companies are using the process?
- Who will manage and update?



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The Journey continues...



...will you join us?

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Bureau

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www.allergenbureau.net



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