

Key Successes of the Allergen Bureau

Tues 18 Sep, 2018 Foodtech Packtech, Auckland

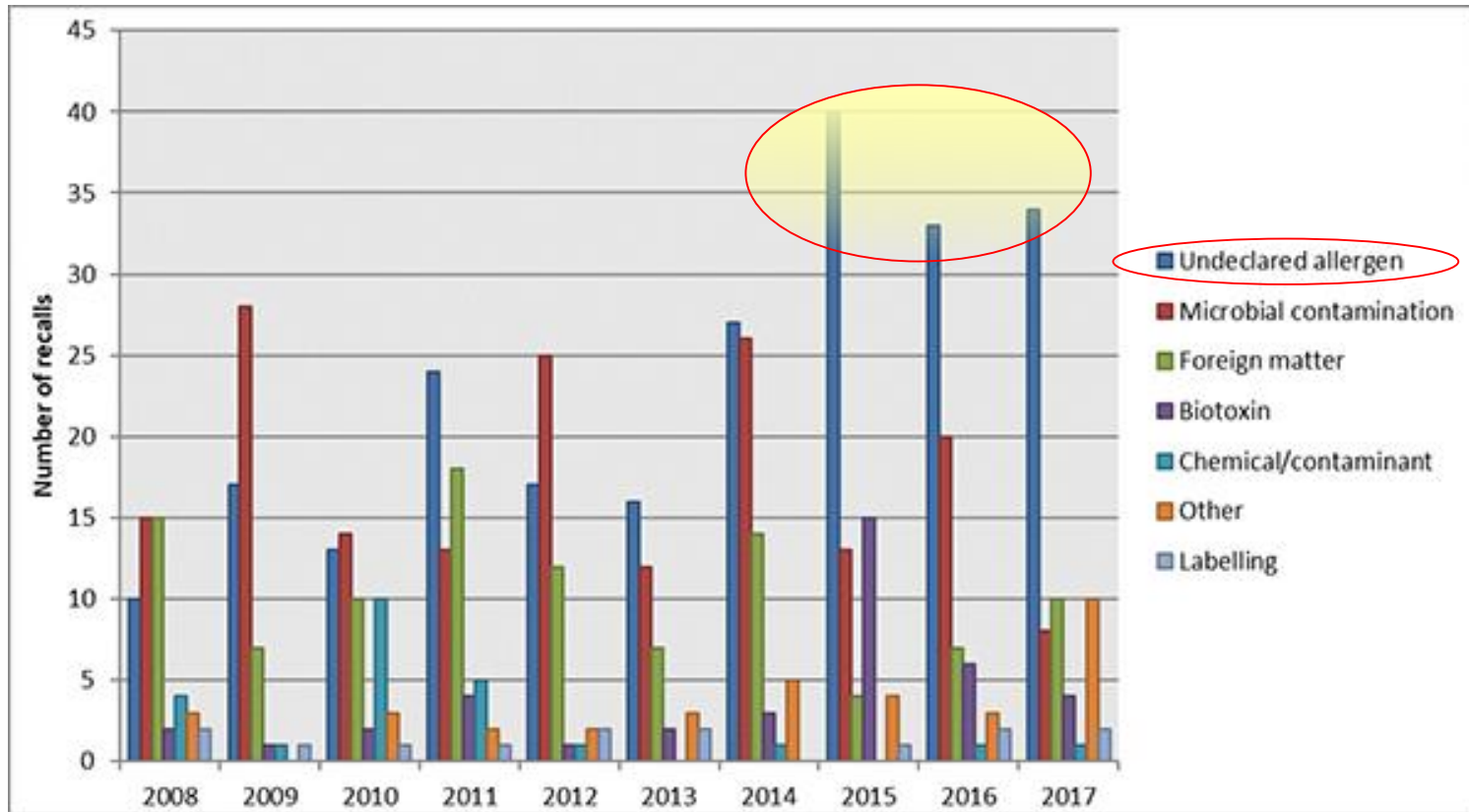
Debbie Hawkes

Director, Allergen Bureau

(GM – Operations & Quality ANZ, Hawkins Watts)

FSANZ Allergen related Recall Stats

Undeclared Allergens are still the major cause of FSANZ recalls



Source: <http://www.foodstandards.govt.nz/industry/foodrecalls/recallstats/Pages/default.aspx>



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Who is the Allergen Bureau?

- The Allergen Bureau is the **peak industry body** representing food industry allergen management in Australia and New Zealand
- The Allergen Bureau is a **membership based** organisation established to provide food industry with rapid responses to questions about allergen risk management in food ingredients and manufactured foods
- Established 2005, **pre-competitive**, 'not-for-profit', industry volunteer Board

Full Members





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The Allergen Bureau – Our Vision and Mission

Vision

- The Allergen Bureau is a globally recognised and supported industry organisation promoting best practice food industry allergen management, risk review and consistent labelling to facilitate informed consumer choice

Mission

- To facilitate a globally accepted, consistent, science-based approach to food allergen risk assessment, management and communication that:
 - guides **industry** best practice
 - assists allergen sensitive **consumers** to make informed choices based on label information

Organisation

Our Members

<http://allergenbureau.net/about-us/our-members>

Board of Directors

**Kirsten Grinter • Caroline Gray • Debbie Hawkes
David Henning • Karen Robinson**

Secretariat

**Dr Tom Lewis
Ray Murphy**

Management Committee

**Kirsten • Caroline • Debbie
Tom**

Website & VITAL Online

External service providers

Operations

Ray

Scientific & Technical

**Georgina Christensen • Lisa Warren
Dr Simon Brooke-Taylor • Robin Sherlock**

The VITAL[®] Program

The VITAL (Voluntary Incidental Trace Allergen Labelling) Program is a standardised allergen risk assessment process for food industry

- ✓ Science-based labelling outcomes
- ✓ Suitable for raw materials & finished product
- ✓ VITAL Online – web-based, VITAL Calculator
- ✓ Supported by regulators

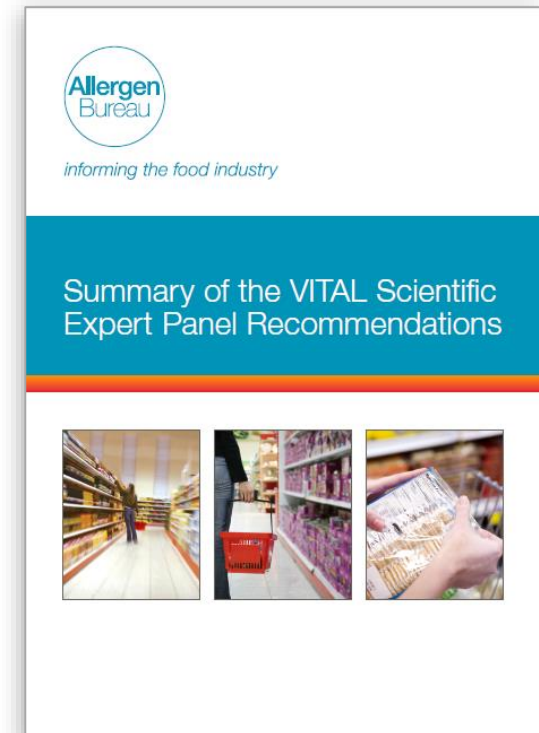
Provides reassurance through informed decision making



The VITAL[®] Scientific Expert Panel (VSEP) overarching scientific approach

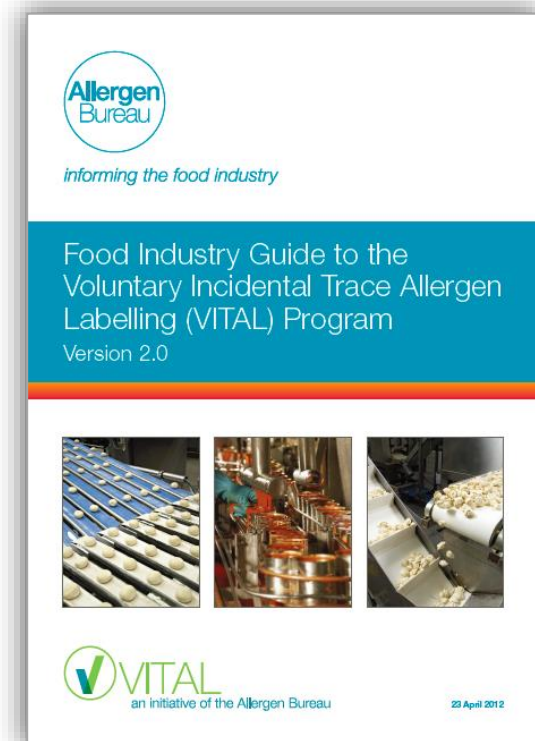
- analysed existing published clinical data and some unpublished data (>1800 data points)
- statistical modelling to look at implication for the allergic population
- scientifically and clinically sound, defensible and transparent
- published papers (Taylor *et al* 2014, Allen *et al* 2014)
- protection for vast majority of people with food allergy

**Next VSEP meeting 16 Oct 2018,
EAACI-FAAM Copenhagen**



The 10 Steps of VITAL[®] - 'The VITAL Procedure'

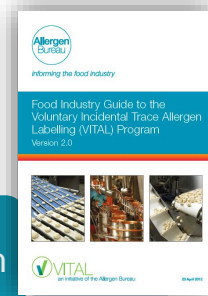
1. Determination of relevant allergens
2. Identification of intentionally added allergens
3. Identification and quantification of cross contact allergens due to ingredients
4. Identification and quantification of cross contact allergens due to processing
5. Calculation of total cross contact allergen in finished product
6. Determination of Action Levels
7. Review of labelling recommendations and sources of cross contact
8. Recording of assumptions
9. Validation of VITAL assessment
10. Ongoing monitoring



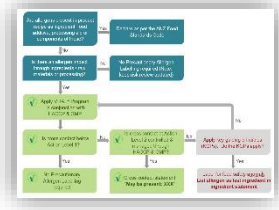
**Consider VITAL as a systematic allergen risk assessment tool.
It is not just about cross contact!**



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VITAL Program



Risk Review Anomalies

Tools & Helpline



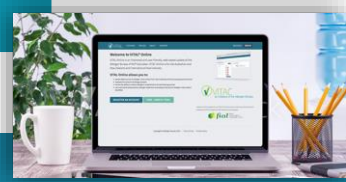
VSEP



Training Providers



VITAL Online



The VITAL® Framework

(WG1) Risk Review

(WG3) Certification

(WG2) Communication

Ingredient List	Water, potato, carrots, celery, brown rice, oats , peanut oil, yeast extract (barley).
Allergen Summary Statement	Contains cereals containing gluten, peanut.
The VITAL Preliminary Statement	May be present: wheat.





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VITAL[®] Working Group 1 – Risk Review

Susan Colling, Newly Weds Foods

Alan Edwards, NSW Food Authority

Jessica Feather, Woolworths

Amanda Hawkins, Cerebos

Jasmine Lacin-Lee, DTS Food Assurance

Kaye Wood, Nestlé Australia

Lisa Warren, Allergen Bureau (Project Lead)

Kirsten Grinter, Nestlé Australia (Sponsor, Allergen Bureau President)



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WG1 Risk Review – Project Brief

- Helpful guidance on investigating the allergen status of food
- Appropriate for a broad food industry audience (local, international, SME, corporations)
- Expandable to include entire supply chain from primary production to finished product and food service
- Lots of detail, but easy to use
- **Modern new approach!**

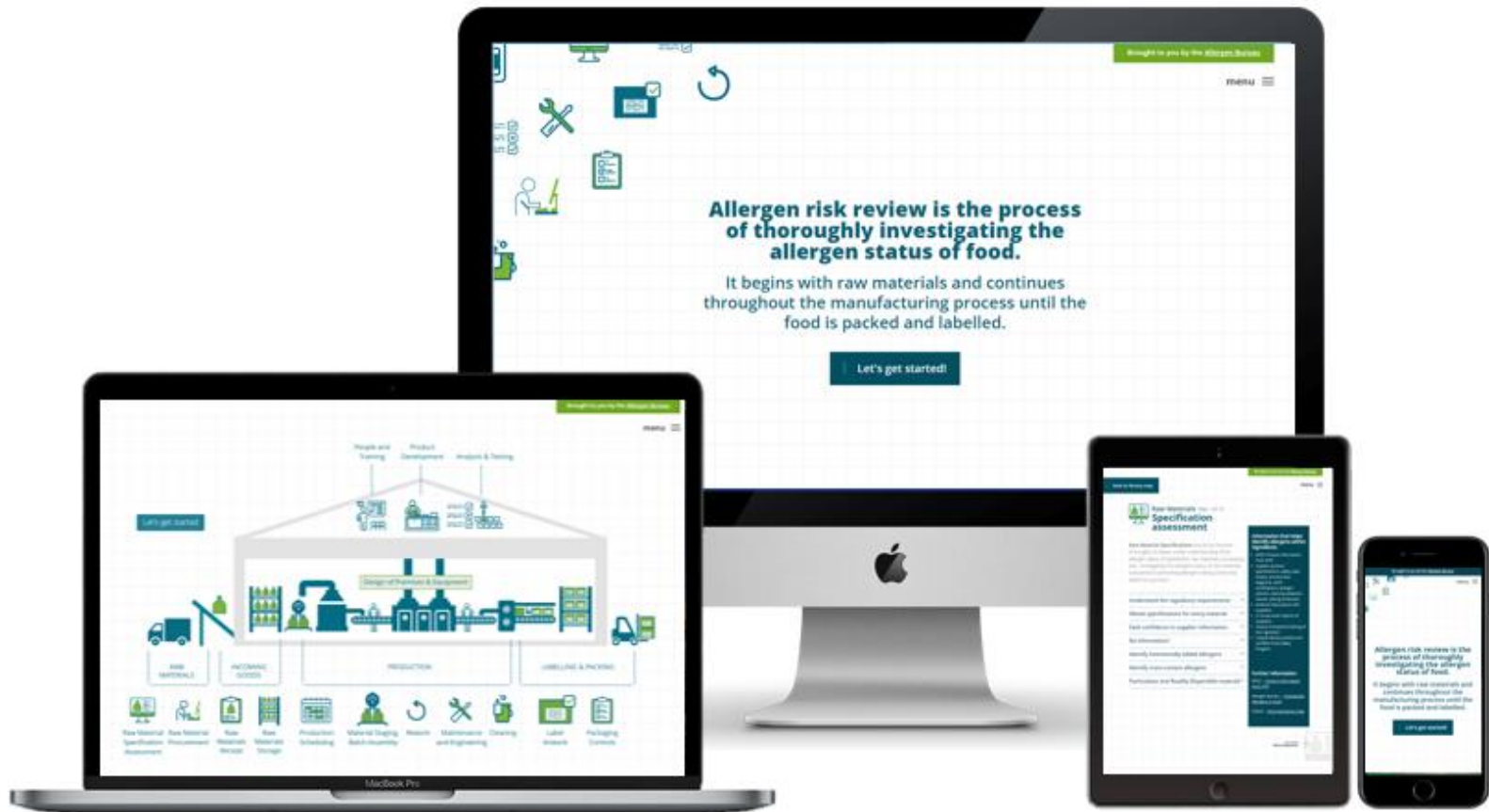


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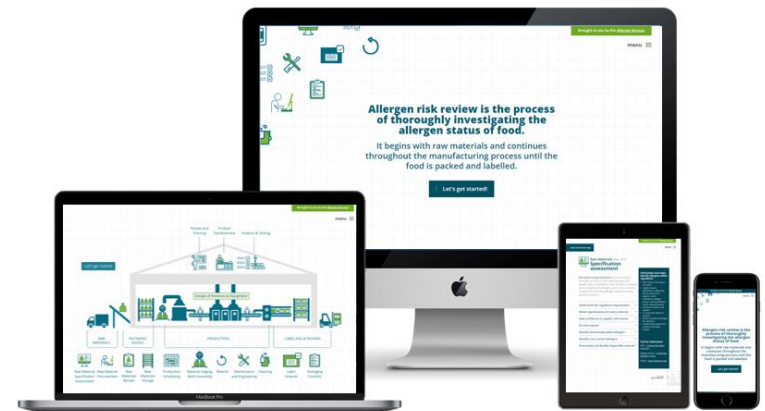
an initiative of the Allergen Bureau

The Risk Review interactive website



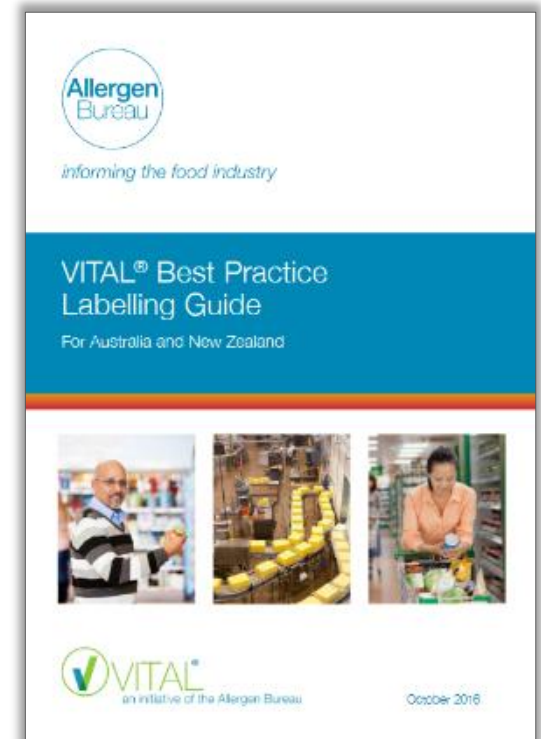
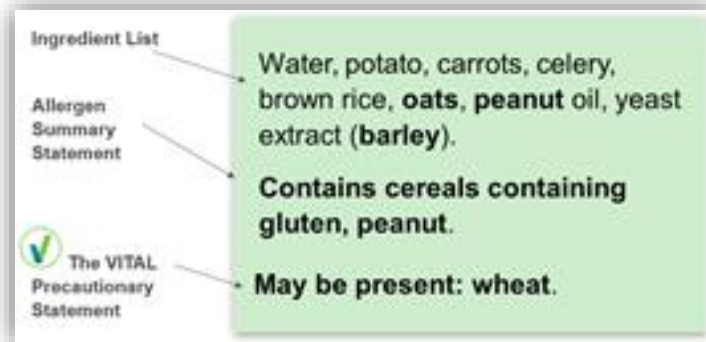
Key timings to launch of Risk Review website

- 12th Sept 2018 Initial demonstration at AIFST allergen session
- Sept 2018 Edit, edit, and edit again
- 25th Oct 2018 Allergen Bureau AGM & Member Meeting – invite **our members** to trial and comment
- Nov 2018 Risk Review website Live!



VITAL[®] Working Group 2 – Best Practice Labelling Guide for ANZ

- ✓ Steps for composing an ingredient list that declares allergens clearly
- ✓ Five worked examples that show best practice for declaring food allergens on a label
- ✓ Key word definitions
- ✓ References to other allergen declaration guidance



VITAL[®] Working Group 3 - Certification

- ✓ Completed drafting the 'VITAL Scheme' under ISO 17065 (**thanks Bill McBride!**)
 - auditable 'VITAL Standard'
 - rules and processes to be followed by accredited certification bodies (to meet ISO 17065)
- ✓ 'Bolt-on' to GFSI-recognised Stds + HACCP-based Allergen Mgmt Programs
- ✓ Draft VITAL Standard being trialled by industry to ensure it can be interpreted & applied consistently
- ✓ Draft scheme to be reviewed by Certification Bodies to ensure it is practical & achievable for industry

Seeking JAS-ANZ accreditation of VITAL Scheme in late 2018



Success story...

- Membership growing, with over 100 food industry organisations and individuals
 - ✓ 34 Full Members, 33 Associate Members and 44 Individual Members
 - ✓ International memberships & interest increasing
- Technical support helpline for Allergen Management and VITAL[®] enquiries
- Excellent free resources available via website, including regular eNews
- VITAL[®] Online continuing to increase in usage:
 - ✓ 2,220 registered organisations, equating to over 3,800 individual users, with 'active users' of VITAL Online between 340 – 540 in any month
 - ✓ Since it's launch in August 2015, users have generated over 15,500 VITAL reports, with over 10,000 ingredients, and 8,000 recipes.
 - ✓ 18 endorsed VITAL[®] Training Providers across the world
- NZIFST and AIFST Best Practice in Food Allergen Management Awards
 - ✓ NZ: Donna & Mike Elston, Talley's Ice Cream
 - ✓ AU: Sue Wilkinson, Robern Menz



Challenges

- ✓ VITAL[®] Program has regulator support but is voluntary
 - Allows flexibility around response which is valuable to industry & consumers
- ✓ Perceived cost of compliance
 - Tiered approach to VITAL Online subscription
 - Free helpline support via VITAL Coordinator
 - Continued investment in further industry tools
- ✓ International acceptance of Reference Dose (Threshold) concept
 - Growing acceptance of the concept and continued science to support the approach
- ✓ Alignment and collaboration with multiple other guidance sources
 - FSANZ Allergen Collaboration
 - AFGC Allergen Management and Labelling Guide
 - FTAA Allergen Protocols
 - Codex Committee on Food Labelling, Allergen Mgmt Code of Practice
- ✓ Global acceptance of VITAL Program





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Conclusion

- ✓ Allergen Bureau continues to respond to stakeholder needs
 - Working groups
 - Investment in development of resources to support allergen management and VITAL[®]
- ✓ Collaborate with key stakeholders
 - National Allergy Strategy
 - FSANZ Allergen Collaboration
 - FSANZ consultation pieces
 - Codex consultation groups

International Collaboration

[FAMS2019](#) May 2019, Melbourne.



FAMS
2019



Acknowledgements and Contact Details

- Secretariat (Dr Tom Lewis & Ray Murphy)
- VITAL[®] Coordinator (Georgina Christensen)
VITAL Support (Lisa Warren)
Scientific & Technical Support (Dr Simon Brooke-Taylor)
- Website: www.allergenbureau.net
- FREE Helpline :
 - email: info@allergenbureau.net
 - International phone: + 61 437 918 959

