

Allergen Bureau

An Update on Allergen Bureau Activities and Looking to the Future

Jasmine Lacis-Lee
Allergen Bureau – Director &
BVAQ – Food Safety Manager

*ICFA 2021/ Day 3: Food Allergen Activities and
Emerging Issues*



Informing the
food industry

Allergen Bureau

- Membership based organisation established to provide food industry with rapid responses to questions about allergen risk management in food ingredients and manufactured foods
- Established in 2005, pre-competitive, 'not-for-profit', Allergen Bureau directors provide voluntary, unpaid services

Become a member

Global Member



Full Members



- ALDI Stores
- BBF Hull Limited
- SoFine Foods

Vision & Mission

Vision: A trusted food supply for allergen sensitive consumers around the world.

Mission: Lead the global food industry in best practice allergen management, sharing information that builds trust and transparency that supports allergen sensitive consumers to make informed choices.

Allergen
Bureau



Allergen Bureau Tour

2020 - 2021

Global and Local Food Allergy
Updates

Allergen
Bureau

Parliamentary Inquiry into allergies & anaphylaxis

Outcome recognised the integrity of VITAL program

Recommendation 15:

The Committee recommends that the Allergen Bureau in collaboration with Food Standards Australia New Zealand (FSANZ), work with the food industry to encourage the consistent use of the VITAL food allergen risk assessment program, including the introduction of a VITAL 'V' tick on packaging to inform consumers that a product has been through this process.

Allergen
Bureau

PARLIAMENT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

Walking the allergy tightrope

Addressing the rise of allergies and anaphylaxis in Australia

House of Representatives Standing Committee on Health, Aged Care and Sport

May 2020
CANBERRA



Plain English Allergen Labelling

Statement of Ingredients (SoI) – display allergens using required names in bold, distinct contrast, same text size (or more), listed separately

Summary Statement (SS) – display allergens beginning with ‘contains’, using required names, in bold, same text size & typeface as SoI, same field of view & next to SoI

Precautionary Allergen Labelling Statement (PAL) –
VOLUNTARY



Recommend VITAL® best practice labelling for clear, consistent communication

INGREDIENTS

Rolled oats, glucose syrup, almond meal, peanut pieces, honey, coconut.

Contains: gluten, almond, peanut
May be present: wheat



AUSTRALIAN
FOOD &
GROCERY
COUNCIL

Allergen
Bureau

Figure 3. Examples of summary statement loc

Preferred format - the summary statement is to

Ingredients
Water, vegetable
starcher (1412),
flavour (wheat m

Alternative formats - the summary statement is

Ingredients
Water, vegetable oil, vinegar, Contal
egg, formalin paste, egg,
capsicum, salt, egg yolk, allero
thickener (1412), almonds, milk,
parmesan cheese (milk), wheat,
gluten
wheat multivitamin, sesame
oil, antioxidant (202)

Alternative format for labels with very limited

INGREDIENTS: Water, vegetable oil, vi
paste, capsicum, salt, egg yolk, thickener
parmesan cheese (milk), garlic, wheat
multivitamin, sesame oil), antioxidant (2
Contains: egg, almond, milk, wheat,

Terminology

The required names for summary statement
for soybean and cereals containing gluten,
same as those in the statement of ingredier
are listed in Column 4 of the table to sector
The following example shows how the requ
can be presented in a statement of ingredie
summary statement using the required nam

Example: Ingredient list for Frozen Green V
Mix:

Ingredients
Green beans, sugar snap peas, edamame
(soybean).
Contains: soy.

Note that soy, soja and soybean are requir
in the statement of ingredients, but not in th
statement where soy is the only permitted n
name.



2021
Food Industry Guide
to Allergen
Management and
Labelling

For Australia and New Zealand



A partnership document of the
Australian Food and Grocery Council and the Allergen Bureau

Essential Allergen Guidance for the ANZ Food Business Operator



AUSTRALIAN
FOOD &
GROCERY
COUNCIL

Allergen
Bureau

VITAL Online Update

The VITAL Online is a web-based calculator to help with the implementation of the VITAL Program

Major platform upgrade in 2021!

Update includes:

- New PEAL requirements
- Sesame in the US legislation



vital.allergenbureau.net

Recent Codex Updates

- Code of Practice on Food Allergen Management for Food Business Operators – Adopted 2020
- General Principle of Food Hygiene (HACCP) – updated 2020 to include allergens



FAO / WHO Expert Consultation on Risk Assessment of Food Allergens

- To inform Codex Committee on Food Labelling
- Proposed changes to global priority allergens
 - Remove soy, lupin, mustard, celery, oats, molluscs, brazil nut, macadamia, pine nuts and sulphites
 - Consider region specific allergens
 - Pulses, insects and other foods (kiwi) added to “watch list”

Allergen
Bureau

<http://www.fao.org/3/cb4653en/cb4653en.pdf>



Bush foods and the “watch list”

- Bush foods would not be considered novel foods
- What do we know about allergenicity?
- What do we know already?
 - Wattle and the Black Bean tree are legumes
 - Oral allergy syndrome / latex allergy and chestnut



FAO / WHO Expert Consultation on Risk Assessment of Food Allergens

- Review and establish threshold levels in foods of the priority allergens
 - Recommendation of ED05 for priority allergens
- Review and evaluate the evidence in support of precautionary labelling

Allergen
Bureau

<http://www.fao.org/3/cb4653en/cb4653en.pdf>



Agricultural Allergen Cross Contact Working Group

- Commenced 2019
- Investigating options for addressing management of agricultural allergen cross contact
 - Phase 1 - Quick wins for industry
 - Phase 2 - Overarching guidance document



Unexpected Allergens in Foods

- Original edition - 2011
- Version 2 – issued January 2021
- Updates include:
 - Additions to unexpected allergens associated with foods and ingredients
 - Inclusion of Agricultural Co-Mingling section
 - Inclusion of a Food Fraud section
 - Inclusion of Case Studies – examples of agricultural co-mingling

Easy
Step-by-step
Industry
Guidance

Allergen
Bureau

UNEXPECTED ALLERGENS IN FOOD

Revised & updated
January 2021

Informing the food industry

allergenbureau.net



Sampling and Testing Subgroup

Kieran Hopkins – SGS

Dean Clarke – NMI

Karl Kusko – ALS

Vivienne Balm – The Kraft Heinz Company

Rhonda Spyrou – Kraft Heinz

Una Mullaney – The Coca Cola Company

Maree Winther – Coca Cola South Pacific

Jasmine Lacin-Lee – Allergen Bureau / BVAQ



What was the brief?

- What is n??
- How many samples are needed to inform the risk?
- How is this determined? – ingredient questionnaire and risk matrix
- General guidance on sampling & testing (the do's and don'ts)
- General guidance on the application of the outcome



The process to date for determining “n”

Reviewed international sampling standards for possible approaches

Agreed that sampling number should be based on a risk rating approach based on the supplier and raw material risk


Risk rating questionnaire has been developed & questions/answers weighted

Agreed that “n” should be based on a blend of sampling standards available

Finalising supporting documentation to accompany the risk rating questionnaire

Example: Risk Matrix Questionnaire

Allergen
Bureau
Informing the food industry



Risk Assessment Questions

Q1 Is the supply chain of local or national geographical origin only?

Q2 Does the supply chain include growers or processors from international sources?

Q3 Is the supplier GFSI certified?

Q4 Does the supplier have a documented and robust allergen management plan?

Q5 Does your business have a detailed understanding and traceability of the agricultural supply chain (i.e Crop rotation, potential cross contact risk due to shared equipment, storage, transport, sourcing and trading etc)

Q6 Are other allergenic crops used in crop rotation or grown in close proximity?

Q7 How is the commodity traded / sourced?

Sampling Considerations

- Sampling approach recommended is random
- Encourage non-biased sampling
- Recognises allergen presence is not always homogeneous



What's the purpose of sampling & testing?

- Inform frequency of allergen presence in samples
- Provide information on the variability of protein concentration in positive samples
- Informs how you might identify and manage the risk in your facility
- A consideration in quantitative risk assessment



Progress and Next Steps

- Risk matrix questionnaire completed
- “n” defined for each risk rating
- Supplementary document in final draft
 - Defining samples – where they come from, what they are, how much to take
 - Defining guidelines for laboratory analysis
 - Guidance on appropriate method selection
 - Defining what the purpose of the sampling and testing approach
- Allergen Bureau and Key Stakeholder feedback in Q4 2021/Q1 2022

**What does the future
hold?**



Allergen
Bureau

Which Eliciting Dose (ED01 or ED05)?

- The underpinning science of the VITAL Program uses Reference Doses (ED01)
- Support amongst FAO/WHO Expert Consultation for thresholds to be based on ED05
- We need to understand the Stakeholder views – Industry, Government, Consumer, Clinicians
- How will industry react to a change from ED01 to ED05? We need to unpack this carefully
- What will be the impact globally? Across jurisdictions?
- How will this impact PAL (FAO/WHO recommendations)



Consumption Data Standardisation

- Currently manufacturers make their own decisions nominating a Reference Amount for the purposes of determining an Action Level
- This is not consistent across each food business
- Standardised consumption data will enable another level of robustness for the VITAL program
- This is strong focus for the future



In summary...

- Collaboration with key stakeholders has been an instrumental part of our AB strategy and will continue to ensure our relevance into the future
- The VITAL Program continues to be flexible and adapt to the needs of the food industry globally



Contact Us:

Visit the Allergen Bureau website www.allergenbureau.net

Join us & enjoy the benefits of the Allergen Bureau membership
www.allergenbureau.net/about-us/join-us/

Subscribe to our free monthly Allergen Bureau eNews www.allergenbureau.net/news/



Free Allergen Bureau Helpline

email: info@allergenbureau.net

Phone: +61 437 918 959 (International)