

# Allergen Bureau

## Applying VITAL Risk Assessments in Your Facility

Allergen Bureau  
July 17/18<sup>th</sup> 2024



Informing the  
food industry

# Agenda

- Introductions
- About Us
- Supporting Resources
- The VITAL Program
  - History
  - Key Concepts
  - Connection to Canadian guide
- VITAL 4.0 & Support documents
- Demonstration & FAQ's

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# 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



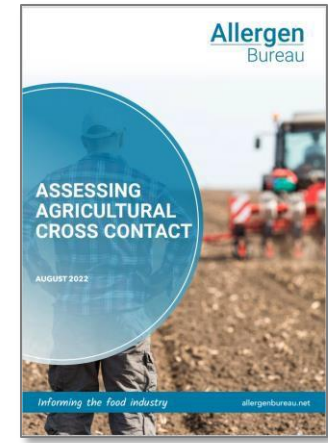
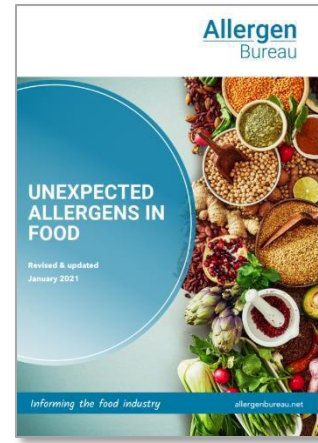
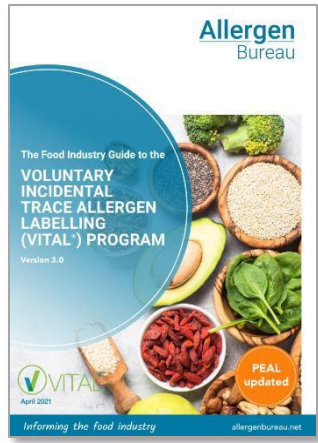
# Vision & Mission

***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.

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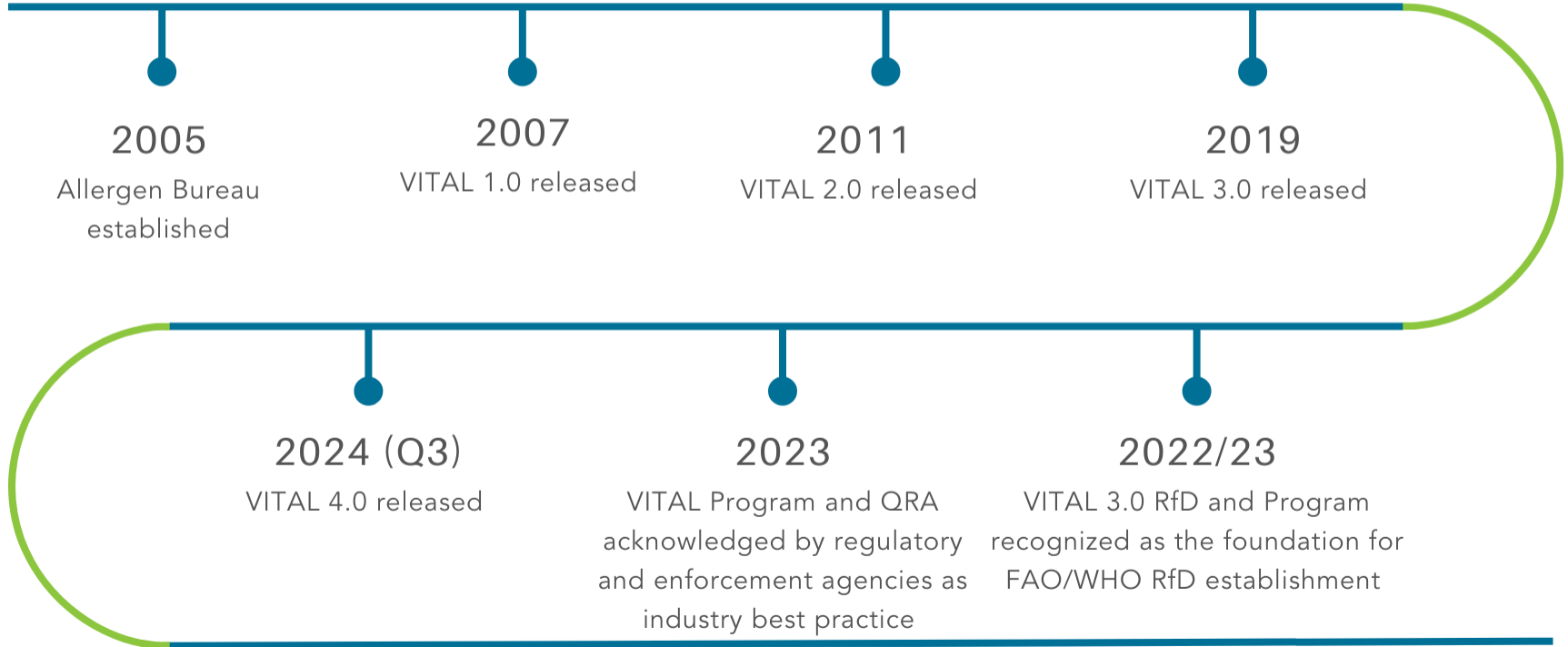


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**Resources for the Food Industry**

allergenbureau.net

# The VITAL Program Development



# Global reach and use

- Approximately 7400 organisations have registered to use the VITAL online tool
- More the 74500 reports generated since online version available
- This does not capture the application of the VITAL Program is other ways (i.e. manual, consultants, other platforms)

TOP 3 VITAL Online regions (as at June 2024)

1. ANZ (73%)
2. Europe (14%)
3. UK (5%)





The  
VITAL<sup>®</sup>  
Program



# Program Objective

To ensure manufactured food is **safe to consume** for the **vast majority** of food allergic consumers by providing **consistent food labels** that declare the presence of allergens, due to **documented, unavoidable, and sporadic cross contact** thus enabling allergic consumers and their carers to make informed choices.

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# The VITAL Program is underpinned by three core concepts

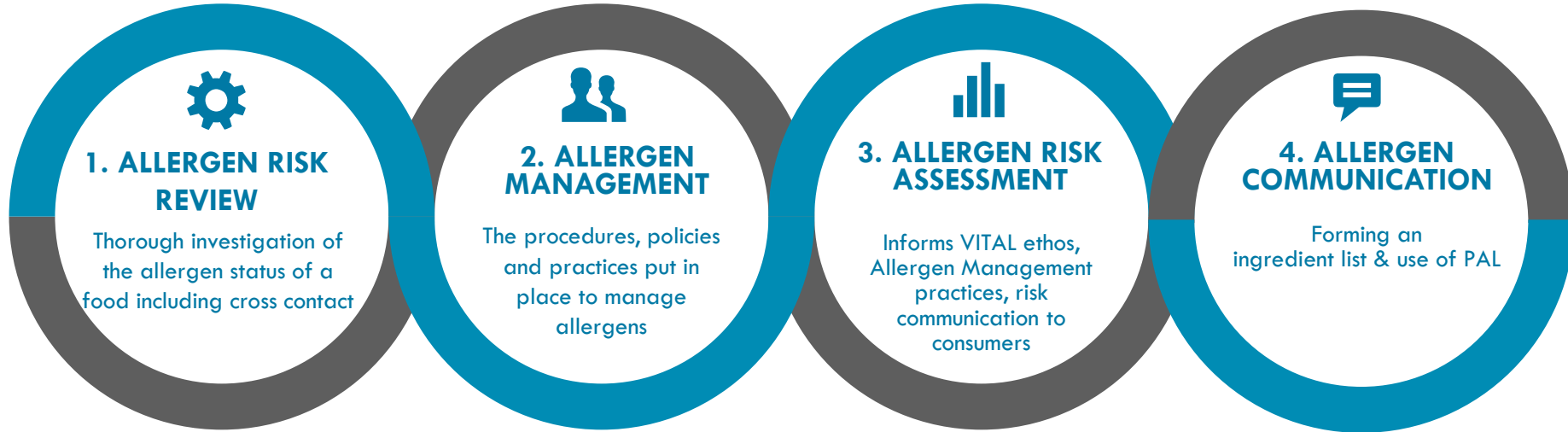
1. Allergen risk review
2. Allergen management
3. Allergen risk assessment

The food industry uses this knowledge to identify and manage allergens within their facilities and to determine if cross contact allergens are to be declared.



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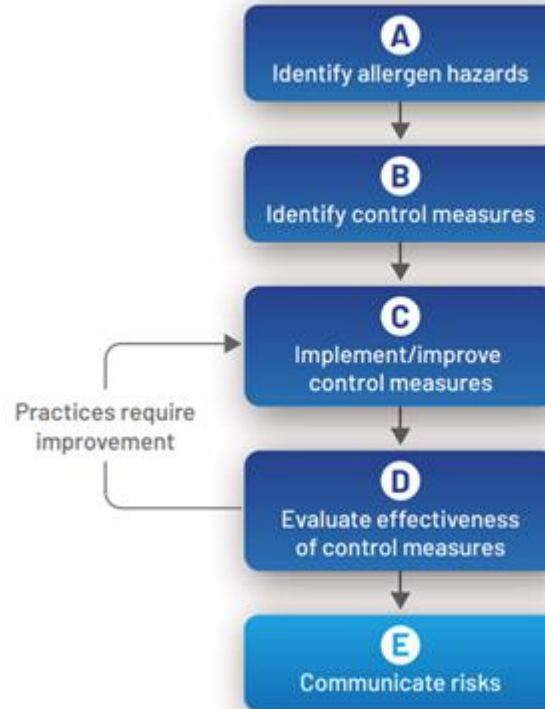
# These work to create a feedback loop that informs communication.



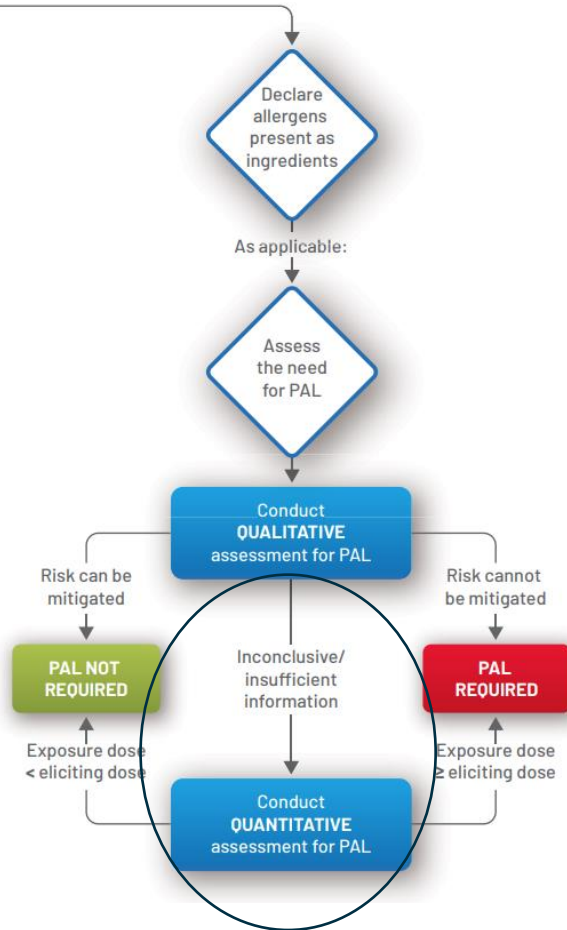
# These are referenced similarly, but differently in Canadian Guidelines



Figure 2: Process map of an Allergen Control Plan:



# When to use the VITAL Program



- The VITAL program is a great adjunct to the Canadian Allergen Management Guidelines
- Provides a central location for all Allergen Ingredient Information. E.g. Could be used to create the Facility Allergen Master list
- Information from Qual Assessments can be referenced to strengthen evidence of Quantitative values used and create processing profiles.
- Can use API's to connect to your systems
- Can be tailored to suit your reporting needs.

## VITAL<sup>®</sup> 4.0

- Based on ED<sub>05</sub> Reference Doses
- Includes Legislated European Values
- Additional Canadian Jurisdiction
- ED01 Action Level Grid
- Additional Risk Management Value for Mollusc
- Default setting for jurisdiction

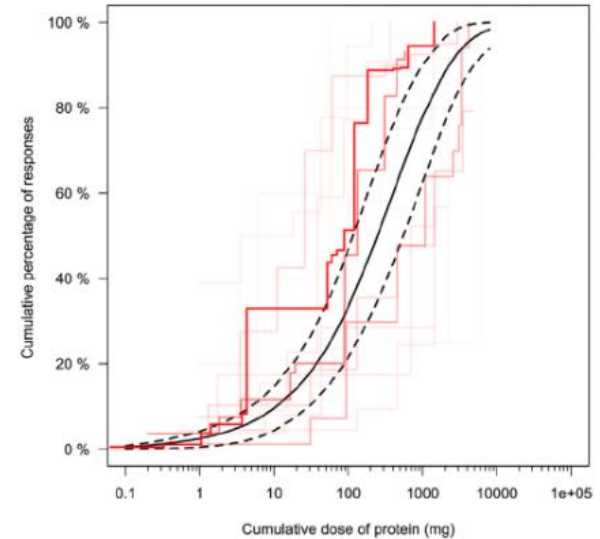


Allergen Risk Assessment underpinned by globally recognised, evidence based, scientific data

# FAO/WHO Adhoc Expert Panel endorsed the VSEP methodology



- “Stacked Model Averaging” which incorporated 5 different statistical models to produce a single “averaged” distribution
- Reference Doses are set using ED05 – the Eliciting Dose of an allergen at which only the most sensitive (5%) of individuals in the allergic population are likely to experience an objective allergic reaction.
- Additional data on sesame and cows milk
- Severity data used to support FAO/WHO expert panel recommendation
- Balanced Risk Management - balancing Public Health Risks and Food Availability



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## ED05 FAQs

- Developed based on industry and stakeholder need
- Includes
  - The science
  - How this translates to consumers
  - What the industry needs to focus on
- Developed to assist industry prepare for / during the transition?
- Sets a foundation for aligned messaging across stakeholders





# Joint Consensus Statement

- Update to include PAL, release expected Q3
- Education & Collaboration must be the focus
  - Healthcare professions (dietitians, allergy nurses, clinicians)
  - Legislators and enforcement agencies
  - Consumers and carers
- Aligned key stakeholder messaging
- Allergen Collaboration continues to work to solve the problems of SME

The graphic is a white rounded rectangle with a blue header. The header contains the title 'Food Allergen Management Consensus Statement'. Below the header, there are three main sections: 1. 'IT IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF CONSUMERS TO:' with two numbered points. 2. 'WE CONSIDER THAT IN ORDER TO ENABLE CONSUMERS TO MAKE INFORMED DECISIONS ABOUT THEIR SAFETY:' in a grey box. 3. Two side-by-side boxes: 'IT IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF PACKAGED FOOD MANUFACTURERS TO:' and 'IT IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF FOOD SERVICE ESTABLISHMENTS/PROVIDERS TO:', each with two numbered points. Below these sections is a paragraph of text and a footer with logos for Centre for Food & Allergy Research, national allergy strategy, Allergen Bureau, ASCIA, Allergy, and FAMS.

## Food Allergen Management Consensus Statement

**IT IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF CONSUMERS TO:**

1. declare their allergies and read food labels (including ingredient lists and allergen declaration statements), and
2. ultimately make their own judgement about the foods they choose to consume.

**WE CONSIDER THAT IN ORDER TO ENABLE CONSUMERS TO MAKE INFORMED DECISIONS ABOUT THEIR SAFETY:**

**IT IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF PACKAGED FOOD MANUFACTURERS TO:**

1. follow robust allergen management practices including quantitative risk assessment, and
2. use clear, consistent labelling to inform consumers about that food's allergen content, including the possible presence of unintended allergens.

**IT IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF FOOD SERVICE ESTABLISHMENTS/PROVIDERS TO:**

1. follow robust allergen management practices, and
2. ensure that staff understand and can inform consumers about the allergen content of the food they provide, including the possible presence of unintended allergens.

We recognise that the safety of consumers with food allergy is a shared responsibility of consumers, packaged food manufacturers, food service establishments/providers, health professionals, retailers, and regulatory and enforcement agencies.

This consensus statement is specific to consumers, packaged food manufacturers and food service establishments/providers, and is part of a strategy to improve the safety and quality of life of consumers with food allergy.





Let's Talk  
Legal Defense

## How VITAL is supporting enforcement decisions & protecting businesses

- Australian & NZ acknowledge a statutory due diligence in respect to breaches in the Food Standard Code
- The application of VITAL has been used to demonstrate due diligence to an enforcement agency

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## Overall Key Messages

1. PAL statements must be meaningful
2. VITAL Philosophy AVOID, ELIMINATE, REDUCE, CONTROL, COMMUNICATE
3. Manage allergens to the lowest possible level. Preferably <AL1, if not possible manage to below the AL2 outcome.
4. Due diligence is key, VITAL helps you document your evidence.
5. Strive for balanced risk management.

Quantitative Risk Assessment is not, and never was underpinned by a 'no risk' philosophy.

# Demonstration

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# THANK YOU

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