

# Allergen Bureau

## Building Tomorrow's Allergen Risk Models with Today's PAL Insights

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Allergen Bureau / BVAQ

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Informing the  
food industry

20  
Year  
Anniversary





## Multi Region Member

ZÉNSHO

## Single Region L Members



# Our Membership

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

## Single Region C Members



## Single Region B Members



## Single Region A Members



- LabCoat Consulting Pty Ltd
- Shoalhaven Starches
- Ezy Chef Pty Ltd
- Blend Pak Inc.
- Orkla Confectionery & Snacks Denmark

# Vision & Mission

**Vision:** A world where individuals with food allergies can trust the safety of the food supply chain and the transparency of food labelling.

**Purpose:** Empower the food industry to help people living with food allergies make informed food choices

**Mission:** To navigate the complexities of the food supply chain by advocating for best-practice allergen management and labelling

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# Study Aim

1

***ED<sub>05</sub> Impact*** – Determine if ED05 Reference Dose reduces PAL on packaged foods.

2

***PAL Prevalence*** – Assess prevalence and types of precautionary allergen statements.

3

***Online Data Accuracy*** – Review accuracy between digital platforms and on-pack allergen information.

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# Methodology:



## Phase I

Collected data from organisations utilising Quantitative Risk Assessment (QRA) using ED01



## Phase II

Examined online data for 1015 packaged foods from two Australian supermarkets



## Phase III

Validated 398 products in-store against online information



# Key Findings: Phase I

Particulates drive

**77%**  
of PAL's

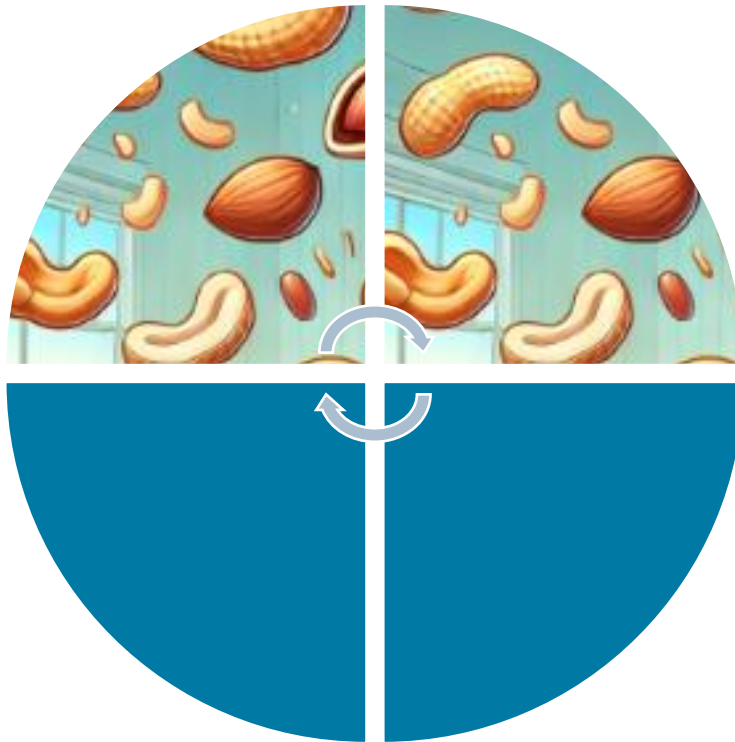
Under VITAL 4.0:

**19%**  
PAL Reduction  
(All bar 3 products)

Leading particulates:

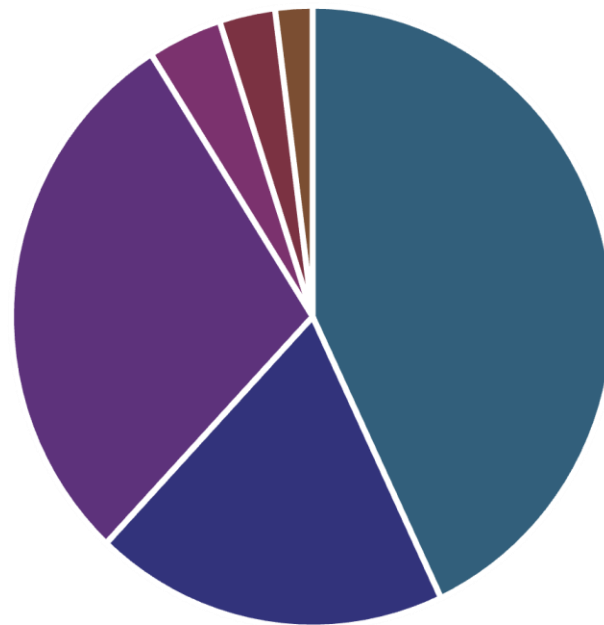
Almond 12%  
Cashew 10%

Cross Contact in  
ingredients  
main driver of PAL



## Phase II: Prevalence and Types of PAL based on digital data

- Photo on website source of truth
- 29% of products did not have a PAL
- **May Contain:** was the most common Statement (43%)
- **May be Present:** (19%)
- **May contain traces..** (or similar) was only used on 3% of packs assessed.



■ May Contain

■ May be Present

■ No PAL

■ Made on  
Line/Facility

■ Traces

■ Missing Data

# Phase II Prevalence and Types of PAL based on digital data

## Most Common in Contains

- Wheat/gluten (24%)
- Milk (20%)
- Soy (19%)

## Most Common in PAL

- Tree nuts (26%)
- Soy (11%)
- Peanut (11%)
- Egg (10%)
- Milk (8%)

## Most limited food availability based on labelled allergens:

\* Soy Allergy(15%),      Milk Allergy (14%),      Coeliac/wheat allergy (14%)



## Allergen Bureau member company feedback

- Use both May Contain and May be present
- Risk based approach – mix of qualitative and quantitative risk assessment

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## Phase III: Online vs Pack Accuracy

**41%**

PAL Statement  
wording differs  
between pack v  
online

**89%**

Accuracy for  
Allergens listed  
Image vs website

**91%**

Accuracy for Allergens listed  
Physical products and website picture



# Opportunities: Supply chain cross contact

- **More data required to understand the driver**
  - Is particulate cross contact also the main reason?
  - Agricultural cross contact v processing risk
- **Global supply chain**
  - Standardised product information?
  - Lack of global uptake of QRA at the start of the supply chain



# Opportunities: Risk assessment types

- **Qualitative v Quantitative**

- When is it appropriate to use a qualitative risk assessment?
- Standardised framework for qualitative assessment required
- Logical and fact based



# Opportunities: Particulates

- If PAL reduction is the aim....
- Are businesses assessing particulates appropriately?
  - Actual risk v perceived risk
  - Use of thresholds
- Is there ever an acceptable level of risk for particulates?
- Is the next stage probabilistic risk assessment?
  - Putting a number to the likelihood a consumer with allergy will purchase a product with particulate cross contact?





# Opportunities: Digital data & consumer confidence

- Define source of truth on digital platforms - photo or text?
- Text alignment – Contains and PAL
- Consistency of PAL Statement versus identification of risk-based principles
  - VITAL Std and mark
- Pack size limitations, digital solutions – 2D barcode, Apps



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# Opportunities: Stakeholder engagement

*Collaborate, Education and  
Communicate*

# THANK YOU

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