

Allergy New Zealand's Food Allergen Labelling Guide

1. Food allergens that must be declared:

Under NZ's food regulations, there are now 10 food allergens which must be declared if they are intentionally in a food for sale as an ingredient, processing aid, or an additive (or a compound of any of these). The foods are listed in the Food Code Standard 1.2.3 clause 4:

- **Cereals** containing gluten, i.e. **wheat**, rye, barley, oats and spelt and their hybridised strains
- **Crustacea** (e.g. crab, crayfish, prawns and shrimps)
- **Egg** and egg products
- **Fish** and fish products (including **shellfish**)
- **Lupin** (*Note: recently added, not yet in the NZ food supply*)
- **Milk** and milk products
- **Peanuts** and peanut products
- **Sesame** seeds and sesame seed products
- **Soybeans** and soybean products
- **Tree nuts** and tree-nut products other than coconut from the palm *Cocos nucifera*.

In some cases, manufacturers might use technical names for an allergen and it is important to know what these are for the ones you need to avoid (see the food allergen lists below).

Some forms of food allergens as ingredients have been made exempt from allergen labelling. This is because it has been found that processing e.g. of highly refined oils, removes the protein in them. They are therefore not considered allergenic, and by exempting them there may be more product options safe for food-allergic consumers.

2. Where they must be declared

Food allergens must be declared on the labels of packaged foods, or information provided on request from the consumer if the food is for sale but does not require a label e.g. food sold in delicatessens, cafes, restaurants, catering services, and farmers markets.

i) Packaged food

Food allergens are declared on the ingredients list on the label, and there may also be a separate 'Contains xxx' statement specifically for allergens. On the ingredients list, it might have the allergen written in bold letters e.g. **wheat** flour, and/or in brackets e.g. margarine (contains **milk**).

However, a 'Contains' statement is not required under current regulations; it is sufficient for food allergens to be declared in the ingredients list. If a label doesn't have a 'Contains' statement it does not mean there are no food allergens in the product.

Always check the ingredients' list every time you buy.

ii) Information on request

If you are interested in ordering/buying a meal or food item that doesn't have a label, always ask the food operator about the presence of the food you/your child is allergic to, including

- Whether it is an ingredient in the food for sale (including in any sauces, flavourings or toppings)
- Whether it is used in other food made in that business or kitchen, and if there is any chance of cross-contamination with the food you wish to buy
- To check labels on ingredients where the allergen might be 'hidden' (refer to the lists below)

3. 'May contain' statements

The food manufacturing process starts from the paddock (or sea) where raw ingredients are grown. Manufacturers must manage the risks associated with possible cross-contact of food allergens in processing ingredients and products from the 'paddock to the plate'. Good food allergen management practice is aimed at identifying where these risks might occur and taking steps to minimise them as far as possible. However, some risks might not be possible to eliminate, hence the use of 'May contain' statements.

There are a variety of statements being used currently, including 'Made in a factory where...' or 'Made on a line where...'. However, as with 'Contains' statements, these are made voluntarily on the part of manufacturers, and are not regulated.

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'Free from' statements are also voluntary, i.e. they are not regulated under our food legislation. However, under New Zealand's Fair Trading Act 1986, claims such as 'free from' must be able to be proved.

4. Where to go for more information

If you are unsure whether a product is safe or not, based on the information on the label, it is best to call the manufacturer. All manufactured food is required to have the contact details for the manufacturer (or distributor if it is an imported food) on the label.

5. Making a complaint

If you are concerned a food product has an undeclared allergen in it, or the label or information provided is misleading in some way, you can make a complaint to the Ministry of Primary Industries (MPI). Call **MPI's consumer food safety line on 0800 00 83 33** or email info@mpi.govt.nz

You can also contact **Allergy New Zealand** if you need any advice about allergen labelling and making complaints – call **0800 34 0800** or email allergy@allergy.org.nz

MPI may issue a food recall if a complaint is upheld. You can subscribe to MPI's email alerts for all food recalls by going to <http://www.mpi.govt.nz/news-and-resources/subscribe-to-mpi/>

6. Other things to be aware of

- Avoid bulk bins in supermarkets as these can be easily contaminated by other foods, including items dropping down from one bin to another, or tongs or scoops being used for different items. Similarly, take care when purchasing food from the delicatessen section.
- Teach your child not to accept food without your permission, such as from people offering food tastings in supermarkets.
- Beverages are also required to declare allergens so check these as well.
- Non-food items such as medications, cosmetics, skin creams and dental products can also contain food allergens.

ASCI has diet sheets which are available on:

<https://www.allergy.org.au/patients/food-allergy/ascia-dietary-avoidance-for-food-allergy>

Please note the lists below are not comprehensive and there may be other foods or ingredients that should be avoided. If in doubt, always ring the manufacturer.

Cereals containing gluten

These are wheat, rye, barley, oats and spelt and their hybridised strains. Gluten is a protein which is common in these cereals; these must be strictly avoided by people who have coeliac disease or are intolerant to gluten.

However, the most common food allergy to cereal is wheat allergy. People with wheat allergy may be able to tolerate other cereals. However, it is sometimes unclear from labels which cereals are present and which are not. In these cases, avoid any food labelled as containing gluten.

Wheat

Avoid these:		May contain wheat protein	
Atta flour	Risone	Baking powder	Liquorice
Bakers flour	Seitan	Baked goods (e.g. breads,	Maltodextrin
Bran	Semolina	biscuits,	Marshmallows
Bulgar	Spelt	crackers,	Muesli
Burghul	Tabouleh	cakes, pastry etc)	Noodles
Cracker meal	Triticale	Batter	Pasta
Couscous	Wheat	Breadcrumbs	Soy sauce (shoyu)
Durum	Wheat: -bran	Cornflour	Spices
Farina	-flour	Confectionery	Starch (edible, gelatinised, modified, vegetable, wheat)
Gluten	-germ	Cereals	Stuffing
Graham flour	-malt	Croutons	Surimi
Kamut	-meal	Dessert mixes	Tinned and processed foods
Matzoh	-starch	Flavourings	
Pasta (e.g. fettucine, spaghetti, lasagne)	-berries	Glucose syrup	
		Icing sugar	
		Textured or hydrolysed protein (TVP, HVP)	
Exemptions:			
Glucose syrups made from wheat starch, refined, and have a gluten protein content that does not exceed 20 mg/kg; or alcohol distilled from wheat.			

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Egg and Egg products

Avoid these ingredients		Avoid these foods	
Albumen or albumin	Livetin	Baked foods with eggs such as cakes, muffins	Omelette, soufflé, frittata
Apovitelin	Lysozyme	Egg (white or yolk)	Pancakes, pikelets
Dried Egg	Ovalbumin	Egg	Pastries (e.g. chocolate eclairs, cream puffs, tarts, pies)
Egg solids	Ovomucoid	Noodles	Pavlova
Flavoproteins	Ovovitelin	French toast	Quiche
Glaze (on baked goods)	Powdered egg	Fritters	Waffles
Globulin	Silici	Meringue	
Imitation egg product	albuminate	Meringue mix	
	Simplese		

Milk and Milk Products

This applies to all milk and dairy products from Cow's milk. It is recommended those with Cow's milk allergy also avoid Goats and Sheep milk and their products as well, as the proteins are similar.

Avoid these ingredients		Avoid these foods	
Butter oil	Milk protein	A2 milk	Ice cream
Butter fat	Milk solids	Butter	Infant formula – cow's milk based
Casein	Non-fat dairy solids	Buttermilk	including partially hydrolysed (HA) formula
Caseinates	Non-fat milk solids	Cheese	Low fat milk
Cheese powder	Skim milk solids	Condensed milk	Malted milk
Dairy solids	Whey	Cottage cheese	Milk
Hydrolysates (casein, milk protein, whey)		Cream	Skim milk
Lactalbumin		Curds	Sour cream
Lactoglobulin		Custard	Yoghurt
Milk derivative		Evaporated milk	
		Ghee	

Take care with **coconut milk** as some products have cow's milk as an ingredient.

Exemptions: Alcohol distilled from whey

Peanut and Peanut Products

Peanuts are legumes, like peas, lentils, pulses and chickpeas, however most people with peanut allergy can tolerate other legumes.

Avoid these ingredients	Avoid these foods	Avoid foods which may contain peanut	
Arachis oil	Mixed nuts	African, Asian (e.g. Chinese, Indian, Indonesian, Japanese, Thai, Vietnamese) and Mexican dishes	Muesli bars
Beer nuts	Nutmeat	Baked goods e.g. biscuits, cakes, pastries	Nougat
Goober nuts	Peanut	Cereals/mueslis, Confectionery e.g. chocolate, Florentines	Pesto
Ground nuts	Peanut butter	Gravy	Sauces
Madelonas	Peanut brittle	Hummus	Tahini
Monkey nuts	Peanut flour	Marzipan	Flavours
Nu-nuts	Peanut oil	Meat dishes e.g. chilli	
Peanut flour			
Peanut oil			

Soybean and Soybean Products

Avoid these ingredients	Avoid these foods	
Bean curd	Edamame	Soy milk
Soya bean paste	Miso	Soy sauce
Soy flour	Soya beans	Soy yoghurt
Soy protein isolate	Soy bean sprouts	Tamari
	Soy cheeses	Tempeh
	Soy desserts	Teriyaki
	Soy formula	Tofu
	Soy ice cream	

Exemptions
Soybean oil that has been degummed, neutralised, bleached and deodorised; or Soybean derivatives that are a tocopherol or a phytosterol.

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Seafood

Types of seafood are **fin fish and shellfish**, i.e. crustacea and molluscs. The allergen labelling standard currently requires crustacea and 'fish' to be declared. Molluscs are declared currently as 'fish'. There is a high risk of cross-contamination with other seafood depending on how/where it is sold.

Fish

Avoid Fin Fish and Molluscs		
Fin Fish		
Anchovies	Rays	Cuttlefish
Cod	Salmon	Kina
Eels	Sardines	Limpets
Flounder	Shark	Mussels
Haddock	Snapper	Octopus
Hake	Sole	Oysters
Halibut	Tarakahi	Paua
Hapuka	Trout	Periwinkles
Herring	Tuna	Pipi
Hoki	Warehou	Scallops
John Dory		Sea slugs
Kahawai	Molluscs	Snails
Mackerel	Abalone	Squid and Squid ink
Moki	Calamari	Tuatua
Parore	Clams	Toheroa
Pike	Cockles	
Avoid food such as:		
Bouillabaisse	Anchovies may be found in Caesar salads & dressing, & Worcestershire sauce	
Caviar		
Crabsticks	Dips and spreads made with fish or shellfish;	
Fish chowder (soup)		
Fish paste, fish sauce, fish stocks	Fish sauce may be added in dressings and sauces, especially to Asian dishes;	
Fruits de mer (seafood)		
Gumbo	Fish oils are used as a diet supplement as a single oil capsule, or as part of a combination oil mix. (If you want to take these supplements, discuss this with your allergy specialist).	
Jambalaya		
Kedgeriee (smoked fish)		
Paella		
Roe		
Surimi		
Exemptions:		
Isinglass derived from swim bladders and used as a clarifying agent in beer or wine.		

Crustacea

Avoid:	Avoid food which might contain crustacea:	
Barnacles	Fish sauce	Prawn chips
Crab	Fish stock	Scampi fries
Crayfish	Marinara mix	Seafood pizza
Lobster	Marinara pasta	Oyster sauce
Prawns	sauce	
Shrimps	Paella	

Sesame Seeds and Sesame Seed Products

Avoid these ingredients	Avoid these foods
Benne	Aqua Libra drink
Benniseed	Halvah
Gingelly seeds	Hummus
Gomasio / Sesame salt	Sesame snacks
Sesame	Pastelli
Sesame oil	Sesame oil
Sesame seed	
Sesarmol	Note that breads, buns, breakfast cereals, cakes, Museli bars etc can have sesame seeds on or in them.
Sesomolina	
Sim sim	
Tahina	
Tahini/sesame paste	
Til	

Lupin

Lupin is a legume and is related to other legumes, such as peanut and soy. In Europe, where lupin flour and bran are widely used in a variety of baked goods such as bread, muffins and cakes and pasta products, there has been mandatory allergen labelling for food products containing lupin since 2007.

The use of lupin-derived ingredients has increased in food products in Australia in recent years and has the potential to be an allergen. However, in New Zealand, it is currently not well-known or prevalent as an allergen, believed in part due to the current low use of lupin-derived ingredients here.

For more information refer to the ASCIA diet sheets on www.allergy.org.au

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Tree Nuts and Tree Nut Products

Tree nuts (such as almonds, cashews and walnuts) can be found in a variety of foods and often in foods we do not suspect, including chocolate, cereal or muesli bars, breakfast cereals and bakery items.

Currently ‘tree nuts’ are not defined in the Food Code for allergen-labelling purposes, other than that ‘coconut from the palm *Cocos nucifera*’, is exempt. Food allergic reactions to coconut are relatively rare.

Specific tree nut sources therefore may not always be declared on labels. FSANZ is currently considering a proposal, based on an extensive scientific and clinical review, to define the list of tree nuts for labelling purposes as almond, Brazil nut, cashew, hazelnut, macadamia, pecan, pine nut, pistachio and walnut.

Avoid these Tree Nuts	Avoid these foods
Almonds Brazil nuts Cashews Hazelnut/ Filberts Hickory nuts Macadamia nuts Pecans/ mashuga nuts Pine nuts/ Indian nuts Pistachios Walnuts	Beer nuts Carponata (may contain pine nuts) Dukkah Macaroons Marzipan Nougat Nut flavoured alcoholic liqueurs and syrups Nut paste, butter or spreads Pesto Pralines
Avoid these ingredients Almond paste Almond meal Almond milk Artificial nuts Natural nut extract Non-gai nuts	Tree nuts are often found in muesli bars, chocolate, breakfast cereals and bakery items.

For more information and resources:

Allergy New Zealand Inc: www.allergy.org.nz

Australasian Society of Clinical Immunology and Allergy (ASCI): www.allergy.org.au

Food Standards Australia New Zealand (FSANZ)

- The Food Code:
- Consumer Information

<http://www.foodstandards.gov.au/>

Ministry of Primary Industries/Food Safety

- **Food Allergies**

<https://mpi.govt.nz/food-safety/food-safety-for-consumers/food-allergies/>

- **Food Labelling**

<https://mpi.govt.nz/food-safety/food-safety-for-consumers/food-labelling/>

- **Food Complaints**

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- email to info@mpi.govt.nz

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