

# GUIDANCE on the CONTROL and MANAGEMENT of ALLERGENS in the MANUFACTURE of foods.

# ALLERGEN MANAGEMENT and LABELLING

## RELEVANT FOR MY BUSINESS?

The guide is relevant to all sectors of the food industry involved in the supply, handling, production, distribution and sale of foods.

It provides recommendations for the production, handling and labelling of foods containing allergenic substances, and introduces the VITAL tool to assess whether a precautionary statement is required.

The guide is **freely** available as an electronic document and should be used with the VITAL procedure and VITAL action level grid.

## WHERE CAN I GET MORE INFORMATION?

The Australian Food and Grocery Council website, [www.afgc.org.au](http://www.afgc.org.au) and the Allergen Bureau website, [www.allergenbureau.net](http://www.allergenbureau.net).

*Limited numbers of printed copies of the guide are also available.*



AUSTRALIAN  
FOOD AND GROCERY  
COUNCIL

Level 2, Salvation Army Building  
2-4 Brisbane Avenue  
BARTON ACT 2600

Locked Bag 1  
KINGSTON ACT 2604

Phone: 02 6273 1466  
Fax: 02 6273 1477  
Email: [info@afgc.org.au](mailto:info@afgc.org.au)

[www.afgc.org.au](http://www.afgc.org.au)



AUSTRALIAN FOOD AND GROCERY COUNCIL

# WHY DO I NEED TO READ THIS?

*Because food allergies can be serious!*



Proper handling and labelling of foods containing allergenic ingredients can be the difference between life and death.

If you fail to label foods containing allergenic ingredients:

- » allergic consumers cannot make an informed choice, risking a potentially fatal allergic reaction
- » you might be forced to conduct expensive food recalls for failing to properly label foods containing allergens.
- » you may face prosecution and face hefty fines or govt.

The most common reason for undertaking food recalls in 2005 was failing to properly label foods declaring allergenic ingredients. This cost industry millions of dollars in lost sales and destruction of product.



## WHY DO I NEED TO DO SOMETHING?

The Allergen Management and Labelling Guide provides a consistent approach in the way allergen information is presented by all food manufacturers. This will help allergic consumers easily and quickly identify foods of concern, helping to minimise accidental consumption of unsuitable foods.

## HOW CAN WE HELP?

The revised 2007 Allergen Management and Labelling Guide helps food manufacturers:

- » meet legal food standards requirements
- » identify information suppliers need to provide
- » address the risk of inadvertent presence of allergens in foods
- » apply a consistent labelling format to assist consumers in identifying allergens of concern to them.



## WHAT IS VOLUNTARY INCIDENTAL TRACE ALLERGEN LABELLING?

A wide variety of voluntary precautionary statements are currently used, such as "Made on a premises which also uses. . ." or "Packed on a production line that also handles. . .", which

- » can be confusing for consumers, and
- » may fail to address the risks presented by such products.

The 2007 guide introduces the concepts behind a tool called **VITAL** (**V**oluntary **I**ncidental **T**race **A**llergen **L**abelling).

**VITAL** helps you determine the actual risk of an allergen accidentally being present in a food and assess if a precautionary statement is needed.

The guide recommends replacing all other precautionary statements with the single term "**May be present:** "

