# Food Standards Agency Requirements - Food Allergens

## Preparing, Storing and Handling foods

If you are a Childminder that provides food as part of your normal Childminding service you are responsible under food law for ensuring that food is prepared, stored and handled in compliance with the food hygiene regulations. This includes keeping a record of actions carried out to keep food safe. The Food Standards Agency (FSA) has produced a special pack called 'Safer food, better business for Childminder’s' (SFBB for Childminder’s).

## Food Labelling Rules from 13th December 2014

From 13 December 2014, all food businesses including Childminder’s will need to provide allergen information on the foods they provide. Food allergens pose a significant risk to consumers with allergic conditions, which may even be life threatening. Children are particularly vulnerable because of their reduced level of control over the foods they eat.

As a Childminder, it is your responsibility to ensure that you provide allergen information for the food you serve and that this is accurate, consistent and verifiable. Remember to check the ingredients list of foods you use to make sure allergen information is correct, to avoid triggering an allergic reaction. The provision of allergen information concerns any foods bought from a shop and non-pre-packed foods including home-cooked meals. This allergen information should be easily accessible and readily available to parents, who leave or may leave children in your care, and any children in your care who can make their own informed food choices.

## 14 Food allergens

There are 14 allergens currently listed under food law that you must declare. These are:

* cereals containing gluten, e.g.: wheat (including spelt and khorasan), rye, barley and oats and their hybridised strains
* crustaceans, e.g.: prawns, crab and lobster
* eggs
* fish
* peanuts
* soybeans
* milk
* nuts, e.g.: almonds, hazelnuts, walnuts, pecan nuts, Brazil nuts, pistachio, cashew, macadamia nuts or Queensland nuts
* celery (including celeriac)
* mustard
* sesame
* sulphur dioxide/sulphites (preservatives used in some foods and drinks) at levels above 10mg per kg or per litre
* lupin
* molluscs, e.g. clams, mussels, whelks oysters, snails and squid

Basic advice from DMBC Environmental Health Team is to go through items that you serve to children, look at the ingredients and list any allergens present. Childminder’s should be able to tell parents what is in the foods they prepare. Best practice would be to have a folder with a sheet for each meal e.g.: pasta bake, then list the ingredients and highlight the allergens present, or to display a ‘food allergen matrix’.

Further FSA information regarding allergen legislation, advice, training and resources can be found via the links below.

### FSA website:

<http://www.food.gov.uk/business-industry/caterers/startingup/childminders>

### FSA training link:

<http://allergytraining.food.gov.uk/>

### FSA resources link:

<http://www.food.gov.uk/business-industry/allergy-guide/allergen-resources>

### For more information contact:

Doncaster Council, Environmental Health Team on: Telephone: 01302 73756