



HUME CITY COUNCIL

# Hume Food News

## In this Winter edition:

- Allergen labelling for consumers
- Health and hygiene - advice for food handlers
- Food Safety Supervisors
- FSANZ approves genetically modified banana

[hume.vic.gov.au/foodnews](http://hume.vic.gov.au/foodnews)



# Allergen labelling for consumers

**Some foods and ingredients can cause allergic reactions including anaphylaxis, immune reactions such as Coeliac disease, and other adverse health reactions such as asthma.**

As mentioned in a previous edition of Hume Food News, from 25 February 2024, food businesses are now required to meet new plain English allergen labelling requirements. These new requirements will show how certain foods known to be common allergens are declared and will mean food allergen information is clearer and easier to find on food labels.

If a food was packaged and labelled before the 25 February 2024, and it does not declare allergens in the new required format, then it can still be sold for another two years (until 25 February 2026). Allergen labelling still applies to food packaged and labelled before the 25 February 2024, but the labelling may appear different to foods packaged and labelled after this date.

## What must be declared?

The food and ingredients listed below will need to be declared in the ingredient list when they are present using the exact name (from list 1 below) and bolded text. For example, cheese (milk) or milk powder. As indicated in the table, the new requirements also mean that individual tree nuts, molluscs and individual cereals must all be declared separately.

A bolded, separate allergen summary statement starting with the word 'contains' will also need to be provided near the ingredient list to help quickly identify any allergens present. For example, 'Contains milk'.

If a cereal containing gluten such as wheat, barley, oats and rye, (including hybrids of these cereals such as triticale) is present, the label will need to identify this in the summary statement using the word 'gluten'.

If the food is not in packaging or does not need to have a label, the information must be displayed with the food or can be requested from the supplier. For example, by asking about allergens in food prepared and sold from a takeaway shop.

## Product exemptions

Some food can be manufactured in a way that makes it safe to be eaten by people with allergies and does not need to have allergens declared.

## Bee products

If a food contains bee pollen, propolis or royal jelly, it must be labelled with either a warning or advisory statement.

## 'May contain' statements

Some food labels use 'may contain' or 'may be present' statements to indicate the possible unintended presence of allergens occurring during food manufacture, such as 'may contain milk'. This is also known as precautionary allergen labelling (PAL). These are voluntary statements made by food suppliers and the Food Standards Code does not regulate them.

**Scan the QR code for further food allergens advice.**



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List 1: Foods and ingredients to be declared (using these names)

<b>wheat</b>	<b>lupin</b>	<b>cashew</b>	<b>walnut</b>
<b>fish</b>	<b>peanut</b>	<b>hazelnut</b>	<b>barley*</b>
<b>crustacean</b>	<b>soy, soya, soyabean</b>	<b>macadamia</b>	<b>oats*</b>
<b>mollusc</b>	<b>sesame</b>	<b>pecan</b>	<b>rye*</b>
<b>egg</b>	<b>almond</b>	<b>pistachio</b>	<b>sulphites**</b>
<b>milk</b>	<b>Brazil nut</b>	<b>pine nut</b>	

\* Barley, oats and rye must be declared if they contain gluten.

\*\* Sulphites must be declared when added in amounts equal to or more than 10 milligrams per kilogram of food.

**Scan the QR code to view a Food Standards Allergen Labelling printable poster.**

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# Health and hygiene – advice for food handlers

## **Making sure you don't contaminate food through illness or unclean habits is important to keep food safe to eat.**

Under Standard 3.2.2 - Food Safety Practices and General Requirements, you need to ensure food is safe and suitable to eat.

### **Be clean and careful**

It's easy to practise good hygiene and make it a good habit. Always ensure you are:

- washing your hands with soap and drying them thoroughly
- ensuring hair, clothes, jewellery or phones does not touch food or surfaces - for example tie your hair back, remove loose jewellery, cover open sores
- not touching ready-to-eat food with your bare hands - use tongs or gloves
- wearing clean clothing and aprons
- not eating, spitting, smoking, sneezing, blowing or coughing over food or surfaces that food touches.

You need to tell your supervisor if you think you are sick or have contaminated food in any way.



## **Wash your hands properly**

You must be thorough when washing your hands. Here are some tips to help ensure you are washing your hands properly:

- only use the handwash sink provided just for hand washing
- wet your hands under warm running water
- lather them with soap, thoroughly scrub fingers, palms, wrists, back of hands and under nails for at least 15 seconds
- rinse hands under warm running water
- thoroughly dry your hands with a single-use towel or hand dryer machine.

## **When to wash your hands**

You must always wash your hands:

- before you start handling food or go back to handling food after other tasks
- before working with ready-to-eat food after handling raw food
- after using the toilet
- after smoking, coughing, sneezing, using a handkerchief or tissue, eating or drinking
- after touching your hair, scalp, nose, on so on
- after doing anything else that could make your hands dirty, like handling garbage, touching animals or children, or cleaning duties.

## **If you are sick**

Some illnesses can pass to people through food. These are foodborne illnesses such as gastro and hepatitis A.

If you know or think you have a foodborne illness, for example if you have diarrhoea or fever you must:

- tell your supervisor
- stop handling food as it's likely to become contaminated
- only return to food handling when a doctor says you're well enough, usually 48 hours after symptoms stop.

**Scan the QR code to view a Health and Hygiene – advice for Food Handlers printable poster.**

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# Food Safety Supervisors

## **Class 1, 2 and 3A food businesses must have at least one trained Food Safety Supervisor (FSS).**

The appointed FSS must be able to oversee the day-to-day food handling operations, help food handlers to handle food safely, and make sure food safety risks are managed.

It has come to the attention of our Environmental Health Officers during routine inspections that some food businesses do not have one appointed. It is a requirement under section 19C of the Food Act 1984 that a food business has an FSS.

Also, if your Food Safety Supervisor has changed, you need to contact the Public Health Unit at [healthadmin@hume.vic.gov.au](mailto:healthadmin@hume.vic.gov.au) to notify us

who is the new FSS and provide a copy of their qualification.

Finally, FSS qualifications are now only valid for 5 years. Those who have completed their training and received their certificate prior to 8 December 2023 have until 8 December 2028 to redo their training.

Any FSS who completed or completes their training after 8 December 2023 will have a valid qualification for 5 years and should refer to the date of completion on their FSS certificate as to when they will need to renew.

**Scan the QR code for more info on Food Safety Supervisors.**

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## FSANZ approves genetically modified banana

### **FSANZ has approved food from a world-first genetically modified (GM) banana.**

Their safety assessment found food derived from the GM banana line QCAV-4 is as safe and nutritious as comparable conventional banana already in the Australian and New Zealand food supply.

QCAV-4 has been genetically modified for resistance to Panama disease, which causes wilting and death in banana plants and is a severe threat to the industry worldwide.

The Office of the Gene Technology Regulator (OGTR) has approved a licence for the commercial cultivation of banana line QCAV-4 in a separate but parallel regulatory assessment.

QCAV-4 developer the Queensland University of Technology (QUT) has indicated there are no immediate plans to commercialise the GM banana in Australia as Panama disease is currently contained and effectively managed.

FSANZ notified Australian and New Zealand food ministers of the decision on 16 February 2024. Food ministers have 60 days to consider the approval. If they do not request a review, the Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code will be amended to permit the sale and use of food derived from the banana.

**Scan the QR code for more info on this story.**

Learn more



Hume City Council recognises the rich Aboriginal heritage within the municipality and acknowledges the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung, which includes the existing family members of the Gunung-William-Balluk clan, as the Traditional Custodians of this land. Council embraces Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander living cultures as a vital part of Australia's identity and recognises, celebrates and pays respect to Elders past, present and future.

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