

Providing food at community and charity events

Guidance on providing food in a village hall or other community setting for volunteers and charity groups. It includes advice on registration, certificates and allergen information.

Food supplied, sold or provided at charity or community events, such as street parties, school fetes or fundraisers, must comply with food law and be safe to eat.

Registration

If you sell or supply food for free, cook, store, handle, prepare or distribute food, you may be considered a food business and may need to? [register with your local authority](#).

This includes food businesses trading:?

- at, or during a charity or fund-raising event
- from physical customer-facing premises
- from home
- from a mobile unit or temporary premises
- online (for example via social media or a website) or through distance selling (distance selling means any selling that happens without face-to-face contact with the consumer)

If the food activity is very limited and infrequent, the local authority may decide that registration is not needed. However, the food you provide should still be safe to eat and we recommend you follow food safety and hygiene best-practices. If you are unsure if you need to register or require further advice, please [contact your local authority](#) in England, Wales or Northern Ireland.

Allergen information

Allergen labelling law applies to [registered food businesses](#). If you are a registered food business, you will need to follow the [allergen rules](#).

If your activity does not need to be registered as a food business, you don't have to provide information for consumers about allergens present in the food as ingredients. We recommend that the more information you can provide about allergens to customers, the better it is, so that people with food hypersensitivities (allergies, intolerances and coeliac disease) can make safe choices.

Prepacked and Prepacked for Direct Sale (PPDS) foods

Prepacked products refer to any food put into packaging before being placed on sale, e.g. the food you find in a supermarket.

PPDS is food which is packaged at the same place it is offered or sold to consumers and is in this packaging before it is ordered or selected, like food to go.

Prepacked and PPDS foods are required to provide the name of the food and a full ingredients list with the [14 mandated allergens](#) emphasised within the list.

If you are serving prepacked or PPDS foods at a community or charity event, we recommend that you keep the packaging so that those with food hypersensitivities can check it for the ingredients they avoid.

Non-prepacked food

Food businesses providing non-prepacked foods (food not in packaging such as a meal or loose slices of cake) to consumers are required to provide information on any of the 14 mandated allergens contained in the food.

The food business can choose how they do this, such as:

- in writing e.g. on a menu, matrix or label
- or verbally, with a sign clearly indicating where the consumer can get this information e.g. by asking a member of staff

If you are serving a non-prepacked food at a community or charity event, like a homemade cake, we recommend that you make a note of the recipe or ingredients list so that you can provide this information to those with food hypersensitivities.

The FSA have free [Allergy and Intolerance E-learning](#) where you can learn more about managing allergens in a kitchen as well as how to cater for allergen information requirements.

Food hygiene certificates

You do not need a food hygiene certificate to make and sell food for charity events. However, you need to make sure that you handle food safely.

Keeping food safe

Following the 4Cs of food hygiene will help you prepare, make and store food safely. The 4Cs of food hygiene are:

- [cleaning](#)
- [chilling](#)
- [cooking](#)
- [avoiding cross-contamination](#)

Here are some general practical tips for when you're making food for large numbers of people:

- prepare food in advance and freeze it, if you can, but ensure the food is properly defrosted before you use it
- wash your hands regularly with soap and warm water, using hand sanitisers if hand washing facilities are not available
- always wash fresh fruit and vegetables
- keep raw and ready-to-eat foods apart
- do not use food past its use-by date
- always read any cooking instructions and make sure food is properly cooked before you serve it

- ensure that food preparation areas are suitably cleaned and sanitised after use and wash any equipment you are using in hot soapy water
- keep food out of the fridge for the shortest time possible

Chilled food

Food that needs to be chilled, such as sandwich fillings served as part of a buffet, should be left out of the fridge for no more than four hours. After this time, any remaining food should be thrown away or put back in the fridge. If you put the food back in the fridge, don't let it stand around at room temperature when you serve it again.

Use-by dates

Use-by dates show how long the food remains safe to eat or drink. Check and follow the use-by dates of the food you serve. Food cannot be supplied in any circumstances if its use-by date has passed. This also applies if you are supplying people with packaged food from a food bank.

[WRAP date labelling guidance](#) provides advice on how to safely redistribute surplus food and avoid food waste.

Foods that need extra care

Some foods are more likely to cause food poisoning than others. These include:

- raw milk
- raw shellfish
- soft cheeses
- pâté
- foods containing raw egg
- cooked sliced meats

If you serve any of these foods, consult the [Foods which need extra care](#) section in the [Safer food better business pack](#).

Cakes

You can serve home-made cakes at community events. They should be safe to eat if:

- the people who make them follow good food hygiene advice
- the cakes are stored and transported safely
- a list of allergens contained in each item is provided

Making and transporting cakes

If you make a cake at home:

- always wash your hands before preparing food
- make sure that surfaces, bowls, utensils, and any other equipment are clean and sanitised
- don't use raw eggs in anything that won't be thoroughly cooked, such as icing or mousse
- keep cheesecakes and any cakes or desserts containing fresh cream in the fridge
- store cakes in a clean, sealable container, away from raw foods

On the day, when you bring in cakes from home or run the stall, you should:

- transport cakes in a clean/sanitised sealable container
- make sure that cheesecake and any cakes or desserts containing fresh cream are left out of the fridge for the shortest time possible, ideally not longer than 4 hours
- when handling cakes use tongs or a cake slice

Storing cakes

You can keep cakes and baked goods with high sugar content in:

- airtight containers - this will prevent mould growth through absorption of moisture from the atmosphere
- the fridge - cakes will last for longer, but their quality may be affected

Any cakes with high moisture additions, such as cream added after baking, should not be left at room temperature. They must be stored chilled (in the fridge) and eaten within the use-by date of the added product.

There are some types of icing, such as ganache and buttercream, that can be kept outside the fridge. It's best to store them somewhere cool and dry. Check the guidelines for storage of the particular icing product you will be using.

Using jam jars

It is safe to re-use glass jam jars occasionally to supply home-made jam or chutney as long as the jars are properly washed. If jam jars are re-used, they should be free from chips and cracks, and should be sterilised prior to each use. Well-fitting lids will also minimise any hygiene risks to the food in the jars.

The regulations on food contact materials, which may limit the re-use of jam jars, apply to businesses. If you have any concerns about the re-use of jam jars, contact your [local authority food safety team](#).

Think Allergy

When someone asks you if a food contains a particular ingredient – always check. From 13 December 2014, food businesses will need to provide information about allergenic ingredients in the food they serve.



1. 'Is there any egg in this?'

Food allergies and intolerances
Before ordering please speak to our staff about your requirements

2. 'I don't know. I'll check.'

3. 'Do you know if this has any egg in it?'

4. 'I'll check.'

5. 'Yes, there is egg in it.'

6. 'Let me help you choose something else.'

Which ingredients can cause a problem?

Cereals containing gluten

Peanuts

Nuts

Milk

Soya

Mustard

Lupin

Eggs

Fish

Crustaceans

Molluscs

Sesame seeds

Celery

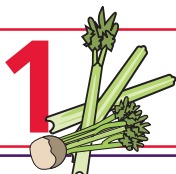
Sulphur dioxide

For more information and advice about allergy, visit: food.gov.uk/allergy
A booklet **Allergen information for loose foods** is also available to download.

14 Allergens

The way allergens are labelled on prepacked foods has changed. The Food Information Regulation, which came into force in December 2014, introduced a requirement that food businesses must provide information about the allergenic ingredients used in any food they sell or provide.

There are 14 major allergens which need to be mentioned (either on a label or through provided information such as menus) when they are used as ingredients in a food. Here are the allergens, and some examples of where they can be found:



1 Celery

This includes celery stalks, leaves, seeds and the root called celeriac. You can find celery in celery salt, salads, some meat products, soups and stock cubes.

Cereals containing gluten

Wheat (such as spelt and Khorasan wheat/Kamut), rye, barley and oats is often found in foods containing flour, such as some types of baking powder, batter, breadcrumbs, bread, cakes, couscous, meat products, pasta, pastry, sauces, soups and fried foods which are dusted with flour.

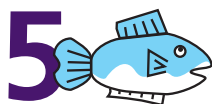


3 Crustaceans

Crabs, lobster, prawns and scampi are crustaceans. Shrimp paste, often used in Thai and south-east Asian curries or salads, is an ingredient to look out for.

Eggs

Eggs are often found in cakes, some meat products, mayonnaise, mousses, pasta, quiche, sauces and pastries or foods brushed or glazed with egg.



5 Fish

You will find this in some fish sauces, pizzas, relishes, salad dressings, stock cubes and Worcestershire sauce.

Lupin

Yes, lupin is a flower, but it's also found in flour! Lupin flour and seeds can be used in some types of bread, pastries and even in pasta.



7 Milk

Milk is a common ingredient in butter, cheese, cream, milk powders and yoghurt. It can also be found in foods brushed or glazed with milk, and in powdered soups and sauces.

Molluscs

These include mussels, land snails, squid and whelks, but can also be commonly found in oyster sauce or as an ingredient in fish stews



9 Mustard

Liquid mustard, mustard powder and mustard seeds fall into this category. This ingredient can also be found in breads, curries, marinades, meat products, salad dressings, sauces and soups.

Nuts

Not to be mistaken with peanuts (which are actually a legume and grow underground), this ingredient refers to nuts which grow on trees, like cashew nuts, almonds and hazelnuts. You can find nuts in breads, biscuits, crackers, desserts, nut powders (often used in Asian curries), stir-fried dishes, ice cream, marzipan (almond paste), nut oils and sauces.



11 Peanuts

Peanuts are actually a legume and grow underground, which is why it's sometimes called a groundnut. Peanuts are often used as an ingredient in biscuits, cakes, curries, desserts, sauces (such as satay sauce), as well as in groundnut oil and peanut flour.

Sesame seeds

These seeds can often be found in bread (sprinkled on hamburger buns for example), breadsticks, houmous, sesame oil and tahini. They are sometimes toasted and used in salads.



13 Soya

Often found in bean curd, edamame beans, miso paste, textured soya protein, soya flour or tofu, soya is a staple ingredient in oriental food. It can also be found in desserts, ice cream, meat products, sauces and vegetarian products.

Sulphur dioxide (sometimes known as sulphites)

This is an ingredient often used in dried fruit such as raisins, dried apricots and prunes. You might also find it in meat products, soft drinks, vegetables as well as in wine and beer. If you have asthma, you have a higher risk of developing a reaction to sulphur dioxide.



For more information, visit: food.gov.uk/allergy or nhs.uk/conditions/allergies

✉ Sign up to our allergy alerts on food.gov.uk/allergy-alerts, or follow [#AllergyAlert](https://twitter.com/AllergyAlert) on Twitter and

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