

# Allergy Resource Guide

As school nutrition professionals, it is important to have the knowledge to monitor and recognize food allergens in order to provide students with documented allergies safe meals. To ensure the safety of students, a collaborative approach among food service departments, key district stakeholders, and parents involved is needed and an appropriate action plan should be created. Work with your school district to make sure you and your employees know your district’s allergy policies and work to ensure that all of your staff are trained appropriately.

## Purpose


The purpose of this guide is to provide school nutrition professionals with a summary of the FDA’s 9 Major Food Allergens, knowing how to recognize these allergens, and provide additional resources to ensure a safe school environment for students with allergies.

## FDA 9 Major Food Allergens

Milk	Tree Nuts
Eggs	Peanuts
Fish	Wheat
Crustacean Shellfish	Soybeans
Sesame	

## How to Recognize Allergens

It is required by law that food labels report if any of the 9 common allergens are present in a food product. This reporting will either be found directly in the ingredient list and/or in a separate statement found underneath the ingredient list. For allergens outside of the major food allergens list, be sure to carefully read ingredient lists on food labels to identify whether the food product contains the allergen.



**INGREDIENTS:** CORN, VEGETABLE OIL (CORN, CANOLA, AND/OR SUNFLOWER OIL), SALT, CORN STARCH, TOMATO POWDER, LACTOSE, WHEY, SKIM MILK, ONION POWDER, SUGAR, GARLIC POWDER, MONOSODIUM GLUTAMATE, MALTODEXTRIN (MADE FROM CORN), CHEDDAR CHEESE (MILK, CHEESE CULTURES, SALT, ENZYMES), DEXTROSE, MALIC ACID, CORN SYRUP SOLIDS, BUTTERMILK, NATURAL AND ARTIFICIAL FLAVORS, SODIUM ACETATE, ARTIFICIAL COLOR (RED 40, BLUE 1, YELLOW 5), SPICE, CITRIC ACID, DISODIUM INOSINATE, AND DISODIUM GUANYLATE.



**CONTAINS MILK INGREDIENTS.**

## Allergen Communication

Communication between the food service department, nurses, and other key district stakeholders is essential to ensure a safe school environment for all students. Student allergen information is confidential and proper procedures should be put in place to make sure that allergen communication protects the privacy of students while also making sure that all individuals needed to be involved in the communication receive the information they need. Be sure to follow the procedures put in place by your district, but some examples of allergen communication may include:

- Posting nutrition labels and/or allergen information of all food products used on your food service website
- Labeling allergen information on school menus

- Creating separate menus to accommodate common allergens (ex. Creating a gluten free menu)
- Ensure regular communication with your school district’s nursing staff
- Ensure all food service staff are properly trained and are aware of student allergies
- Maintain communication with parents

### **Additional Resources**

- [USDA Food Allergies](#)
- [CDC Food Allergies in Schools Toolkit](#)