



30 April 2020

**Accurate food allergen labelling has never been more important,  
says Tri-Label's Alan Bryson**

*"While there is plenty of advice out there for food businesses to ensure customers with allergies are identified, the failsafe remains accurate labelling."*

An increasing number of foodservice and delivery businesses have adapted to the current Covid-19 crisis by developing new contact-free and cashless delivery and takeaway collection methods. Food delivery services have become a lifeline to many since the lockdown began – both for those who are staying home, and for the hospitality businesses who are rapidly adapting their menus for home delivery to stay afloat during a financially difficult time.

With these changes, it is now more important than ever to ensure that they comply with food safety and labelling regulations.

The importance of accurate allergen labelling came into sharp focus with the death of Natasha Ednan-Laperouse, on a flight in July 2016, following an allergic reaction to a baguette purchased shortly before at Heathrow Airport. That tragedy led to the introduction of stricter labelling regulations for pre-packaged food, introduced in September 2019, and known as 'Natasha's Law'.

The new legislation, which applies to England, Wales and Northern Ireland, mandates full ingredient and allergen labelling on foods which are pre-packed for direct sale and comes into

effect from October 2021. Before the Coronavirus crisis developed, the Food Standards Agency (FSA) was developing a working interpretation of the types of food to which the legislation applies, giving food businesses 18 months to prepare for the new requirements.

With the topic now reaching a larger audience through the national media, and the recent anaphylactic shock storyline on popular soap opera Emmerdale which is watched by millions across the country, the subject remains one of significant importance both to customers and the hospitality businesses and their employees.

“With changes in delivery methods introduced as a result of Covid-19 and the increased requirement for a contact-free, socially distanced experience the need for accurate allergen labelling has become even more important,” says Tri-Label’s Alan Bryson. “Until now retailers of loose foods have been required to hold a list of allergens behind the point of sale, but the foods themselves have not been required to carry labels and information on allergens, as it is assumed that the customer can speak with the person who made or packed the product for this information. This led to people mistakenly thinking that the food does not contain any allergens. Now that direct communication is no longer an option and orders for home delivery are being taken via websites or by phone. While there is plenty of advice out there for food businesses to ensure customers with allergies are identified, the failsafe remains accurate labelling.”

The Chartered Institute of Environmental Health (CIEH) advises that for website and phone ordering, business must clearly communicate with customers and highlight any allergies or intolerances. These should then be communicated to kitchen staff to ensure the specific allergenic ingredient is avoided as well as ensuring food is prepared safely by avoiding cross contact. Allergy sufferer’s meals require clear labelling, identifying individual food items to avoid mistakes on delivery and unpacking by the customer.

“Not only does this mean that business owners or managers and their staff need training to ensure they are familiar with the full list of 14 allergens, but also that any recipe or menu change must result in a labelling review,” says Alan Bryson. “CIEH also advises that during delivery, food prepared for allergenic customers should be stored separately to avoid any cross contact, but only accurate labelling can provide a failsafe on delivery and truly give consumers confidence.”

### **Let’s act now**

“When it was announced that Natasha’s Law would come into effect from October 2021, I asked ‘why wait?’,” says Alan Bryson. “While this is an important health issue, it is also one of corporate responsibility. 2021 is a long way off, so why leave risks in place when we, as an industry, could

act right away. With the option for face to face confirmation on the presence of allergens currently unavailable, it is imperative that food delivered into allergen sufferer's homes or collected from takeaways is clearly and accurately labelled.

“Lives are literally at stake, and we as an industry can improve our reputation immediately if we take action today rather than waiting until 2021.”

Tri-Label from Tri-Star Packaging makes food labelling simple, and its expert team can draw on more than thirty years of combined experience in the food labelling sector to help guide customers through current and future legislation changes.

“Tri-Label Online is available now and already services a huge volume of customers. We offer the best support and training available and endeavor to stand out in a traditional market with innovative solutions and cutting-edge ideas.

“Natasha's Law creates a great opportunity for the foodservice sector to enhance its reputation by acting to provide consumers with essential allergen information – and should act now.

Ends



*Tri-Label's Alan Bryson*



*Tri-Label from Tri-Star Packaging makes food labelling simple.*

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**Notes to Editors:**

**About Tri-Star Packaging**

Tri-Star Packaging is the UK's leading supplier of packaging and disposables to the food and drink market. Renowned for innovation and outstanding customer service, Tri-Star offers a huge range of cutting-edge, award-winning packaging and products for the food-to-go, coffee bar, retail, catering and bakery sectors.

**About Tri-Label**

Tri-Label is a specialist labelling company which makes food labelling simple. Tri-Label's expert team draws on more than 30 years of combined experience in the food labelling sector to help guide customers through current and future legislation changes.

**About Natasha's Law**

Announced in June 2019, following the tragic death of Natasha Ednan-Laperouse, who died in July 2016 after an allergic reaction to a baguette, 'Natasha's Law' was enacted in September 2019 and will require all pre-packed food to display full ingredient and allergen labelling from October 2021.

**About Natasha Allergy Research Foundation (NARF)**

Tanya and Nadim, Natasha Ednan-Laperouse's parents, set up Natasha's Foundation with a clear vision – to help and cure people with allergies. Natasha's Foundation will fund and support pioneering allergy research bringing the greatest scientific minds together working for cures & better medicine.

Tri-Star Packaging is supporting the work of the Natasha Allergy Research Foundation (NARF), which it has chosen as its 'Charity of the Year' for 2020.