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Food Allergens, Sulphites and Gluten Sources Policy & Regulatory Update

**Presentation to BC Food Protection Association
Lance Hill, Food Policy Liaison Officer
Health Canada**

October 7th, 2010



Canada 

Outline

- ❑ Why ?
- ❑ History
- ❑ Allergen Methods – Allergen Methods Committee
- ❑ Recalls
- ❑ Regulatory & Policy Update - Labelling of Prepackaged Food
 - Enhanced Labelling Regulations
 - Food Allergen Precautionary Labelling
 - Modernized Definition for Gluten-Free
- ❑ Research Initiatives



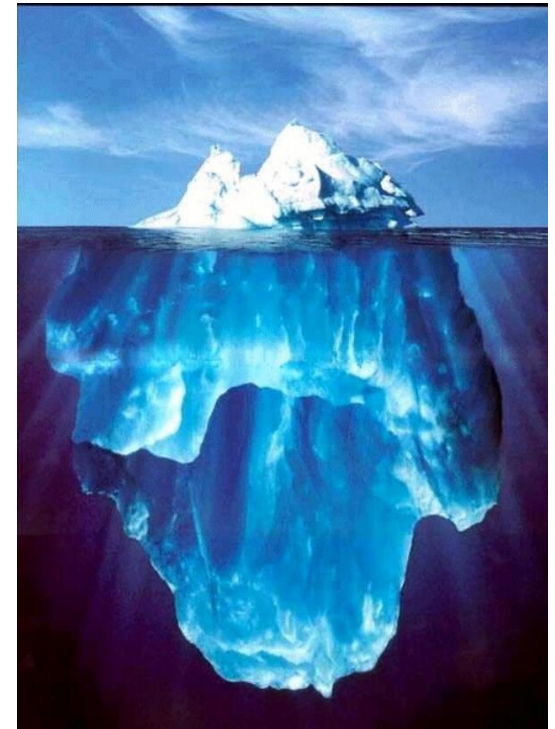
Why are food allergens, gluten sources and sulphites an issue?



Food Allergies and Celiac Disease

A High Priority Public Health Issue

- ❑ Food allergies affect an estimated 6% of Canadian children and 3 - 4% of adults.
- ❑ 150 - 200 deaths/year due to food anaphylaxis in North America; estimated 2.6 deaths/year in Ontario.
- ❑ Celiac disease affects approximately 1% of the Canadian population; is widely under-diagnosed.
- ❑ Celiac disease is linked to multiple affections including osteoporosis and cancer.
- ❑ Impacts go beyond family circle; significant societal impacts.



AVOIDANCE

The Key to Preventing Potentially Serious Health Consequences

- ❑ Consumers depend on the information provided on the label to avoid the food allergen, gluten sources and added sulphites in a prepackaged food.
- ❑ Food allergy incidents are preventable.
- ❑ **Avoidance** is the most effective risk management approach for food allergic consumers.



Prevention of food allergy incidents: Tools

❑ Legislative and Regulatory Instruments

- *Food and Drugs Act and Regulations* and their enforcement.

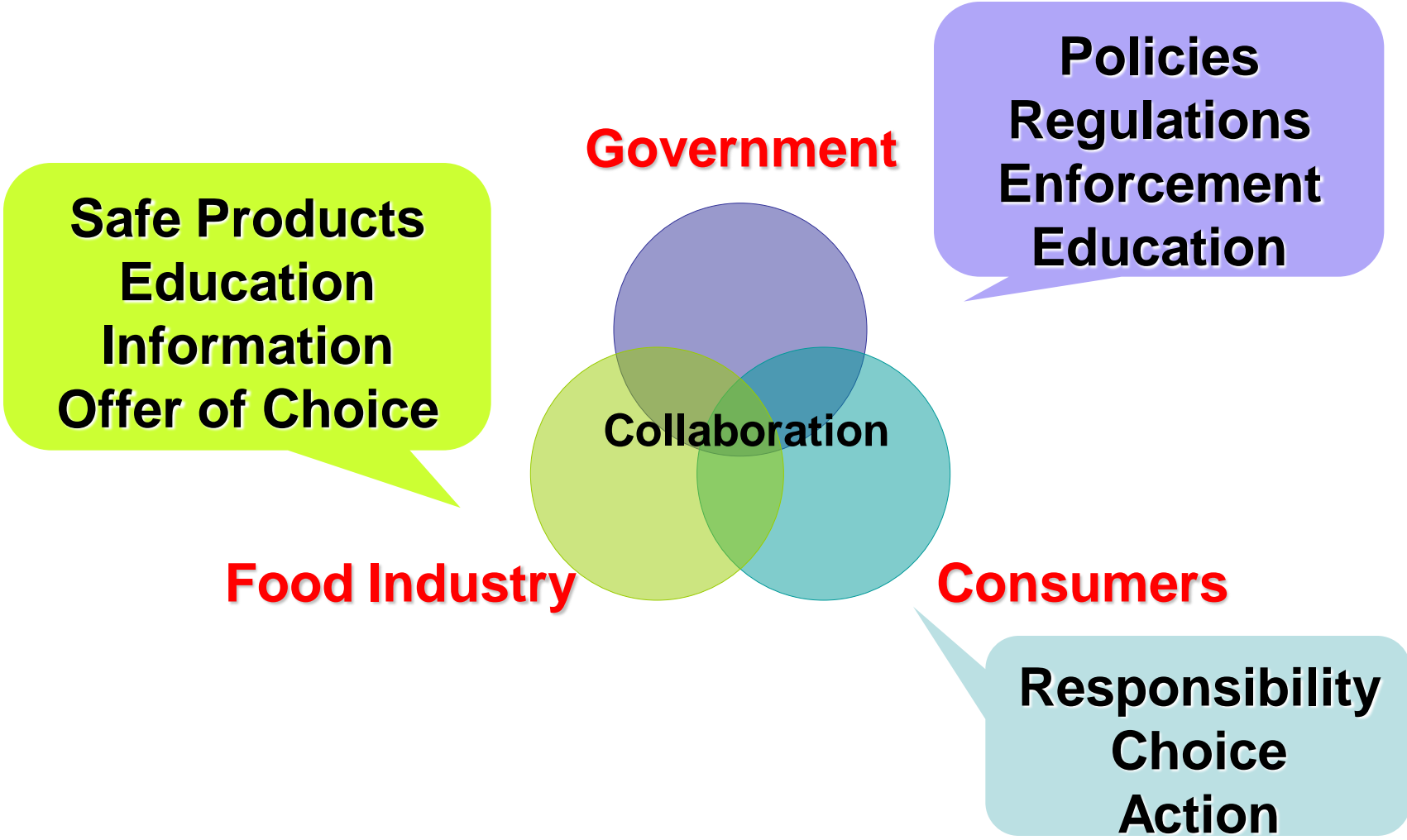
❑ Voluntary Policy Instruments / Guidelines

- e.g. Good Manufacturing Practices, Policy on Food Allergen Precautionary Labelling
- Developed through collaboration between stakeholders

❑ Education, Information Dissemination



Partnership is Key



History



History - *The Beginning*

- ❑ 1989: A number of deaths attributed to anaphylaxis from foods consumed at the foodservice level
- ❑ June 1989: Canadian Restaurant and Foodservices Association (CRFA) release, *Food Allergies and the Foodservice Industry*
- ❑ August 1989: Health Canada (HC) publish, *Issues – Adverse Reactions to Foods and the Listing of Fast Food Ingredients*
- ❑ October 1991: CRFA establishes *ALLERGY AWARE* program
- ❑ October 1991: HC presents at *Seminar for the Allergic*, sponsored by Allergy/Asthma Information Association



History - Formalizing an Approach

- ❑ October 1992: *HC Task Force – Allergies and Adverse Reactions to Foods*
- ❑ February 1993: *HC Field Compliance Guide 93-02, Adverse Reactions to Foods*
- ❑ August 1993: *HC Field Compliance Guide 93-03, Precautionary Labelling of Foods*



The List : 1989 - 1993

- ❑ Compounds which have been identified as causing the most frequent, or severe allergic reactions or food intolerances include:
 - corn;
 - dairy products;
 - lactose;
 - egg products;
 - animal fats and oils;
 - fish/seafood (marine and fresh water animal products including fish, crustaceans and molluscs);
 - monosodium glutamate (MSG);
 - peanuts, soybeans and their oils/extracts;
 - (nuts and seeds including any oils or extracts)
 - sulphiting agents (not sulphite compounds);
 - tartrazine;
 - grain;
 - gluten.



History - Awareness

- ❑ 1993: Grocery Products Manufacturers of Canada (GPMC) develop *ALLERGY BEWARE Training Video and Manual* (Awareness, Accuracy, Avoidance, Action)
- ❑ 1993: Health Canada provided training to food inspection staff
- ❑ March 1994: HC Field Compliance Guide 94-01, *Adverse Reactions to Foods*
- ❑ March 1994: HC Field Compliance Guide 94-02, *Precautionary Labelling of Foods*



The List : 1994 - 1995

- Compounds which have been identified as causing the most frequent, or severe allergic reactions:
 - egg products;
 - fish;
 - shellfish;
 - peanuts;
 - nuts;
 - sulphites.



History - Consultation / Evaluation

- ❑ August 1995: Document prepared on foods causing severe adverse reactions in Canadians as a background for regulatory review and for forming position for Codex Alimentarius
- ❑ March 1996: *Consultation on Ingredient Labelling of Prepackaged Food (Projects 19 & 21)*
- ❑ May 1996: Health Canada convened *Task Force on Undeclared Allergens in Food*
- ❑ July 1996: Health Canada compliance responsibilities transfer to Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada
- ❑ April 1997: Formation of the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA)



The List : 1996 - 1997

- ❑ Most adverse reactions are caused by the following foods and their derivatives:
 - peanuts,
 - tree nuts
 - sesame seeds
 - soybeans
 - milk
 - eggs
 - fish and shellfish
 - Wheat, including spelt and kamut, rye, barley, oats and triticales
 - Sulphites (greater than or equal to 10 ppm)



History - Affirmation & Action

- ❑ 1998: CFIA forms National Committee on Food Allergies and Sensitivities
- ❑ March 1998: CFIA issues *Letter to Industry*
- ❑ April 1998: Food Drug Regulations Review, Project 19 Consultation, *Proposed Labelling of Foods Causing Severe Adverse Reactions in Canadians*
- ❑ June 1998: CFIA issues News Release, *Food Labelling to Help People with Allergies*



The List : 1998

- ❑ Most adverse reactions are caused by the following foods and their derivatives:
 - peanuts,
 - tree nuts (almonds, Brazil nuts, cashews, hazelnuts (filberts), macadamia nuts, pecans, pinenuts, pistachios, walnuts)
 - sesame seeds
 - milk
 - eggs
 - fish, crustaceans (e.g. crab, crayfish, lobster, shrimp) and shellfish (e.g. clams, mussels, oysters, scallops)
 - soy
 - wheat
 - sulphites



History - *International Literature Review*

- ❑ 1999: *Common Allergenic Foods and Their Labelling in Canada – A Review*, Zarkadas, Scott, Salminen, Ham Pong
- ❑ April 1999: HC begins to consider regulatory proposal to enhance labelling requirements
- ❑ 2000: Food and Consumer Products of Canada (FCPMC) release ALLERGY BEWARE 2000: Guidelines, *Allergen Management Best Practices*
- ❑ January 2001: CFIA develops, *A Tool for Managing Allergen Risk in Food Products*
- ❑ 2002: *First Workshop on Food Allergen Methodologies*



The List : 1999 - 2000

- ❑ The following foods and their derivatives, when added as ingredients or components of ingredients to prepackaged foods shall always be declared on food labels by their specific common names:
 - peanuts,
 - tree nuts (almonds, Brazil nuts, cashews, hazelnuts [filberts], macadamia nuts, pecans, pine nuts, pistachios, walnuts),
 - sesame seeds,
 - milk,
 - eggs,
 - fish,
 - Crustacea (e.g. crab, crayfish, lobster, shrimp),
 - and shellfish (e.g. clams, mussels, oysters, scallops),
 - soy,
 - wheat,
 - sulphites.



History - Tools & Education Initiatives

- ❑ July 2002: CFIA posts, *Labelling of Foods Causing Allergies and Sensitivities*
- ❑ May 2003, HC publishes, *It's Your Health, Severe Allergic Reactions*
- ❑ October 2003: *Second Workshop on Food Allergen Methodologies*
- ❑ 2005: Government of Canada produces, *a series of nine pamphlets on food allergens*
- ❑ February 2006: HC & FARRP host, *Food Allergies Workshop - Issues and Solutions for the Food Product Manufacturer*
- ❑ March 2005: *Third Workshop on Food Allergen Methodologies*



History – Assessment / Policy Update

- ❑ June 2006: HC releases, *Paper on the Allergen Control Activities within the Canadian Food Inspection Agency*
- ❑ October 2006: *Fourth Workshop on Food Allergen Methodologies*
- ❑ August 2007: HC publishes, *Celiac Disease and the Safety of Oats*
- ❑ September 2007: HC updates policy, *The Use of Food Allergen Precautionary Statements on Prepackaged Foods*
- ❑ September 2007: CFIA posts, *Questions and Answers Regarding the Labelling of Food Allergens and the use of Precautionary Statements*
- ❑ May 2008: *Fifth Workshop on Food Allergen Methodologies*



The List : 2002 - 2007

- ❑ Most adverse food reactions are caused by the following foods and products made from them:
 - peanuts
 - tree nuts (almonds, Brazil nuts, cashews, hazelnuts (filberts), macadamia nuts, pecans, pinenuts, pistachios, walnuts)
 - sesame seeds
 - milk
 - eggs
 - fish, crustaceans (e.g. crab, crayfish, lobster, shrimp) and shellfish (e.g. clams, mussels, oysters, scallops)
 - soy
 - wheat
 - sulphites



History - Consultation

- ❑ July 2008: Schedule 1220 - *Enhanced Labelling for Food Allergen and Gluten Sources and Added Sulphites* pre-published in Canada Gazette Part I
- ❑ March 2009: CFIA posts, *Declaration of Food Allergens - Pre-Packaged Foods*
- ❑ May 2009: HC publishes, *Celiac Disease – The Gluten Connection*
- ❑ June 2009: HC posts, *It's Your Health, Food Allergies*
- ❑ November 2009: HC holds, *Consultations on Precautionary Labelling of Priority Allergens in Prepackaged Foods*



The List : 2008 - 2010

- ❑ In Canada, there are nine priority food allergens (substances which cause allergies):
 - peanuts
 - tree nuts (almonds, Brazil nuts, cashews, hazelnuts [filberts], macadamia nuts, pecans, pine nuts, pistachio nuts, and walnuts)
 - sesame seeds,
 - milk
 - eggs
 - fish (including shellfish and crustaceans)
 - soy,
 - wheat,
 - sulphites.



History - Regulation & Policy Update

- ❑ 2010: Government of Canada produces, *Common Food Allergies - A Consumer's Guide to Managing the Risks*
- ❑ February 2010: First meeting of the *Canadian Food Allergy and Intolerance Network*
- ❑ May 2010: *Sixth Workshop on Food Allergen Methodologies*
- ❑ June 2010: HC posts, *Reviews and Answers Comments Received on Regulatory Project 1220*



The List : 2010 / 2011(?)

- ❑ Food allergen: any protein or modified protein, including any protein fraction, derived from any of the following foods:
 - almonds, Brazil nuts, cashews, hazelnuts, macadamia nuts, pecans, pine nuts, pistachios and walnuts,
 - peanuts,
 - sesame seeds,
 - wheat, triticale,
 - eggs,
 - milk,
 - soybeans,
 - crustaceans,
 - shellfish or fish,
 - **mustard seed**. (to be formally added to the list with publication in CG Part II)



Methods



Food Allergen Research Program

❑ Allergen Methods Committee

- aims at providing direction and better coordination in the development, delivery and advancement of allergen testing and allergen research programs

❑ The Compendium of Food Allergen Methodologies

<http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fn-an/res-rech/analy-meth/allergen/index-eng.php>

❑ Methods evaluated to date:

- Elisa Systems Sesame March 2010
- Elisa Systems Casein December 2006
- Elisa Systems Beta Lactoglobulin March 2006
- Neogen Veratox for Egg July 2004
- Neogen Veratox for Almond December 2004



Regulatory Allergen Methodology Capability

- ❑ Commercial Immuno-Assays:
 - peanut
 - almond
 - hazelnut
 - egg
 - milk (casein and b-lactoglobulin are tested separately, i.e. two kits)
 - sesame
 - soy
 - gluten

- ❑ Health Canada/In-House Immuno-Assays:
 - crustacean
 - brazil-nut

- ❑ Non-Immuno-Assays :
 - sulfite by AOAC 990.28 (Optimized Monier-Williams)

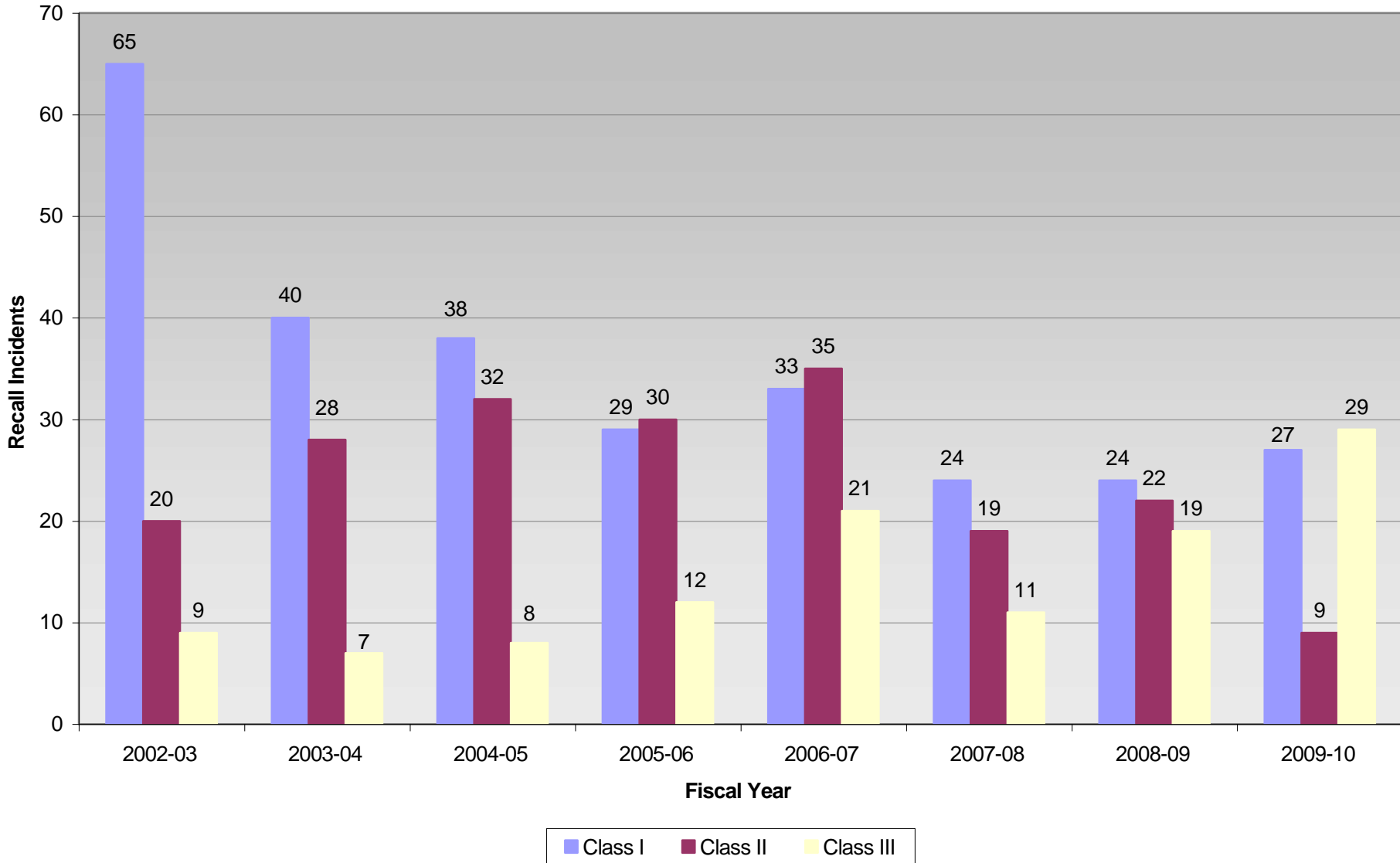
- ❑ Pending:
 - walnut
 - mustard



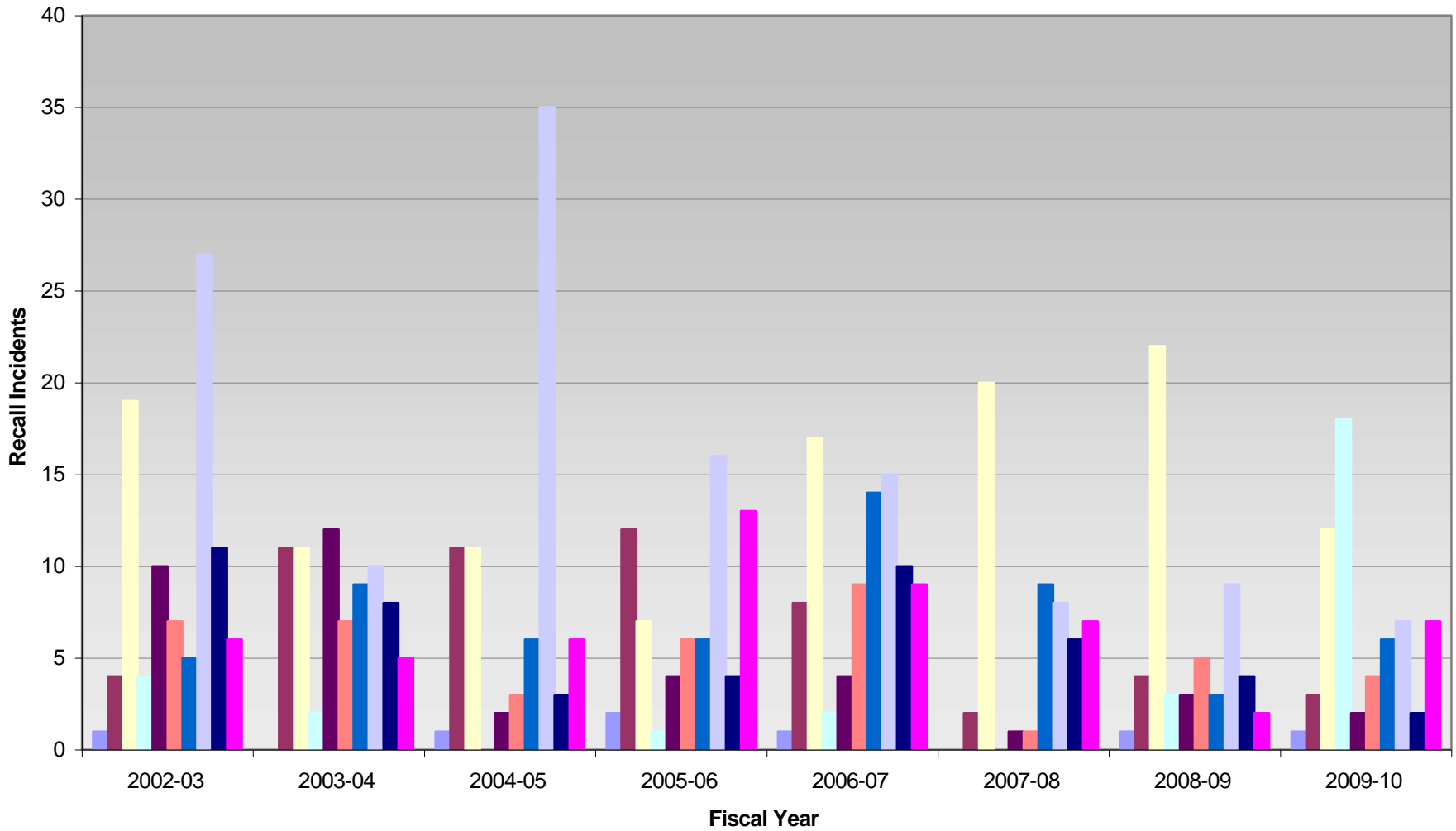
Recalls



Allergen Recall Incidents by Class 2002-10



Recall Incidents by Allergen 2002-10



■ Fish/Crustacean/Shellfish
 ■ Egg
 ■ Milk
 ■ Other
 ■ Peanut
 ■ Sesame Seeds
 ■ Soy
 ■ Sulphites
 ■ Tree Nut
 ■ Wheat

Labelling of Prepackaged Foods



Current Labelling Requirements

- ❑ The *Food and Drug Regulations* require that a complete and accurate list of ingredients appear on the label of most prepackaged foods.
- ❑ In most cases, the list of ingredients must include the components of ingredients (i.e. ingredients of ingredients).



Current Labelling Requirements

However...

❑ The current Regulations:

- Exempt certain ingredients from component declaration.
- Permit the use of class names for ingredients.
- Fully exempt certain foods from any ingredients listing.
- Do not require clear identification of the allergen “source”.



Primary Objectives

- ❑ To require the mandatory “source” declaration of the common food allergens and gluten using simple, plain language in English and French.
 - Including allergens and gluten present in components of ingredients that are currently exempt from component declaration.
- ❑ To enhance the declaration of sulphites when present in the prepackaged food in a total amount of 10 ppm or more.
 - Enabling consistent labelling
 - Reducing uncertainties and confusion
 - Enhancing choice



Proposed Regulatory Amendments

Scope

- ❑ Applicable for all ingredients intentionally added to pre-packaged foods.

- ❑ Does not address:
 - Food ingredients resulting from cross contamination;
 - Precautionary labelling (e.g. “may contain”); or,
 - Allergen-free claims



Proposed Regulatory Amendments

Canada Gazette Part I, Vol. 142, No. 30 — July 26, 2008
Regulations Amending the Food Regulations
Schedule 1220
Enhanced Labelling for Food Allergen
and Gluten Sources and Added Sulphites

- ❑ HTML: <http://www.gazette.gc.ca/rp-pr/p1/2008/2008-07-26/html/reg1-eng.html>
- ❑ PDF: <http://www.gazette.gc.ca/rp-pr/p1/2008/2008-07-26/pdf/g1-14230.pdf>



Proposed Regulatory Amendments

“Food Allergen” Defined

Any protein from any of the following foods or any modified protein, including any protein fraction, that is derived from the following foods:

- Almonds, Brazil nuts, cashews, hazelnuts, macadamia nuts, pecans, pine nuts, pistachios, walnuts
- Peanuts
- Sesame seeds
- Wheat, triticale
- Eggs
- Milk
- Soybeans
- Crustacea
- Fish
- Shellfish
- Mustard seed**



Proposed Regulatory Amendments

“Gluten” Defined

Any gluten protein from the grain of any of the following cereals or the grain of a hybridized strain created from at least one of the following cereals :

- Wheat
- Oats
- Barley
- Rye
- Triticale



Proposed Regulatory Amendments

Mandatory “Source” Declaration

Whenever a common “food allergen or gluten” is present

In the **list of ingredients**

- In parenthesis, immediately following the common name of the ingredient or component in which it is present.

OR

In the statement:

“Contains:”

- Immediately following the list of ingredients when provided



Proposed Regulatory Amendments

“Contains:”

- ❑ When this statement is mandated or voluntarily used, i.e. for sulphites, alcoholic beverages and vinegars:
 - It must be complete and include all food allergens, gluten sources or added sulphites.



Proposed Regulatory Amendments

Voluntary Ingredient Lists

- ❑ For products which do not require a list of ingredients but which choose to add an ingredient list, the list will have to be complete and accurate for food allergens, gluten sources and sulphites.



Proposed Regulatory Amendments

Common Name of Starches, Modified Starches, Hydrolyzed Protein and Lecithin

- ❑ The name of the source of protein be identified in the common name of all **hydrolyzed plant proteins**
- ❑ The name of the plant source be identified in the common name of all forms of **starch or modified starch**
- ❑ The name of the source of lecithin be identified in the common name of **lecithin.**



Proposed Regulatory Amendments

Alcoholic Beverages and Vinegar

Under the proposed regulatory amendments:

- ❑ Alcoholic beverages and vinegars will not be required to provide a list of ingredients, however they would require a statement entitled “Contains:” to identify on their label when they contain any food allergens, gluten sources or added sulphites at levels of 10 ppm or above



Proposed Regulatory Amendments

Mandatory Declaration of Sulphites

- ❑ All previous requirements for sulphite declaration maintained.
 - sulphites will continue to be declared in the ingredient list when intentionally added at any level, or when present as a component of an ingredient that has not been exempted from component declaration.
 - sulphites present as a component of an ingredient that has been exempted from component declaration do not need to be declared in the list of ingredients
- ❑ However, in addition to these requirements;
 - When sulphites are present at levels of 10 parts per million or more in the finished product (whether intentionally added or as a component of an ingredient) and not already shown in the list of ingredients, Health Canada will permit sulphites to be shown in the list of ingredients or in the “**Contains:**” statement.



Summary of Issues Identified by Stakeholders

- ❑ **Definitions: requests to add mustard seeds, onions & garlic:** > criteria developed; agreed to add mustard seeds.
- ❑ **Declarations: include all varieties of wheat:** > "Wheat" to be interpreted to include all cereal grains from the species *Triticum*; references to spelt and kamut removed.
- ❑ **Declarations: hydrolyzed proteins:** > restrict to the common names of hydrolyzed plant proteins.
- ❑ **"Allergy and Intolerance Information":** > shortened to "Contains:"
- ❑ **Sulphite declaration:** > separate statement no longer mandatory; at 10 ppm or more show in the list of ingredients or "Contains:" statement.
- ❑ **Exemptions for fining agents and wax coatings:** > removed
- ❑ **Concern that declarations will be driven by continued progress in analytical capability:** > HC is committed to developing a process for exemptions from the enhanced labelling requirements if they do not pose a risk.
- ❑ **Legibility criteria was not addressed:** > may be addressed as part of a broader policy initiative on food labelling.
- ❑ **Transition period - Align the implementation period with other initiatives:** > extending to 18 months
- ❑ **Need for clearer and stricter guidelines for the use of precautionary labelling:** > noted; part of policy review
- ❑ **Need to inform and educate consumers and industry:** > noted; HC will partner with patient groups, consumer groups and industry associations to further educate Canadian's and industry.



Comparison with Other Jurisdictions

❑ Similarities:

- Proposed amendments are similar or exceed allergen labelling requirements in other countries; such as, the United States, Australia and the European Union.

❑ Key difference:

- Canada will be the only jurisdiction to require the declaration of gluten sources.
 - *Rationale: to remove uncertainty and increase choice for individuals with wheat allergies and Celiac disease.*



Next Steps

- ❑ June 2010: Health Canada responded to comments
- ❑ Preparation of final version of amendments is underway
- ❑ Publication in Canada Gazette Part II
 - *Late 2010 or early 2011.*
- ❑ New regulatory amendments enacted with an 18 month transition period.



Guidance for Industry

<http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fn-an/securit/allerg/index-eng.php>

☐ Health Canada continues to urge food manufacturers and importers to declare priority food allergens, sulphites and gluten sources on food labels without exception either:

- in the **list of ingredients**

OR

- in the statement:

“Contains: ”



Guidance for Industry

<http://www.inspection.gc.ca/english/fssa/labeti/allerg/allergee.shtml>

- ❑ Should Health Canada identify a significant health risk with respect to the undeclared presence of priority food allergens, added sulphites or gluten sources in pre-packaged foods, the Canadian Food Inspection Agency will take appropriate enforcement action, which may include recall of the product

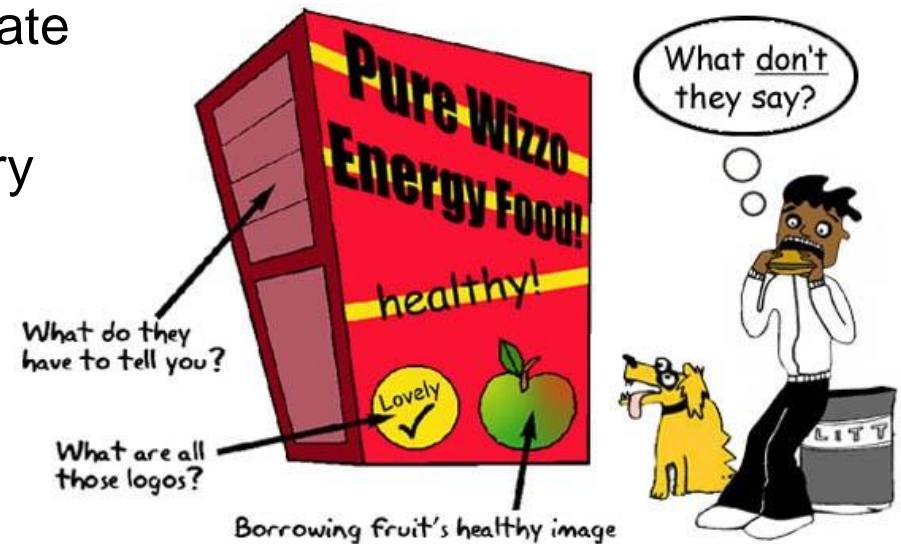


Food Allergen Precautionary Labelling



Update on Food Allergen Precautionary Labelling

- ❑ Public consultations:
 - Face to face meetings in 7 cities across Canada completed in late 2009.
 - Online consultation in February 2010.
- ❑ Report on consultations to be completed and published in 2010.
- ❑ Recommendations for updated guidance to industry and consumers will be developed.



Objectives

- ❑ Reinstating the use of allergen precautionary labelling as a meaningful and effective risk management tool in order to:
 - **minimize risks** associated with inadvertent consumption of undeclared priority allergens in food; and
 - **maximize available choice** of safe and nutritious foods for consumers with food allergies and celiac disease.



Precautionary Labelling: Definition

Allergen precautionary labelling

- ❑ Labelling that warns about priority allergens that may be in products, even though they are not in the list of ingredients

Food allergen precautionary labelling statement

- ❑ A declaration on the label of a prepackaged food that identifies the priority food allergens that are not among the listed ingredients, but may have been inadvertently added to a product during the manufacturing process.

Examples: "may contain..."; "may contain traces of..."; "not suitable for consumption by persons with an allergy to..."



Precautionary Labelling: Why and when?

In Canada, allergen precautionary labelling was identified as a judicious risk management measure... *first accepted in 1993.*

- ❑ To address instances of « unavoidable » cross-contamination with priority food allergens during food processing.
- ❑ To alert allergic consumers of the « unsuitability of the product » for their condition and of **a possible risk.**
- ❑ Precautionary statement differs from a « contains » statement, however risk may be identical.



Precautionary Labelling: Truthful /Helpful ?



Precautionary Labelling: Truthful /Helpful ?

What does it mean ?

Risk? /No risk ?

INGREDIENTS: Seasoned Beef (beef, water, salt, sodium phosphate, dextrose, spice), BBQ Sauce (water, tomato paste, sugar, dextrose, vinegar, maltodextrin, salt, autolyzed yeast extract, spices, citric acid, colour, sodium benzoate, potassium sorbate, flavour, corn syrup solids, silicon dioxide, sulphites (less than 3 ppm)).

INGRÉDIENTS : Boeuf assaisonné (boeuf, eau, sel, phosphate de sodium, dextrose, épice), sauce au BBQ (eau, pâte de tomates, sucre, dextrose, vinaigre, maltodextrine, sel, extrait de levure autolysée, épices, acide citrique, couleur, benzoate de sodium, sorbate de potassium, saveur, matières sèches du sirop de maïs, dioxyde de silicium, sulfites (moins de 3 ppm)).

ALLERGENS: Manufactured in a facility with the following allergens present: wheat, soya milk, sulfites.

ALLERGÈNES : Fabriqué dans une usine où les allergènes suivants sont présents : blé, soya lait, sulfites.



Precautionary Labelling: Truthful /Helpful ?

Rotisserie Chicken™ Poulet rôti B.B.Q.

Reheating Instructions: Microwave: Remove lid. Leave chicken in Heat on HIGH for 5 to 7 minutes, rotating dish 1/4 turn occasion
Oven: Preheat oven to 350°F (190°C). Remove chicken from pack
Heat 15 to 20 minutes.

Mode de cuisson: Au micro-ondes: Enlever le couvercle. Laisser maximale (MAX.) de 5 à 7 minutes, en tournant occasionnelleme
Au four conventionnel: préchauffer le four à 350°F (190°C). Reti profond allant au four avec 1/4" d'eau. Cuire à découvert de 15 à

Ingredients/Ingrédients: Chicken, salt/poulet et sel.

Net weight after cooking/Poids net après cuisson: 1.1 Kg

THIS PRODUCT MAY HAVE COME INTO CONTACT WITH EGGS,
NUTS, SESAME SEEDS, SULPHITES, SEAFOOD.

Ingredient list much shorter than allergen precautionary statement



Precautionary Labelling: What's in the product?

Health Canada survey on chocolate and granola bars (2007):

- ❑ The most common precautionary statement found was « *May contain traces of...* »
- ❑ Levels of food allergens found varied very widely, from non-detected to 6500 ppm (or 0.65%) in a chocolate product which consistently used « may contain **traces** »:
 - The word « traces » can be misleading
 - Corroborate the fact that allergic consumers **must avoid** products with PS.



2007 Health Canada Communication

In 2007, Health Canada posted information on its website indicating that:

“Health Canada continues to consider the use of allergen precautionary labelling to be a useful tool for reducing adverse reactions to priority food allergens **when used appropriately.**”



Recommended conditions of use of allergen precautionary labelling:

- Precautionary labelling should be used only when the presence of allergens in food is inadvertent and unavoidable, despite all reasonable measures.
- Precautionary labelling must not be used when an allergen is deliberately added to a food. When deliberately added, the ingredient should appear on the list of ingredients.
- Precautionary labelling should not be used where there is no actual risk of an allergen being present.



2007 Health Canada Communication

In addition, Health Canada recommended that manufacturers and importers use **one of the following two** precautionary statements on food labels:

- "may contain [allergen X]" **or**
- "not suitable for consumption by persons with an allergy to [allergen X]"



Allergen Precautionary Labelling

- ❑ Health Canada and the Canadian Food Inspection Agency consulted with allergy associations and industry stakeholders on the policy review during the fall of 2009.
- ❑ Report on public comments pending.



Gluten-Free



Update on Gluten-Free Labelling

Current Approach

- Gluten-free regulations to reflect science around Celiac disease.
- Similar to project 1220, focus will be on the protein containing part of the grains, rather than “any part thereof”.

Progress to Date

- Currently studying options for updating gluten-free regulations (B.24.018 FDR).
- Invitation was issued to comment on proposed principles for the revision of the gluten-free labelling regulations; comment period open from May 13th until July 11th, 2010.
- Report on public comments pending.



Gluten-Free Claims

❑ Products which meet the definition of gluten-free may be labelled as gluten-free and carry logos such as those licensed by the Gluten-Free Certification Organization (GFCO).

❑ Pending a decision and a regulatory amendment to B.24.018 products containing oats or pure, uncontaminated oats **may not** be labelled as gluten-free in Canada or carry the GFCO logo or any other logos which would infer the product is gluten-free.



Research in Support of Health Canada's Food Allergen Program



Research Initiatives

- ❑ Pan-Canadian study on prevalence of food allergies and consumer behaviour
- ❑ Dietary survey on food consumption habits of Canadians with celiac disease
- ❑ *"Living With a Gluten-Free Diet" Survey.*



Research Initiatives

SCAAALAR Study

A pan-Canadian survey on the prevalence of food allergies

- ❑ “SCAAALAR” (**S**urveying **C**anadians to **A**ssess the Prevalence of Common Food **A**llergies and **A**ttitudes towards Food **l**abelling and **R**isk)
- ❑ Objective – Data gathering to support:
 - Health Canada:
 - qualify health and educational resources necessary to provide prevention, diagnosis and management of food allergies in Canada.
 - enhance its allergen labelling policies (E.g. Precautionary labelling policy – currently under review).
 - Stakeholders in developing policies to prevent / manage anaphylaxis.
 - Food industries with consistent and comprehensible labelling.
- ❑ Collaborators:
 - McGill and McMaster Universities, AllerGen (Allergy, Genes, and Environment Network of Centres of Excellence) , Health Canada.



Research Initiatives

Gluten Dietary Survey

A Health Canada research study to generate data on the level of gluten contamination and the sources of undeclared gluten in a typical gluten-free diet

- ❑ Objective – data generation to:
 - Assess the potential impact of setting a gluten threshold level in gluten-free foods.
 - Investigate the need to refine the current gluten-free regulations and associated compliance policy.
 - Support Health Canada in developing guidance for Canadians with Celiac disease, following a gluten-free diet, reduce exposure to hidden gluten sources.

- ❑ Collaborators:
 - Health Canada, the Canadian Celiac Association (CCA) and la Fondation québécoise de la maladie coeliaque (FQMC)



Research Initiatives

Living with a Gluten-free Diet

A collaborative study targetting adults with celiac disease following a gluten-free diet

❑ Objective – Data gathering:

- To determine the management strategies used while following a gluten-free diet,
- To estimate the psychological impact that having to follow a life long gluten-free diet has on daily life, including compliance and quality of life.
- To support Health Canada:
 - Develop strategies and educational programs for individuals with celiac disease
 - Review Canadian regulations on gluten-free labelling.

❑ Collaborators:

- Health Canada, the Canadian Celiac Association (CCA) and la Fondation québécoise de la maladie coeliaque (FQMC)



Questions or Comments

Thank you!

Please send any questions or comments to:

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