



## Manager's Corner

# Eight Major Allergens

### PROJECT COORDINATOR

Liz Dixon

### EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Aleshia Hall-Campbell, PhD, MPH



NUTRITION



OPERATIONS



ADMINISTRATION



COMMUNICATIONS/  
MARKETING



Key Area: 2 Operations  
Code: 2620 Food Safety General  
2630 Federal, State, and  
Local Food Safety  
2640 Food Safety Culture

2019

# **Institute of Child Nutrition**

## **The University of Mississippi**

The Institute of Child Nutrition was authorized by Congress in 1989 and established in 1990 at the University of Mississippi in Oxford and is operated in collaboration with The University of Southern Mississippi in Hattiesburg. The Institute operates under a grant agreement with the United States Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service.

### **PURPOSE**

Improve the operation of child nutrition programs through research, education and training, and information dissemination.

### **VISION**

Lead the nation in providing research, education, and resources to promote excellence in child nutrition programs.

### **MISSION**

Provide relevant research-based information and services that advance the continuous improvement of child nutrition programs.

This project has been funded at least in part with Federal funds from the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service through an agreement with the Institute of Child Nutrition at the University of Mississippi. The contents of this publication do not necessarily reflect the views or policies of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, nor does mention of trade names, commercial products, or organizations imply endorsement by the U.S. government.

The University of Mississippi is an EEO/AA/Title VI/Title IX/Section 504/ADA/ADEA Employer.

In accordance with Federal law and U.S. Department of Agriculture policy, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability.

To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights; Room 326-W, Whitten Building, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20250-9410 or call (202) 720-5964 (voice and TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

© 2019, Institute of Child Nutrition, The University of Mississippi, School of Applied Sciences

Except as provided below, you may freely use the text and information contained in this document for non-profit or educational use with no cost to the participant for the training providing the following credit is included. These materials may not be incorporated into other websites or textbooks and may not be sold.

Suggested Reference Citation:

Institute of Child Nutrition. (2019). *Manager's corner: Eight major allergens*. University, MS: Author.

The photographs and images in this document may be owned by third parties and used by the University of Mississippi under a licensing agreement. The University cannot, therefore, grant permission to use these images.

**For more information, please contact [helpdesk@theicn.org](mailto:helpdesk@theicn.org).** November 22, 2019

## Table of Contents

Professional Standards .....	1
Introduction .....	1
Lesson Overview .....	2
Questions for Staff.....	2
Activity: Food Allergens.....	4
References.....	5



## Professional Standards

### FOOD SAFETY AND HACCP TRAINING – 2600

**Employee will be able to effectively utilize all food safety program guidelines and health department regulations to ensure optimal food safety.**

2620 – Food Safety-General

Practice general food safety procedures.

2630 – Federal, State, and local food safety regulations

Practice Federal, State, and local food safety regulations and guidance.

2640 – Food Safety Culture

Promote a culture of food safety behaviors in the school community.

## Introduction

*Manager's Corner: Eight Major Allergens* is designed to empower managers to use in training their staff. Each lesson is roughly 15 minutes. This lesson plan contains:

- Learning objective
- Statement explaining the importance of the topic
- List of materials
- Instructions on how to present the information
- Questions to ask staff
- An activity to strengthen or refresh the knowledge of the staff

## Lesson Overview

### Instructions for lesson:

- Review the lesson objective and background information.
- Review why it is important.
- Ask staff the questions.
- Facilitate the activity outlined.
- Provide time for staff to ask questions.

**Objective:** Recognize the eight major allergens – eggs, fish, milk, peanuts, shellfish, soy, tree nuts, and wheat – and possible food sources.

**Background information:** Schools are required to make reasonable accommodations for students who are unable to eat regular meals due to disabilities (including food allergies) certified by a State licensed healthcare provider. There are eight (8) food allergens that account for 90% of all food allergic reactions in the United States:

- Egg Allergies
- Fish Allergies
- Milk Allergies
- Peanut Allergies
- Shellfish Allergies
- Soy Allergies
- Tree Nut Allergies
- Wheat Allergies

If you are uncertain about whether a food item contains an allergen, check with your supervisor. If you are unable to identify all of the food ingredients, do not serve that food to a child with a known allergy.

**Why it is important:** School nutrition employees are the front line defense to help prevent food-related allergic reactions in the school environment. They should be familiar with the eight major food allergens so they can be mindful of them on ingredient labels. These allergies cause roughly 90% of all food-allergic reactions in the United States.

## Questions for Staff

- **Can egg substitutes be used to prepare foods for children with egg allergies?**
  - No. Typically, egg substitutes are made from egg whites, which are highly allergenic for children with egg allergies.

- **Can a child with a fish allergy eat Worcestershire sauce?**
  - No, it contains anchovies, which is a fish.
- **If a product is labeled “dairy-free” or “nondairy,” is it safe for a person with milk allergies?**
  - No. The term “dairy-free” does not have a Food and Drug Administration (FDA) regulated definition, so there is no guarantee that the product does not contain milk proteins. The FDA definition of “nondairy” states that the product can include milk proteins and still be labeled “nondairy.” Ingredient labels should always be checked for the presence of milk even if one of these terms is used on the packaging.
- **If a student has a peanut allergy, what is a good shelf-stable alternative to a peanut butter sandwich for a field trip?**
  - One option may be to substitute the peanut butter with soy or sunflower seed butters. A few other options include a cheese sandwich, tuna packet with crackers, or bean dip and chips.
- **What are examples of shellfish?**
  - There are two types of shellfish: crustaceans (crab, lobster, and shrimp) and mollusks (clams, mussels, and oysters). Crustacean shellfish are considered the most allergenic. Because many people with allergies to one type of shellfish are also allergic to other types, it may be advised to avoid all shellfish.
- **Can soy be found in meat products?**
  - Yes, it can be used as a filler in processed meat such as chicken nuggets, hamburgers, and hotdogs.
- **What are some examples of tree nuts?**
  - Common nuts: almonds, Brazil nuts, cashews, chestnuts, filberts, hazelnuts, macadamia nuts, pecans, pine nuts, pistachios, and walnuts.
- **Is gluten-free the same thing as wheat-free?**
  - Gluten-free diets are not the same as wheat-free diets. Gluten is found in wheat, barley, and rye. It can also be found in products like bread, pasta, baked goods, and other processed foods.

**Additional Resources:**

- Food Allergy Research Education – Tips for Avoiding Your Allergen  
[www.foodallergy.org](http://www.foodallergy.org)

## Activity: Food Allergens

### Activity materials included in this document:

No supplemental materials are included in this document.

### Materials provided by the school nutrition operation:

- Chart paper
- Marker
- Copies of handouts - Food Allergy Fact Sheets can be found online ([www.theicn.org/foodsafety](http://www.theicn.org/foodsafety)). Click Food Allergy Resources, then select and print copies of each of the following fact sheets for staff members to share.
  - Egg Allergies
  - Fish Allergies
  - Milk Allergies
  - Peanut Allergies
  - Shellfish Allergies
  - Soy Allergies
  - Tree Nut Allergies
  - Wheat Allergies

### Activity Instructions:

- Print the handout(s) and/or worksheet(s).
- On a piece of chart paper, list the names of the eight major food allergens (egg, fish, milk, peanuts, shellfish (crustacean shellfish), soy, tree nuts, and wheat) with space in between.
- Give the staff the eight Food Allergy Fact Sheets. Have them look at the sections, "What foods contain [Allergen]?" and "Common Menu Items that May Contain [Allergen]."
- Have staff read through the list of common menu items on the handout they received and name one to two food sources of the allergen that they were unaware contained that allergen. Write those sources under the appropriate allergen on the chart.
- Ask the staff to add food sources for each allergen.
- Ask some of the provided questions on the fact sheet and refer staff to the Food Allergy Fact Sheets to help answer.
- Answer any questions staff may have when finished.



## References

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2013). *Voluntary guidelines for managing food allergies in schools and early care and education programs*. Washington, DC: US Department of Health and Human Services. Retrieved from <https://www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth/foodallergies/>
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2017). *Food allergies in schools*. Retrieved from <https://www.cdc.gov/healthyschools/foodallergies/index.htm>
- Food Allergy Research and Education. (2017). *Food allergy & anaphylaxis emergency care plan*. Retrieved from <https://www.foodallergy.org/life-with-food-allergies/food-allergy-anaphylaxis-emergency-care-plan>
- Food Allergy Research and Education. (n.d.). *Symptoms of an allergic reaction to food*. Retrieved from <https://www.foodallergy.org/life-with-food-allergies/food-allergy-101/symptoms-of-an-allergic-reaction-to-food>
- Institute of Child Nutrition. (2018). *Food allergies for school nutrition directors*. University, MS. Author.
- Institute of Child Nutrition. (2018). *Food allergy fact sheets*. Retrieved from [www.theicn.org/foodsafety](http://www.theicn.org/foodsafety)
- United States Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service. (2017). *Accommodating children with disabilities in the school meal programs guidance for school food service professionals*. Retrieved from <https://www.fns.usda.gov/2017-edition-accommodating-children-disabilities-school-meal-programs>
- United States Department of Health and Human Services Public Health Services, Food and Drug Administration. (2017). *FDA food code*. Retrieved from <https://www.fda.gov/Food/GuidanceRegulation/RetailFoodProtection/FoodCode/ucm595139.htm>



The University of Mississippi  
School of Applied Sciences

800-321-3054  
[www.theicn.org](http://www.theicn.org)