

# NSW Food Safety Supervisor Plain English Allergen Labelling (PEAL) Overview

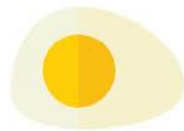
December 2023



Almond Brazil nut Cashew Hazelnut Macadamia Pecan Pine nut Pistachio Walnut



Peanut



Egg



Milk (this includes  
all dairy foods and  
all animal milks)



Sesame



Soy



Mollusc  
(e.g. oyster, octopus,  
scallops, calamari)



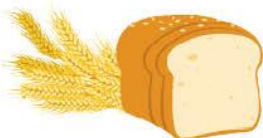
Fish



Crustacea  
(e.g. prawn, lobster)



Lupin



Wheat



Barley



Oats



Rye

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#### Acknowledgements



Food  
Authority



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## Plain English Allergen Labelling (PEAL) Overview

Food allergen labelling in Australia is regulated by the Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code (the Code).

On 25 February 2021, the Code was changed to introduce new requirements to make it easier to find allergen information on food labels, known as Plain English Allergen Labelling (PEAL).

### **Important dates:**

- 25 February 2024: **all food that is packaged and labelled after 25 February 2024 must use the new PEAL labelling.** Food that is packaged before this date with the previous allergen labelling can be sold until 25 February 2026. This is called the 'stock in trade period'.
- 26 February 2026: All food sold in Australia must have Plain English Allergen Labelling.

There are 3 main changes to allergen labelling under PEAL, explained in the following 3 sections.

### 1. Specific names for allergens

The Code mandates plain English names that must be used for each allergen. These are shown in the following table:

Table - Names that must be used for food allergen on food labels under PEAL

Name to be used in ingredient list	Name to be used in summary statement
egg	egg
fish	fish
lupin	lupin
milk	milk
<u>mollusc</u>	<u>mollusc</u>
crustacean	crustacean
peanut	peanut
sesame	sesame
Soy, <u>soya</u> or soybean	soy
almond	almond
Brazil nut	Brazil nut
cashew	cashew
hazelnut	hazelnut
macadamia	macadamia
pecan	pecan
pine nut	pine nut
pistachip	pistachio
walnut	walnut
wheat	wheat; and if gluten is present - gluten
barley	gluten
oats	gluten
rye	gluten

## 2. Allergens must be declared in the statement of ingredients

- The allergen must be printed in **bold font** that stands out from the other text in the statement of ingredients. The text for the allergen must be the same size or larger than the other text, for example:
  - cheese (**milk**) or **milk** powder.
- The print should be in English and easy to read on the label.
- The allergen must be listed each time it is present in an ingredient, for example:
  - kamut (**wheat**), maltodextrin (**wheat**).
- If allergen information is in another language, it must be identical to the information written in English.

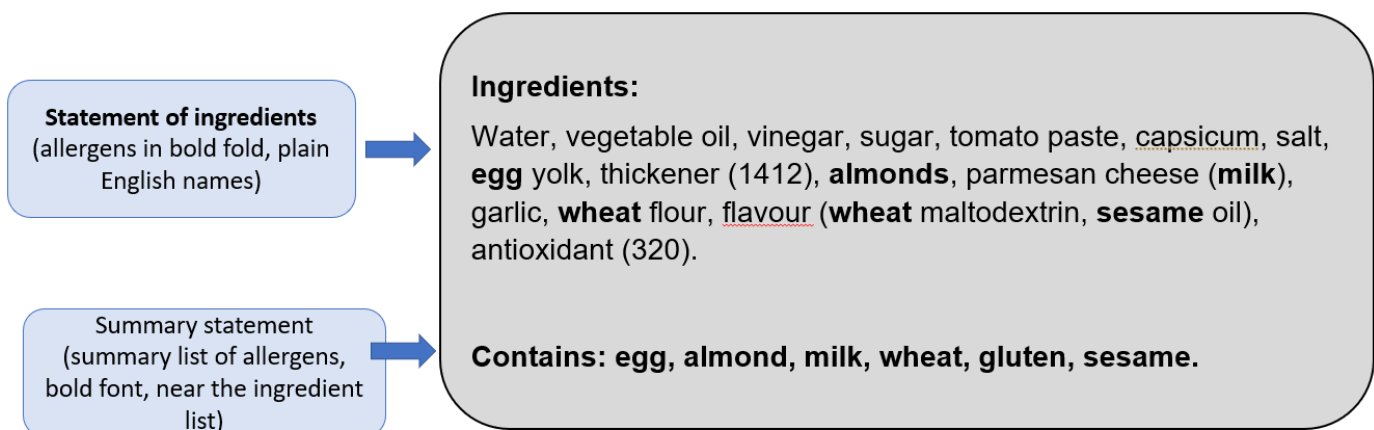
## 3. The label must include an allergen summary statement

The allergen summary statement is a list of all the mandatory allergens that are in the product

The summary statement must:

- start with the word “contains” (for example, “**contains milk**”),
- be printed in **bold font**
- appear next to, under or above the statement of ingredients
- have the same allergens as those listed in the statement of ingredients - there should be no missing allergens or extra allergens in the summary statement.

This is an example of the preferred way to label a food product:



Source: 2023 Food Industry Guide to Allergen Management and Labelling for Australia and New Zealand

### A note on wheat and gluten

- If wheat is in the food, **wheat** must be declared in the statement of ingredients, and if gluten is present, both **wheat** and **gluten** must be listed in the summary statement.
- If other gluten-containing grains (rye, oats and barley) are in the food, they must be listed in the statement of ingredients. For these grains, the term **gluten** must be used in the summary statement (not rye, oats and barley).

## Other mandatory declarations:

- Sulphites are a preservative commonly added to foods. Sulphites can trigger asthma and in very rare cases, cause anaphylaxis. Sulphites must be declared if they are present in food in concentrations of 10mg / kg or more.

The FSS and food handlers should treat sulphite and gluten queries in the same manner as an allergy question and give correct information.

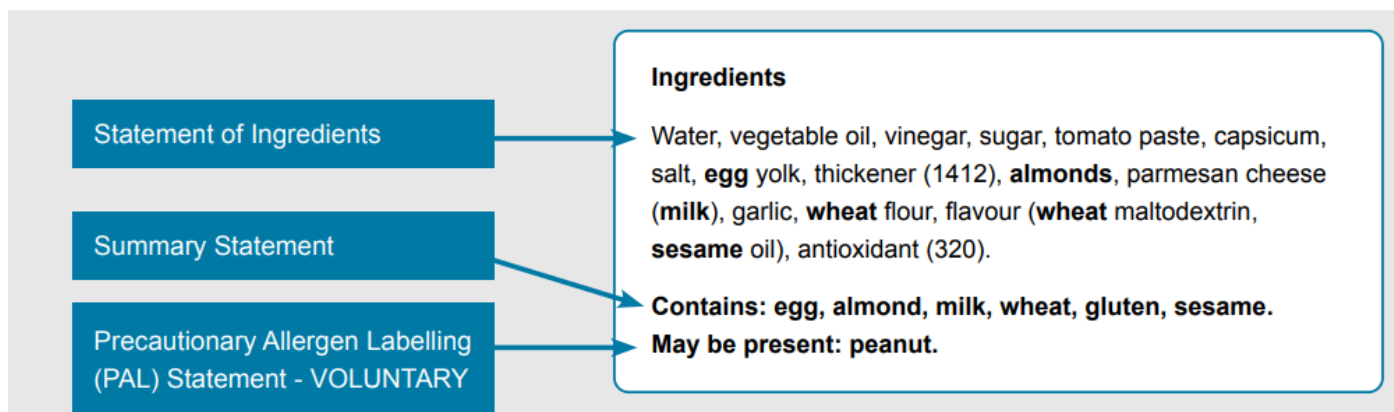
## Precautionary Allergen Labelling

Precautionary Allergen Labelling (PAL) statements are used by food manufacturers to explain that a food may have been accidentally contaminated with an allergen. This can happen during growing, storing, making, and transporting the food. This can make the food a risk to the person with food allergy.

PAL statements are not regulated by the Food Standards Code. Food companies can choose to use them or not. They appear in many ways on food labels. Common PAL statements include:

- “may contain”.
- “may be present”.
- “made on equipment that also processes”.

This label shows an example of a PAL statement:



If a food has a PAL statement for a food allergen, the food should not be served to a customer who is allergic to that food. For example, a product labelled “may contain peanut” is not suitable for a person with a peanut allergy.

It is important to remember that if a product is labelled “may be present” or “may contain” it does not mean someone who is allergic to that food can eat it.

## What about foods that are not required to have a food label?

Some foods do not have a label or package - for example bread or cakes from a bakery, meat from a butcher or fresh vegetables. For unlabelled foods, the supplier must provide the ingredient and allergen information in some other written way.

This can be a printed copy or electronic product documentation, usually called a product information form (PIF).

- A PIF or other product documentation lists ingredients and mandatory allergens in the food and can be requested from your supplier at any time.
- PIFs should be kept up to date by ensuring the supplier has given you the current version. They should be kept where staff can easily find them so they can be used to answer customers' questions.

Example allergen information on a Product Information Form (PIF) for burger buns

PRODUCT LABELLING DETAILS	
<b>Ingredients</b>	<b>Wheat</b> flour, water, yeast, <b>sesame</b> seeds, canola oil, <b>wheat</b> gluten, sugar, vinegar, iodised salt, <b>soy</b> flour, <b>soy</b> lecithin, vitamins (thiamine, folic acid).
Allergen	Present
wheat	Yes
rye, oats, or barley	No
gluten	Yes
egg	No
milk	No
fish	No
soy	Yes
crustacea	No
mollusc	No
peanut	No
lupin	No
sesame	Yes
almond	No
Brazil nut	No
almond	No
cashew	No
hazelnut	No
macadamia	No
pecan	No
pine nut	No
pistachio	No
walnut	No
sulphites (in concentrations of 10mg/kg or more)	No

## More information

- Visit the Food Authority's website at [www.foodauthority.nsw.gov.au](http://www.foodauthority.nsw.gov.au)
- Email the Helpline at [food.contact@dpi.nsw.gov.au](mailto:food.contact@dpi.nsw.gov.au)
- Phone the Helpline on 1300 552 406.

[NSW Food Authority Food allergen rules](#)



[All about Allergens food labelling information](#)  
(National Allergy Council)



[FSANZ Allergen labelling](#)

