



Food Quality Labs

protecting your quality name

ALLERGEN TESTING OVERVIEW

Several years ago the Legislature passed the Food Allergy Labeling and Consumer Protection Act of 2004 which was signed into law by the President in August, 2004, and went into affect on January 1, 2006. This law, in part, requires food processors to identify in the ingredient list the presence of any of the Big Eight allergens (milk, tree nuts, glutens, peanuts, soy, fish, crustacean shellfish, and eggs.)

This law impacts food processors in two primary areas: 1) the undocumented presence of any of the Big Eight allergens in component ingredients, and 2) the possibility of cross-contamination that could occur when switching production from a food that DOES contain an allergen to a food that does not.

A testing laboratory can offer assistance in both cases. Even though the ingredient supplier may claim 100% allergen-free products, it would be well to err on the side of caution and have those claims periodically verified by an independent laboratory.

The second case may be addressed internally by developing manufacturing procedures that A) clearly identify any raw ingredients that contain allergens so that human error is minimized, B) require complete cleaning of all equipment when switching from allergen-containing products to allergen-free products, and C) ensure accurate labeling of the finished product.

Externally, a testing laboratory should be an integral part of the quality monitoring procedure by periodically testing for the presence of allergens in allergen-free product. The testing results will provide on-going feedback to manufacturing on how well or poorly the procedures are working as well as providing a check on ingredient suppliers.

Food Quality Labs is currently providing ELISA-method testing of the following allergens:

- Milk (or Casein)
- Egg
- Peanut
- Almond
- Gluten (or Gliadin)
- Soy
- Other tests are in development.

Quantification range: 2.5 to 25 ppm.

Time to results: 5 working days.

Let **Food Quality Labs** help protect your quality name.