



# TECH NOTES

## Food Allergen Safety and Testing

### Why is Allergen Safety Important?

Millions of Americans have allergic reactions to food. Approximately 2% of adults and 5% of infants/young children in the United States suffer from food allergies. Although most food allergies cause relatively mild and minor symptoms, some food allergies can cause severe reactions. Each year there are roughly 30,000 individuals that require emergency care due to allergic reactions.

There is no cure for food allergies. Strict avoidance of food allergens – and early recognition and management of allergic reactions to food – are important measures to prevent serious health consequences.

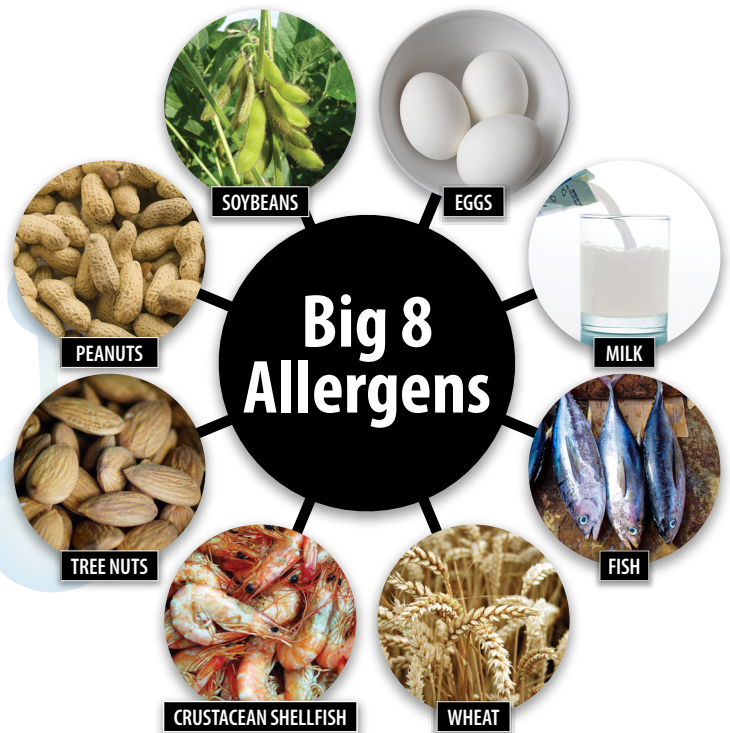
Allergen control is becoming an increasingly important component of the overall safety programs for the food manufacturers.

**What Manufacturers Can Do to Minimize Exposure Evaluate** – Food manufacturers should evaluate their operations to recognize and develop plans to control unidentified allergens. A review of all aspects of a manufacturing operation must be performed to ensure that control points have been identified.

**Monitor** – Evaluation for allergen hazards (a chemical hazard) should be a part of your HACCP plan. Routine monitoring of control points could be the best solution of reducing risk of a “recall”.

**Educate** – Training of personnel from management to line production employees will help ensure that risks associated with allergens are fully understood. It will also be important to have an ongoing monitoring system to verify that all control points are being consistently met.

**McCoy & McCoy Laboratories, Inc.’s** (MMLI) focus is to provide routine analytical support to the food manufacturing industry by providing timely and accurate analysis, as well as, on-site sample collection and screening. MMLI offers ELISA based Allergen Testing for environmental surfaces, as well as, finished product testing. In some cases, on-site screening can be employed to provide real-time monitoring of your processes. Contact us today and get started with your testing program!



There are eight major food groups that account for 90% of food allergies



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