

Preparing Hot Drinks for the FreeFrom Customer

The supply of hot and cold drinks is covered by the FIC Regulations 1169/2011. It is good practice to ensure you have allergy tables that cover all drinks which you supply which are not prepacked (e.g., Bottle beers, mixed juices), the tables should include toppings, sprinkles and extras added to drinks. There is a huge potential for something to go wrong when serving drinks to the Food Hyper-Sensitive customer [FHS], ranging from storage, equipment, added ingredients, preparation and serving in a fast-paced environment. It is important that staff are trained to an adequate level. Don't forget to log near misses - when a server makes a mistake or potentially serves an incorrect drink, capture the reasons and review to ensure prevention of potentially serious situations occurring.

Types of Milk - There are many types of dairy free milk available, and the range is growing

- Oat Milk[#]
- Almond Milk[#]
- Soya Milk[#]
- Coconut Milk
- Rice Milk
- Pea Milk
- Cashew Milk[#]
- Macadamia Milk[#]
- Hemp Milk

Some milks[#] will come with their own risks as they are considered a protein, which can cause an allergic reaction. Special care should be taken when using these milks and cleaning prior and post preparation. If using Oat milk check to see if gluten free, if not have procedures in place to manage the gluten free / Coeliac customer. With the popularity of plant-based products new options such as pea protein milks are being developed, be aware that this can be a risk to those with a legume allergy, which is becoming common in young children.

Procedures & Preparation

Have a set procedure in place for the FHS customer. Get staff to stop and concentrate on the preparation of the beverage. Have a checklist on the back wall of what steps are required to safely serve the FHS customer.

Cleaning

It is recommended that you have a separate nozzle to heat milk for the FreeFrom customer, however you also need to gauge the risk of heating the high risk[#] milks as outlined above. Maybe offer the Nut free customer cold milk in their drink or heat via an alternative method – microwave for example.

Nozzles should be two staged cleaned when heating milk for the FHS, using throw away cloths. 1st step clean and remove allergen, 2nd step clean with a clean cloth. Re-using a cloth will have a cross contamination risk for the drink prepared.

Equipment

When offering FreeFrom Milks consider having separate equipment and consider colour coding milks and their specific equipment to prevent errors and reduce cross contamination risks. Have a chart on the wall for instant referral

- Separate milk frother/ nozzle
- Individual Coffee Milk Thermometers
- Separate jugs
- Spoons/spatulas

Extra's & Serving - Consider garnishes and syrups when serving the FreeFrom, many syrups can contain or have 'may contains' warning for nuts. Chocolate sprinkles can contain dairy and/or soya, if you have a dairy free hot chocolate mix do not assume the sprinkles on top are also dairy free, ensure it is highlighted on the allergy tables. As a business you can purchase a tin of cocoa powder or dairy free hot chocolate and use specifically for the FHS with safe procedures in place. Providing you are able to produce the allergen/ ingredient information it is acceptable to serve, and you may gain a new customer base for your business. When serving the FHS customer ensure you double check the drink, its contents and read back to the customer the contents to reassure them the order is correct.

Further fact sheets and additional information to keep your FreeFrom customer safe can be found at - <https://foodallergyaware.co.uk/resources/> If you need help creating induction, & full training for your business, please contact us Marketing@fatc.co.uk. We have off the shelf and bespoke tools to help your business.