

GC contributes to research prioritisation in food hypersensitivity

News story

Government Chemist contributes to Food Standards Agency food hypersensitivity research horizon scanning exercise



The Food Standards Agency, FSA, [food hypersensitivity research prioritisation exercise paper](#) has been published.

The Government Chemist was pleased to contribute to the horizon scanning exercise which took place earlier this year, and in which [Michael Walker](#), former Head of the office of the Government Chemist was an invited stakeholder.

Food hypersensitivity (FHS), including food allergy, coeliac disease and food intolerance, is a major public health issue. The FSA sought to identify research priorities in the area of FHS by a UK-wide public consultation to identify unanswered research questions followed by a series of stakeholder workshops. This resulted in 10 priority uncertainties in evidence, from which 16 research questions were developed. These were summarised under the following five themes:

1. Communication of allergens both within the food supply chain and then to the end-consumer (ensuring trust in allergen communication)
2. The impact of socioeconomic factors on consumers with FHS
3. Drivers of severe reactions
4. Mechanism(s) underlying loss of tolerance in FHS

5. The risks posed by novel allergens/processing.

Allergen research needs that were identified included improving the reliability of analytical tests, although this was deemed outside of FSA scope.

The Government Chemist has worked hard to call attention to and address deficiencies in allergen analysis and is grateful to FSA for past support in this area. The Government Chemist will continue to seek support to take forward this vital aspect to help people with food allergies and businesses supplying safe food.

For more information about the work that the Government Chemist does please contact:

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