

Strategic Plan

A Comprehensive Strategic Plan
for the Allergen Bureau

October 2024

“Looking forward, the Allergen Bureau will continue to **support industry and the consumer** as we move towards **global harmonised risk management and allergen labelling**, with a renewed focus on **education for the industry and consumers** about the industry.”



Jasmine Lacis-Lee

Allergen Bureau President

— A note from our President

Dear Member,

Together with our Board of Directors, I am excited to share the Allergen Bureau's new strategy, guiding us toward a future where allergen management meets the evolving needs of the global food industry. The Allergen Bureau is committed to improving allergen management practices to protect the quality of life for individuals with food allergy. For 20 years, we have led the way in advancing food labelling, risk assessment, and safe production techniques worldwide by facilitating the exchange of information, technology, and expertise. As a not-for-profit organisation, our role has been to connect cutting-edge science, global regulatory insights, and industry practices, making critical resources accessible to all food producers.

Our vision is to create a world where individuals with food allergies can trust the safety and transparency of the food supply chain. As an organisation with global reach, we commercialise and apply scientific advancements in allergen management, addressing a growing need as food allergies rise worldwide. To achieve this, our future strategy focuses on five key pillars:

- Setting the gold standard in food allergen risk management and labelling
- Uniting the food allergen management community through collaboration
- Leading globally with the VITAL® Program
- Empowering the industry through education & training
- Advocating for greater awareness to promote informed consumer choices.

As we look ahead, we remain dedicated to building a safer and more inclusive food environment. By aligning science, regulation, and industry, we ensure that every step in the food supply chain strengthens trust and safety for consumers. I am confident that with your support, we will continue to lead the industry in best practices and make a meaningful difference for those with food allergies.

Thank you for joining us on this vital journey.

With gratitude and dedication,

Jasmine Lacis Lee
President, Allergen Bureau

— Introduction

The Allergen Bureau aims to lead the Australian – and indeed the world’s – food industry in best-practice allergen management, sharing information that builds trust and transparency that supports individuals with food allergies to make informed choices.

As a not-for-profit organisation, the Allergen Bureau relies on membership and services revenue to fund our work to meet this goal.

Established as a collaborative and impartial platform, the Allergen Bureau unites researchers, regulatory authorities, industry stakeholders, and consumer groups to achieve the best outcomes in food allergen management.

About Allergen Bureau

The Allergen Bureau is committed to improving food allergen management practices within the food industry for the protection and quality of life for individuals with food allergy and their carers. We aspire to improve food labelling, risk assessment, and safe food production techniques worldwide by facilitating the exchange of information, technology, and expertise.

A Global, Science-Based Platform

The Allergen Bureau allows for the translation and application of science relating to food allergies into commercial food production. Our work extends beyond borders with the rise in food allergies affecting millions of individuals globally.

Recognising the need for sound and robust science to underpin Allergen Risk Assessment and Labelling, the Allergen Bureau invited international scientists specialising in allergen management, food allergy and risk assessment to form the VITAL Scientific Expert Panel (VSEP). With their assistance, the risk assessment program and tools developed by the Allergen Bureau, are underpinned by credible and sound science, recognised and adopted in various countries.



OUR VISION

A world where individuals with food allergies can **trust the safety** of the food supply chain and the **transparency of food labelling**.



OUR PURPOSE

Empower the food industry to help people living with food allergies make **informed food choices**.



OUR MISSION

To **navigate the complexities** of the food supply chain by advocating for **best-practice allergen management** and labelling.

We achieve this through collaboration, resource development and education, all grounded in robust science, to help food businesses produce food products that clearly communicate allergen information, ensuring individuals with food allergies can make informed choices.

— Our Strategic Pillars

Setting the Gold Standard in Food Allergen Risk Management and Labelling

Our aim is to lead the Australian—and indeed the world’s—food industry in best-practice allergen management, sharing information that builds trust and transparency to support individuals with food allergies in making informed choices.

We engage with food industry stakeholders from over 20 countries, making us a globally recognised authority.

Uniting the Food Allergen Management Community Through Collaboration

As a not-for-profit organisation, the Allergen Bureau relies on membership and service revenue to fund its work and achieve this goal. Established as a collaborative and impartial platform, the Allergen Bureau unites researchers, regulatory authorities, industry stakeholders, and consumer groups to achieve the best outcomes in food allergen management.

Leading Globally with the VITAL® Program

Recognised and respected globally, our flagship program, VITAL® (Voluntary Incidental Trace Allergen Labelling), is a standardised allergen risk management tool. VITAL helps manufacturers identify and mitigate risks to the lowest possible level and determine precautionary allergen labelling (PAL) outcomes to support individuals with food allergies in making informed choices. As we strive for harmonisation, consistent use of the VITAL program promotes transparency throughout the supply chain.

Empowering the Industry Through Education & Training

We aspire to improve food labelling, risk assessment, and safe food production techniques worldwide by facilitating the exchange of information, technology, and expertise. Our international conferences, webinars, and publications serve as a repository of knowledge that drives discussion and change in food allergen management. Education and training within the industry provide opportunities to build knowledge globally.

Advocating for Greater Awareness to Promote Informed Consumer Choices.

The Allergen Bureau is committed to improving food allergen management practices within the food industry to enhance the quality of life for individuals with food allergy. It is essential for consumers and healthcare professionals to recognise how the food industry manages and labels to build understanding, foster trust and enable informed decision making, ultimately supporting better food choices for individuals with food allergies.

Supported by worlds best science minds + VSEP

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Bureau

Setting the Gold
Standard in Food
Allergen Risk
Management and
Labelling



STRATEGY 1

Setting the Gold Standard in Food Allergen Risk Management and Labelling

Our aim is to lead Australia, and indeed the world's food industry in best-practice allergen management, sharing information that builds trust and transparency to support individuals with food allergies in making informed choices.

We engage with food industry stakeholders from over 20 countries, making us a globally recognised authority.

How do we know we have succeeded?

Global acceptance of the VITAL Science by the food industry, food regulators and enforcement agencies, with resources utilised directly or as the foundation for other tailored material.

Actions we will take:

- Maintain regular communication and brand activities to gather feedback from members and stakeholders
- Attend and host forums to promote key resources with our key audiences
- Collaborate with the VSEP in addressing global challenges and gaining acceptance of VITAL science worldwide
- Align resources to industry standards and the latest science.



Uniting the Food
Allergen Management
Community Through
Collaboration

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STRATEGY 2

Uniting the Food Allergen Management Community Through Collaboration

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How do we know we have succeeded?

Working together to tackle industry challenges and create a unified approach that improves the food ecosystem and supports individuals with food allergies.

Actions we will take:

- Bring the food allergen community together to create better outcomes for individuals with food allergies
- Build strong local and global partnerships to communicate clearly and drive positive change
- Connect with healthcare professionals to close gaps between industry, clinical practice, and consumer needs
- Promote consistency in allergen regulations and enforcement across Australia and New Zealand and foster global collaborations for a unified approach to allergen management.

Leading Globally with the VITAL[®] Program

- Home
- VITAL Program
- VITAL Science
- VITAL Resources
- VITAL Training
- VITAL and the Consumer
- VITAL Standards
- VITAL Pricing
- VITAL History
- FAQs & Help/Help



Voluntary Incidental Trace Allergen Labelling

The Allergen Bureau's VITAL[®] Voluntary Incidental Trace Allergen Labelling Program is a standardized allergen risk assessment process for the food industry.

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STRATEGY 3

Leading Globally with the VITAL[®] Program

Recognised and respected globally, our flagship program, VITAL (Voluntary Incidental Trace Allergen Labelling), is a standardised allergen risk management tool. VITAL helps manufacturers identify and mitigate risks to the lowest possible level and determine precautionary labelling outcomes to support individuals with food allergies in making informed choices. As we strive for harmonisation, consistent use of the VITAL program promotes transparency throughout the supply chain.

How do we know we have succeeded?

The VITAL Program and resources are recognised as leading tools for food allergen risk management in Australia and New Zealand, with opportunities for adoption globally.

Actions we will take:

- Through VITAL 4.0 updates, guide the transition from ED01 to ED05 allergen thresholds
- Maintain the VITAL online tools' relevance, reliability, security, and user experience
- Identify gaps in key markets and develop new content, enhancements, or programs to address them
- Position VITAL as the flagship brand of the Allergen Bureau using updates and news to build trust with stakeholders.



A person wearing a red and blue plaid shirt is holding a tablet computer. The background is a blurred field of crops under a blue sky. The entire image has a blue overlay.

Empowering the
Industry Through
Education & Training

Allergen
Bureau

STRATEGY 4

Empowering the Industry Through Education & Training

We aspire to improve food labelling, risk assessment, and safe food production techniques worldwide by facilitating the exchange of information, technology, and expertise. Our international conferences, webinars, and publications serve as a repository of knowledge that drives discussion and change in food allergen management. Education and training within the industry provide opportunities to build our brand both locally and globally.

How do we know we have succeeded?

Allergen Bureau branded and educational content is developed and used by food businesses, industry professionals, academia and consumers.

Actions we will take:

- Explore funding opportunities to support program development
- Create practical, relevant content tailored for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs)
- Build training partnerships with leading educational institutions
- Leverage digital platforms to make content widely accessible and engaging with a regular feedback loop to continuously improve content and delivery.



Advocating for greater
awareness to promote
informed consumer
choices

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STRATEGY 5

Advocating for greater awareness to promote informed consumer choices

The Allergen Bureau is committed to improving food allergen management practices within the food industry to enhance the quality of life for allergic consumers. It is essential for consumers and healthcare professionals to recognise how the food industry manages and labels to build understanding, foster trust and enable informed decision making, ultimately supporting better food choices for individuals with food allergies.

How do we know we have succeeded?

Assist the community affected by food allergy to understand the relationship between food allergen management practices and food availability.

Actions we will take:

- Promote greater awareness to support informed consumer choices
- Help individuals with food allergies understand how allergen management affects food availability
- Educate consumers and healthcare professionals on allergens in the food supply
- Collaborate with the food industry, consumers, advocacy groups, and healthcare professionals to create clear, unified messages
- Highlight the food industry's role in supporting informed choices.

Special thanks to Dr. Cristina Lesseur (Cristina Lesseur Advisory) for her instrumental work during the initial phase of this strategy. We would also like to thank the members and stakeholders participating in our 2022 consultations. Your feedback has been invaluable in shaping our future direction.

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