Natasha Allergy Research Foundation

TOTAL foodservice

Our Partnership With The Natasha Allergy Research Foundation

Your wholesaler Total Foodservice is a member of The Country Range Group (CRG), a leading foodservice buying group. CRG has entered into a three-year partnership with The Natasha Allergy Research Foundation to help drive the delivery of its charitable objectives such as the Natasha Clinical Trial, becoming the first foodservice buying group to be a partner of The Natasha Allergy Research Foundation.

This unique partnership will see the buying group and its members work alongside the charity to raise compassion, understanding and crucially, vital funds, to help make food allergy history. The Natasha Allergy Research Foundation is the only charity in the UK dedicated to scientific and medical research into allergy.

As well as becoming CRG's chosen annual charity for the next three years, the partnership will also see The Natasha Allergy Research Foundation become an editorial partner of the industry leading trade magazine, Stir it up providing leading insight about Natasha's Law, allergen research and other information crucial to caterers.

Natasha's Story

If you met Natasha, you would soon be smiling. She had an enormous heart.

The first sign of allergy was when Natasha was 12 weeks old. At 6 months old, Natasha had her first anaphylactic episode to a tiny amount of banana. A well as food allergies and being prone to asthma from the cold, mould and damp, she also suffered breathing difficulties when in contact with chemical smells such as bleach, air-freshener, perfume and acetone and airborne milk particles in coffee shops. She was dosed up with Piriton between March and May every year because of spring blossom pollen.

Natasha felt more confident as she got older in navigating her allergic life but she never ate something new without checking first. Until her fatal reaction in 2016, she hadn't had an anaphylactic reaction for nine years.

On 17th July 2016 Natasha died from eating sesame seeds that were baked into the dough of a baguette. The label on the packaging didn't include this ingredient and they were invisible to the naked eye. On the day her life ended, her family's lives changed forever.

"The unique partnership will see the buying group and its members work alongside the charity to raise compassion, understanding and crucially, vital funds, to help make food allergy history."

Timeline

2019

The Natasha Allergy Research Foundation was launched from Natasha's mother, Tanya's kitchen table, growing into a life changing, policy influencing and respected organisation.

2019

Natasha's Law was passed.

2020

Natasha's Foundation provides University of Southampton with bursaries for students on the Allergy Master's degree and PhD courses at this world leading allergy research centre.

2021

Natasha's Law implemented across England, Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales.

2022

A £2.5m oral immunotherapy Natasha Clinical Trial launched to treat up to 300 children and young people with milk and peanut allergies across universities in England and Scotland.

What Natasha's Law Ensures

The UK Food Information Amendment, also known as Natasha's Law, came into effect from October 2021 and requires food businesses to provide full ingredient lists and allergen labelling on foods prepackaged for direct sale on the premises. These changes apply to businesses in England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland.

According to the new rules, PPDS (Prepacked for Direct Sale) food will have to clearly display the following information on the packaging:

- **Name of the food.**
- **Full ingredients list, with allergenic ingredients emphasised (for example in bold, italics or a different colour).**

In the Republic of Ireland food information must be accurate, clear and easy to understand for the consumer. It must not be misleading. Where any of the 14 major allergens are used as an ingredient in a food, they must be indicated in a particular manner on the label:

- **They must be indicated in the list of ingredients with a clear reference to the name of the substance or product.**
- **The name of the substance or product must be emphasised through a typeset that clearly distinguishes it from the rest of the list of ingredients, for example by means of the font, style or background colour**.

The Natasha Allergy Research Foundation Mission

Our Vision – Our vision is to make food allergy history. We want to prevent and eradicate allergic disease, starting with food allergy, creating a world that is safe for all individuals.

Our Mission – Our mission is to bring about positive change by focusing on medical research, law and policies, educating and raising allergy awareness. We want to ensure the needs of people living with allergy are met in a meaningful way and to offer a real hope that will change the lives of all those living with this life-threatening disease.

Our Priority – We will fund and utilise the best scientific minds to spearhead specific research to identify the causes of allergy and how it can be prevented and eradicated.

Our Promise – We will do everything in our power to give a voice to the rising tide of younger and older people living with allergic disease; for everyone living with allergy to be understood and taken seriously by all of society and to campaign for change where change is needed. To do so now is more vital than ever before.

Our Research – Funding research projects with a view to end allergic disease is the primary focus of Natasha's Foundation. All research breakthroughs will be published and pioneering research project results shared so that everyone can benefit. With your support, we can fund more breakthrough research and finally halt the growing allergic epidemic we are living in.

"We're delighted to welcome the Country Range Group to Natasha's Foundation and are overwhelmed by their generosity to name us as their chosen charity for the next three years. Our vision is to make allergy history, something we wouldn't be able to do without the support of companies like the Country Range Group. Their knowledge, expertise and reputation in the foodservice sector is second to none so we're thrilled we're able to partner with them and their incredible independent members on our groundbreaking work."

Nadim Ednan-Laperouse OBE, Co-Founder & Trustee of The Natasha Allergy Research Foundation

Natasha's parents, Tanya Ednan-Laperouse OBE and Nadim Ednan-Laperouse OBE.

The Natasha Clinical Trial FAQ's

The Natasha Clinical Trial focuses on children and young people with milk and peanut allergies in a ground-breaking £2.5m Oral Immunotherapy trial (OIT). The study aims to plug the current Oral Immunotherapy research gap by proving that everyday foods instead of expensive pharmaceutical drugs can be used as a practical treatment. If it's successful, the trial could open up potential life changing treatments for hundreds of thousands of allergy sufferers at a fraction of the current cost for the NHS.

Q) What is food immunotherapy?

A) Immunotherapy is a medical treatment that uses the body's own immune system to fight disease outcomes. When used to treat food allergies, it involves giving the patient, under medical supervision, tiny but increasing amounts of the food to which they are allergic. This gradually trains the immune system not to see the food as a threat, triggering an allergic reaction. When the food is given by mouth, this is known as oral immunotherapy or OIT. Successful OIT was first reported in a 13-year-old boy with egg allergy in 1908 in the medical journal The Lancet. However, it is only in the last 15 years that trials have been carried out showing that OIT can work in up to 80% of patients with allergies to cow's milk and peanut. Despite these impressive results, OIT is still not widely available on the NHS.

Q) How could the Natasha Trial help people with food allergies?

A) Currently, the main strategy for the 2 to 3 million people living with food allergies in the UK is avoidance of the food they react to, and in many cases, prescribing adrenaline autoinjectors if they are at risk of anaphylaxis. However, trying to avoid the food to which you are allergic can be difficult, especially when eating out. Even when following good avoidance, typically someone with peanut allergy has an accidental reaction once every 2-3 years, often due to undeclared contaminants.

OIT offers the possibility of a long-term solution – once the body has been desensitized to the food, food-allergic individuals no longer need to worry about small amounts of accidental allergen presence. However, they must carry on eating a specific amount of the allergen in order to maintain the desensitization effect. The trial will achieve this by using "everyday foods" to keep up this level of tolerance. The aim of the trial is to establish OIT as a practical treatment for food allergy to allow people to live a more normal life.

Q) Is it a cure?

A) No. Studies have shown that OIT is around 80 percent successful in treating milk and peanut allergies. This means that eight out of 10 people who have the treatment, will respond to it. However, for the treatment to remain successful, in most cases patients must continue to consume the food regularly or the desensitisation will be lost. We hope to run a follow-on study to continue to monitor participants after 3 years, to see if longer term desensitisation is achievable without them needing to continue to eat small amounts of the food on an ongoing basis.

"We're proud to be entering into a partnership with The Natasha Allergy Research Foundation and are committed in their aims to help make food allergens a thing of the past. Although some important policies have been introduced since Natasha's tragic death, there's still so much more that can be done to prevent and eradicate allergic disease. We hope that this far-reaching partnership will bring about positive change and offer hope to those living with allergies."

Martin Ward, Chief Executive of the Country Range Group

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