How to Print EU Regulation 1169/2011 Compliant Labels

Primera Technology advises food producers on the right approach.

Food allergens can be life threatening and the only way people can manage a food allergy is to avoid the foods that make them ill. In the UK, it is estimated that one to two per cent of adults and five to eight per cent of children have a food allergy. This equates to around two million people living in the UK with a food allergy, and this figure does not include those with food intolerances.[1] Considering that, there are actually even more people living with a food allergy or food intolerance.

An allergic reaction can be produced by a tiny amount of a food ingredient that a person is sensitive to (for example, a teaspoon of milk powder, a fragment of peanut or just one or two sesame seeds). Symptoms of an allergic reaction can range from mild symptoms such as itching around the mouth and rashes or can progress to more severe symptoms, such as vomiting, diarrhoea, wheezing and on occasion anaphylaxis shock. It can even cause death.

Therefore, the European Union installed a consumer regulation that focuses on allergens in food. From December 13, 2014 the EU Food Information for Consumers Regulation (No.1169/2011) outlines the new requirements for businesses, which are providing food sold prepacked and non-prepacked (loose) such as food sold in a restaurant or takeaway. Since then, all food businesses need to provide information about the allergenic ingredients used in food sold or provided by them.

In order to have food product labels that are compliant to the new EU regulation, it's not enough to just list allergens that are included in a product. It's also mandatory to use a certain font size depending on the size of the label and also highlight all allergens in a certain way.

A product label is the first source of information for people with food allergy and/or intolerance to help them decide if they can buy and eat that product without risking an allergic reaction. And recent studies have shown that the readability of information is a key factor to the consumer's purchasing decision.

There are several different printing solutions out there. One of the leading manufacturers of speciality colour label printers is Primera Technology. Primera is widely known for its inkjet-based LX-Series label printers, including the entry-level colour label printer LX500e and industrial-grade LX2000e label printer.

Primera's newest member of the LX-Series is the LX910e Color Label Printer. With a print speed of up to 11.4 cm/s, LX910e is not only the company's fastest desktop label printer, it also offers very low ink costs due to a new, ultra-high capacity ink cartridge. LX910e utilises one tri-colour ink cartridge with an integrated print head. With every cartridge change, users get a new print head, simplifying maintenance and lowering ongoing operating costs. Process black is dark and crisp and uses no more ink than a separate black ink tank would on the same amount of text or graphics. LX910e can print with dye-based ink for brilliant, eye-popping colour or with pigment ink for maximum durability against water and UV light. Both types of ink work interchangeably on the same printer.

To produce exceptional product labels, one not only needs reliable print technology but also high-quality substrates. It's always the combination of hardware and the right label material that fits the requirements of each application. Over the years, Primera worked together with several substrate manufacturers to offer customers the perfect companion to all LX-Series label printers -- its Primera Genuine certified inkjet label substrates. The label portfolio includes a variety of materials and finishes, such as Primera's high-gloss, semi-gloss, matte, vintage, gold and silver shiny paper, along with tags, plastic and cotton fabric labels.

At Natural Products Scandinavia, held in Malmö, Sweden, on November 14-15, 2018, visitors can attend live demonstrations of Primera's label printers, including the new LX910e, at stand B49. For more information about LX-Series label printers and Primera Genuine substrates, visit www.primeralabel.eu.

Reference:
[1] Source: Food allergen labelling and information requirements under the EU Food Information for Consumers Regulation No.1169/2011: Technical Guidance, April 2015, http://www.food.gov.uk/sites/default/files/food-allergen-labelling-technical-guidance.pdf