

## **Food Ingredients and Additives Policy**

Pabulum's policy is to provide fresh, delicious, honestly sourced quality foods from sustainable sources. Alongside this it is essential that all food supplied conforms to relevant UK and EU legislation, including:

- The Food Safety and Hygiene (England) Regulations 2013
- Food Labelling Regulations 1996 and associated directives
- Food Information for Consumers Regulation (EU FIC)
- EU Regulation No. 2073/2005 on Microbiological Criteria for Foodstuffs
- Regulation (EC) No. 1935/2004 on Materials and Articles in Contact with Food

We ensure that we meet the government's nutritional requirements within the new School Food Plan standards designed to assist caterers in making imaginative, flexible and nutritious menus.

Specific medically requested diets can also be arranged on request. We have a full policy and procedure for dealing with these special diets and may work with a dietician in their development.

In accordance with the Food Information for Consumers Regulations we provide information on the presence/absence of the fourteen allergens contained within these regulations on request. Accurate allergy information provided by our food suppliers is then communicated to customers.

### **Ingredients**

Good practice standards are laid down by Pabulum for various specific ingredients. Wherever possible within our business these standards are adhered to:

### **Produce**

Menus are developed to include British and preferably locally sourced produce when in season, provided this is available in sufficient volume to meet our demands. In line with our Fresh Food Policy, fresh produce is used in preference to frozen or dried equivalents.

### **Dairy Products**

Fresh milk and dairy products are produced in the United Kingdom, unless for reasons of provenance e.g. French cheese. All of our eggs are produced under the British Lion.



## Fish Products

Our company policy is to purchase responsibly sourced fish with MSC certification (Marine Stewardship Council) or MCS certification (Marine Conservation Society).

## Meat and Meat Products

All of Pabulum's fresh meat meets the minimum requirements as laid down by the Red Tractor Assured Food Standards scheme. All our fresh meat is clearly labelled and is all born, raised and slaughtered in the United Kingdom. Pabulum provides Halal meat at the request of the School. Some schools may require only Halal meat, whilst others may require two offers – one Halal and one non-Halal.

Where Halal is provided, Pabulum provides a Halal certificate for display. Additional quality standards are required for Red Tractor certification which requires our meats to be stunned prior to slaughter. Pabulum routinely audits our suppliers to verify standards. Minced and diced meat has a maximum fat content of 10%. Mechanically recovered meats are excluded from our menus.

## Trans Fats / Hydrogenated Vegetable Oils

Pabulum excludes hydrogenated vegetable oils (trans-fats) from our ingredients as they are undesirable from a nutritional point of view. The consumption of trans-fats is linked to an increased risk of coronary heart disease. There has consequently been a worldwide drive to eliminate the consumption of trans-fats in the diet.

## Irradiated and Genetically Modified Foods

Pabulum recognises the potential of irradiation as a technology that can assist with food preservation. However, given public uncertainty over the process, it is Pabulum's policy not to use foods or ingredients that have been subjected to irradiation.

Pabulum are aware that there are genuine concerns with regard to the consumption of genetically modified foods. In order to identify if any of our supplier products contain modified ingredients, we request details of their products on an on-going basis. We are therefore confident that no genetically modified ingredients are knowingly used across our business.

## Food Additives

Food additives comprise a large and varied group of chemicals, many of which have a long history of use or are thoroughly tested to assure safety before use. They are added to food to improve keeping quality, safety, nutritional quality, sensory qualities and other properties required for processing and / or storage.

Pabulum specifies that additives should not be present in foods as a substitute for best quality ingredients or to artificially extend the shelf-life of the product. Additives that are present need to be fully declared on the pack in line with legal requirements and must be used at the minimum level in terms of the number used and quantity present to satisfactorily achieve the functions for which they are added.



Suppliers provide technical data to substantiate general or particular additive use. They are also required to remain up to date on any legislative changes with regard to additive use.

### Colouring

Colour is a key sensory component of food and therefore many processed foods contain added colorants. These colorants can be naturally occurring pigments or synthetic dyes. In recent years there has been a move away from the use of synthetic dyes due to consumer demands.

At Pabulum, natural or nature identical colours are preferred to artificial additives especially as the majority of our customers are children. Certain artificial colours are not permitted in our ingredients following their link to hyperactivity in children.

### Preservatives

Preservatives are either added to food to prevent rancidity or to prevent microbial growth. Antioxidants can be either naturally occurring or synthetic in origin. Antimicrobial agents are used to prevent spoilage by bacteria, yeasts and moulds and include sulphites, benzoates, sorbates and nitrates.

Meeting Soil Association Food for Life Catering Mark guidelines certain preservatives such as E211 Sodium Benzoate are excluded from our Bronze standard certification.

### Sugars and Sweeteners

Pabulum's policy is that only natural sugars and sweeteners that would typically be found in a store cupboard are permitted. The quantity of sugar or sweetener shall be limited to the lowest level possible to accomplish the desired effect. Creative and innovative cooking techniques and ingredients are used in the kitchen to limit the amount of sugar and sweeteners needed.

### Flavour Enhancers

Flavour enhancers are food additives commonly added to food and designed to enhance the existing flavours of products. Monosodium glutamate (MSG) being a common example. Some flavour enhancers have been associated with the onset of adverse reactions in some people. Meeting the Soil Associations Food for Life Catering Mark Pabulum's policy is to avoid use of the following flavour enhancers:

E621 Monosodium glutamate (MSG)

E635 Sodium 5 ribonucleotide

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*(This policy will be reviewed in May 2023)*

