UKHospitality position on ingredient data API

About UKHospitality

UKHospitality is the authoritative voice for over 730 companies operating around 85,000 venues in a sector that employed 3.2 million people prior to COVID. The body speaks on behalf of a wide range of leisure and 'out-of-home' businesses, from FTSE 100 enterprises to niche groups and independent single-site operators, as well as 6,000 affiliated operators. UKHospitality provides a single voice bringing together businesses from all aspects of hospitality: coffee shops, hotels, serviced apartments, pubs, restaurants, leisure parks, nightclubs, contract caterers, entertainment, wedding venues, holiday homes, bowling alleys and visitor attractions.

Key points

One element of operation that is common across virtually all of our membership is the provision of food to the public. Given the importance of food issues, both in terms of safety and nutrition, UKHospitality has two specific policy groups composed of operation experts from within member companies. These groups provide expert insight and information on how the UK hospitality sector works in terms of food process and how we interact with our customers on the wide range of issues that are encountered daily.

On allergens and hypersensitivity, the hospitality sector is working collaboratively across companies themselves, suppliers, online delivery platforms, with the Food Standards Agency, customer representative bodies and charities to ensure we develop the most effective and workable solutions when it comes to food safety across the wider out of home sector. This includes feeding in to the ongoing Food Standards Agency hypersensitivity work with a focus on smaller businesses and raising awareness on the current law and responsibilities with regard to allergens.

In principle, UKHospitality would welcome the development of an ingredient data API, as the sector continues to prioritise the safety of guests. In particular, a 'single source of truth' to provide all information on calories, fats, sugars and allergens would be a helpful tool in assisting businesses in providing up to date and accurate information to consumers. This is particularly important given the volatility that exists (and is increasing) within the supply chain, with many businesses having to regularly substitute products.

We also recognise the scale and challenges involved in such a project, which in order to be effective, would need to include the whole UK food supply chain more widely than hospitality. It would be critical to have engagement of producers and suppliers from an early stage (UKHospitality has had discussions in this area in recent years) which we would be happy to help facilitate where possible.