

21.04.20

9 Deputy I. Gardiner of the Minister for the Environment regarding updating the Food Safety (Jersey) Law 1966 (OQ.90/2021):

Will the Minister provide Members with a timescale for updating the Food Safety Law 1966 with particular regard to making the labelling of the 14 most common food allergens mandatory for food businesses, as is already the case in the E.U. and the U.K.?

3.9.1 Deputy J.H. Young (The Minister for the Environment):

The Draft Food (Jersey) Law 202- is in the final stages of drafting to ensure all necessary post-Brexit measures in respect of food are covered. I hope to be in a position to lodge the primary law, either this quarter, quarter 2, or very early next quarter, quarter 3, this year. Subsequently, to the usual process it is hoped that it, along with secondary registration which will be needed, will all be in place by the end of the year. This would include mandatory labelling of the 14 most common allergens, as is the case in the E.U. and in the U.K. Of course in anticipation of this, the Environmental Health team was carrying out awareness training for the hospitality sector through breakfast bites and seminars and during visits. But now this activity will recommence, as the hospitality industry opens. Obviously many businesses already label their products and menus appropriately and that is encouraging.

[11:15]

Before I just finish that answer, I would like to take the opportunity to correct remarks I made in the previous sitting about law drafting to do with environmental work, *et cetera*, which I think was interpreted as delays due to the Legislative Drafting Office. This was not the case on investigation. It is a complex business and that team do a tireless job for us.

3.9.2 Deputy I. Gardiner:

I thank the Minister and it is really reassuring that the proposed legislation will be lodged this year. In the meantime, will the Minister commit lodging a campaign similar to the Food Standard Agency that speak up for allergies to help raise awareness of the need for proper allergen labelling for children and young people, especially as this group are most likely to suffer an allergic reaction when eating in the food businesses?

Deputy J.H. Young:

Yes, obviously it is a very important thing. I would have to discuss that with the officers, the chief Environmental Health team, to see. At the moment they are very, very severely stretched, as I think Members know. I do not want to make commitments that are unrealistic. Ultimately, I think there may be a requirement, I do not want to overplay that. But if it is necessary I will take steps to ensure that we can because preparing the industry for this new legislation is as important as the legislation and so on. I think the Deputy is right in her proposal. I will have to come back to her, I cannot give a commitment now though.