

Food fair guide

If you're thinking of running a food fair you will find all you need in this guide. We're grateful to all Local Groups that take up the challenge and we hope your event will be a great success. Running a food fair is very rewarding, but there is quite a bit to consider so here are some tips to ensure that everything goes well on the day.

These guidelines have been prepared to enable you to:

- plan the event
- ensure the day runs smoothly
- guarantee you and Coeliac UK as a whole meet the criteria that ensure the Charity's public liability insurance is valid.

Naturally the safety and wellbeing of people attending any Coeliac UK event is a major concern so please ask us if there is any aspect that you're not sure of.

We can help with all of this and examples of useful documents are provided in the appendices and on our [website](#).

If you require any further help, please don't hesitate to contact our Volunteering Team on 01494 796117 or email volunteer@coeliac.org.uk

Contents

Contents	1
Introduction.....	2
What is a food fair?	2
Initial planning.....	2
<i>Where?</i>	2
<i>When?</i>	3
<i>How?</i>	4
<i>Next steps</i>	4
The full programme.....	5
Healthcare professionals.....	5
Cookery demonstrations.....	5
Children’s events.....	5
Lunch.....	5
Some practical points to remember.....	6
Health and safety at food fairs.....	6
First aid.....	7
Support from Coeliac UK.....	8
Dietary advice.....	8
Materials.....	8
Coeliac UK exhibition stand.....	8
Speak to the experienced.....	8
Organising publicity.....	9
Appendices.....	10

Introduction

What is a food fair?

These are large scale food focused events (usually with at least 15 stands) held around the country and organised by Coeliac UK's Local Voluntary Support Groups. Some Local Groups regularly hold mini food fairs on a much smaller scale.

The aim is to give Members an overview of the gluten-free diet, allowing them to sample the wide range of products on offer, speak directly to manufacturers and buy gluten-free goods. It's also a great opportunity for the Local Group and Coeliac UK staff to reach out to people and promote the information and support that we provide and to showcase the work that we do around campaigns and research.

Some food fairs also host an information stand manned by dietitians from the local hospital who can answer any diet and health questions.

You may know from experience how daunting the gluten-free diet can be when you are first diagnosed. Food fairs aim to give those who are newly diagnosed the confidence to manage their gluten-free diet and to promote the fantastic national and local gluten-free foods available.

Initial planning

Where?

The success of an event of this size depends on reaching as many Members as possible. Things to consider when choosing a location are:

- **easy access** - your venue needs to be easy to reach by public transport
- **good parking** - most people arrive by car so you need plenty of car parking
- **cost** - even though you will be able to charge manufacturers for their stands, you **must** make sure your Group can fund any deposits and costs needed to secure a venue and to create the materials needed to publicise the event. It can make sense to consider sharing the organisation and cost between Local Groups.

- **space** - the standard table size for a display is 6ft long. Make sure your event has plenty of space for exhibitors and their stands and for visitors to walk around without being crowded. Check there are power points/electricity sockets in easy reach of the stands.
- **refreshments area** - look for a venue which has a kitchen/refreshment area. A small charge for refreshments can help raise funds.
- **well equipped venue** - make sure the venue can provide suitable tables and chairs for every stand and whether they have a PA system, digital signage or WiFi through which you can promote the event and manufacturers on the day.
Check whether they will allow manufacturers to send stock to the venue prior to the event and whether they allow exhibitors to cook and prepare food on the premises.
- **number of Members** - to maximise the benefit of an event of this size, you need to reach as many Members as possible. Don't underestimate the power of social media - make sure your venue is capable of comfortably holding several hundred people throughout the event, if not more, and that parking arrangements are sufficient.
- **gluten-free food manufacturers** - suppliers and manufacturers attend events of this sort for commercial reasons. They want to promote their goods, raise awareness of their brand and develop a relationship with the newly diagnosed. Many manufacturers like to have a rough number of Members you hope will attend. If you have never held a food fair before maybe contact another Local Group with more experience for advice.

When?

- **Choose your date carefully** - make sure you don't conflict with another big local event or a neighbouring Group's event. Bear in mind school holidays and Bank Holiday weekends.
- **Coeliac UK** - contact Barbara Mayne to make sure that there are no other Coeliac UK or Local Group events taking place at the same time.
- **Think ahead** - food fairs take a long time to organise and Members and the public need plenty of notice about upcoming events. If you wanted to advertise your event in two editions of Crossed Grain we would need your information ten months in advance.
- **Timings** - how long you want the event to last? There is often a rush of visitors for the opening and by the close, stock is running low. Is there enough to offer Members for more than three hours? Do manufacturers have sufficient supplies to last into the afternoon? During the winter do your timings mean people will be travelling in the dark? These are all things to think about.

How?

- **Organisation** - can you take on the organisation alone or could you work with a neighbouring Group? Splitting the responsibility makes everything more manageable and you can all share in the event's success.
- **Costs** - to ensure the event pays for itself you should charge manufacturers to attend. How much you charge depends on location and size of the event (both in regard to number of attendees and number of manufacturers). For up to date information on what to charge manufacturers please contact the Volunteering Team.
- **Admission** - most Groups charge a small amount for admission, which is fine. There are a number of other ways you can raise at the food fair including:
 - holding a raffle
 - selling refreshments throughout the day.
- **Health and safety** - you are responsible for the health and safety of yourself and all attendees at the event so plan ahead and follow the guidance provided. Don't hesitate to contact the Volunteering Team if you need any further advice or support.

Next steps

Once you have decided on your venue and your date, you need to send out invitations to stall holders, local manufacturers and suppliers.

A comprehensive list of gluten-free manufacturers can be found in the Food and Drink Directory as these companies are registered with us as supplying suitable products.

Visit our website at: www.coeliac.org.uk/eFDD

Many producers are certified by Coeliac UK. You can find a list of certified companies here: www.coeliac.org.uk/licensees

Companies using our Crossed Grain symbol are also listed in the Food and Drink Directory.

The full programme

You may wish to do more than just have stands from manufacturers. Here are some ideas of other aspects of food fair programmes which have been successful in the past.

Healthcare professionals

One to one: give visitors an opportunity to speak on a personal level with a dietitian or other healthcare professional.

Panel: organise a group of GPs, dietitians or gastroenterologists to take questions as a panel

Presentations: invite a gastroenterologist, Coeliac UK staff member, Helpline dietitian, or healthcare professional to give a talk.

Cookery demonstrations

Demonstrations go down well with both exhibitors and visitors. If you can't get a supplier to offer a demonstration, perhaps you could challenge two chefs to a ready steady cook scenario! Remember to make sure that those giving the demo have suitable insurance.

Children's events

Some Groups hire entertainers to look after children during the event – you must stress however that this is not a crèche and parents must supervise their children at all times as Coeliac UK's insurance does not cover Groups for this.

A simple quiz or competition might be an idea to keep children busy, or something like biscuit decoration using gluten-free biscuits donated by manufacturers.

Lunch

If your event takes place over lunchtime you might like to serve food. Some Groups have served hot and cold lunches at their event and have raised money for the Group in the process. See guidance in the Local Group Handbook on catering and the provision of food.

Some practical points to remember

- Make arrangements for somebody to be at the venue to receive goods on the day
- Confirm catering arrangements (hot drinks, cold drinks and gluten-free snacks)
- Ensure clear signage is in place for exhibitors and attendees
- Make sure tables and chairs are in place according to the exhibition plan and that tables are labelled
- Confirm the provision of tablecloths
- Confirm the First Aid responsibility
- Check location of First Aid kit and Fire Exits
- Do you have music provision for the day?
- Agree responsibility for any announcements
- Agree responsibility for on the door ticket sales.



Health and safety at food fairs

The safety of the Group, Members and visitors is paramount at any event. Following these simple steps will enable you to welcome suppliers into a safe environment whilst protecting the needs of your visitors.

1. Adapt the **Food fair - exhibitor guidelines** to suit your venue and your event.
2. Issue the guidelines to **all** exhibitors to ensure that they complete, sign and return the **Guidelines declaration** before the event.
3. Send a copy of the **Gluten-free product criteria** and **Food suppliers' gluten-free food declaration** to all manufacturers and retailers. Ensure that everyone has read the criteria and signed and returned the declaration before the event.
4. Complete a **Risk assessment** and **Timeline** for your event. You will find an example risk assessment in this pack. We suggest you use this as a simple 'model' to complete your own.

First aid

You should have a trained first aider at the event - consider hiring a St John's Ambulance crew member as you could have several hundred (and sometimes more) people through the doors.

Emergency contact numbers should be displayed and known to **all** event organisers.

All documents referenced above can be found in the Appendices.

Support from Coeliac UK

Dietary advice

Coeliac UK is fortunate to have a number of professional dietitians working for the organisation so you might be able to book one to attend your event - but please note that they cannot attend all events.

It is likely that amongst your Membership you will have some professional healthcare providers: either GPs, gastroenterologists or dietitians who may be willing to support your event in a professional capacity.

Materials

You can order the following items from Coeliac UK to support your event. Please order by calling 01494 796117.

- **Leaflets**
- **T shirts** (subject to availability)
- **Headed paper** (for invites or press releases).

Coeliac UK exhibition stand

Coeliac UK will try to ensure that there are staff representatives at every food fair. Our staff will man a Coeliac UK stand and actively engage with everybody, explaining what Coeliac UK (and the Local Groups) do and how we can support our Members. We will:

- answer questions and signpost as appropriate
- hand out informative leaflets and publications
- encourage non Members to join and enjoy the benefits of Membership.

Speak to the experienced

If you would like to speak to an experienced food fair organiser, please contact the Volunteers' Assistant who will put you in touch with a Group who have successfully held food fairs in the past.

Organising publicity

Once you've booked your event you need to publicise it to as many people as possible.

- **Tell your Membership:** include an advert in your Group's newsletter. Especially inform your Healthcare Professional Members as they will be involved with new Members who would may benefit the most from attending your event.
- **Coeliac UK publications:** let Coeliac UK know and we can advertise the event in Crossed Grain and our email newsletter which goes out monthly. Email your news to Barbara Mayne at barbara.mayne@coeliac.org.uk
- **Web:** upload the information on your Local Group's web page and contact your local paper for them to publicise your event on the *what's on* pages.
- **Inform other Group Organisers:** ask other Group Organisers to highlight your event in their newsletters. You may want to include neighbouring Groups and those further afield as they may want to organise coach trips to ferry their Members to your event.
- **Programme:** perhaps you'd like to create a flyer detailing the programme of events, to be sent or emailed to Members from your Group and neighbouring Groups.
- **Press releases:** send your local newspaper and radio stations a press release using the example press release inviting them to attend with a photographer.
- **Paid advertising:** you may wish to take out an advert in your local newspaper. Ask for a charity discount if you do.

Use the sample press release in the Appendices to guide you.

Appendices

- Food fair guidelines for exhibitors
- Exhibitor guidelines
- Guidelines declaration
- Criteria for gluten-free products
- Food suppliers' gluten-free food declaration
- Statement of Health and Safety
- Example: risk assessment
- Example: food fair press release

Food fair guidelines for exhibitors

Issued [insert date]

Introduction

Coeliac UK would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your support of the [insert food fair name] food fair.

Please do take the time to read this handbook as contains basic procedural information that must be adhered to. You should then complete, sign and return the declaration enclosed with this handbook.

If you require any further assistance, please don't hesitate to contact:

[Insert organiser's names and contact details.]

TIMETABLE

Build up

- Samples can be delivered to the venue on [insert date] between [insert times], addressed to [insert food fair name], [insert food fair address].
- The venue will be accessible from [insert time] on [insert date] for you to set up your stand.
- All displays must be ready for the opening of the food fair on time.

Exhibition opening hours

- The food fair will be open to visitors from [insert time] to [insert time].

Breakdown

- Dismantling of your stand can start at [insert time].
- All material and equipment is to be removed from the venue by [insert time] on that day.
- Exhibitors are responsible for organising their own couriers.
- **Under no circumstances can exhibits be removed from the venue during the food fair opening hours.**

TECHNICAL INFORMATION

Catering

- Throughout the event opening hours, coffee, tea, soft drinks and light refreshments (including gluten-free refreshments) will be available for purchase at the venue.

Cleaning

- It is the responsibility of the exhibitor to maintain their stand in a clean condition throughout the event.
- Where the venue is carpeted, exhibitors should provide adequate protection for the floors around their stands.

Dilapidation

- Exhibitors are responsible for making good any damage to the fabric of the venue, caused by them or anyone working on their behalf.
- Please check the condition of your exhibition site before the dressing of your stand and after breakdown.

Electrical

- Exhibitors will be shown allocated power points (where requested) on arrival. Please only use your allocated power point.
- Extension leads and appliances must be PAT tested and carry the relevant stickers.
- Do not overload the system.
- Use 13-amp max, fused appliances only.

Evacuation procedure

- Prior to the start of the event, exhibitors must familiarise themselves with the venue's evacuation procedure. In the event of an alarm, please follow these instructions and exit promptly through one of the fire exits and assemble as instructed.

Exhibitor passes

- No exhibitor passes will be issued.
- Please complete and return the attached exhibitor's declaration to notify Coeliac UK of all stand representatives.

First aid

- A trained first aider will be on site. Please contact the venue reception desk or one of the organisers if you require assistance.

Freight and storage

- Exhibitors are responsible for organising the freight of materials to the food fair.
- There is no specific carrier for the event and neither the venue nor Coeliac UK can take responsibility for items lost or missing in transit.

Health and safety

- You will comply with the best practice requirements of the statutory Health and Safety guidelines as laid down by the Health and Safety Executive.

Lost property

- Any recovered lost property should be handed to staff at the venue where claimants can make enquiries about any missing items.

Property

- Coeliac UK or the venue will accept no responsibility for any property lost or stolen.
- Exhibitors are advised to ensure they have adequate insurance to cover any such loss.
- Exhibitors are requested not to leave any valuables on a stand left unattended.
- All exhibitor property must be removed from the venue at the end of the event. There is no facility for storage awaiting collection from third parties.

Public liability

- Coeliac UK cannot accept any liability for food supplied by you to visitors, either through sales or sampling. You must take every precaution to ensure that the products you provide are gluten-free and that your public liability and general indemnity insurance provides adequate cover.

Smoking

- Smoking is not permitted in the exhibition hall.

Stand activities

- Sampling, selling and cooking may be permitted on your stand, please check details.
- If this is the case only electrical cooking appliances are permitted.
- If cooking, exhibitors must provide adequate insurance, fire safety equipment such as a fire blanket or suitable extinguisher.
- Exhibitors must abide by all relevant food hygiene regulations.
- All foods provided must be gluten-free including those used to serve or sample.

Vehicular access for loading/unloading

- When exhibitors have unloaded/loaded their vehicle they should remove the vehicle from the site as soon as possible following instructions on where to park.
- Please DO NOT PARK near to the entrances for reasons of safety.

Water and waste

- No water or waste services are provided to exhibition stands.
- Unless specific waste bags are provided by the venue, exhibitors should provide their own waste bags and arrange to remove all waste at the end of the event, including cardboard boxes.

Coeliac UK is a charity registered in England and Wales (1048167) and in Scotland (SCO39804) and company limited by guarantee, registered in England (No. 3068044) Registered Office, 3rd Floor, Apollo Centre, Desborough Road, High Wycombe, Bucks, HP11 2QW

Exhibitor guidelines

[Insert date]

Dear Exhibitor

[Insert name of food fair] food fair – exhibitor guidelines

Thank you for agreeing to support the [insert] food fair on [insert date]. In order to ensure that exhibitors operate to the highest possible health and safety standards on the day, we have prepared the enclosed guidelines for you.

Would you please read the guidelines carefully and then complete the declaration and return it to me at [insert address] by [insert date]. For your information, I also enclose a copy of **Coeliac UK's criteria for gluten-free** products. If you have not yet returned a signed declaration relating specifically to the products you will be selling or sampling, would you please be kind enough to do so.

I know that form filling is time consuming and may seem unnecessary, but when we are dealing with food that could, if not managed properly, make people ill, I hope you will agree that we cannot be too careful.

Yours sincerely,

[Insert name]

Event Organiser

Guidelines declaration

[insert name] food fair
[Insert food fair address]
[insert date]

I confirm that I have read the Coeliac UK food fair exhibitor guidelines and undertake to ensure that all those involved on the exhibition stand are aware of the requirements and agree to adhere to the conditions set out. I confirm that I have public and product liability insurance to cover my presence at this food fair and will adhere to statutory Health and Safety Guidelines.

Name:

Position:

Company:

Signature:

Date:

Please list here any electrical equipment you will be using

Exhibitor personnel names:

Stand guests:

Please return the completed form by [insert date] to: [insert contact details]

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Criteria for gluten-free products

Gluten-free

Products must comply with the following criteria according to legislation (EC 41/2009):

Foods containing 20 ppm or less of gluten

Foods that contain 20 ppm or less of gluten will be able to be labelled 'gluten-free'. This labelling term may apply to naturally gluten-free products, products which contain gluten-free (Codex) wheat starch and uncontaminated oat products which are less than 20 ppm.

Allergen information

Products must comply with the requirements of the Food Information Regulation (EU 1169/2011):

- Information on deliberate ingredients present in all products served must be available, either printed or on request.

Gluten-free (Codex) wheat starch and oats

Samples containing gluten-free (Codex) wheat starch or oats must be clearly labelled/signposted.

If you have any queries regarding suitability of products to be labelled gluten-free, please do not hesitate to contact:

Coeliac UK, 3rd Floor, Apollo Centre, Desborough Road, High Wycombe, Bucks, HP11 2QW

Tel: 01494 437278

Fax: 01494 474349

Email: foodanddrink@coeliac.org.uk

Website: www.coeliac.org.uk

Food suppliers' gluten-free food declaration

Name:

Company name:

Address:

Position within company:

Contact telephone number:

Email:

I declare that the products I am submitting as gluten-free meet the Coeliac UK criteria in full and comply with EC 41/2009 and EU 1169/2011.

Signature _____

Date _____

Statement of health and safety

Coeliac UK is committed to do all that is reasonably practicable to protect the health, safety and welfare of its employees, volunteers and Members, prevent damage to property and to protect everyone, including the general public, from foreseeable work hazards. In particular, the Charity will:

- operate a system of safety management control over all its operations
- undertake assessments of all its operations, carry out appropriate reviews, measure safety performance, manage risks and comply with the Health and Safety Policy
- ensure that adequate training and instruction is made available to all employees to enable them to perform their work both safely and competently
- provide and maintain a safe working environment that complies with current legislation, to include safe equipment and safe systems of work
- make available, ensure their use and supervise all necessary safety devices and protective equipment
- maintain a constant and continuing interest in health, safety and welfare matters applicable to the Charity's activities by putting in place control procedures and conducting operations so as to continuously improve safety standards
- respond effectively and investigate accidents, incidents and near misses and take reasonable measures to prevent recurrence
- ensure safe handling and use of substances.

Coeliac UK regards the promotion of health, safety and welfare as a mutual objective for management and employees and volunteers at all levels. Coeliac UK will consult and involve employees on matters relating to health and safety, and maintain adequate communication and action in regard to health and safety. Employees and volunteers have a duty to cooperate with the Charity and a positive role to play in matters of health, safety and welfare:

- by working at all times with due regard to safety
- by using the protective equipment provided
- by adhering to charity practices and procedures, jointly agreed on their behalf to ensure a safe working environment
- by reporting near misses and accidents that have occurred
- by assisting in the investigation of accidents with the objective of introducing measures to prevent recurrence.

Overall and final responsibility for health and safety lies with Trustees. Employees and volunteers share in the responsibility for health and safety within areas of their control. The Management Team will have day to day responsibility to make health and safety a high priority. Management, employees or volunteers who fail to comply with safe work practices, either specifically laid down in policy statements, or after being brought to their attention, could face disciplinary action.

Example: risk assessment

Food fair EXAMPLE: RISK ASSESSMENT FOR [insert food fair name] [Insert food fair address] [insert date]			
Activity	Hazard	Recommendations	Actions
Environment	Car park, stairs, doors, heavy furniture, lifts	Liaison with venue staff and exhibitors, planning of layout, consider needs of all attending. Appoint coordinator and stewards for set up/breakdown process	Two liaison meetings, plans in place, needs of young, elderly and infirm considered. Exhibitors advised of procedure for build up and breakdown and coordinator appointed
Stands	Inadequate space, blocked safety access	Plans to be drawn to scale and agreed with venue staff. Keep to plan	Plans completed and given to venue, layout to be set up by venue staff, volunteers present when stand holders arrive
Equipment	Knives; food heating equipment; electrical equipment	Sharp and hot equipment to be kept away from public, all stands using electrical equipment to be sited by a socket, all extension leads to be kept away from public. Exhibitors to ensure all equipment PAT tested and bring fire safety equipment	Stand positions planned with reference to socket positions; notes made to instruct stand holders about sharp and hot equipment. Exhibitor guidelines distributed
Public	Lack of information and lavatory provision, ingestion of gluten-containing food	Signage required, volunteers required, lavatory locations to be noted. Guidelines for exhibitors	Clear signage and volunteer rota arranged. Exhibitors advised of gluten-free requirements
Medical	Medical emergency during food fair	Obtain telephone numbers of doctors, check first aid provision	Numbers obtained, first aid to be provided by trained venue staff

Example: food fair press release

Print on Coeliac UK headed paper

Press Release

Date: xxxx

****INSERT LOCATION**'S GLUTEN-FREE FOOD FAIR**

A gluten-free food fair for **insert area** is being held on **insert date** at **insert location**, organised by the **Insert Group name** Local Voluntary Support Group of Coeliac UK (the national Charity for people with coeliac disease), giving local people the chance to meet gluten-free food manufacturers and learn more about coeliac disease and the gluten-free diet.

Coeliac disease is a serious autoimmune disease caused by intolerance to gluten. When gluten (a protein found in wheat, rye and barley) is eaten by someone with the condition, damage to the gut lining occurs. 1 in 100 people in the UK have coeliac disease, but only around 24% of those are currently diagnosed. There is no cure or medication for the condition; the only treatment is a strict gluten-free diet for life. If someone with coeliac disease doesn't stick to a gluten-free diet, the disease can lead to other conditions such as malnutrition, osteoporosis and small bowel cancer. More information about coeliac disease can be found at www.coeliac.org.uk

Insert Group Organiser name, the **insert Group name**'s Group Organiser says, "We're hoping that 1,000 people attend the event. Everyone is welcome and it's a great way of finding out more about the types of gluten-free food available and meet other like-minded people."

Admission to the event is **free/enter amount** and the venue is easily accessible by public transport and offers ample car parking.

ENDS

For more information on the event please contact: Your name XX: on XX tel: & email:

Notes to editor:

The media is very welcome to attend the event. Please contact XX on XX (mobile number on the day) to arrange interviews or photo shoots

Around 12,000 newly diagnosed people are joining Coeliac UK every year. The Charity supplies Members with an annual Food and Drink Directory which lists foods people with coeliac disease can eat, Crossed Grain - a regular magazine, as well as information and telephone support.

For further details on Membership please call the Helpline on 0333 332 2033.