The international food industry appreciates the benefits of sharing its research load via collaborative programs with partners. TNO offers you the opportunity to participate in its strategic Shared Research Program (SRP) ‘Towards a Food Allergy Free World’. The goal of an SRP is to build advanced knowledge and technology platforms, in groundbreaking research areas, that offer broad application opportunities. 

**TOWARDS A FOOD ALLERGY FREE WORLD**

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**HIGH IMPACT**

As a major cause of concern for industry, governments and society as a whole, food allergy and immune health are high on the agenda of the Innovation Contract Agri&Food of the Netherlands. Impacting between 2 and 4% of the population, food allergy is one of the most widespread disorders in the western world, affecting the allergic individual and his family, friends and colleagues. The public health impact of food allergies is significant and the impact on quality of life can be enormous, partly because allergic reactions can be lethal. Moreover, food allergens are one of the major causes of food incidents and product recalls, putting a major economic burden on society as a whole and food industry specifically. As new alternative (sustainable) protein sources and crops with improved characteristics, will appear in our diets, they bring the risk of new food allergens and cross-reactivity.

Fundamental science and technology have reached the stage where sufficient starting points exist to develop proper, proactive risk-assessment, risk-management and intervention methods; fundamental precursors to creating a Food Allergy Free World by the year 2030.

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* The Agri&Food Top Sector was established in 2010 by the Dutch Government to further strengthen the sector’s important societal and economic role. It does this by promoting innovation together with government, companies and research institutions.
SRP GOALS:

ROAD MAP

Much of the knowledge and technology needed is already available or currently in development. The additional knowledge and technologies - required to achieve the program’s goals - will be defined in a road map that will be developed in collaboration with partners in the program.

GOALS AND PROGRAM LINES

SRP goals:

1. Allergen and allergy management - to protect food-allergic consumers

2. Allergenicity assessment of (novel) food proteins - to prevent the introduction of (new) strongly-allergenic foods

3. Therapeutic and prophylactic products and strategies - to cure food-allergic consumers and prevent the development of new food allergies

4. Immune health maintenance and optimization - to create and maintain the conditions needed for effective and safe interventions

Program Line 1 is aimed at the protection of the food-allergic consumer: Allergen & allergy-management tools available and applied in 4-6 years

Program Line 2 is aimed at the introduction of (new) strongly-allergenic foods: Prevention of the development of new food allergies: Allergen availability and applications in 6-8 years

Program Line 3 is aimed at the development and improvement of (novel) food proteins available and applied in 8-10 years

Program Line 4 is aimed at the conditions needed for effective and safe interventions: Immune health maintenance and optimal immune health. Assessment technology for creating and maintaining the conditions needed for effective and safe interventions. Biological markers for diagnostic, prognostic, monitoring or safety purposes. This will facilitate the development of immune-modulating products and strategies beneficial for the allergic individual and the individual at risk of developing an allergy.

This program line addresses the science of food consumption, the sensitivity of patients, and cross-contamination in food production chains, in order to improve allergen-risk assessment and management and will enable science based action levels for precautionary labeling. Participation by, and dissemination to, different stakeholder groups will be important in increasing both health professional and consumer trust in labeled and non-labeled food products. It will enable the food industry to reduce the risks and costs associated with unintended cross contamination and/or other allergen-related issues.

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