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DEVELOPED countries**NAICS/Industry Codes:** 722310 Food Service Contractors**Abstract:** The article discusses the increase in food allergies, hay fever and allergic asthma in developed nations from the mid-20th century through 2018, within the context of the Southwest Airlines company's decision to stop serving peanuts on flights.**Full Text Word Count:** 193**ISSN:** 0262-4079**DOI:** 10.1016/S0262-4079(18)31405-2**Accession Number:** 131303960**Database:** Academic Search Complete**Section:** LEADERS**Allergies aren't nuts**

LOVERS of nuts - and freedom - suffered a blow on 1 August, when the US budget carrier Southwest Airlines went peanut-free. While many parents of children with allergies expressed thanks, other people took to the internet to announce they would be bringing their own supply from now on.

If you were born before the 1990s, or don't have children, peanut bans by airlines, schools and workplaces can feel like a gross overreaction. Allergies may seem like modern maladies, but that does not make them any less real or life-threatening.

This isn't simply a case of hypochondria or increased vigilance - cohort studies that have closely followed different generations for decades confirm that hay fever, allergic asthma and food allergies have all risen since the mid-20th century in the developed world.

Rapidly developing nations such as China are now beginning to see an increase in allergies too. The challenge is to work out why, and dispel some of the many other myths surrounding allergies (see page 28). In the meantime, whether afflicted or non-afflicted, we must all learn to live with them.

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