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Guidance for Written Notification of Major Food Allergens as Ingredients in Unpackaged Foods

In 2024, section 3717-1-03.5(D)(6) was added to the Ohio Uniform Food Safety Code which states: “The license holder will notify consumers by written notification of the presence of major food allergens as an ingredient in unpackaged food items that are served or sold to the consumer.” This rule applies to all licensed food service operations (FSOs) and retail food establishments (RFEs) that offer unpackaged foods, including temporary and mobile FSO’s and RFE’s.

As specified in section 3717-1-01(B)(68) of the food code, the major food allergens include milk, egg, fish (such as bass, flounder, cod, and including crustacean shellfish such as crab, lobster, or shrimp), tree nuts (such as almonds, pecans, or walnuts), wheat, peanuts, soybeans, and sesame.

The written allergen notification may be provided in FSO’s and RFE’s in different ways such as physical or electronic means, including, but not limited to, brochures, deli case or menu notifications, label statements, table tents, placards, or other effective written means.

This is an example of an allergen notification statement: “The following major food allergens are used as ingredients in this facility: Milk, egg, fish, crustacean shellfish, tree nuts, peanuts, wheat, soy, and sesame. Please notify staff for more information about these ingredients.”