

Benefits Associated with Complete Adoption and Implementation of the FDA Food Code

A goal of the Food and Drug Administration's (FDA) Retail Food Safety Initiative¹ is to "Encourage widespread, uniform, and complete adoption of the FDA Food Code." To address this goal, FDA emphasizes benefits that can be realized when State, territorial, local, and tribal governments adopt the Food Code in its entirety. Recognition of these benefits by the retail store, foodservice and vending industries should help to promote complete and widespread Food Code adoption as statutes, codes and ordinances pertaining to retail food safety are updated at all levels of government.

Cross-cutting Benefits for Government and Industry

1. Promotes uniform national standards for retail food safety to reduce complexity and better ensure compliance.
2. Ensures food safety regulations reflect the most current science available and evolve to reflect new science and knowledge, emerging technologies and to remain current with other federal laws.
3. Created through a coordinated and collaborative process (Conference for Food Protection), the Food Code reflects input from all stakeholders: National, state and local regulators, industry, academia and consumers.
4. Stakeholders can take advantage of scientific and personnel resources expended by FDA and other agencies to ensure the FDA Food Code is complete.
5. Provides effective controls as a means of reducing the risks of foodborne illnesses within retail establishments, thus protecting consumers and industry from potentially devastating health consequences and financial losses.
6. Provides a comprehensive approach to food safety management and provides extensive supporting documents and training.
7. Facilitates and allows for standardization of inspections and inspectors.
8. May result in cost savings related to the conduct of inspections.
9. Reduces complexity and the paperwork burden for industry and government alike.
10. Improves consumers' understanding of food safety expectations.
11. Creates a common/standardized food safety language that can improve communication between regulators and industry operators.
12. Uniformity of using the same Food Code allows comparison of performance across national chains by providing standardized inspection criteria. Thereby an establishment can target

resources according to science and risk to improve the public health performance of restaurants.

13. State and local agencies usage of FDA interpretations of Food Code reduces the work load associated with development of interpretations.
14. Creates a common/standardized language between regulators and industry.
15. Fosters a common understanding of risk, risk control/management and food safety between industry and regulators.
16. Reduces industry Food Safety training costs by allowing the utilization of training materials which can be used across all jurisdictions.

Regulatory Benefits

1. Ensures conformance with Standard No .1 – Regulatory Foundation of FDA’s Voluntary National
2. Retail Food Regulatory Program Standards.
3. Avoids errors caused when State and Local jurisdictions adopt only selected sections of the FDA Food Code (cross references may be missed or overlooked or incorrectly referenced).
4. Makes the process for updating laws and regulations at the State and Local level more efficient through elimination of redundant food code creation processes at the state and local regulatory level.
5. Conserves resources by allowing regulatory software providers to develop inspection tools that work at all jurisdictions.
6. Demonstrates food safety commitment and therefore increases eligibility for federal training, grants, cooperative agreements and other resources.

For More Information

- FDA Retail Food Program: www.fda.gov/RetailFoodProtection
- Food Code 2017 (and its Supplement): www.fda.gov/FoodCode
- Retail Food Program Standards: www.fda.gov/RetailProgramStandards
- Retail Food Protection Industry Educational Materials: www.fda.gov/foodemployeetraining
- Inquiries should be sent by email to: retailfoodprotectionteam@fda.hhs.gov