

# PUBLICATION

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## FDA Amends Food Code

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**January 6, 2010**

In November 2009, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) amended its Food Code, which serves as a model for codes of the lower tier governmental agencies that administer state food regulation. Below is the FDA's summary and a link to the 2009 Code. Please note the new focus on safety for cut leafy greens, non-continuous preparation methods for meat items and new cleaning and sanitizing requirements. With so many well-publicized incidents of food-borne illness during the last two years, these changes are sure to get more attention than conventional code changes.

### Summary of 2009 FDA *Food Code*

On November 11, the FDA released its 2009 Edition of the *FDA Food Code*. The *Food Code* is a model code and reference document for state, city, county, tribal and territorial agencies that regulate over one million restaurants, retail food stores and vending and foodservice operations in institutions such as schools, hospitals, nursing homes and child care centers.

This is the first update to FDA's *Food Code* since 2007, when it issued a supplement to the 2005 Edition. Below are key changes and additions made by the 2009 Edition of the *FDA Food Code*:

- Each provision in the *FDA Food Code* is now designated as a "Priority Item," a "Priority Foundation Item" or a "Core Item," to assist the industry and regulatory community in prioritizing their food safety interventions and their inspections. These designations are based on a qualitative risk assessment and replace the use of "Critical" and "Non-Critical" designations in previous editions of the *FDA Food Code*.
- Cut leafy greens are now included among the foods that require time and temperature control for safety and a new supporting reference document, "Recommendations to Food Establishments for Serving or Selling Cut Leafy Greens" is summarized in Annex 2.
- Requirements were added to improve food worker awareness of food allergen concerns in the foodservice and retail setting.
- Serving hamburgers and other ground meats in an undercooked form upon a consumer's request is no longer an option for items offered on a children's menu.
- A new definition and criteria are added in a new *FDA Food Code* section for the non-continuous cooking of foods comprised of raw animal products to address the safety of this cooking method.
- Several requirements related to the effective cleaning and sanitizing of equipment and surfaces are enhanced or clarified.

The full text of the 2009 FDA Food Code can be found at <http://www.fda.gov/Food/GuidanceRegulation/RetailFoodProtection/FoodCode/UCM2019396.htm>.