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# Trans Fat Help

## BC Trans Fat Regulation Q&A

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### How do I know if the BC trans fat regulation applies to my business?

All BC food service establishments with a permit to operate a food service must comply with the trans fat regulation. This may include restaurants, delis, hospitals, schools, bakeries, coffee shops and shelters.

### What are the BC trans fat regulatory requirements?

There are three regulatory requirements:

1. Documentation for food is kept on site and provided to the Environmental Health Officer upon request (ingredient lists, Nutrition Facts table or product specification sheet) for all food in your establishment.
2. All soft spreadable margarine and oil meets the restriction of 2% trans fat or less of total fat content.
3. All other food meets the restriction of 5% trans fat or less of total fat content

### What food does the regulatory requirement apply to?

All food located on the premises of, used in preparation, served or offered for sale in a food service establishment.

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### Why does the regulation restrict trans fat to 2% and 5% or less trans fat of total fat?

The 2% and 5% restrictions are based on the Health Canada Trans Fat Task Force Recommendations released in 2006. These restrictions allow for the presence of naturally occurring trans fat in ruminant meat and dairy products which typically range from 2 – 5% of total fat content and have not been shown to have the same harmful effects as industrially produced trans fat.<sup>1</sup>

### When does the regulation take effect or come into force?

The regulation comes into force on September 30, 2009.

## How will the BC trans fat regulation be enforced?

Environmental Health Officers or Food Safety Inspectors will be enforcing the new regulatory requirements as part of their routine food safety inspections. Environmental Health Officers will be taking a progressive approach to the enforcement of the new regulatory requirements. This includes education and information for food service establishments who are not already compliant.

For more information on enforcement, please contact the Health Protection Division for your Health Authority:

- **Fraser Health**
- **Interior Health**
- **Northern Health**
- Vancouver Coastal Health (email [environmental.health@vch.ca](mailto:environmental.health@vch.ca))
- **Vancouver Island Health Authority**

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## How will the BC trans fat regulation be enforced in Chain food service establishments?

A voluntary Documentation Audit for Chain food service establishments is available through BC Health Authorities and the BC Centre for Disease Control. See **Documentation Audit for Chain food service establishments**.

## What documentation do I need to keep on site and provide to the Environmental Health Officer/Health Inspector upon request

You must have an **Ingredient List** for all food items\* on site, except for fresh fruits and vegetables, eggs, raw meat, fish or poultry.

If a food item has one of the following words in the ingredient list: "hydrogenated," "partially hydrogenated," "margarine" or "shortening" you also need nutrition information that shows the amount of trans fat in grams (g) and total fat in grams(g) (ie. a **Nutrition Facts table**).

The ingredient list and/or nutrition information can be on the food label, or in the case that it is not available, a product specification sheet. Information can be available in hard copy or electronically. According to federal law, this documentation must be provided to you as a food service establishment each time you order a food product from your supplier, distributor or manufacturer.

**\*Note:** All food items includes all food products and ingredients used in food preparation (such as cooking and baking) and/or ready-made food that is prepared elsewhere and served or offered for sale at your food service establishment. Pre-packaged food with a Nutrition Facts table required under the *Food and Drugs Act (Canada)*, sold or offered directly to the consumer without any alteration to the nutritional contents.

## What about naturally occurring trans fat?

The BC trans fat regulation does not restrict naturally occurring trans fat if the only source of trans fat in the food is from ruminant meat such as beef, sheep, lamb, goat, bison and deer, or from dairy products, such as milk, cream and butter.

Ready-made foods that have a source of naturally occurring trans fat AND a source of industrially produced trans fat (such as a meat pie) are called "mixed products" and must meet the 5% trans fat restriction.

An exception will be made for mixed products that exceed the 5% restriction due to a high amount of naturally occurring trans fat IF the manufacturer can prove that the industrially produced trans fat in the product meets the trans fat restrictions. This can be done by including documentation for each ingredient used in the mixed product that contains industrially produced trans fat (e.g. shortening used in the crust of a meat pie), along with documentation for the final product.

## I manufacture a product that exceeds the 5% trans fat restriction due to an ingredient that

**contributes naturally occurring trans fat. How can I let my consumers know that my product meets the restrictions, as the source of fat in the product is not industrially produced trans fat?**

CFIA regulates any advertising or marketing of items restricted in trans fat on the product label. However, you can state "Meets BC's Trans Fat Restrictions" or "Meets the National Trans Fat Task Force Recommendations" on an invoice, order form or newsletter.

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<sup>1</sup>**TRANSforming the Food Supply**. Ottawa: Minister of Health;

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