

Wild Mushrooms



PUBLIC HEALTH REASONS:

Over 5000 species of mushrooms grow naturally in North America. The vast majority have never been tested for toxicity. It is known that about 15 species are deadly and another 60 are toxic to humans whether they are consumed raw or cooked.

Some wild mushrooms that are extremely poisonous may be difficult to distinguish from edible species. If a food establishment chooses to sell wild mushrooms, management must ensure that wild mushrooms are obtained from a safe source.

[CAL FOOD CODE, Section 114021](#)

In California, the market for wild harvested mushrooms has greatly increased due to the popularity of using fresh, local ingredients. However, some wild mushrooms that are extremely poisonous may be difficult to distinguish from non-poisonous species.

Food establishments that buy wild mushrooms must recognize and address the need for a sound identification program for providing safe wild mushrooms.

The Food Code requires the identification of mushroom species picked in the wild to have the following written buyer specifications:

- Identification of the mushroom species by scientific and common name.
- The mushroom must be identified while in the fresh state (has not been processed or dried).
- Name(s) and contact information of the person who identified the mushroom and the mushroom seller.
- A statement as to the qualifications and training of the identifier, specifically related to mushroom identification.
- In order to forage **for commercial purposes**, the individual must have a Mushroom Foraging Permit from the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA)

These written specifications are to remain on file in the food establishment for a minimum of 90 days from the date of sale or service.

A food establishment that sells or serves mushrooms picked in the wild shall ensure the mushrooms are conspicuously identified by a label, placard, or menu notation that states:

1. The common and usual name of the mushroom; and
2. The statement "Wild mushrooms: not an inspected product."



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