

# phasing out ARTIFICIAL TRANS FAT

*in Cambridge Food Service Establishments*

## **How to Comply:**

What Restaurants, Caterers,  
Mobile Food Vendors, and Others Need to Know

**CAMBRIDGE PUBLIC HEALTH DEPARTMENT**



Cambridge Health Alliance

# SUMMARY OF REGULATION

In 2009, the City of Cambridge will no longer allow the use of ingredients containing artificial trans fats in foods served to customers. The regulation will take effect in two phases, beginning July 1, 2009 and October 1, 2009. With the exception of K-12 schools, the regulation does not apply to foods sold to customers in the manufacturer's original sealed package.

## **Beginning July 1, 2009**

Oils, shortenings, and margarines used for deep-frying, pan-frying, grilling, or as a spread cannot contain partially hydrogenated fat (artificial trans fat), unless the product label or manufacturer information indicates less than 0.5 grams of trans fat per serving.

Until October 1, 2009, establishments may continue to use products containing artificial trans fat as a recipe ingredient and for deep-frying cake batter and yeast dough.

## **Beginning October 1, 2009**

All foods served or stored will be required to contain less than 0.5 grams of artificial trans fat per serving, except foods that are sold in the manufacturer's original sealed package with a Nutrition Facts label.

# BASIC FACTS ON TRANS FAT

## 1. What is trans fat?

Trans fat is a type of fat that raises the risk of heart disease. While some trans fat occurs naturally, most is artificial. The regulation addresses only artificial trans fat, which is the main dietary source of trans fat. Unlike other dietary fat, artificial trans fat is neither required nor beneficial for health.

## 2. What is artificial trans fat?

Artificial trans fat is created in an industrial process that adds hydrogen to liquid vegetable oils, called hydrogenation. It is found in partially hydrogenated vegetable oil. Foods that contain artificial trans fat include margarines, shortenings, and fry oils, as well as many baked goods, mixes, and packaged foods.

## 3. Why is trans fat so bad?

Trans fat is the most dangerous type of dietary fat. It increases bad (LDL) cholesterol and lowers good (HDL) cholesterol, which puts people at a greater risk for heart disease.

Trans fat has no known health benefits, and there is no harmless level of artificial trans fat consumption.

# COMPLYING WITH THE REGULATION

## 4. How do I know if the trans fat regulation applies to my establishment?

The regulation applies to all food service establishments that are required to hold a license from the Inspectional Services Department and/or the Cambridge License Commission. A food service establishment is any entity that stores, prepares, packages, serves, sells, or otherwise provides food or beverage for consumption in the City of Cambridge *and* is licensed and subject to inspection by sanitary inspectors from the city's Inspectional Services Department.

Food service establishments include restaurants; delis; ice cream shops; coffee shops; bakeries; mobile food vendors; permanent or temporary concession stands; hotels; supermarkets, grocery stores, convenience stores, and other retail stores; cafeterias in schools, universities, and businesses; catering operations; senior center meal programs; nursing homes; daycare centers; soup kitchens; public and private schools (K-12) in the City of Cambridge; and hospitals.

**5. My establishment is not required to hold a license from the Inspectional Services Department or the Cambridge License Commission. Do I still have to comply with the city's trans fat regulation?**

If your establishment does not require a license from the City of Cambridge, the regulation does not apply and you are not legally bound by it.

Even so, using healthier oils may be good business!

For example, if you supply food to Cambridge establishments that are covered by the regulation, those establishments will not be allowed to use, store, or sell products that contain partially hydrogenated vegetable oils, shortenings, or margarines containing 0.5 grams or more trans fat per serving. Unless you supply products that keep your Cambridge clients in compliance, you could lose their business.

**6. When does the regulation take effect? Does it cover all food items?**

Beginning July 1, 2009, oils, shortenings, and margarines used for deep-frying, pan-frying, grilling, or as a spread cannot contain partially hydrogenated fat (artificial trans fat), unless the product label or manufacturer information indicates less than 0.5 grams of trans fat per serving.

You may continue to use trans fat-containing oils and shortenings for deep frying cake batter and yeast dough, and all other foods containing trans fat, until October 1, 2009, when the regulation takes full effect.

Beginning October 1, 2009, all foods served or stored will be required to contain less than 0.5 grams of artificial trans fat per serving, except foods that are sold in the manufacturer's original sealed package with a Nutrition Facts label.

The regulation does not apply to food served in the manufacturer's original sealed package, such as a bag of potato chips or package of crackers.

7. How can I tell if a particular product is allowed under the regulation?

**Step 1**

Check the ingredients list to see if “partially hydrogenated,” “shortening,” or “margarine” are listed.

- If none of these terms are listed, you may use the product.
- If any of these terms are listed, go to Step 2.

**Step 2**

Check the product’s Nutrition Facts panel for trans fat content.

- If the panel says the product has 0 grams of trans fat, or less than 0.5 grams of trans fat per serving, you may use the product.
- If the panel says the product has 0.5 grams or more of trans fat per serving, you may NOT use the product.
- If there is no Nutrition Facts panel on the product, go to Step 3.

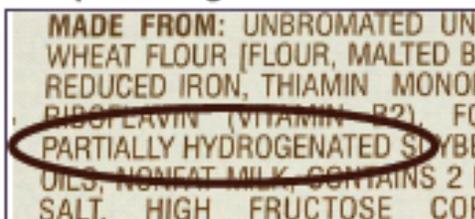
**Step 3**

If there is no Nutrition Facts panel, ask your supplier to provide a letter from the manufacturer that lists the product’s ingredients.

- If the ingredients list contains the terms “partially hydrogenated,” “shortening,” or “margarine,” the letter must also include information on the amount of trans fat in each serving.
- As in Step 2, if the product has 0 grams of trans fat, or less than 0.5 grams of trans fat per serving, you may use it.
- The letter should be on the manufacturer’s letterhead and show the manufacturer’s name and address. Keep the letter at your food service establishment, available for review by a sanitary inspector from the city’s Inspectional Services Department.

**Step 1**

**Example of an ingredients list**



MADE FROM: UNBROMATED UNWHEAT FLOUR [FLOUR, MALTED BARLEY, ENRICHED WITH NIACIN, REDUCED IRON, THIAMIN MONONITRATE, RIBOFLAVIN (VITAMIN B2), FOLIC ACID], PARTIALLY HYDROGENATED SOYBEAN OILS, NONFAT MILK, CONTAINS 2% OR LESS OF: SALT, HIGH FRUCTOSE CORN SYRUP

This product contains partially hydrogenated vegetable oil. Go to Step 2.

**Step 2**



Nutrition Facts	
Serving Size 1 cup (228g)	
Servings Per Container 2	
Amount Per Serving	
<b>Calories</b> 250	Calories from Fat 110
<b>% Daily Value*</b>	
<b>Total Fat</b> 12g	18%
Saturated Fat 3g	15%
<b>Trans Fat</b> 3g	
<b>Cholesterol</b> 30mg	10%

This product has more than 0.5 grams of trans fat. You may not use it.

**8. I buy containers of oil that are shipped in a box. The containers do not have labels, but the box does. Do I need to save the labels on the box?**

Yes. Save the ingredients label and the Nutrition Facts panel, along with the product's brand name and common name, until the product has been completely used. These labels should be available for review by a sanitary inspector from the city's Inspectional Services Department.

**9. Which labels should I save, and how long should I keep them?**

Beginning July 1, 2009, you will need to save labels for any oils, shortenings, or margarines used for frying, pan-frying (sautéing), or grilling, or as a spread until the product is completely used. Labels may be kept on the product container, photocopied, or kept separately. Any label or ingredients list removed from the product or photocopied directly from the product must be dated.

Beginning October 1, 2009, when the regulation takes full effect, you will need to save the label for any food containing oils, shortenings, or margarines, regardless of how you use the product. For instance, if you are frying frozen French fries, you should save the label for both the frying oil and the French fries until both have been completely used.

**10. Can I still keep products that contain artificial trans fat in my pantry after July 1, 2009?**

That depends on the use of the product. You are not allowed to keep or store oils, shortenings or margarines that are used for deep-frying, grilling, or as a spread unless these products contain less than 0.5 grams of trans fat per serving.

After October 1, 2009, you will not be able to store, use, or serve any products containing partially hydrogenated oil that has 0.5 grams or more trans fat per serving. After this date, no product with artificial trans fat may be present on the premises no matter what the use. (See also Question 21.)

**11. What if I use margarine both as a spread and for baking? Will I have different deadlines for changing these practices?**

Yes, there are different deadlines.

Beginning July 1, 2009, margarines containing 0.5 grams or more trans fat per serving may not be used for frying or as a spread, but they may be used in baked goods until October 1, 2009. (See also Question 26.)

**12. What if a supplier sells me cakes that contain no artificial trans fat, but each serving contains more than 0.5 grams of trans fat per serving from natural sources?**

If the product label or ingredients list does not mention partially hydrogenated vegetable oil, shortening, or margarine, then the trans fat in the product comes from natural sources and is not covered by the regulation. In that case, you may use it. If the product label or ingredients list does mention any of these ingredients, its trans fat content must be less than 0.5 grams per serving. (See also Question 27.)

- 13. If I purchase ingredients from outside Cambridge for products I serve in my establishment, do those ingredients have to contain less than 0.5 grams of trans fat per serving?**

Yes. It does not matter where you buy the products.

Beginning July 1, 2009, oils, shortenings, and margarines (no matter where purchased) that are used for deep-frying, pan-frying, grilling, or as a spread cannot contain partially hydrogenated fat (artificial trans fat), unless the product label or manufacturer information indicates less than 0.5 grams of trans fat per serving. You may continue to use trans fat-containing oils and shortenings for deep frying cake batter and yeast dough, and all other foods containing trans fat, until October 1, 2009, when the regulation takes full effect.

Beginning October 1, 2009, all foods and ingredients stored, used, or served in Cambridge food service establishments that contain partially hydrogenated vegetable oils, shortenings, or margarines must have less than 0.5 grams of trans fat per serving.

## ENFORCEMENT

- 14. When the trans fat regulation takes effect, will the City of Cambridge issue violations?**

Yes. Beginning July 1, 2009, the Inspectional Services Department will issue violations.

- 15. Will violations be counted as “critical” or “non-critical”?**

Violations will be counted as non-critical.

- 16. Will the City of Cambridge follow up on trans fat violations?**

Yes. Any food service establishment violating the restriction on artificial trans fat will receive a follow-up inspection to determine compliance.

- 17. Will trans fat violations be posted on the Cambridge Inspectional Services Department website?**

Yes. All violations, including those regarding trans fat, will be posted.

- 18. What will happen if an inspector finds products that are not allowed under the trans fat regulation?**

This is considered a violation. The first time you will receive a written warning. Further violations will then be subject to fines.

- 19. Can I receive a violation for food I purchase in bulk if it comes without a label?**

Yes. Beginning July 1, 2009, you will need to have documentation available to sanitary inspectors from the city’s Inspectional Services Department for any oils, shortenings, or margarines used for frying, pan-frying (sautéing), or grilling, or as a spread, unless these ingredients are being used only for deep frying cake batter or yeast dough.

Beginning October 1, 2009, when the regulation takes full effect, you will need to have labels or other documentation available for all products that contain oils, shortenings, or margarines.

Beginning October 1, 2009, if you buy unlabeled baked goods or other food products that contain oils or shortenings, you need to ask your supplier for an ingredients list and a Nutrition Facts panel or a letter from the manufacturer (as described in Question 8) showing trans fat content per serving.

**20. If I have a food item containing artificial trans fat but I don't cook with it, may I keep it in my kitchen pantry?**

No. After the regulation takes effect, the City of Cambridge will issue violations for all restricted products that are found in the establishment – regardless of whether they are for personal use, served, or stored.

## **SUBSTITUTING FOR TRANS FAT**

**21. May I use a product that claims to have “0 grams trans fat” if the ingredients list includes partially hydrogenated vegetable oil, shortening, or margarine?**

Yes. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration allows products with less than 0.5 grams of trans fat per serving to be labeled 0 grams trans fat, even if they contain small amounts. Any product labeled 0 grams trans fat per serving is in compliance with the regulation.

**22. Are products with 0 grams trans fat more expensive?**

Establishments that make the change usually find that the costs are similar. Contact your supplier to inquire about prices, and start switching over to products with 0 grams trans fat as soon as possible.

**23. What can I use for frying instead of oils that contain trans fat?**

Ask your suppliers for oils that have 0 grams of trans fat per serving. These include traditional vegetable oils such as soybean, corn, or canola oil, as well as new oils made from specific varieties of soybeans, sunflowers, and other grains and seeds with long fry lives.

Your supplier should have a range of options available. You can also find resources for substitutions on the American Heart Association website, [www.americanheart.org/presenter.jhtml?identifier=3050593](http://www.americanheart.org/presenter.jhtml?identifier=3050593).

**24. What can I use for baking instead of shortenings with trans fat?**

There is a wide variety of products that can meet your baking needs. Since it may take time to find the right product for your recipes, you should test replacement oils and shortenings well in advance of the October 1, 2009 deadline.

You can find resources for substitutions on the American Heart Association website, [www.americanheart.org/presenter.jhtml?identifier=3050593](http://www.americanheart.org/presenter.jhtml?identifier=3050593).

**25. What if I use vegetable shortening both for frying and for baking?**

Beginning July 1, 2009, most frying (see Question 7) must be done with oils, shortenings, and margarines that contain less than 0.5 grams of trans fat per serving.

Products with higher levels of artificial trans fat may be used for most other purposes (but not as spreads) until October 1, 2009.

**26. What about butter, beef tallow, suet, and lard?**

These animal fats are not covered by the regulation because they contain naturally occurring trans fat, not artificial trans. However, these animal fats are high in saturated fat and should be used in moderation. You can find resources for substitutions on the American Heart Association website, [www.americanheart.org/presenter.jhtml?identifier=3050593](http://www.americanheart.org/presenter.jhtml?identifier=3050593).

**27. Where can I get advice about using healthier fats?**

While your choice of replacement fats is not covered by the regulation, it is encouraged that you make healthier substitutions whenever you can. You can find resources for substitutions on the American Heart Association website, [www.americanheart.org/presenter.jhtml?identifier=3050593](http://www.americanheart.org/presenter.jhtml?identifier=3050593).

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