Why is Cambridge banning trans fat in food service establishments?
Nutrition Facts panels help consumers avoid trans fat in foods they buy in stores. When people eat out, they have no way of knowing if a food contains trans fat.

About the new regulation
In 2009, the City of Cambridge will no longer allow the use of ingredients containing artificial trans fat 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, you 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.
What is trans fat?
Most trans fat is artificial. It is created in an industrial process that adds hydrogen to liquid vegetable oils. There is a small amount of naturally occurring trans fat in meats and dairy products. Artificial trans fat increases heart disease risk because it raises “bad” cholesterol and lowers “good” cholesterol. The regulation does not apply to naturally occurring trans fat.

What foods contain trans fat?
Artificial trans fat can be found in many products, including:
• Oils, shortenings, and margarines
• Bread crumbs and croutons
• Dressings and sauces
• Prepared foods (onion rings, meatballs, French fries)
• Baked goods (cakes, pastries, pizza dough)
• Mixes (muffins, mashed potatoes, hot cocoa)

How can I get rid of trans fat?
Trans fat is not necessary for delicious recipes. New trans-fat-free ingredients are increasingly available and produce excellent results. Let your supplier know that you need trans-fat-free alternatives.

What ingredients should I use?
Not all trans-fat-free oils and fats are equal: some contain high amounts of saturated fat, which is not good for heart health. Healthier options include olive, canola, peanut, corn, soybean, safflower, and sunflower oils. Blended oils that are low in saturated fat are also healthier choices. Less healthy choices include lard, suet, palm oil, coconut oil, and oil blends that are high in saturated fat.

How to identify foods that contain trans fat

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 restaurant inspector.