



FACT SHEET – APPLE CIDER AND JUICES

January 6, 2010

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Apple Cider and Other Juices: Are they considered a Potentially Hazardous Food?

Apple cider and other juices are not considered a potentially hazardous food. This assessment is based upon the definition of potentially hazardous food in the Ohio Uniform Food Safety Code which is modeled after the 2009 FDA Model Food Code. They do not support the growth of microorganisms due to the pH being less than 4.6. They are considered to be high risk foods because they may contain an infectious or toxigenic microorganism or chemical or physical contaminant at a level sufficient to cause illness.

FDA Final Rule

The Food and Drug Administration published a final rule designed to improve the safety of fruit and vegetable juice and juice products. Under the rule, cider and juice processors must employ pasteurization or another approved process to achieve a 5-log reduction in the numbers of the most resistant pathogens, and they must use Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) principles for juice processing. The FDA rule comes after a rise in the number of food borne illness outbreaks and consumer illnesses associated with juice products during the past several years. Food borne infections are especially dangerous for young children, older adults, and those with weakened immune systems.

Juice HACCP Regulations

The Juice HACCP regulations apply to cider and juice products in both interstate and intrastate commerce. Juice processors will be required to evaluate their manufacturing process to determine whether there are any microbiological, chemical, or physical hazards that could contaminate their products. The Juice HACCP program must also include an approved process to achieve a 5-log reduction in pertinent pathogenic microorganisms. If a potential hazard is identified, processors will be required to implement control measures to prevent, reduce, or eliminate those hazards.

Exemption from Juice HACCP

Retail establishments where packaged cider or juice is made and only sold from the premises directly to the consumer are not required to comply with Juice HACCP. However, all packaged cider or juices must bear the warning statement on the label if it has not received a 5-log reduction in pertinent pathogenic microorganisms.

Label Warning Statement

The warning statement for untreated cider and juice products must appear on the label as follows: **“WARNING:** This product has not been pasteurized and, therefore, may contain harmful bacteria that can cause serious illness in children, the elderly, and persons with weakened immune systems”.

