

# FACT SHEET • Ohio Department of Agriculture

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Fact Sheet - Apple Cider and Juices  
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## APPLE CIDER AND JUICES

### 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 1999 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 foodborne illness outbreaks and consumer illnesses associated with juice products during the past several years. Foodborne 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.

### Other Approved Processes

Processors are also required to use processes that achieve a 5-log, or 100,000-fold, reduction in the numbers of the most resistant pathogens in their finished products compared to levels that may be present in untreated juice. Cider and juice processors may use reduction methods other than pasteurization, including approved alternative technologies such as ultra violet light, irradiation or ozonation, or a combination of techniques.

### Time Table to Meet Regulations

Large processors with greater than 500 employees must have a HACCP program in place by January 18, 2002. Small processors with less than 500 employees must have a HACCP program in place by January 21, 2003. And very small processors with total sales less than one half million dollars, or with total sales greater than one half million dollars but food sales less than \$50,000, or with less than 100 employees and food sales less than \$100,000, must have a HACCP program in place by January 20, 2004.

### Exemptions 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**

Processors must continue to use the previously required label warning statement on all cider and juice products that do not employ a process to achieve a 5-log reduction until they implement the required HACCP program. 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”.

### **When is a Pasteurized Product not considered Pasteurized?**

According to the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, when a pasteurized juice is transported in bulk (i.e. not packaged) to another facility for packaging and labeling, it is no longer considered to be a pasteurized juice and the juice product packaged at that site must bear the “warning statement” on its label.