



North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services  
Division of Public Health

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Governor

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November 4, 2015

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Cultivated Mushrooms in North Carolina Food Establishments

**PURSUANT TO:** North Carolina Food Code Manual, Part 3-201

**SOURCE:** Cindy R. Callahan, REHS  
Head, Food Protection and Facilities Branch

**QUESTION / ISSUE:** Assessing Approved Sources for Cultivated Mushrooms in Food Establishments

**Discussion/Rationale:**

The North Carolina Food Code Manual Section 3-201.16 states:

(A) Except as specified in ¶ (B) of this section, mushroom species picked in the wild shall be obtained from sources where each mushroom is individually inspected and found to be safe by an APPROVED mushroom identification expert.<sup>P</sup>

(B) *This section does not apply to:*

- (1) *Cultivated wild mushroom species that are grown, harvested, and processed in an operation that is regulated by the FOOD regulatory agency that has jurisdiction over the operation; or*
- (2) *Wild mushroom species if they are in packaged form and are the product of a FOOD PROCESSING PLANT that is regulated by the FOOD regulatory agency that has jurisdiction over the plant.*

Because North Carolina does not currently have a food regulatory agency that is overseeing cultivated mushroom operations in North Carolina, guidance must be provided for assessing and approving the source of cultivated mushrooms.

**Response/Interpretation**

When mushrooms are derived from commercially available mycelium plugs, and are cultivated and harvested from a farm (either indoor or outdoor), they can be considered from an approved source. This interpretation is being used by other jurisdictions that do not have regulatory oversight of raw agricultural commodities. This source can be approved according to the 2013 FDA Food Code, Paragraph 3-201.16(A).

In order to be an approved source, the following will be required at the food establishment serving cultivated, wild species mushrooms:

www.ncdhhs.gov • www.publichealth.nc.gov

Tel 919-707-5000 • Fax 919-870-4829

Location: 5605 Six Forks Road • Raleigh, NC 27609

Mailing Address: 1931 Mail Service Center • Raleigh, NC 27699-1931

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1. The mushroom farm must provide written verification of the original source of the mycelium or inoculated plugs used in cultivation.
2. The mushroom farm must provide an invoice to the food establishment with the product that states:
  - a. The name, address, and phone number of the farm, and
  - b. The Latin binomial name and the common name of the mushroom species.

If the food establishment is purchasing from a farm and cannot provide the invoice(s) and documentation, the product found in a food establishment would be considered an unapproved source. This is a violation of Section 3-201.16 of the NC Food Code Manual.

Please contact your Regional Specialist if you have questions.

**REFERENCES:**

Rules Governing the Food Protection and Sanitation of Food Establishments, 15A NCAC 18A .2600  
North Carolina Food Code Manual  
2009 FDA Food Code  
2013 FDA Food Code  
2013 FDA Food Code Annexes

*NOTE: Position statements are policy documents to clarify how to interpret or enforce a law or rule. They are not enforceable on their own, but are intended to promote uniform interpretation and enforcement of the underlying law or rule.*