



Extension FactSheet

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Food Product Recall Fact Sheets: An Introduction

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Product recall is faced by companies in numerous industries including the food industry. Although a recall may be perceived as a failure, with a proactive rather than reactive approach, the company's reputation can be recovered and even improved by demonstrating a commitment to consumer safety and service. The recall process includes withdrawal of an unsafe or substandard product from the market and distribution channels, as well as the return of already purchased product from consumers. The rapid removal of a product from the market requires a well-documented product code and tracking system be in place. According to federal and state regulations, recalls are voluntary; however, in most cases appropriate agencies oversee the recall. The need for a recall is determined by the potential health hazards of a product, and the extent of recall is implemented according to the classification of hazard.

Starting from the year 2000, USDA requires a press release to be issued for every recall even if the product had not yet reached consumer channels. To notify the public in the event of a product recall, the press release and the Recall Notification Report are posted on web sites maintained by federal agencies, as well as state agencies such as the Ohio Department of Health.

This series of fact sheets provides information about the recall process emphasizing the importance of plan-

ning and execution of rapid corrective action when it becomes necessary. The Food Product Recall fact sheets will answer questions on the following subjects:

- AEX-251** Understanding the recall concept in the food industry
- AEX-252** Who should be involved in recall planning and execution?
- AEX-253** What can you do to be ready for a recall?
- AEX-254** Product identification and tracking
- AEX-255** How do you conduct a recall?
- AEX-256** What is the best communication strategy during a recall?
- AEX-257** Recall plan assessment and modification
- AEX-271** Consumer guide to product recall

The overall objective of this series of fact sheets is to guide the food industry to prepare and execute an effective recall plan, as well as to recover from a product recall. The fact sheets are designed to address issues in the recall process that food industry professionals need to know, as well as to inform consumers in Ohio about available resources and the content of food product recall announcements.

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