

**Conference for Food Protection  
2012 Issue Form**

**Internal Number: 061  
Issue: 2012 I-011**

<b>Council Recommendation:</b>	Accepted as Submitted _____	Accepted as Amended _____	No Action _____
<b>Delegate Action:</b>	Accepted _____	Rejected _____	

*All information above the line is for conference use only.*

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**Title:**

Wild Harvested Mushroom Exam

**Issue you would like the Conference to consider:**

This issue describes one of the five important elements of a model wild harvested mushroom program, which will permit a variety of wild harvested mushrooms to be sold to and by retail and foodservice establishments.

The FDA Food Code specifies that mushrooms 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, but does not establish what constitutes the basis for approval of an identification expert. Due to the lack of established criteria and recognized training courses, the best way to protect public health is to provide education and training including an exam to demonstrate knowledge on how to safely and properly identify wild harvested mushrooms.

**Public Health Significance:**

The trade of wild harvested mushrooms is an established and rapidly growing industry that impacts consumers through wholesale, retail and restaurant services. The inability of Regulatory Authorities to effectively regulate and approve individuals as competent to identify mushrooms fosters the back door trading of wild harvested mushrooms and poses a threat to the consumer population through the potential ingestion of mushrooms that have been misidentified.

**Recommended Solution: The Conference recommends...:**

that a letter be sent to FDA requesting that Annex 3 Section 3-201.16 of the 2009 Food Code (as modified by the Supplement issued in 2011) be amended to include the information noted below regarding a Wild Harvested Mushroom Exam.

Exam for the Approved Mushroom Identifier

This is to be developed and administered by individuals who have demonstrated competence as a trainer and are competent in the field identification of wild harvested mushroom species in their jurisdiction, as verified by a mycological association or other educational institution. The regulatory authority may choose to have the exam designed by a psychometrician or standardized by a third party authority. If these are not deemed

reasonable, the regulatory authority may use another technique to ensure that the exam is legally defensible.

The exam should test individuals on the information in the curriculum with special emphasis on species identification. Use of photos is highly recommended. In some cases it may be appropriate to include a lab practicum with fresh samples of the approved species and their similar species to test identification skills. The passing score is to be determined by the regulatory authority.

For the purposes of this recommendation, the **trainer** is defined as an individual who has demonstrated competence as an educator, competence in the field identification of wild mushroom species, and whose competence has been verified by a mycological association or educational institution recognized by the regulatory agency. Examples of organizations are North American Mycological Association (NAMA), Cooperative Extensions, Mycological Society of America, local or regional mycological associations, schools, colleges and universities. An advanced degree in Mycology does not necessarily qualify an individual as an approved trainer in the field identification of mushroom species.

The Conference also recommends that the above language be incorporated into a single Wild Harvested Mushroom Guidance Document and posted on the CFP website so that state and local jurisdictions can use this information to develop and implement their own wild harvested mushroom program.

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