

# Consumer Advisory

## Purpose of Advisory

The consumer advisory is meant to inform consumers, especially highly susceptible populations (elderly, children, pregnant women, immunocompromised individuals) about the increased risk of foodborne illness from eating raw or undercooked animal foods.

## When is a Consumer Advisory Required?

According to the Houston Food Ordinance, if an animal food such as beef, eggs, fish, lamb, pork, poultry, or shellfish is served or sold raw, undercooked, or without otherwise being processed to eliminate pathogens, either in ready-to-eat form or as an ingredient in another ready-to-eat food, then a consumer advisory is required.

## Examples of Foods Requiring a Consumer Advisory

- Raw or soft-cooked eggs
- Raw or raw-marinated fish
- Raw molluscan shellfish
- Raw or rare meat (steak, hamburgers)

The permit holder shall inform consumers of the significantly increased risk of consuming such foods by way of a disclosure and reminder, using brochures, deli case or menu advisories, label statements, table tents, placards, or other effective written means.

### Disclosure shall include:

- a. A description of the animal-derived foods, such as "oysters on the half shell (raw oysters)", "raw-egg Caesar salad", and "hamburgers (can be cooked to order)"; or
- b. Identification of the animal-derived foods in a menu or other listing by asterisking them to a footnote that states that the items are served raw or undercooked or contain (or may contain) raw or undercooked ingredients.

**Reminder shall include** asterisking the animal-derived foods that require disclosure in a menu or other listing to a footnote that states that:

- a. Written information regarding the safety of these items is available upon request<sup>1</sup>;
- b. Consuming raw or undercooked meats, poultry, seafood, shellfish, or eggs may increase your risk for foodborne illness; or
- c. Consuming raw or undercooked meats, poultry, seafood, shellfish, or eggs may increase your risk for foodborne illness, especially if you have certain medical conditions.

The following foods **may not** be served or offered for sale in a ready-to-eat form in a food establishment serving a highly susceptible population:

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1. <sup>1</sup> When the brochure is used to remind consumers of their risk and the brochure is not publicly available, the above *reminder* statement has to be mentioned on the *menu*.

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- a. Raw animal foods, such as raw fish, raw-marinated fish, raw molluscan shellfish, and steak tartare;
- b. A partially cooked animal food, such as lightly cooked fish, rare meat, soft-cooked eggs that are made from raw shell eggs, and meringue; and
- c. Raw seed sprouts.

## Examples of Consumer Advisories

### Example A

#### *Disclosure as a Description/Reminder to a Footnote:*

Menu

- Chef's Salad
- Spinach Salad
- Caesar Salad (contains two raw eggs)\*

(At bottom of page)

\* Consuming raw or undercooked meats, poultry, seafood, shellfish, or eggs may increase your risk of foodborne illness, especially if you have a medical condition.

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### Example B

#### *Disclosure and Reminder to a Footnote:*

Menu

- Hamburgers\*
  - Cheeseburger
  - Olive Burger
  - Bacon Burger
  - Hamburger Deluxe

(At bottom of page)

\* Hamburgers are cooked to order. Consuming raw or undercooked meats, poultry, seafood, shellfish, or eggs may increase your risk of foodborne illness.

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### Example C

#### *Disclosure as a Description/Reminder to a brochure:*

Menu

- Oysters on the Half Shell (raw oysters)\*

(At bottom of page)

\* Regarding the safety of these items, written information<sup>2</sup> is available upon request.

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<sup>2</sup> Sanitarians will check written information at time of inspection to ensure that consumers are informed of the significantly increased risk of consuming such foods.