



Recall Guidance Material

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1 Introduction

1.1 What does this guidance cover?

This guidance material, developed by The Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI) is a reference document for the food and beverage industry. It aims to clarify and standardise procedures for the identification and removal of unsafe or unsuitable food from the food chain. A recall plan should be a fundamental component of a food business.

This document will outline:

1. The roles of the regulatory authorities and the food industry during a recall.
2. The risk assessment process.
3. The elements of a product recall plan.
4. The actions to take when food must be removed from the market.
5. MPI's standards for product recall notices and guidelines for media communication.

1.2 Does my food business need a food recall plan?

Even within the best managed food business, an issue involving the safety of a food product may occur. This could be the result of a packaging defect, a preservation failure, a production problem, contaminated ingredients, sabotage or inadequate labelling. It is important that food businesses assume that a food safety issue may arise with their products and, therefore, plan ahead. These systems and plans should be periodically tested to ensure that they are effective and remove the unsafe product from consumers and/or the distribution chain.

Manufacturers, wholesalers and importers of food should have a written system in place to manage the recall of unsafe food.

Food businesses within the food service sector, such as restaurants, cafes, caterers and takeaways making food that is eaten shortly after serving may not need a recall plan (the food will have been consumed therefore it can't be recalled). While a recall plan is not required in these circumstances, these businesses may be part of another business's recall. For example, they may need to remove recalled stock from shelves and return it to the manufacturer or to ensure that food that is subject to a recall is separated and identified from other food until it is disposed of in accordance with the instructions provided as part of the recall. This usually means ensuring the disposal of food so that it cannot be used for human consumption.

Food businesses can remove products from the market for reasons other than food safety. This eventuality is not covered in this document. However, the procedures outlined here may be useful in such an event. Food businesses may wish to expand their recall and traceability systems to include product issues not involving food safety.

1.3 The purpose of a product recall

The purpose of a product recall, in the context of this document, is to protect public health by facilitating the efficient, rapid identification and removal of unsafe food from the distribution chain and, by informing consumers (where necessary) of the presence on the market of a potentially hazardous food. An effective product recall will ensure that the unsafe foods are contained and either destroyed or made safe.

NB. The investigation and review of the circumstances that resulted in a recall are essential activities but are not addressed in this document. Removal of the product from consumer exposure should be seen as the initial and immediate corrective action. Once this is achieved the prevention of a recurrence must be addressed.

1.4 Levels of product recall

Where food safety is concerned there are two levels of product recall.

1. **Consumer Level Recall:** This is the removal of unsafe food from the distribution chain and extends to food sold to consumers and therefore involves communication with consumers.
2. **Trade Level Recall:** This is the removal of an unsafe food from the distribution chain but does not extend to food sold to the consumer.

The above terminology should always be used in all communication with other businesses and regulatory authorities when referring to the type of recall to avoid confusion.

In general, a consumer level recall should be initiated when food has been identified as unsafe, a potential risk to public health, and has been distributed to the consumer. A recall would be expected to occur where there is a reasonable possibility that use or consumption of the food would cause adverse health consequences or even death. Examples of when these circumstances might exist include when there is the presence of pathogenic organisms (e.g. *Clostridium botulinum*, *Salmonella* species, *Listeria monocytogenes*), foodborne pathogenic viruses (e.g. Hepatitis A, norovirus), toxic chemicals (e.g. cleaning chemicals or presence of bacterial toxins) and harmful foreign bodies (e.g. glass fragments or hard plastic).

Recall action may also be taken if the product has serious defects that pose a potential health risk. Examples of when these circumstances might exist include; when there are goods that are incorrectly labelled, for example not declaring the presence of an allergen such as peanuts, milk or milk products, soy etc; or have incorrect/insufficient cooking instructions.

Generally, a trade level recall should be initiated when food has been identified as unsafe, a potential risk to public health but it can be demonstrated that the unsafe products remain wholly in the distribution chain and have not reached the consumer. However, there are some situations

where food is distributed to the consumer but circumstances indicate a trade level recall will be sufficient to protect public health. Such decisions should always be made in consultation with MPI. There are two options for remedial action:

1. Permanent removal of the unsafe products from the market or from use and disposal;
2. Temporary removal of the unsafe products from the market, followed by correction of the problem (e.g. by reworking, repackaging or relabeling) and a return to the market.

1.5 Definitions

Definitions for terms used in this Guidance Material are included below.

Food recall

A food recall, in the context of this document, is any action taken to remove unsafe or unsuitable food from distribution, sale and consumption. There are two levels of food recalls, a consumer level recall and a trade level recall.

Consumer Level Recall

This is a removal of unsafe food from the distribution chain and extends to food sold to consumers and therefore involves communication with consumers.

Trade Level Recall

This is the removal of an unsafe food from the distribution chain but does not extend to food sold to the consumer.

Food recall plan

A food recall plan is a written document detailing a food business's food recall system.

Traceability

Traceability is the ability to track a food through all stages of production, processing and distribution (including importation and at retail).

Unsafe food¹

Unsafe food is food that may cause illness or injury to a person that consumes it.

Unsuitable food¹

Unsuitable food includes food that is in an offensive condition; is damaged, deteriorated or perished or contains a foreign object but may not necessarily cause harm.

¹Refer also to Section 12 of the Food Act 2014 for the meaning of safety and suitability

2 Roles and Responsibilities

2.1 The role of the food industry

In accordance with the Food Act and other food legislation, the primary responsibility for the safety and suitability of food for human consumption is borne by the food industry. For a wide variety of reasons a manufacturer/trader may be responsible for a situation where product is not safe and is in the hands of others. On becoming aware of the situation the responsible manufacturer/trader must take all reasonable steps to remove the product from the possession of others.

Consumer demand for information and public health protection are also key drivers for an effective product recall system. ‘Product life cycle management’ and category and brand protection are also very important considerations for any company. As a result, every food business is encouraged to have a written and visible recall policy. This policy should be supported by a written product recall plan, the contents and testing of which should be guided by elements of this guidance material.

If a food business becomes aware of, or is notified of a potential food safety incident, all necessary action must be taken to protect public health.

2.2 The role of the regulatory authorities

MPI is responsible for the administration and enforcement of food legislation in New Zealand. There are several business units within MPI that may have a role in food recall, depending on the legislation a food business is administered by (e.g. Food Act 1981, Food Act 2014, Animal Products Act 1999).

The preferred position of MPI is to support the actions of the responsible business. In this process the responsible business would be:

- Addressing the matter with urgency;
- Keeping MPI fully informed from the first indication of a product ‘problem’ through all stages of the recall;
- Complying with all reasonable requests the MPI officers may make on the recall process;
- Taking all reasonable steps to inform all persons who may have product that is unsafe or potentially unsafe, and;
- Retrieving that product or having it disposed of in a suitable manner.

The interface between a food business and MPI may be via MPI Food Act Officers, MPI Verification Agency or Third Party Agencies depending on location or food sector. The company is expected to deal directly with these representatives of MPI during the stages of the recall as their point of contact and to follow their own non-conformance procedures e.g. Food Safety Programme, Risk Management Programme.

In providing that support MPI will carry out the following actions:

- Ensure that appropriate recall plans are in place in the approval/registration of risk management systems.
- Ensure that recall procedures are appropriately addressed in the approval/recognition of codes of practice.
- Have freely available to businesses, documentation that provides sound guidance in the execution of a recall.
- Have procedures in place that ensures that MPI is in close liaison with the business during the crisis period and ensure that the business is meeting its responsibilities.
- Conduct an audit of the recall (usually through MPI Food Act Officers, MPI verifier or through a contracted third party agency) after its completion to establish its credibility.

The regulatory authorities also have a role in providing risk assessment advice to food business. MPI has a role in co-coordinating national recalls that may affect more than one food and/or more than one business.

In addition, MPI is obliged to report food incidents to other (overseas) regulatory authorities in cases where unsafe food has been exported.

2.3 Recalls of product being sold in New Zealand

MPI Operations Branch will co-ordinate all industry initiated food recalls and regulator initiated food recalls for products sold on the domestic market (in some cases this will include Australia). They will work with other parts of MPI and the domestic food industry to ensure the necessary systems and procedures are in place to recall food from the market place to protect consumers.

Recall information is posted on the MPI consumer website <http://www.foodsmart.govt.nz/food-safety/recalls/latest-recalls/>

2.4 Recalls and overseas countries

New Zealand has obligations under certain trading arrangements and as a responsible trading country to notify relevant recall actions to overseas countries. The responsibility for regulatory oversight/action in countries other than New Zealand rests with the Group that has regulatory oversight of the particular products concerned. They will work with other parts of MPI, as appropriate, to ensure that appropriate measures are taken.

2.5 Australia

All food product recalls within New Zealand are notified to Australia irrespective of whether recalled product has been sold in that country. The notification process is managed by MPI Operations Branch. Australia reciprocates with similar notifications through Food Standards Australia New Zealand (FSANZ).

2.6 Regulatory audit of business generated recalls

It is the responsibility of the regulatory group that had the regulatory oversight of the business recall to ensure that an audit of the recall is carried out and to ensure that any deficiencies found in the audit are rectified.

NB. At this time the regulator should ensure investigation has occurred into the circumstances that led to the recall and that appropriate corrective action and timeframes have been identified. The regulator has a responsibility to ensure these are carried out.

2.7 Product tampering/extortion

Food products can be the target of deliberate damage or contamination. This could be accompanied by extortion demands or it could be intended to cause adverse publicity or economic harm to a

supplier or retailer. In these circumstances any decision to recall the product should be made only after full consultation with the police, the relevant health authorities, MPI and the importer, manufacturer, distributor or retailer of the products. Widespread recall may not be appropriate or necessary.

3 Legal Requirements

3.1 Recalls and the law

The power for MPI to initiate a recall exists in legislation.

- The Food Act 2014
- The Animal Products Act 1999
- The Wine Act 2003

In each Act, the legal process that must be followed is set down. The purpose of an MPI initiated recall needs to be understood and adhered to. In most circumstances the need to exercise the legal power will result from the failure of a business to act responsibly. It is not to be used as a means of penalising a business. Recall action is not an impediment to the taking of any other legal action that may be available to regulators under any statute.

It is important to note that the ability for MPI to initiate a recall is not limited to matters of food safety. The wording in the Food Act 2014 refers to the recall of “food or a food related accessory that is not safe or suitable or whose safety or suitability is in doubt” giving considerable scope for recall including matters relating to food safety, fraud, and non-compliance with food standards.

3.2 Privileged statements

The Chief Executive of MPI has power to make privileged statements to protect consumers and to inform the public under:

- The Food Act 2014
- The Animal Products Act 1999
- The Wine Act 2003

The following factors influence a decision to make a privileged statement:

- The need for urgency - in a situation where it is imperative that the public is informed with the absolute minimum of delay, a privileged statement may be issued. A recall may follow.
- Where the owner(s) of product(s) fail to manage a recall or it is necessary for MPI to correct inaccuracies that have been created.
- A decision to make privileged statement(s) may be made in conjunction with a MPI initiated recall to further inform the public.
- Where the owner(s) of product(s) are managing a recall appropriately and a high level of public concern exists it may be helpful for MPI to confirm to the public that all reasonable steps are

being taken.

- Where the owner(s) of the product(s) cannot be identified or contacted, and the situation requires the public is informed without delay, a privileged statement will be issued.

4 Developing a recall plan

4.1 The features of a recall plan

The features of an effective product recall plan include:

1. The business having a recall policy
2. The development and maintenance of a product recall plan
3. Testing of the product recall plan
4. Implementing the product recall plan
5. Managing the product recall plan
6. Closing a product recall
7. Reviewing a product recall and amending the product recall plan if necessary.

4.2 Product recall policy

All food businesses should develop a product recall policy. A product recall policy is a simple, clear and unambiguous business statement on the commitment to remove product from the market that presents a risk to human health. It demonstrates a company's commitment to protect public health. It should clearly state the objective of the product recall plan and the senior management's commitment to providing the necessary resources to ensure the successful removal of unsafe foods from the market. The product recall policy should be in place prior to the development of the product recall plan.

4.3 The product recall plan

This should reflect the business policy on product recall. It must be a written document that effectively guides the business during a recall event.

A multi-disciplinary recall team, where possible, should develop the product recall plan. Examples of elements that may be incorporated into a plan are:

- Reference to the product recall policy
- List of member(s) of the recall team
- Definition of roles and responsibilities for product recall
- Contact names and details including home telephone or mobile numbers
- Definitions of the two classifications of a product recall (see Levels of Product Recall)
- A product recall decision tree
- Mechanisms of notification of a product recall
- Reference to the company's traceability system
- Guidelines for media contact
- Sample press releases

- Sample product recall notices
- A product recall plan testing procedure
- A product recall review (audit) procedure

4.4 The product recall team

Depending on the size and complexity of the business the team will be one or more people. It is essential that there is a recall co-ordinator who has the authority of the business to carry out that role. The recall co-ordinator should be appointed by, and have the full support of senior management. The plan needs to stipulate that it is the responsibility of the recall co-ordinator to maintain and retain full documented evidence of all actions taken during the recall. This person should be knowledgeable about every aspect of the business operations. To do this the recall co-ordinator will need inputs from other areas of the business operation including:

- Production
- Quality
- Purchasing
- Marketing
- Sales
- Legal services
- Distribution and supply chain
- Consumer affairs/public relations
- Compliance.

The business will have examined these responsibilities and determined who will provide these inputs into the team. Possibly these inputs will be provided from outside the organisation on an ‘as needed’ basis, e.g. legal advice. The important thing is that they are identified.

The responsibilities of the recall team will be to:

- Develop the business recall plan
- Manage the maintenance and testing of the recall plan
- Update the recall plan
- Direct the product recall activities
- Recommend changes to the business operations to minimise the need to remove unsafe foods from the market.

4.5 Recall team roles and responsibilities

Effective product recall requires all employees to be clear about their roles during a product recall and the boundaries of their responsibilities. These need to be detailed in the plan. In a complex business with many employees there would be advantages in detailing this in diagrammatic form. A sample diagram is shown in **Appendix 1**.

4.6 Product recall contacts list

It is vital that an up to date contact list is maintained. It is also the element that most quickly becomes inaccurate. Often contact lists are not updated and this frequently becomes an issue during a product recall. Valuable time can be wasted creating or updating the list during the recall event and there is the risk that essential people are omitted from the process. Responsibilities for updating the list should be specified in the product recall plan and the accuracy of the list should be frequently checked by the product recall team. The contact list itself may be included in the recall plan, however as it is likely to require frequent modification it may be more effective to provide clear direction as to the location of the up to date contact list.

It is suggested that the contact lists available in or referenced by the product recall plan are split into five sections as follows:

1. The product recall team and senior management (include key personnel if not part of the recall team)
2. Suppliers of ALL ingredients (include water or ice and packaging)
3. Distribution company and business customers
4. Sources of technical advice and support including laboratory facilities
5. MPI. Refer to Appendix 9: Contacting a MPI Food Act Officer

Experience has shown that a significant number of food safety incidents occur out of normal business hours. Therefore it is suggested that the contact lists are as comprehensive as possible, updated regularly and easily accessed to facilitate fast and efficient information recovery.

Contact details should include:

- Work Phone
- Home Phone
- Mobile Phone
- Fax
- Email

An example of a contact list layout is shown in **Appendix 2**.

4.7 The decision to recall

Where possible the parameters in relation to chemical, physical and biological indicators that would make a product unsafe must be predetermined. In the application of Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point (HACCP) the hazard analysis will provide the basis for making this determination. In situations where the analysis has not been made, provision to evaluate the severity and impact of hazards should exist. In these situations a recall decision tree may assist.

A decision tree should be designed to clarify the thought processes leading to a final decision on the necessity of product recall and the appropriate type of product recall (i.e. consumer level recall or trade level recall). **Appendix 3** shows an example of a typical decision tree. However, food

businesses should draw up a decision tree applicable to their own business and management structure.

The timely and effective removal of unsafe food from the market is dependent on careful, considered risk assessment. Risk assessment should only be carried out by, or with the co-operation of, a person who is technically competent to evaluate the severity and impact of food safety hazards in foods. The risk assessment should be carried out in recognition of the precautionary principle (section 4.9 Risk Assessment). In this process the involvement of the appropriate regulator should be included.

4.8 Sources of information

The product recall team should always get their facts first hand. This prevents the miscommunication that often hampers efficient product recall. The information that is gleaned concerning the food safety hazard, the product details, the likely distribution and the extent of the problem is vital to good decision making. There is a high probability that information gathered in the early stages of an investigation will be faulty or flawed. This needs to be accounted for in the initial risk assessment, which should always take a precautionary approach placing the protection of the consumers' health high on the list of priorities. The precautionary approach requires companies to act to protect public health even when limited details are available.

Initial information on a potential food safety incident can come from a variety of sources but in the first instance it is likely to rest with only one or two individuals in an organisation. It is important that these individuals are aware of the product recall plan and that they take the correct steps to ensure that a product recall team is convened. Training of staff will be necessary to ensure that initial information is handled appropriately.

Sources of initial information may be:

- Internal
 - Quality and production records
 - Sales representatives
 - Employees

- External
 - Ingredient suppliers
 - Packaging suppliers
 - Regulatory agencies
 - Distributors/business customers
 - Consumer complaints
 - Media reports

Information should be verified at source where possible by the product recall team. In the case of a consumer claiming illness, full details should be obtained by contacting the customer or local Public Health Unit where appropriate.

The product recall team should aim to collect the following minimum data set on a suspected food safety incident:

- Product name
- Product description
- Batch codes involved
- Quantity of product implicated
- Distribution details
- Whether the product has been sold to consumers
- The nature of the product fault (hazard).

This information should be verified and fed into the risk assessment process that in turn informs a risk management decision on the level of product recall (i.e. consumer level recall or trade level recall) and the urgency/resources required.

4.9 Risk assessment

Product recall is a risk management decision that requires food businesses to be able to identify a potentially unsafe food. In addition, a business must be able to decide if the unsafe food can cause a potential risk to public health and if so, determine the level of adverse health effect and the affected population profile and size. This requires a food business to carry out an assessment of the potential risks resulting from the problem with the food. This is called a risk assessment.

Risk assessments should only be carried out by competent technical people. If in doubt, food businesses are advised to seek suitably competent technical advice and/or contact the local Food Act Officer.

Food businesses should follow an accepted model for risk assessment such as that developed by the Codex Alimentarius Commission. The risk assessment should include the following four steps:

- **Hazard Identification:** the identification of hazards capable of causing adverse health effects and which may be present in a particular food.
- **Hazard Characterisation:** the qualitative and/or quantitative evaluation of the nature of the adverse effect associated with the hazard.
- **Exposure assessment:** the qualitative or quantitative evaluation of the likely intake of the identified hazards via food as well as exposure from other sources if relevant.
- **Risk Characterisation:** the integration of hazard identification, hazard characterization and exposure assessment into an estimate of the risk and its associated uncertainties.

The process is best understood using an example:

The Production Problem: The pH of an acid preserved food is too high. The product is distributed at ambient temperature, has a shelf life of one year, does not require re-heating and has been on sale for one month.

Hazard Identification: The bacterium *Clostridium botulinum* could grow during product distribution and storage. *Cl. botulinum* causes botulism, a condition where a person, who eats food where *Cl. botulinum* has grown and produced toxin, can die.

Exposure Assessment: The product conditions and shelf life are suitable for *Cl. botulinum* to grow and produce toxin. There is no re-heating to degrade the toxin. The consumer is likely to have bought the product. The chances of exposure to *Cl. botulinum* toxin are high.

Hazard Characterisation: *Cl. botulinum* toxin is one of the most potent neurotoxins known. If the toxin is ingested the chances are high the consumer will develop severe breathing difficulties and may die.

Risk Characterisation: The chances of exposure are high and the consequences of exposure potentially lethal. A severe adverse public health effect is likely. It is not possible to quantify the risk or the uncertainties associated with the risk.

Risk management decision: Recall of product from the affected batches with immediate effect.

The decision on whether to conduct a consumer level recall or a trade level recall is therefore based on the identification of a hazard that makes a food unsafe and its likelihood of affecting public health. To ensure that public health is protected at all times a food business must adopt the precautionary principle in its risk assessment activities. In the context of this document the precautionary principle can be explained as:

Where assessment of available information indicates the possibility of harmful effects on health but scientific uncertainty exists, assume the product presents a risk to human health and take appropriate control action.

Food businesses, faced with the production of a potentially unsafe food should aim to document their hazard identification and risk assessment logic. For an example form to assist in this process refer to Recall Hazard/Risk Analysis Form.

For guidance on recall criteria, such as foreign matter, refer to **Appendix 4**.

4.10 The scope of the recall

The recall plan must detail how the business will scope the range of product(s) and the batches to be recalled. It is not sufficient for a business to determine that only a single batch should be recalled simply because the problem has only been demonstrated in that batch. Businesses should also consider the possibility of the same problem or type of contamination occurring in different package sizes of the same line, in product with a different expiry date, in a different product line all together or same or similar products packaged under a generic label. The plan must demonstrate the processes that will be followed to determine why batches produced prior to, and after the known event, do not suffer the same problem. Production control mechanisms that make particular batches unique will provide justifiable decisions in relation to recall scope. Failure to demonstrate that uniqueness should extend the scope of the recall, possibly to the whole of the product on the market. The business policy and action on product traceability will also be a factor to be built into the recall plan.

If the hazard/risk is found to be one or more raw materials supplied to the business, then the supplier of the raw materials and their customers need to be notified and the affected supply chain alerted.

4.11 Notification of a product recall

Following on from the decision to recall the plan must detail the processes to follow in notifying the recall.

If the decision is taken to initiate a trade level recall then three levels of notification are advised:

- Within the Company
- Regulatory authorities/MPI
- Distribution Chain
 - Distributors
 - Wholesalers
 - Retailers
 - Food service

If the decision is taken to initiate a consumer level recall then four levels of notification are advised:

- Consumers
- Within the company
- Regulatory authorities/MPI
- Distribution chain
 - Distributors
 - Wholesalers
 - Retailers
 - Food service

4.12 Communicating with regulatory authorities/MPI

It is strongly recommended that the recall plan provides for communication with the appropriate regulator at the earliest opportunity, after an incident is identified that may lead to a recall. Support and advice from the regulatory authority/MPI will be advantageous to the food business and will help when dealing with the media and the public (businesses under the Food Act or Food Hygiene Regulations refer to Food Act Officers, businesses under the Animal Products Act refer to MPI Verification Agency). The method of communication needs to be specified along with the commitment to liaise with the regulator throughout the recall process. Companies should ensure that they supply the following information as soon as possible:

- Name of the company and contact details (including after hours contact details)
- Name of the product
- Batch identification codes
- Product details incl. packaging size and type
- Date marks
- Amount of product on the market
- Distribution details (is the product exported – note food distributed in Australia and the Pacific Islands is classed as exported)
- Names of the companies/outlets selling to the consumer
- Nature of the food safety risk
- Results of any investigations (including any applicable test results)
- The level of product recall being considered (i.e. consumer level recall or trade level recall)
- The rationale that was applied in determining the scope of the recall
- Plans for trade and public communications
- Timings for product recall and communication.

Food businesses should continue to update the regulatory authorities or MPI throughout the product recall and formally close the product recall with the regulatory authority by notifying them in writing.

Food businesses can expect close liaison in a recall situation from the regulatory authority/MPI who are required to undertake an audit of the recall, approximately within 60 days of the recall notification, to ensure effectiveness of both the recall and identified corrective actions.

Companies should be clear when communicating with the regulatory authorities about information that is commercially sensitive or private in nature. MPI, as a Public Service Department is subject to government administrative laws, which means that its actions are open to public scrutiny. The Official Information Act 1982 makes provision for public access to certain documents in the Authority's possession. Section 9 of the Act "Other reasons for withholding official information," allows for non- disclosure of certain confidential and commercially sensitive information.

4.13 Communicating with the distribution chain

Procedures for notifying the distribution chain should contain detailed methods for stopping product distribution, retail sale or food service use. It is also important that plans are developed with business customers to store recovered product safely and in isolation from other foods when it is outside of the control of the company responsible for the product recall. Recovered stock must be appropriately labelled or withdrawn. Further, methods need to be developed to regain control over unsafe product from the business customer and store it safely and in isolation from safe product pending stock reconciliation and destruction (some businesses may choose not to regain control of affected stock but may require their customers or the consumer to destroy the product after prior notification to the business involved).

Initial notification to the trade could be via telephone but this should be followed up by written communication by fax or email. The written communication should contain all the information necessary to allow the business customer to remove the correct product from sale or distribution. The need for urgency must be conveyed and there must be assurance that the message has been received, understood and acted on.

Food businesses should include sample notifications in the product recall plan. Sample notifications should take account of the information below.

- The notification should be clearly titled ‘Urgent: Consumer level recall’ or ‘Urgent: Trade level recall’ as appropriate in bold large lettering to ensure that the notification is acted upon quickly.
- Avoid making the notification look like a business letter or it may not be dealt with urgently. The details included should facilitate immediate and unambiguous identification of the product.
- The ‘action required’ part of the notification should clearly state:
‘Remove from sale/distribution’ or ‘do not use’ in the case of food service
‘Notify us immediately if this product has been sold to the public’
‘Notify us immediately if this product has been distributed to other distributors or retail/catering establishments. Please also notify these businesses of the product recall without delay;
- This part of the notification can also be used to specify
 - Plans for recovery of product and disposal
 - Notification of quantities of stock recovered
 - The need to identify and isolate the product
 - Other details to facilitate the consumer level recall/trade level recall of product
 - Request any assistance in notifying the public in case of a consumer level recall, see 4.14 below.

Appendix 5 shows an example of a trade notification.

4.14 Communicating with the consumer

Procedures for notifying consumers should detail which media sources are to be used and how contacts will be informed. This may take the form of a media release or paid advertisement in newspapers, on radio or television. The form of media used will depend on the circumstances involved.

Where product that is unsafe can be demonstrated to be in the hands of consumers the plan should articulate the basic rule that the consumer will be informed.

Options for communicating a consumer level recall to consumers include:

- Placing warning notices at locations where the product has been sold.
- Paid advertisements in selected press outlets that are identified to have coverage of the consumers who can reasonably be expected to have possession of the product
- A general media release and paid advertisements as specified above.

4.14.1 Paid Advertisements (applicable during a consumer level recall or a trade level recall)

Paid advertisements are necessary in the case of a consumer level recall or in the case of a trade level recall when a company cannot identify all its business customers in the distribution chain. Food businesses should include sample consumer level recall/trade level recall advertisements in the recall plan along with instructions for placing advertisements in appropriate media. The information below should be recognised when drafting guidelines for the product recall plan.

When a food business is engaged in a consumer level recall, as defined in this guidance material, paid advertisements must be placed in the appropriate newspaper(s) or radio as soon as possible.

When a food business is engaged in a trade level recall, as defined in this guidance material, but find, for whatever reason, that it is not possible to contact all relevant customers then the food business should consider expanding the trade level recall to a consumer level recall.

Product recall advertisements must be clear, simple, unambiguous and in a prominent position towards the front of the newspaper. Avoid including unnecessary information about the company or turning the product recall advertisement into a marketing opportunity. Product recall advertisements must be approved by MPI before publishing.

Templates are available to use on the MPI website, for general recalls and for recalls involving allergens here: <http://www.foodsafety.govt.nz/recalls-warnings/conducting-a-recall/>

A single contact can arrange newspaper adverts in some or all of the national newspapers, namely:

News Works NZ

Level 1, 58 Albert Street

PO Box 2941, Auckland 1140

Tel: (09) 306 1600

Fax: (09) 303 2570

Email: info@newsworks.nz

Similarly there is a single contact that can arrange radio adverts in some or all radio stations nationally:

THE RADIO BUREAU

PO Box 8049, Symonds Street

Level 4, Textile Centre

Kenwyn Street Parnell Auckland

Tel: 09 302 1122

MPI also posts information about consumer level recalls on the MPI website here:

<http://www.foodsmart.govt.nz/food-safety/recalls/latest-recalls/>. MPI will publish the recall advertisement on their website for up to three years.

4.14.2 Press release (applicable during consumer level recall only)

The plan must specify that where the risk to the consumer is of such a nature that immediate notification is appropriate, a press release will be made to all sections of the media. Press releases have the advantage of reaching print media and online media without the delays that could accompany a paid advertisement. If press releases are used there is often no financial cost to the company. However, as companies cannot rely on the uptake of a press release this method should only be used in addition to the routine paid advertisement process that will be conducted in a longer time frame.

The press release should cover all the features detailed in the paid advertisement (see above). A copy of a sample press release should be placed into the product recall plan. An example of a press release is available here: <http://www.foodsafety.govt.nz/recalls-warnings/conducting-a-recall/>

It is important to include local radio news desks, especially if the product recall is isolated to specific areas. Follow-up phone calls to media are recommended. To encourage journalists or editors to pick up on a press release the following approach to writing the release should be taken:

- Write 'Press release – for immediate release' at the top of the page in bold print.
- Compose a title e.g. Company 'A' recalls product 'X' due to health concerns.
- Place the synopsis of the recall, the product, the problem and what is being done into the first paragraph and the use the proceeding paragraphs to flesh out the details.
- Include quotes from the company that the journalist can use in the article.
- Finish the release with 'ENDS' to signify conclusion.
- Keep press releases to a single page if possible.

Appendix 7 shows a sample press release.

4.14.3 Warning notice or point of sale notice

Placing warning notices where the product has been sold will assist in communicating to the consumer that there is a recall relating to that particular product. For an example refer to the MPI website here: <http://www.foodsafety.govt.nz/recalls-warnings/conducting-a-recall/>

4.15 Testing and reviewing the product recall plan

The product recall plan should specify the periods for review and the names of the people responsible for the review. In most cases this will be the product recall team. The plan should be examined for errors, particularly in the contact lists or in light of any changes in the company's product recall or trading status. It is recommended that the product recall plan is reviewed at least twice a year in accordance with a documented procedure which is held as part of the product recall plan itself.

It is essential that a product recall plan is periodically tested using a 'trial run' or mock recall exercise. This can be considered as a validation of the product recall plan. This procedure should also be documented and held as part of the product recall plan itself. Companies that develop product recall plans but do not test them may face problems when a real food safety incident occurs.

It is easier and more cost effective to alter a product recall plan when the food safety incident is part of an exercise without the pressures of the real situation. It is recommended that product recall plans be validated annually or more frequently if appropriate. Ideally, in order to determine a company's preparedness and speed of action the test should be unannounced and not prepared. It may be worth exploring the possibility of an agreement with customers and/or supermarkets for them to become involved in the product recall test, thereby increasing the value of the exercise. Once the test is completed, a review must be carried out with the relevant product recall team members to correct and improve the process where necessary.

4.16 Traceability

An effective traceability system is an essential part of a food recall plan and an effective tool with which food businesses can trace food throughout the food chain. All food businesses should have as a minimum a documented one step back/one step forward approach.

In a food recall, the aims of traceability are to:

- Identify uniquely a lot/batch/consignment of food in a way that allows tracing of the physical flow of the food forwards through the food chain to the immediate customer and tracing of the physical flow of raw materials backwards to the immediate supplier;
- Create and maintain accurate traceability records that can be provided within a short time period when needed for recall or at the request of regulatory authorities.

Some businesses will have legal requirements for traceability depending on the production sector

and need to be familiar with the sector specific traceability requirements.

4.17 Managing and staffing a product recall

The management of a product recall should be driven by the product recall plan. The plan should carry all the details necessary for the product recall co-coordinators to manage a product recall successfully.

It is worth considering whether you would need help to manage a recall. This could mean employing extra staff to enable permanent staff to deal with the recall. Specialist help may also be required to draft and deliver your recall message. Most importantly it is necessary to prepare thoroughly prior to facing a real emergency.

Many firms involved in previous recall campaigns have felt the need to ask for specialist advice from an external agency. There are consultants who specialise in every type of marketing communication – from advertising and direct mail, to public relations and corporate communications. There are also many agencies that can give all-round advice. If your firm already employs an agency, you can ask what experience it has in dealing with food recalls or other areas of crisis communications.

Firms may not need to retain a consultancy in case of future recalls, but having some relevant companies' details on file may be useful.

4.17.1 Paying for a recall

A recall will cost money. Just as it makes sense to agree with your suppliers and business customers in advance about who should organise a recall if it is needed, you should also decide who would pay for each cost associated with a recall. Insurance may cover the cost of carrying out a recall and any loss of profits related to it. It is worth finding out if you already have this cover under any existing business catastrophe or disaster insurance policy. If not, you may want to consider taking out a specialist policy.

4.18 Documenting the recall process

All information gathered by the product recall team should be documented along with the date, time and provider of the information. The member of the product recall team gathering the information should sign off on the record. It is useful to set up an incident log. All product recall team members are responsible for completing the incident log but the product recall co-coordinator should review the log to verify that this is happening. The incident log will be useful in three ways:

1. It will serve as a reference if facts need to be checked
2. It will serve as a means by which the recall can be reviewed
3. It may serve as a legal document should it become necessary.

Decisions that are taken should reference the evidence on which they are based and should be entered in the incident log. The person responsible for the decision should sign off on the record of

the decision. This is especially important in the risk assessment process that determines the level of product recall (i.e. consumer level recall or trade level recall) and the severity of the incident. The sequence of events and actions taken will be very important in the review and should not depend on peoples' memories.

4.19 Regaining control of affected stock

A food business that has initiated a product recall may regain control of the potentially unsafe product but must account for all missing stock.

In some circumstances a food business may request a customer or the consumer to destroy the affected product. However, the food business should ensure that they reconcile the destroyed product in an appropriate manner where possible.

If affected product is recovered either by direct returns from consumers; returns to retail outlets; returns via the distribution chain; or product already in stock, then the following considerations are important:

- The product should be returned to one central site or, in the case of a widely distributed product, to major recovery sites.
- The recovered product must be stored in an area that is separated from any other food products.
- Accurate records must be kept of the amounts of recovered product and the codes of that product.
- If the recovered product is unfit for human consumption, it may be destroyed or denatured under the supervision of the company management and/or the relevant regulatory authority where legally required.
- If the food safety risk can be safely removed from the recovered product through relabelling or reprocessing this may be done once it is clear that public health will be protected.

4.20 The effectiveness of the recall

To be effective, the product recall notification must reach as far as the product has been distributed. The effectiveness of the product recall is assessed on the basis of the amount of product returned as a proportion of the amount of product that left the manufacturer or distributor, while taking into account the retail turnover of the product.

During the product recall progress must be reviewed so that its success can be monitored. If it is decided that there is now little risk to the public, the product recall can be judged to have been a success and brought to an end but if there have been few returns and little response to a high-risk problem the product recall procedure must be reassessed. The product recall may then have to be repeated using different methods to reach the consumer.

4.21 Closing the recall and reviewing lessons learned

The plan needs to define the process for formally notifying all parties that the incident has ended. This includes the regulator who will arrange for the recall to be audited. The co-ordinator will

ensure that the document record is made available to the auditor to facilitate this process.

Every product recall should be viewed as opportunity to learn and improve the systems used in the food business. The recall co-coordinator should initiate a formal review procedure involving the product recall team and any key personnel who were involved. These could be external contacts such as a retailer or caterer. It is suggested that the review procedure should be documented as part of the product recall plan but should be sufficiently flexible to be useful. Some of the elements that should be included in a review are:

- A review of the cause of the issue, identifying the real issue (not the symptoms) and immediate and long term actions that will rectify the problems.
- A review of company policies, procedures and actions to update them in light of the issue
- A review of training plans to improve awareness of the problem and ensure it is not repeated.
- A review of management structures, if reporting or lack of clarity on responsibilities contributed to any problems with the product recall.
- A review of investigations and analysis carried out on product returns
- A review of stock reconciliation.

Food businesses involved in product recall should review the product recall process and amend the product recall plan if necessary.

Some of the elements to be considered in the review should be:

- The effectiveness of the process. Did it work?
- Did the product recall plan drive the recall?
- What problems were encountered?
- How effective was the internal and external communication to customers and authorities?
- Media coverage. Did it communicate the message accurately?
- Customer care line. Did it work, was it overloaded, did it cope or crash?
- What was the true cost of the product recall; product, time, recall message costs, lost sales?
- Accountabilities for the product recall team. How effective were they?
- How did the team work together?

Communicate the lessons learnt to the appropriate personnel internally.

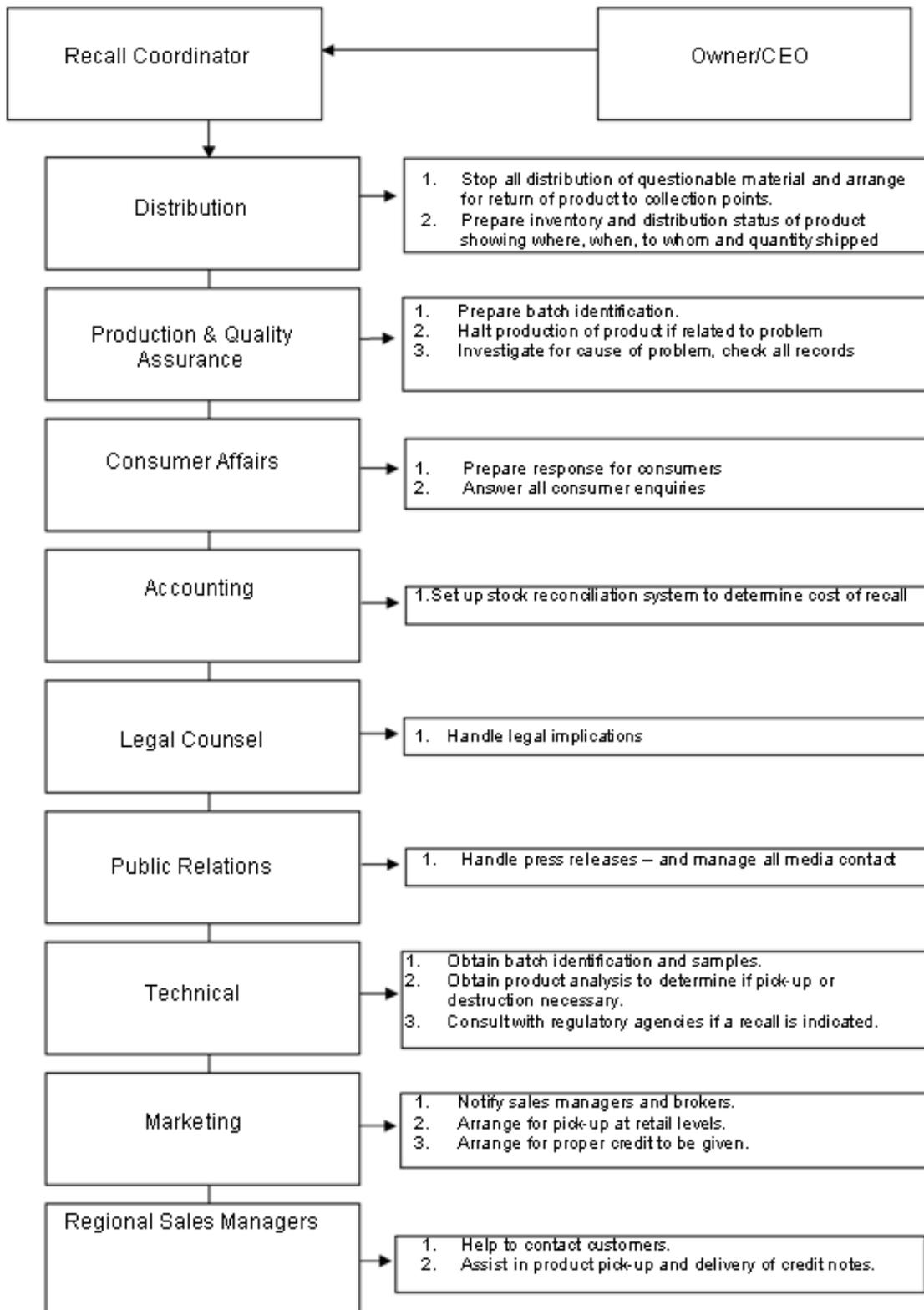
4.22 Final reports and recommendations

It is expected that the audit is reported to MPI. The final report should include the following:

- The circumstances leading to the product recall
- The extent of distribution of the relevant batch(es) in NZ and overseas
- The action taken by the business including any publicity, with names of newspapers in which advertisements appeared.
- A copy of the product recall notification (e.g. advertisement, fax, email) to customers.
- A summary of stock reconciliation (i.e. amount of stock recovered or notified as having been disposed of).

- The method of disposal or otherwise of recalled stock, with proof of activity undertaken (e.g. FAO confirmation, landfill receipts etc).
- Action proposed for the future to prevent a recurrence of the problem.
- Any difficulties experienced in conducting the product recall.
- Any information relating to relative effectiveness of recall communications (i.e. newspapers vs other communications).

Appendix 1: Roles and Responsibilities Diagram



Appendix 2: Example of a Contact List Layout

Company Contacts List

| | | | |
|-----------------------------------|-------|------------------------|-------------|
| CEO/Owner | Mr A | Ph (wk) Ph (hm) Mob | Email: Fax: |
| Recall Coordinator | Ms. B | Ph (wk) Ph (hm) Mob | Email: Fax: |
| Alternative Recall Coordinator | Mrs C | Ph (wk) Ph (hm) Mob | Email: Fax: |

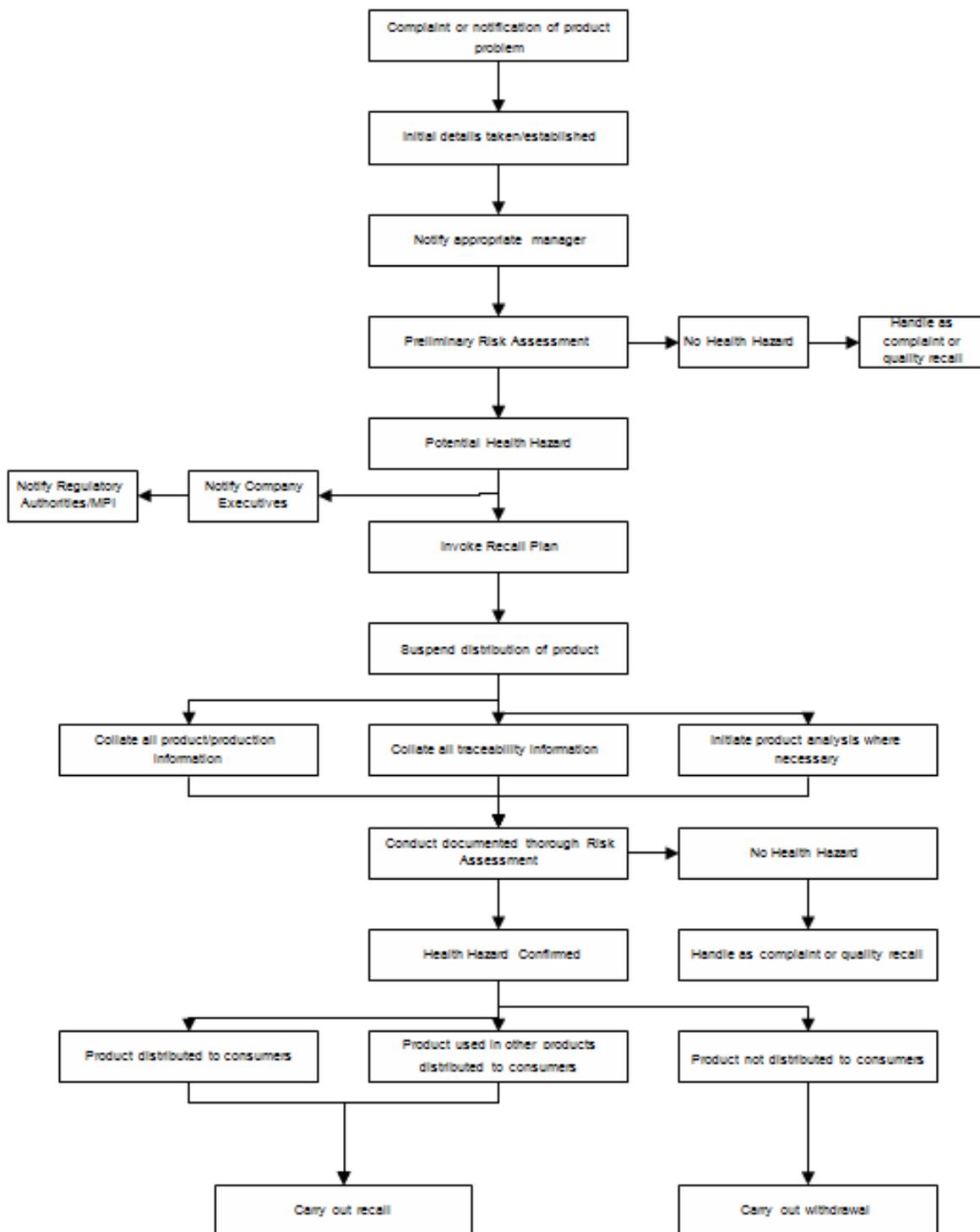
Supplier List

| | | | |
|--|--------|---------------------------|----------------|
| Pack Me Main Contact | Ms. D | Ph (wk) Ph (hm) Mob | Email: Fax: |
| Pack Me Alternative Contact | Mr E | Ph (wk) Ph (hm) Mob | Email: Fax: |
| Pick Me Ingredients Main Contact | Mr F | Ph (wk) Ph (hm) Mob | Email: Fax: |
| Pick Me Ingredients Alternative Contact | Miss G | Ph (wk) Ph (hm) Mob | Email: Fax: |

Customer/Distributor List

| | | | |
|---|--------|---------------------------|----------------|
| Stop 'n Shop Supermarket Main Contact | Miss H | Ph (wk) Ph (hm) Mob | Email: Fax: |
| Stop 'n Shop Supermarket Alternative Contact | Mr I | Ph (wk) Ph (hm) Mob | Email: Fax: |
| Here to There Distributors Ltd Main Contact | Ms. J | Ph (wk) Ph (hm) Mob | Email: Fax: |
| Here to There Distributors Ltd Alternative Contact | Mrs K | Ph (wk) Ph (hm) Mob | Email: Fax: |

Appendix 3: Example of a Recall Decision Tree



Appendix 4: Recall Criteria Guide

Microbiological Contamination

Where microbiological results indicate the presence of pathogens (i.e. food poses a safety risk), refer to Microbiological Reference Criteria for Food, MoH 1995, for pathogen levels [MoH Microbiological Reference Criteria for Food](#) and also Food Standards Australian New Zealand Code Standard 1.6.1 [Microbiological Limits for Food](#). In particular for dairy products refer to [DPC1: Animal Products \(Dairy\)](#).

Listeria monocytogenes

L.monocytogenes is the most pathogenic (able to cause illness) member of the *Listeria* genus of bacteria. Other members of the species, collectively referred to as *Listeria spp.* are unlikely to cause illness. However as they live and grow under the same conditions as *L.monocytogenes*, finding any type of *Listeria* e.g. *L.innocua* can be an early warning that the pathogenic bacteria could also be present.

The Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI) has developed a series of documents “Guidance for the Control of *Listeria monocytogenes* in ready-to-eat foods”. These documents provide extensive information on the control of *Listeria* and how to respond if *Listeria* is detected in processing areas and products.

The guidance documents are:

- [Part 1: Listeria Management and Glossary](#)
- [Part 2: Good Operating Practices](#)
- [Part 3: Microbiological testing for verification of the control of *Listeria monocytogenes*](#)

Part 3 describes the required response to the detection of *Listeria monocytogenes* in food products and on product contact surfaces. The guidance identifies appropriate processes for the investigation, recall, corrective actions and procedures to demonstrate the efficacy of the corrective actions have been implemented.

These documents are a useful resource for managing a recall event and are therefore cross referenced as part of this recall guidance.

Microbiological Limits

Microbiological limits for bacteria in food are either set as absent (zero or not detected) or as a maximum number. For *L. monocytogenes* both types of limits are applicable. However as the number of *Listeria* present increases, the risk of an infection also increases. It is now agreed by international experts (see Codex Alimentarius) that where the levels are below 100cfu/g, the risk of infection is low for most consumers. Those at greatest risk of infection

are those vulnerable populations; the very young, the old, the pregnant and those with lowered immunity. Therefore **where there are no regulatory limits on *L. monocytogenes***, counts up to 100cfu/g may be acceptable at the time of consumption¹.

Microbiological limits for *L. monocytogenes* currently applied in New Zealand are found in section 5.2.2: Regulatory criteria, of the “Guidance for the Control of *Listeria monocytogenes* in Ready-to Eat Foods; Part 1: *Listeria* Management and Glossary.

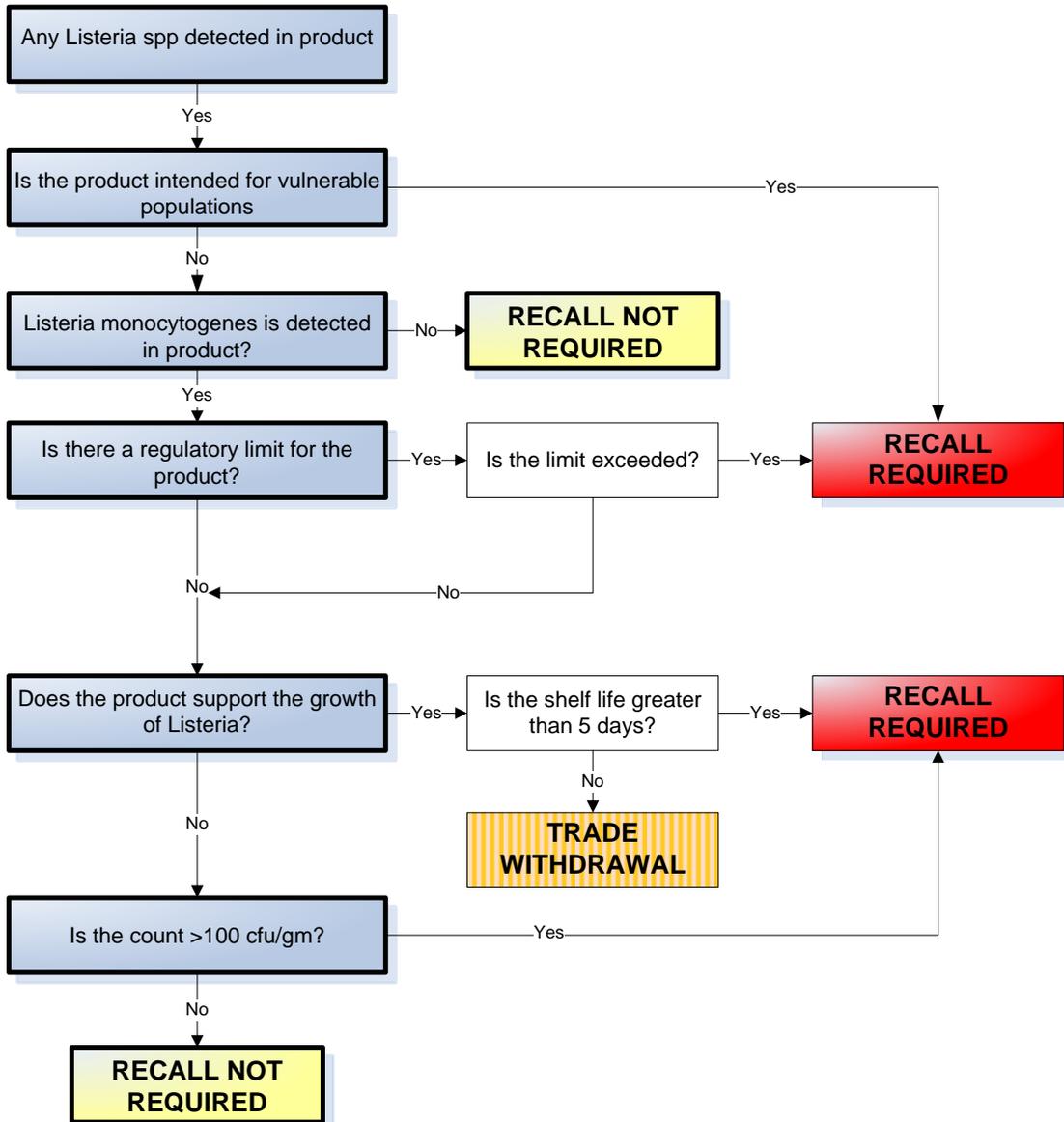
For ready-to-eat (RTE) foods where there are no regulatory limits established, these must be safe and suitable for consumption. MPI has suggested guidance that could be adopted by food operators in Table 1: Microbiological levels of foods where there are no regulatory limits, of the “Guidance for the Control of *Listeria monocytogenes* in Ready-to Eat Foods; Part 1: *Listeria* Management and Glossary”.

When may a recall be necessary?

The Recall Decision Tree provides a summary of the decision making process for whether a recall is necessary. The Recall Decision Tree should not be read in isolation from the document as a whole including the guidance documents.

¹ Further factors that should be considered together with the number of *Listeria* present are whether the food supports the growth of *Listeria*, and the intended consumer.

Recall Decision Tree



Listeria species detected in ready-to eat food products

A recall may be necessary when any *Listeria* species, including *L. monocytogenes*, is detected in ready to eat product intended for vulnerable populations – the very young, elderly, pregnant women and those with lowered immunity.

Food ‘intended for vulnerable populations’ is food specifically prepared for or supplied for people with lowered immunity including hospitals, maternity units, child care, aged care and ‘meals on wheels’.

Listeria monocytogenes in ready-to-eat food products

A recall is likely to be necessary for all ready-to eat food products when *L.monocytogenes* has been detected in a product and any regulatory limit or operator defined limit is exceeded.

It may not be possible to recall a food that supports the growth of *L. monocytogenes* when the specific food has a shelf-life of less than 5 days. This is because the product is likely to have been consumed when the test results are received. However, the operator should consider whether there is potentially any other products at risk from *L. monocytogenes* contamination that may require a trade withdrawal or recall from the market.

A recall/trade withdrawal may not be necessary if:

- the food does not support the growth of *Listeria monocytogenes*; and
- the *Listeria monocytogenes* count is <100cfu/gm; and
- the food is not intended for vulnerable populations

If the operator does not know whether or not the food supports the growth of *L.monocytogenes* it should be assumed that that the food will support the growth of *Listeria*, unless the food is dry ($a_w < 0.92$), acidic ($pH < 4.4$) and/or has preservatives added that prevent or retard the growth of *L. monocytogenes*. Further information on the growth & survival of *Listeria* can be found in section 8.2: Growth and survival limits of the “Guidance for the Control of *Listeria monocytogenes* in Ready-to Eat Foods; Part 1: *Listeria* Management and Glossary.

In deciding whether a recall/trade withdrawal is required, the above should be considered together with the test history for all products and the processing environment.

Listeria monocytogenes has been detected on a product contact surface.

Product that has been in contact with a surface contaminated with *Listeria monocytogenes* is considered to be at risk of being contaminated and should be treated as if the product itself is contaminated. Refer to section 7.4: What product might be contaminated in the “Guidance for the Control of *Listeria monocytogenes* in Ready-to Eat Foods; Part 3: Microbiological testing for the verification of the control of *Listeria monocytogenes*.

How much product might be affected and require recalling?

Product may have been contaminated prior to, during and after the contamination event.

Refer to section 7.4: What product might be contaminated of the “Guidance for the Control of *Listeria monocytogenes* in Ready-to Eat Foods; Part 3: Microbiological testing for the verification of the control of *Listeria monocytogenes*. Processors need to use all resources available to make a decision about which product is potentially contaminated and whether a recall is necessary.

Should processing continue during the investigation and response?

Processing on the affected lines should cease. For some processes this may not be possible or appropriate. If processing continues, all resulting product from affected lines should be considered potentially contaminated and put on “hold” to prevent it being used, sold or distributed.

Finding the Source of the Contamination

An investigation into the source or cause of the *Listeria* contamination, identifying affected product and corrective actions must be undertaken. This may involve a review of processes, procedures and records, and is likely to involve intensive microbiological sampling. Refer to section 7: Recommended actions when *L.monocytogenes* is detected in a food or product contact surface of the “Guidance for the Control of *Listeria monocytogenes* in Ready-to Eat Foods; Part 3: Microbiological Testing for the verification of the control of *Listeria monocytogenes*.

Procedures once processing resumes

Three days of clear results for *Listeria* species of the product and processing environment during the intensive microbiological sampling is required. This should be followed by intensive verification sampling for a further four days to give a level of confidence that *Listeria* has been controlled and that microbiological limits are being met. Refer to Appendix 6: Sample taking and testing during a contamination event and to section 7: Recommended actions when *L.monocytogenes* is detected in a food or product contact surface of the “Guidance for the Control of *Listeria monocytogenes* in Ready-to Eat Foods; Part 3: Microbiological Testing for the verification of the control of *Listeria monocytogenes*.

Release of product

Product may not be released for sale unless cleared or agreed to by the regulatory authority. Actions that may be required to be completed before release of product include a review of *Listeria* controls; identification of the source of the *Listeria* contamination, acceptable intensive microbiological verification sampling and that adequate corrective and preventative action has been implemented to prevent a reoccurrence.

Foreign Matter

Foreign matter can be broadly classified as:

1. food safety hazards and
2. non food safety hazards, or issues of quality/wholesomeness.

Therefore, irrespective of whether foreign matter presents a food safety hazard or not it can be expected that whenever foreign matter is discovered in food, or an incident occurs in the manufacturing process that could reasonably lead to foreign matter inclusion in food, corrective action will occur. The nature of expected corrective action is the question – should the food be recalled, or is it sufficient to investigate the process and take steps to mitigate, where possible, any risks of re-occurrence?

In general, a case by case decision will be required. The following provides some guidance and ‘rules of thumb’ for different types of foreign matter.

General

Hard or sharp foreign matter in food may cause traumatic injury including laceration and perforation of tissues of the mouth, tongue, throat, stomach and intestine as well as damage to the teeth and gums and may therefore be considered a physical food safety hazard particularly if:

- The product contains hard or sharp foreign matter that measures **7 mm to 25 mm**, in length, and
- The product is ready-to-eat, or the intended use does not include further processing steps that would eliminate, invalidate, or neutralize the hazard prior to consumption.

In most cases, where actual or possible inclusion of foreign matter meeting the above criteria occurs in food that has been sold, and is not ‘one-off’ (i.e. multiple consumers are at risk) recall is indicated.

It is recommended advice and input into decision-making is sought from the regulatory authority/MPI when:

- The product contains a hard or sharp foreign object that measures 7 mm to 25 mm in length, and it is proposed to subject the product to additional preparation or processing that may have an effect on the presence of the foreign objects in the finished food. For example, additional sifting of a product that may or may not remove foreign objects, depending on the measurements of the objects and the mesh aperture of the sifter.
- The product contains a hard or sharp foreign object less than 7 mm or between 25 mm and

77mm in length and the primary intended consumers of the product are children under 6 years of age, the elderly, or persons with dentures.

Glass

Consider the type and size of glass fragments present.

Where glass fragments are likely to include shards or splinters general the MPI practice has been to require recall, irrespective of the likely size of the glass pieces.

Some glass is designed to shatter into rounded pieces rather than to produce sharp fragments. In this case the size of the pieces may determine whether a food safety hazard exists (see 'general').

Allergens

MPI recognises that food containing certain allergenic components must be labelled to show the presence of the allergen, as per the ANZ Food Standards Code (Standard 1.2.3 Mandatory Warning & Advisory Statements & Declarations) Allergic individuals may be severely sensitive to the allergen

and suffer life threatening consequences if they consume food containing the allergen.

Where a recall is initiated, an allergy warning in the second line of the heading of the newspaper advertisement is required. Refer to a template for recall advertisement involving allergens:

<http://www.foodsafety.govt.nz/recalls-warnings/conducting-a-recall/>

Allergy NZ is to be advised of all recalls involving allergens as soon as possible.

Appendix 5: Sample Trade Notification

To: All Stop 'N' Shop Store Managers, Duty Manager & Nightfill Managers

Date: 25 December 2004

Fax: Broadcast

From: Joe Brown, ABC Foods National Food Safety Manager

Re: PRODUCT TRADE LEVEL RECALL

Pages: 1

The information in this facsimile message is confidential and may be subject to legal privilege. If you are not the intended recipient, you are notified that you must not use, review, distribute or copy this facsimile message. If you have received this message in error, please notify us immediately by facsimile or telephone call (collect) and return the original message by mail.

URGENT – PRODUCT TRADE LEVEL RECALL

Note: A return is required even if your stock holding is zero

Fab Fun Lollipops 200g Bags

Best Before 30 June 2006

PEL Code: 124578

The supplier of this product has initiated a product trade level recall of the above batch due to an undeclared allergen (dairy protein) affecting the Red lollipops. Please immediately remove the affected batch and hold in your storeroom clearly marked "NOT FOR SALE".

A rep will call to collect your withdrawn stock.

Please record stock quantity in box below and complete store name and your signature below:

STORE NAMENumber.....

SIGNATURE

Please complete the above action by the end of business today, 25 December 2011, and return this notice by email or fax to:

Jane Smith

Fax: 05 345 1234

Email: jsmith@abcfoods.co.nz

Kind regards

Joe Brown

ABC Foods National Food Safety Manager

Appendix 6: Sample Consumer Level Recall Notice

FOOD RECALL NOTICE
ALLERGEN WARNING

ABC Foods Ltd
Fab Fun Lollipops
Multipacks (200g),
Best Before 30 June 2015

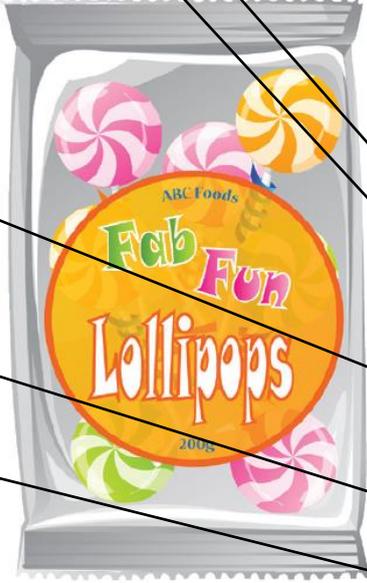
ABC Foods Ltd are recalling their Fab Fun Lollipops after discovering that the red lollipops contain dairy proteins that are not declared on the label. All 200g multipacks with the ABC Foods brand and "Fab Fun Lollipops" on the label should not be consumed by people allergic to dairy products.

There have been no reports of illness, however any person concerned about their health should seek medical advice.

The product is sold in all major supermarkets throughout New Zealand. Customers should return the product to their retailer for a full refund or phone 0800 888 888 with any queries.

This recall does not affect any other ABC Foods product.

ABC Foods Ltd
123 Main Street
Middle Town



- Minimum size of advert is 2 columns by 10 centimetres
- The advert must have a cross-hatched border
- Heading should be 'Food Recall Notice'
- Allergen warnings may be identified with a sub heading
- A photo of the product should be included

The notice should provide the following information:

- Who is recalling the product?
- What product is it?
- What is wrong with the product?
- The "do not consume" message
- Health warning and action
- Where is the product found?
- What action should be taken?
- A contact for queries

Important Points to Note:

- Recall notices should exclude promotional information.
- The company logo may appear in the advertisement but it should not detract any attention from the recall message.
- The advertisement should appear in the main body of the newspaper, not in the classified section.
- Recall information will also be made available on the MPI website.
- Draft advertisements should be submitted to MPI to ensure wording is satisfactory and avoid MPI having to issue their own statement.
- This format should be used for food safety or other MPI sanctioned recalls only. If performing a recall for quality or other reasons an alternative format and heading should be used. This is to maximise consumer response when seeing food safety recalls

Appendix 7: Sample Press Release

PRESS RELEASE - for immediate release

25 December 2011

Fab Fun Lollipops recalled due to Health Concerns

ABC Foods Ltd are conducting a voluntary recall on Fab Fun Lollipops, purchased from major supermarkets throughout New Zealand, due to some lollipops containing undeclared dairy protein which was not displayed on the packaging ingredients list.

Consumers who suffer from a dairy protein allergy or intolerance should not consume this product. Food allergy symptoms vary from a mild response such as a skin rash to a life threatening reaction.

"We have become aware that one of our ingredients has been reformulated and now contains dairy protein. This ingredient is added only to red lollipops. We have not had any complaints from consumers about allergic reactions to these products. However we are advising consumers who may be concerned about their health following the consumption of this product to seek advice from their healthcare professional," ABC Foods National Food Safety Manager, Joe Brown, said.

Apart from this labelling irregularity there is no other fault with this product. Consumers not allergic to dairy protein can safely consume this product.

Consumers who have a dairy protein allergy or intolerance are asked to return this product to the place of purchase for a full refund. All retailers have been advised of this recall.

Consumers requiring further information should please contact:

ABC Foods Ltd
123 Main Street
Middle Town
(ph) 0800 888 888

ENDS

For further information contact:

Jane Smith, Communications Advisor, ABC Foods Ltd, 05 345 2528 or 022 654 789.

Appendix 8: Schedule of National Newspapers

| No. | Newspapers |
|-----|---------------------------|
| 1 | Northern Advocate |
| 2 | NZ Herald |
| 3 | Waikato Times |
| 4 | Bay of Plenty Times |
| 5 | Rotorua Daily Post |
| 6 | Gisborne Herald |
| 7 | Taranaki Daily News |
| 8 | Hawkes Bay Today |
| 9 | Wanganui Chronicle |
| 10 | Manawatu Evening Standard |
| 11 | Wairarapa Times Age |
| 12 | The Dominion Post |
| 13 | Nelson Evening Mail |
| 14 | Marlborough Express |
| 15 | Westport News |
| 16 | Greymouth Evening Star |
| 17 | Timaru Herald |
| 18 | The Press |
| 19 | Otago Daily Times |
| 20 | The Southland Times |
| 21 | Sunday Star Times |
| 22 | Sunday News |

Note: In some circumstances smaller community newspapers may be a more effective way of disseminating recall information, this decision should always be made in consultation with MPI.

Appendix 9: Contacting a MPI Food Act Officer

To notify MPI and obtain assistance with a food recall, contact a MPI Food Act Officer by phoning 0800 00 83 33.