



DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH County of Riverside

INFORMATIONAL BULLETIN NO. 62-09-DES

DISTRICT ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES DIVISION

WILD MUSHROOMS

Wild mushrooms are not allowed to be used or sold in any food facility within Riverside County. Some wild mushrooms are extremely poisonous. Every year, hundreds of Californians become ill after ingesting toxic wild mushrooms, thought to be safe. Toxic and edible mushrooms can look extremely similar and it takes identification by a “mushroom expert” with years of training, to properly distinguish between the two. This bulletin will explain why wild mushrooms are not approved for use by any Riverside County food facility.

Wild Mushrooms – Unapproved Source/Unapproved Food

California Retail Food Code (CRFC Sec. 113735 – “Approved Source”)

All foods processed, sold, or given away on a retail basis in California, must come from “an approved source”, according to the California Retail Food Code (CRFC). The CRFC does not recognize produce grown in the “wild” to be from an approved source. Wild mushrooms are not grown using agricultural controls, leaving the source and condition of the mushrooms unverifiable.

In addition to these issues, the California Department of Public Health has issued numerous advisory notices warning people of the dangers in consuming wild mushrooms for personal use. Illnesses from eating poisonous mushrooms can be serious with symptoms including abdominal pain, cramping, vomiting, diarrhea, liver damage, kidney failure leading to coma, and even death. Depending on the type of wild mushroom ingested, symptoms can be delayed eight to twelve hours, leading many victims to not associate their symptoms with wild mushroom poisoning. Most incidents involve eating poisonous mushrooms mistaken for edible ones.

If you have any questions regarding this policy, please contact our Department at the number listed below.

*Document available in an alternate format upon request