APPENDIX 1: SUMMARY OF CHANGES

This summary provides a synopsis of the changes made to the 2026 edition of the Voluntary National Retail Food Regulatory Program Standards. The primary intent of this record is to capture the nature of the changes found in the 2026 edition of the Voluntary National Retail Food Regulatory Program Standards rather than to identify every word or editing change. This record should not be relied upon as an absolute comparison that identifies each and every change.

Changes Recommended by the Conference for Food Protection (CFP)

FDA works closely with stakeholders through the biennial Conference for Food Protection (CFP) to review proposed changes to the Voluntary National Retail Food Regulatory Program Standards. Changes may be proposed by FDA, or by stakeholder groups such as academia, industry, consumer groups, and regulatory officials. The CFP provides an opportunity for stakeholders to provide comments about proposed changes.

The following changes reflect the recommendations from the Conference for Food Protection, 2025 biennial meeting.

Addition of Definitions for "Risk Based Inspection" and "Intervention Strategy"

What changed in the Definitions Section?

This section was updated to include definitions for the following terms:

Risk Based Inspection - A retail food establishment inspection that prioritizes the identification and correction of risk factors that contribute to foodborne illness.

Intervention Strategy - Food protection activities, initiatives, or tools implemented to achieve immediate and/or long-term control of foodborne illness risk factors.

How do these changes affect your jurisdiction?

The added definitions provide clarity around related concepts within the Voluntary National Retail Food Regulatory Program Standards.

How will I be able to access and complete these forms?

These forms are available on FDA's website.

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Other Changes made by FDA

FDA made several editorial and formatting changes to the Voluntary National Retail Food Regulatory Program Standards. These changes are described below.

Formatting Changes

Program Self-Assessment and Verification Audit Forms for all nine Standards and most of the corresponding Worksheets were reformatted to be accessible in their layout and follow a logical reading order. Font size and type, page margins, and paragraph spacing and text spacing were also reformatted to be more consistent and readable.

Incorporation of 2026 FDA Model Food Code

Program Self-Assessment and Verification Audit Forms for all nine Standards and corresponding worksheets that previously referenced the 2022 FDA Model Food Code have been updated to reflect the 2026 FDA Model Food Code.

The 2026 Voluntary National Retail Food Regulatory Program Standards workbook primarily reflects an incorporation of the recently approved changes that resulted from the 2025 Conference for Food Protection held in Denver, CO. In addition to these recommendations and changes from FDA, the workbook also contains editorial corrections throughout to correct for spelling, grammar, and date errors from previous editions.