

To: FDA Commissioner
560 Fishers Lane
Rockville, Maryland 20857

Fax: (301) 827-1412
E-mail: execsec@oc.fda.gov

From: J. BARTON

1387 APR 26 PM 21nd St.
7952 Bloomington, MN 55425

As a member of the Center for Science in the Public Interest, I urge you to invest more resources to ensure that:

- 1 ■ food labels completely and accurately list the presence of all known allergens, including those used in flavorings,
- 2 ■ food manufacturers adopt measures to prevent the unintentional contamination of their products with undeclared food allergens; and
- 3 ■ food manufacturers include a toll-free telephone number on their labels that consumers can call for more information about ingredients.

See article enclosed please!!

FDA: Labels often don't list allergy triggers

New York Times

An investigation of dozens of food companies by the Food and Drug Administration has found that in spite of strict labeling laws, as many as 25 percent of manufacturers failed to list common ingredients that can cause potentially fatal allergic reactions.

The labeling omissions may pose a threat to the about 7 million Americans who suffer from food allergies and who rely on a product's packaging to keep them safe, the FDA said.

There has been a sharp increase in the amount of food recalled from store shelves for containing allergy-provoking ingredients, such as peanuts and eggs, that were not listed on a product's label. Worried about the trend, the FDA enlisted state regulators in Minnesota and Wisconsin to determine the extent of the problem and correct it at the source.

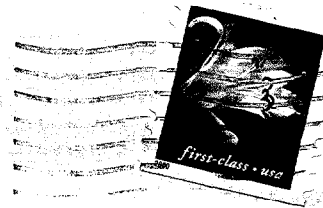
In the past two years, the agency examined 85 companies that were likely to use common allergy triggers:

cookiemakers, candy companies and ice cream manufacturers. Its report, which was completed earlier this year, found that a quarter of the companies made products with raw ingredients, such as nuts, but omitted them from the labels.

Only slightly more than half the manufacturers checked their products to ensure that all the ingredients were accurately reflected on the labels, the report said, making it more difficult for consumers to know which foods might trigger allergic life-threatening reactions.

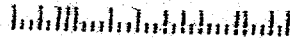
"The fact that ingredient listings can be dead wrong certainly points to major shortfalls in food safety," said Caroline Smith DeWaal, food safety director at the Center for Science in the Public Interest. "The accuracy of a label can really save a life."

The FDA report does not discuss the prevalence of food allergies, but every year 30,000 people are rushed to emergency rooms because of the problem, according to the American Academy of Allergy, Asthma and Immunology, and as many as 200 of them die.



05 29 01

FDA Commissioner
5600 Fishers Lane
Rockville MD 20857





Janet Barton
1307 E 92nd St.
Minneapolis, MN 5542