

# RESTAURANT FOOD TRACEABILITY CHECKLIST



NATIONAL  
RESTAURANT  
ASSOCIATION

ServSafe  
National Restaurant Association

The Food and Drug Administration's (FDA) Food Traceability Rule was created to identify foods that are potentially causing foodborne illness and rapidly remove them from the marketplace.

## RESTAURANT-FOCUSED ACTION ITEMS

- Read the FDA's [Food Traceability Rule](#).
- Attend [webinars](#), informational sessions and read information about what other organizations are doing to prepare to follow the Rule.
- To determine if the restaurant qualifies for full or partial exemptions, download the Restaurant Traceability Evaluation.
- Download & read the National Restaurant Association's [Restaurant Food Traceability Rule Guidance](#) document. Become familiar with the Rule terminology and requirements.
- Review the [Food Traceability List](#). Go through the restaurant menu and recipes and identify which Food Traceability List Foods are used in the restaurant(s).
- Make a list of the FTL Foods used and who supplies them to the restaurant.
- Determine how the restaurant will collect and store the required FTL Foods information or if suppliers will do this for the restaurant.
- Consider setting up a [new electronic data storage system](#) to store/share the required Key Data Elements information for the FTL Foods or determine if one or more of the restaurant's existing systems can be modified to store/share this information.
- Document a Food Traceability Plan and train staff on any procedures or practices necessary to carry out the plan consistently. See this [sample Traceability Plan](#) for an example of what it might look like.
- Determine if you will need any new technology, equipment, or processes to comply with the Rule.
- Train staff in any new systems, processes, and new technology.
- Conduct a traceability information request practice session. Pick an FTL Food and see if the restaurant could provide the required KDE information to the FDA within 24 hours. Keep track of what went well and what went wrong. Use this information to make improvements.

## DISTRIBUTOR/SUPPLIER- FOCUSED ACTION ITEMS

- Talk with your distributors, discuss if they are required to follow the Rule or if they are exempt.
- Have conversations with your suppliers, distributors, and/or enterprise resource planners to discuss how they will share, capture, verify and store the KDEs.
- Consider requesting that your distribution center/ suppliers keep track of the FTL Food KDEs for the restaurant.
- To ensure compliance and protect your restaurant, have a formal written agreement with your Distribution Center/suppliers related to them for storing and providing access to the KDE information for products you order.
- Verify that your supplier(s)/distributor(s) can:
  - Send/provide access to the KDE information that a restaurant is required to collect/keep.
  - and provide proof that all the previous supplier(s)/ distributor(s) that have had the FTL food in their possession are keeping all the CTE/KDE information that they are required to keep.
- Determine a process to verify that the Traceability Lot Codes for the products you received match the TLCs your supplier indicated they sent. Work with your supplier to determine how any TLC errors will be addressed.

**CTE:** Critical Tracking Event  
**FTL Foods:** Food Traceability List Foods  
**KDE:** Key Data Elements  
**Rule:** Food Traceability Rule  
**TLC:** Traceability Lot Code

*Please see the Restaurant Food Traceability Guidance Document for definitions and more details on these terms.*