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What Cos. Must Know About New Sesame Allergen Labeling

On April 23, President Joe Biden signed into law the Food Allergy Safety, Treatment, Education and Research, or FASTER, Act, S. 578, making sesame the ninth major food allergen under the Federal Food, Drug and Cosmetic Act.

Effective Jan. 1, 2023, the FASTER Act requires food manufacturers to list sesame as an allergen on food labels. This act represents the first time a new allergen has been added to the list that the Food Allergen Labeling and Consumer Protection Act established as major food allergens.

In addition to the labeling mandate, the listing of sesame as a major food allergen has implications for the hazard analysis and preventive controls plans for facilities that handle sesame, under the Food Safety Modernization Act.

As background, food allergies affect approximately 7.6% of children and 10.8% of adults, and sesame allergies in particular have increased in recent years. Food allergies occur when a person's immune system reacts to certain proteins in food as a threat.

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