

## KOMBUCHA AT RETAIL INDUSTRY GUIDANCE

### Section 5K-4.0050, Florida Administrative Code (F.A.C.)

Kombucha is a fermented beverage made from tea leaves with a starter culture, known as a SCOBY (symbiotic culture of bacteria and yeast). The following are food safety concerns regarding this process:

- The cooked plant (tea) is held at room temperature for numerous hours.
- The pH can become so low it is harmful for consumption.
- The fermentation process produces alcohol.

Per our regulations, any food item containing over 0.5% alcohol cannot be sold as food. An alcohol content over 0.5% changes the classification of the product to alcoholic and therefore regulated by the Department of Business and Professional Regulations, Division of Alcohol and Tobacco.

If your bottled Kombucha has a refrigerated shelf life of greater than 7 days, you will need to submit validation for the extended refrigerated shelf life.

The Department requires that a Special Process Approval (SPA) application be completed and submitted with all supporting documentation as stated in the instructions for evaluation and acceptance.

#### Documentation Requirements:

- **SPA application**
- **HACCP plan:** Provide an adequate HACCP plan with copies of potential monitoring records.
- **Validated Process:** This is a document obtained from a certified laboratory, called a Process Authority, which will test both your process and your food to see if the result is safe and wholesome. Please go to [www.afdo.org/foodprocessing](http://www.afdo.org/foodprocessing) to locate a Process Authority.
- **Food Process Flow Diagram:** This will illustrate the flow of food throughout the process. It must include the food ingredients and their amounts as well as their CCP points.
- **Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs):** Step-by-step description of the entire process from start to the finished food product. Include ingredients/amounts, each preparation step, method(s) of storage/distribution and display for sale, labels (include use by date, etc.), lot identification code system and how you track each lot, and calibration of applicable instruments.
- **Sanitation Standard Operating Procedures (SSOP):** These are the cross-contamination strategies and sanitation practices for your operation. State how things will be cleaned, how often, with what sanitizer and at what concentration, etc. Careful to include all surfaces (tables, cutting boards), as well as all pieces of equipment and utensils required for making the product.
- **Food employee and supervisory training plan:** This is a document which outlines how those involved in this special process will be trained in all procedures and plans associated with this process.
- **Floorplan:** Layout of the processing area; include equipment placement involved in the process. Does not have to be professionally created but should be as accurate as possible.



- **Any other pertinent, applicable documentation to ensure the safety of the finished product.**

Please submit all required materials along with a completed Special Process Approval application to:  
[RetailHACCPspa@FDACS.gov](mailto:RetailHACCPspa@FDACS.gov)

If after review all submitted materials are acceptable, the operator will receive written notification from the Department stating the SPA has been granted and what supporting documents the Department has accepted. These documents must be kept on site where the production of kombucha is taking place and made available to the regulatory authority upon request. The inspector will review the documentation and ensure the establishment is implementing the accepted plans/procedures and retaining monitoring records as required to document proof of control.

**1-800 HELP FLA**  
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