
**Rural Development, Agriculture &
Natural Resources Committee**

HB 1698

Brief Description: Prohibiting latex gloves in the handling and preparation of food for sale to consumers.

Sponsors: Representatives Shewmake, Ryu, Ramel, Peterson, Tharinger, Pollet and Harris-Talley.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Prohibits the use of latex gloves in food establishments, cottage food operations, and food processing plants.

Hearing Date: 1/21/22

Staff: Rebecca Lewis (786-7339).

Background:

Food Service Standards.

The United States Food and Drug Administration (FDA) provides guidance to state and local agencies regarding safe food service practices (Food Code). The FDA developed the Food Code in cooperation with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the United States Department of Agriculture to provide current enforcement standards for safe food service practices.

The Washington State Board of Health (Board) is authorized to establish minimum standards for the prevention and control of food borne illnesses. Local jurisdictions may adopt more stringent standards. The Board's rules direct food service establishments in the areas of food supplies,

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food protection, public health labeling, food preparation, temperature control, personal hygiene, garbage and litter, sanitary equipment, and pest control. The Board considers the most recent version of the FDA's Food Code when adopting rules for food service. Under rules adopted by the Board, food employees may not contact ready-to-eat food with their bare hands, and instead must use suitable utensils such as deli tissue, spatulas, tongs, or single use gloves.

Food Establishments and Food Processing Plants.

Food establishments are operations that store, prepare, package, serve, and vend food directly to the consumer, or otherwise provides food for human consumption. Food establishments include restaurants, food banks, and markets. Food establishments do not include food processing plants, which are commercial operations that manufacture, package, label, or store food for human consumption, and provide food for sale or distribution to other business entities.

Cottage Food Operations.

Cottage food operations are businesses where a person may produce certain non-hazardous food products in a home kitchen for direct sale to a consumer and are permitted by the Washington State Department of Agriculture (WSDA). Examples of products that may be produced under a cottage food permit are baked goods, jams, jellies, fruit butters, and preserves. By statute, all persons involved in the processing and packaging of cottage food products must avoid bare hand contact with ready-to-eat foods through the use of single-service gloves, bakery papers, tongs, or other utensils.

Summary of Bill:

The use of latex gloves in food establishments, cottage food operations, and food processing plants is prohibited beginning January 1, 2024. Types of nonlatex gloves that may be used instead include gloves made of nitrile, polyethylene, or vinyl.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.