

**Annual Trend
Report**
2021





Table of Contents

1. 2021 At A Glance

- a. Figure 1-A: Live Reporting 2021

2. Product Categories

- a. Figure 2-A: Recalls by Major Product Category – **amended 2/22/22*
- b. Figure 2-B: Breakdown of *Produce* Category

3. Ethylene Oxide Impact

- a. Figure 3-A: Top Reasons for Recall (Europe)
- b. Figure 3-B: Breakdown of *Other Foods* Category

4. Non-Food Breakdown

- a. Figure 4-A: Recalls of Non-Foods

5. Reasons for Recall

- a. Figure 5-A: Global Reasons for Recall
- b. Figure 5-B: Allergen Breakdown

2021 At A Glance

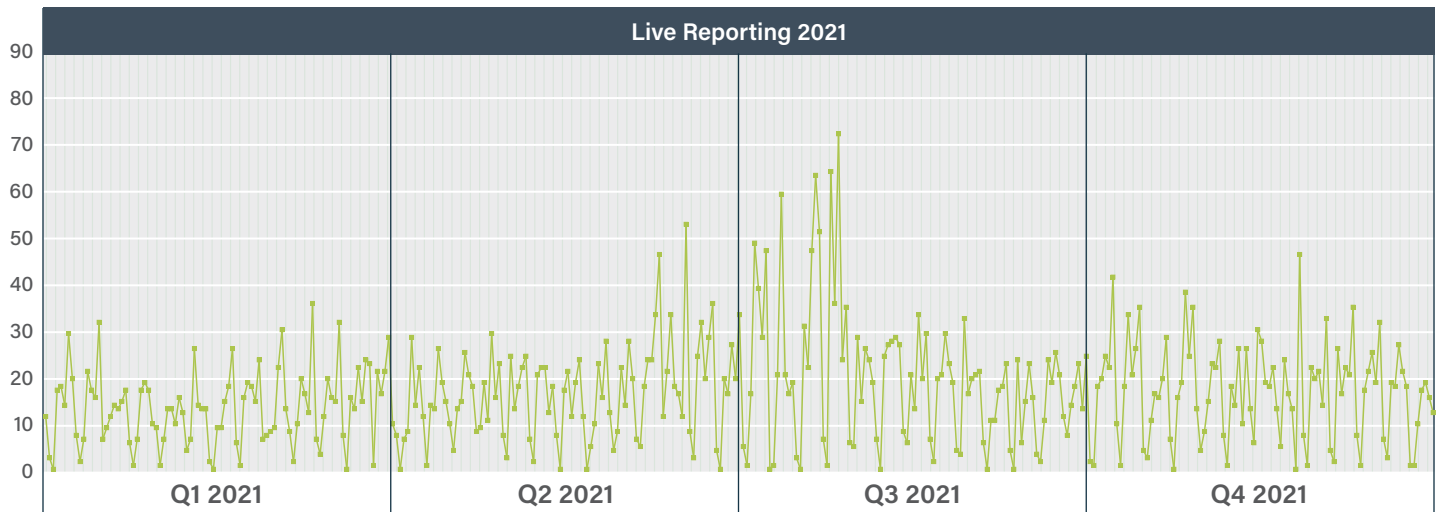


Figure 1-A

5,000
alerts

1,013
related to allergens

763
organic products

87%
from non-agency
sources

2%
resulted in reactions,
illnesses, injuries, or deaths

25%
Class I Recalls
(US & Canada)

In an ongoing effort to commit to food and consumer safety, the FDA announced its Foodborne Outbreak Response Improvement Plan this year. It will focus on four priority areas, aiming to curb outbreaks associated with food; tech-enabled product traceback, root-cause investigations, analysis and dissemination of outbreak data, and operational improvements. This plan is part of the organization’s larger effort to implement the Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA) and its New Era of Smarter Food Safety initiative.

Product Categories

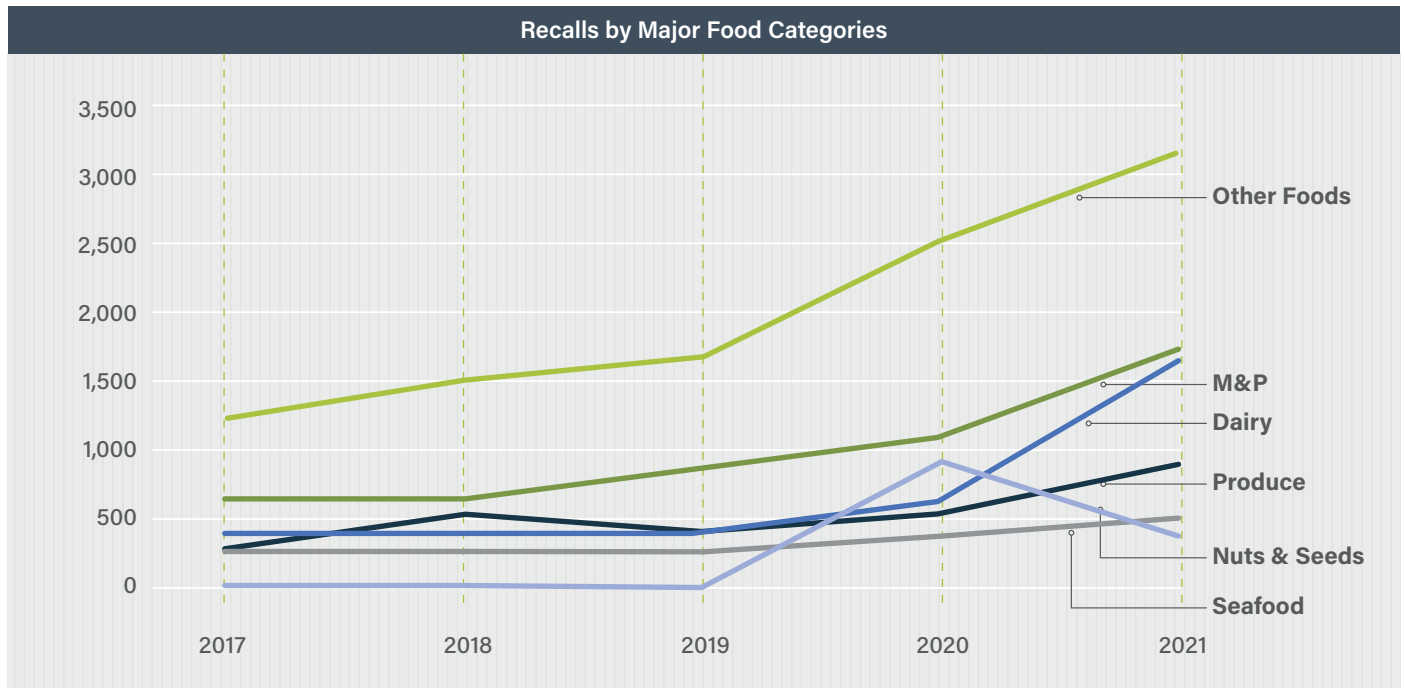


Figure 2-A
*amended 2/22/22

FoodTrack's *Other Foods* category continued to show high numbers this year as a result of Ethylene Oxide-related recalls. While 2020 was characterized by an increase in recalls in the Nuts & Seeds category, many cereals, grains, and bakery items continued to be recalled this year as the pesticide was found in both ingredients and finished goods throughout Europe.

A rise in the *Produce* category can be attributed to pathogenic outbreaks impacting leafy greens. While there were four larger pathogen-related events throughout the year, the investigation by the FDA of Bright Farms and their Controlled Environment Agriculture (CAE) hydroponic farming operation was the first of its kind. While a root cause was not identified at the close of the investigation, the agency stated that certain conditions and practices pertaining to storage, water management, and sanitation did not necessarily do enough to prevent the introduction or spread of pathogenic microorganisms.

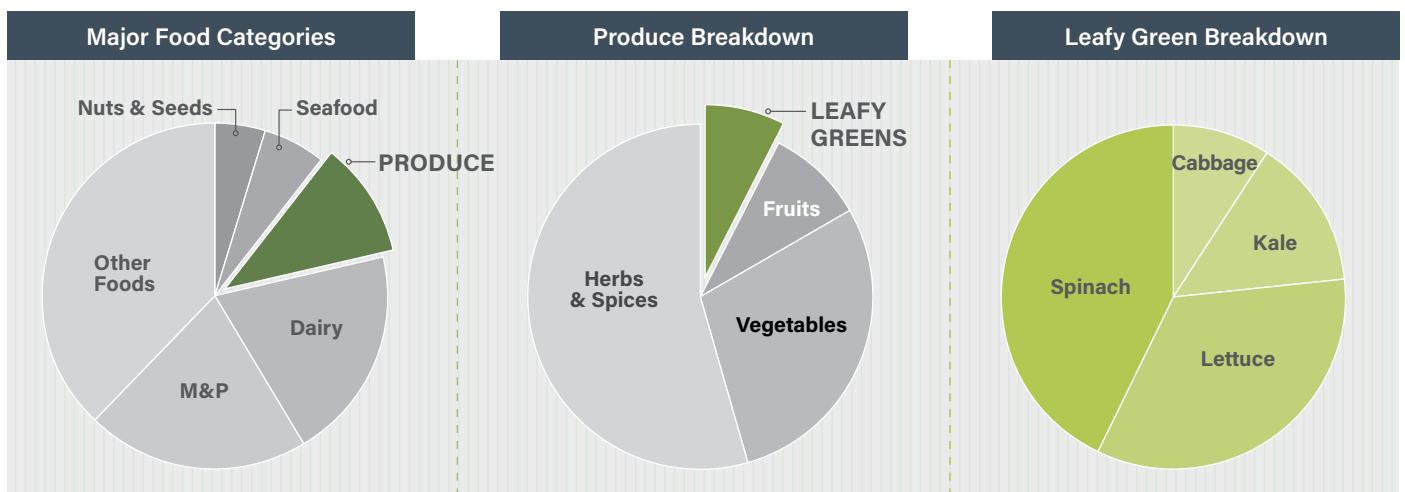


Figure 2-B

Ethylene Oxide Impact

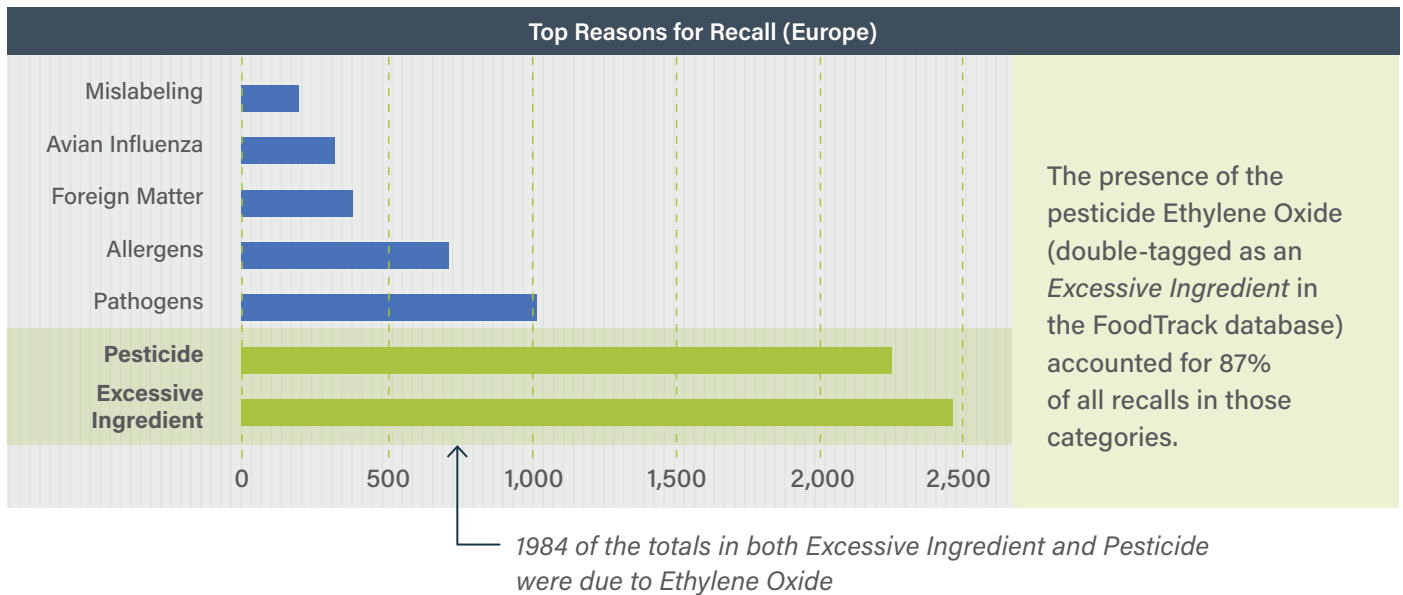


Figure 3-A

While Allergens and Pathogens are typically the most common recall across the board for all regions, the past few years have been upended by an abundance of Ethylene Oxide-related recalls. Alerts from 2020 showed that raw ingredients such as sesame seeds were recalled in large numbers — this has shifted in 2021 to reflect more processed products, including items such as breads, pastas, and prepared meals. The most recent influx of recalls has included ice cream and sorbet products that were prepared using stabilizers such as guar gum and xanthan gum which had been treated with Ethylene Oxide.

This event continues to involve new products that use raw ingredients impacted by the use of Ethylene Oxide. As these processed foods have a long shelf-life, it is expected that numbers due to this cause will remain high for the foreseeable future. As illustrated by Figure 4-B below, our *Other Foods* category has shown high numbers of these processed foods in 2021.

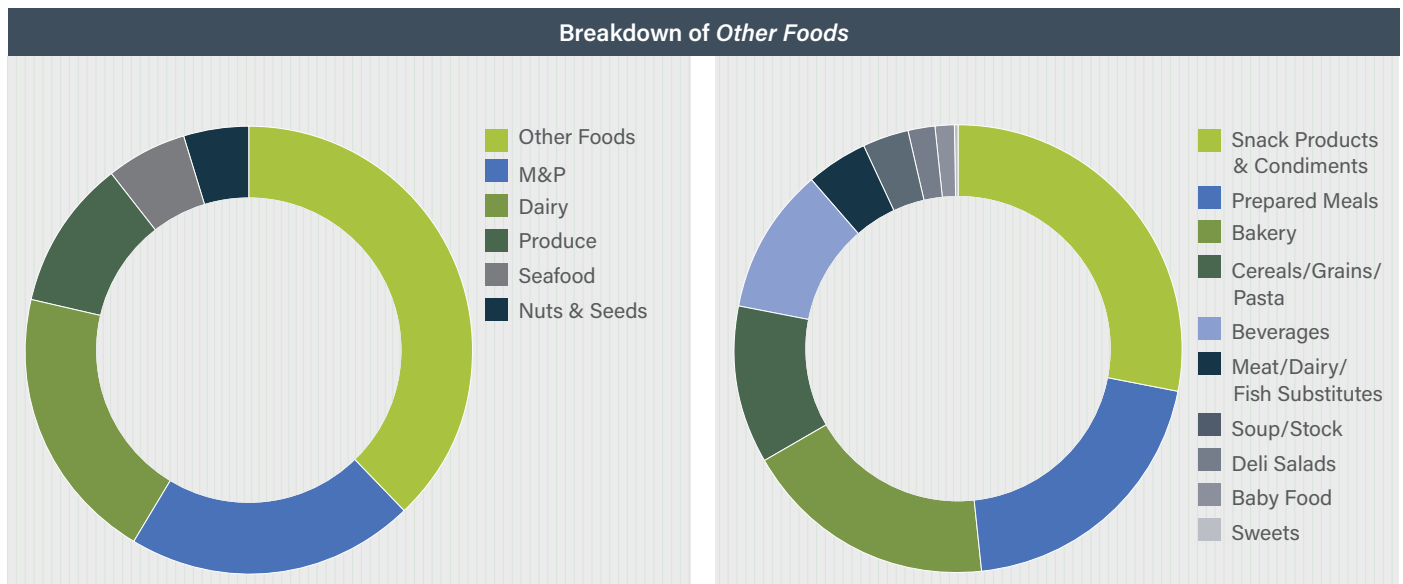


Figure 3-B

Non-Food Breakdown

Historically, FoodTrack has only reported US Gen. Mdse. reports — Beginning in April 2021, this was expanded to include reports from Canada, which explains the increase of Gen. Mdse. recalls starting that month.

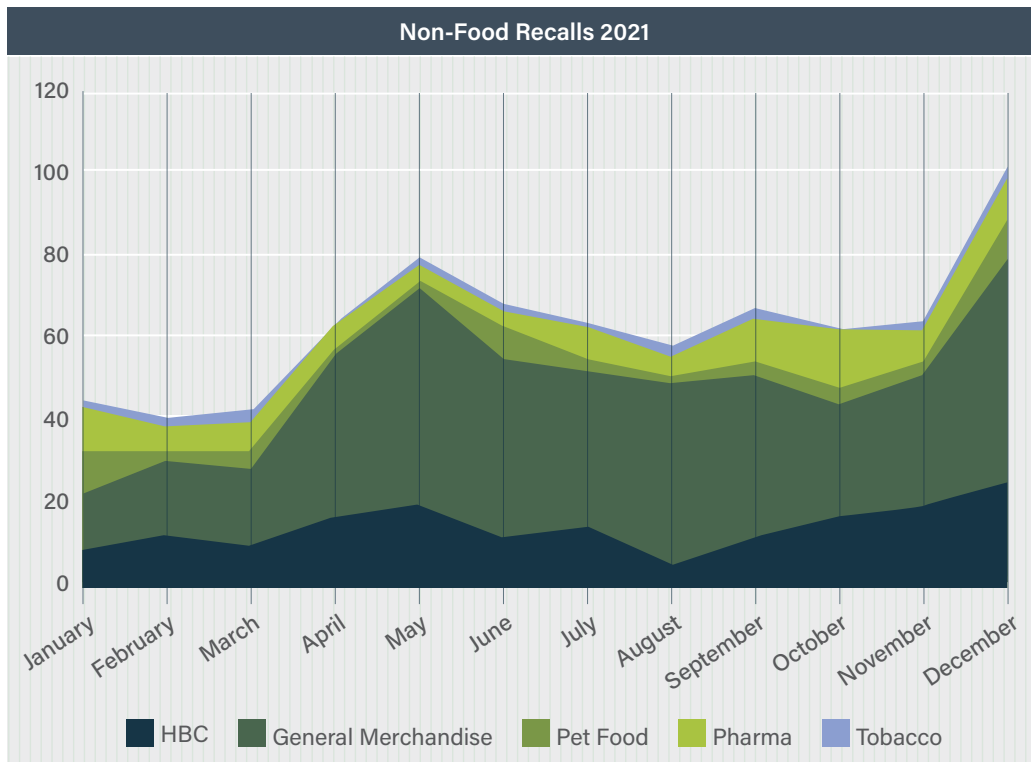


Figure 4-A

There were several non-food recall events that ended up stretching on for months and requiring dozens of updates in 2021. Unacceptable levels of NDMA, a carcinogen, caused multiple pharmaceutical companies to recall ranitidine from the market, resulting in a total of 32 updates done by FoodTrack. Hand sanitizers originating from Canada and Mexico recalled for toxic ingredients such as ethanol resulted in 23 and 37 individual updates, respectively. And essential oils distributed in the United States were recalled for not adhering to child resistant packaging guidelines, with over 40 related recalls reported by FoodTrack.

Updates are proof that recall events — and consequently FoodTrack publishing — does not stop after any initial recall is announced. We continue to update throughout the duration of a recall, every time there is an expansion or important information is added. Depending on the situation, you may see upwards of 40 or 50 updates. This is especially true when the recalled product is an ingredient or has a wide distribution range.

Reasons for Recall

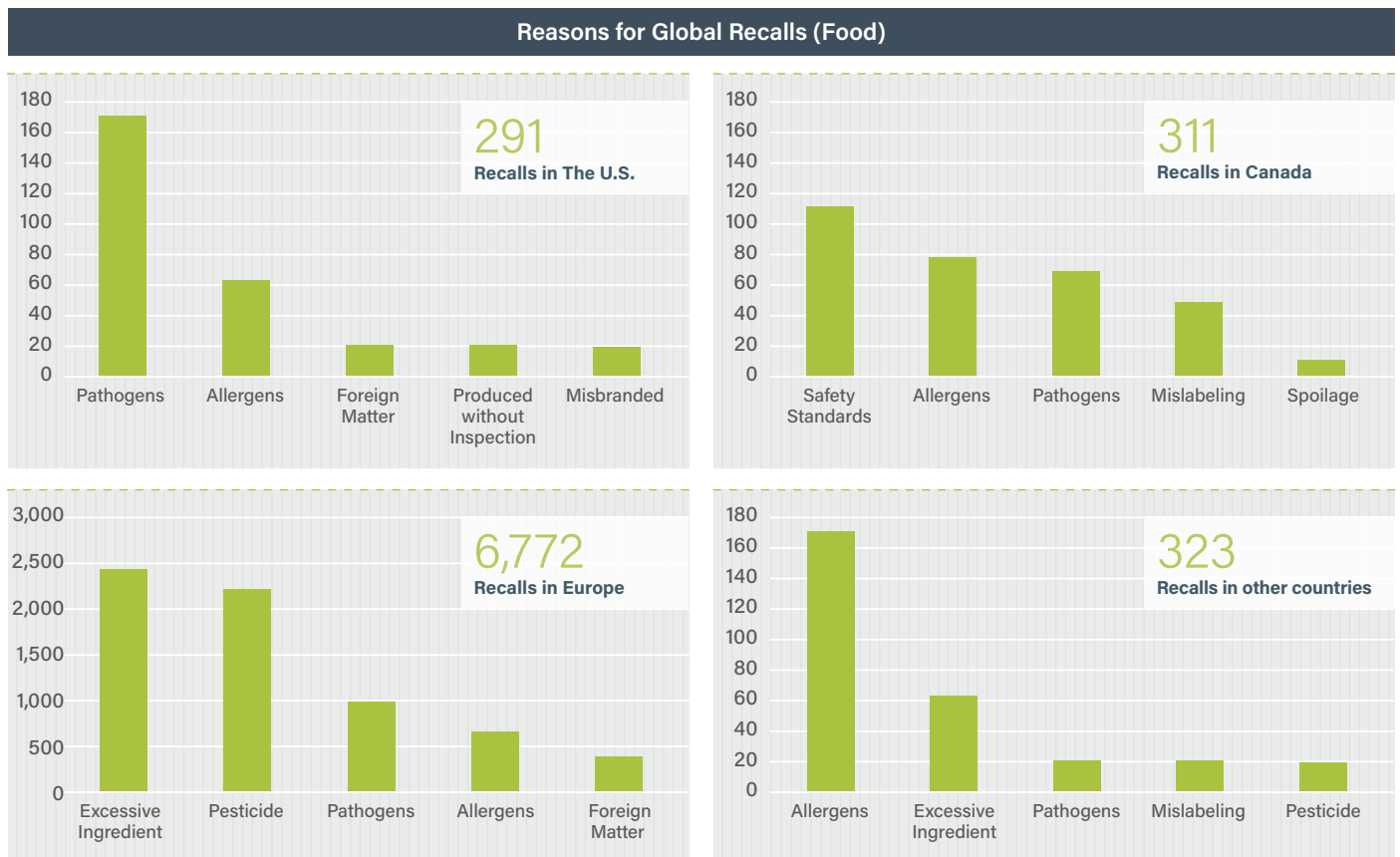


Figure 5-A

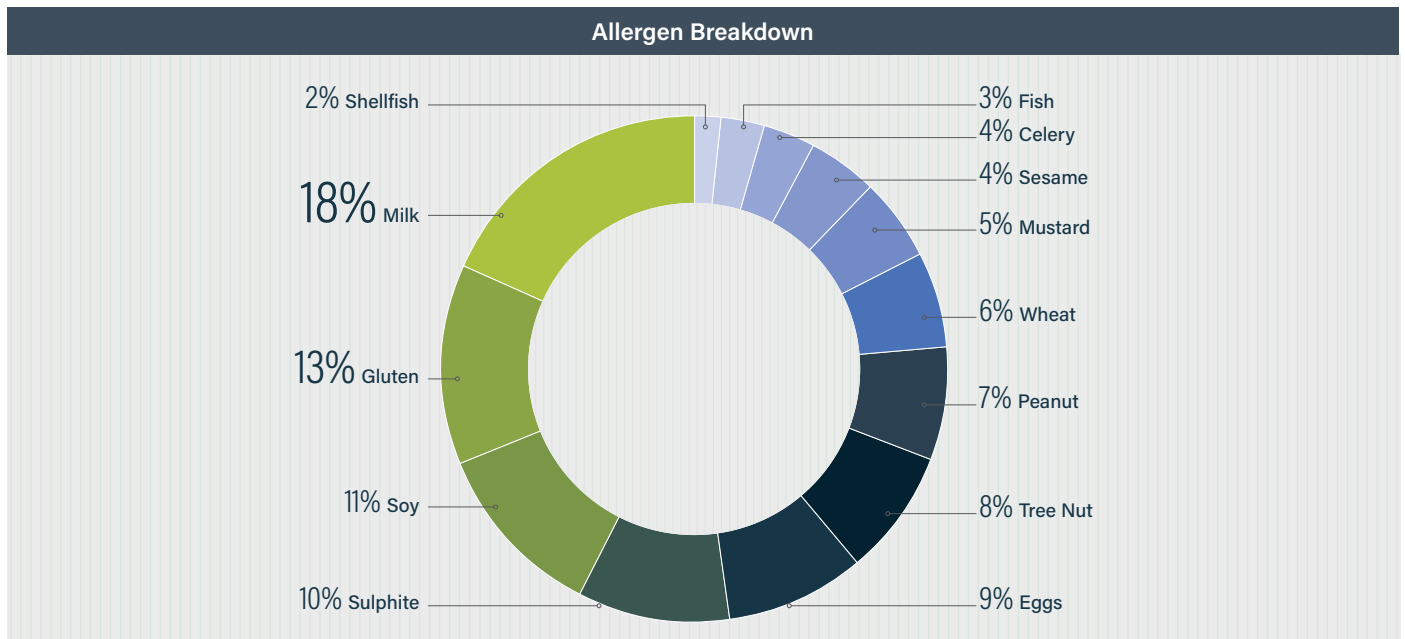


Figure 5-B

If you have any inquiries about this report or if you would like to request a custom report, please email recalls@foodtrack.net.