



Press Release

AAFA Boosts Advocacy Efforts on FASTER Act; Bill Will Require Food Companies to List Sesame on Labels

Sesame is a food safety issue for one million Americans; Bill also promotes food allergy research



Washington, D.C., March 4th, 2021 – Overnight the Senate passed Act, S.578. The FASTER acronym stands for Food Allergy Safety, Treatment, and Research Act. Not only will the FASTER Act expand food allergy awareness, it will also declare sesame the 9th major food allergen recognized by law in the United States.

The Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America (AAFA) remains a driving force behind making sure sesame gets added to the list of major allergens food manufacturers will have to include on labels. Sesame labeling would not be included in the FASTER Act without AAFA's hard work and advocacy on behalf of the more than 32 million Americans living with food allergies.

Over one million people in the U.S. have an allergy to sesame. It's also a major allergy for people across the globe and is already listed as a top allergen in some countries. With AAFA leading the way, several food allergy groups have been working as a collaborative to encourage lawmakers and the Food and Drug Administration to make sure sesame is officially declared a top allergen.

“We almost crossed the finish line with the FASTER Act in 2020. But Congress ran out of time to get it done. The Senate's quick action on this only recently reintroduced bill is extremely encouraging,” said Kenneth Mendez, CEO, and president of the Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America. “We're hoping the House will be just as quick to act. Making the FASTER Act law will have a huge impact on safety and improving the lives of all Americans, especially those living with sesame allergies. This effort has involved great collaboration between different groups over many years to get where we are today. We're thankful for Congressional supporters, fellow food allergy groups and active community voices.”

The FASTER Act (H.R.1202) is now in the House for consideration. We still need our community's help. We encourage everyone to keep contacting their representatives in the House to get the job done so the FASTER Act can be sent to the president's desk to be signed into law. Advocacy efforts through AAFA's [Kids With Food Allergies](#) division can be supported here: [Tell Congress to Support the Food Allergy Safety, Treatment, Education, and Research Act \(FASTER Act\) Now!](#)

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About AAFA

Founded in 1953, AAFA is the oldest and largest non-profit patient organization dedicated to saving lives and reducing the burden of disease for people with asthma, allergies and related conditions through research, education, advocacy and support. AAFA offers extensive support for individuals and families affected by asthma and allergic diseases, such as food allergies and atopic dermatitis (eczema). Through its online patient support communities, network of local chapters and affiliated support groups, AAFA empowers patients and their families by providing practical, evidence-based information and community programs and services. AAFA is the only asthma and allergy patient advocacy group that is certified to meet the standards of excellence set by the National Health Council. For more information, visit www.aafa.org.