

Lab 1: Introduction

CS 410W Spoiler Alert

Lab 1 Introduction

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1 Problem

Food recalls are always relevant, and keeping up with this information is anything but easy. It almost feels like all the tools needed to look into these recalls and keep them up to date are intentionally separate and inconvenient to use. This information must be easily accessible to the public; without it, not only do consumers stand to be at risk of illnesses and allergies, but companies themselves can be liable to lawsuits and controversy.

1.1 Who is Affected

The truth of the matter is, everyone is affected by recalls or the lack thereof. Parents who are trying to feed their kids, individuals with allergies who must be cautious with what they are putting into their bodies, or immunocompromised individuals can't afford to make any kind of mistake. Or the other end of the spectrum, where producers like Farmers need to know about chemicals or produce they use being recalled, or stores and restaurants that want to avoid the trouble that comes with dealing with recalled products, too little too late.

1.2 Problem Characteristics

All of these issues feed off of each other; there's the awareness gap, where FDA/USDA announcements make their way to the average person slowly, leaving consumers unaware. Then there are the customization, engagement, and urgency gaps, where most consumers don't even think about how important these recalls can be, since there are no reliable, consistent channels for feeding relevant information to the public, as well as no way to tailor to these individuals.

2 Solution

Spoiler Alert aims to solve these problems by being a one-size-fits-all tool with push notifications, receipt/barcode scanning, and the ability to tailor to a user's needs and concerns, like allergies specific to them, with reliable data directly from the FDA and USDA.