FOOD SERVICE VENDORS

The listings on the previous page (meat, baked goods, eggs, produce, dairy, acidified foods and pet treats) all fall under the category of "Farm Market Vendor" in which one receives home inspection prior to beginning their operation and brings prepackaged foods to the market. **This section pertains to "Food Service Vendors" who prepare food and offer it for sale on-site at a Farmers' Market.**

Food Service Vendors must undergo inspection at the Market. VDACS inspects vendors at government run markets and the Health Department inspects vendors at privately sponsored markets.

Food Service Vendors and vendors giving out samples must have an on-site utensil and equipment washing set up that includes three basins: one each for washing, rinsing, and sanitization (using appropriate strength of chlorine or quaternary ammonium). Utensils should be cleaned when you are changing between raw and ready to eat foods, between raw fruits and vegetables and potentially hazardous foods, or if they have been contaminated.

Practice general good hygiene. Hands must be washed frequently at an on-site hand washing station. Avoid bare-hand contact with ready to eat foods and use gloves, tongs, deli paper, etc.

Food Protection: Overhead protection for vendor is required (tent, canopy, awning, table umbrella, permanent structure, etc.) Preparation must occur on smooth cleanable surfaces such as tables. Slicing must be done on cutting boards. Use wrapping or other effective barriers to protect from customer handling. Stored food should be in a clean, dry location, preferably off of the ground.

Temperature Control: Hot Holding is 135°F or higher and Cold Holding is 41°F or lower. Use a calibrated probe thermometer to ensure you are meeting the required temperatures. Ice should be drained frequently.

VDACS CONTACTS FOR MORE INFORMATION …

Pam Miles, Program Supervisor
Food Safety & Security Program
Richmond, VA – 804-786-3520
pamela.miles@vdacs.virginia.gov

Barry Jones, Inspection Manager
Office of Meat and Poultry Services
Lynchburg, VA – 434-947-2280
barry.jones@vdacs.virginia.gov

Connie White, Compliance Officer
Office of Plant Industry Services
Feed Licensing and Registrations
Richmond, VA – 804-371-2667
connie.white@vdacs.virginia.gov

Richard Keller, Regional Supervisor
Office of Weights and Measures
Harrisonburg, VA – 540-209-9145
richard.keller@vdacs.virginia.gov

Kate Weakley, **Food Safety Specialist**
Roanoke, VA – 804-786-3520
kate.weakley@vdacs.virginia.gov

John Beers, Program Supervisor or
Donna Bonner, Regional Manager
Office of Dairy and Foods
Richmond, VA – 804-786-1452
john.beers@vdacs.virginia.gov
donna.bonner@vdacs.virginia.gov

Starting a Food Business, Regulations, Food Labels, Acidified Foods Publications
http://pubs.ext.vt.edu/author/b/bacon_karleigh-res.html

For more general information, please contact:

Cathryn Kloetzli, Extension Agent, Agriculture & Natural Resources - cathrynk@vt.edu
Christine Kastan, Extension Agent, Family & Consumer Sciences - cakastan@vt.edu
Virginia Cooperative Extension - Albemarle County Office
460 Stagecoach Road Charlottesville, VA 22902 – (434) 872-4580

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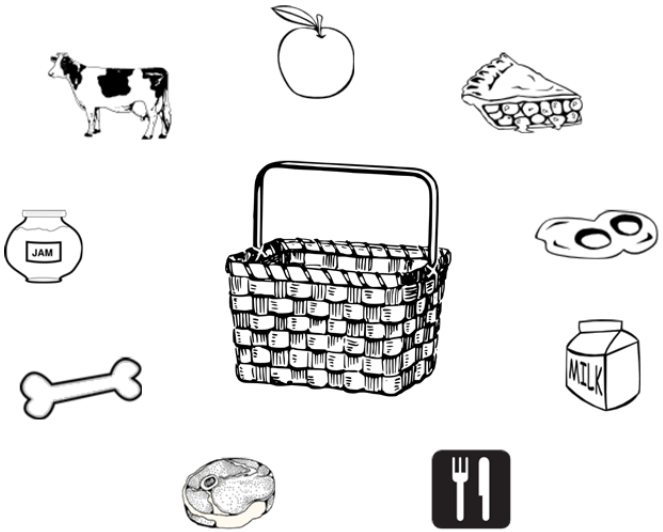
GOING TO MARKET



A Beginners Guide to Selling Goods at the Farmers' Market

Most home-based operations must first be inspected prior to selling any goods at the Farmers' Market. The Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (VDACS) is the aggregate through which most food endeavors will be processed. On the following pages are some general points about various foods, as well as numbers to contact to get started on your journey to selling goods at the market.

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MEAT

INSPECTION

All meat that is to be sold must be slaughtered at a USDA/state-inspected facility. The Office of Meat and Poultry Services (OMPS) provides free inspections for amenable species (cattle, hogs, sheep, goats, chickens, turkeys, ducks, geese, guineas, ratites and squabs).

EXEMPTIONS

- 1,000 Bird Exemption
- 20,000 Bird Exemption
- Custom Exemption: with permit from OMPS, allows businesses to slaughter animals, only for their owners consumption, without an inspector present.

LABELING

1. Product Name
2. List of Ingredients
3. Net Weight
4. Name/address of Responsible Party
5. Inspection Legend (number of the plant that did the work for you)
6. Safe Handling Statement

For Custom Exemption: "NOT FOR SALE"; 20,000 Bird Poultry Exemption Label, if applicable.

AT MARKET

Keep products at 41°F or lower.

BAKED GOODS

INSPECTION

Home-based food operations can process, prepare and sell candies, jams and jellies (no low-acid ingredients), and baked goods that don't require temperature control, if they are sold to an individual for that person's own consumption.

LABELING

Label must contain:

1. Product name
2. Net weight
3. Ingredient statement
4. Name and address of manufacturer, distributor, or packer
5. Nutritional labeling (exemptions apply)
6. List of allergens

If under the above exemption, product must be labeled with the following: "NOT FOR RESALE—PROCESSED AND PREPARED WITHOUT STATE INSPECTION"

AT MARKET

If providing samples, prepare them at an approved, inspected facility prior to arriving at the market. Cut baked goods into pieces at an inspected facility, place them on a tray, insert a toothpick into each piece, and keep the tray covered in plastic wrap.

EGGS

INSPECTION

Exempt from Virginia Egg Law and do not need inspection if selling less than 150 dozen of your own eggs per week or less than 60 dozen of another producer's eggs per week.

LABELING

1. Product Name (term "fresh eggs" can only be used if product meets requirement for Grade A or higher)
2. Safe Handling Instructions
2. Name and Address of Packer
3. Grade (AA, A, B) or "Ungraded" if not inspected

AT MARKET

Eggs must be clean and held at 41°F or lower at all times. Note that reusing egg cartons runs the risk of contamination; consider asking patrons to bring their own.

PRODUCE

INSPECTION

If you only grow and sell fresh fruits and vegetables, you do not need to be inspected. However, if you grow sprouts for distribution to restaurants or retail stores, you are classified as a food manufacturer and are required to be under inspection.

AT MARKET

Most fruits and vegetables only require basic coverage for protection from outside contamination, but since melon is a Potentially Hazardous Food*, cut melon, cut leafy greens, and cut tomatoes must be held at 41F or lower. This applies to samples as well.

***Potentially Hazardous Foods (PHFs)** require temperature control because they are capable of supporting the growth of various infectious microorganisms or toxins. Some PHFs include meats, dairy products, eggs, mushrooms, cut melons, cut tomatoes, cut leafy greens, and heat-treated plant food such as cooked rice, beans, and vegetables.

DAIRY

INSPECTION

All dairy products to be sold must be inspected. The sale of raw milk is prohibited. The sale of cheese made from raw milk that has not been aged a minimum of sixty days above 35 degrees is also prohibited. Contact the Office of Dairy and Foods at VDACS.

LABELING

1. Product Name
2. Net Weight
3. Ingredient Statement
4. Name and Address of Manufacturer/Distributor
5. Sell-by date

AT MARKET

Keep frozen products frozen and all other products at 41°F or lower. If storing products on ice, drain frequently. Products may be stored and offered for sale a maximum of 7 days after being mixed, handled, cut, wrapped, or packaged at market. Un-refrigerated samples may be left out for tasting no more than 4 hours (any leftovers at that point cannot be re-cooled or used again, they must be thrown away).

ACIDIFIED FOODS/OTHER

INSPECTION

Low acid and acidified low-acid foods (pickled products, salsa, pumpkin/sweet potato butter, barbeque sauces, chow-chow, relishes, hot pepper jelly, hot sauces, garlic in oil, etc.) must be inspected. In addition, producers of low-acid and acidified foods must comply with relevant FDA regulations (21 CFR 113 or 21 CFR 114)

EXEMPTIONS

Honey Exemption: Residents who process and prepare honey in their private residence from hives they own, who sell less than 250 gallons of honey a year, and who do not process or sell other foods are exempt from inspection.

LABELING

Label must contain:

1. Product name
2. Net weight
3. Ingredient statement
4. Name and address of manufacturer, distributor, or packer
5. Nutritional labeling (exemptions apply)
6. List of allergens

All low acid and acidifed foods must have a unique identifying code visible to the naked eye.

If under the honey exemption, honey must be labeled with the following: "PROCESSED AND PREPARED WITHOUT STATE INSPECTION. WARNING: Do Not Feed Honey to Infants Under One Year Old"

PET TREATS

INSPECTION

Home/facility inspection not required, but must obtain local licensing and permitting. Product registration may also be required.

LABELING

1. Product Name
2. Intended Species
3. Quantity Statement
4. Guaranteed Analysis
5. Ingredient Statement
6. Nutritional Adequacy Statement
7. Feeding Directions
8. Name and Address of Manufacturer/Distributor

AT MARKET

Can be sold either pre-packaged or in a bulk, self-serve style.