Department of Public Health
CITY OF PHILADELPHIA

Food Sampling Guidelines at Farmers' Markets

Some vendors may want to provide samples of their food at farmers' markets. Samples may be provided as long as safe food handling practices are followed. In order to safely sample your product, a temporary hand wash station must be provided for each vendor that is sampling. An approved hand wash station is an insulated container with a spigot that can stay open (no push buttons) and dispenses warm water (100°–120°F). Soap, paper towels and a container for waste water must also be provided.

General guidelines for all vendors that allow sampling of their products:

- All employees should practice good personal hygiene. Exclude any workers with symptoms of illness from handling food.
- No bare hand contact of ready-to-eat foods is permitted. Acceptable practices include using a napkin or gloves.
- All foods are from a licensed facility.
- Promote effective and frequent hand washing.
- Store pre-cleaned cutting boards and utensils in clean containers and replace them every four hours.

Sampling processed foods including bakery items, breads, crackers, jams, jellies, canned items:

- Pre-cut samples at an approved facility.
- Store pre-cut samples in cleaned and sanitized food grade containers.
- Keep all disposable items used to sample products (cups, napkins, etc.) off the ground and in a manner that prevents contamination (original packaging, clean containers).
- Potentially hazardous foods that require refrigeration must be kept below 41°F at all times.
- No homemade products may be sold or sampled.

Sampling fruits and vegetables:

- Samples may be cut and sampled on-site.
- No cutting of tomatoes or melons (any kind) on-site.
- All fruits and vegetables to be sampled must be rinsed thoroughly in clean water prior to sampling.
- Rinse products to be used for sampling in advance and store in disposable food bags.
- Fruit and vegetable sample servings must be protected from contamination at all times.

Sampling packaged, potentially hazardous foods including cheese, meet and seafood:

- Must be pre-cut at a licensed facility. Cannot be cut on-site.
- All pre-cut samples must be stored in cleaned and sanitized food grade containers
- Food that requires refrigeration must be kept below 41°F at all times.

Cooking demonstrations on-site:

- All food is from a licensed source. On-site food prep is permitted and must be pre- approved by the Office of Food Protection.
- Menus, list of ingredients, prep description and equipment specifications are needed for all on-site food prep. Some restrictions may apply.
- Follow all above food sampling guidelines.
- Complete and submit the Farmers Market Cooking Demo Food Handling Form to the Philadelphia Department of Public Health, Office of Food Protection, at least two weeks before the cooking demonstration is scheduled. The form is available at www.phila.gov/health/farmersmarkets.

For more information, contact Environmental Health Services

at 215-686-1230 or healthfarmersmarkets@phila.gov.

Philadelphia Department of Public Health, Environmental Health Services,

7801 Essington Avenue, Philadelphia, PA 19153