

FOOD SAFETY IN WASHINGTON STATE



Farmers' Markets and Food Processors

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Goals of Presentation

- Identify food safety concerns related to farmers' markets and food processors in Whitman County, Washington
- Identify regulations and requirements for these facilities
- Identify resources and contacts to assist in development and operation of these facilities
- Not to bore you to death while being informed!!



What is a "farmers' market"??

- A source for fresh and wholesome produce
- Added income for farmers
- A community event
- An open air food store or restaurant



What a Farmers' Market "IS NOT"

- A place to sell anything made or grown on the farm
- A place for retailers to "get rid" of overstock
- Outside the responsibilities of the public health department
- Exempt from government regulations



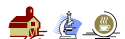
Farmers' Markets and Public Health

- Prevention of foodborne and other illnesses
- Educational partnerships with food vendors and market operators
- Public information campaigns
- Nutritional alternatives for families
- Safety of community



Fruits and Vegetables

- 88% of all produce-related outbreaks were associated with 5 fruits and vegetables:
 - Tomatoes
 - Melons
 - Lettuce and leafy greens
 - Sprouts
 - Green onions



Other Products



- Home-canned vegetables (*C. botulinum*)
- Tomatoes (*Salmonella*, *E. coli* O157:H7)
- Cantaloupes (*Salmonella*)



- Seed Sprouts (*E. coli* O157:H7, *Salmonella*)
- Berries (Parasites)



- Parsley, cilantro, basil, green onions (*Shigella*, Hepatitis A)



- Green leafy vegetables (Parasites, STEC)



- Juices (*Salmonella*, *E. coli* O157:H7, *Cryptosporidium*)



Causes of Illnesses

- The pathogen is resistant to low pH
- The produce takes up the pathogen by roots or stem scars
- Pathogen enters through bruises and cuts
- Pathogen forms barriers to protect from cleaning
- Wrinkles & crevices of produce can shelter pathogens



Farmers' Market Vendor's Role

- Grow or purchase produce/juice from producers who use Good Agricultural Practices (GAP's)
- Use only potable water to wash produce
- Prevent contamination of produce from
 - Infected workers
 - Chemicals, pesticides
 - Dirty equipment, storage containers, knives
- Refrigerate/ice if necessary
 - Cut melons, sprouts
 - Other potentially hazardous food
- Comply with Health Department Regulations and Recommendations



Producer's Role

- Use Good Agricultural Practices (GAPs) and consider:
 - Irrigation and wash water quality
 - Manure management & municipal biosolids
 - Worker health and hygiene
 - Sanitary facilities
 - Field equipment & packing house sanitation
- Consider certification programs
 - GAPs
 - Processing juice
 - Organic standards



Regulator's Role



- Conduct routine inspections of Farmers' Markets
- Provide vendors with information about food employee health, sanitation requirements and Good Agricultural Practices (GAPs)
- Work with Farmers' Market Associations to provide
 - Code updates
 - Training for vendors
 - Information about foodborne outbreaks related to produce and juice
- Educate consumers about produce safety



"THE GREEN BOOK"



Your one-stop-shop for information on the requirements for farmers' markets in Washington State



State & Local Department of Health

- Whitman County Health Department licenses retail food establishments that sell their food products directly to the consumer, including bakeries that sell less than 25% of their products through wholesale distribution.
- The Department of Health will monitor water systems to verify that the water you are using in your facility meets the potable water standards.



Farmers' Market vs Food Processor

- "Food processing" means the handling or processing of any food in any manner of preparation for sale for human consumption.
- This includes dried fruits, herbs, teas, baked goods, cider, and many other food products which are processed for wholesale distribution and food that is custom processed for another party.
- It does not mean fresh fruit or vegetables merely washed or trimmed while being prepared or packaged for sale in their natural state (69.07.01 RCW).



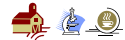
Food Processing In Washington State

- Food Processing is defined as, "the handling or processing of any food in any manner of preparation for sale for human consumption."
- All businesses selling processed foods direct to the consumer at farmers markets, on-farm, or any other location must obtain a Food Processors license from the WSDA Food Safety Program



WSDA Food Processor License

- Your business is processing and selling packaged foods,
- Your farm business processes low-acid canned foods (i.e. canned fish, vegetables, retorted pouches of fish, vegetables, etc.)
- You are producing a processed food and your farm business is not licensed by the county health department as a food service establishment.
- You are selling your processed food outside your county.



Licensed Products

- Licenses cover only those products, processes, and operations specified in the license application and approved for licensing by the Food Safety Officer (FSO).
- An amendment must be filed if the processor wishes to add another type of food product that is different than the products specified on their license.



Home Processing

- **Home Processing? Not Allowed, but...**
- When processed food is intended for resale to the public, the State Board of Health prohibits the processing of such food products in domestic sleeping or living quarters--this includes domestic kitchens.
- A processor may establish a separate facility to process food in their home. The processing area must be a separate area dedicated to the commercial processing operation only.



Department of Agriculture

- All processors who sell 5% or more of their processed food products through wholesale distribution networks.
- All bakeries that sell more than 25% of their products wholesale.
- All processors who process low acid canned foods (i.e. canned fish, vegetables or retorted pouches of fish, vegetables, etc.) whether retail or wholesale.
- SEE EXCEPTIONS.



Exceptions to WSDA Licensing

- Processors who have a current WSDA dairy license are not required to obtain a food processor license. **Contact WSDA for more information: (360) 902-1876**
- Winery and brewery operations obtain their license through the Washington State Liquor Control Board. However, these facilities must maintain the WSDA sanitation standards outlined in the Regulations section listed below. **Contact the Liquor Control Board for more information: (360) 664-0012.**



Licensing Requirements



- Master License
- Naming Options on Master License

- Comply with Local Building Codes
- Department of Agriculture License
- State Licensing Requirements
- Local health permitting



Insurance Needs

- Consult a professional about your specific needs and requirements.
- Policies to consider:
 - ✓ General Liability & Property
 - ✓ "Umbrella" Policy
 - ✓ Professional Liability
 - ✓ Health & Life
 - ✓ Business Interruption
 - ✓ Crop Loss



Permits in Whitman County

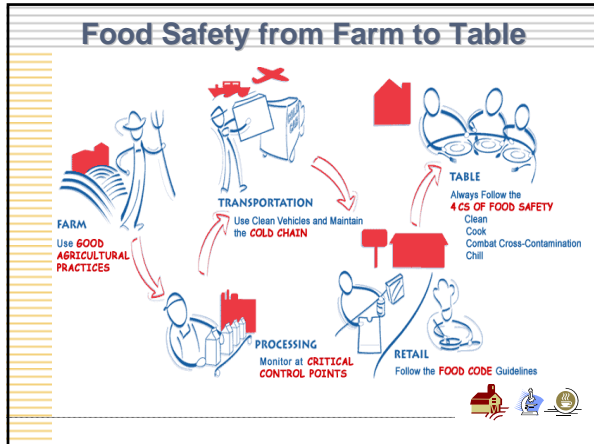
- 1) Depending on complexity of food item(s)
 - Process Review (Dr. Dougherty)
 - Requirements of WSDOH
- 2) Review planned menu to determine permit requirements
- 3) Inspection of market and facilities



Food Safety

- Regulations and requirements of local public health are not designed to limit your operations. Instead they are designed to protect the health and safety of our communities.





- ### Special Thanks
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 - Public Health Seattle-King County

Questions?

Please share any questions, comments, or concerns you may have.

Contact Information

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