

# Guidelines for Public Market Managers and Vendors

*Reference: Alberta Food Regulation and Food Retail and Foodservices Code*

These guidelines provide information to the operators and vendors of public markets and flea markets located in Alberta. These guidelines are intended to minimize the possibility of foodborne illness.

## DEFINITIONS

- **Food Establishment** - means a place where food is handled and intended for public consumption.
- **Farmers' Market** - means a food establishment whose proposed operation has been approved by the Minister responsible for Agriculture as an approved Farmers' Market Program under the administration of that Minister's Department. Alberta Health Services may issue or renew a Farmers' Market permit only to a person or group of persons who have this approval.
- **Public Market** - means a place where food and other items are sold from permanent or temporary stalls or booths by independent merchants but does not include special events or Farmers' Markets. Public markets include flea markets, and the typical products sold include food and crafted goods.
- **High-risk Food (Potentially Hazardous)** - means food with a pH level or water activity level or combination that is capable of supporting the growth of pathogenic micro-organisms or the production of toxins. Examples include: antipasto, brisket, cabbage rolls, canned vegetables or meat, cheese, cheesecakes, cracked eggs, cream-filled or custard-filled pastries, dairy products, fish, garlic spreads, perishable beverages, lemon meringue pie, meat or meat products, oils infused with garlic and herbs, perogy, poultry and poultry products, pumpkin pie, salsas, sauces, sausage rolls, whipped butter, etc.
- **Low-risk Food** - means food that is prepared in a safe and sanitary manner that does not require refrigeration and includes whole fruits and vegetable and baked goods. Examples include: breads, buns, fruit-filled pies, cookies, jams, jellies, and pickles.

- **Processing** - means any mixing, assembling, forming, or preparation of food and also includes heating or cooking for service and scooping ice cream for service (as opposed to heating, cooking, or scooping for sampling only). Processing does not include serving or portioning products.
- **Sampling** - means the serving of no charge, bite-sized portions for promotion only.
- **Temporary Location** - A market location that is seasonal and operates for one day a week or less. Temporary locations are assembled on the day of operation and taken down at the end of the day. They do not make significant use of permanent structures or facilities.

## MANAGER RESPONSIBILITIES

- Ensure that these **Guidelines for Public Market Managers & Vendors** are followed.
- Ensure that toilet and handwashing facilities are available on location or at a nearby location through agreement with another person.
- Ensure that the market building and grounds are kept clean and supplied with adequate numbers of garbage containers.
- Enforce that live animals are not permitted in food areas with the exception of service animals.
- Notify the Public Health Inspector / Environmental Health Officer (PHI / EHO) of any changes of vendors, foods, etc.
- Provide a list of all food vendors at the market to the PHI / EHO upon request. The list is to provide contact numbers and type of food items sold.
- Monitor to ensure all food vendors are selling foods from approved sources.

## VENDOR RESPONSIBILITIES

### 1. *Food Handling Permits*

- Vendors selling food at a Public Market must have a valid Food Handling Permit issued by Alberta Health Services.
  - \* The permit will be issued for the market location.
  - \* Vendors may be issued a mobile Food Handling Permit if the facility meets mobile food vending unit requirements. These requirements are available at [www.albertahealthservices.ca/8302.asp](http://www.albertahealthservices.ca/8302.asp) under **Food Facilities**.
- Vendors selling **ONLY** foods listed below **DO NOT** need a valid Food Handling Permit.
  - \* Unprocessed fruits, vegetables, and other produce
  - \* Eggs, in compliance with the Purchase and Sale of Eggs and Processed Egg Regulation, available at [www1.agric.gov.ab.ca/\\$department/deptdocs.nsf/all/rsb10367](http://www1.agric.gov.ab.ca/$department/deptdocs.nsf/all/rsb10367).

- \* Honey if produced by seller. More information available at [www1.agric.gov.ab.ca/\\$department/deptdocs.nsf/all/agdex2743](http://www1.agric.gov.ab.ca/$department/deptdocs.nsf/all/agdex2743).

## 2. Food Source

### Acceptable Foods

- All foods and ingredients other than unprocessed fruits, vegetables and produce must be obtained from approved sources (commercially pre-packaged or prepared in an approved facility). Vendors at Public Markets must be able to demonstrate that all food is from an approved source, in the form of receipts or copies of valid permits and/or licenses. Copies of licenses issued by Alberta Health Services, Alberta Agriculture, Health Canada, Canadian Food Inspection Agency or a health authority in another province must be present on-site at the Public Market. It must also be produced upon request by a Public Health Inspector / Environmental Health Officer.
- Graded whole, raw, shell poultry eggs
- Inspected meat

### Unacceptable Foods

- Un-inspected meat
- Home-prepared foods
- Home-canned foods including jams, jellies and pickles
- Unpasteurized milk, milk products, or foods that contain unpasteurized milk except unpasteurized cheese produced by a licensed / registered facility.

## 3. Food Packaging and Labeling

- Food grade plastic bags and wrap, paper bags and other disposable containers shall be clean and not previously used. Garbage bags are prohibited because they are treated with chemical odour control products which can leach into the food.
- Labeling of food products is regulated by the Canadian Food Inspection Agency. It is the vendor's responsibility to ensure that their products are labeled in accordance with the federal regulatory requirements.  
<http://www.inspection.gc.ca/english/fssa/labeti/guide/toce.shtml>

## 4. Food Protection

- All foods must be protected from contamination (i.e. from public handling, coughs, sneezes, dust, etc.) during preparation, processing, storage, and display.
- High-risk foods (i.e. seafood, meats and dairy products, etc.) must be transported in a manner that prevents contamination and must be kept at temperatures **below 4°C (40°C) or above 60°C (140° F)**.
- All whole raw shell poultry eggs must be clean, free of cracks and stored at **7°C (44.6°F) or colder**.

- A suitable thermometer (i.e. digital probe or infrared thermometer) that is capable of measuring temperatures between 0°C and 100°C is required for high-risk (potentially hazardous) foods.
- All foods and utensils must be stored in a sanitary manner, off the ground, protected from contamination and separate from chemicals and staff personal items.

## 5. Sampling

- Food samples include no charge, bite-size portions that are pre-portioned at an approved food establishment to reduce unnecessary handling on-site.
- All foods offered as samples must be protected from contamination and improper handling by customers. It is recommended that vendors hand samples to the customer, use toothpicks or single-use containers. Offering bowls or open bags of chips, pretzels, crackers or similar foods for customers on a self-serve basis is not allowed.
- Vendors offering food samples shall:
  - \* follow approved handwashing requirements, and
  - \* replace samples if they are displayed longer than one hour, and
  - \* discard leftover or contaminated samples.
- No vendor shall cook or reheat food for samples unless:
  - \* approval is obtained from Alberta Health Services, and
  - \* cooking equipment is located within the stall and away from customer contact, and
  - \* a thermometer is available to ensure that foods reach an internal temperature greater than 74°C, and
  - \* a sanitizer (e.g. bleach) is available in a spray bottle or other easily used dispensing device, and
  - \* handwashing sink and equipment requirements are met.

## 6. Mobile Food Establishments

- The preparation of foods on-site at the market must be carried out at either a mobile unit or a permanent food establishment that has been permitted by Alberta Health Services.
- Self-serve condiments must be individually pre-packaged, dispensed from a squeeze or pump container or from a container with an attached lid.
- If the primary business is to scoop hard ice cream, a continuous flow dipper well is required. However, if limited amounts of ice cream or similar products are served, and with the approval of Alberta Health Services, scoops may be cleaned and sanitized after each use. Scoops may also be immediately returned into the product container after each use provided neither the food nor the scoop becomes contaminated. Each product is required to have a separate scoop.

## 7. Handwashing, Sink and Equipment Requirements

### Equipment Requirements - General

- In addition to specific requirements noted below, equipment requirements are totally dependent on the foods served and will be determined on an individual basis.

### Handwashing and Sink requirements

Each vendor must meet all sink requirements as follows:

- If the vendor is handling open foods, or processing / preparing foods :
  - \* A booth that has plumbing available must meet the requirements equivalent to those found in a commercial food establishment.
  - \* A booth that does not have plumbing must meet the sink and water / waste tank requirements equivalent to those found in a mobile food vending unit.
- If a vendor is handling food for the purpose of sampling only, then they must meet the following sink requirements :

#### **FOR MARKETS OPERATING ONE DAY A WEEK OR LESS**

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Low-risk food samples pre-portioned at approved location and only handled with utensils</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hand sanitizer and <u>access</u> to a hand sink</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Low-risk food samples portioned on-site <b>OR</b></li> <li>• Pre-portioned high risk food samples</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hand sink needed in booth (temporary set up* acceptable)</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High-risk foods samples portioned <b>AND / OR</b> heated on-site</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hand sink needed in booth (temporary set up* acceptable)</li> <li>• Approved sanitizer (Chlorine or QUAT) for surfaces</li> <li>• Duplicate utensils</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High-risk foods cooked from raw on-site for sampling purposes <b>ONLY</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hand sink needed in booth (temporary set up* acceptable)</li> <li>• Approved sanitizer (Chlorine or QUAT) for surfaces</li> <li>• Separate utensils for raw and cooked product</li> <li>• Duplicate utensils</li> <li>• Access to a two-compartment utility sink with hot / cold running water</li> </ul>

\* Temporary setups include the use of coffee urns, spigotted containers and similar devices.

\* Temporary hand sinks must drain into a bucket large enough to prevent water from running onto the ground. Vendors must emptying buckets and ensuring they do not overflow.

**FOR MARKETS OPERATING MORE THAN ONE DAY PER WEEK**

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Low-risk food samples pre-portioned at approved location and only handled with utensils</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hand sanitizer and <u>access</u> to a hand sink</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Low-risk food samples portioned on-site <b>OR</b></li> <li>• Pre-portioned high-risk food samples</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hand sink equipped with hot / cold running water needed <u>in booth</u></li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High-risk food samples handled (portioned, cooked or reheated) on-site for sampling purposes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Two-compartment sink with hot/cold running water <u>in booth</u>, hand soap, paper towel, dish soap, and an approved sanitizer (Chlorine or QUAT)</li> <li>• An additional (separate) hand sink may be required if food handling activities limit the vendor's access to the utility sink for this purpose</li> </ul>

**8. Cleanliness and Maintenance**

- Walls, floors, ceilings and equipment must be kept clean and in good condition at all times.
- All food contact equipment must be routinely cleaned and sanitized.

**9. Waste Management and Washroom Facilities**

- **Liquid waste** from temporary hand sinks must either be discharged directly to an approved sanitary sewer or stored in a totally enclosed wastewater holding tank. Wastewater may not be disposed of into a storm sewer.
- An **adequate number of garbage containers** with plastic liners must be provided for both the operator and customers.
- An adequate number of washrooms must be provided according to the following table:

**WASHROOM REQUIREMENTS FOR PUBLIC MARKETS**

(Taken from Alberta Regulation 243/2003 - Nuisance and General Sanitation Regulation)

<b>Number of Persons</b>	<b>Minimum Number of Temporary Outdoor Privies Required</b>	
1-25 (total)	Only 1	
<b>Number of Persons of Each Sex</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>
26-50	1	2
51-75	2	3
76-100	2	4
101-150	3	5
151-200	4	6
201-300	5	7
301-399	6	8
Over 400	7 plus 1 for each additional 200 people	9 plus 1 for each additional 150 people

**Example situations:**

- a) There is a small outdoor event with 24 people expected to attend.

This event would only require one (1) temporary privy or toilet.

- b) There is an outdoor event with 500 people expected to attend.

Unless the exact numbers of male and female attendees are known, this event would require twelve (12) temporary privies or toilets. One must assume there will be 250 males and 250 females. Five (5) privies or toilets would be required for males and seven (7) privies or toilets would be required for females.

Note: For the purposes of this table, unless the number of males and females attending an event can be determined, assume half the expected attendees will be male and half will be female.

***For more information, please contact your nearest Environmental Public Health office.***

Edmonton Main Office  
Calgary Main Office  
Lethbridge Main Office

780-735-1800  
403-943-2295  
403-388-6689

Grande Prairie Main Office  
Red Deer Main Office  
[www.albertahealthservices.ca/eph.asp](http://www.albertahealthservices.ca/eph.asp)

780-513-7517  
403-356-6366

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