

Information for Farmers' Market Managers and Stallholders

Farmers' markets are markets that are:

- approved by the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, and
- issued a Food Handling Permit by Alberta Health Services (AHS).

This document provides information for managers and stallholders in farmers' markets.

Markets that have not been approved by the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry are public markets, not farmers' markets. Public market information is available at ahs.ca/ephbusiness.

Information for Stallholders

Food Products

Home-prepared foods may be sold at farmers' markets. The requirements below help ensure high-risk foods and canned goods are safe for customers.

1) Home-prepared High-Risk Foods (Potentially Hazardous Foods)

High-risk foods include but aren't limited to:

- foods with high-risk ingredients, such as pyrogies, cabbage rolls, sausage rolls, meat pies, pumpkin, meringue or cream pies, cheesecake
 - poultry, meats, eggs
 - milk, milk products such as cheese
 - sauces, antipasto, low-sugar fruit spreads
- a) Stallholders selling high-risk foods should review food preparation procedures with AHS Environmental Public Health **before** selling the foods.
 - b) All high-risk food must be stored, displayed and transported at a temperature of 4°C or colder. Samples can be held warmer than 4C for 1 hour before discarding.
 - c) All frozen food must remain frozen while being stored, displayed, packaged, or transported.
 - d) Stallholders cannot sell any raw meat unless it is stamped, tagged, labeled or otherwise confirmed as inspected (i.e. provide inspection certificate or paperwork).
 - e) Stallholders cannot sell milk or milk products unless they are from an approved source (i.e. from a licensed dairy manufacturing plant). Unpasteurized milk/milk products prepared at home cannot be sold.
 - f) Stallholders may sell whole, raw, uninspected shell poultry eggs from their farm. The eggs must be clean, free of cracks and maintained at a temperature not exceeding 7°C. Additional requirements are available in the [Purchase and Sale of Eggs and Processed Egg Regulation](#) at http://www.qp.alberta.ca/1266.cfm?page=2004_023.cfm&leg_type=Regs&isbncIn=9780779764075.

2) Home-Canned Foods

Stallholders may only sell home-canned jams, jellies and pickles.

- Canned products must be sealed using new, approved lids.
- Freezer jams are to be kept frozen.

Refer to Alberta Health Services Farmers' Market Guidelines for Canning Lids and Jars available at the end of this document.

Food Handling

1) Offering samples

Stallholders may provide bite-sized samples free of charge.

a) Stallholders offering food samples will:

- follow approved handwashing requirements (available on Page 4).
- discard samples if they are displayed longer than one hour.
- discard leftover or contaminated samples.

b) No stallholder shall cook or reheat food for samples unless:

- approval is obtained from Alberta Health Services before you begin providing samples,
- cooking equipment is located within the stall and away from customer contact,
- a thermometer is available to ensure foods reach an internal temperature greater than 74°C,
- a sanitizer (e.g. bleach) is available in a spray bottle or other easily used dispensing device, and handwashing sink and equipment requirements are available.

c) Pre-portion samples before the farmers' market, if possible.

d) All foods offered as samples must be protected from contamination and improper handling by customers. For example:

- hand samples to the customer,
- use tooth picks, or
- use 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.

2) Preparing food in stalls (greater volumes than sampling)

Preparing and serving foods, other than samples in the manner described below, is not allowed. Stallholders who want to sell prepared, ready-to-eat foods, like pyrogies or spring rolls, must:

- operate out of a permanent location at the market or from an approved [mobile food vending unit](http://www.albertahealthservices.ca/assets/wf/eph/wf-eh-mobile-food-vending-units.pdf) (www.albertahealthservices.ca/assets/wf/eph/wf-eh-mobile-food-vending-units.pdf).
- meet the [Alberta Food Regulation Part 2](#) requirements for commercial food establishments available at www.qp.alberta.ca/574.cfm?page=2006_031.cfm&leg_type=Regs&isbncIn=0779746295&display=html.
- obtain a Food Handling Permit separate from the Farmers' Market permit

Stallholders may serve open, unpackaged food from their stalls without a separate Food Handling Permit if the food is:

- low-risk, like cookies or cupcakes
- prepared before the market

Food Protection

1) Display

All food except whole fruits and vegetables must be protected from contamination and customer handling (e.g. provide cover, wrap, or sneeze guards).

2) Packaging of Foods

- a) Food-grade plastic bags and wrap, paper bags and other disposable containers shall be clean and not previously used. Garbage bags can't be used to wrap food as these bags may contain chemicals that can leach into the food and make people sick.
- b) High-risk food shall not be sold in sealer jars as customers may believe the food has been canned. Customers may end up storing the food improperly, such as not refrigerating or storing the food too long, which would put them at risk of getting sick. Plastic, Styrofoam or paper containers are acceptable.

3) Labeling — Preparer and Ingredients

Labeling of food products is regulated by the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA). It is the responsibility of the stallholder that their products are labeled in accordance with federal regulatory requirements.

<http://www.inspection.gc.ca/english/fssa/labeti/guide/toce.shtml>

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE MARKET MANAGER

- Ensure toilet and handwashing facilities are available on location or at a nearby location through agreement with another person. Talk about using temporary toilets with your Public Health Inspector/Environmental Health Officer (PHI/EHO), if necessary.
- Ensure that the farmers' market building and grounds are kept clean and supplied with adequate numbers of garbage containers.
- Provide a list of all food vendors at the market to the PHI/EHO upon request. The list includes contact numbers and type of food items sold.
- Ensure that stallholders who intend to sell high-risk food products review the food preparation procedures with AHS prior to initially selling at the market.
- Complete both Farmers' Market Checklists (Attachments #1, #2).
- Ensure that stallholders comply with the Farmers' Market guidelines in this document.
- Ensure live animals are not permitted in food areas with the exception of service animals.

HANDWASHING AND SINK REQUIREMENTS

Handwashing and sink requirements are dependent on the type of food operation, the amount of food handling, whether the food served is high-risk, and the number of times per week the stallholder is in operation.

- 1) Handwashing and sink requirements for individual PERMITTED CONCESSIONS / STALLHOLDERS where food preparation is occurring
 - a) Equal to permanent food establishments where plumbing is available OR
 - b) Equal to an equivalent permitted mobile vending unit where plumbing is not available.
 Requirements will be discussed when applying for the Food Handling Permit.

2) **Handwashing and sink requirements for STALLHOLDERS operating under the Farmer's Market permit (vendors not individually permitted) offering samples.**

The tables below are the minimum sink requirements. There may be additional requirements based on specific food and handling risks in a stall.

- a) For markets operating three days per week or less with no permanent structures or facilities:

Food Preparation	Requirement
Food samples pre-portioned off-site and only handled with utensils. Low risk drinks dispensed from original sealed containers. Low risk dry foods transferred from original container directly into single use sample cups. No handling.	Hand sanitizer and <u>access</u> to a hand sink (temporary set up acceptable)

Food Preparation	Requirement
<p>Low-risk food samples portioned on-site and not described above.</p> <p>High risk food or drinks dispensed from a sealed container.</p>	<p>Hand sink needed in booth (temporary set up acceptable*)</p>
<p>High-risk foods samples portioned AND/OR heated on-site.</p>	<p>Hand sink needed in booth (temporary set up acceptable*)</p> <p>Approved sanitizer (Chlorine or QUAT) for surfaces</p> <p>Duplicate utensils</p>
<p>High-risk foods cooked from raw on-site for sampling purposes ONLY.</p>	<p>Hand sink needed in booth (temporary set up acceptable*)</p> <p>Approved sanitizer (Chlorine or QUAT) for surfaces</p> <p>Separate utensils for raw and cooked products</p> <p>Duplicate utensils</p> <p>Access to a two-compartment sink with hot/cold running water</p>

*Temporary handwashing station information is available at [Temporary Handwashing Stations](http://www.albertahealthservices.ca/assets/wf/eph/wf-eh-temporary-handwashing-stations.pdf) (<http://www.albertahealthservices.ca/assets/wf/eph/wf-eh-temporary-handwashing-stations.pdf>).

b) For markets operating more than three days per week and/or operating from permanent structures:

Food Preparation	Requirement
<p>Food samples pre-portioned off-site and only handled with utensils.</p> <p>Low risk drinks dispensed from original sealed containers.</p> <p>Low risk dry foods transferred from original container directly into single use sample cups. No handling.</p>	<p>Hand sanitizer and <u>access</u> to a hand sink with hot and cold running water.</p>
<p>Low-risk food samples portioned on-site and not described above.</p> <p>High risk food or drinks dispensed from a sealed container.</p>	<p>Hand sink equipped with hot/cold running water needed <u>in booth</u>.</p>
<p>High-risk food samples handled (portioned, cooked or reheated) on-site for sampling purposes.</p>	<p>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).</p> <p>A separate hand sink may be required if food handling activities limit the vendor's access to the utility sink for this purpose.</p>

CORRECT HANDWASHING PROCEDURE

- Wet hands with warm water.
- Use soap, lather and scrub well (a nail brush is recommended).
- Rinse.
- Dry hands with paper towels.

This procedure takes at least **20 seconds**.

DEFINITIONS

High-Risk Foods (Potentially Hazardous) - Foods with pH level or water activity level or a combination of pH and water activity levels that will support the growth of pathogenic microorganisms or the production of toxins.

Jams and jellies – Preserves with 60% - 65% solids (fruits plus 55% sugar).

Pickled products - Products processed with salt, vinegar and/or sugar to make them shelf stable (pH of < 4.6 or Aw < 0.86 or salt > 10%). Pickles can include, but are not limited to: cucumbers, green peppers, beets, carrots, horseradish, mushrooms, kimchi, cabbage, eggs, green tomatoes and onions.

Preparing or Preparation– means any mixing, assembling, cooking, heating, or portioning of foods (low or high risk). Preparation does not include the above activities when they are performed exclusively for the purpose of sampling as defined in this document.

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

Edmonton Main Office
Calgary Main Office
Lethbridge Main Office

780-735-1800 Grande Prairie Main Office
403-943-2288 Red Deer Main Office
403-388-6689 www.ahs.ca/eph

780-513-7517
403-356-6366

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Farmers' Market Manager's Checklist - Daily

Market Manager's Name: _____ Date: _____

Items to be checked	Y	N	If no, corrective action
Is the market manager on site while the market is in operation? * If not, has the market manager appointed someone else to conduct the inspection of the market?			
Are the vendors stalls maintained in a clean and sanitary condition?			
Are the vendors' tables in good repair and easily cleanable?			
Are potentially hazardous foods being held below 4°C? * If ice packs are used, are they successfully keeping potentially hazardous foods below 4°C?			
Are whole shell poultry eggs stored below 7°C?			
Does each vendor have an accurate thermometer to monitor potentially hazardous food temperatures?			
Has each vendor been informed of the locations of the two-compartment clean-up sinks and hand sinks?			
Are all foods on display protected from customer handling and contamination (this includes foods used for sampling)?			
Is all food packaging being used made of food grade material, clean, and not previously used?			
Are all home canned products, being offered for sale at the farmers' market, only jams, jellies, and pickles? * For the vendors selling canned foods, are they only using new approved canning lids?			
Is all meat being offered for sale at the farmers' market identified, and confirmed as being government inspected meat?			
Are all milk products being offered for sale at the farmer's market, identified and confirmed as being produced in a facility licensed or permitted by CFIA, Alberta Agriculture, or Alberta Health Services?			
Is an ingredient list and producer contact information available for all food products being offered for sale?			
Are all potentially hazardous foods being offered for sale identified with a date of preparation?			
Is each vendor offering food samples and/or open food equipped with handwashing supplies?			
Are leftover potentially hazardous food samples being discarded after one hour, if they are not held below 4°C or above 60°C?			

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

Edmonton Main Office
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Lethbridge Office

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

Grande Prairie Main Office
Red Deer Main Office
www.albertahealthservices.ca/eph.asp

780-513-7517
403-356-6366

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Farmers' Market Vendors' Food Safety Checklist

Vendor's Name: _____ Date: _____

Items to be checked	Y	N	If no, corrective action
Have you read the Farmers' Market Guidelines provided by Alberta Health Services?			
Is your market stall clean and sanitary?			
Is your table smooth, easily cleanable and in good repair?			
Do you have handwashing supplies available at your stall?			
Did you wash your hands thoroughly before handling any food?			
Do you have a sanitizer solution (e.g. bleach) for cleaning your table and equipment?			
Do you have test strips to ensure the concentration of your sanitizer solution is adequate?			
Do you store your cleaning supplies separate from your food?			
If you sell potentially hazardous food, is it stored below 4°C?			
Do you have an accurate thermometer to monitor cold holding temperatures?			
Is your equipment clean and in good repair?			
Do you properly clean and sanitize equipment before and after its use?			
Is all your food packaged in clean food grade material?			
Are you wearing clean apparel, with your hair restrained?			
Is your food on display protected from customer and environmental contamination?			
Do you have an ingredient list for each of your food products?			
Do you have contact information (producer's name and contact number) to supply with the purchase of each food product?			
Are all potentially hazardous foods being offered for sale identified with a date of preparation?			
Are leftover potentially hazardous food samples discarded after one hour, if they are not held below 4°C or above 60°C?			

Log sheet for recording temperatures and sanitizer solution concentration

	Morning	Afternoon
Cold Food Temperatures (°C)		
Hot Food Temperatures (°C)		
Sanitizer Concentration (ppm)		

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Farmers' Market Guidelines for Canning Lids and Jars

TWO-PIECE CAPS

Two-piece caps consist of a lid and a metal screw band. They are made specifically for use with modern day home canning jars and are most commonly used.

The underside edge of the lid has a rubber like sealed cap that softens when it is heated. This lid adheres to a clean jar and rim and creates a vacuum seal after the heat-processing period. Lids are not reusable.

The screw band holds the lid in place during the processing period and secures it in place when storing an opened jar in the refrigerator.

Screw bands may be used as long as there are no signs of corrosion or rust and they are not out of round or dented.

HOME CANNING JARS

To ensure safe home canning today, use only jars approved for home canning and made from tempered glass. Tempering is a treatment process for glass that allows the jars to withstand the high heat.

Use jars and two-piece caps made for home canning. Discard any jars that are cracked or nicked.

Never use sealing lids a second time. Always use new lids. The sealant on the underside of the lid is good for only one processing.



PREPARING YOUR JARS, LIDS AND SCREWS

1. Inspect your jars, lids, and screw bands for any defects.

Jars: Check the jar edges for any nicks, chips or cracks in the glass, discarding any jars with these defects. Ensure no stains or food residue.

Screw Bands: You may use these if they are not warped, corroded, or rusted. Discard defective bands or “out of round (bent or not completely round)”.

Lids: All lids must be new. Lids are not reusable. Check the sealant on the underside of each lid for evenness.

2. Wash the jars, lids, and screw bands in hot, soapy water.
3. Rinse all the washed items, removing all soapy residue.
4. Place the metal disc part of the lids in boiling water for 5 minutes immediately before using. This sanitizes the lids and softens the sealing compound so an airtight seal is formed. Remove the metal disc from the boiling water and center it on the jar rim. Apply the screw band just until it is fingertip tight.

When cooling, the air will contract and the lid “snaps” down creating an airtight vacuum seal. If the lid is too tight, air cannot escape from the jar, possibly resulting in a failed seal, which could cause food spoilage.

N.B. It is important to follow the directions for use on lids and jars provided by the manufacturer. Each brand of lid may be treated differently. Never reuse lids from commercially canned foods for home canning.

For further information on canning, lids and jars please contact the following:

www.homecanning.com www.FCS.uga.edu/extension/food

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

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