



MICHIGAN FARMERS MARKET ASSOCIATION

Food Samples at Farmers Markets

Over the last couple years, MIFMA and MIFFS have been working with the MDA to develop guidelines for safe food sampling at Michigan farmers markets. A new MDA document, Guidelines for Providing Safe Food Samples at Farmers' Markets, does just that.

This five-page document, available online at http://www.michigan.gov/documents/mda/MDA_FdSmplngFarmMkts5-09_279110_7.pdf, covers guidelines for processed food, fruit, vegetable and meat sampling at farmers markets. Hygiene, temperature control, food protection, warewashing and facility and equipment are other important topics. Here's a quick summary of guidelines for different products. Please read the full document before sampling at your market.

Processed Food Sampling

Processed foods include bakery items, jams, jellies, canned items, etc.

- The best practice is to prepare samples at an approved, licensed facility prior to arriving at the market.
- The next best practice is to use clean, sanitized knives and cutting boards to cut product, taking care to store in-use items so they are protected from contamination.
- Use toothpicks, wax paper, paper sampling cups, or disposable utensils to distribute samples.
- Maintain temperature control on items needing refrigeration after opening.
- Home-canned and home-prepared foods are not allowed.

Fresh Fruit And Vegetable Sampling

Preparation of most fruit and vegetable samples requiring cutting or slicing must be done on-site, immediately prior to consumption. Samples prepared ahead of time must be prepared in a licensed kitchen.

- The best practice is to prepare samples at an approved, licensed facility prior to arriving at the market.
- Rinse all fruits and vegetables thoroughly in clean, potable water on site, or if not available, in advance, storing in disposable food bags.
- Protect samples from contamination at all times and protect the sample from any bare hand contact.

Meat Sampling

All meats must come from inspected approved sources. Vendors must be able to show proof of the approved source.

- Serve meat items directly from a covered grill using sanitary methods, such as toothpicks or tissues
- If foods are cooked and held, hold meat at 135°F or above.
- Protect foods from environmental contamination and insects at all times.
- The best practice is to provide meats in pre-formed patties, or pre-cut portions not requiring on-site preparation.
- Set up and operate as shown in warewashing station if necessary.
- Serving full meal size portions requires a temporary food establishment license from the local health department.
- Home-canned and home-prepared foods are not allowed.

What's Happening?

- **June 1, 2009:**
MIFMA Board Meeting
- **June 4, 2009:**
Michigan Farmers Markets Food Assistance Partnership Conference Call
- **June 8, 2009:**
MIFMA Marketing Committee Conference Call
- **June 15, 2009:**
MIFMA Board Conference Call
- **June 18, 2009:**
FSEP Conference, www.fsepmichigan.org
- **June 20, 2009:**
Meridian Twp "Fantastically Fresh" Farmers Market Tour. Register now at www.learngreatfoods.com
- **June 24, 2009:**
Senior Project FRESH Conference Call
- **July 2, 2009:**
Michigan Farmers Markets Food Assistance Partnership Conference Call
- **July 13, 2009:**
MIFMA Board Conference Call
- **July 16, 2009:**
MIFMA Professional Development Committee Conference Call
- **July 16, 2009:**
Leland "Wharf & Wine" Farmers Market Tour. Register now at www.learngreatfoods.com

For more information regarding these listings, call 517-432-3381.

Egg Law Update! A representative of the Office of Attorney General is expected to issue an opinion on whether or not the MDA has the authority to regulate shell eggs sold by the producer to final consumer or first receiver by June 10. Learn more and get updates at: http://www.michigan.gov/mda/0,1607,7-125-1568_2387_46671-212367--,00.html



The Michigan Farmers Market Association advances farmers markets to create a thriving marketplace for local food and farm products. Our vision is to place farmers markets at the forefront of the local food movement and to ensure all residents have access to healthy, locally grown food and that Michigan farmers markets receive policy support.

MIFMA Member of the Month: *Meridian Township Farmers Market (Okemos)*

An Interview with Christine Miller, Market Manager



MIFMA and Learn Great Foods are kicking off their market tour series at the Meridian Township Farmers Market on June 20th. Tell us why we should register today for the market tour.

Besides supporting local agriculture, guests can learn the ins and outs of a “seasoned” farmers market. Participants will be able to talk with vendors candidly and ask questions about their farming practices. Once the ingredients are picked up from the market vendors, Chef Ian Diem, Culinary Program Coordinator from Lansing Community College, will take the group to the adjacent Meridian Historical Village to prepare and serve the meal. Guests will be able to ask the chef questions on how to prepare food items and cook with fresh ingredients!

After the meal commences, guests have some options. The market will be open until 2 p.m. so shopping may take place after the meal, the Meridian Historical Village does free tours until 2 p.m., the MSU Student Organic Farm will provide a free tour at 2:30 p.m. only minutes away from the market (maps will be available), there is a festival in Downtown Okemos (corner of Okemos Rd and Hamilton Rd) and of course there is always Michigan State University campus to cruise. Please come see what the Meridian Township “Fantastically Fresh” Market Tour has to offer!

Can you share something about the farmers and vendors that sell at your market?

The Meridian Township Farmers’ Market is very much a community gathering place! Family, friends, and neighbors come, meet, and shop at the market and visit with the wide range of vendors. The Market has fresh fruits and veggies, plants for your gardens, flowers for the house, grass fed beef, lamb, pork, poultry, fish, fresh mushrooms, egg

rolls and spring rolls, baked goods from around the world, and kettle corn. Our farmers are more than happy to answer any questions customers might have and help them have a great experience at the farmers’ market!

Tell us more about how you’re encouraging your farmers and vendors to use a labeling system to help consumers know where products are coming from, how that system works and what those labels are?

Each farmer has to label their products either “Home Grown,” “Farmer Direct,” “Wholesale,” or “Home Made.” “Home Grown” is defined as grown or self- produced by vendor. “Farmer Direct” means purchased from the farmer who grew it. “Wholesale” is purchased through a produce wholesaler or produce auction. “Home Made” is produced by the vendor from raw materials. The reasoning for having the labels is to educate the customer about where their food is coming from and where it has been. If a vendor produces 100% of their products they only need to state “Home Grown” on their farm sign versus every product on their table if they have a mix of “Home Grown”, “Farmer Direct”, “Wholesale”, and “Home Made.”

The Meridian Township Farmers Market is a member of MIFMA. Why is it important to you and your market to be involved in MIFMA?

Besides all the great support of other MIFMA members, it is important to have that network for sharing information and staying informed about current events in the agriculture industry and how it will affect farmers and/or farmers markets. I truly enjoy the comradery and sense of togetherness that being a MIFMA member brings. I have been a member of many organizations, but none welcomed you like MIFMA does - almost making you feel like a member of a family. Thanks Dru!

What’s one thing every MIFMA member should know about the Meridian Township Farmers Market?

The Meridian Township Farmers’ Market is a great place to find fabulous friends, fantastic flowers and the freshest food! Come visit the market every Saturday, May through October and Wednesdays, July through October from 8 am to 2 pm. I hope to see you at the market!

Welcome New Members!

MIFMA would like to welcome its new members for May 2009.

Farmers Markets

- Richland Area Community Center Farmers Market
- Dansville Farmers Market

Farmer/Vendors

- Roeske Farms, LLC in Hartland
- F.U.R.R. Produce in Pinconning
- Rock River Farm in Chatham

Friends, Individual/ Household

- Carolyn Hancock, Bath
- Dave and Pam Montri, Troy

Friends, Organization

- Cherry Capitol Foods, LLC in Traverse City
- Inn Season Café in Royal Oak
- St. Clair County MSUE in Port Huron
- Traverse Bay Medical in Traverse City

To join MIFMA, visit www.farmersmarkets.msu.edu

Thank you, Sponsors!

MIFMA Sponsors

- Lynn Ochberg, Ochberg Sugar Bush in Okemos

To become a MIFMA Sponsor, contact Dru Montri, 517- 432-3381 or dmontri@msu.edu.