

**MARKET SAFETY BEST PRACTICES**  
**Vermont Farmers' Market Association**  
**May 2013**

**FOOD SAFTY**

**Farmers' Market: Management, Directors, Staff and Volunteers:**

- Should include in the market guidelines a section that states: “vendors *are responsible for compliance* with all Rules and Regulations of the State of Vermont.”
- Should include in the market guidelines a section that states: “vendors are responsible for compliance/possession of all required licenses. Information about the most common licenses is listed below, by Agency. A complete document of State Rules and Regulations is updated annually and is available [here](#).
  - It should not be the requirement or the expectation of the board or market manager to enforce the health and safety requirements, but the responsibility of the vendors to research and choose to display/sell their product in a safe and legal manner.
- Each year the vendor application should require the signature of the vendor stating they have read and understand the guidelines and agree to adhere to them.
- Should have General Liability Insurance aka Commercial Liability. Policies cover *only* losses associated with the market site.
- Should consider having each farmers' market vendor sign a Hold Harmless Clause/General Release/Product Liability Release form that includes compliance with State Rules and Regulations and for selling their individual food products.
- Market Manager should be aware of the common State Rules and Regulations governing farmers' markets and assist vendors to meet these Standards and Best Practices
  - Refer vendors to State Regulations for Selling at Farmers Markets: [A Guide for Market Managers and Vendors](#).
  - Special cases may require additional rules and permits to be researched by the vendor.

**Vendor:**

- Vendors are responsible for compliance with Rules and Regulations of the State of Vermont and must be in compliance and in possession of any licenses that may apply.” An excerpt of information about the most common licenses is listed below, by Agency.
- Vendors should each have Product Liability Insurance (more info [here](#)). This insurance product covers the individual vendor for the products they make/sell, as well as anything that could happen to a customer as a result of their vending stand or space.

**[Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets](#)**

- Dairy Products: contact the Dairy Division @ 1-802-828-2433
  - Licenses required:
    - *Milk Handler's License* for anyone selling dairy products they produce.
    - *Retail License* to sell prepackaged product.
    - *Frozen Dessert License* for ice cream and other frozen dairy products.
- Meat Products: except Game Birds, Rabbits and Venison. Contact the Meat Inspection @ 1-802-828-2426.
  - Licenses required:
    - *Farmers' Market Retail License* for red meat and *inspected* poultry.
    - Uninspected poultry – no license needed, but all labeling requirements of 6VSA #3312 that apply to their product.

- Eggs: contact the Consumer Assurance Section @ 1-802-828-2436
- Scale Certification: contact the Consumer Assurance Section @ 1-802-828-2436
- Labeled Products: contact the Consumer Assurance Section @ 1-802-828-2436

### Department of Health

- Baked Goods: contact the Food and Lodging Program @ 1-800-439-8550
  - Home Baking License, same requirements as Home Catering License. Unless gross sales are less than \$125 a week, averaged over entire year.
- Prepared Foods: contact the Food and Lodging Program @ 1-800-439-8550
  - Licenses required:
    - Fair Stand License: covers those who wish to do the food preparation at the Farmer's Market.
    - Home Caterers License: covers those who wish to prepare food at home and bring it to the Farmer's Market, packaged and ready for sale.
- Vendors selling to Restaurants: Contact the Food and Lodging Program @ 1-800-439-8550.

### GROUNDS SAFETY

#### **Farmers' Market: Management, Directors, Staff and Volunteers:**

- Have a safe, family friendly environment.
- Consider easily accessed customer traffic aisles.
- Recognize the need for a market common area.
- Have an Emergency Plan for the unexpected incident in the market place.
- Be aware of the boundaries of designated vendor spaces.
- Have solid footing materials for the entrance areas giving special considerations to vehicles, the elderly and small children.
  - Be aware of mud and slippery ground in high-traffic walking areas and mark them appropriately.
- Have a bicycle policy:
  - Consider no riding through the market area.
  - Consider offering designated bike parking space.
- Support clean environment practices:
  - Trash collection containers.
  - Access to bathrooms.
  - Policy for dogs – owners' to pick-up after animals.
  - Recycling containers.
- Examine customer - vendor vehicle intersections.
  - No vehicles should be driven in the farmers' market vending area during market hours.
    - Ensure safe environment for vendors entering and departing the market area.
- Required to have necessary General Limited Liability Insurance (Commercial Liability) (more info [here](#)):
  - Commercial Liability Insurance covers the market site, but does not cover individual vendor space and/or product liability concerns.
  - Strongly suggest that vendors obtain a Product Liability Insurance Policy to cover incidences under the vendor's canopy and product liability concerns.
- Require tents, umbrellas, vendor signs, and displays to be well secured.
- Maintain contact with state and town officials around parking, market access, and traffic flow concerns.

**Vendors:**

- Be aware of the boundaries of the designated vendor space.
- Strongly suggested that vendors obtain Product Liability Insurance Policy to cover incidences under the vendor's canopy and product liability concerns.
- REQUIRE tents, umbrellas, vendor signs, and displays to be well secured.
  - Consider safe and appropriate placement as well as visibility of all tie-downs to safeguard against customer injury.