



**Public Health**  
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Sidney-Shelby County Health Department  
202 West Poplar Street  
Sidney, Ohio 45365  
Phone: 937-492-7249 Fax: 937-498-7013  
sschd@shelbycountyhealthdept.org  
www.shelbycountyhealthdept.org

# Farmers' Market Fact Sheet

## What is a farmers' market?

- ▶ A farmers' market is a location where producers congregate to offer one or more of the following food items for sale: fresh unprocessed fruits or vegetables; products of a cottage food operation; maple syrup, sorghum, or honey produced by an exempt processor; <100 cu ft of commercially prepackaged, non-TCS (time/temperature controlled for safety) foods. To be exempt from licensure, the local market organizer must register the farmers' market with the Ohio Department of Agriculture.

## What is considered an "unprocessed" fruit or vegetable?

- ▶ "Unprocessed", with respect to fruits and vegetables, means that they are not processed beyond merely rough trimming and rinsing.

## What is a cottage food production operation?

- ▶ A cottage food production operation means a person, who in their own home, produces non-TCS foods such as bakery products, jams, jellies, candy and fruit butter. Please see the "Cottage Food Fact Sheet" for more information.

## What is an exempt processor of maple syrup, sorghum, or honey?

- ▶ An exempt processor of maple syrup, sorghum, or honey is a person who uses at least 75% of their own maple tree sap, sorghum plants, or honey hives to produce their end product. Containers of maple syrup, sorghum, and honey must be labeled according to law.

## What are examples of commercially prepackaged, non-TCS foods?

- ▶ Some examples of commercially prepackaged, non-TCS foods are bagged potato chips, wrapped candy bars, canned soda, etc.

## Do I need a food license to sell food at a farmers' market?

- ▶ If you are selling one or more of the above mentioned foods at a registered farmers' market, you are exempt from needing to obtain a food license. However, the Ohio Department of Agriculture has the authority to inspect and sample the product of all food vendors at a registered farmers' market to ensure that Ohio laws and regulations are being adhered to.

## What if I want to sell foods other than those listed above at a farmers' market?

- ▶ Foods other than those listed above may be able to be sold at a registered farmers' market if they are from an approved source. However, you will need to obtain a license from and be inspected by the local board of health.

For more information, please contact the Sidney-Shelby County Health Department  
or the Ohio Department of Agriculture at 614-728-6250.