



Permit Requirements for Farmers Market Vendors

The following serves as a guide to assist farmers market managers in determining the permits, licenses, and certificates that vendors selling at farmers markets are required to have. This list is meant to be a general guideline rather than a comprehensive list of all regulations that vendors are responsible for following. Please consult with the proper agency for further assistance and for additional information regarding compliance of regulations.

Fresh Produce

- No permits, licenses, or certificates are required, if the produce is raw, uncut, and unprocessed.
- For products sold by weight, the scale used must be a National Type Evaluation Program (N.T.E.P.) approved scale. All scales must be tested annually by the Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce, Weights and Measures Division.

Eggs (see additional Egg Vendor Checklist)

- A Retail Food Sanitation License - Eggs from the Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce, Consumer Protection Division is required.
 - A copy of the Retail Food Sanitation License - Eggs must be displayed and made available to the purchaser at the location where the eggs will be offered for sale.
 - Clean shell eggs must be maintained at or below 45°F ambient temperature under mechanical refrigeration (in a refrigerator and/or cooler with a/c or d/c power).
- For any eggs sold off the farm, the layers shall have NPIP (National Poultry Improvement Program) testing by the Mississippi Board of Animal Health.
- Proper packaging and labeling is required.

Honey/Syrup

- A Food Permit from the Mississippi State Department of Health is required only if the vendor sells more than 500 gallons annually.
- If the honey being sold is not pure honey, the added ingredients must be properly listed on the label.
- Proper packaging and labeling is required.

Baked Goods/Processed Foods

- Based on the risk level of products being sold, vendors must obtain the proper Food Permit or Certificate from the Mississippi State Department of Health. For vendors selling at a farmers market certified by the Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce, a Certificate from the Mississippi State Department of Health along with meeting specific training requirements may suffice for the Food Permit.
- All baked goods and processed foods must be prepared in a facility approved and permitted by the Mississippi State Department of Health.
- Home kitchens that are inspected and certified by the Mississippi State Department of Health may be used for some food processing activities for products that will be sold only at farmers markets certified by the Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce. Any food which is allowed to be prepared in a home kitchen must have a sign posted at the point of sale which indicates that the food was not processed under a Food Processing Permit from the Mississippi State Department of Health.
- Proper packaging and labeling required.

Meats

- A vendor selling meat must obtain a Mobile Retail Food Sanitation License from the Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce.
 - Products being sold must be properly inspected by the United States Department of Agriculture or the Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce.
 - Vendors must transport and sell meat from a refrigerated vehicle.
- For products sold by weight, the scale used must be a National Type Evaluation Program (N.T.E.P.) approved scale. All scales must be tested annually by the Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce, Weights and Measures Division.
- Proper packaging and labeling is required.

Shrimp/Seafood

- A Seafood Dealers License from the Mississippi Department of Marine Resources or a Food Permit from the Mississippi State Department of Health is required for vendors selling raw shrimp or seafood.
- If the shrimp is being cooked/steamed, a Food Permit is required from the Mississippi State Department of Health.
- For products sold by weight, the scale used must be a National Type Evaluation Program (N.T.E.P.) approved scale. All scales must be tested annually by the Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce, Weights and Measures Division.

Dairy Products (Milk, cheeses, and other dairy products such as yogurt, butter, and sour cream)

- A vendor must obtain a Grade A Permit from Mississippi State Department of Health.

- A vendor selling dairy products must obtain a Mobile Retail Food Sanitation License from the Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce.
 - Vendors must transport and sell dairy products from a refrigerated vehicle.
- For products sold by weight, the scale used must be a National Type Evaluation Program (N.T.E.P.) approved scale. All scales must be tested annually by the Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce, Weights and Measures Division.
- Proper packaging and labeling is required.

Plant Sales

- No person can deal in plant materials that are known to harbor noxious plant diseases or invasive weeds/plants or sell plants that are on the noxious weed list per the Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce, Bureau of Plant Industry.

Fresh Cut Flowers

- No permits, licenses, or certificates required.

Contacts:

Mississippi Board of Animal Health, National Poultry Improvement Program (NPIP):
(601) 832-3351

Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce, Bureau of Plant Industry:
(662) 325-3390

Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce, Consumer Protection Division:
(601) 359-1148, johnt@mdac.state.ms.us

Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce, Farmers Market Certification Program:
(601) 359-1118, donna@mdac.state.ms.us

Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce, Weights and Measures Division:
(601) 359-1149, connie@mdac.state.ms.us

Mississippi State Department of Health, Office of Food Protection:
(601) 576-7689

Mississippi Department of Marine Resources, Licensing:
(228) 374-5000

Mississippi State University, Department of Food Science, Nutrition & Health Promotion:
(662) 325-3200, jls46@msstate.edu, annah@ext.msstate.edu

For questions regarding sales tax, please contact your local Tax Commission Office.