

Program Policies

October 1995 – Revised March, 1996 – Revised April 1998 – Revised October 2001 – Revised May 2003- Revised September 2010 – Revised September 2011- Revised January 2015- Revised December 2016 - Revised January 2018

Educational Requirements

1. Each high risk food establishment subject to the licensing program will have at least one full-time equivalent owner, manager or operator who is certified as having completed all requirements of a food service training and certification program as prescribed by the Minnesota Department of Health in MN Rules Parts 4626.2000 – 4626.2010. The licensee will be responsible for costs incurred for compliance with this policy. The certified individual need not be on the business premises at all times that the business is open to the public.

Rationale: having a knowledgeable person available is critical to the partnership concept of environmental health programming. Certification is proactive, prevention-based and a sound public health principle. Certification gives the establishment management more ownership in their food safety system and policies.

2. Each high risk food establishment must have a Person in Charge (PIC) present during all hours of operation. The PIC must understand and be able to demonstrate knowledge of safe food handling with the following areas of knowledge: personal hygiene, foodborne disease characteristics, transmission factors, time and temperature standards and proper procedures.

Rationale: requiring a knowledgeable and responsible person to be present in restaurants all hours of operation ensures that procedures will be consistently followed during regular operating conditions and times of crisis as well.

3. Each high risk food establishment will have available evidence of having someone who has completed the educational requirements of this policy as noted in #1.

Rationale: making the certification program mandatory by tying it to the licensing program is critical to ensures 100% compliance.

4. Management from each high risk food establishment will notify the Environmental Health Department when the certified person leaves or terminates employment with the food establishment. The licensee will designate a new manager, owner or operator to be trained and certified within 90 days.

Rationale: continuity in programming is essential for public health and safety. Training sessions are offered throughout the region periodically.

5. The Environmental Health Department will provide licensed establishments with educational materials on a regular basis and will also provide mailed updates on critical or emerging issues. It will be the responsibility of the establishment owner, manager or operator to be sure that important issues are discussed with establishment personnel.

Rationale: To ensure that an establishment is up-to-date on the all food safety issues, a good educational program must be in operation year-round. Methodology to distribute bulletins warning of critical food safety issues must be in place.

6. Food Safety Seminars are available to all county residents, institutions and/or organizations and will be provided upon request.

Rationale: educational opportunities for charities, churches, special events and other situations where food is served to the public is an important part of a proactive environmental health program.

Operational Requirements

Meetings

Mandatory meetings may be called by Environmental Health staff to cover significant issues of importance to a number of establishments, such as new programs, licensing changes or emerging issues. Whenever possible, these meetings will be located at times and distances convenient to a majority of establishments.

Rationale: it is cost-effective to convene the group of license-holders to review important issues. Meetings provide opportunities for efficient communications, as well as an open forum for questions and mutual problem-solving.

Reporting

Establishments must comply with the reporting requirements set forth by this agency including but not limited to:

- Customer Foodborne Illness Reporting

Each licensed Food and/or Beverage Establishment must inform this agency of all reports of Customer Foodborne Illness complaints immediately. If the report is after hours or voicemail is reached, the establishment is directed to call The Director's office phone (507-934-7096) and leave a message with the following information: the name of complainant, phone number and time of complaint. The establishment must also record all complaints of Customer Illness on the provided Customer Complaint Log, maintain current and retain on file for one year. Calls to the Director's phone are then transferred via email to the Director 24/7, and a call back to the establishment will be made as soon as possible.

- **Employee Illness Reporting /Food and Beverage Establishments**
Each licensed Food and/or Beverage Establishment must inform this agency of all reports of Employee Illness as written in the Minnesota Food Code. Establishments must report this information to this agency within 24 hours, maintain a current Employee Illness Reporting Log and retain log on file for one year.

- **Employee Illness Reporting / Public Swimming Pools**
Each licensed public swimming pool must monitor and record all reports of Employee illness associated with vomiting and diarrhea. Each site must maintain an Employee Illness Reporting Log and retain this log on file for one year. This information must remain confidential between pool manager and reporting employee. Our agency will provide a template for an Employee Illness Reporting Policy and Report Log.

Special Programs

When opportunities arise for pilot programs or experimental projects, all appropriate establishments will be expected to participate. Programs will be designed to be relevant to establishments, to lead to more effective food safety procedures in the future and to be as non-interruptive and easy as possible for establishment staff.

Rationale: most of the special programs are designed to run via full participation by all establishments. The pilot projects are intended to either streamline or enhance procedures through better education; thus full participation will result in an increase in food safety quality for all businesses.

Documentation

Establishments must comply with documentation requirements. These include, but are not limited to: sanitizer logs, temperature logs, a record of customer complaints of illness, signed Employee Illness Reporting Agreements, and Employee Illness Logs

Communications

Establishments must make arrangements for language interpretive services if management or staff are not proficient in English during critical interactions with the environmental health staff such as plan reviews, inspections, enforcements and education.

Rationale: documentation and communications are such important parts of safe service operations that their implementation must be continuous as well as systematic.

Licensing

Licensing categories are developed and may change over a period of time. They reflect a wide range of licensed establishments.

Categories are used to determine the annual fee required for license by this Health Authority. Generally, the fee schedule correlates with the size of the facility, the complexity of the operation, number of meals served and public health risk.

As license applications are made available for the next year's license, the Community Health Board will consider if the current fee schedule is appropriate. The Board will consider current levels of service, budget constraints and overall needs of the program as well as services provided. Generally, increases to the fee schedule will be consistent across all categories.

Additional licensing costs will also be reviewed annually by the Board. Examples include: late payment fees, plan review fees, enforcement action fees, inspection and Administration Fees.

Inspections:

Frequency

The frequency of inspections of the establishments shall be based on the degree of health risk.

- (a) High-risk establishments must be inspected at least once every 12 months.
- (b) Medium-risk establishments must be inspected at least once every 18 months.
- (c) Low-risk establishments must be inspected at least once every 24 months.

Risk Categories

(a) **High-risk establishment.** "High-risk establishment" means a public pool, or any food and beverage service establishment, hotel, motel, lodging establishment, or resort that:

- (1) serves potentially hazardous foods that require extensive processing on the premises, including manual handling, cooling, reheating, or holding for service;
- (2) prepares foods several hours or days before service;
- (3) serves menu items that epidemiologic experience has demonstrated to be common vehicles of food-borne illness;
- (4) has a public swimming pool; or
- (5) draws its drinking water from a surface water supply.

(b) **Medium-risk establishment.** "Medium-risk establishment" means a food and beverage service establishment, hotel, motel, lodging establishment, or resort that:

- (1) serves potentially hazardous foods but with minimal holding between preparation and service; or
- (2) serves foods, such as pizza, that require extensive handling followed by heat treatment.

(c) **Low-risk establishment.** "Low-risk establishment" means a food and beverage service establishment, hotel, motel, lodging establishment, or resort that is not a high-risk or medium-risk establishment. (d) **Risk exceptions.** Mobile food units, seasonal permanent and seasonal temporary food stands, food carts, and special event food stands are not inspected on an established schedule and therefore are not defined as high-risk, medium-risk, or low-risk establishments.

(e) **School inspection frequency.** Elementary and secondary school food service establishments must be inspected according to the assigned risk category or by the frequency required in the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act, whichever frequency is more restrictive.

Emergencies

In the case of emergencies, special orders/conditions may be established. Examples include but are not limited to the following:

- alternative water supplies
- alternative refrigeration options
- alternative sanitizing procedures
- alternative handwashing

Rationale: after storms, floods, fires, power outages and other emergencies, the Environmental Health Department will help establishments assess options and will assist in allowing businesses to operate whenever possible. Emergencies in other areas have shown that flexibility and resourcefulness can occur; alternatives have been documented that may be adapted after local emergencies.

Plan Reviews

I. A formal Plan Review will take place in the following situations:

- when a new establishment is constructed
- when an existing establishment is reconstructed/remodeled which may include:
 - plumbing is modified
 - walls are moved, constructed or torn down
 - substantial menu changes are planned – requiring equipment changes
 - size of kitchen or seating area is substantially increased
- when an establishment is out of operation over 45 days, due to management or ownership changes, the facility must undergo a plan review
- when a change of management or owner occurs with less than a 45 day interruption of operation, the facility may need to undergo a full plan review.

Rationale: the local environmental health department and in the case of plumbing changes, the Minnesota Department of Health, must be involved with such changes to ensure compliance with current codes and ordinances. The formal plan review process involves analysis of equipment and facilities, to ensure that standards are maintained and involves a fee to ensure that the cost of the plan review process is absorbed by the

establishment receiving the oversight, rather than being supported by the overall licensing program.

2. The Plan Review timetable will be as follows:
 - The Environmental Health Department will be notified as soon as possible during the planning process.
 - Overall plans, blueprints, menus (if applicable) equipment specifications and establishment plan review application must be received by the Environmental Health Department and plumbing plans must be received by the Minnesota Department of Labor and Industry before any construction can begin.
 - The Environmental Health Department will review plans within 30 days of their receipt and will make written comments delineating any necessary changes.
 - Any variation from this timetable may result in a construction stop-order and possible penalty fee equal to other enforcement fees.

Rationale: Any work started without approval could result in time consuming consultations by staff and expensive changes to the facility.

3. Plan Reviews shall be conducted following guidelines developed by the Environmental Health Department and the Minnesota Department of Health.

Variances

Variance requirements and procedures are listed in all program ordinances as they relate to the regulation of all licensed establishments.

Enforcement Actions

Re-inspection

1. Inspectors may schedule a re-inspection in any of the following situations:
 - critical violations exist that are not corrected at the time of the routine inspection
 - lack of demonstration of knowledge
 - poor sanitation (a high number of non-critical violations)
 - to ensure timely compliance of orders written

A re-inspection might not be required

- When the violations are corrected immediately during the inspection.
- When a non-critical violation cannot be corrected immediately, such as repairs to equipment or repairs to the physical facility.
- When the non-critical violation would not have an immediate impact on public health and the correction can be verified at the next annual

inspection.

- When a repair can be provided by some other written form of documentation (i.e. invoice from a repair company).

2. A re-inspection fee will be assessed to partially cover the costs of an additional inspection.

Rationale: the additional cost of food safety violations will be borne by the party responsible for the violation, not by all the licensed establishments as would be the case if there were no re-inspection fee. If this fee is not paid within 30 days an additional charge will be added.

3. Re-inspection dates will be determined based on the nature of the violations and ease of compliance with written orders.

Rationale: violations that may have serious impacts on human health must be corrected quickly; violations necessitating replacement of equipment or construction/remodeling may take time to implement.

4. Re-inspections may be conducted by two inspectors.

Rationale: collaboration will reduce subjectivity; team-inspection may be necessary if the situation warrants.

In-office Hearings

1. In-office Hearings may be scheduled in the following situations:

- violations are repeated for two or more inspections
- violations are repeated over the course of one or more years
- violations are critical (but do not pose imminent health threats)
- the inspector feels the necessity for administrative assistance in securing compliance

Rationale: setting the hearing is another tool for securing compliance by establishing a serious tone and provides back-up to the inspector. Establishment management will be asked to justify the lack of compliance to the program director and/or agent for the Board. Mutually acceptable compliance dates will be established in a more formal setting, increasing the likelihood of more timely compliance. Violations and compliance plans will be better documented. If many violations have been found, reviewing the lengthy list may be better accomplished in a more private setting and at a less busy time, at a place and time when all parties can better concentrate on resolving the situation.

A fee will be charged for an in office hearing. If this fee is not paid within 30 days a penalty charge will be added.

2. The scheduling of an In-office Hearing will be confirmed in writing, including a list of specific violations. Copies of the letter will be annotated and sent to the district

commissioner, the county board chair and/or chair of the Community Health Board, the county attorney and other parties as deemed appropriate.

Rationale: Annotating the list of those notified about violations may increase compliance; it will also keep elected officials aware of establishment status and will provide documentation of violations in case of the need for further enforcement actions.

3. Officials receiving notice of In-office Hearings may attend the hearing if they so desire.

Rationale: in some cases, attendance will help officials understand the nature of the violations and may add impetus to compliance efforts. However, in some cases, it may be more expedient if such officials choose to be “once-removed” from the enforcement process.

4. Whenever possible, the In-office Hearing will be held at a neutral place; however, in some cases, the hearing can be held at the establishment in question.

Rationale: moving the meeting to the Public Health or Environmental Health Office will underscore the more magisterial nature of the hearing, elevating it slightly from the setting of a regular inspection or less serious re-inspection. Changing this policy can be considered if officials feel a need to see violations.

Suspension of License

Temporary Closure

Licenses may be suspended temporarily by the Environmental Health Director at any time for failure by the holder to comply with the requirements of this ordinance or whenever the Environmental Health Director finds unsanitary or other condition(s) in the substantial hazard to the public health.

Permanent Closure

For serious or repeated violations of any of the requirements of the ordinance the license may be permanently revoked after an opportunity for a hearing before the Brown-Nicollet Community Health Appeals Board has been provided.

Other Enforcement Options

Other enforcement actions which may be taken:

- Inspection Report Supervisory Review - inspection reports may be marked for Supervisory Review. These reports will be reviewed by Supervisor and a letter requesting a written plan for compliance will be sent. The response will be reviewed by Supervisor and Inspector and appropriate actions will be taken which may include acceptance of plan, re-inspection or In-Office Hearing.
- Additional education and/or demonstration of competence for establishment personnel (i.e. staff food safety seminars).
- HACCP plans by food and /or establishment staff to minimize subjectivity in procedures (i.e. standardizing procedures for handling potentially hazardous foods or situations where emerging health threats may occur).
- Development and approval by this agency of maintenance schedules by establishment staff to ensure regular sanitation and routine cleaning (i.e. sanitizing checklists and cleaning calendars).
- Development and approval by this agency of written policies and procedures to ensure uniformity in compliance, (i.e., an incident reporting form for foodborne illness reports).

Rationale: any alternatives that will enable establishment operators to continue operations while minimizing threats to public health should be considered. Flexibility within health and safety parameters is a benefit to the community, the licensing authority and the business.

Temporary Food Service

Special Event Food Service (SEFS) means a food and/or beverage stand which, if used in conjunction with celebrations and special events, operates for no more than 10 total days annually.

Special Event Minimal Handling Food Service (SEMH): means a Special Event Food Service that prepares and sells only hot dogs, nachos, and/or bottled or can beverages and operates no more than 10 total days annually.

Special Event One Day Food Service(SEOD): means a food and/or beverage stand which is used in conjunction with a celebration, benefit or special event, which operates for no more than one day once a year.

Special Event Food Service Policies

The following requirements must be met prior to approval for a Special Event Food Service or a Special Event One Day Food Service license:

1. Approval of preparation site.
2. A menu information sheet must be submitted and approved — the menu

- must not include any home- prepared food.
3. The hot and cold holding equipment must maintain proper temperature on site, mechanical refrigeration for cold potentially hazardous foods is required.
 4. Approval of on-site storage areas — food cannot be stored on the ground.
 5. Approval of hand-washing facilities and methods.
 6. Approval of sanitizing procedures for the food stand and for equipment and utensils.
 7. Food stand workers must review educational materials provided by the county.
- All food stands possessing a Special Event Food Service license, must register with the Environmental Health Office by filling out a Menu Information Sheet even if they are licensed by:
 - a) Minnesota Department of Agriculture
 - b) Minnesota Department of Health
 - c) Previously licensed by this office but are participating in their second or third event.

Rationale: It is important for the Environmental Health office to have a file with the menu and food preparation information in advance so that food safety directive and education can be provided to the licensee.

- All food stands, if used in conjunction with celebrations and special events and operate for no more than ten total days annually, must hold a Special Event Food Service license, even if the normal site of operation would be exempt from licensing and even if the primary site is already licensed.

Rationale: It is important for the Environmental Health office to have a file with the menu and food preparation information in advance so that food safety directive and education can be provided to the licensee.

- Special Event Food stands with minimal food handling that prepare and sell only hot dogs, nachos, and/or bottled or can beverages will be charged a reduced license fee.

Rationale: the risk of potential food safety problems is minimal at these type of stands so inspection, education and consultation services are less intensive than at regular food stands.

- Any organization will be allowed to sell homemade double crust fruit pies, cakes, breads, cookies and other non-potentially hazardous foods.

Rationale: the sale of these products has long been accepted in Minnesota as an acceptable form of fund-raising by these organizations. Individuals or groups however,

strongly are encouraged to explore the possibility of using space in an approved food facility, such as: a church or school kitchen or other existing licensed food establishment suitable for food manufacture.

Both commercial and non-profit food handlers must follow acceptable food handling and transportation practices to protect food from potential contamination or temperature abuse.

This policy prohibits the sale or use of homemade food products in a licensed establishment and allows the use and sale of homemade, non-potentially hazardous foods by non-profit organizations, such as: churches, 4H clubs, etc.

Seasonal Temporary Food Service (STFS) means a food and/or beverage service stand that is a food stand which is disassembled and moved from location to location. The food stand must operate for no more than 21 days at any one location unless approved by the licensing agency. For operation more than 21 days an application for a Seasonal Temporary Food Service Variance must be received at time of initial application and approved by this office prior to operation.

Seasonal Temporary Food Service Policies

The following requirements must be met for a Seasonal Temporary Food Service license:

1. Approval of preparation site.
2. A menu information sheet must be submitted and approved, the menu must not include any home-prepared food.
3. The hot and cold holding equipment must maintain proper temperature on site mechanical refrigeration for cold potentially hazardous foods is required.
4. Approval of on-site storage areas — food cannot be stored on the ground.
5. Approval of hand-washing facilities and methods.
6. Approval of sanitizing procedures for the food stand and for equipment and utensils.
7. Food stand workers must review educational materials provided by the county.

All Seasonal Temporary Food Services operating in Brown, Nicollet, Cottonwood or Watonwan Counties must have a license issued by either:

- a) the Brown-Nicollet Environmental Health Office
- b) the Minnesota Department of Agriculture, or
- c) the Minnesota Department of Health

Rationale: Many temporary food stands travel to several events throughout the year. The county will need to provide thorough inspection, education and consultation.

- All food stands possessing a Seasonal Temporary Food Service license must register with the Environmental Health Office by filling out a Menu

Information Sheet, even if they are licensed by:

- a) Minnesota Department of Health
- b) Licensed by a neighboring local environmental health department

Rationale: It is important for the Environmental Health office to have a file with the menu and food preparation information in advance so that food safety directive and education can be provided to the licensee.

- Seasonal Temporary Food Stands with minimal food handling, that prepare and sell only hot dogs, nachos, and/or bottled or can beverages, will be charged a reduced license fee.

Rationale: the risk of potential food safety problems is minimal at this type of stand so inspection, education and consultation services are less intensive than at regular food stands.

- Any organization will be allowed to sell homemade fruit pies, cakes, breads, cookies and other non-potentially hazardous foods.

Rationale: the sale of these products has long been accepted in Minnesota as an acceptable form of fund-raising by these organizations. Individuals or groups, however are, strongly encouraged to explore the possibility of using space in an approved food facility, such as a church or school kitchen or other existing licensed food establishment suitable for food production.

Both commercial and non-profit food handlers must follow acceptable food handling and transportation practices to protect food from potential contamination or temperature abuse.

This policy prohibits the sale or use of homemade food products in a licensed establishment and allows the use and sale of homemade, non-potentially hazardous foods by non-profit organizations, such as: churches, 4H clubs, etc.

Seasonal Permanent Food Service (SPFS) means a food and/or beverage service stand which is a permanent food service stand or building, but operates for no more than 21 days annually.

Seasonal Permanent Food Service (SPFS) Policies

The following requirements must be met for a Seasonal Permanent Food Service license:

- I. Approval of preparation site – a formal plan review must be completed and plans approved prior to the construction of any new Seasonal Permanent Food Service stand.

2. A menu information sheet must be submitted and approved — the menu must not include any home-prepared food.
3. The hot and cold holding equipment must maintain proper temperature. On-site mechanical refrigeration for cold potentially hazardous foods is required.
4. Approval of on-site storage areas — food cannot be stored on the ground.
5. Approval of hand-washing facilities and methods.
6. Approval of sanitizing procedures for the food stand and for equipment and utensils.
7. Food stand workers must review educational materials provided by the county.
 - All food and beverage establishments that are permanent food service stands or buildings, which operate for no more than 21 days annually, (4-H, etc.) must have a Seasonal Permanent Food Stand license issued by:
 - a) the Brown-Nicollet Environmental Health Office
 - b) the Minnesota Department of Agriculture
 - c) the Minnesota Department of Health

Rationale: Many temporary food stands travel to several events throughout the year. The county will need to provide thorough inspection, education and consultation.

- All food stands possessing a Seasonal Permanent Food Service license must register with the Environmental Health Office by filling out a Menu Information Sheet, even if they are licensed by:
 - a) Minnesota Department of Health
 - b) licensed by a neighboring local environmental health department.

Rationale: It is important for the Environmental Health office to have a file with the menu and food preparation information in advance so that food safety directive and education can be provided to the licensee.

- All food and beverage establishments that are permanent food service stands or buildings, which operate for no more than 21 days annually, must hold a Seasonal Permanent Food Service license even if the normal site of operation would be exempt from licensing and even if the primary site is already licensed (4-H, etc.).

Rationale: It is important for the Environmental Health office to have a file with the menu and food preparation information in advance so that food safety directive and education can be provided to the licensee.

- Seasonal Permanent Food Service stands with minimal food handling, that prepare and sell only hot dogs, nachos, and/or bottled or can beverages, will be charged a reduced license fee.

Rationale: the risk of potential food safety problems is minimal at these types of stands so inspection, education and consultation services are less intensive than at regular food stands.

- Any organization will be allowed to sell homemade fruit pies, cakes, breads, cookies and other non-potentially hazardous foods.

Rationale: the sale of these products has long been accepted in Minnesota as an acceptable form of fund-raising by these organizations. Individuals or groups however, strongly are encouraged to explore the possibility of using space in an approved food facility, such as a church or school kitchen or other existing licensed food establishment suitable for food production.

Seasonal Food Service Variance (SFSV) – a variance applied for the operation of any Seasonal Food Service to operate beyond 21 days. An additional application form and fee will be required for this variance and approval of variance is necessary prior to operation.

Other Temporary Food Service Operations:

School Additional Food Service (SAFS) – a separate food service license is required for any additional food service outside the school cafeteria area. Compliance is the responsibility of the school.

Church Functions: The preparation and/or service of food to the members or public on the grounds of an established community church.

*Example: A church prepares and serves food in its church building, an associated building or on the church grounds. This is a Church Function. **No food license is necessary.***

Private Party: The preparation, transportation and/or service of food to a private party, with no remuneration for services.

*Example: An organization holds a luncheon for its members. The meal is prepared and served by its members. It is not advertised to the public. **This is a Private Event. No license is required.***

Catering: Food establishments that prepare food under contract in support of an event such as a reception, party, luncheon, conference, ceremony or trade show must be licensed. All caterers operating in Minnesota, including those based in neighboring states, must operate in compliance with the Minnesota food

Example: An organization holds a luncheon for its members. The meal is prepared by a person under contract. This is a Catered Event. The person receiving payment must hold a Catering License.

1. A person providing catering services to a private party in the counties must be licensed by the health department having jurisdiction for the location of the main base of operation for the caterer.

Rationale: this will insure that all caterers are licensed and provided with education, consultation and inspection services. The counties will honor licenses from the base of operation; thus multiple licenses will not be required.

2. No home-prepared food will be allowed. Food must be prepared at a licensed facility.

Rationale: this will insure that proper equipment and work surfaces are used; and will minimize potential contamination by family members, pets and domestic equipment failures as would be the case if home-prepared food was allowed.

3. Catering licenses are required for establishments which have on-site dining facilities and also provide and/or serve food for other locations.

Rationale: the license fee will help cover the additional environmental health services necessary to monitor this addition to the regular business. This insures fairness to establishments who do not cater by helping keep overall fees lower.

The following requirements must be met prior to approval for a catering license:

1. Approval of preparation site — inspection of facility used for food preparation.
2. Approval of menu of catered food items — the menu must not include any home-prepared food.
3. The hot and cold holding equipment used to transport food and to maintain its temperature at the catering site must meet NSF standards.
4. The facility where food is prepared must have adequate and approved storage areas. Food, equipment and supplies cannot be stored in homes or garages.
5. The vehicle used for transporting food products must be approved by the jurisdictional health department.
6. The licensed caterer must attend and pass an approved food safety certification course.
7. Each catered event must be staffed by either a Certified Food Manager or a “Person In Charge”.

Minnesota Department of Health Licensed Mobile Food Units

Any food vendor, present at any event within Brown, Nicollet, Cottonwood or Watonwan counties, operating with a Mobile Food Unit license issued by the Minnesota Department of Health will be charged an Inspection Fee if that vendor is present and inspected at an event in Brown, Nicollet, Cottonwood or Watonwan Counties.

Home-prepared Food

The following policy has been in place for several years with regard to the sale of home-prepared food items at events, such as: celebrations, special events, bake sales and natural disasters.

Commercial Businesses

Individuals or firms selling food for profit are prohibited from selling food products that are made in a home. The only exceptions are foods that are prepared in a home that has a separate approved and licensed facility.

Non-Profit Organizations

Any non-profit organization will be allowed to sell the following home-prepared food items: double crust fruit pies, cakes, breads, rolls, cookies and other non-potentially hazardous foods.

Rationale: The sale of these products has long been accepted in Minnesota as an acceptable form of fund-raising. The public enjoys these items: people enjoy making them too. Following these guidelines will help ensure that the home-prepared food will be produced safely.

The sale of home-prepared potentially hazardous food is prohibited. "Potentially hazardous food" means food that is in a form capable of supporting:

- the rapid and progressive growth of infectious or toxigenic microorganisms
- any food of animal origin that is raw or heat-treated
- a food of plant origin that is heat-treated or consists of raw seed sprouts
- cut melons
- garlic and oil mixtures

Both commercial and non-profit food handlers must follow acceptable food handling and transportation practices to protect food from potential contamination. It is strongly suggested that groups explore the possibility of using space in an approved facility to eliminate the use of individual homes as the preparation site.