

COTTAGE FOOD – FOOD SAFETY DIRECTIVES

The Food Safety Directives are public health intervention strategies designed to limit the potential for **FOODBORNE DISEASE OUTBREAKS**. **COTTAGE FOOD OPERATORS** should follow these directives as a means to help ensure the safety of their products. They represent the minimum best practices required in the production of **COTTAGE FOOD PRODUCTS**, and **COTTAGE FOOD OPERATORS** are encouraged to contact the Department for additional guidance on food safety issues.

(1) **Handwashing**

- (a) Employees involved with the preparation and packaging of **COTTAGE FOOD PRODUCTS** should clean their hands and exposed portions of their arms before starting food processing and after any activity that renders the hands unsanitary.
- (b) Liquid soap, paper towels, and water warm to the touch should be used for handwashing, and should be available at the handwashing sink at all times.

(2) **Bare-Hand Contact with Ready-to-Eat Foods.** Bare-hand contact with **READY-TO-EAT FOODS** should be avoided at all costs. Single-service gloves, bakery papers, tongs, or other **UTENSILS** should be used when handling **READY-TO-EAT FOODS**.

(3) **Hair Restraint and Clean Outer Garments.** Hair restraints and clean outer garments must be worn by all persons in the **PERMITTED AREA** during processing, preparing, packaging, or handling of **COTTAGE FOOD PRODUCTS**.

(4) **Eating, Drinking, or Using Tobacco.** No **COTTAGE FOOD OPERATOR**, or employee under his/her direct supervision, should eat, drink, or use any form of tobacco in the **PERMITTED AREA** during processing, preparing, packaging, or handling of **COTTAGE FOOD PRODUCTS**.

(5) **Preventing Contamination When Tasting.** A **COTTAGE FOOD OPERATOR** or employees under his/her direct supervision should not use a **UTENSIL** more than once to taste **COTTAGE FOOD PRODUCTS**.

(6) **Employee Health.** Employees should not be allowed to prepare or package **COTTAGE FOOD PRODUCTS** if they have any of the following symptoms:

- (a) Vomiting;
- (b) Fever;
- (c) Diarrhea;
- (d) Jaundice; or
- (e) Sore throat with fever.

(7) **Unauthorized Persons.** No person other than the **COTTAGE FOOD OPERATOR**, or designated employees under his/her direct supervision, should be engaged in **FOOD** processing or handling activities, or be present in the **PERMITTED AREA** while preparation, packaging, or handling is occurring.

(8) **Food Contact Surfaces.** The **FOOD CONTACT SURFACES** of all **EQUIPMENT** and **UTENSILS** should be clean to the sight and touch before beginning manufacture of **COTTAGE FOOD PRODUCTS**, and at a minimum frequency while in use to limit the potential for **FOOD** and ingredient contamination.

(9) **Proper Storage of Ingredients and Finished Products.** **COTTAGE FOOD PRODUCTS'** ingredients and finished products should be stored separate from the residential food supplies, and in a manner to prevent contamination from the premises and non-employees.

(10) **Proper Use and Storage of Chemicals.** Chemicals should be used according to the label instructions, and stored in a manner to prevent contamination of **FOOD CONTACT SURFACES**, ingredients and finished products, **SINGLE-USE ARTICLES**, and packaging materials.

- (a) **PERSONAL CARE ITEMS** should not be stored or allowed in the **PERMITTED AREA** unless stored in such a manner that does not allow contamination of food or **FOOD CONTACT SURFACES**.
- (b) Spray bottles should have their contents clearly labeled.
- (c) Pest control chemicals should not be used in the **PERMITTED AREA**.

(11) **Pests.** Pests should not be present in the **PERMITTED AREA**. These areas should be kept clean to prevent harborage of pests, and the premises should allow for easy visual inspection of pest activity.

(12) **Pets.** Pets should not be allowed in the **PERMITTED AREA** at any time during the preparation or packaging of **COTTAGE FOOD PRODUCTS**.