MARIN FARMERS MARKET ASSOCIATION'S
HAND WASHING AND FOOD SAMPLING REQUIREMENTS, GUIDELINES AND PROCEDURES

Providing samples at Certified Farmers' Markets allows consumers to try a product before purchasing it. However, unsafe sampling methods can adulterate or contaminate food and result in food borne illness. The California Uniform Food Facilities Law (CURFFL) requires that basic sanitation practices be followed when samples are dispersed at farmers markets.

To that end MCFMA has created a handout that was developed with the help of Marin and Alameda County Environmental Health Services(EHS) to give all vendors the basic sanitation practices for healthy and legal sampling within MARIN FARMERS MARKETS.

1. HAND WSHING STATION--If a vendor is sampling food at the market the vendor is required to have a hand washing station. The hand washing station is required by Marin and Alameda County Environmental Health Services(EHS). The basic items required for a proper hand washing station are:

- A container of potable water (4 to 7 gal. capacity) with a free-flowing hands-free dispensing valve.
- One 5 gal.waste water bucket.
- Paper towels-as many rolls as you estimate will be needed for a typical market day.
- Liquid hand washing soap in a pump or squeeze bottle.

Please see attached illustration.

a. If all your samples are prepared in an approved kitchen and single use utensils are used once by the customer, an individual hand washing station is not required but only if the hand washing facilities designated by the market management are consistently used before the food is sampled.

2. FOOD SAMPLING SET UP--Samples can be prepared several ways. They can be prepared, stored (refrigerated) and brought to the market or they can be prepared at the market. If they are prepared at the market all vendors are required to have:

- A cleaning, rinsing and sanitizing station.
- A hand washing station.
- A knife and a proper cutting board.
- Appropriate number of containers with appropriate sneeze and handling protection.
- Disposable latex and plastic gloves.
- Approved disposable single use utensils for distribution of samples to customers.
- A plastic bag lined waste basket for sampling preparation waste and sampling distribution waste disposal. *Please see attached illustration.*

3. THE CLEANING, RINSING AND SANITIZING STATION--Please see the illustration of examples of proper set up. Here are several important **requirements** of a proper station:

a. All cutting boards and other utensils must be able to lie flat and/or totally submerged in wash and sanitizing basins in this set up. After cleaning, rinsing and sanitizing allow cutting board and utensils air dry.

b. The sanitizing solution is one tablespoon of household bleach to every gal. of water. In this bleach/water solution allow cutting board and utensils to be submerged for 30 seconds. Allow to air dry.

c. **REMEMBER: CLEANING is a process that removes dirt, grease and food debris. Detergents and soaps are used in cleaning. SANITIZING is a process that kills disease-causing bacteria with bleach (not detergent or soap).**

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d. Utensils and hand washing water shall be disposed of in a facility connected to the public sewer system. This means waste water must not be dumped on the ground, grass, the pavement or down the storm drains. All waste water must be taken home with vendor or poured into the potties of the portable restrooms until they are full.

e. The "washing, rinsing and sanitizing station" and the "hand washing station" must be set up before preparing any samples that may be offered to a customer.

f. All waste generated from sampling preparation and sampling in general shall be taken away from the market and disposed of by the vendor. Please do not use the trash cans at the market. These trash cans are for general use within the market and on market day only.

REMEMBER: Only after both the hand washing and utensil washing stations are set up can the vendor prepare his samples for distribution.

4. <u>PREPARING AND DISTRIBUTING SAMPLES</u>--Here are the important requirements and guidelines.

a. All food shall be stored at least 6 inches (15 centimeters) off the floor or ground or under any other conditions that are approved.

b. Produce intended for sampling must be washed with potable water to remove any soil material in order that it is wholesome and safe for consumption**.** Your hand washing station can also be used for produce washing. **Please take special note** that Watermelons, Cantaloupe and other melons must be washed and sanitized in a large suitable container with a mild bleach solution before cutting for sampling.

c. Thoroughly wash your hands before the market and as necessary to prevent contamination of the food.

d. If all your samples are prepared at an approved kitchen and single use utensils are used once by the customer, an individual hand washing station is not required but only if the hand washing facilities designated by the market management are consistently used before the food is sampled.

e. Keep all samples in a container with hinged lid or behind other approved sneeze and handling protection. Each vendor has the responsibility to protect against contamination of samples from sneezing or touching. If you cannot assure your sampling methods can meet this standard you will have to consider a new method or discontinue sampling all together. In Marin County it is approved to provide a cup or other holder of toothpicks next to the hinged container for customer sampling. For the sampling of various nuts a shaker bottle is to be used as a dispenser. *<u>See attached illustrations.</u>*

f. Use disposable plastic gloves when cutting product for sampling. DO NOT REUSE GLOVES AFTER TOUCHING CONTAMINATED SURFACES OR MONEY OR PRODUCE.

g. Use tooth picks, wax paper, paper sampling cups or disposable utensils to distribute samples. In this way each vendor and his workers can prevent the hands of customers from touching and contaminating the food. **EACH VENDOR'S DISPENSING METHOD MUST PREVENT CONTAMINATION BY THE CUSTOMER.**

h. In Marin County sampling tongs can be used in only two cases. First when the vendor is distributing the sample to the costumer and second when the covered sample container has a small opening from which the tong's handle extends and can be safely used to obtain sample by a customer. *<u>Please see sampling illustration</u>*.

i. Use only plastic (nonabsorbent) or approved hardwood cutting boards or disposable paper plates for cutting produce for sampling.

j. Know where the approved toilet and hand washing facilities are located.

k. No live animals, birds or fowl shall be kept or allowed within 20ft (6 meters) of any area where food is stored or held for sale. This does not apply to guide, signal or service dogs when used in the manner specified in section 54.1 of the Civil Code.

5. REGARDING SAMPLING FOR FOOD PURVEYORS AND VENDORS

a. All food purveyors and vendors should follow the same sampling guidelines for health and safety that are detailed above for the Certified Farmer's Market, especially with regard to hand washing and washing/sanitizing of all items and utensils used in sample preparation. Remember it is your responsibility to be sure the method you use to dispense samples is safe from contamination.

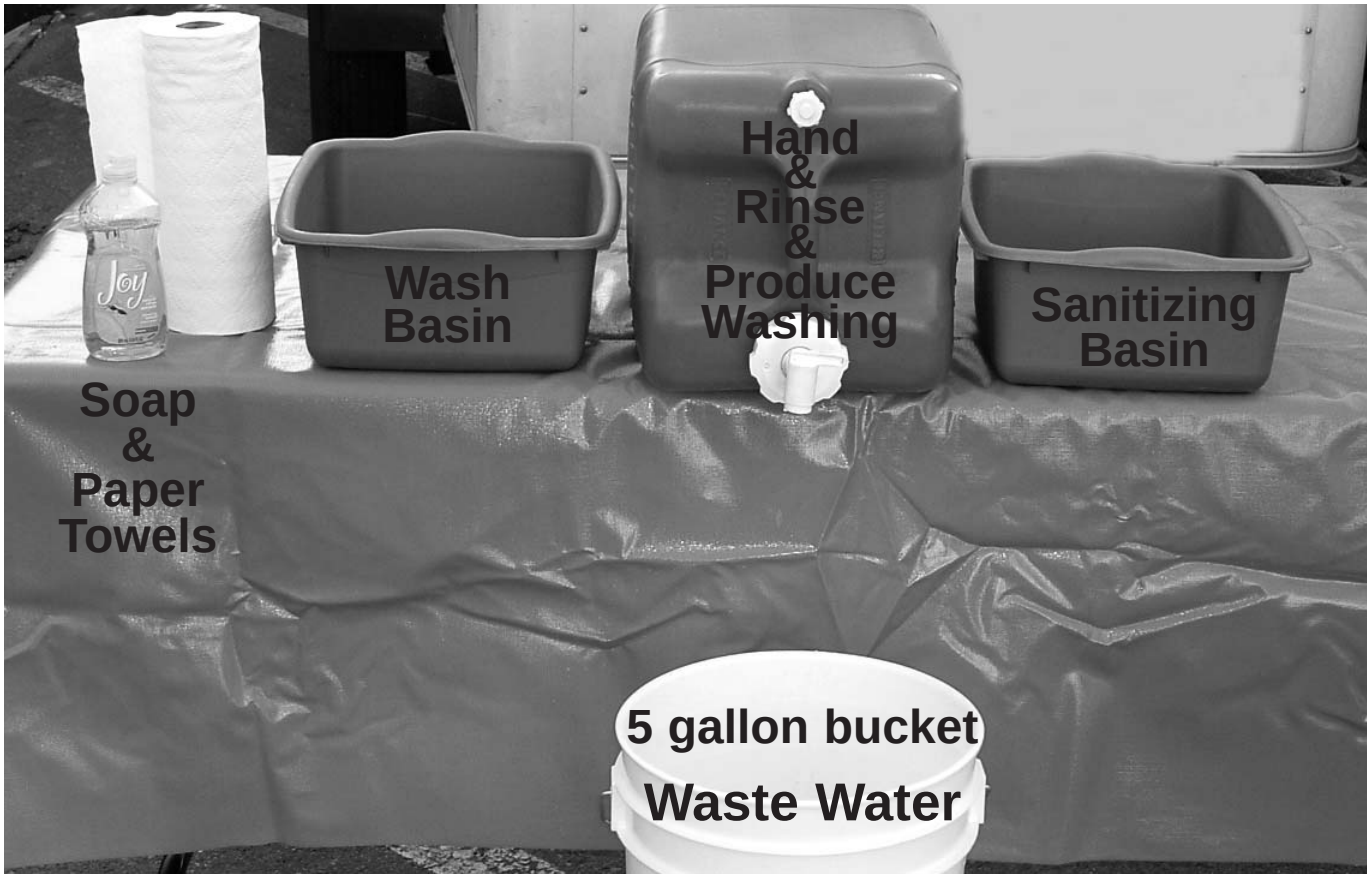
b. If you bring cold product to the market for sale the EHS requires you keep it cold at 41˚F or below. That means you probably must ice it above and below.

c. Any product you warm at the market must be warmed to 135˚F or above.

6. VIOLATIONS, CITATIONS AND FINES

Violations of proper sampling and hand washing requirements are subject to re-inspection fees by Marin County or Alameda County Environmental Health Services (EHS). There is no fee for the 1st inspection and the re-inspection.. The 2nd re-inspection is accompanied by a fine of $100.00. A 3rd re-inspection may be accompanied by a fine of up to $300.00.

“Hand Washing” and “Cleaning, Rinsing, and Sanitizing” Station
Example #1



HAND WASHING AND “CLEANING, RINSING AND SANITIZING STATION” STATION
1. Required basic items for proper handwashing station.
  a. A 4 to 7 gal. potable water container with a free-flowing hands free dispensing valve.
  b. One 5 gal. waste water bucket.
  c. Paper towels--as many rolls as you need for market day.
  d. Liquid handwashing soap.
2. All vendors that prepare and distribute samples are required to have a handwashing station by Marin and Alameda County Environmental Services.
3. Hand washing and other cleaning waste water must be disposed of in a facility connected to the public sewer system or in the potties of the market portable restrooms. Not in the grass, on the ground or pavement or in the storm drains.
4. The hand washing water dispenser can be used to wash produce for sampling.

“CLEANING, RINSING AND SANITIZING” STATION:
1. All cutting boards and non disposible utensils used for sampling must be able to lie flat and or totally submerged in the wash and sanitizing basins. After cleaning, rinsing and sanitizing allow cutting boards and utensils to air dry.
2. A sanitizing solution is 1 tablespoon of household bleach per gallon of water. Allow submerged items to remain in solution for 30 seconds. Allow to air dry. Sanitizing is a process that kills disease-causing bactieria.
3. Produce intended for sampling must be washed with potable water to remove any soil material in order that it is wholesome and safe for consumption. Cantaloupe, watermelons and other melons should be cleaned in a very mild bleach and water solution.
4. Both the “Hand Washing” and the “Cleaning, Rinsing and Sanitizing” stations must be set up before samples can be prepared and distributed.

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“Hand Washing” and “Cleaning, Rinsing, and Sanitizing” Station
Example #2

HAND WASHING AND “CLEANING, RINSING AND SANITIZING STATION” STATION

1. Required basic items for proper handwashing station.
   a. A 4 to 7 gal. potable water container with a free-flowing hands free dispensing valve.
   b. One 5 gal. waste water bucket.
   c. Paper towels--as many rolls as you need for market day.
   d. Liquid handwashing soap.
2. All vendors that prepare and distribute samples are required to have a handwashing station by Marin and Alameda County Environmental Services.
3. Hand washing and other cleaning waste water must be disposed of in a facility connected to the public sewer system or in the potties of the market portable restrooms. Not in the grass, on the ground or pavement or in the storm drains.
4. The hand washing water container can be used to wash produce for sampling.

“CLEANING, RINSING AND SANITIZING” STATION:

1. All cutting boards and non disposible utensils used for sampling must be able to lie flat and or totally submerged in the wash and sanitizing basins. After cleaning, rinsing and sanitizing allow cutting boards and utensils to air dry.
2. A sanitizing solution is 1 teaspoon of household bleach per gallon of water. Allow submerged items to remain in solution for 30 seconds. Rinse and air dry. Sanitizing is a process that kills disease-causing bactieria.
3. Produce intended for sampling must be washed with potable water to remove any soil material in order that it is wholesome and safe for consumption. Cantaloupe, watermelons and other melons should be cleaned in a very mild bleach and water solution.
4. Both the “Hand Washing” and the “Cleaning, Rinsing and Sanitizing” stations must be set up before samples can be distributed.

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Sampling

Essentail required items for proper sampling: disposable single use utensils,covered sampling container, a knife and cutting board, disposable latex or plastic gloves, tongs and waste basket w/liner.

Vendor should provide containers with hinged covers to prevent food contaimination from customer by touching samples.

Marin County EHS approves of the method pictured above. The coustomer can obtain a sample with the toothpicks next to the covered container

In this example the vendor gives out a sample using tongs.

This method provides the best way to keep the sample from being contaiminated.

The vendor is in complete control of his sampling process and this method is highly recommended by the Marin and Alameda County EHS.

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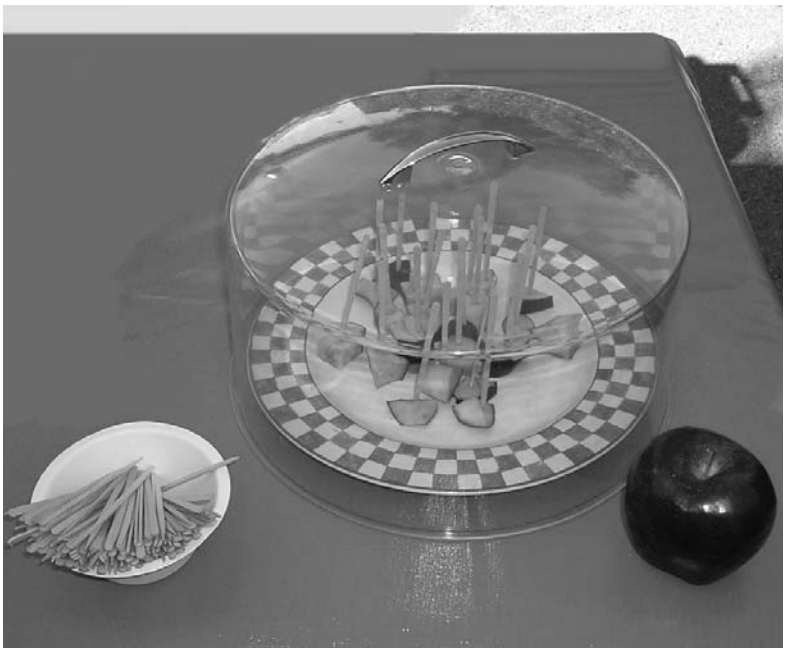
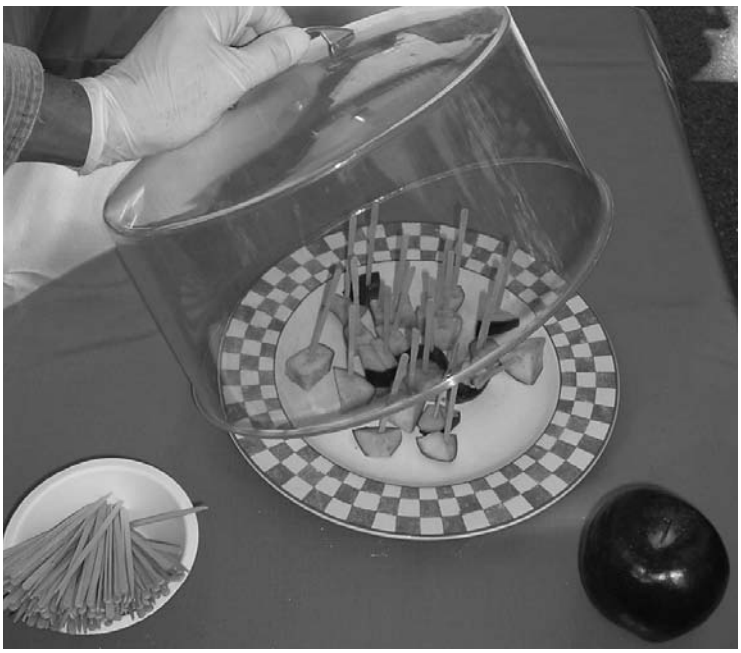
Covered Sample Set-up





Here is an other example of how to protect your samples. Notice the samples have tooth picks already so customer does not have to touch the sample. The cake cover acts as a sneeze protector.

If you are sampling nuts of any kind, you must use a nut-shaker similar to the ones pictured above.

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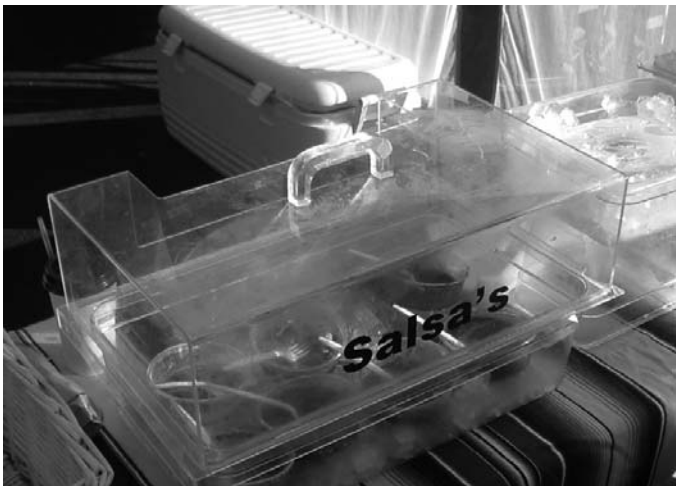
Examples of Sneeze Protected Samples



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