Farmers Markets

A "farmers market" is a marketplace which operates seasonally, mainly as a common market for Iowa-produced farm products, as well as on a retail basis for off-the-premises consumption.

What you need to know before selling at a farmers market

Certain items can only be sold at a farmers market with a valid food license. Any potentially-hazardous food can be sold at a farmers market with one of the following three licenses:

- Farmers market license
  - A separate license is required for each county in which a vendor sells food.
  - Each annual license is $150. Recommended time to apply is at least two weeks
prior to the operating date but must be received at least three days prior to the event.
- The license is only valid at farmers markets.
- If the vendor operates two or more stands simultaneously, a separate license is required for each unit.

- Mobile food unit license

- Temporary food establishment license

Unpackaged foods that need to be temperature-controlled for safe consumption that are not prepared at the farmers market must be produced in a licensed facility (food service establishment, food processing plant, mobile food unit, temporary food establishment). A farmers market license is also required to sell these foods at the market.

Other regulations

The requirements outlined here relate only to Iowa licensing and inspections. Individual products may also be subject to FDA regulations. To determine if FDA regulations are applicable visit the FDA website or contact them at 1.888.463.6332.

Apply or renew online

Foods that only can be sold at a farmers market with a valid license
The following products may not be sold at a farmers market without appropriate licensing from local, state or federal authorities:

1. Unpackaged foods that are temperature-controlled for safety, which include:
   - Meat
   - Poultry
   - Dairy products
   - Cooked or prepared foods
   - Soft pies
   - Custard-filled products
   - Cream-filled products;

2. Wild-harvested mushrooms as described in 481 Iowa Administrative Code, Section 31.1(4), Wild-harvested mushrooms. (See below for more information.)

Foods that can be sold at a farmers market without a license
The following products **may** be sold at a farmers market to consumers without being licensed as a farmers market establishment:

1. Whole, uncut fresh fruits and vegetables;

2. **Cottage foods**, as defined by and labeled according to Iowa Code. Cottage foods include foods that are prepared in a private residence and do not need to be kept hot or cold for safe consumption. Cottage foods may include home-processed and home-canned food IF they
comply with all of the regulations for those foods:

3. Foods that are prepared, packaged, and labeled in a licensed establishment that need to be kept hot or cold for safe consumption. Examples include: Packaged meat, poultry, and dairy products, or packaged soft pies, cheesecakes, or cream-filled pastries;

4. Fresh, wholesome shell eggs; and

5. Honey (Please note: Products containing honey need to be individually evaluated).

About wild mushrooms

Image
Wild mushrooms may be sold at a farmers market if **all** of the following criteria are met:

1. All wild-harvested mushrooms sold or served are varieties classified as one of the following:
   - **Morel**
     - White or blonde morel (Morchella americana)
     - Black morel (Morchella angusticeps)
     - Half-free (Morchella punctipes)
   - **Oyster**
     - Pearl (Pleurotus ostreatus)
     - Golden (Pleurotus citrinopileatus)
Aspen (Pleurotus populinus)
- Indian, a.k.a. Italian, phoenix, or lung (Pleurotus pulmonarius)
- **Chicken of the woods**
  - White-pored (Laetiporus cincinnatus)
  - Sulfur shelf (Laetiporus sulphureus)
- **Hen of the woods** (Grifola frondosa)
- **Chanterelle** (Cantharellus cibarius group)
- **Bear's head tooth, Lion's mane** (Hericium erinaceus or Hericium americanum)
- **Pheasant back**, a.k.a. Dryad's Saddle (Polyporus squamosus)
- **Black trumpet** (Craterellus cornucopoides)

2. Each wild-harvested mushroom must be inspected and found to be safe by a certified wild-harvested mushroom identification expert.

3. The seller of the wild-harvested mushrooms must keep a written record for at least 90 days from the date the mushrooms were purchased with the following information:

   - Identification of each mushroom species by the scientific and common name;
   - Date of purchase;
   - The quantity by weight of each species of mushrooms purchased;
   - A statement indicating that each mushroom was identified in its fresh state and was not mixed or in contact with other mushroom species;
   - The name, address, and telephone number of the certified wild-harvested mushroom identification expert;
   - A copy of the wild-harvested mushroom identification expert's certificate of successful completion of the program, including the date of completion.

4. The seller must obtain a farmers market license or a mobile food unit license.

5. The seller must inform customers by a consumer advisory in a brochure, deli case or menu advisory, label statement, table tent, placard, or other effective written means that wild mushrooms should be thoroughly cooked and may cause allergic reactions or other effects.

*Please refer to [481 Iowa Administrative Code, Section 31.1(4), Wild-harvested mushrooms](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/Bills/481/Code/31/31-31-1-4), for additional information.*

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**About consumable hemp at farmers markets**

**Consumable hemp products may be sold at a farmers market if:**

- The farmers market is listed in the [Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship](https://www.iowa.gov/department/agriculture)
(IDALS) farmers market directory. If the market is not listed in the IDALS directory, consumable hemp products may not be sold there.

- The individual selling consumable hemp products at an IDALS-listed farmers market has applied for and received a retail registration for consumable hemp from DIA. The cost of an annual registration is $475. Visit the consumable hemp page to view videos that walk through the process of applying for a consumable hemp retailer registration.
- The valid consumable hemp retailer registration documentation from DIA is posted in plain sight at the retailer’s farmers market booth/stand.

**Selling consumable hemp at other events or locations**

Selling or providing samples of consumable hemp at any other event or unregistered retail sites is prohibited (e.g., at a “pop-up,” roadside, or temporary stand; door-to-door; at private parties; in vending machines).

**Consumable hemp in food**

Food that contains consumable hemp cannot be sold unless it is produced in a licensed food-processing plant. Bread, cake, pie, or other “cottage food” items made in a person’s home kitchen or other residential space containing consumable hemp may not be sold at farmers markets or any retail location, even with a consumable hemp retail registration.

**Raw hemp**

Harvested raw hemp is considered a raw agricultural commodity and is not regulated by DIA. However, raw hemp packaged for human consumption may be sold as long as it has been manufactured according to the rules and regulations found in Iowa Administrative Code 481, Chapter 32, and the appropriate food licenses have been obtained prior to manufacturing.

**About labels**

**Product labels**

Cottage foods sold at farmers markets must be labeled with:

- Information to identify the name and address, phone number, or email address of the person preparing the food;
- The common name of the food;
- A list of ingredients in order of predominance (by weight);
- The following statement: “This product was produced at a residential property that is exempt
from state licensing and inspection.;
- If the **cottage food** contains one or more major food allergens, an additional allergen statement must be included on the label identifying each major allergen contained in the food by the common name of the allergen;
- If the food is home-processed and home-canned pickles, vegetables, or fruits permitted under this section, the date that the food was processed and canned.

Food that is prepared in a licensed food establishment or food processing plant must be labeled at a minimum with:

- Product name;
- A list of ingredients in order of predominance (by weight). If the product has a standard of identity in the Code of Federal Regulations, it must conform to that standard;
- Name and address of the manufacturer, packer, or distributor. Unless the name given is the actual manufacturer, it must be accompanied by a phrase which states the product is “manufactured for” or “distributed by”;
- Net weight or volume;
- Allergen information;
- Nutrition labeling information is required unless exempt. Exemptions may be found on the website. [www.fda.gov](http://www.fda.gov).

### About allergens

Image
Allergen information

Allergen information needs to be declared on the label or by the use of a placard.

The following food products are considered major allergens and should be declared:

- Crustacean (crab, lobster or shrimp)
- Eggs
- Fish
- Milk
- Peanuts
- Sesame
- Soybeans (not refined soybean oil)
- Tree Nuts (almonds, pecans or walnuts)
- Wheat