

SAMPLING PRODUCTS in RETAIL FOOD ESTABLISHMENT and Farmer's Markets

The Brown County Health Department has established the requirements in Brown County for offering sampling of products;

FOREMOST- If selling commercially produced product, you must have a food license from the BC Health Department to offer samples.

Food to be sampled must be from either a commercially produced product in a sealed jar that is opened on the premises, or baked goods at a Farmer's Market as a Home Based Vendor. Cut produce sampling is allowed at Farmer's Markets if a hand-washing station is available.

The acceptable foods to be sampled are:

- Jams and jellies
- Salsas (if Home Based Vendor produced there are other requirements)
- Honey
- Prepared sauces from a commercially produced jar
- Dips (sour cream/yogurt mixed with dip base on premises)
- Soups (not for Home Based Vendors)

If you would like to offer foods not on this list- check with the Health Department prior to offering for sampling

Single-use pretzels, crackers etc. that are **wrapped individually** are permitted to be used for sampling without a domed container.

If chips, taco chips or pretzels are not individually wrapped and are offered as a base for the sampled product, these should be held in a **domed container** that permits the removal of such with either **TONGS or GLOVED HANDS**.

Single service cups that contain a small amount of chips, pretzels etc. are permitted if stored behind counter and provided to customer upon request.

Sour cream, yogurt based dips or other potentially hazardous dips must be thrown out 4 hours after preparation unless continuously chilled outside of refrigeration to a 41 degree or lower temperature. (An ice water bath container is acceptable to keep them at 41 degrees or lower). These open products must have a **time label** applied to the container when removed from refrigeration.

Small disposable spoons are acceptable if the handle is placed upward in the container.

Squeeze bottles are acceptable but must be cleaned, labeled and washed daily.

Disposable bowls are acceptable if they are kept covered and a sign is provided that says "*Use a clean bowl each time*".

Samples should be in an area that can be monitored. Signage should be provided **“Sampling for Adults only- children must be assisted”** or similar wording.

No homemade products are to be sampled or sold except for Home Based Vendor products. If a product is co-packed or commercially produced from an approved source for the store specifically, this is acceptable for sampling.

No raw meat, or fish items are allowed.

A handwashing Station or sink is necessary for personnel, which includes soap, paper towels, and a trash can.

No hand sanitizers are required. There is no limit on number of items to sample.

The area **should be wiped down every 4 hours** with a cloth holding a sanitizing solution, Clorox wipes are acceptable for outdoor vending/ Farmer’s Markets only. Proper sanitizing solution should be used if sampling is done in a food establishment facility, and should be tested for correct concentration.

At the end of the day open jars that have not been refrigerated or kept under 41 degrees should be disposed of. Ideally, jars that have samples taken during the day are refrigerated in-between sampling. Any items needing refrigeration such as cream based sauces **must** be kept refrigerated in between sampling.

Any soups to be sampled must be kept hot, **over 135 degrees** in a heat maintaining container like a crock pot. Soup made previously must be reheated to 165 degrees for 15 seconds prior to replacement in a crockpot and then must be held at or above 135 degrees. Crockpots must be washed and sanitized at the end of the day. Soup should be cooled to 70 degrees within two hours and to 41 degrees in an additional 4 hours before storing in a refrigerated unit

A sneeze guard over the samples is not required but suggested for safety..

Failure to adhere to this guidance may result in the possibility of losing your food license and/or more restrictive sampling procedures.

WHY DO WE REQUIRE THIS? VIRUSES PASS READILY FROM PERSON TO PERSON.... Bacteria grows well between 41 and 135 degrees F.

Any questions, please contact Jennifer Heller at the Brown County Health Department, 200 Hawthorne Drive Nashville, IN , 812-988-2255 or email bcenvironmental@browncounty-in.us