

## **SAMPLING PRODUCTS in RETAIL FOOD ESTABLISHMENTS**

In the interest of a uniform procedure for foods to be sampled in our retail food establishments, the Brown County Health Department has established the following guidelines for our County

FOREMOST- You must have a food license from the BC Health Department, either full or limited Retail Food Establishment License.

Food to be sampled must be either a commercially produced jar that is opened on the premises, or a commercially prepared dip mix that is mixed on the premises with a commercially produced product such as sour cream, milk, or yogurt.

### **No Home-Based Vendor or Homestead Vendor products are to be offered in a Retail Food Establishment.**

The acceptable foods to be sampled are:

- Commercially licensed jams and jellies
- Commercially prepared Hot Sauces
- Commercially prepared Salsas
- Honey (wholesaled and labeled)
- Commercially prepared sauces in a sealed jar
- Dips (sour cream/yogurt/milk mixed with commercial dry dip base, done on premises- will need refrigeration also if holding over 6 hours)
- Cheeses/Cooked commercial sausages (kept refrigerated until sampled)

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

If chips, taco chips or pretzels are offered as a base for the sampled product, these should be held in a container that permits the removal of such with tongs or gloved hands only. Single-use pretzels, crackers etc., that are wrapped individually in plastic are permitted. Single service cups that contain a small amount of chips, pretzels etc. are permitted as a method of giving out samples if these are stored behind the counter, wrapped and protected from contamination and provided to the customer upon request.

Sour cream, yogurt or milk-based dips or other potentially hazardous dips must be thrown out 6 hours after preparation unless refrigeration is provided to keep these at 41 degrees F or lower. These dips must have a time label applied when made, if time/temperature is to be used as a control, (if they are offered without refrigeration), and then they are to be discarded after 6 hours. A formal written

plan must be approved by the Health Department to offer samples this way with time/temperature control and this plan must be kept on file.

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

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 home produced products are to be sampled or sold.**

A product that is co-packed from an approved source for the store specifically, is acceptable for sampling.

A handwashing sink is necessary in the establishment for staff if sampling is offered.

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

The area where sampling occurs should be wiped down daily with a sanitizing solution, Clorox wipes are acceptable.

At the end of the day any open samples should be disposed of unless they are shelf stable, needing no refrigeration, and stored where they are protected from contamination. If the samples need refrigeration and have **not** been out of temperature (over 41 degrees F) for six hours, they can be refrigerated to below 41 degrees F and used one more time.

Utensils used to remove samples from jars should be disposable and discarded or washed, rinsed and sanitized after use.

Protect any pre-prepared samples from contamination with a cover, such as plastic wrap.

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

This policy has been developed with the goal of allowing you to sample products without obtaining a variance.

Any questions, please contact the Brown County Health Department,

**812-988-2255**

or email: [bcenvironmental@browncounty-in.gov](mailto:bcenvironmental@browncounty-in.gov)