

June 20, 2011
St. Louis County Council
Justice and Health Committee Meeting
Recommendations Regarding Legislation Amending Fees and Permitting
For Farmers Markets Vendors in St. Louis County
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- I. Introduction: Reasons to Encourage Growth of Farmers Markets in St. Louis County
 - A. Support viability of emerging regional small farm economy
 - B. Protect and promote local small business economy
 - C. Promote spending in surrounding local communities
 - D. Promote healthy eating and active lifestyles
 - E. Provide community interaction and cohesiveness
 - F. Provide municipality with above services at low cost
 - G. Promote regional communication, commerce, and growth

- II. Eliminate All Permitting and Licensing Fees Charged to Farmers
 - A. Comply with Missouri State Statutes: 150-030, (94-040, and 71-630)
As outlined by Missouri Department of Agriculture's General Counsel, Michael Warrick, in a letter addressed to the Committee and dated June 7, 2011.
 - B. Include Illinois farmers in Missouri exemption. St. Louis County is located on the boundary of the state of Illinois. This farming region includes many Illinois farmers. Many St. Louis Farmers Markets bylaws include the wording like "Missouri or Illinois grown" or "within 150 miles. Apply Mo. Statutes to Illinois farmers vending at St. Louis County Farmers Markets.
 - C. Include a provision for no licensing fees to be charged by the STL County Dept. of Revenue to farmers vending at STL County Farmers Markets.
 - D. May include registration for farmers selling eggs, cheese, meat, fish, and poultry, or other value-added products.

- III. Establish Annual Farmers Market Food Service Establishment Permit
 - A. Permit application and fee is filed once per farmers market season
 - B. Permit may be used at one or multiple farmers markets in St. Louis County. Multiple locations may be listed on application and additional locations may be added later in the season without additional fees.
 - C. Permit applies to vendors selling ready-to-eat food prepared off-site in an approved kitchen as well as food prepared on-site as long as food safety and sanitation guidelines are followed.

- D. Types of foods may include but are not limited to kettle corn, ice cream, BBQ, grilled foods, omelets, waffles, crepes, coffee and tea, juices, lemonade, smoothies, hot chocolate, sandwiches, and salads.
- E. Permit is limited for use at farmer's market location(s) and during farmer's market hours of operation.
- F. This Annual Farmers Market Permit replaces both the Temporary Food Establishment Permit and the Seasonal Food Establishment Permit

IV. Eliminate Fees and Establish Guidelines for Sampling

- A. Eliminate Temporary Food Establishment Permit which is currently applied to many vendors who offer samples of their products for tasting.
- B. Sampling of products increases vendor sales and is important to the research and development of successful product recipes for small food entrepreneurs.
- C. Products that may be sampled include but are not limited to fresh fruits and vegetables, baked goods, prepared chocolates, tea and coffee, jam, jelly, honey, dried meat jerkies, and packaged nut mixes. Beer and wine tastings and Chef demonstration tastings of dishes prepared on-site are also included.

V. Conclusion of recommendations

- A. Simplifying the permitting process for farmers markets food vendors will reduce the required paperwork for STL County Health Department Environmental Specialists.
- B. If the permitting process is simplified, the overhead for the Health Department is reduced and consequently revenue is not lost due to a reduction in permitting fees.
- C. Amending fees and permitting for farmers and food vendors supports and encourages compliance with local and state health codes, food safety and sanitation guidelines.

Please Note: The above recommendations are intended to support the Committee's research and examination of the criteria involved in the amending of the Fee and Permitting Process for St. Louis County Farmers Markets.