

Oregon Legal Requirements for Purchasing Food from Farms

The legal requirements for purchasing from a farm or farm organization vary by the type of food product. The information below is broken out by food product with information specific to the food product listed below the heading. General information that applies to all food products is found at the end.

Dairy Products

A license from the Oregon Department of Agriculture (ODA) to sell fluid milk is required. Dairy products (butter, cheese, ice cream, etc.) must also be purchased from an establishment licensed by ODA. Each license expires on June 30 following the date of its issuance, and may be renewed. Fees for various licenses vary.

Eggs

A producer is required to have an egg handler's license from the ODA Food Safety Division if the producer sells graded eggs to retailers, cafes, bakeries, hospitals, schools, boarding houses or institutions.

Fresh Fruits and Vegetables

Licensing: Farms that sell fresh, whole fruits and vegetables directly can do so without the need of licensing or permit. These farms are approved sources for fruits and vegetables that they produce on their own farms.

Reselling Produce: If a farm or vendor is selling product from another farm, they need to obtain a retail food license. <http://www.oregon.gov/ODA/FSD/index.shtml>

Inspection: Certain fruits and vegetables require inspection by the Oregon Department of Agriculture for marketing purposes. This is a quality (grade, size) based inspection and is not for food safety purposes. These products are onions, filberts, and cherries. If selling less than 2000 pounds per day, inspection is not required. Contact Ron Pence (Ronald.R.Pence@state.or.us) in Commodity Inspection Division for additional information.

Pesticides: The Oregon Department of Agriculture (ODA) regulates the use of pesticide products in the production of agricultural commodities. Individuals who apply/use pesticide products may be required to be licensed with ODA for the classification of pesticide involved. For additional information on pesticide regulation see the Oregon Department of Agriculture, Pesticides Division website or call 503 986 4635.

http://www.oregon.gov/ODA/PEST/contact_us.shtml

Prepared Fresh Foods: Fresh produce that has been cut or prepared in any manner before purchase must be processed in an Oregon State Department of Agriculture licensed food-processing facility. Examples include: sliced apples, chopped broccoli, salad mix, dried fruit, etc. Products that have been merely washed and trimmed do not need to be prepared in a licensed facility.

Meats and Poultry: All slaughtered and processed meat and poultry

All slaughtered and processed meat and poultry sold in Oregon must be inspected by the US Department of Agriculture (USDA) and slaughtered in USDA-inspected plants. For a list of USDA inspected plants, contact the Food Safety Division at the Oregon Department of Agriculture, 503-986-4720. There is a small flock exemption for producers that sell less than 2,000 birds annually. This exemption must be applied for with USDA.

General Information

Insurance: School districts may require vendors to hold substantial liability insurance policies. Check with your local school district to identify their liability insurance requirements. .

Licenses: Scales used commercially (i.e., direct buying, selling, or packaging of commodities) must be licensed with the Oregon Department of Agriculture. Please refer to the "Weights and measures" section of the "What everyone needs to know" chapter. http://oregon.gov/ODA/pub_fd_ventures.shtml#Direct_sales_to_the_customer

Resources

This Oregon Farm Direct Marketing website provides producers/farmers with the regulations regarding direct marketing of Oregon agricultural products.

http://oregon.gov/ODA/pub_fd_toc.shtml

Good Agricultural Practices/Good Handling Practices (GAP/GHP) is a voluntary certification using a systems-based approach to minimizing risk of microbial contamination of fresh fruits and vegetables on the farm. The practices are a set of parameters that growers can implement during growing, harvesting, sorting, packaging, and storing to reduce the possibility of microbial contamination to fresh fruits and vegetables. For more information including a list of farms with certification see

http://www.oregon.gov/ODA/CID/ghp_gap.shtml

A Checklist for Purchasing Local Produce, Iowa State University outlines steps to follow to demonstrate reasonable care has been taken for procurement of foods.

<http://www.extension.iastate.edu/NR/rdonlyres/B0D64A49-9FA9-410E-849A-31865EFECE91/65301/AChecklistforPurchasingLocalProduce.pdf>