



## Requirements for a Farmers' Market Vendor Permit

A Farmers' Market Vendor Permit is required from Harris County Public Health (HCPH) for a farmer or producer selling food at a farmers' market is located in unincorporated areas of Harris County or a city whose food establishments are inspected and permitted by HCPH. A Farmers' Market Vendor Permit applies to vendors selling the following foods at a farmers' market:

- yard eggs,
- temperature controlled food, or
- food prepared at the market for sale.

Food is defined by law\* as *"An agricultural, apicultural, horticultural, silvicultural, viticultural, or vegetable product for human consumption, in either its natural or processed state, that has been produced or processed or otherwise has had value added to the product in this state. The term includes:*

- (A) fish or other aquatic species;*
- (B) livestock, a livestock product, or livestock by-product;*
- (C) planting seed;*
- (D) poultry, a poultry product, or a poultry by-product;*
- (E) wildlife processed for food or by-products;*
- (F) a product made from a product described by this subdivision by a farmer or other producer, including a cottage food production operation, who grew or processed the product; or*
- (G) produce."*

**A Farmers' Market Vendor Permit may be purchased by a farmer or food producer for use at all Farmers' Markets in the HCPH jurisdiction.**

A Farmers' Market Vendor Permit is not needed for:

- Produce sold in its natural state,
- Small honey production operation,
- Pre-packaged foods that do not require temperature control and are prepared at a location permitted by a regulatory authority. These foods must be properly labeled according to state requirements,
- Cottage food that is prepared, packaged and labeled according to law as defined by the Texas Health and Safety Code §437, and remains packaged for the duration of the event, or
- Samples of food.

*HCPH is the local public health agency for the Harris County, Texas jurisdiction. It provides a wide variety of public health activities and services aimed at improving the health and well-being of the Harris County community.*

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- Any preparation and distribution of food must be conducted according to the handout: **Temporary Food Establishment Operational Requirements**
- A valid and current manufacturer's license or other applicable state license, when required, must be provided upon request.

The Farmers' Market Vendor Permit is valid:

- for one year from the date of purchase
- at farmers' markets as defined by law\*
  - A Farmers' Market Vendor Permit is only valid at a farmers' market that is fifty-one percent or more farmers or food producers

*\*The Texas Health and Safety Code, Chapter 437, TAC 25 §229, and Rules for the Regulation of Food Establishments in Unincorporated Areas of Harris County, Texas*

To obtain a Farmers' Market Vendor Permit:

1. First time applicants must complete the Farmers' Market Vendor Application [online](#), submit the Plan Review fee, and Farmers' Market Vendor Operational Statement to HCPH Environmental Public Health, 2221 West Loop South, Suite 100, Houston, Texas 77027, Monday through Friday, 8:00am - 3:30pm. The Plan Review team will set up an appointment to review the submitted information.
2. After the plan review is complete, the operator will contact HCPH at (713) 274-6300 to request a permit inspection. An HCPH food investigator will inspect the booth at a farmers' market to verify minimum requirements are met to issue a permit application or renew an existing permit.
3. The permit can be purchased:
  - To make a payment online for a permit, please use the emailed invoice link.
  - By mail: enclose the permit application and applicable fees (money order or cashier's check\*\*) to HCPH
  - In person (cash, money order, cashier's check, or credit card\*\*) at HCPH Environmental Public Health, 2221 West Loop South, Suite 100, Houston, Texas 77027, Monday through Friday, 8:00am - 3:30pm.

\*\*Note: personal checks are not accepted

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