

AN ACT concerning health.

**Be it enacted by the People of the State of Illinois,
represented in the General Assembly:**

Section 5. The Food Handling Regulation Enforcement Act is amended by changing Section 3.3 as follows:

(410 ILCS 625/3.3)

Sec. 3.3. Farmers' markets.

(a) The General Assembly finds as follows:

(1) Farmers' markets, as defined in subsection (b) of this Section, provide not only a valuable marketplace for farmers and food artisans to sell their products directly to consumers, but also a place for consumers to access fresh fruits, vegetables, and other agricultural products.

(2) Farmers' markets serve as a stimulator for local economies and for thousands of new businesses every year, allowing farmers to sell directly to consumers and capture the full retail value of their products. They have become important community institutions and have figured in the revitalization of downtown districts and rural communities.

(3) Since 1999, the number of farmers' markets has tripled and new ones are being established every year. There is a lack of consistent regulation from one county to

the next, resulting in confusion and discrepancies between counties regarding how products may be sold.

(4) In 1999, the Department of Public Health published Technical Information Bulletin/Food #30 in order to outline the food handling and sanitation guidelines required for farmers' markets, producer markets, and other outdoor food sales events.

(5) While this bulletin was revised in 2010, there continues to be inconsistencies, confusion, and lack of awareness by consumers, farmers, markets, and local health authorities of required guidelines affecting farmers' markets from county to county.

(6) Recognizing that farmers' markets serve as small business incubators and that farmers' profit margins frequently are narrow, even in direct-to-consumer retail, protecting farmers from costs of regulation that are disproportionate to their profits will help ensure the continued viability of these local farms and small businesses.

(b) For the purposes of this Section:

"Department" means the Department of Public Health.

"Director" means the Director of Public Health.

"Farmers' market" means a common facility or area where the primary purpose is for farmers to gather to sell a variety of fresh fruits and vegetables and other locally produced farm and food products directly to consumers.

"Task Force" means the Farmers' Market Task Force.

(c) In order to facilitate the orderly and uniform statewide implementation and affordability of the standards established in the Department ~~of Public Health's~~ administrative rules for this Section, the Farmers' Market Task Force shall be formed by the Director to assist the Department in implementing statewide administrative regulations for farmers' markets.

(d) This Section does not intend and shall not be construed to limit the power of counties, municipalities, and other local government units to regulate farmers' markets for the protection of the public health, safety, morals, and welfare, including, but not limited to, licensing requirements and time, place, and manner restrictions, except as specified in this Act. This Section provides for a statewide scheme for the orderly and consistent interpretation of the Department's ~~Department of Public Health~~ administrative rules pertaining to the safety of food and food products sold at farmers' markets.

(e) The ~~Farmers' Market~~ Task Force shall consist of at least 24 members appointed within 60 days after August 16, 2011 (the effective date of this Section). Task Force members shall consist of:

(1) one person appointed by the President of the Senate;

(2) one person appointed by the Minority Leader of the Senate;

(3) one person appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives;

(4) one person appointed by the Minority Leader of the House of Representatives;

(5) the Director of Public Health or his or her designee;

(6) the Director of Agriculture or his or her designee;

(7) a representative of a general agricultural production association appointed by the Department of Agriculture;

(8) three representatives of local county public health departments appointed by the Director and selected from 3 different counties representing each of the northern, central, and southern portions of this State;

(9) four members of the general public who are engaged in local farmers' markets appointed by the Director of Agriculture;

(10) a representative of an association representing public health administrators appointed by the Director;

(11) a representative of an organization of public health departments that serve the City of Chicago and the counties of Cook, DuPage, Kane, Kendall, Lake, McHenry, Will, and Winnebago appointed by the Director;

(12) a representative of a general public health association appointed by the Director;

(13) the Director of Commerce and Economic Opportunity

or his or her designee;

(14) the Lieutenant Governor or his or her designee;

~~and~~

(15) five farmers who sell their farm products at farmers' markets appointed by the Lieutenant Governor or his or her designee; and -

(16) one person appointed by the Mayor of Chicago.

Task Force members' terms shall be for a period of 2 years, with ongoing appointments made according to the provisions of this Section.

(f) The Task Force shall be convened by the Director or his or her designee. Members shall elect a Task Force Chair and Co-Chair.

(g) Meetings may be held via conference call, in person, or both. Three members of the Task Force may call a meeting as long as a 5-working-day notification is sent via mail, e-mail, or telephone call to each member of the Task Force.

(h) Members of the Task Force shall serve without compensation.

(i) The Task Force shall undertake a comprehensive and thorough review of the current Statutes and administrative rules that define which products and practices are permitted and which products and practices are not permitted at farmers' markets and to assist the Department in developing statewide administrative regulations for farmers' markets.

(j) The Task Force shall advise the Department regarding

the content of any administrative rules adopted under this Section and Sections 3.4, 3.5, and 4 of this Act prior to adoption of the rules. Any administrative rules, except emergency rules adopted pursuant to Section 5-45 of the Illinois Administrative Procedure Act, adopted under this Section without obtaining the advice of the Task Force are null and void. If the Department fails to follow the advice of the Task Force, the Department shall, prior to adopting the rules, transmit a written explanation to the Task Force. If the Task Force, having been asked for its advice, fails to advise the Department within 90 days after receiving the rules for review, the rules shall be considered to have been approved by the Task Force.

(k) The Department ~~of Public Health~~ shall provide staffing support to the Task Force and shall help to prepare, print, and distribute all reports deemed necessary by the Task Force.

(l) The Task Force may request assistance from any entity necessary or useful for the performance of its duties. The Task Force shall issue a report annually to the Secretary of the Senate and the Clerk of the House.

(m) The following provisions shall apply concerning statewide farmers' market food safety guidelines:

(1) The Director, in accordance with this Section, shall adopt administrative rules (as provided by the Illinois Administrative Procedure Act) for foods found at farmers' markets.

(2) The rules and regulations described in this Section shall be consistently enforced by local health authorities throughout the State.

(2.5) Notwithstanding any other provision of law except as provided in this Section, local public health departments and all other units of local government are prohibited from creating sanitation guidelines, rules, or regulations for farmers' markets that are more stringent than those farmers' market sanitation regulations contained in the administrative rules adopted by the Department for the purposes of implementing this Section and Sections 3.4, 3.5, and 4 of this Act. Except as provided for in Sections 3.4 and 4 of this Act, this Section does not intend and shall not be construed to limit the power of local health departments and other government units from requiring licensing and permits for the sale of commercial food products, processed food products, prepared foods, and potentially hazardous foods at farmers' markets or conducting related inspections and enforcement activities, so long as those permits and licenses do not include unreasonable fees or sanitation provisions and rules that are more stringent than those laid out in the administrative rules adopted by the Department for the purposes of implementing this Section and Sections 3.4, 3.5, and 4 of this Act.

(3) In the case of alleged non-compliance with the

provisions described in this Section, local health departments shall issue written notices to vendors and market managers of any noncompliance issues.

(4) Produce and food products coming within the scope of the provisions of this Section shall include, but not be limited to, raw agricultural products, including fresh fruits and vegetables; popcorn, grains, seeds, beans, and nuts that are whole, unprocessed, unpackaged, and unsprouted; fresh herb springs and dried herbs in bunches; baked goods sold at farmers' markets; cut fruits and vegetables; milk and cheese products; ice cream; syrups; wild and cultivated mushrooms; apple cider and other fruit and vegetable juices; herb vinegar; garlic-in-oil; flavored oils; pickles, relishes, salsas, and other canned or jarred items; shell eggs; meat and poultry; fish; ready-to-eat foods; commercially produced prepackaged food products; and any additional items specified in the administrative rules adopted by the Department to implement Section 3.3 of this Act.

(n) Local health department regulatory guidelines may be applied to foods not often found at farmers' markets, all other food products not regulated by the Department of Agriculture and the Department of Public Health, as well as live animals to be sold at farmers' markets.

(o) The Task Force shall issue annual reports to the Secretary of the Senate and the Clerk of the House with

recommendations for the development of administrative rules as specified. The first report shall be issued no later than December 31, 2012.

(p) The Department of Public Health and the Department of Agriculture, in conjunction with the Task Force, shall adopt administrative rules necessary to implement, interpret, and make specific the provisions of this Section, including, but not limited to, rules concerning labels, sanitation, and food product safety according to the realms of their jurisdiction in accordance with subsection (j) of this Section.

(q) The Department and the Task Force shall work together to create a food sampling training and license program as specified in Section 3.4 of this Act.

(r) In addition to any rules adopted pursuant to subsection (p) of this Section, the following provisions shall be applied uniformly throughout the State, including to home rule units, except as otherwise provided in this Act:

(1) Farmers market vendors shall provide effective means to maintain potentially hazardous food, as defined in Section 4 of this Act, at 41 degrees Fahrenheit or below. As an alternative to mechanical refrigeration, an effectively insulated, hard-sided, cleanable container with sufficient ice or other cooling means that is intended for the storage of potentially hazardous food shall be used. Local health departments shall not limit vendors' choice of refrigeration or cooling equipment and shall not

charge a fee for use of such equipment. Local health departments shall not be precluded from requiring an effective alternative form of cooling if a vendor is unable to maintain food at the appropriate temperature.

(2) Handwashing stations may be shared by farmers' market vendors if handwashing stations are accessible to vendors.

(Source: P.A. 98-660, eff. 6-23-14; 99-9, eff. 7-10-15; 99-191, eff. 1-1-16; 99-642, eff. 7-28-16.)