



MEDIA RELEASE

STATE OF TENNESSEE
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
FEBRUARY 22, 2007

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TDA IMPLEMENTS NEW RULES TO ALLOW SAFE HOME FOOD PREP

Workshops to Help Prospective Home Food Businesses

NASHVILLE, Tenn. – With a growing interest in the sale of home-prepared jam, jellies and baked-goods, the Tennessee Department of Agriculture (TDA) has implemented new rules to allow the commercial sale of certain foods safely prepared in domestic kitchens.

“The purpose of the domestic kitchen rules is to allow individuals to commercially prepare, manufacture and sell ‘non-potentially hazardous’ foods that are prepared in the home while ensuring that the public’s health is protected,” said John Sanford, TDA administrator for food manufacturing.

“The domestic kitchen rules represent a reasonable approach to help meet the needs of a growing cottage industry, and more importantly, they’re the result of a cooperative effort to provide for the safe preparation and commercial sale of home-based foods.”

The new rules, which went into effect Jan. 27, provide for the preparation of “non-potentially hazardous” foods only. Non-potentially hazardous foods include products such as jam, jellies, candy and baked goods. Foods are considered non-potentially hazardous if they do not consist mainly of meat, poultry, liquid eggs, partially cooked egg products, fish, milk and milk products, shellfish, partially cooked bakery products or other ingredients susceptible to the rapid growth of micro-organisms when stored out of recommended temperature ranges for cold or hot foods.

Other prohibited foods include low-acid canned vegetables and acidified foods such as salsa or pickled vegetables.

The new rules require the licensing of domestic kitchens by the department’s Regulatory Services Division, Food and Dairy Section, and compliance with any other local or state business license, permit or zoning requirements. A \$50 fee is charged for the license, known as a Regulatory Services Permit. Domestic kitchens licensed by the department are subject to inspection any time commercial foods are being processed, prepared, packaged, handled or stored for distribution.

According to Sanford, individuals who prepare non-potentially hazardous foods solely for one-day events such as charity or non-profit fundraisers are exempt from the new rules. However, sales for consecutive-day events or sales held more than six times per year are not exempt.

Sanford says the education and certification requirement of the new rules is an important part in ensuring the safe handling and preparation of home-based foods. “Domestic kitchen operators

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are required to successfully complete the Tennessee Food Safety Certification Course offered by the University of Tennessee Department of Food Science and Technology, or other approved courses.”

The Tennessee Food Safety Certification Course is being offered statewide in March. Anyone interested in obtaining a Regulatory Service Permit under the domestic kitchen rules is encouraged to attend one of the following:

- March 22 – Jackson, UT Agricultural Experiment Station, 605 Airways Blvd.
- March 23 – Nashville, UT Extension Central District Office (Ellington Agricultural Center), 5201 Marchant Dr.
- March 29 – Knoxville, Laurel Church of Christ, 3457 Kingston Pike

All three courses are from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. (local time) and cost \$100 per person. For more information about the course, call the UT Department of Science and Technology’s Nancy Austin at (865) 974-7331, or email naustin@utk.edu.

For a complete copy of the new domestic kitchen rules and regulations, visit TDA online at www.tennessee.gov/agriculture. For more information about foods, licensing or inspections under the new domestic kitchen rules, contact TDA’s Regulatory Services Division, Food and Dairy Section at P.O. Box 40627, Nashville, TN 37204, call (615) 837-5193 or email Buddy.Woodson@state.tn.us or John.Sanford@state.tn.us.

The Tennessee Department of Agriculture currently licenses and inspects more than 8,000 retail food stores and 1,000 food manufacturers statewide for sanitation and for the safe preparation, storage and handling of food products.

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