Options for Value-Added Food Production

December 6th, 2018

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This presentation and the resources mentioned herein are available online now:

https://virginiafoodworks.org/resources/
What is a “value-added” food?

When any agricultural product has been changed through some process – e.g. cooking, canning, freezing, dehydrating, baking – into a new product that can be sold.
Where can you process?

- Your private home
- Shared-use kitchens
- Restaurants during off hours
- Local church kitchens
- Private schools during off hours
- Social service organizations’ kitchens
What foods need inspection?

If food is manufactured for sale to the public, it must be inspected.

Resource for Farmer’s Market vendors:
Choose between Co-packing and D.I.Y. processing
Who Regulates What?

Federal Government:
- **U.S. Dept. of Agriculture (USDA)** - Production and distribution of meat (2% or greater), poultry (2% or greater) and whole eggs
- **U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA)** - Production and distribution of all other non-meat packaged food, including dairy

States/Local Governments:
1. **Virginia Department of Agriculture (VDACS)** regulates packaged foods; canned, frozen or baked with the intent to eat at a later date. In Virginia, VDACS represents the FDA for certain food products.
2. **Virginia Department of Health (VDH)** regulates Ready to Eat foods; chopped fruit, bakery items, catered foods
1. Virginia Department of Agriculture (VDACS) Regulates:

- Food Manufacturers
  - Commercial Kitchen
  - Home Kitchen
- Food Warehouses
- Supermarkets and Convenience Stores
- Seafood Markets
- Wineries, Breweries and Distilleries
- Bakeries
- Farmer’s Markets Vendors (Overseen by local and state government)
2. Virginia Department of Health (VDH) Regulates:

- Restaurants
- Catering Operation
  - Trucks and mobile units
- Carts and mobile units
- Bed and Breakfasts
- Delis (Not attached to Store)
- Convenience Store Delis
  - Greater than 15 seats
  - Associated with a national chain
- Private Farmer’s Markets (Usually only inspect mobile units and foods needing temperature control for safety)
Home-based Kitchen vs. Commercial Kitchen?

1. VDACS:
   - Allows home-based businesses
     - **Pets must be excluded by doors on kitchen and storage areas** *(Keeping pets in closed rooms during production will not satisfy requirement)*
     - Does not allow home kitchens to be used for dairy product or meat products manufacturing
       - These must be processed in a separate facility from home kitchen

2. VDH:
   - Does not allow home-based businesses
   - Must be separate facility from homeowner’s kitchen
1. Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (VDACS):

Contact:

Office of Dairy and Foods
Food Safety and Security Program

www.vdacs.virginia.gov

(804)786-3520

foodsafety@vdacs.virginia.gov
A MUST-USE RESOURCE!

Application For Food Processing Operation packet available from VDACS. Submit completed paperwork to regional office:

1. Southwest:
   Lisa Ramsey
   540-562-3641

2. Northern Virginia:
   Nikeya Thomas
   804-785-3033

3. Tidewater:
   Courtney Michiewicz
   757-363-3840
Application Basics:

• $40 Fee
• Submit packet
• Obtain feedback
• Inspector will visit processing facility

Application requires:

• Detailed recipe and process
• Floor plan of establishment
• Well water test
• Zoning documentation
• Process Approvals
• Product label
Virginia Department of Agriculture (VDACS) Inspection Exemption:

• Private home where resident is processing specific food products (no meat, poultry or dairy)
  • Sold to individuals for their own consumption and not for resale
  • Sold at the private home or at farmer’s markets
  • Labeled “NOT FOR RESALE – PROCESSED AND PREPARED WITHOUT STATE INSPECTION”
  • Cannot be sold to other establishments (wholesale or retail) or on internet
2. Virginia Department of Health (VDH)

- Contact www.vdh.virginia.gov or local county VDH office
- VDH issues permits to operate food businesses serving READY TO EAT foods
- Permit application available from county VDH office- “Application for a Department of Health Foodservice Establishment Permit”
- Permits require regular evaluations
- $40 application fee
Virginia Department of Health (VDH) Basic Requirements:

- Hand washing sinks
- 3 compartment sink
- Utility sink
- Cold holding (refrigerators/freezers)
- Cooking equipment
- Ventilation
- Hot Holding Equipment
- Smooth & Cleanable Surfaces
- Dish machines (optional: must be commercial grade)
- Knowledge of Food Safety (ServSafe for example)
Where can you get help in creating your Value-Added Food?

- **Virginia Tech’s Food Innovations Program**

- **Virginia Food Works**
  A non-profit providing hands on assistance to food producers. Kitchen Rental and Co-packing services are available.
Where does Virginia Food Works operate?

- We operate out of the Prince Edward County Cannery, located near Farmville, VA
- Cannery is a “shared-use” facility that is geared toward processing fresh, local produce.
- Cannery is also available for processing “home use only” foods in metal cans (not for resale)
What equipment is available?

- Produce washer
- Various choppers and dicers
- Commercial dishwasher
- Produce blancher
- 7 steam-jacketed kettles
- Food pump and metered filler
- Large-scale water bath
- Label applicator
- Walk-in fridge and freezer
What products can be made?

- Shelf stable foods that are acidic, including sauces, salsas, fruit products, dressings, condiments

- Refrigerated or frozen foods of varying acidity, including dips and spreads

- Dry blends such as herb and tea mixes

Note: The facility is a VDACS Inspected, commercial kitchen. We are open to new products, ideas and uses for the kitchen!
What services are provided?

- Providing guidance on processing regulations
- Co-packing
- Providing pre-approved recipes for local farmers
- Identifying suppliers (containers, labels, LOCAL ingredients)
- Providing use of kitchen facility and processing equipment
- Providing BPCS certified staff
- Testing of product samples for pH
- Explaining batch coding and record keeping
- Navigating FDA label requirements
- Providing jars and lids for purchase
How much does it cost?

- Cannery rental rates vary between $10 to $25 per hour. *This is for the Do-It-Yourself type clients!*

- Co-packing rates are between $65 to $125 per hour, depending on staff members needed for production. *This is ideal for farmers or those who want to focus on marketing and selling and not creating products.*
Cannery Considerations:

Often, produce can be delivered and processed same day

Don’t let the Cannery’s location deter you

Not all products need a hot water bath- ask us about hot fill/hold processing

Try a test batch if you are unsure!
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