



IDAHO DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & WELFARE
DIVISION OF PUBLIC HEALTH

Cottage Food Public Meeting Transcript

H = Division of Public Health Employee

A = Meeting Attendee

H1, H2, etc = Health District Employee

May 4th – Caldwell

H: So where do we go? If you guys don't have anything to add, I will tell you what I have been hearing from around the State, but if you guys want to add something, let's talk about it.

A: At this point, this is just something that we saw online was happening. And I thought we've talked about the possibility of doing some baking and seeing if we could find out about Farmer's Markets. We haven't formulated any business plan. Actually, this is our very first step.

H: Well, welcome. So what I am hearing so far from around the State is a combination of those first two bullet points. Where people are effectively saying, 'we don't think this needs to be regulated, we don't think we need rules around it, we don't think there should be a fee associated with it. But, it does need to be better defined, so maybe in the Food Code put in a definition of Cottage Foods.' That definition would primarily start with, let's say this, typical examples of non-TCS foods include, this kind of a list.'

A: Can you tell me what TCS stands for again?

H: Sure, time/temperature control for safety. So what this means is this is a food that either has to be maintained cold or hot, or it can be out at room temperature for a specified amount of time in order to be safe. Very few food establishments use the time method because at the end of the time, that food must be discarded. You can't cool it back down to be held again. So these are things that if you go to a restaurant and they are holding, what we call hot holding, where they've got their soups and things like that in steam baths. Or you go in a restaurant and they've got stuff on ice or in coolers that is cold holding. So that is TCS.

A: Those are regulated foods?

H: Yes. So going back to the previous slide, if you wanted to go to the Farmers Market and make sandwiches, and include meats and stuff like that, you are going to be inspected by the Health Department no matter what. But if you just want to make the bread, then you are not. You

wouldn't be required to do anything special for the Health District. The Farmers Market Management might disagree, saying, 'we want you to do this, and we want you to go through these steps here if you are going to sell at our market.'

A: So each Farmers Market has their own option to regulate?

H: Yes. Go back to this one here. This presentation is online at www.foodsafety.idaho.gov. Right in the front center of the page you will see a link that says, 'Cottage Food Presentation.' And that is what I am showing you.

So there is a Farmers Market Association in Idaho and we've had some pretty good representation at our earlier meetings. And it looks like, most likely, we will be working with them in the future to kind of clarify some of this language. We are letting folks know that the Farmer's Market can still have their own internal policies and rules about what is allowed and what is not. After today, I am here tomorrow talking about the proposed Food Code updates, which is a different conversation. If you are interested, you are welcome to attend that as well. Then we will be going to Twin Falls. We will be in Twin Falls Wednesday and Thursday. The next week we will be in Idaho Falls Monday and Tuesday and Pocatello on Wednesday and Thursday having this same kind of meeting and trying to hear from folks like you about, 'What do we do? How do we fix this? Is there a problem?' So that is kind of what the focus of the meeting is.

H2: So what kind of baked goods are you guys thinking of making?

A: Muffins.

H2: What kind of muffins.

A: I am really interested to see if I can make a really good gluten-free version because my son has to be completely gluten-free. I can't even cook something in the same muffin pan that has gluten in it. It has to be sterilized and cleaned because any gluten, then he is reactive. So we are going to do two versions, with gluten at her place and non-gluten at mine.

H2: Will it have whipped cream filling.

H: So the one thing that we might be concerned about with a muffin is if we did a carrot cake muffin with an authentic cream cheese icing or something like that.

A: Because of the cream cheese.

H: The cream cheese and depending on the recipe, sometimes when you do that, when you bake a vegetable into bread like that it can support growth, but that really depends on the individual recipe. If you decide to do a carrot cake muffin, I will give you my phone numbers and you will sell to me in large quantities.

A: I'll do that! That's what I want to do.

H: Because in my opinion, a good carrot cake is a balanced meal.

A: It actually is my favorite cake to make.

H: It's got the grains. You can even use rice flour. So it's got the grains, it's got vegetables, a good carrot cake has walnuts, so you have your protein, and a good carrot cake has a cream cheese frosting.

A: Eggs are also a protein.

H: Okay, I'll go with that. So a good carrot cake is a balanced meal.

A: So I do see the issue with the cream cheese though.

H: Well that can depend on the individual recipe. There are some ways if you mix in enough powdered sugar you may be able to lower that water activity down to where we won't be concerned about it.

There are labs. There is a lab right here in Caldwell, there is a lab in Boise. Heave them do an analysis of the food for you. It generally cost around \$20.