

Farmers' Market: Cheese Curds



What are cheese curds?

In general, cheese curds are the washed curds of cheddar cheese.

Cheese curds are considered a potentially hazardous, ready-to-eat food.

Licensing

- All cheese curds offered for sale must be manufactured at a licensed food processor.
- A current Dane County Farmers' Market Vendor or DATCP Mobile Retail license is required at the Farmers' Market (no copies).
- *If only selling in Dane County, a Dane County Farmers' Market Vendor license is required. If selling in multiple counties, only a DATCP Mobile Retail license is required. Operating simultaneously at multiple markets requires a license for each location*

Safe Handling Requirements

- Cheese curds must be 41°F or below at all times.
- Approved cold holding equipment for cheese curds include commercial mechanical refrigerators OR coolers with sufficient ice to maintain the product at 41°F.
- While on display, cheese curds must be maintained at 41°F or below, unless a documented "Time as a Public Health Control" plan has been approved by the Public Health Sanitarian.

Sampling

- Must be protected from consumer contamination with lids/covers
- Provide a safe method for customers to sample curds
- Post a sign or provide verbal sampling instructions
- Cooking, cutting samples, or any other processing activities onsite are not acceptable
- Displayed foods (foods not for sale) must have a sign stating "Display Only"

Labeling

Labels on packaged curds must include the following information:

- Name of product
- List of ingredients
- Net weight or volume
- Name, address, and zip code of manufacturer, packer, or distributor
- Keep Frozen/Refrigerated (if necessary)

Special Considerations

- ✓ Fresh cheese curds may be displayed out of refrigeration at any location on the day they are made or up to a period not to exceed 24 hours after the time of manufacture.
- ✓ The package for the fresh cheese curds must be labeled with the date and time of manufacture.
- ✓ Fresh cheese curds must be discarded after 24 hours.

Contacts

Farmers' markets within Dane County:

Public Health-Madison and Dane County
608-243-0330

<http://www.publichealthmdc.com/>

Food processing licenses and farmers' markets outside of Dane County:

Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection
Division of Food Safety
608-224-4700

<http://www.datcp.state.wi.us/index.jsp>

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