



northern health

05 March 2015

Dear food facility operator

The regulation states that all foods in restaurants and food stores must be from an approved source. Northern Health has traditionally interpreted this as purchasing all foods from grocery stores or commercial food supply companies. A commercial supplier will try to ensure that food safety standards are being met.

To promote local food and economic sustainability, healthy eating and food security, Northern Health understands that many local food producers have safe, cost effective foods that you can use in your food facility.

The Food Premises Regulation allows Northern Health to approve local and home grown produce and vegetables for use in restaurants and food stores.

Food facility operators may now buy local produce, fruits and vegetables at farmers markets, local farmers or grow your own as long as produce, fruits and vegetables are physically sound and in good sanitary condition and unprocessed. Processed foods such as jams, chutneys, salsas etc. must come from a government inspected source.

You as the operator are now taking on the responsibility for the inspection and safety components that your food distributor did in the past. The following checklist can be used when buying local produce. Ask yourself and the producer these questions to ensure that you are getting the best and safest products to your customers.

Your local Environmental Health Officer is always available for questions or any concerns you may have with a producer.

Respectfully,

CPHI(C)
Environmental Health Officer
Northern Health

What to look for when purchasing locally sourced products:

Item	What to look for...	
Hand washing	Are hands washed before and after handling foods?	
Water Quality	Are you confident that the water used for irrigation is safe and free from contaminants?	
Wash Water	Are you confident that the water used for washing the product is safe and free from contaminants?	
Product Quality	Are the crops in good condition and without evidence of disease or pest activity?	
Record Keeping	Are you keeping records of all your products in case you need to trace back?	
Pesticide Use	Are you confident that the products are free from pesticides and chemical residues?	
Transportation	Are products covered and protected from contamination during transportation?	
Eggs	Eggs must come from an approved supplier.	
Meat/Poultry	Meats and Poultry must come from a licensed class A, B, or D facility. Contact your local Public Health office for a list of licensed facilities.	

- ❖ Larger producers should be able to provide a copy of their self declaration that provides information on the items in the above table.

Who can I call for more info?

In the North, contact your local Environmental Health Officer or Office at:

Northern Interior

Prince George: 250-565-2150
Quesnel: 250-983-6810
Vanderhoof: 250-567-6900

Northwest

Terrace: 250-631-4222
Smithers: 250-847-6400
Prince Rupert: 250-622-6380

Northeast

Dawson Creek: 250-719-6500
Fort Nelson: 250-774-7092
Fort St. John: 250-263-6000