



# **SELLING TO FOODSERVICE ESTABLISHMENTS: FOOD SAFETY AND REGULATIONS**

**Catherine Strohbehn**

**&**

**Scott Platt**

# First Rule of Retail – Know your Market

- What is Foodservice?
- See handout in binder

Foodservice many shapes and forms

- ownership status – public or private
- independent or chain (national or regional)
- franchise
- scope of menu
- extent of preparation in house
- skill level of labor pool
- service style

# Procurement will Vary

- Independently owned, single unit commercial restaurants typically more flexibility and greater ability to meet market prices.
  - National chains usually limited to pre-determined suppliers
- Non-commercial foodservices potential for education
  - Less resources and access to resources (funding, personnel, etc.)
- All must comply with Food Code – set of recommendations compiled by Conference on Food Protection; reviewed biannually with updates based latest science, published every 5 years.
- Iowa legislature adopted Food Code 1997 – current national standard is Food Code 2005
  - New IA Food Bill proposal to allow adoption of current FDA Model Food Code by rule change.

# Foodservice Regulations\*

- Food must be purchased from an approved supplier
  - Burden of proof rest upon the purchaser.
- Packaging must protect integrity of food.
- Most fresh produce is NOT considered a Potentially Hazardous Food Item – PHFs are those at greatest risk for pathogens to grow and reproduce to harmful levels
- So, no license is required by the vendor to sell whole, unprocessed or minimally trimmed fresh produce.
- Other regulations listed on handout in binder

\*Source: *Food Code 1997*

# Concerns of Operations

- Because fresh produce is NOT typically heat treated – there is not a kill step, thus could be risk of pathogens on product.
- Generally lower risk due to acidity and lack of protein, BUT pathogens (think Norovirus, E. Coli 0157:H7, Hepatitis A) could contaminate the product.
- Foodservice Buyer may ask about:
  - GAPs
  - Water supply and testing program
  - Packing procedures and materials,
  - Health and hygiene of your employees
  - Transportation practices.



# Foodservice Buyers DO see

BENEFITS to purchasing food from local sources:

- helps the regional economy
- opportunity to purchase smaller case packs
- promote local vendors
- unique varieties of products
- good PR
- fresher food
- safer food

*Source: Strohbehn & Gregoire (2001, 2002, 2004), surveys to buyers in various sectors of foodservice market*



# Foodservice Buyers are BUSY!

- Often wear many hats in their operations and are busy putting out multiple fires such as no show employees, equipment malfunctions, late deliveries, internal strife, etc.
- A Day in the Life of a Foodservice Manager - Purchasing MUST be easy!

They want to buy locally, but need to know:

- a) that they can (see purchasing regulations)
- b) who to buy from
- c) trust that product will be delivered when and in amounts ordered.

# A Day in the Life

Foodservice director at the Rolling Rock Assisted Living Facility- Your residents have expressed interest in farm tomatoes and other vegetables through committee meetings, etc. so you are open to local purchasing. But....



Arrive at work at 6:30 AM

Find out Tom (AM Cook has car trouble so will be late)

Need to start on breakfast

One of universal care workers comes into kitchen without hairnet and old uniform (give her hairnet and apron)

Delivery from Sysco arrives at 8 AM – check in groceries, find out the tomato sauce for tonight's spaghetti is back ordered. Have to run to local grocery store for extra needed.

Dish machine operator says the chemical sanitizer line is clogged up.

Local Health Inspector shows up

Administrator asks for latest food costs

A resident calls requesting a birthday cake

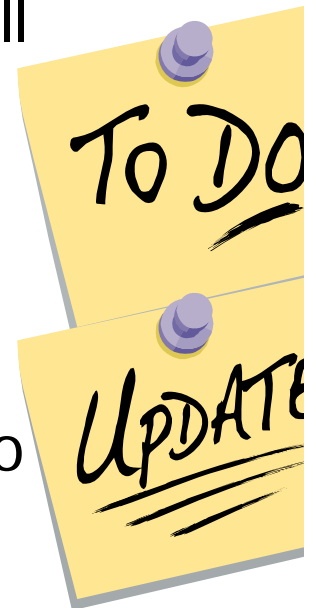
And so it goes...until 3 PM



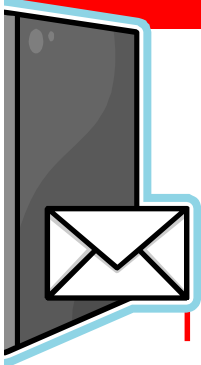


# Producer To Do List: Research Potential Clients

1. Review menus and identify potential items to sell
2. Understand purchasing regulations
3. Find out hours of operation
4. Call for an appointment to discuss a purchase relationship (not around service hours!)
5. Understand the **organizational structure** and **procurement policies** that could be in place to protect their patrons- public facilities is open
6. Prepare your list of available products (type and estimated amounts) and timeframe available for purchase
7. Identify ways product can be used on the menus
8. Prepare other questions and ways you can make a contribution



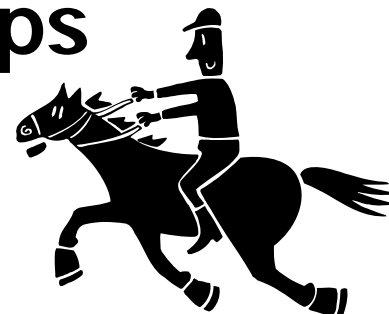
# PRODUCER TO DO LIST: COMMUNICATE



1. Be business-like. Show up at meeting as scheduled and appropriate dress (business casual ok).
2. Discuss specifics of the products – variety, size, package units, materials for transport, delivery times, order procedures, and payment plan.
3. Bring your documentation of GAPs and post-harvest practices –
4. Show liability insurance coverage
5. Willingness to tell your story – promotional materials, educational tours clients and staff, product use ideas, etc.



# Relationship Rescue - Tips



Dr. Cathy (not Phil)

Follow through on what you have discussed with the buyer. *Example:*

*If weather has delayed harvest, communicate in timely manner – not morning of but time so they can arrange back-up.*

Have documentation of your safe on-farm practices ready.