

# Understanding Milk and Cheese Regulations

## State Contacts:

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## Have you considered adding a dairy animal to your farmstead?

The addition of dairy cows or goats can bring a new dimension to your small farm. Fresh milk, cream, butter, cheese and ice cream are all products which can be made in your own kitchen. Some people dream of selling their dairy products to generate a revenue stream from their operation. However, to do this will require complying with a number of regulations. The Missouri State Milk Board serves as the regulator for all dairy products, except ice cream. Manufacture of ice cream and other frozen desserts fall under the Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services. If you are a dairy farmer, it is perfectly legal to produce and consume dairy products for your own personal use.

According to Missouri Revised Statute 196.935: *No person shall sell, offer for sale, expose for sale, transport, or deliver any graded fluid milk or graded fluid milk products in this state unless the milk or milk products are graded and produced, transported, processed, manufactured, distributed, labeled and sold under state milk inspection and the same has also been produced or pasteurized as required by a regulation authorized by section 196.939 and under proper permits issued thereunder. Only pasteurized graded fluid milk and fluid milk products as defined in subdivision (3) of section 196.931 shall be sold to the final consumer, or to restaurants, soda fountains, grocery stores, or similar establishments; except an individual may purchase and have delivered to him for his own use raw milk or cream from a farm.*

If you are considering starting up a dairy, your first step will be to contact the State Milk Board. This agency should be involved from the very beginning, before any construction takes place. All structural plans must be pre-approved. There are specific licenses for Grade A Certification and Manufactur-



ing Grade Certification. These licenses apply to cow dairies as well as those constructed for other dairy animals including goats and sheep.

## Production of Cheese, Yogurt and Butter

Cheese, butter, yogurt, kefir (cultured milk similar to yogurt) and other dairy products may be produced for individual consumption. These items may not be manufactured for sale outside of an approved dairy facility. Specialized processing rooms must be constructed and inspected according to Missouri regulations. Because these products are fragile, public health issues are of utmost concern. Therefore, strict production methods and inspections are required for the production of these items for public consumption or sale. Non inspected facilities may not offer samples or direct sales to consumers; dairy products made here may only be consumed by family members.

Sale of cheese, yogurt, butter, kefir, sour cream, ice cream and other dairy products produced outside of a licensed facility are prohibited.

*Fresh milk, cream, butter, cheese and ice cream are all products which can be made in your own kitchen.*

## Home Dairy Safety

Proper sanitary procedures are as important in the home dairy as they are in commercial production. Animals should be prepared for milking using a teat dip, followed by stripping the initial stream of milk into a strip cup, and finally wiping the udder to make sure it is clean and free from any debris. This technique known as **dip, strip and wipe** will assist in the prevention of high bacteria counts in the milk. Always visually check



the milk in the strip cup for signs of mastitis, an inflammation of an udder caused by infection. Any clumping, curding or off smelling milk should not be used for consumption. Cleanliness of the milking area, the milk buckets or cans are also essential in collecting milk safely. If any medication has been given to an animal, make sure the withhold time has passed before collecting milk. This withhold time can be found on the label of the medication. Proper hand washing of the person milking is also an important step in sanitary milk collection. Washing the milking area is essential and should be performed after each milking.

Milk must be chilled immediately. An ice bath is the fastest way to bring the temperature down quickly. Simply place the milk in a clean container and then in a larger container filled with ice and water. Chill until the temperature reaches 50° F. The immediate chilling will slow down the multiplication of bacteria which replicates exponentially. Sanitize all buckets and equipment with an approved dairy sanitation product.

If the milk is to be used for making cheese, pasteurization is required for any cheese which is to be aged for less than 60 days. Pasteurization is also recommended for the production of yogurt, kefir, sour cream, ice cream and other dairy products. The easiest method of pasteurizing milk in the home kitchen is to purchase a small home pasteurizing unit. Another option is to heat the milk to 145° F and hold for 30 minutes, stirring throughout the process. A double boiler will provide even heating of the milk without scorching. Chill as recommended above.

## How to Apply For A Dairy License

The publication "Starting a Dairy in Missouri" is available online at: <http://agebb.missouri.edu/dairy/buildings/startingadairyguide.pdf> This guide was developed to help potential new producers start a dairy business in Missouri. It is a step-by-step guide to information sources and to the regulatory agencies that require notification prior to beginning a dairy operation. This application process must be followed in order to obtain the proper approval and permits to eventually sell and/or ship milk. Included in the guide are Market Outlet Information, Missouri Department of Natural Resources contact information, consulting agencies and institutions as well as sample copies of Dairy Farm Inspection Reports for Grade A and Manufacturing Dairy Facilities. It is most important

to note that contact with this agency should be made before any construction of a dairy facility begins.

The Missouri Milk Board offers the publication: "Manufacturing Grade Milk Laws and Regulations" which explains the requirements for manufacturing grade milking facilities within the state of Missouri.

In the United States, Grade A milk, also called **fluid grade milk**, refers to milk produced under sufficiently sanitary conditions to qualify for fluid (beverage) consumption. Only Grade A milk is regulated under federal milk marketing orders. Grade B milk (also referred to as manufacturing grade milk) does not meet fluid grade standards and can only be used in cheese, butter and nonfat dry milk. More than 90 percent of all milk produced nationally is Grade A. Therefore, much of the Grade A milk supply is used in manufactured dairy products.



## Web Resources

Missouri Department of Agriculture: [www.mda.mo.gov](http://www.mda.mo.gov)

Missouri State Milk Board: [www.mda.mo.gov/animals/milk/](http://www.mda.mo.gov/animals/milk/)

Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services:  
[info@health.mo.gov](mailto:info@health.mo.gov)

AgEbb: <http://agebb.missouri.edu/dairy>

Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education: [www.sare.org](http://www.sare.org)

National Center for Appropriate Technology: [www.attra.org](http://www.attra.org)

American Cheese Society: [www.cheesesociety.org](http://www.cheesesociety.org)

Big Rivers Dairy Artisans Guild: [www.dairyartisans.org](http://www.dairyartisans.org)