

**Food Innovation Team
Meeting Minutes
September 14, 2021**

Today's meeting was held via WebEx.

Members present included: Jane Jewett, Lolly Occhino, Blake Nordin, Shelley Erickson, Joe Jurusik, Noelle Hardin, Jane Knott, and Jodie Burke

Visitors present included: Jeff Luedeman, Alida Sorenson, Sara George, Brian Jorata, Kathy Zeman, Nayan Shukla, Jason Robinson, and Natasha Hedin

The meeting started at 9:00 a.m.
July meeting minutes were accepted.

1. Upcoming Dates

The next Food Innovation Team (FIT) Meeting will be Tuesday, November 9th via Microsoft Teams.

2. Case Review – Red Wing Farmers' Market Cross-border Sales

The group held an item-by-item discussion for some of the specific products of concern at the Red Wing Farmers' Market. Most of the concerns discussed involved cross-border sales between Minnesota and Wisconsin. See the final recommendation report posted on the FIT website for item-by-item discussion and solutions.

3. Discussion Container Washing Business Proposal

The FIT team discussed a container-washing business that does not meet the traditional "food operation" definition.

Discussion point: Licensing by the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH)

[Minnesota Statutes Chapter 157.16 Licensing Fee Categories](#) - The "Category 1 License" contains a list of items that meet the definition of Category 1 and are inspected by MDH; item (iv) is specifically described as a facility that "provides cleaning for eating, drinking, or cooking utensils, when the only food served is prepared off site. The MDH would be able to license this type of business. In such a scenario, the facility would be licensed by a regulatory authority and would therefore meet the requirements under Paragraph A. However, there is a concern with the operation not meeting the definition of a food processing plant which is defined in the [Minnesota Food Code Part 4626.0020 - Definitions](#). "Food processing plant" means a commercial operation that manufactures, packages, labels, or stores food for human consumption and provides food for sale or distribution only to other business entities such as food processing plants or food establishments.

Discussion point: Applying for a Variance

[Minnesota Food Code Part 4626.0295 – Refilling Returnables](#) – Concerns that would need to be addressed or resolved for a variance approval include but are not limited to: identifying how clean and dirty dishes would be dropped off and picked up, how they are separated, how clean dishes are maintained clean during transport and drop off, and how the restaurant would prevent pest issues with dirty dishes sitting out for a long period of time. It is also important to understand all the food code provisions that may apply. It would be additionally important to identify the duties and responsibilities of the Person in Charge (PIC)/ Certified Food Protection Manager (CFPM), like the daily verification of processes and how the licensed facility meets the variance requirements. They must be able to show that meet and comply with all requirements under the variance. The restaurant should meet with their inspector and make sure they comply with everything under the [Minnesota Food Code Part 4626.1695 – Variance Request; Criteria for Decision](#).

Question: Why can't the combination of a Category 1 license under M.S. 157.16 and MN Rule 4626.0295 Part B work for this type of business?

The MDA must defer to the MDH about the applicability of the MN Food Code with respect to licensing authority under MS157.16.

Recommendations

Moving forward, it is recommended that Dwala run their pilot by getting variances on a restaurant-by-restaurant basis. It was recommended that the business reach out to the MDH with a suggestion to investigate the potential discrepancy between Minnesota Statutes 157.16 and Minnesota Rules 4626.0295 until the formal process is opened. Any questions about licensing within the City of Minneapolis should be discussed with their agency. Notes from this meeting will be shared with Ryan Krick.

4. Admin

Dropbox:

Jane Jewett created a shared Dropbox folder for storing FIT-related documents. The link was shared with the group and FIT members will be able to collaborate on documents within this folder. Natasha Hedin will upload current versions of all FIT documents.

FIT Case Summary Table

Jodie Burke will work on adding the Good Courage Farm case to the Case Summary Table for the website.

Standard Operating Procedure (SOP)

Shelley Erickson volunteered to review the SOP for any updates necessary regarding adding After Action Reviews (AARs).

5. Potential agenda items for November:

No agenda items were mentioned.