

**Minnesota Department of Agriculture
Food Safety and Defense Task Force
Food Innovation Team Subcommittee**

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Data Privacy Tennessee Warning:

The Food Innovation Team (FIT) regularly requests data from food business owners (FBOs) interested in participating or gaining food business licensing guidance from FIT through the Pre-Screening Intake Form (PSIF), during FIT meeting proceedings, and as part of the regular processes of FIT. The information provided for these FIT activities will be used before, during, and after FIT meetings to answer licensing questions from FBOs. Information provided is public information and will be discussed at a meeting that is open to the public. If you have information that you want protected, please contact the Food and Feed Safety Division Director, Katherine Simon (Katherine.simon@state.mn.us or (651) 201-6596) before filling out this form and submitting it to FIT.

FIT Website Notification:

Please note that all information contained in this form is subject to public information requests. This form will be published on the FSDTF website.

Date of FIT Meeting: 09/15/2020

Meeting Participants:

- FIT Members:
 - Blake Nordin
 - Julia Selleys
 - Lolly Occhino
 - Kathy Zeman
 - Jane Jewett
- Other:
 - Jeff Luedeman
 - Alida Sorenson
 - Natasha Hedin
 - Carla Mertz

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General Business Information (Do not include this section in public-facing online database)	
Name of business:	Iron Shoe Farm
Location of business:	Princeton, MN
Referred by:	<input type="checkbox"/> MDA <input type="checkbox"/> MDH <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> x FIT member <input type="checkbox"/> MDA Delegated Agency <input type="checkbox"/> MDH Delegated Agency
Current license(s), registration(s), and/or exemption(s): (Please include date of issuance.)	No current license for commercial kitchen or food & beverage service
Why was this business referred to FIT?	
Current business model:	<p>Iron Shoe Farm sustainably raises beef, poultry, and hogs. Pre-COVID, they sold to 45 local restaurants in the Twin Cities as 90% of their business. During COVID that restaurant business was lost. Since June 2020 they have begun hosting licensed caterer chefs and restaurant chefs as part of a “dinner on the farm” series. They’ve hosted seven public ticketed events and three private friends and family events to test the market. They have eight more events scheduled through the end of October. This has been a great shift in promoting agritourism, talking about issues involving local food systems in Minnesota to educate the consumer, and supporting chefs who want to do what they love best: cook for the people. Everything on the menu is sourced from Minnesota. In 2013, Iron Shoe Farm became the first event location in Sherburne County on agricultural property. They worked through their county’s Conditional Use Permit process, so they have permitting in place from their county to host agritourism events. With the COVID-related decline in large gatherings such as weddings, they turned the focus to smaller-attendance dinners and brunch on the farm. Chefs prepare food offsite and finish plating and warm-up on the farm. Some chefs want to use open fire cooking methods and an outdoor kitchen. This type of cooking is interesting to many people and draws dinner customers to the farm.</p>
Key issues examined by FIT:	<p>After speaking with the MDH regarding licensure, Iron Shoe Farm was told that open-air, open-fire methods of cooking were not okay as there was a chance for contamination of the food. However, Ms. Mertz has observed that many licensed restaurants in Minneapolis feature open fire cooking, or have a patio setting where restaurants can plate and serve food outdoors. This outdoor plating and service also poses a risk of contamination for food, but it is allowed. Iron Shoe Farm’s owners feel that on-farm outdoor cooking spaces should be exempt from commercial facilities requirements associated with restaurant licensing but recommended to use commercial equipment. Also, the need to have each menu approved separately seems a bit extensive. Licensed restaurants that do outdoor cooking on their premises are not required to get approval of every menu.</p>

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Other issues:	The current structure of license types doesn't exactly match up with this innovative approach of outdoor cooking and food service combined with temporary licensure and bringing in different chefs or caterers in succession.
What issues were resolved?	
Description of resolution:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This operation would be licensed and inspected by the Minnesota Department of Health. • Special Event Food Stand licenses are available for agritourism businesses. They allow a business to operate for up to ten days'-worth of events annually without commercial food service equipment requirements and with flexibility on MN Food Code facilities standards. A new license model may need to be explored. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Generally, a license should be held by the person preparing and/or serving the food. If the farm is running an event with multiple chefs preparing the food, it might be more cost effective to have the farmer hold the license. • Licensed outdoor cooking is possible with some menu items and some configurations. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ There is potential for approval of a shield for cooking or finishing food over an open fire. • Seasonal Temporary Food Stand licenses are available for agritourism businesses. These licenses allow a business to operate up to 21 days per year in any one location. With local zoning approval it is possible to operate in one location for more than 21 days annually. • There are documents available that describe outdoor cooking options for permanent restaurants that could be adapted. • Generally, MDH has not objected to outdoor cooking operations by a licensed food establishment that involve food preparation in an area protected from environmental contamination, followed by brief transport of food outdoors to an outdoor cooking area.
Other notes:	It may be possible to find a pathway to this type of agritourism within existing food & beverage service license categories. If not, agricultural groups might consider pursuing legislative changes to license categories.
Licensing authority representative (name and organization):	Blake Nordin, Minnesota Department of Health
Recommendations / Lessons Learned	
FBO:	The FBO is already working with her local MDH inspector and that inspector's supervisor. This FIT discussion explored a more varied set of potential options than had previously been discussed, which can inform future discussions between FBO

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	and inspectors. An exact pathway forward for the FBO was not defined by FIT in this case.
Internal (FIT):	
Licensing agency:	Minnesota Department of Health
Rules / Statutes:	

Exclusion of liability statement

The report generated is a *recommendation* by the FIT Subcommittee; it is the role of the jurisdictional regulatory body to determine next steps for the FBO. Neither the FIT Subcommittee nor the FSDTF are the final decision maker regarding the future of a case. FSDTF and its subcommittees are advisory bodies only. The job of the FIT Subcommittee is to aid FBOs with complex questions as it relates to licensing, and offer suggestions based on member's experience and expertise. The FSDTF and its subcommittees do not have any enforcement or regulatory authority and are not liable for any issues or consequences arising out of the use of the FSDTF or any subcommittees thereof.