



STATE OF WEST VIRGINIA
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN RESOURCES

4/94

Gaston Caperton
Governor

Office of Environmental Health Services
Public Health Sanitation Division
815 Quarrier Street, Suite 418
Charleston, WV 25301-2616
(304) 558-2981 FAX 558-0691

CULINARY HERBS

Facilities packaging and labeling culinary herbs for retail sale are subject to FDA's "Current Good Manufacturing Practice in Manufacturing, Packing, or Holding Human Food", as specified in this department's "Requirements For Food Processing Plants", and are to be inspected by this division's staff. Compliance with these requirements generally precludes the use of home kitchens.

Members of the WV Herb Association have requested that we consider allowing the use of home facilities for packaging culinary herbs. The herbal cottage industry is already established, and there are a number of individuals in West Virginia currently operating out of their homes. The herbs are a dry, non-potentially hazardous food which are placed in packages, weighed and labeled. No processing or manufacturing takes place. The procedure requires very little space and few utensils or equipment.

Based on these factors, this office will allow the use of a private home for the packaging and labeling of culinary herbs PROVIDED the following conditions are met:

1. Products must be protected at all times from potential contamination, including insects, rodents, animals, poisonous and toxic substances, unauthorized individuals, overhead leakage and flooding and drainage.
2. A specific work area must be designated for the packaging operation. While herbs are being packaged, this area may not be used for any other purpose.
3. The work surfaces shall be free of unnecessary articles and must be cleaned and sanitized before each use.
4. Utensils used for the herbs may not be used for any other purpose, shall be washed and sanitized before each use, and shall be stored separate from the home's utensils.
5. Sinks used for washing and sanitizing utensils and equipment may be located in the home's kitchen. The sink must contain at least two compartments and must be cleaned and sanitized prior to use. When utensils and equipment are being washed and sanitized, the sinks may not be used for any other purpose.

OVER

6. Individuals packaging herbs shall wash their hands before starting work and during work as often as is necessary to keep them clean. The sink used for hand washing may be located in the home's bathroom. Hands shall not be washed in the same sink used for washing and sanitizing utensils and equipment.
7. Adequate storage facilities must be provided for supplies and finished products.
8. Work and storage areas, sinks, and utensils and equipment shall be kept clean and shall be of approved construction and in good repair. All areas shall be maintained in a clean and sanitary manner.
9. Approved water supply and sewage disposal systems shall be provided.
10. Packaging materials must be food-grade quality.
11. Labels must be approved by the WV Department of Agriculture. Medicinal claims are prohibited.
12. Facility must be in compliance with all other applicable requirements of the "Current Good Manufacturing Practice in Manufacturing, Packing, or Holding Human Food."

Individuals involved in the packaging and commercial sale of culinary herbs should contact this office to obtain a copy of the requirements and to request an inspection.

LMJ/gp