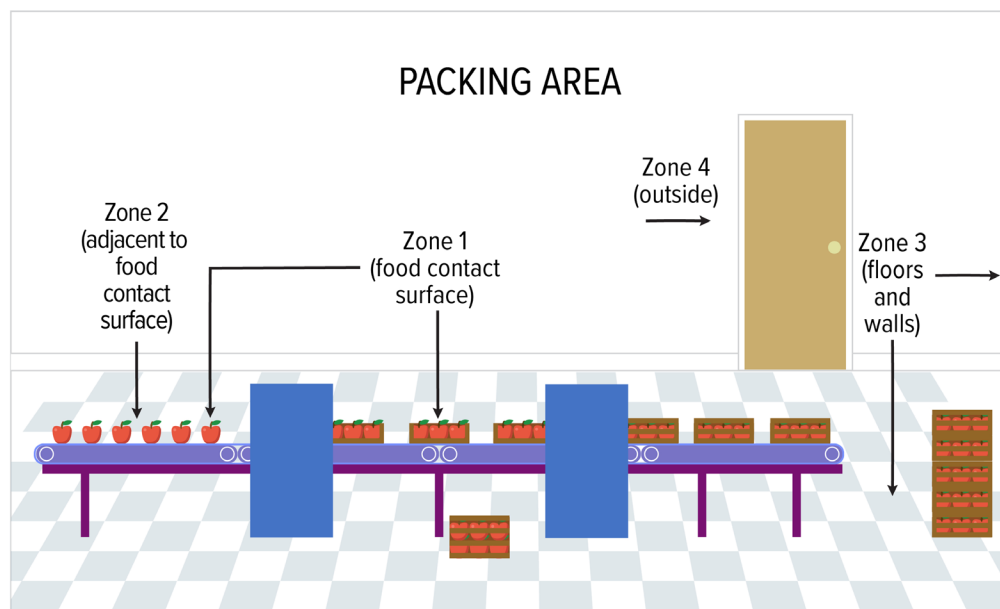


# FARMERS MARKETS



## Hygienic Zoning at Processing Facility

Processed foods to be sold at farmers markets can be prepared at an off-site location, such as a commercial kitchen, certified facility or retail food establishment. To ensure safe food, the processing facility should be designed and constructed based on sanitary principles. One such principle is hygienic zoning, which means segregating the facility area into different zones based on food safety risks. Hygienic zoning allows proper flow of traffic, minimizes cross-contamination and facilitates effective cleaning and sanitation programs.



Examples of hygienic zoning in a fresh produce packinghouse.

**Zone 1:** These are the surfaces that directly contact food, such as conveyors, rollers, utensils, mixers, slicers, bins, countertops and workers' hands. Cleaning and sanitation in zone 1 should be prioritized to minimize food safety risks. All food contact surfaces of equipment and tools covered in zone 1 should be inspected, maintained, cleaned and sanitized to prevent contamination.

**Zone 2:** These are the areas immediately adjacent to zone 1, such as equipment panels and bearings. These areas are not in direct contact with the food but are in close proximity to the food. These areas are sometimes referred to as indirect food contact surfaces and can pose food safety risk. These areas should be managed by established cleaning schedules to ensure that they do not contaminate zone 1.

**Zone 3:** These are the areas adjacent to zone 2, such as floors, walls, ceilings, pipes, trash cans, forklifts and phones. These areas may contribute to contamination due to proximity to food contact surfaces. Water should be drained properly from the processing area, and there should not be any leakage or accumulation of water in walls, floors or ceilings.

**Zone 4:** These are the areas outside the production facility, such as loading docks, hallways, warehouses, toilets, offices and cafeterias. Exterior environmental factors such as soil, animals, manure and traffic from a loading dock can cause the contamination to enter the facility.

## Control the movement of personnel and materials

- Control the flow of workers, staff, raw materials and packaging material, and rework from one area to another, if needed.
- Use physical barriers, such as turnstiles, curtains, access control card readers and magnetic locks, to control the flow.
- Transition sites before entering high risk areas should be equipped with items to prevent cross-contaminations, such as a handwashing station, a foot foaming station, air showers and personal equipment, such as hairnets and footwear.

## Control water accumulation inside the facility

- Ensure that water drains properly from the processing area and there is no leakage or accumulation of water in walls, floors or ceilings.

## Control temperature and humidity

- Install proper cooling and ventilation systems in the facility.
- Monitor and record the temperature and humidity of the processing area regularly.
- Install automated temperature and humidity monitoring devices to identify whenever a breach occurs.

## Pest control

- Pests, such as rodents, insects and birds, can carry pathogens in their feces and can contaminate food.
- A pest management plan should be developed for excluding or eliminating pests from the facility used for processing, packing and storing foods to be sold at the farmers market.

- The pest management plan should include measures to protect food, food contact surfaces and packing material from contamination by pests, as well as routine monitoring plans and measures to exclude pests from the facility.
- The facility's entries should have doors, screens or air curtains to restrict the movement of pests inside the facility.
- The area surrounding the facility should be clean and free of weeds and tall grasses.
- Remove trash every day so that it does not attract pests.
- Regularly inspect the walls, windows and doors of the facility and repair any holes or cracks.
- Use unbaited traps to monitor and eliminate pests inside the facility. Baited traps may attract the pests to the area, thus should be avoided inside the facility.
- Pesticides may be used under close supervision to manage pests and prevent food contamination.

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