

The following ordinance is a template to be used by any municipality that wants to reclaim control of its local food exchanges. There is more to it than just inserting your name in the blank, however. You must gather your people and make the document reflective of what you are trying to protect in your community. Our communities aimed to protect a right to foods of our own choosing and our traditional foodways. Local farmers and small-scale food producers had to decide what they needed to be viable, and customers had to decide what relationship they wanted with farmers and their food. Writing your ordinance will take a great deal of time and effort, but will pay off in making it easier to organize your locality toward passage. Check out the Local Food RULES web site for more info at www.localfoodrules.org Feel welcome to contact Heather Retberg (phabc@localnet.com) or Bonnie Preston (bonniepreston@earthlink.net). We can arrange a conference call with a group of you. Proceed knowing that you will not be alone in this work; you will be part of a national food freedom movement and a global movement for food sovereignty.



Local Food And Community Self-Governance Ordinance Of 2014 (LFCSGO)

Section 1. Name. This Ordinance shall be known and may be cited as the “Local Food and Community Self-Governance Ordinance.”

Section 2. Definitions. As used in this ordinance:

(a) “Patron” means an individual who is the last person to purchase any product or preparation directly from a processor or producer and who does not resell the product or preparation.

(b) “Home consumption” means consumed within a private home.

(c) “Local Foods” means any food or food product that is grown, produced, or processed by individuals who sell directly to their patrons through farm-based sales or buying clubs, at farmers markets, roadside stands, fundraisers or at community social events.

(d) “Processor” means any individual who processes or prepares products of the soil or animals for food or drink.

(e) “Producer” means any farmer or gardener who grows any plant or animal for food or drink.

(f) “Community social event” means an event where people gather as part of a community for the benefit of those gathering, or for the community, including but not limited to a church or religious social, school event, potluck, neighborhood gathering, library meeting, traveling food sale, fundraiser, craft fair, farmers market and other public events.

Section 3. Preamble and Purpose. We the People of the Town of (name of town), (name of county), Maine have the right to produce, process, sell, purchase and consume local foods thus promoting self-reliance, the preservation of family farms, and local food traditions. We recognize that family farms, sustainable agricultural practices, and food processing by individuals, families and non-corporate entities offers stability to our rural way of life by enhancing the economic, environmental and social wealth of our community. As such, our right to a local food system requires us to assert our inherent right to self-government. We recognize the authority to protect that right as belonging to the Town of (name of town) .

Democratic Wisdom

“When, in some obscure country town, the farmers come together to a special town meeting, to express their opinion on some subject which is vexing the land, that, I think, is the true Congress, and the most respectable one that is ever assembled in the United States.” — Henry David Thoreau

We have faith in our citizens’ ability to educate themselves and make informed decisions. We hold that federal and state regulations impede local food production and constitute an usurpation of our citizens’ right to foods of their choice. We support food that fundamentally respects human dignity and health, nourishes individuals and the community, and sustains producers, processors and the environment. We are therefore duty bound under the Constitution of the State of Maine to protect and promote unimpeded access to local foods.

The purpose of the Local Food and Community Self-Governance Ordinance is to:

- (i) Provide citizens with unimpeded access to local food;
- (ii) Enhance the local economy by promoting the production and purchase of local agricultural products;
- (iii) Protect access to farmers’ markets, roadside stands, farm based sales and direct producer to patron sales;
- (iv) Support the economic viability of local food producers and processors;
- (v) Preserve community social events where local foods are served or sold;
- (vi) Preserve local knowledge and traditional foodways.

Section 4. Authority. This Ordinance is adopted and enacted pursuant to the inherent, inalienable, and fundamental right of the citizens of the Town of (name of town) to self-government, and under the authority recognized as belonging to the people of the Town by all relevant state and federal laws including, but not limited to the following:

The Declaration of Independence of the United States of America, which declares that governments are instituted to secure peoples’ rights, and that government derives its just powers from the consent of the governed.

Article I, § 2 of the Maine Constitution, which declares: “all power is inherent in the people; all free governments are founded in their authority and instituted for their benefit, [and that] they have therefore an unalienable and indefeasible right to institute government and to alter, reform, or totally change the same when their safety and happiness require it.”

§3001 of Title 30-A of the Maine Revised Statutes, which grants municipalities all powers necessary to protect the health, safety, and welfare of the residents of the Town of (name of town) .

§1-A of Title 7 of the Maine Revised Statutes which states: “The survival of the family farm is of special concern to the people of the State, and the ability of the family farm to prosper, while pro-