

## **TOWN OF DEDHAM FOOD SOVEREIGNTY ORDINANCE**

**WHEREAS**, the Town of Dedham wishes to encourage the local production and sale of food and food products;

**WHEREAS**, regulation of the local production and sale of food and food products can be unduly burdensome to producers; and

**WHEREAS**, the Maine Legislature has provided municipalities with home rule authority to exempt direct producer-to-consumer transactions of food and food products from regulation;

**NOW, THEREFORE**, be it ordained by the voters of the Town of Dedham, that the Food Sovereignty Ordinance is hereby enacted:

*1. Authority and Purpose:* This Ordinance is intended to provide Dedham residents unimpeded access to local food and to reduce governmental regulation of local foods to the extent permitted by home rule authority under 30-A M.R.S.A. § 3001, the Constitution of Maine, Article VIII, Part Second, and pursuant to 7 M.R.S. § 281 et seq.

*2. Definitions:* As used in this ordinance, unless the context otherwise indicates, the following terms have the meanings stated below:

A. Direct Producer-to-Consumer Transaction: A face-to-face transaction involving food or food products at the site of production of those food or food products.

B. Food or Food Products: Any food or food product intended for human consumption, including, but not limited to, milk or milk products, meat or meat products, poultry or poultry products, fish or fish products, seafood or seafood products, cider or juice, acidified foods or canned fruits or vegetables.

C. State and Town Food Law: Any provision of Title 7 or Title 22 of the Maine Revised Statutes, or rules adopted under Title 7 or Title 22 of the Maine Revised Statutes, or provision of the Town of Dedham Code that regulates direct producer-to-consumer transactions.

*3. Exemption from Licensure and Inspection:* Producers and processors of local food intended for direct producer-to-consumer transactions in the Town of Dedham shall be exempt from state and Town licensure and inspection under State and Town Food Laws. In accordance with Section 284 of the Maine Food Sovereignty Act, the State of Maine and the Town of Dedham shall not enforce State and Town Food Laws with respect to direct producer-to-consumer transactions.

*4. Exception for Meat and Poultry Inspections:* In accordance with Section 285 of the Maine Food Sovereignty Act, the exemption provided in Section 3 of this Ordinance does not apply to any

meat or poultry product inspection and licensing requirements that are specified under applicable federal acts.

*5. Liability Protection:* Producers and processors of local food may enter into private agreements with patrons to waive any liability for the consumption of local food.

Any individual citizen of the Town shall have standing to enforce any rights secured by this ordinance which have been threatened or contested by any person, whether natural or juridical, and may seek relief both in the form of injunctive and compensatory relief from a court of competent jurisdiction.

*6. Mutual Recognition and Inter-municipal Government Collaboration:* The Town hereby recognizes producers and processors of local foods in other municipalities that have also adopted a Local Food and Community Self-Governance Ordinance. Those producers and processors of local foods from other municipalities operating under a similar ordinance may also operate under this ordinance.

*Adoption Date: June 12, 2025*