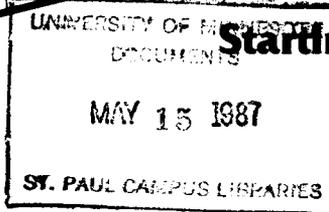


Family-Based Business

Starting a Bed and Breakfast or Farm Vacation Business



Wanda Olson
Harold Alexander
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What is a Bed and Breakfast?

Bed and breakfast businesses provide lodging, breakfast, and hospitality. These businesses are found on farms and in rural communities as well as in larger cities. All are part of a private residence, offer short term overnight stays, include breakfast(s) in the room charge, and are known for the personal services offered. Farm vacation homes usually provide additional meals and activities for guests. Bed and breakfast and farm vacation homes are alternatives to other commercial forms of lodging; many have become attractions in themselves. This booklet is designed to help you decide if a bed and breakfast or farm vacation home is a realistic business option for you.

Hospitality

Some assessment of personal qualities and entrepreneurial skills is necessary to see if these businesses are a good match for you and your family. The common factor across the bed and breakfast industry is hospitality; it is the key ingredient to any successful guest business. You must enjoy meeting people and welcoming them into your home on a regular basis.

The feeling of welcome goes beyond a handshake, and there is much you can do to increase it. Do some play acting. Enter your home as if you were a stranger, and have family members greet you. Go to your guest room and stay in it for a night. What do you need that is there, that is not there?

The hosts should be personable. It is customary to spend time visiting with the guests upon arrival and at breakfast. Be prepared to describe points of interest and activities in the community, the background of your business and its location, and information about you and your family.

Family Implications

Before starting your business, carefully assess the impact it may have on your family — both on living

arrangements and on specific needs of family members. If you answer yes to the following questions, then this family-based business may be for you. It can provide supplemental income and introduce you to a new way of life.

- Do you enjoy meeting all types of people?
- Would you be comfortable with strangers in your home?
- Would you be able to provide enough areas for use by family members and the security of family belongings? (This is easier to do in some houses because of the arrangement of entrances, hallways, and sleeping rooms. Remodeling or even rearranging furnishings can help to separate family and business areas.)
- Do you have the time to plan and promote this business and still give time to your family?
- Will you be able to spend substantial time with the guests?
- Will you be able to define the business responsibilities for each family member?

Management Policies

When you share your home with guests, you have the right to determine allowable activities and limits. To avoid misunderstandings, it is a good idea to state these policies in your brochure and post them in the rooms.

Development of this publication was a cooperative effort by Community and Natural Resource Development, Home Economics, and Agriculture.

Make decisions about the following items:

- Smoking restrictions
- Use of alcoholic beverages
- Whether children are welcome
- Breakfast hours
- Guest areas vs. family space
- How and when bill will be paid
- Use of credit cards
- Whether pets are allowed
- Use of the telephone, television, and radio
- Arrival and departure times

Most guests make arrangements in advance, unless you are in a community where hotel/motel accommodations are in short supply. It is up to you to establish reservation procedures, deposit policies, and cancellation and refund rules. Reservation forms should clearly state these policies. Deposits, if any, can range from one night's lodging to a set dollar fee. Cancellation policies generally specify a time frame, and it is common to refund the deposit only if a room can be rebooked, minus a small service fee. Alternatively, you might offer to hold the deposit toward an overnight stay at another time.

If you would like to learn more about management practices, stay as a guest at other bed and breakfasts. This exchange of ideas will give you a better idea of any standard management policies in the bed and breakfast industry.

Your House, Furnishings, and Food

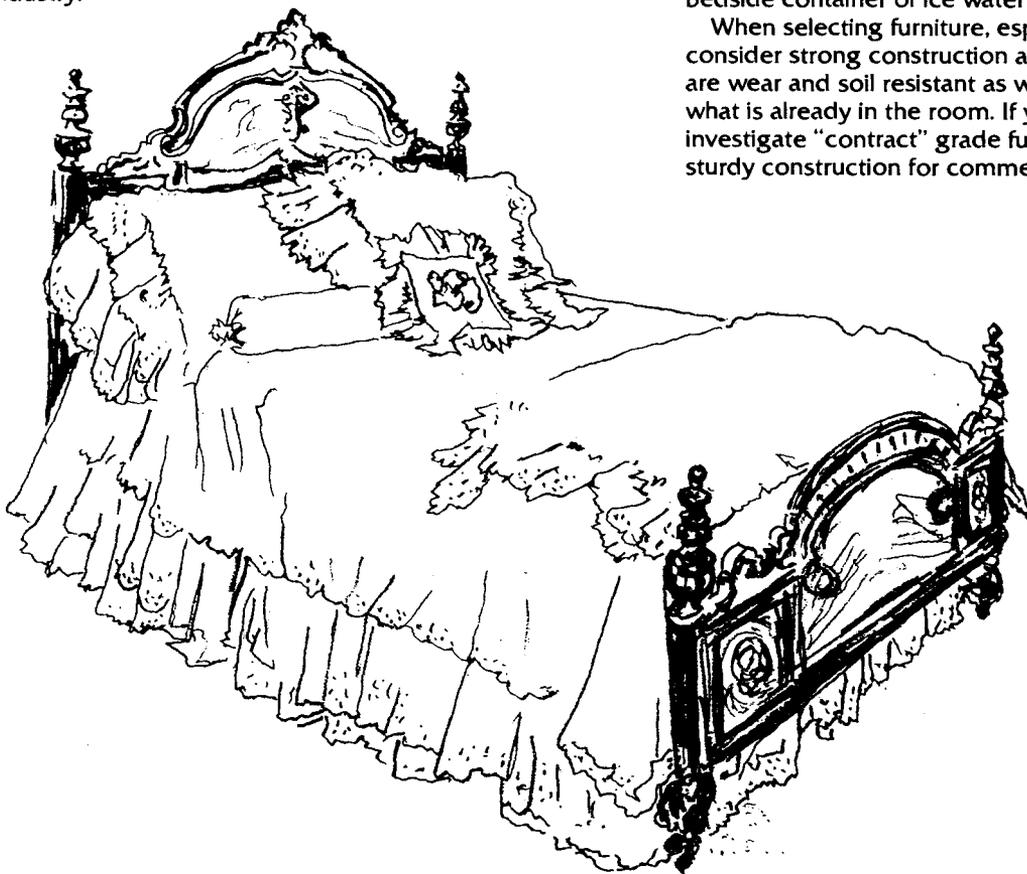
The bed and breakfast or farm vacation home facility can be anything from contemporary to historic. It does not need to be a mansion. It does not always have to be old or of historical importance. It should however always be comfortable, clean, distinctive, and pleasant. Your home should be unique and reflect your family, the people who live there. One of your selling points is "ambiance" — the look or feel of your home.

Analyze why you think guests — paying guests — would find your home a place where they want to stay. Look at your house and its furnishings and consider what may be needed to bring them up to code, make them more attractive, and contribute to the smooth functioning of your business.

You should determine the "look" that you want to have in your home and in the guest rooms. Analyze the furniture and accessories you have, along with the style of your home and its interior architecture. Be creative; your home should reflect your tastes and interests. Personal items placed in your home and even in the guest rooms are appropriate.

The bedroom needs a bed with a good quality mattress and pillows, clothes and skirt/pant hangers, and a towel rack if the bathroom is shared. Include a comfortable chair(s) with light for reading, a mirror, and a nearby outlet for personal appliances. The room should smell and look fresh and clean. Extras such as a full length mirror, fresh flowers or plants, recent magazines, a small selection of books, fresh fruit, and a bedside container of ice water will all be appreciated.

When selecting furniture, especially new pieces, consider strong construction and upholstery fabrics that are wear and soil resistant as well as compatible with what is already in the room. If you expect many guests, investigate "contract" grade furniture, which is of more sturdy construction for commercial use.



Sharing bath facilities is permissible. For some families or family members, an additional sink or half bath would make this arrangement more agreeable. Shared bathrooms must be spotless and without personal clutter. Guests are given time preference.

Food is a special part of bed and breakfast and farm vacation homes. It should be memorable — what you serve, how you serve it, and where it is eaten. Food should be plentiful, but you do not need to offer a large number of selections. Offer an assortment of beverages: coffee (regular and caffeine free), tea, juices, and milk. You may wish to have alternative foods on hand for persons on special diets.

If you like to cook breakfast, serve your specialties: muffins, pancakes, or omelets with sausages or bacon. If you hate to cook or have only a limited food license, buy the best specialties from your local bakery and complement with fresh fruits and cheeses. Breakfast may be served all at once (more difficult if all share one bath) or at different times to accommodate guests.

Codes and Regulations

In Minnesota all bed and breakfast and farm vacation homes must be licensed and meet state codes and regulations. In addition, municipalities may have special restrictions. Compliance with health, fire, and building codes and regulations is needed to help ensure the health and safety of the guests. **The cost of compliance** is a major consideration in determining the economic feasibility of your business. Zoning, building, and fire codes are **minimum** requirements.

Zoning

Zoning approval is granted by a local jurisdiction and is the first step in establishing the business. If you live in a township, check both with township and county officials. Some units have special ordinances regulating only bed and breakfast operations. If there is no special ordinance, seek approval under the general zoning ordinance.

If the home occupation is listed in the zoning ordinance as a principal use, approval must be granted as a “matter of right” if the business complies with specific standards in the ordinance.

If the home occupation is listed as a conditional use, it can be approved only after a lengthy administrative procedure, including a public hearing. This action increases the cost of approval and allows considerable discretion by the governmental unit. Special restrictions may be imposed on the business.

Some units use a hybrid approach, which might be called a limited principal use. Approval is granted quickly by a zoning official with limited discretion. A hearing may or may not be required.

Concerns addressed by these ordinances include size of proposed business and implications of expansion, parking, signs, lighting, entrance and exterior appearance, maximum number of employees, maximum length of guest stay, and limitations on meals served.

Food and Lodging License

This section includes a general discussion of facilities with additional details in the Appendix. The Minnesota Health Department licenses food, beverage, and lodging establishments. Many of the county or city health departments have contracts with the Minnesota Department of Health to regulate the establishments. Inspections are made yearly. A local or state fire marshal will inspect and note deficiencies. Bed and breakfast and farm vacation homes are licensed as a hotel/motel and as a restaurant. The lodging and food service annual fees will be between \$90 and \$125 depending on the size of the business.

If any remodeling or site work is to be done, check with the appropriate building and zoning officials for a permit or an application for inspection. Changes in plumbing or electrical service may require the entire system to be brought up to code. If the plumbing and electrical work is in the area used by the business or is needed for the business, the work must be completed by licensed contractors.

BEFORE APPLYING FOR LICENSING, obtain zoning approval and evaluate the specific requirements of the Department of Health and the applicable fire and building codes. You may request the health inspector to conduct a preliminary site investigation to be followed by a final inspection and license application. You will need an approved water supply and sewage disposal system. The specifications for private systems are listed by the Minnesota Department of Health in “Sanitary Specifications in Well Water Supplies,” and by the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency in “Septic Systems.” The greatest concern is that the water supply meets the purity standards for coliform bacteria and nitrates. An existing septic tank and drain field must be adequately sized to handle the additional use.

Only a limited food license is needed if the food service is limited to beverages and purchased rolls and pastries. If the food service for a prepared meal is limited to 10 or fewer guests, household kitchen equipment is allowed with the restaurant license. Otherwise, restaurant regulations apply.

Specific food service requirements include the use of either an automatic dishwasher in which the plate temperature reaches 160° F during a fill cycle or hand washing in a three compartment sink using an approved chemical sanitizer and air drying.

Safe food handling practices must be observed and all food used must be obtained from an approved source. No home canned or frozen food can be used in food preparation. Fresh home grown fruits and vegetables can be used if pesticides, if used, are applied according to directions listed in Minnesota Extension Service guides to pesticides. There will not be an excessive residue remaining on the crop if the current pesticide label directions are followed, and the pre-harvest interval (the length of time between application and harvesting) is observed. There are stringent EPA and FDA regulations regarding pesticide residue levels.



If "homemade jams or jellies" are to be served they must be prepared according to the Minnesota Department of Agriculture regulations. The requirements for approved facilities, methods of processing, and labels are listed in the Minnesota Extension Service guide. The family kitchen is not an "approved facility."

Lodging regulations specify minimum bathroom facilities and a minimum size for sleeping rooms of 70 square feet of usable floor space or 60 square feet for each person if the room is to be used by more than one person.

Fire code requirements differ depending upon the size of the business. The requirements specify the number and type of exits from the sleeping rooms and the required smoke detectors, fire alarms, and fire extinguishers. The fire codes identify other types of unsafe conditions. These include interior surface finishes that would allow a quick flame spread, improper storage of flammable materials, and an attached garage without a fire wall.

Insurance and Taxes

General liability insurance is needed. Your current homeowner's insurance policy will not cover the risks associated with paying guests. Common coverage would include house and contents, medical (per person and per occurrence), and liability. Several policies for bed and breakfast businesses have been written for \$500,000 liability. Assess and manage your risk by working with your insurance agent to determine an appropriate liability limit for your specific situation. Purchase insurance from a company that has experience with the special needs of this particular type of hospitality business. Some insurance companies are offering special coverage for home ventures including the guest business.

Rates charged for all guest accommodations and meals are subject to Minnesota sales tax. Before beginning business and making taxable sales, apply for a Minnesota sales and use tax permit. Request form M.B.A. "Application for Minnesota Tax Identification Number" from the Minnesota Department of Revenue.

A free kit containing federal tax forms and publications needed by businesses is available from the Internal Revenue Service. This kit contains a basic reference bulletin, "Tax Guide for Small Businesses," that discusses federal tax laws and deadlines as they apply to business operations.

The Business Plan

A comprehensive business plan should be developed before beginning a bed and breakfast or farm vacation operation. The major purpose of a business plan is to analyze the business in an objective and critical fashion to determine if it is a sound investment. A business plan also forms the basis of a financial proposal if you seek financial assistance from bankers, investors, friends, or extended family members. If you decide to invest in your bed and breakfast or farm vacation operation, the finished business plan will assist you in managing the business.

Starting any business involves risk. Money invested in a business may not earn a return or may even be lost. Consider how much you could earn by investing your money in something other than the proposed business, and how much you could earn working for someone else. Your calculations will vary depending on whether you expect your bed and breakfast business to be a supplemental income source of \$1000 to \$3000 per year or the major source of family income. You determine your expectations.

If you start a bed and breakfast, you should be willing to earn an amount less than your desired income for a minimum of one to three years. On average, small businesses do not earn a profit in the first two years. One of the main reasons small businesses fail is because they do not project and obtain enough working capital for the first two years of operation.

One way to improve the chances of your business success is to develop a business plan which carefully estimates income and expenses. There are three major elements of a business plan: an organizational overview, a financial plan, and a marketing plan. The overview includes a description of the business — location and services, information on the background and skills of the individuals operating the business, short and long term goals, and the form of the business (sole proprietorship, partnership, or corporation). An attorney and a tax adviser can help you decide which form of business is best for you.



Financial Section

The financial section of the plan is used to determine if the business will earn you a return on your investment of time and money. A cash flow projection will indicate to you how much cash is needed and when it is needed. Cash flow projections are constructed by first estimating monthly expenses and monthly income.

To estimate your income, you need to determine the prices you plan to charge as well as your season(s) of occupancy. The first step in setting rental rates is to estimate your costs carefully to insure the price you charge covers your costs at the occupancy projected. This calculation is critical to your financial success.

You then can compare your expected rates with other lodging establishments. There is great variation in the Minnesota bed and breakfast industry. 1987 overnight rates ranged from \$20 to \$80 for double occupancy. One informal rule of thumb used by some bed and breakfast operators is to price at 40 to 65 percent of the high-quality room rates in the region. Guest businesses may charge more depending on amenities provided.

With respect to expenses you will need to estimate the start up capital required for investment in home improvements, furniture, linens, and safety equipment. Legal and accounting assistance may also be needed before the business starts earning income. Next you need to estimate the operating expenses that do not vary with the number of guests such as insurance, license fees, and debt repayment. A more difficult task is to estimate the costs that vary with the occupancy rates: utility costs for hot water, lighting, heating, and air conditioning; food; cleaning and office supplies; repairs and maintenance; advertising; employment-related wages and taxes; and a replacement reserve for worn out equipment and furniture.

Your final cash flow projections will determine the amount of financing required for your bed and breakfast. The initial source of financing for a small business venture is you. You should expect to invest from 35 to 50 percent of the total financial needs. The balance may come in the form of a commercial bank loan, providing you have adequate collateral to pledge for the loan. Care should be taken when committing personal assets to finance the business. You may be risking the loss of your home, car, or land.

A successful business owner needs financial management skills. Even if an accountant or bookkeeper is hired, the manager/owner should be able to track progress and translate financial data in order to make decisions that will maintain a healthy business.

If you have never been in business, there are several sources of assistance to help you get started. The State of Minnesota is the publisher of an excellent reference book, *A Guide to Starting a Business in Minnesota*. A copy of this free guide can be obtained from the Minnesota Small Business Office. You might also contact the Small Business Administration to obtain free brochures on developing a business plan, recordkeeping, analyzing records, pricing, and budgeting.

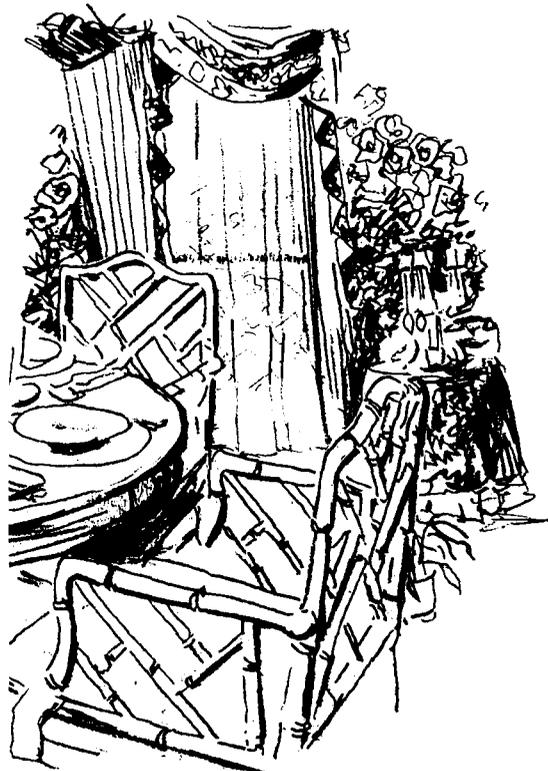
Marketing Section

In the marketing section of the business plan, outline the current market situation. Describe the bed and breakfast experience you are selling in terms of the benefits it offers to your guests, such as a rural getaway or farm experience. Define the features that are available — proximity to outdoor recreation, a scenic setting, historical interest, accessibility for business travelers, or location in a town with limited overnight accommodations. Who and what is your competition in the hospitality industry? What are your strengths and weaknesses?

Use this information to “position” your product and set your bed and breakfast home apart from competitors. Determine if you are offering convenient location, better service, top quality accommodations, or low price. You can’t sell all four and stay in business. Your image is based on this positioning.

A key to marketing is to select a segment of the market — the target market — and then to direct marketing efforts to that group. A target market is a group of high-potential customers who share similar characteristics such as age, income, lifestyle, and geographic location. These characteristics frequently define customer expectations. For example, upper middle income customers may be willing to pay a higher price in return for more service.

Other examples of target markets are business travelers visiting nearby companies, cross-country skiers who use local trail systems, or urban families interested in a rural experience. The size of the target market should justify your marketing efforts. You do not have to be located in a traditional tourist area to capture the bed and breakfast trade if you can tap into existing travel generated by commercial activity or major travel routes.





Promoting Your Bed and Breakfast

You can not afford to waste any of your valuable dollars in today's competitive tourism marketplace. In other family-based lodging businesses like resorts, it is common to spend a minimum of four to six percent of gross sales for marketing. A higher percent is typical during the first years of operation when you're trying to create awareness. Therefore, it is important that you know who your prospects are, what will motivate them to buy, and how to promote purchase of your product.

From the market assessment in the business plan, you can develop realistic marketing objectives that state what you want to accomplish. Be specific, include a time frame, and make sure the outcome is measurable. An example of a well thought out marketing objective would be: increase average weekly occupancy to 50 percent during the fall season (Labor Day to November 15) through promotion directed at retired couples in the Twin Cities.

The first marketing strategy that comes to mind is advertising — paid nonpersonal communication with

potential customers. Bed and breakfast operators often advertise together under a banner headline to create awareness of B&B's as a lodging option. Good advertising should stress a benefit, be honest and believable, inform, and enhance the image of the advertiser. There are also ways to piggyback formal advertising with a combination of inexpensive promotion and free publicity to keep your business in the public eye.

Printed Materials

You will need a professional-looking brochure to send to guests in response to inquiries, to distribute at visitor information locations, and to use in any direct mail campaigns. If the design and text are well done, an inexpensive one-color brochure with line drawings can be effective. A standard piece that describes your facility, services, and local attractions, with a single page rate insert sheet, will avoid reprinting charges each time you raise prices. A logo helps create a consistent image you can use on stationery, business cards, and reservation forms.

A bookstore or library can help you find the numerous guidebooks that list bed and breakfasts on a nationwide or regional basis. The Minnesota Office of Tourism annually publishes a directory of licensed bed and breakfasts and historic inns. There are also many regional and community tourism guides where you can place a listing for a fee.

Publicity and Public Relations

Be sure your bed and breakfast gets referrals locally when travelers stop in town. You want your home to be the first place people think of for overnight lodging. Gain that support early: keep the neighbors informed about your plans and have a community-wide open house when you open your doors for business. Take advantage of every opportunity to host meetings or to speak about your operation to groups. It is impossible to overemphasize the importance of becoming an active member of the Chamber of Commerce and local tourism promotion groups.

You can't buy the kind of publicity you get from a feature story in a magazine or newspaper. Travel writers don't just wander into town; invite them and develop ongoing contacts that will encourage them to visit. Travel publications look for the new and the noteworthy, an unusual "hook," and human interest stories that appeal to their specific reader profile. Tourism businesses in a region also organize "fam" tours from time to time to familiarize travel writers with area attractions and hospitality services.

Travel Promotions

Incentives such as a weekday discount, lower rates for extended stays, coupons, or promotional drawings can introduce guests to your facility. Another growth area in tourism is packaging, where a variety of services such as lodging, food, entertainment, and transportation are available for one inclusive price. For instance, work with a local restaurant and theatre to offer a price break for a complete overnight package.

Reservation Service Organizations (RSO's)

Reservation service organizations maintain national or regional listings of B&B's and take bookings. Typically there is an annual fee and a 15 to 25 percent surcharge on each reservation. The advantage of affiliation with RSOs is that they can make direct contact with potential guests and screen them for you according to your preferences (smoking, use of alcohol). RSO's may also have aggressive publicity campaigns, and some hosts are willing to pay for these conveniences.

Referrals

But always — **THE BEST PUBLICITY IS WORD-OF-MOUTH REFERRALS FROM SATISFIED GUESTS.** Use an evaluation form to determine how you have met the expectations of your guests.

Results

Finally, decide how to monitor results. Always code advertisements so that it is possible to track their effectiveness in receiving inquiries and making bookings. Continually check with guests to find out how they learned about your home. Study the results, update objectives, and investigate why sales have increased or declined.

References

Davies, Mary and P. Hardy, J. Bell and S. Brown. So. . . You Want to Be An Innkeeper. 1985. 101 Productions, San Francisco.

Mathews, Beverly. Start Your Own Bed and Breakfast Business. 1985. Pocket Books, New York.

State of Minnesota

Procedure for Obtaining a License to Operate a Food, Beverage and a Lodging Establishment. Minnesota Department of Health.

"Requirements for Food and Beverage Establishments," Minnesota Statute Chapter 4625 Department of Health.

"Requirements for Lodging Establishments," Minnesota Statute Chapter 4625 Department of Health.

Sanitary Specifications for Well Water Supplies, Minnesota Department of Health.

"Septic Systems," Minnesota Rules Chapter 7080, Minnesota Pollution Control Agency.

Minnesota State Fire Code, an auxiliary code in the National Fire Protection Association 101 Life Safety Code. Minnesota State Fire Marshal.

Minnesota Building Code, State Building Code Division.

University of Minnesota, Minnesota Extension Service

"Establishing the Ambiance in a Bed and Breakfast or Farm Vacation Home," HE-FO-3219.

"Commercial Vegetable Weed, Insect and Disease Control Guides," AG-FO-1879-1885

"Commercial Apple Pest Control," AG-FO-0844

"Weed Control — Commercially Grown Strawberries," AG-FS-1131

"Blueberry Production in Minnesota," AG-FO-2241

"Commercial Raspberry Pest and Weed Control Guide," AG-GS-1135

"Commercial Strawberry Pest Control Guide," AG-FS-1134

"Manufacture of Jams and Jellies for Retail Sale," Extend-U (through County Extension agents)

The County Extension agent has a wealth of information on space planning, selection and care of furniture and equipment, and remodeling the home.



Resources

If you have questions or wish to request a copy of any regulations or specifications, check with your local officials or call or write:

Minnesota Department of Health
717 S.E. Delaware Street
Minneapolis, MN 55440
License Applications (612) 623-5341
Plumbing (612) 623-5328

Minnesota Department of Revenue
Sales and Use Tax Division
P.O. Box 64452
St. Paul, MN 55164
(612) 296-6181

U.S. Internal Revenue Service
Taxpayer Assistance Unit
Rm. 380 Federal Building
St. Paul, MN 55101

or

Rm. 149 Old Federal Building
210 Third Ave. S.
Minneapolis, MN 55401
(612) 291-1422
1-800-424-1040

Minnesota Pollution Control Agency
520 Lafayette Rd.
St. Paul, MN 55155
(612) 296-7252

Minnesota Small Business Office
900 American Center Building
150 East Kellogg Blvd.
St. Paul, MN 55101
(612) 296-3871
1-800-652-9747

Small Business Administration
100 N. 6th St.
Minneapolis, MN 55403
(612) 349-3550

Minnesota State Building Code Division
Metro Square Bldg.
St. Paul, MN 55101
(612) 296-4639

Minnesota State Fire Marshal
289 E. 5th Street
St. Paul, MN 55101
(612) 296-7641

Minnesota State Office of Tourism
250 Skyway Level
375 Jackson Street
St. Paul, MN 55101
(612) 297-2901
1-800-652-9747

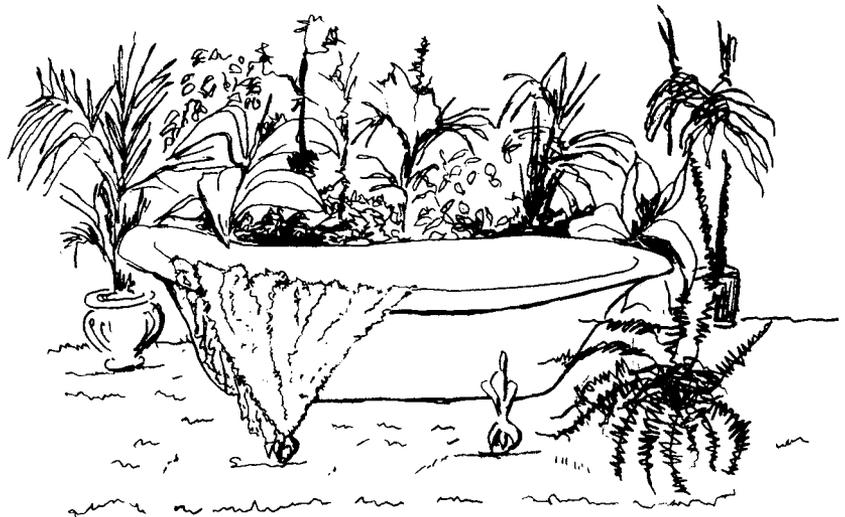
Bed and Breakfast Networks

Minnesota Historic Bed and Breakfast Association
649 W. Third Street
Hastings, MN 55033
(612) 437-3297

American Bed & Breakfast Association
P.O. Box 23294
Washington, DC 20026
(703) 237-9777

The National Bed & Breakfast Association
Phyllis Featherstone, President
148 East Rocks Road, P.O. Box 332
Norwalk, CT 06852
(203) 847-6196

The Bed & Breakfast Society
Kenn Knopp, Coordinator
330 West Main Street
Fredericksburg, TX 78624
(512) 997-4712



Appendix

Food Service and Lodging Regulations, Fire Safety Standards.

The items in bold face in the following sections relate directly to the regulations for bed and breakfast or farm vacation homes when 10 or fewer guests are served.

Food Service Regulations

Dishwashing

Use either an automatic dishwasher in which the plate temperature reaches 160° F during a fill cycle or hand wash in a 3 compartment sink using an approved chemical sanitizer and air drying.

Kitchen Aid (KDSC21A, KDSM21A, KDSS21A) and Thermador/Waste King (THD4800, THD3800, WKD3700) are models in which the temperature is reached or exceeded. In most dishwashers with a "sani" option or sanitizing cycle the water temperature reached is not higher than 150° F. Water heating dishwashers typically are designed to heat the incoming water to 140° F or 150° F.

There may be a more rapid loss of metal trim and a more rapid rate of etching of glassware when consumer dishware is continually exposed to high water temperatures. Chlorine bleach is one of the approved sanitizers for hand dish washing. When used with plastic dishware it can cause deterioration of the surface of the dishware and also leave a disagreeable odor.

Refrigeration

Household (domestic) equipment is permitted. The refrigerator should be large enough and have a cooling capacity for the amount of food and type of menu served. Serving lunches and dinners to ten guests requires more capacity than breakfast for two or three guests. The temperature of perishable food must be held at 40° F or lower.

Ranges & Microwave Ovens

Household (domestic) equipment is permitted. Commercial ranges with their greater heat output have clearance space and ventilation requirements that are different from those for household (domestic) ranges.

Microwave ovens with the higher wattage (600-700 watt output) and larger cavity size (one cubic foot or greater) are the most suitable. Ovens with higher wattage output heat faster than those with lower wattage output. The larger cavity size should accommodate frequently used serving dishes.

Tableware and Kitchenware

The utensils used in the storage, preparation, and serving of food must be of non-toxic and corrosion-resistant materials. All surfaces in contact with food should be easily cleaned and sanitized. Cookware can be of stainless steel, aluminum, iron, glass, glass-ceramic, or plastic (not soft reused food containers). Enamelware is unacceptable because if the surface is chipped, acid foods in contact with the bare metal could form a poison. Wood cutting boards or chopping blocks have to be completely cleaned and sanitized after each use with raw meats or poultry.

Walls, Windows, and Floors in the Food Preparation Area

These surfaces should be easy to clean. Smooth floorcoverings, sealed wood, and tile are acceptable; kitchen carpeting is not.

General Home Cleanliness

Measures shall be taken to minimize rodents, flies, and insects.

Pets should not be allowed in the kitchen food preparation area.

Diapering of babies should not be allowed in the kitchen food preparation area.

General family laundering should not be done in the kitchen food preparation area.

Pesticides, toxic chemical cleaners, and products except sanitizing agents should not be stored in the kitchen food preparation area.

General Food Protection

No home canned or frozen foods can be used in food preparation. Fresh home grown fruits and vegetables can be used if pesticides, if used, are applied according to directions listed in Minnesota Extension Service guides to pesticides. There will not be an excessive residue remaining on the crops if the current pesticide container label directions are followed and the pre-harvest interval, the length of time between application and harvesting, is observed. There are stringent EPA and FDA regulations regarding pesticide residue levels. If "homemade jams or jellies" are to be served they must be prepared according to the Minnesota Department of Agriculture regulations. The requirements for approved facilities, methods of processing, and labels are listed in the Minnesota Extension Service guides. The family kitchen is not an approved facility.

No home slaughtering of meats is permissible. Slaughter must be in a USDA or Minnesota Department of Agriculture inspected facility.

Fluid milk or milk products must be pasteurized. Home pasteurized milk must meet standards for bottling milk.

Food that is perishable and potentially hazardous should be stored at temperatures 40° F or below or 150° F or above.

Food supplies must be stored in a clean, dust-free location.

Supplies once opened must be stored in hard-sided closed containers.

Food served at a meal that has been in serving containers and unwrapped must not be reused.

Follow good hand washing practices. Use separate towels.

Other Food Service Considerations

The food service aspects of bed and breakfast and farm vacation home businesses may place greater work demands on the kitchen, and additional storage and counter space may be needed. A good arrangement will contribute to safe and convenient working conditions. If two persons are to prepare food at the same time: (a) plan for separate work areas no less than 36 inches wide each or one extended work area 60 inches wide. The work areas should each be convenient to the sink(s); and (b) avoid placing two or more major pieces of equipment in a location so that two persons would need to use the same working/operating space. Corner work areas are difficult for two persons. A separate microwave oven and range would be preferable to a microwave range or to a range and an over-the-range microwave oven.

Lodging Regulations

Sleeping Rooms

Sleeping rooms must contain a minimum of 70 square feet of usable floor space (closets, lavatories not included) or 60 square feet for each person if the room is used by more than one person. There must be no less than 400 cubic feet of air space per person. A 3 foot space is required between beds when located side by side.

Basement sleeping rooms are not allowed unless half the space is above grade. The sleeping room (bedroom) needs a bed with a good quality mattress and pillows, a closet with clothes and skirt/pant hangers, and a towel rack if the bathroom is shared. Other amenities include a comfortable chair with light for reading, a mirror, and an outlet for any personal appliances.

Clean bed and bath linens must be supplied for each guest. Wash linens separately from family laundry; hot water and a sanitizing agent such as chlorine bleach should be used.

Bathrooms

While a minimum of one toilet and lavatory is required for every 10 occupants and one bath tub or shower for every 20 occupants, the zoning, building, and fire code requirements should be checked if you want to keep a single family dwelling classification. Sharing bath facilities is permissible. For some families or family members, an additional sink or half bath would make this business arrangement more agreeable. Shared bathrooms must be spotless and without personal clutter. Guests are given time preference.

Hot water at the bath, shower, or hand washing sinks should be no higher than 130° F. Mixing faucets are available. Bed and breakfast and farm vacation home businesses place extra demands on hot water. Laundry times can be staggered; bathing and showering by guests is likely to occur within a short time period. Baths (half fill standard size) take about 30 gallons of 105° F water (15 gallons of 140° F water if cold is set at 50° F). Showers use about 4 gallons of 105° F water per minute or 2 gallons per minute if equipped with a low flow shower head. Check the first hour rating of your heater to see if it is adequate. A tankless water heater could serve baths and showers.

Other Lodging Considerations

Rooms used in conjunction with the bed and breakfast or farm vacation home businesses shall be lighted and ventilated as needed.

Some areas need to be lighted for safety, especially steps and stairways. Other areas needing special lighting are the mirror in the bathroom and work areas in the kitchen.

Additional showering and cooking increase the ventilation load. **Whenever exhaust systems are installed there must be some provision for make-up air (fresh outdoor air). Tightly weatherized houses with combustion heating equipment must have a combustion air supply as well as sufficient make-up for power exhaust fans to prevent back drafting of combustion flue gases.**

Fire Safety Standards

The minimum standards include the state fire code, auxiliary codes plus any additional stricter standards adopted by local governments. Additional safety provisions may also be included in the state building code; these would be in force in those communities where the state building code is in effect.

The language in the codes is detailed, often with several options given. The general requirements relate to the number and type of exits from the sleeping rooms, together with the

required smoke detectors, fire alarms, and fire extinguishers. The fire codes identify other types of unsafe conditions. These include interior surface finishes that would allow a quick flame spread, improper storage of flammable materials, and an attached garage without a fire wall.

The code requirements differ depending upon the size of the operation. The statutes and codes relating to fire safety define a unit as a single family dwelling if it has accommodations for no more than three guests, as a lodging house if it can accommodate more than three guests and has five or fewer guest rooms, and as a hotel if it has six or more guest rooms.

Sleeping rooms in a single family dwelling or lodging house must have two means of emergency escape and rescue, one as a door or stairway leading to unobstructed travel to the main floor and to the outside. The second means of escape may be an operable window with an unobstructed opening of at least 5.7 square feet in area, at least 20 inches wide and 24 inches in height. The doorway (except the bathroom door) or pathway shall be no less than 28 inches wide. Stairs used for vertical escape must be no less than 36 inches in width, with the tread depth no less than 9 inches and the height of the risers no more than 8 inches.

Guest sleeping rooms in a single family dwelling must be serviced by a smoke detector and an alarm powered by the electrical system. Sleeping rooms in a lodging house require a smoke detector in the corridor. Each room must have a smoke detector, which may or may not be battery powered. A fire alarm system with manual pull stations at each exit is required when the dwelling has more than three guest rooms.

If the house has more than ten occupants on the second story then there must be a complying second exit from this story. Any floor above the second story, if occupied, requires a minimum of a complying second exit regardless of the number of occupants.

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