



Inside Ag

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Food Plan Operators: Doing Business with Colorado Consumers

The term "Food Plan Operator" may be unfamiliar to many Coloradans; however, numerous consumers, at one time or another, have encountered a food plan operator who knocks on the door of their home and offers to sell them food and/or food products. These door-to-door solicitations are made by individuals that are, under Colorado State Law, classified as "Food Plan Operators." Such operators offer "food plans" which are comprised of individual packages of frozen meat or seafood. These packages might be combined and sold as a "bundle." In addition to frozen meat and seafood, some food plan operators sell frozen vegetables and desserts, offer meal planning services, and sell freezers, grills and other items.

Food Plan Operators (FPO's) are regulated by the Colorado Department of Agriculture (CDA) Food Plan Operator Program, which licenses and bonds FPO's. This regulatory program provides consumers with protection from unethical and fraudulent sales tactics.

When offering products for sale to a consumer, FPO's are required to provide certain, specific information such as documentation that discloses the weight of the products and the total price the consumer will pay for them. "It is important for the consumer to have the facts prior to purchasing a food plan" states Nick Brechun, CDA's FPO Program Administrator.

A FPO is also required to furnish the buyer with a completed "Notice of Cancellation" when the sales contract is signed. This written notice informs the consumer of their right to cancel the transaction within three business days of the date of sale without penalty or obligation.

Any salesperson, who operates as a sole proprietor of a food plan sales company, or as an employee of a food plan corporation, must obtain a FPO license from CDA. When a consumer considers the purchase of a food plan, they should ask the salesperson for proof of this license. As an added measure of protection for the consumer, all FPO's must submit a surety bond to CDA as part of their license application process. The surety bond is a tool to help CDA recover consumer's money if a FPO fails to provide the goods and/or services promised.

The CDA, Inspection and Consumer Services Division, FPO Program is responsible for investigating consumer complaints relating to the sale of food plans. For more information regarding this program, visit the [Food Plan](#) page on the CDA website.

Consumers with complaints or problems related to a recent food plan purchase should call Nick Brechun at (303) 867-9237.