

## MOBILE QUICK FREEZE UNIT

The Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets, with support from a USDA Rural Business Enterprise Grant and the Vermont Department of Tourism, is accepting inquiries about scheduling the use of a mobile individual quick freeze unit by qualified entities and persons. This unit freezes agricultural and value-added product rapidly. Freezing rates change with density of product, but it is designed for 600 pounds of berries per hour. The unit also freezes at a high quality so that, for example, berries retain their shape as they are frozen. Details on the equipment and scheduling it are below.

**EQUIPMENT FOR QUICK FREEZE UNIT:** The freezing unit is contained in an 8 x 18' cargo trailer that is towable over the road by a pick up truck. Inside is a washing & drying station and racks for holding product to be frozen.

The freezing compartment itself is a small room that can hold approximately 800-lbs of berries (or equivalent). The Agency expects operators of the unit to have their own storage space and storage on the trailer would be temporary only. The freezing equipment can handle most products, but the unit does not have equipment for pre-processing (eg blanching). The unit cannot be used for meat, poultry, or any meat or poultry by-products, or dairy as these products are regulated by the Agency.

The trailer unit has a hand washing sink for cold and hot water via inlets with garden hose connectors and a dump valve for the gray water (Note: product must be washed in *potable* water).

The trailer unit requires both a 120 volt, 30 Amp outlet and a 230 vol., 50 Amp outlet single phase feed. The Unit comes with 50' power cords.

Users must double check that these required electrical connections are installed and available at your facility. Users are advised to check with a licensed electrician about their installation.



**SERVICES PROVIDED WITH EQUIPMENT:** The Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets will deliver and retrieve the quick freeze unit from the location specified by qualified users as long as the site is acceptable (see requirements below) and according to a pre-arranged schedule. Agency staff will provide basic training in equipment operation and provide the user with an operation manual. Basic training and operation manual review by users are required. Agency staff will clean the unit following each delivery to ensure that it remains sanitary and is cleaned in compliance with organic standards.

**REQUIREMENTS FOR USING QUICK FREEZE UNIT:** Any person or entity requesting the quick freeze unit to freeze product *not* intended for personal use (e.g. selling the product) must show proof of commercial liability insurance coverage of at least \$1 million. Additionally, product with pre-processing requirements intended for sale must be pre-processed in a certified commercial kitchen before freezing.

Operators must provide a secure, level place for the quick freeze unit to be parked— operators will be responsible for any avoidable damage that occurs to the unit as a result of being located at their property.

Operators must also provide their own packaging for food processed and a final storage location for the frozen food.

The quick freeze unit cannot travel outside of Vermont.

**RESERVING THE QUICK FREEZE UNIT:** The quick freeze unit is available for use at farms, other businesses, and non-profit organizations anywhere in Vermont. The equipment is simple to use after a basic training that is provided by the Agency of Agriculture. If you are interested in using the unit please contact Helen Labun Jordan ([Helen.jordan@state.vt.us](mailto:Helen.jordan@state.vt.us) or 802-828-3828) with the following information:

- Name of Business / Organization
  - Please indicate if multiple users are requesting as a group
- Contact Name & Contact Information
- Location
  - If unit will be used somewhere other than your location, please indicate where
- Product to Be Frozen
- Final Use for Product (eg. Is this product for sale? For community use? For home use? Is this a demonstration project?)
- Weeks Requested
  - We realize that the harvest cannot be exactly predicted. The unit cannot be reserved for more than 2 weeks in a row without permission from the Agency of Agriculture (for example, if no one else has reserved the unit).

The Agency will attempt to accommodate all requests for the quick freeze unit. Requests from individual farm users will be filled on a first-come, first-served basis. Preference will be given to requests that benefit multiple producers.

All persons and entities reserving the unit must:

- Sign a lease contract (sample available on request)
- Show proof of \$1 million insurance (except for personal use)
- Reimburse the Agency \$75 for costs:
  - Transportation and delivery costs
  - Organic cleaning supplies and staff time for cleaning
  - Staff time for training

If you have questions please contact Helen Labun Jordan ([Helen.jordan@state.vt.us](mailto:Helen.jordan@state.vt.us), 828-3828)

