



Cornell University Cooperative Extension Washington County

415 Lower Main Street
Hudson Falls, NY 12839-2629
t. 518.746.2560
800.548.0881
f. 518.746.2419
e. washington@cornell.edu
www.cce.cornell.edu/washington

Things You Should Know About Weights & Measures...

By: Sandy Buxton
Cornell Cooperative Extension

How does a customer know that what they just paid for is actually what they received? The system that provides this public trust is a carefully regulated process. Controlled by NYS Agriculture and Markets, there are local offices in each county to oversee the equipment and the vendors who are weighing and selling products in their stores, at the market or through a pump.

Basic Rules

There are some very basic rules that are important for everyone to know.

- If you are selling something by weight, you are responsible to make sure that at least the listed amount of weight is contained by the package.
 - **All scales must be certified by Weights and Measures PRIOR to using them for weighing out products.** The vendor is responsible for purchasing an approved device AND having it certified by a local Weights and Measures official. Many scales available at common retail outlets are not appropriate for use, visit www.agmkt.state.ny.us/WM/725ver0905.pdf for a list of approved commercial devices. **Do Not Wait to Call, it should be done immediately.** At this time there is no fee in Washington County to have equipment certified but that could change and other counties do charge. There is also a fine for not using approved scales and for every mis-weighed unit available for sale.
 - The local official, under the auspices of NYS Ag and Markets, may come out to your business, farmers' market stand, roadside stand or other selling venue and check to make sure that your products and labels agree on what is being sold. They also:
 - Enforce the laws and regulations
 - Inspect and test weighing and measuring devices used commercially
 - Inspect and test packaged commodities
 - Regulate commercial weighing and measuring practices used by vendors
 - Investigate consumer and business complaints
 - Agriculturally related vendors who need to be aware of the rules and make sure they are abiding by them include:
 - Maple producers – who sell by weight and volume
 - Meat producers – who must make sure that the scales weighing and labeling their products have been inspected and certified.
 - Cheese and dairy producers – who are selling by weight and volume
 - Fruit – both selling by weight as well as the size of berry boxes may be checked.
 - Vegetables – for producers using scales to sell products by weight
- Other possible concerns – bakers if products are labeled by weight, roadside stands who weigh out many products.

Contact information for local officials is:

Washington County Department of Weights & Measures

William Adamson, Director Phone: (518) 746-2254
Email: badamson1@co.washington.ny.us Fax: (518) 746-2293

Warren County Department of Weights & Measures,

Herb Levin, Director Phone: (518) 761-6496
Email: levinh@co.warren.ny.us Fax: (518) 761-6496

Saratoga County Department of Weights and Measures

Fred Test, Director Phone: (518) 885-2237
Email: sarwandm@govt.co.saratoga.ny.us Fax: (518) 884-4707

Rensselaer County Department of Weights and Measures

Joseph P. Rappold, Director Phone: (518) 732-2809
Email: lboz46@aol.com Fax: (518) 283-1741

Or at the state level, from their website:

NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets
10B Airline Drive
(518) 457-3146

Bureau of Weights and Measures
Albany, New York 12235-0001
agmweigh@agmkt.state.ny.us

Weights and measures officials throughout the State routinely inspect a wide range of commercial devices and packaged commodities to assure accurate measure in the marketplace. These inspections serve to eliminate from the marketplace those devices and packages that do not provide an accurate measure of the commodities or services that are exchanged. The inspections involve more than just accuracy tests, as the official must verify that the device or package meets other operational and/or marking and labeling requirements.

Officials inspect only commercial devices, that is, those used in the weighing or measuring of commodities for sale and those used to measure services rendered on the basis of weight or measure. Gas pumps, grocery store and deli scales, and truck mounted oil meters are some of the more common devices inspected. Devices such as taximeters, farm milk tanks, wire and cordage meters, and berry baskets also fall under the jurisdiction of weights and measures.

Look for the Weights and Measures Seal on Devices



The seal indicates that that device has been inspected and was performing correctly and within the applicable tolerances.

Some Local Scale Suppliers:

Gerhart Scale
PO Box 14501
Albany, NY 12212
www.gerhart.com
(518)459-0033

ABC Restaurant Equip. &
Refrigeration Co.
28 Elm Street
Glens Falls, NY 12801
(518)793-3456

Global Industrial
1-888-979-7759
www.globalindustrial.com

**MAKE SURE THE SCALE IS
NYS APPROVED!!**