



A FREE GUIDE FROM ARDENT SELLER

# Cottage Food Laws

the 50-state + DC quick reference

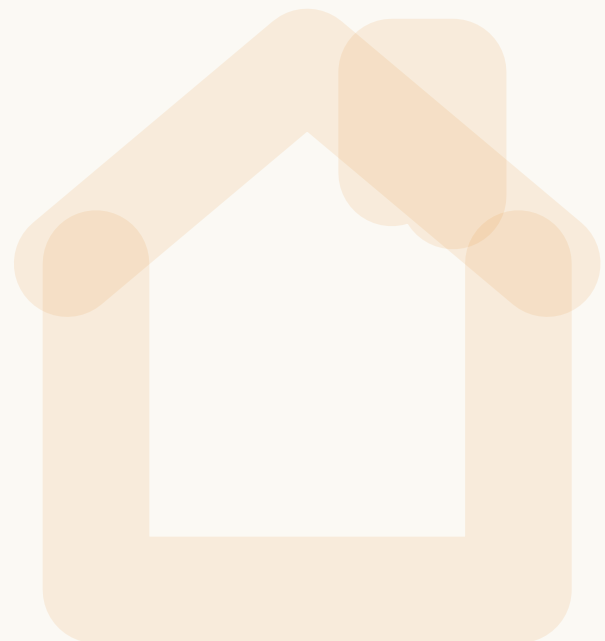
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Revenue caps, sales venues, registration rules,  
and the most common restrictions for all 50 states  
and DC — in one place, in plain English.

REVENUE CAPS

SALES VENUES

RULES



## WELCOME

# Find your state. Verify before you launch.

Cottage food laws are how the United States lets you bake, can, and candy-make from your home kitchen and sell to the public — without a commercial license. They're also why this is one of the most confusing areas of small-business law: every state has its own rules, and those rules change often.

This guide covers all 50 states plus DC at a glance. For each state, you'll find the revenue cap, the venues where you can sell, the registration and inspection requirements, and the most common thing people get wrong. Find your state, read the card, and treat it as a starting point — not as legal advice.

### READ THIS FIRST

State cottage food laws change frequently. The information here is current as of early 2026, but caps rise, venues open, and rules get amended every legislative session. Before launching, always verify against your state's official source — your state Department of Agriculture or Department of Health. Use this guide to know what to ask, not as the final word.

### HOW TO READ A STATE CARD

Each card has the same four pieces of information. Scan in this order:

- TIER + CAP**

The colored eyebrow at the top tells you whether your state has a revenue cap and roughly how generous it is. **Green** means no cap (food freedom). **Teal** means a high cap that most growing bakers won't hit. **Amber** means a meaningful cap to track from day one.
- WHERE YOU CAN SELL**

Sales venues vary widely. Some states allow only direct, in-person sales. Others permit online, retail, mail, and even interstate commerce. This field tells you which channels are open.
- WHAT'S REQUIRED**

Registration, training, kitchen inspection, fees. The shorter this section, the easier it is to start. The longer it is, the more upfront work before your first sale.
- WATCH FOR**

The mistake people most often make in this state — an unusual rule, a hidden cap, a recent change, or a common misreading. Read this section twice.

## SECTION 01

# The 50 states + DC

Listed alphabetically. Each card is a quick reference, not a complete summary — use it to know what questions to ask your state agency.

**FOOD FREEDOM · No cap**

## Alabama

**WHERE YOU CAN SELL**

Direct, online, retail, and mail order all permitted.

**WHAT'S REQUIRED**

No state permit required. Standard cottage food labeling rules apply. Food handler training is recommended but not required.

**WATCH FOR**

Local cities or counties may add their own business license requirements. Confirm with your municipality before launching.

**LOW REVENUE · \$25,000**

## Alaska

**WHERE YOU CAN SELL**

Direct in-state sales and farmers markets. Online sales generally not permitted.

**WHAT'S REQUIRED**

Label must state 'not subject to state inspection.' Recipe testing required for any low-acid foods.

**WATCH FOR**

Limited venues compared with most states. Acidified products face the strictest scrutiny.

**FOOD FREEDOM · No cap**

## Arizona

**WHERE YOU CAN SELL**

Direct, online, retail, and farmers markets all permitted.

**WHAT'S REQUIRED**

No permit required. Standard labeling. Acidified foods need pH verification.

**WATCH FOR**

If you make pickles, salsas, or anything acidified, the pH-test requirement is real — skipping it puts you out of compliance.

**MEDIUM REVENUE · \$25,000**

## Arkansas

**WHERE YOU CAN SELL**

Direct, farmers markets, and online sales permitted.

**WHAT'S REQUIRED**

Registration and food handler training required. Standard label disclaimers.

**WATCH FOR**

The \$25K cap counts gross revenue, not profit. Mind it as you grow.

**HIGH REVENUE · \$75K (A) / \$150K (B)****California****WHERE YOU CAN SELL**

Class A: direct in-person only. Class B: direct, online, and retail.

**WHAT'S REQUIRED**

Class A: registration plus food handler training. Class B adds a kitchen inspection and a permit. Caps are inflation-indexed in 2026.

**WATCH FOR**

The Class A vs. Class B choice matters: Class B opens online sales but requires inspection. Pick one and structure operations around it.

**MEDIUM REVENUE · \$20,000****Colorado****WHERE YOU CAN SELL**

Direct, farmers markets, and online sales permitted.

**WHAT'S REQUIRED**

Registration plus food handler training required. Specific label statements required.

**WATCH FOR**

\$20K is one of the tighter caps. Track gross revenue from day one.

**MEDIUM REVENUE · \$50,000****Connecticut****WHERE YOU CAN SELL**

Direct, farmers markets, and online sales permitted.

**WHAT'S REQUIRED**

Registration plus food handler training required.

**WATCH FOR**

Retail outlet sales are not permitted unless produced under a licensed commercial kitchen — cottage food cannot supply local stores.

**LOW REVENUE · \$3,000****Delaware****WHERE YOU CAN SELL**

Direct sales and farmers markets only.

**WHAT'S REQUIRED**

Registration, home kitchen inspection, and label disclaimers required.

**WATCH FOR**

The \$3,000 cap is the lowest in the country. This is a hobby tier — if you intend to scale, Delaware likely won't support it under cottage law.

**MEDIUM REVENUE · \$50,000****District of Columbia****WHERE YOU CAN SELL**

Direct, farmers markets, retail, and online sales permitted.

**WHAT'S REQUIRED**

Registration plus food handler training required. Labels must include an ID number in place of your home address.

**WATCH FOR**

DC's ID-number system is uncommon and useful — it preserves your address privacy on every label.

**HIGH REVENUE · \$250,000****Florida****WHERE YOU CAN SELL**

Direct, online, in-state mail, and farmers markets — all permitted. Wholesale to retailers, restaurants, and grocery stores is NOT permitted.

**WHAT'S REQUIRED**

No state license, permit, or kitchen inspection required (under HB 663, the "Home Sweet Home Act," 2021). State law preempts local cottage food regulation.

**WATCH FOR**

Florida has the highest cap in the country AND one of the lowest startup burdens. The trade-off: products may only be sold direct to consumers — not wholesaled through retail outlets.

**FOOD FREEDOM · No cap****Georgia****WHERE YOU CAN SELL**

Direct, farmers markets, online, retail stores, and restaurants — all permitted.

**WHAT'S REQUIRED**

No license required. Labels can show an ID number in place of your home address. Effective July 2025/2026 under HB 398.

**WATCH FOR**

Local jurisdictions retain limited opt-out authority for retail sales. Confirm before approaching local stores or restaurants.

**MEDIUM REVENUE · \$35,000****Hawaii****WHERE YOU CAN SELL**

Direct sales and farmers markets only.

**WHAT'S REQUIRED**

Home kitchen inspection plus registration required. Labels must include allergen info.

**WATCH FOR**

Online sales are not permitted under Hawaii cottage food law. Direct only.

**FOOD FREEDOM · No cap****Idaho****WHERE YOU CAN SELL**

Direct, farmers markets, and online sales permitted.

**WHAT'S REQUIRED**

No registration required. Standard labeling. Food safety training required for any TCS items.

**WATCH FOR**

Idaho's simplicity is genuine — just label correctly and start selling.

**HIGH REVENUE · \$50,000****Illinois****WHERE YOU CAN SELL**

Direct, farmers markets, online, and retail sales permitted.

**WHAT'S REQUIRED**

Registration plus food handler training required. State law preempts local ordinances.

**WATCH FOR**

Retail sales are limited to shelf-stable products only. Anything refrigerated stays direct.

**LOW REVENUE · \$2,500****Indiana****WHERE YOU CAN SELL**

Direct sales (farmers markets and home only).

**WHAT'S REQUIRED**

Registration, inspection, and label disclaimers required.

**WATCH FOR**

\$2,500 is functionally a hobby cap. No online or mail sales permitted.

**FOOD FREEDOM · No cap (shelf-stable)****Iowa****WHERE YOU CAN SELL**

Direct, farmers markets, and online sales permitted.

**WHAT'S REQUIRED**

No registration for shelf-stable tier. Home Food Processing tier requires registration, inspection, and has a \$50K cap.

**WATCH FOR**

Iowa has a dual-tier system: shelf-stable is permissive, refrigerated requires registration and caps your revenue.

**MEDIUM REVENUE · \$25,000****Kansas****WHERE YOU CAN SELL**

Direct sales and farmers markets only.

**WHAT'S REQUIRED**

Registration plus food handler training required.

**WATCH FOR**

Mail delivery is not permitted. Online ordering with in-person pickup is the workaround.

**MEDIUM REVENUE · \$20,000****Kentucky****WHERE YOU CAN SELL**

Direct, farmers markets, and online sales permitted.

**WHAT'S REQUIRED**

Registration plus a permit fee required.

**WATCH FOR**

The permit fee is real — budget for it before launching.

**MEDIUM REVENUE · \$30,000****Louisiana****WHERE YOU CAN SELL**

Direct sales and farmers markets.

**WHAT'S REQUIRED**

Registration plus home kitchen inspection required.

**WATCH FOR**

Cap was raised to \$30K in recent years — older guides may still show \$25K.

**FOOD FREEDOM · No cap (Home Food Processor)****Maine****WHERE YOU CAN SELL**

Direct, farmers markets, and online sales permitted.

**WHAT'S REQUIRED**

Home Food Processor license required, plus a kitchen inspection.

**WATCH FOR**

Maine trades higher upfront requirements (state license + inspection) for unlimited revenue potential. Best for serious home bakers.

**MEDIUM REVENUE · \$50,000****Maryland****WHERE YOU CAN SELL**

Direct, mail delivery, farmers markets, special events, and retail outlets all permitted.

**WHAT'S REQUIRED**

No license, inspection, or training required to sell direct or by mail. Selling at retail outlets adds a food safety course and label approval. Label ID# protects your home address.

**WATCH FOR**

Cap was doubled from \$25K to \$50K in 2022. Retail-channel sellers face extra requirements; direct-and-mail sellers do not.

**MEDIUM REVENUE · Local (often unlimited)****Massachusetts****WHERE YOU CAN SELL**

Direct sales and farmers markets.

**WHAT'S REQUIRED**

Registration with your local board of health, plus a kitchen inspection. Requirements vary substantially by city.

**WATCH FOR**

MA delegates regulation to local health boards. There's no statewide cap, but your town may impose one. Call your local board before doing anything.

**HIGH REVENUE · \$50,000****Michigan****WHERE YOU CAN SELL**

Direct, farmers markets, online, mail order, and third-party delivery all permitted.

**WHAT'S REQUIRED**

No state registration required. Optional MSU Product Center registration preserves address privacy.

**WATCH FOR**

Cap rises to \$75K for items priced \$250+ per unit (custom cakes). Inflation adjustment begins October 2026.

**HIGH REVENUE · \$78,000****Minnesota****WHERE YOU CAN SELL**

Direct, farmers markets, and online sales permitted.

**WHAT'S REQUIRED**

Tier 1 (under \$7,665): no registration. Tier 2 (up to \$78,000): registration plus training.

**WATCH FOR**

The two-tier structure is unusual. Most growing bakers cross into Tier 2 within their first year and need the formal registration.

**LOW REVENUE · \$35,000****Mississippi****WHERE YOU CAN SELL**

Direct sales and farmers markets only.

**WHAT'S REQUIRED**

Currently no registration, fees, or training required. (Verify before relying on this.)

**WATCH FOR**

Online ordering with in-person pickup is allowed; mail/courier shipping is not. Direct-to-consumer only — no wholesale.

**FOOD FREEDOM · No cap****Missouri****WHERE YOU CAN SELL**

Direct, farmers markets, online, and retail sales permitted.

**WHAT'S REQUIRED**

No registration required for shelf-stable products. TCS items require training. Limited wholesale allowed.

**WATCH FOR**

Missouri lifted its cap and opened online sales recently. One of the more permissive states for scaling cottage food.

**FOOD FREEDOM · No cap****Montana****WHERE YOU CAN SELL**

Direct, farmers markets, and online sales permitted.

**WHAT'S REQUIRED**

No registration required. Standard labeling.

**WATCH FOR**

Montana's Local Food Choice Act allows almost any homemade food except certain meats. Among the most permissive in the country.

**MEDIUM REVENUE · \$25,000****Nebraska****WHERE YOU CAN SELL**

Direct, farmers markets, and online sales permitted.

**WHAT'S REQUIRED**

Registration plus food handler training required.

**WATCH FOR**

Standard cottage food state — nothing unusual. Watch the cap as you grow.

**LOW REVENUE · \$35,000 (rises to \$100K in 2027)**

## Nevada

### WHERE YOU CAN SELL

Direct in-person sales only currently. Online and delivery permitted starting July 2027.

### WHAT'S REQUIRED

Must register in each county health district where you sell. Clark County charges \$160+; most others are free.

### WATCH FOR

Major reform pending: AB 352 raises the cap to \$100K and adds online sales effective July 1, 2027. Plan around the transition.

**MEDIUM REVENUE · \$25,000**

## New Hampshire

### WHERE YOU CAN SELL

Direct, farmers markets, and online sales permitted.

### WHAT'S REQUIRED

Registration plus a home kitchen inspection required.

### WATCH FOR

Inspection is a real step — budget the time and ensure your kitchen meets the state's checklist before applying.

**MEDIUM REVENUE · \$50,000**

## New Jersey

### WHERE YOU CAN SELL

Direct, farmers markets, online, and retail sales permitted.

### WHAT'S REQUIRED

Registration plus food handler training required. Pre-approved foods list applies.

### WATCH FOR

NJ was the last state to legalize cottage food (2021). The pre-approved foods list is real — if your product isn't on it, you can't sell it.

**FOOD FREEDOM · No cap**

## New Mexico

### WHERE YOU CAN SELL

Direct, farmers markets, and online sales permitted (in-state shipping allowed).

### WHAT'S REQUIRED

ANAB-accredited food handler certification (about \$7) required. No state permit.

### WATCH FOR

State law preempts local bans (overriding Albuquerque's previous prohibition). Direct-to-consumer only — no wholesale.

**FOOD FREEDOM · No cap (Home Processor)**

## New York

### WHERE YOU CAN SELL

Direct sales and farmers markets only. No online or shipping.

### WHAT'S REQUIRED

Registration with NY Dept of Agriculture & Markets required (mail-in). Periodic inspections.

### WATCH FOR

NY removed the revenue cap, but the approved-products list is restrictive. Cakes and pies are NOT on it — only the listed baked goods, jams, and candies.

**FOOD FREEDOM · No cap (Home Processor)**

## North Carolina

### WHERE YOU CAN SELL

Direct to consumers only (farmers markets, home, events).

### WHAT'S REQUIRED

NCDA&CS Home Processor registration required, including a home kitchen inspection.

### WATCH FOR

No formal cottage food law — NC operates a voluntary Home Processor program with no cap but inspection required upfront.

**FOOD FREEDOM · No cap**

## North Dakota

**WHERE YOU CAN SELL**

Direct, farmers markets, online, mail, interstate commerce, and consignment all permitted.

**WHAT'S REQUIRED**

No permit required. TCS foods allowed. Standard label disclaimers.

**WATCH FOR**

ND is the only state currently permitting interstate cottage food shipments. If you want to ship across state lines, this is the path.

**LOW REVENUE · \$25,000**

## Ohio

**WHERE YOU CAN SELL**

Direct sales and farmers markets only.

**WHAT'S REQUIRED**

Registration plus a home kitchen inspection required. Shelf-stable products only.

**WATCH FOR**

No online or mail sales. Refrigerated products not permitted under cottage food law.

**FOOD FREEDOM · No cap**

## Oklahoma

**WHERE YOU CAN SELL**

Direct, farmers markets, online, and retail permitted.

**WHAT'S REQUIRED**

No permit for shelf-stable. TCS items allowed with training. \$15/year registration.

**WATCH FOR**

Generous and inexpensive — one of the easier states for growing operations.

**MEDIUM REVENUE · \$52,000**

## Oregon

**WHERE YOU CAN SELL**

Direct, farmers markets, and online sales permitted.

**WHAT'S REQUIRED**

No registration required. Food safety training required. Acidified foods need pH testing.

**WATCH FOR**

Cap is inflation-adjusted in 2026, so it will continue to rise. Acidified foods (pickles, salsas) trigger extra requirements.

**LOW REVENUE · \$25,000**

## Pennsylvania

**WHERE YOU CAN SELL**

Direct sales and farmers markets only.

**WHAT'S REQUIRED**

Registration and labeling required. Shelf-stable products only.

**WATCH FOR**

No online or mail sales. PA is more restrictive than most neighbors.

**LOW REVENUE · \$5,000**

## Rhode Island

**WHERE YOU CAN SELL**

Direct sales and farmers markets only.

**WHAT'S REQUIRED**

Registration plus a home kitchen inspection required.

**WATCH FOR**

\$5K cap is functionally a hobby tier. Limited product list.

**MEDIUM REVENUE · \$25,000****South Carolina****WHERE YOU CAN SELL**

Direct, farmers markets, and online sales permitted.

**WHAT'S REQUIRED**

Registration plus food handler training required.

**WATCH FOR**

SC recently expanded the allowed shelf-stable product list and legalized selling at grocery stores.

**FOOD FREEDOM · No cap****South Dakota****WHERE YOU CAN SELL**

Direct, farmers markets, and online sales permitted.

**WHAT'S REQUIRED**

No permit required. Standard label disclaimers. Shelf-stable and perishable foods allowed.

**WATCH FOR**

Among the more permissive food-freedom states. Few hidden requirements.

**FOOD FREEDOM · No cap****Tennessee****WHERE YOU CAN SELL**

Direct, farmers markets, online, and retail permitted.

**WHAT'S REQUIRED**

No registration, license, or inspection required. Poultry and pasteurized dairy now allowed.

**WATCH FOR**

TN's HB 130 amendment (2024) opened up TCS foods, making it one of the most permissive states for ambitious bakers.

**HIGH REVENUE · \$150,000****Texas****WHERE YOU CAN SELL**

Direct, farmers markets, online, mail, and wholesale (non-TCS) all permitted.

**WHAT'S REQUIRED**

No permit. Food handler training required. TCS items require DSHS registration. Labels must include production date.

**WATCH FOR**

\$150K cap is inflation-indexed. The wholesale path for non-TCS items is unique — few states allow cottage products in retail without a commercial kitchen.

**FOOD FREEDOM · No cap****Utah****WHERE YOU CAN SELL**

Direct, farmers markets, retail, online, and mail all permitted.

**WHAT'S REQUIRED**

Registration plus food handler training required. Kitchen inspection for MEHKO and Homemade Food Act paths.

**WATCH FOR**

Utah's 'microenterprise home kitchen' law is the only path in any state to sell homemade meals containing meat.

**MEDIUM REVENUE · \$30,000****Vermont****WHERE YOU CAN SELL**

Direct, farmers markets, and online sales permitted.

**WHAT'S REQUIRED**

Annual virtual training plus registration with Health Dept by Jan 15. Updated labeling rules.

**WATCH FOR**

Vermont's Act 42 (2025) tripled the cap from \$10K and changed the requirements. Verify against the most current rules.

**MEDIUM REVENUE · \$25,000****Virginia****WHERE YOU CAN SELL**

Direct, farmers markets, and online sales permitted.

**WHAT'S REQUIRED**

Registration and a kitchen inspection required. Acidified/pickled foods capped at \$3,000.

**WATCH FOR**

Two caps to watch: \$25K general and \$3K specifically for acidified products. Most growing bakers stay under both, but track them separately.

**FOOD FREEDOM · No cap (shelf-stable)****Washington****WHERE YOU CAN SELL**

Direct, farmers markets, and online sales permitted.

**WHAT'S REQUIRED**

No permit for shelf-stable goods. Perishables require the Food Processors Exemption.

**WATCH FOR**

Permissive for shelf-stable only. Anything refrigerated requires the formal exemption path.

**MEDIUM REVENUE · \$25,000****West Virginia****WHERE YOU CAN SELL**

Direct, farmers markets, and online sales permitted.

**WHAT'S REQUIRED**

Registration plus an inspection required.

**WATCH FOR**

Standard cottage food state. Inspection is the main upfront step.

**LOW REVENUE · \$5,000****Wisconsin****WHERE YOU CAN SELL**

Direct sales and farmers markets only.

**WHAT'S REQUIRED**

Registration plus a kitchen inspection required.

**WATCH FOR**

\$5K cap and no online or mail sales. Among the most restrictive caps in the country.

**FOOD FREEDOM · No cap****Wyoming****WHERE YOU CAN SELL**

Direct, farmers markets, and online sales permitted.

**WHAT'S REQUIRED**

No registration required. Standard label disclaimers. Shelf-stable and TCS allowed.

**WATCH FOR**

Wyoming's Food Freedom Act is one of the originals — permissive and stable. No reported foodborne illness outbreaks under the law.

## SECTION 02

# Universal labeling rules

Every state requires a compliant label. The exact wording differs, but the core elements are the same almost everywhere. Get these right and you're compliant in most states by default.

- Cottage food disclaimer.**  
A statement identifying the product as made in a home kitchen exempt from state inspection. Exact wording is set by your state — copy it from the official source, do not paraphrase. Some states require it on every label; a few require it only when selling online.
- Ingredient list, in descending order by weight.**  
Sub-ingredients in compound ingredients (e.g., chocolate chips that contain sugar, cocoa butter, soy lecithin) must be listed inside parentheses after the parent ingredient name.
- Top 9 allergen disclosure.**  
FDA mandates clear declaration of milk, eggs, fish, crustacean shellfish, tree nuts, peanuts, wheat, soybeans, and sesame — either in the ingredient list or in a separate ‘Contains:’ statement after it. Sesame was added to the list in 2023; older labels often miss it.
- Net weight or volume.**  
Required in both US customary and metric units. ‘Net Wt. 12 oz (340g)’ is the standard format. Approximate weight is fine for small batches but should be defensible if questioned.
- Producer name and address.**  
Some states require a physical street address; others permit a P.O. box or a state-issued ID number. The ID-number alternative (offered by DC, Georgia, Maryland, Michigan via MSU, and a handful of others) preserves your home-address privacy — use it if available.
- Production date or batch identifier.**  
Now required in Texas for certain items, and best practice everywhere for traceability. A simple lot-code system pays for itself the first time a customer asks ‘when was this made?’

**PRO INSIGHT**

Build your label template once, with placeholders for product name, ingredient list, net weight, and lot code — then use it for every product. Most cottage food violations are template errors that propagate across hundreds of labels at once. A consistent template is the cheapest compliance investment you can make.

## SECTION 03

## Six pitfalls that catch first-year sellers

Across all 51 jurisdictions, these are the misreadings that show up again and again in enforcement actions and forum posts. Avoid these and you avoid the bulk of the trouble.

- 'The cap doesn't apply to me because I sell at cost.'**  
It does. Caps are based on gross revenue, not profit. If your gross sales exceed your state's cap, you need to transition to a commercial kitchen license whether or not you made money.
- 'Online ordering is the same as direct sales.'**  
It often isn't. Many states permit online ordering with in-person pickup but prohibit shipping. Mississippi, Hawaii, Indiana, Kansas, Ohio, Pennsylvania, and Wisconsin all distinguish these — shipping is the prohibited step.
- 'Cottage food law overrides my HOA.'**  
It doesn't. Your HOA, lease, or local zoning can prohibit home-based businesses entirely, even when state law permits cottage food. Check before you list.
- 'The state cap is the only cap I need to worry about.'**  
Some states have product-specific sub-caps (e.g., Virginia caps acidified foods at \$3,000 even if you're under the \$25,000 general cap). Read the full rule, not just the headline.
- 'I can sell across state lines because cottage food is legal in both states.'**  
Currently only North Dakota residents may ship cottage food interstate. Selling across state lines from any other state requires a different regulatory framework entirely (typically FDA-registered facility).
- 'Sales tax doesn't apply to cottage food.'**  
Almost always wrong. Most states require you to collect and remit sales tax on home-baked goods sold direct to consumers. Register with your state Department of Revenue before your first sale.

## SECTION 04

# Sources & how to verify

Cottage food law is one of the fastest-changing areas of small-business regulation. Headline figures in this guide were cross-checked against the primary sources cited below, but no third-party guide can substitute for the official statute and rule in your state. Verify before launching.

## Primary sources

The state-level data in this guide draws from three foundational, publicly available sources. Each is more comprehensive than this summary and worth consulting directly when you need the legal specifics for your state.

- National Agricultural Law Center — Cottage Food Law Compilation.**  
An ongoing, citation-level compilation of every state's cottage food statute and regulation, maintained by the NALC at the University of Arkansas. Last updated April 2025. The most authoritative single source for the actual statutory text in each state.  
[nationalaglawcenter.org/state-compilations/cottagefood](https://nationalaglawcenter.org/state-compilations/cottagefood)
- Institute for Justice — Baking Bad nationwide survey.**  
A 17-criterion comparative grading of every state's cottage food and food freedom law, plus a continuously updated reform timeline. IJ is a public-interest law firm that has helped pass cottage food reforms in 20+ states, so the data is both up-to-date and rigorous.  
[ij.org/issues/economic-liberty/homemade-food](https://ij.org/issues/economic-liberty/homemade-food)
- State Departments of Agriculture and Health.**  
The official, primary source for your state. The exact statutory rule lives here, along with the application forms, fee schedules, and labeling templates you'll actually use. Every state has a 'cottage food coordinator' or equivalent contact — a free 30-minute call is more authoritative than any summary.

## Finding your state's official rule

Per-state URLs change frequently as agencies redesign their websites, so this guide doesn't list them — broken links would do you more harm than good. Instead, here is the search pattern that reliably lands on the official source:

**Search: '[your state] cottage food law'.**

Filter results to .gov domains. Your state's Department of Agriculture or Department of Health is almost always the first or second result.

 **Look for a page titled 'Cottage Food Operations,' 'Home Processor,' or 'Homemade Food.'**

Different states use different terms ('Microenterprise Home Kitchen' in California, 'Home Food Processor' in Maine and North Carolina, 'Food Freedom' in Wyoming). This card's first sentence in the WHAT'S REQUIRED block names the program type for your state — use that term in your search.

 **Verify the cap, the venues, and the labeling rule personally.**

These are the three things that change most often and matter most. Print the official page once you find it — agency websites occasionally lose pages during redesigns.

 **Call the cottage food coordinator if anything is unclear.**

Every state has one. The contact info is on the same official page. They are paid to answer your questions, and a 15-minute call can save weeks of misreading the rule.

## What this guide doesn't cover

Four areas where readers may want a different resource:

- US territories.**

Puerto Rico, Guam, US Virgin Islands, American Samoa, and the Northern Mariana Islands have their own regulatory frameworks that vary significantly from state cottage food law and were not included in the source data. Contact your territorial Department of Health directly for guidance.
- Local rules and HOA restrictions.**

State law sets the floor — cities, counties, and HOAs can add their own restrictions on home-based businesses, zoning, signage, and parking. State legality does not override local rules. Confirm with your municipality and any applicable HOA before launching.
- Federal interstate sales.**

Cottage food laws are state laws. Selling across state lines (with the limited exception of North Dakota) requires compliance with federal FDA regulations, which are not summarized here.
- Sales tax and business licensing.**

Both apply almost universally to cottage food sales but are governed by different agencies (state Department of Revenue and local clerk's offices) and aren't addressed in cottage food statutes themselves. Plan to register with both before your first sale.

### DATA CURRENCY

Information in this guide reflects state cottage food laws as of early 2026. Several states have legislation pending that will change their rules in 2026–2027 (notably Nevada, where AB 352 raises the cap and adds online sales effective July 1, 2027). Re-verify before any major business decision.

**YOU'RE READY TO START.**

## Build the business while you bake.

Knowing your state's rules is the first step. The harder part is running the business they let you start — tracking ingredients, costing recipes, watching margins as your costs rise, and making sure you're still under your cap as your sales grow.

Ardent Seller was built for makers, bakers, and creators who want to take their craft seriously. Free tier available, no credit card.



## Ready to stop juggling spreadsheets?

Ardent Seller is the all-in-one inventory, manufacturing, and sales platform built for makers, bakers, and creators who are ready to grow their business without the spreadsheet chaos. Track inventory, cost recipes, and watch your margins — all in one place. Every feature included on every plan, including the free tier.

[www.ardentseller.app](http://www.ardentseller.app)

Start free — no credit card required.

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