

# Michigan Cottage Food Law

## The Bare Basics

2010 Cottage Food Law passed to enable small businesses to test the waters before becoming a licensed food produce and to encourage produce growers to make added-value products to sell at Market or at on-farm stands.

### What are Cottage Foods?

Cottage Foods are specific types of foods that you make in the unlicensed kitchen of your single family domestic residence within the State of Michigan. Not all food products can be sold as Cottage Foods. They must be non-potentially hazardous foods that do not require time and/or temperature controls for safety. You must also store your Cottage Food products at your home following safe, good handling guidelines outlined in the [Michigan Food Law](#) to prevent adulteration caused by insects, household chemicals, water damage, insanitary conditions, etc.

### Is there a limit to how much I can sell as a Cottage Food producer?

Yes. You are limited in the amount of money you can make selling Cottage Foods.

The Cottage Food Law includes a limit to the amount of money you can make selling cottage foods. The limit is currently gross sales to \$25,000 per year. You need to maintain sales records and provide them to a Michigan Department of Agriculture & Rural Development (MDARD) food inspector, upon request (MDARD has regulatory responsibility for the Cottage Food Law).

### Cottage Foods Product List: What Qualifies and What Doesn't

The rules under Michigan's Food Law were developed to protect the health and safety of Michigan citizens and to reduce the risk of foodborne illness. Foods allowed for sale under the Cottage Food Law are allowed based on their relatively low risk for foodborne illness. Cottage food producers can help reduce the risk of foodborne illness even further by following safe food handling and storage practices and maintaining good hygiene in their home kitchens. Proper labeling is also important, especially for people who may be allergic to certain ingredients.

The following lists show examples of foods that meet the requirements for Cottage Foods and those that do not.

### What Food Products Meet the Requirements for Cottage Foods?

Select non-potentially hazardous foods (time and/or temperature controls not required to assure food safety - meaning foods can safely be kept at room temperature and do not require refrigeration) meet the requirements for cottage foods and can be prepared in a home kitchen and

### Amendments for COVID-19

- Bakery is in an enclosed container or package
- Produce is pre-bagged
- No sampling
- No additional liquid creams or sauces

sold directly to consumers without a license. Many of these items are identified by MDARD. Examples include:

- Breads
- Baked goods
- Cookies
- Cakes, including celebration cakes (birthday, anniversary, wedding)
- Quick breads and muffins (e.g., pumpkin or zucchini bread, blueberry muffins)
- Cooked fruit pies, including pie crusts made with butter, lard, or shortening
- Fruit jams and jellies (as defined in 21 CFR part 150) in glass jars that can be stored at room temperature (except vegetable and other non-fruit based jams/jellies)
- Confections and candies (made without alcohol)
- Granola
- Dry herbs and dry herb mixtures
- Dry baking mixes
- Dry dip mixes
- Dry soup mixes
- Dehydrated vegetables or fruits
- Popcorn
- Cotton Candy
- Non-potentially hazardous dry bulk mixes sold wholesale can be repackaged into a Cottage Food product. Similar items already packaged and labeled for retail sale cannot be repackaged and/or relabeled.
- Chocolate covered pretzels, marshmallows, graham crackers, Rice Krispies treats, strawberries, pineapple, bananas, or other non-TCS foods
- Coated or uncoated nuts
- Dried pasta made with or without eggs
- Roasted coffee beans or ground roasted coffee
- Vinegar and flavored vinegars

## What Food Products Are NOT ALLOWED to Be Produced in My Home?

Potentially hazardous foods that require time and/or temperature control for safety are NOT ALLOWED to be produced in a home kitchen and must be produced in a licensed kitchen. Examples include:

- Meat and meat products like fresh and dried meats (jerky)
- Fish and fish products like smoked fish
- Raw seed sprouts
- Vegetable jams/jellies (e.g., hot pepper jelly)
- Canned fruits or vegetables like salsa or canned peaches

### COMMON LIST OF FOODS THAT ARE NOT ALLOWED

Pepper Jelly  
Pickles  
Products with meat  
Milk & Dairy  
Pet treats

- Canned fruit or vegetable butters like pumpkin or apple butter
- Canned pickled products like corn relish, pickles, or sauerkraut
- Pies or cakes that require refrigeration to assure safety like banana cream, pumpkin, lemon meringue or custard pies; cheesecake; and cakes with glaze or frosting that requires refrigeration (e.g., cream cheese frosting)
- Milk and dairy products like cheese or yogurt
- Cut melons
- Caramel apples
- Hummus
- Garlic in oil mixtures
- All beverages, including fruit/vegetable juices, Kombucha tea, and apple cider
- Ice and ice products
- Cut tomatoes or chopped/shredded leafy greens
- Confections that contain alcohol, like truffles or liqueur-filled chocolates
- Focaccia style breads with fresh vegetables and/or cheeses
- Food products made from fresh cut tomatoes, cut melons or cut leafy greens
- Food products made with cooked vegetable products that are not canned
- Sauces and condiments, including barbeque sauce, hot sauce, ketchup, or mustard
- Salad dressings
- Pet food or treats *\*\* NOTE: A commercial feed license is required to make in a home kitchen \*\**

If you have questions about a specific product not listed here or in the "*Cottage Foods: Frequently Asked Questions, Section 2 - Product/Production Related Questions*", please contact the Michigan Department of Agriculture & Rural Development at 800-292-3939 or [MDA-Info@Michigan.gov](mailto:MDA-Info@Michigan.gov). Please include your zip code and a telephone number with your request for information.

## Cottage Food Sample Label and Labeling Guidelines

There are two parts to labeling, the legal side as described below but also the branding side. This is an opportunity to build your brand with logo, font/typeface and description. Customers respond to descriptors like FRESH, HOMEMADE, LOCAL, SEASONAL, ARTISAN and will begin to recognize your label/logo if it's unique and you use it consistently.

The basic information that must be on the label is as follows:

- Name and physical address of the Cottage Food operation. (You must use the physical address of your home kitchen; Post Office Box addresses are not adequate).
- Name of the Cottage Food product (All capital letters or upper/lower case are both acceptable).
- The ingredients of the Cottage Food product, in descending order of predominance by weight. If you use a prepared item in your recipe, you must list the sub ingredients as well. For example: soy sauce is not acceptable, soy sauce (wheat, soybeans, salt) would be acceptable, please see the label below for further examples.
- The net weight or net volume of the Cottage Food product (must also include the metric equivalent - conversion charts are available online).

- Allergen labeling as specified in federal labeling requirements.
- The following statement: "*Made in a home kitchen that has not been inspected by the Michigan Department of Agriculture & Rural Development*" in at least the equivalent of 11-point font (about 1/8" tall) and in a color that provides a clear contrast to the background (All capital letters or upper/lower case are both acceptable).

Hand-printed labels are acceptable if they are clearly legible, written with durable, permanent ink, and printed large enough to equal the font size requirements listed above.

Here is an example of a label that should help you develop your own labels:

**MADE IN A HOME KITCHEN THAT HAS NOT BEEN INSPECTED  
BY THE MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE & RURAL  
DEVELOPMENT**

Chocolate Chip Cookie

Artie Pinkster  
123 Foodstuff Lane  
Casserole City, MI 82682

Ingredients: Enriched flour (Wheat flour, niacin, reduced iron, thiamine, mononitrate, riboflavin and folic acid), butter (milk, salt), chocolate chips (sugar, cocoa butter, butterfat (milk), Soy lecithin as an emulsifier), walnuts, sugar, eggs, salt, artificial vanilla extract, baking soda

Contains: wheat, eggs, milk, soy, walnuts

Net Wt. 3 oz

