



HEALTH DEPARTMENT

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COTTAGE FOOD PRODUCTION OPERATION FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

WHAT IS COTTAGE FOOD PRODUCTION OPERATION?

- ❖ A cottage food production operation is defined in the Ohio Revised Code Chapter 3715 to mean a person who, in the person's own home, produces food items that are not potentially hazardous foods. This includes bakery products, jams, jellies, candy, and fruit butter.

WHERE CAN I MAKE COTTAGE FOODS?

- ❖ You may only make cottage goods from the primary residence occupied by the residence's owner. The home may only contain one stove or oven (which may be a double oven) designed for common residential use, not commercial use.

WHAT KINDS OF COTTAGE FOODS CAN I MAKE? WHAT CAN'T I MAKE?

- ❖ Cottage foods include bakery products, jams, jellies, candy and fruit butter that are not potentially hazardous. You may not process such foods as acidified foods, low acid canned foods, or potentially hazardous foods.

WHAT ARE "POTENTIALLY HAZARDOUS FOODS?"

- ❖ Potentially hazardous foods are foods that support the rapid growth of pathogenic microorganisms. Foods that require temperature control (ex: refrigeration) are considered potentially hazardous foods.

WHERE CAN I SELL COTTAGE FOOD PRODUCTS?

- ❖ Cottage food products that are properly labeled may be sold:
 1. Directly to the end consumer from the site of preparation(home)
 2. Through licensed grocery stores
 3. Through farm markets or farmers markets
 4. To a licensed restaurant to be used in the preparation of food
 5. At a recognized festival

CAN I SELL COTTAGE FOODS ON THE INTERNET?

- ❖ No, cottage foods may not be sold using internet sale methods.

CAN I SELL COTTAGE FOODS ACROSS STATE LINES?

- ❖ No, cottage foods produced in Ohio may only be sold in Ohio from the aforementioned approved locations.

WHAT ARE THE LABELING REQUIREMENTS FOR COTTAGE FOODS?

- ❖ All cottage foods are required to be labeled with the following 5 items:
 1. Name and address of the “business”(home)
 2. Name of the food product
 3. Ingredients of the food product, in descending order of predominance by weight
 4. Net weight or net volume of the food product
 5. The following statement in ten-point font: “This Product is Home Produced”
- ❖ Cottage foods that are not properly labeled are considered adulterated and will be embargoed by the Health Department.

DO I HAVE TO LABEL THE COTTAGE FOOD WITH NUTRITIONAL INFORMATION?

- ❖ If nutritional claim is made (Ex: “low fat” or “salt free”), federal labeling requirements must be met. If no claim is made, you are not required to label the product with nutritional information.

DOES A COTTAGE FOOD PRODUCTION OPERATION NEED A LICENSE?

- ❖ No, a cottage food production operation is exempt from licensing by the Ohio Department of Agriculture and local health district. However, all food products, including those produced by a cottage food production operation are subject to sampling or inspection by the Department of Agriculture or local health district to determine if a food is misbranded or adulterated.

WHAT IS A “HOME BAKERY?”

- ❖ A Home Bakery is different from a cottage food production operation. A Home Bakery is a home-based business that bakes or processes potentially hazardous foods or does not meet the definition of a Cottage food production operation. Home Bakeries must register with the Ohio Department of Agriculture and are subject to regular Inspections.

HOW CAN I CONTACT THE OHIO DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE?

- ❖ If you have any questions regarding “Home Bakeries” or other issues you may contact the Ohio Department of Agriculture at 1-800-282-1955.

OTHER QUESTIONS WE HAVE BEEN ASKED:

- ❖ Question: Can I sell baked bean dip I made at home in my kitchen?
Answer: No, baked bean dip is not a cottage food. It is considered potentially hazardous food. Cottage foods are bakery products, jams, jellies, candy, and fruit butter.
- Question: Can I sell prepackaged ice cream cookies from my home?
Answer: No, ice cream cookies are not cottage food. They are also potentially hazardous.
- Question: Can I make a trail mix at home and sell it at the Fair?
Answer: No, trail mix production is a process. It is not a cottage food.
- Question: Can I bake pumpkin pies and sell them from my home?
Answer: No, pumpkin pies are potentially hazardous foods.