

COTTAGE FOOD LAW REPORT

Shelby County

Alabama · Columbiana · FIPS 01117 · Population 223,916 ·
Crosodo Index #1254*

STATE BASELINE

Ala. Code §22-20-5.1

STATE TIER

Good

ANNUAL SALES CAP (STATE)

—

CONFIDENCE

MEDIUM

LAST VERIFIED

2026-05-05

IMPORTANT — NOT LEGAL ADVICE

This report compiles publicly-available statutes, regulations, and county zoning rules into a research reference. It is **not legal advice** and is provided **without warranty** as to accuracy, completeness, or current applicability.

Cottage food law changes frequently. Counties may amend zoning, health departments may issue new permits, and state legislatures may update statutes after the publication date shown above.

Always verify rules directly with your state department of health/agriculture and your county health and planning offices before relying on them for any business or regulatory decision. Consult a licensed attorney for advice specific to your situation.

How to start — 60-second path

Shelby County, Alabama — permit, pickup, and label steps before the full county rules.

HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED?

Yes

STATE SALES CAP

—

HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT?

Conditional

ON-SITE / PORCH PICKUP?

Yes

INSPECTION

Conditional

PETS

Standard food safety practices apply; no explicit state-level pet restriction in Alabama cottage food statute, but county health inspectors may require exclusion of pets from kitchen during production.

BEFORE YOU SELL FROM THIS ADDRESS

- ☐ **1. Menu** — Confirm each product under Alabama cottage food rules (county cannot expand a state ban).
- ☐ **2. Pickup & zoning** — Home occupation and porch pickup cells above; HOA/lease may still block customer traffic.
- ☐ **3. Local tax / license** — Business license or sales tax certificate if your city/parish requires it (common even with no state food permit).
- ☐ **4. Training** — Food handler or state registration before market day.
- ☐ **5. Labels** — Disclaimer, allergens, ingredients, net quantity, producer info.
- ☐ **6. Call if unclear** — County health and planning for your exact address.

LABEL FIELDS TO INCLUDE

- ☐ Product name · producer name · address (or allowed alternative)
- ☐ Ingredients by weight · major allergens · net weight/quantity
- ☐ Alabama home-kitchen disclaimer (see live label one-pager)

CONTINUE ONLINE

[Open the live county page →](#)

[Alabama label one-pager →](#)

Local notes & questions →

Planning path only — not legal advice. Rules change. Always verify with state and local offices before selling.

ALABAMA: SHELBY COUNTY

CROSODO INDEX #1254* · FIPS 01117 · Columbiana

Shelby County

Population 223,916 · State baseline: Ala. Code §22-20-5.1 · MEDIUM

QUICK VIEW FOR BAKERS IN THIS COUNTY

HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED?

Yes (Alabama state law (§22-20-5.1) permits home kitchen production of non-potentially hazardous foods. Producer must complete a state-approved food safety course before selling. No sales cap. Direct sales only (no wholesale). Application and approval required through local county health department. Shelby County Health Department reviews applications, requires proof of training, sample label, and product list.)

SEPARATE KITCHEN REQUIRED?

No

PETS ALLOWED?

Standard food safety practices apply; no explicit state-level pet restriction in Alabama cottage food statute, but county health inspectors may require exclusion of pets from kitchen during production.

HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT?

Conditional (Shelby County zoning governs home-based businesses for unincorporated areas. Individual municipalities (Hoover, Pelham, Helena, Alabaster, etc.) within Shelby County may require separate home occupation permits. Contact Shelby County Planning & Zoning or the relevant municipal zoning office. Shelby County is a large suburban county in the Birmingham metro area.)

ON-SITE / PORCH PICKUP?

Yes

INSPECTION REQUIRED?

Conditional (County health department reviews application and may inspect before approving cottage food operations. Alabama does not require routine inspections post-approval, but county health has authority to investigate complaints.)

Home kitchen rules

HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED	Yes — Alabama state law (§22-20-5.1) permits home kitchen production of non-potentially hazardous foods. Producer must complete a state-approved food safety course before selling. No sales cap. Direct sales only (no wholesale). Application and approval required through local county health department. Shelby County Health Department reviews applications, requires proof of training, sample label, and product list.
SEPARATE DEDICATED KITCHEN	No
PET RESTRICTIONS	Standard food safety practices apply; no explicit state-level pet restriction in Alabama cottage food statute, but county health inspectors may require exclusion of pets from kitchen during production.
WATER SUPPLY	No specific private water testing requirement documented for Alabama cottage food operations at state level; county health may have additional requirements.
HANDWASHING	Standard handwashing required per state food safety training course requirements.
FOOD STORAGE	Non-TCS, non-perishable storage required. Products must be shelf-stable.

Inspection & permitting

INSPECTION REQUIRED	Conditional — County health department reviews application and may inspect before approving cottage food operations. Alabama does not require routine inspections post-approval, but county health has authority to investigate complaints.
HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT	Conditional — Shelby County zoning governs home-based businesses for unincorporated areas. Individual municipalities (Hoover, Pelham, Helena, Alabaster, etc.) within Shelby County may require separate home occupation permits. Contact Shelby County Planning & Zoning or the relevant municipal zoning office. Shelby County is a large suburban county in the Birmingham metro area.
LOCAL BUSINESS LICENSE	Varies

Customer-facing rules

ON-SITE CUSTOMER PICKUP	Yes
ON-SITE SIGNAGE	Conditional
DELIVERY / PICKUP RULES	Alabama cottage food law allows direct-to-consumer sales, including home pickup, online sales, and in-state shipping (as of 2021 amendment). No wholesale or retail store sales.
MAX EMPLOYEES IN HOME	No explicit employee cap in Alabama cottage food statute; home occupation zoning may restrict non-resident employees.

Relevant county code

Ala. Code §22-20-5.1; Shelby County zoning ordinance (contact Planning & Zoning)

RESEARCH NOTES

Alabama state baseline applies. Shelby County is a major suburb of Birmingham with high population and many municipalities. County health department approval required before selling, with proof of food safety training. The 2021 amendment (SB 160 / Act 2021-461) expanded the law significantly — removed sales cap, added online sales and shipping. Shelby County Health Department not listed in input URLs. No county-specific override found beyond state-required county health approval process. Applications and fees vary by county; Shelby County health department contact should be verified directly.

SOURCES VERIFIED AT RESEARCH TIME

<https://www.shelbyal.com>

<https://www.alabamapublichealth.gov/foodsafety/cottage-food-law.html>

<https://www.shelbyal.com>

Questions about this county? Local notes and a place to leave a question: crosodo.com/nb/alabama/shelby-county-discuss

Bordering counties — cottage food law

Regulation	Shelby County	Jefferson County	St. Clair County
HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED	Yes	Yes	Yes
SEPARATE DEDICATED KITCHEN	No	No	No
PETS ALLOWED	Standard food safety practices apply; no explicit state-level pet restriction in Alabama cottage food statute, but county health inspectors...	Not specified; standard sanitation applies	No specific state restriction; county health approval may review kitchen conditions.
INSPECTION REQUIRED	Conditional	Upon-complaint	Upon-complaint
ON-SITE CUSTOMER PICKUP	Yes	Yes	Yes
ON-SITE SIGNAGE	Conditional	Conditional	Conditional
DELIVERY / PICKUP	Alabama cottage food law allows direct-to-consumer sales, including home pickup, online sales, and in-state shipping (as of 2021 amendment)...	Direct-to-consumer: home, farmers markets, events, online, in-state shipping (permitted since 2021 amendment). No wholesale. No out-of-stat...	Direct sales only. In-state online sales and shipping allowed. Home pickup, farmers markets, events permitted.
HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT	Conditional	Conditional	Conditional
LOCAL BUSINESS LICENSE	Varies	Varies	Varies
RESTRICTIONS	Alabama state law (§22-20-5.1) permits home kitchen production of non-potentially hazardous foods. Producer must complete a state-approved ...	State baseline applies. Food handler certification (state-approved course, e.g., Learn2Serve ~\$7 or ACES course) required before selling. A...	Alabama cottage food law (§22-20-5.1, 2021 amendment): no sales cap, direct sales only. Must complete state-approved food safety course and...
FOOD STORAGE	Non-TCS, non-perishable storage required. Products must be shelf-stable.	Standard food storage; non-PHF only	Non-potentially hazardous shelf-stable foods only.
POPULATION	223,916	672,265	91,719

State context — Alabama cottage food law

Shelby County's rules sit on top of Alabama's state cottage food framework. The state law sets the floor — counties can add but cannot remove protections.

STATUTE

Ala. Code §22-20-5.1

ANNUAL SALES CAP

—

REGISTRATION REQUIRED

Yes

FOOD HANDLER CERT

Yes (specific course)

KITCHEN INSPECTION

No

DIRECT SALES ONLY

Yes

INDIRECT SALES

No — Indirect sales to grocery stores, restaurants, or wholesale are not permitted; producers may use an agent for delivery but cannot sell through retailers.

For the full state-level analysis including the verbatim statute text, see the [Alabama cottage food law report](#) on Crosodo, or open the live guide: crosodo.com/states/alabama.

STATE-LEVEL REFERENCES

State statute: <https://alison.legislature.state.al.us/code-of-alabama>

State dept cottage food page: <https://www.alabamapublichealth.gov/foodsafety/cottage-food-law.html>

Forrager.com: <https://forrager.com/law/alabama/>

Questions about Shelby County? Local notes and a place to leave a question are on Crosodo. We monitor new threads — start with zoning, permits, or porch pickup.

crosodo.com/nb/alabama/shelby-county-discuss

Classifieds

Resources for cottage food & home bakers · crosodo.com/advertise

NATIONAL

SUPPLIES

Advertise here — Supplies

Reach home bakers across the country. crosodo.com/advertise

COURSES

Advertise here — Courses

Reach home bakers across the country. crosodo.com/advertise

INSURANCE

Advertise here — Insurance

Reach home bakers across the country. crosodo.com/advertise

LOCAL

Advertise here

Reach home bakers in Shelby County, Alabama. Supply stores, farmers markets, kitchen rentals, and bakery services welcome.

crosodo.com/advertise

Your business here

Local cottage food listings, kitchen rentals, co-packer referrals, and community events — post yours on Crosodo.

crosodo.com/nb/alabama/shelby-county-discuss

Free ad space available

Let us know if you're a non-profit or community organization. Farmers markets, kitchen rentals, and cottage food events near you welcome.

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