

COTTAGE FOOD LAW REPORT

Imperial County

California · El Centro · FIPS 06025 · Population 179,578 ·
Crosodo Index #756*

STATE BASELINE

Cal. Health & Safety Code §113758

STATE TIER

Good

ANNUAL SALES CAP (STATE)

Tiered (see notes)

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

Imperial County, California — permit, pickup, and label steps before the full county rules.

HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED?

Yes

STATE SALES CAP

Tiered (see notes)

HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT?

Conditional

ON-SITE / PORCH PICKUP?

Yes

INSPECTION

No

PETS

Pets not allowed in food prep areas; assessed during Class B inspection.

BEFORE YOU SELL FROM THIS ADDRESS

- ☐ **1. Menu** — Confirm each product under California 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
- ☐ California home-kitchen disclaimer (see live label one-pager)

CONTINUE ONLINE

[Open the live county page →](#)

[California label one-pager →](#)

[Local notes & questions →](#)

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

CALIFORNIA: IMPERIAL COUNTY

CROSODO INDEX #756* · FIPS 06025 · El Centro

Imperial County

Population 179,578 · State baseline: Cal. Health & Safety Code §113758 · MEDIUM

QUICK VIEW FOR BAKERS IN THIS COUNTY

HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED?

Yes (Class A: direct sales only, ~\$86,206 annual cap (CPI-adjusted 2025). Class B: direct and indirect sales, ~\$172,411 annual cap, requires home kitchen inspection. Registration with Imperial County Environmental Health required. Food safety training (ANSI-accredited, every 3 years) required. Only state-approved foods list permitted.)

SEPARATE KITCHEN REQUIRED?

No

PETS ALLOWED?

Pets not allowed in food prep areas; assessed during Class B inspection.

HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT?

Conditional (California Gov. Code §51035 preempts local zoning restrictions on cottage food operations. Imperial County Environmental Health handles CFO registrations. No local zoning restrictions can be imposed on qualifying cottage food operations.)

ON-SITE / PORCH PICKUP?

Yes

INSPECTION REQUIRED?

No (Class A: no initial inspection. Class B: inspection required. Complaint-based inspections possible.)

Home kitchen rules

HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED	Yes — Class A: direct sales only, ~\$86,206 annual cap (CPI-adjusted 2025). Class B: direct and indirect sales, ~\$172,411 annual cap, requires home kitchen inspection. Registration with Imperial County Environmental Health required. Food safety training (ANSI-accredited, every 3 years) required. Only state-approved foods list permitted.
SEPARATE DEDICATED KITCHEN	No
PET RESTRICTIONS	Pets not allowed in food prep areas; assessed during Class B inspection.
WATER SUPPLY	Potable water supply required.
HANDWASHING	Adequate handwashing facilities required.
FOOD STORAGE	Non-potentially hazardous foods stored in clean, sanitary conditions.

Inspection & permitting

INSPECTION REQUIRED	No — Class A: no initial inspection. Class B: inspection required. Complaint-based inspections possible.
HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT	Conditional — California Gov. Code §51035 preempts local zoning restrictions on cottage food operations. Imperial County Environmental Health handles CFO registrations. No local zoning restrictions can be imposed on qualifying cottage food operations.
LOCAL BUSINESS LICENSE	Varies

Customer-facing rules

ON-SITE CUSTOMER PICKUP	Yes
ON-SITE SIGNAGE	Conditional
DELIVERY / PICKUP RULES	Class A: direct sales only within California. Class B: direct and indirect sales within California. No interstate sales.
MAX EMPLOYEES IN HOME	Only one non-family employee permitted.

Relevant county code

Cal. Health & Safety Code §113758; Imperial County Environmental Health cottage food registration

RESEARCH NOTES

Imperial County is a rural border county in Southern California. State preemption prevents local restrictions on cottage food operations. County environmental health department administers registration. Same California two-tier framework as other CA counties.

SOURCES VERIFIED AT RESEARCH TIME

<https://www.imperialcounty.gov>

https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CEH/DFDCS/CDPH%20Document%20Library/FDB/FoodSafetyProgram/Cottage%20Food%20Operations/CFO_Faq.pdf

https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/codes_displaySection.xhtml?lawCode=HSC§ionNum=113758

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

Bordering counties — cottage food law

Regulation	Imperial County	Riverside County	San Diego County
HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED	Yes	Yes	Yes
SEPARATE DEDICATED KITCHEN	No	No	No
PETS ALLOWED	Pets not allowed in food prep areas; assessed during Class B inspection.	State baseline applies	State baseline applies
INSPECTION REQUIRED	No	Conditional	Yes
ON-SITE CUSTOMER PICKUP	Yes	Yes	Yes
ON-SITE SIGNAGE	Conditional	Conditional	Conditional
DELIVERY / PICKUP	Class A: direct sales only within California. Class B: direct and indirect sales within California. No interstate sales.	Direct/indirect sales within California only. State baseline applies. Operator may hire up to 1 full-time employee.	MEHKO permits on-site dining, pickup, and delivery by operator/staff. CFO allows in-home direct sales and online orders. State preemption b...
HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT	Conditional	Varies by city	Varies by city
LOCAL BUSINESS LICENSE	Varies	Varies by city	Varies by city
RESTRICTIONS	Class A: direct sales only, ~\$86,206 annual cap (CPI-adjusted 2025). Class B: direct and indirect sales, ~\$172,411 annual cap, requires hom...	Riverside University Health System – Environmental Health administers CFO Class A and Class B registrations/permits. No MEHKO opt-in confir...	San Diego County opted into the permanent MEHKO program (effective January 5, 2024), administered by the Department of Environmental Health...
FOOD STORAGE	Non-potentially hazardous foods stored in clean, sanitary conditions.	State baseline applies	State baseline applies
POPULATION	179,578	2,429,487	3,289,701

State context — California cottage food law

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

STATUTE

Cal. Health & Safety Code §113758

ANNUAL SALES CAP

Tiered (see notes)

REGISTRATION REQUIRED

Yes

FOOD HANDLER CERT

Yes (specific course)

KITCHEN INSPECTION

No

DIRECT SALES ONLY

No

INDIRECT SALES

Limited (see notes) — Class B permit holders may sell indirectly through retail stores and restaurants statewide; Class A registrants are limited to direct sales only and may not sell through any retail or wholesale venue.

For the full state-level analysis including the verbatim statute text, see the **California cottage food law report** on Crosodo, or open the live guide: crosodo.com/states/california.

STATE-LEVEL REFERENCES

State statute: https://leginfo.ca.gov/faces/codes_displaySection.xhtml?lawCode=HSC§ionNum=113758

State dept cottage food page: https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CEH/DFDCS/CDPH%20Document%20Library/FDB/FoodSafetyProgram/Cottage%20Food%20Operations/CFO_Faq.pdf

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

Questions about Imperial 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/california/imperial-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 Imperial County, California. 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/california/imperial-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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