

COTTAGE FOOD LAW REPORT

District of Columbia

District of Columbia · Washington · FIPS 11001 · Population 670,587 · Crosodo Index #2170*

STATE BASELINE

D.C. Code §7-742.02; 25-K DCMR 103.5 (approved foods list); no annual cap

STATE TIER

Okay

ANNUAL SALES CAP (STATE)

—

CONFIDENCE

HIGH

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

District of Columbia, District of Columbia — permit, pickup, and label steps before the full county rules.

HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED?

Yes

STATE SALES CAP

—

HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT?

Yes

ON-SITE / PORCH PICKUP?

Yes

INSPECTION

Conditional

PETS

Not specified; standard sanitation applies

BEFORE YOU SELL FROM THIS ADDRESS

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

CONTINUE ONLINE

[Open the live county page →](#)

[District of Columbia label one-pager →](#)

[Local notes & questions →](#)

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

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA: DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

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District of Columbia

Population 670,587 · State baseline: D.C. Code §7-742.02; 25-K DCMR 103.5 (approved foods list); no annual cap · **HIGH**

QUICK VIEW FOR BAKERS IN THIS COUNTY

HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED?

Yes (DC cottage food requires: (1) \$50 registration fee (valid 2 years) from DC Health; (2) Certified Food Protection Manager (CFPM) certification — not just food handler card; (3) Home Occupation Permit from DCRA/DLCP; (4) CFPM ID card (\$35, valid 3 years). Optional pre-operational inspection available. Kitchen must meet sanitation standards.)

SEPARATE KITCHEN REQUIRED?

No

PETS ALLOWED?

Not specified; standard sanitation applies

HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT?

Yes (DC requires a Home Occupation Permit from DCRA (Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs) / DLCP (Department of Licensing and Consumer Protection) as part of the cottage food registration process. This is a mandatory step. Contact DLCP at 1100 4th Street SW, Washington DC, or online at dlcp.dc.gov.)

ON-SITE / PORCH PICKUP?

Yes

INSPECTION REQUIRED?

Conditional (Optional pre-operational inspection available (not required). DC Health may inspect upon complaint. No routine inspections.)

Home kitchen rules

HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED	Yes — DC cottage food requires: (1) \$50 registration fee (valid 2 years) from DC Health; (2) Certified Food Protection Manager (CFPM) certification — not just food handler card; (3) Home Occupation Permit from DCRA/DLCP; (4) CFPM ID card (\$35, valid 3 years). Optional pre-operational inspection available. Kitchen must meet sanitation standards.
SEPARATE DEDICATED KITCHEN	No
PET RESTRICTIONS	Not specified; standard sanitation applies
WATER SUPPLY	Municipal water (DC Water) standard; potable water required
HANDWASHING	CFPM certification implies comprehensive knowledge of handwashing/sanitation
FOOD STORAGE	Standard food storage per DC cottage food regulations; 25-K DCMR 103.5

Inspection & permitting

INSPECTION REQUIRED	Conditional — Optional pre-operational inspection available (not required). DC Health may inspect upon complaint. No routine inspections.
HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT	Yes — DC requires a Home Occupation Permit from DCRA (Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs) / DLCP (Department of Licensing and Consumer Protection) as part of the cottage food registration process. This is a mandatory step. Contact DLCP at 1100 4th Street SW, Washington DC, or online at dlcp.dc.gov .
LOCAL BUSINESS LICENSE	Yes

Customer-facing rules

ON-SITE CUSTOMER PICKUP	Yes
ON-SITE SIGNAGE	Conditional
DELIVERY / PICKUP RULES	Online and retail sales allowed (2020/2025 amendments). Direct-to-consumer, online, retail stores permitted. 2025 B26-0025 added wholesale to food establishments. No annual sales cap. Sales within DC.
MAX EMPLOYEES IN HOME	Unknown

Relevant county code

D.C. Code §7-742.02; 25-K DCMR 103.5; DLCP Home Occupation Permit regulations

RESEARCH NOTES

DC is unusual in requiring CFPM (Certified Food Protection Manager) certification — not just a basic food handler course — for cottage food operators. The Home Occupation Permit is a mandatory step in the registration process, making DC one of the clearer cases of explicit home occupation permit requirement for cottage food. No annual sales cap (removed in 2020 amendments). The 2025 amendment (B26-0025) added wholesale to food establishments. DC's cottage food law was created by D.C. Law 20-63 (2013) and significantly amended in 2020 and 2025.

SOURCES VERIFIED AT RESEARCH TIME

<https://dchealth.dc.gov/service/cottage-food-businesses>

<https://dlcp.dc.gov>

<https://dc.gov>

<https://dchealth.dc.gov/service/cottage-food-businesses>

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

Bordering counties — cottage food law

Regulation	District of Columbia	Prince George's County	Montgomery County
HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED	Yes	Yes	Yes
SEPARATE DEDICATED KITCHEN	No	No	No
PETS ALLOWED	Not specified; standard sanitation applies	Not specified; standard sanitation applies	State baseline applies
INSPECTION REQUIRED	Conditional	Upon-complaint	Upon-complaint
ON-SITE CUSTOMER PICKUP	Yes	Conditional	Yes
ON-SITE SIGNAGE	Conditional	Conditional	Conditional
DELIVERY / PICKUP	Online and retail sales allowed (2020/2025 amendments). Direct-to-consumer, online, retail stores permitted. 2025 B26-0025 added wholesale ...	State baseline: direct-to-consumer at farmers markets, fairs, festivals; customer pickup from home allowed per MDH 2025 guidelines; retail ...	State baseline applies: direct-to-consumer sales. Cottage food cannot be sold outside Maryland. Montgomery County requires a Farmer's Marke...
HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT	Yes	Conditional	Conditional
LOCAL BUSINESS LICENSE	Yes	Varies	Varies by city
RESTRICTIONS	DC cottage food requires: (1) \$50 registration fee (valid 2 years) from DC Health; (2) Certified Food Protection Manager (CFPM) certificati...	Prince George's County explicitly allows cottage food production at home for sale at farmers markets and temporary events only. County zoni...	Montgomery County follows Maryland state baseline for cottage food (COMAR 10.15.03.27). The state \$50,000 annual cap applies. Montgomery Co...
FOOD STORAGE	Standard food storage per DC cottage food regulations; 25-K DCMR 103.5	Standard food storage per COMAR 10.15.03; no additional county-specific requirements found	State baseline applies
POPULATION	670,587	957,189	1,056,910

State context — District of Columbia cottage food law

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

STATUTE	ANNUAL SALES CAP
D.C. Code §7-742.02	—
REGISTRATION REQUIRED	FOOD HANDLER CERT
Yes	Yes (specific course)
KITCHEN INSPECTION	DIRECT SALES ONLY
Yes	No
INDIRECT SALES	
Yes — As of 2020 amendments, DC allows direct, online, retail (excluding restaurants and grocery stores), and wholesale sales to food establishments (expanded further in 2025 by B26-0025); sales must remain within the District.	

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

STATE-LEVEL REFERENCES

State statute: <https://code.dccouncil.us/dc/council/code/sections/48-110.01.html>

State dept cottage food page: <https://dchealth.dc.gov/service/cottage-food-businesses>

Forrager.com: <https://forrager.com/law/district-of-columbia/>

Questions about District of Columbia? 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/district-of-columbia/district-of-columbia-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 District of Columbia, District of Columbia. 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/district-of-columbia/district-of-columbia-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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