

COTTAGE FOOD LAW REPORT

Ford County

Illinois · Paxton · FIPS 17053 · Population 13,451 · Crosodo Index #2030*

STATE BASELINE

410 ILCS 625/4 (Food Handling Regulation Enforcement Act)

STATE TIER

Great

ANNUAL SALES CAP (STATE)

—

CONFIDENCE

MEDIUM

LAST VERIFIED

2026-05-06

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

Ford County, Illinois — permit, pickup, and label steps before the full county rules.

HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED?

Yes

STATE SALES CAP

—

HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT?

Varies

ON-SITE / PORCH PICKUP?

Yes

INSPECTION

Upon-complaint

PETS

No specific state prohibition; good manufacturing practice applies

BEFORE YOU SELL FROM THIS ADDRESS

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

CONTINUE ONLINE

[Open the live county page →](#)

[Illinois label one-pager →](#)

[Local notes & questions →](#)

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

ILLINOIS: FORD COUNTY

CROSODO INDEX #2030* · FIPS 17053 · Paxton

Ford County

Population 13,451 · State baseline: 410 ILCS 625/4 (Food Handling Regulation Enforcement Act) ·

MEDIUM

QUICK VIEW FOR BAKERS IN THIS COUNTY

HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED?

Yes (Must register with local health department (Ford County Health Department or adjacent county health dept if none) for up to \$50/year. Certified Food Protection Manager (CFPM-level) certification required for all persons who prepare or package food. Inspection is complaint-based only. Illinois uses a prohibited-list approach — virtually all non-prohibited foods allowed for direct in-state consumer sales.)

SEPARATE KITCHEN REQUIRED?

No

PETS ALLOWED?

No specific state prohibition; good manufacturing practice applies

HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT?

Varies (Ford County local zoning ordinances may regulate home-based business activities (parking, signage, customer traffic). Illinois state cottage food law preempts local restrictions that are inconsistent with state law, but operators should verify home occupation permit requirements with the county zoning/planning office or municipality of residence.)

ON-SITE / PORCH PICKUP?

Yes

INSPECTION REQUIRED?

Upon-complaint (Consumer complaint or suspected foodborne illness)

Home kitchen rules

HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED

Yes — Must register with local health department (Ford County Health Department or adjacent county health dept if none) for up to \$50/year. Certified Food Protection Manager (CFPM-level) certification required for all persons who prepare or package food. Inspection is complaint-based only. Illinois uses a prohibited-list approach — virtually all non-prohibited foods allowed for direct in-state consumer sales.

SEPARATE DEDICATED KITCHEN

No

PET RESTRICTIONS

No specific state prohibition; good manufacturing practice applies

WATER SUPPLY

Potable water required; if on private well, annual coliform testing may be required

HANDWASHING

Handwashing sink required in kitchen

FOOD STORAGE

Proper storage of shelf-stable and non-TCS foods; acidified foods require pH documentation and food safety plan; fermented foods have additional requirements

Inspection & permitting

INSPECTION REQUIRED

Upon-complaint — Consumer complaint or suspected foodborne illness

HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT

Varies — Ford County local zoning ordinances may regulate home-based business activities (parking, signage, customer traffic). Illinois state cottage food law preempts local restrictions that are inconsistent with state law, but operators should verify home occupation permit requirements with the county zoning/planning office or municipality of residence.

LOCAL BUSINESS LICENSE

Varies

Customer-facing rules

ON-SITE CUSTOMER PICKUP	Yes
ON-SITE SIGNAGE	Conditional
DELIVERY / PICKUP RULES	Direct sales to consumers only (in person, at farmers markets, online orders). In-state shipping of non-perishable items permitted within Illinois. Out-of-state shipping prohibited. No third-party resale or distribution.
MAX EMPLOYEES IN HOME	No specific limit; all food preparers/packagegers must hold CFPM certification

Relevant county code

Contact Ford County Health Department for local registration requirements under 410 ILCS 625/4

RESEARCH NOTES

Illinois cottage food law (PA 102-0633 eff. Jan 1 2022; further amended PA 103-0903, 2025) is highly permissive with prohibited-list approach. Registration required with local health department (\$50/year cap). Food Safety Manager cert (CFPM) required — manager-level cert, not just food handler. All 43 counties in this batch are rural Illinois counties; state law strongly preempts contradictory local restrictions. Ford County in east-central IL; county seat Paxton. Very rural agricultural county. No county-specific cottage food deviations found. Local zoning may still regulate home occupation aspects (parking, signage, customer counts) consistent with state preemption. University of Illinois Extension and Illinois Stewardship Alliance offer county-level guidance. Research confirmed no county-specific overrides for these counties; medium confidence as county health dept websites not individually scraped.

SOURCES VERIFIED AT RESEARCH TIME

<https://www.fordcounty.gov>

<https://dph.illinois.gov/topics-services/food-safety/cottage-food.html>

<https://www.ilga.gov/legislation/ilcs/ilcs3.asp?ActID=2625&ChapterID=35>

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

Bordering counties — cottage food law

Regulation	Ford County	Iroquois County	Livingston County
HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED	Yes	Yes	Yes
SEPARATE DEDICATED KITCHEN	No	No	No
PETS ALLOWED	No specific state prohibition; good manufacturing practice applies	No specific state prohibition; good manufacturing practice applies	No specific state prohibition; good manufacturing practice applies
INSPECTION REQUIRED	Upon-complaint	Upon-complaint	Upon-complaint
ON-SITE CUSTOMER PICKUP	Yes	Yes	Yes
ON-SITE SIGNAGE	Conditional	Conditional	Conditional
DELIVERY / PICKUP	Direct sales to consumers only (in person, at farmers markets, online orders). In-state shipping of non-perishable items permitted within l...	Direct sales to consumers only (in person, at farmers markets, online orders). In-state shipping of non-perishable items permitted within l...	Direct sales to consumers only (in person, at farmers markets, online orders). In-state shipping of non-perishable items permitted within l...
HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT	Varies	Varies	Varies
LOCAL BUSINESS LICENSE	Varies	Varies	Varies
RESTRICTIONS	Must register with local health department (Ford County Health Department or adjacent county health dept if none) for up to \$50/year. Certi...	Must register with local health department (Iroquois County Health Department or adjacent county health dept if none) for up to \$50/year. C...	Must register with local health department (Livingston County Health Department or adjacent county health dept if none) for up to \$50/year....
FOOD STORAGE	Proper storage of shelf-stable and non-TCS foods; acidified foods require pH documentation and food safety plan; fermented foods have addit...	Proper storage of shelf-stable and non-TCS foods; acidified foods require pH documentation and food safety plan; fermented foods have addit...	Proper storage of shelf-stable and non-TCS foods; acidified foods require pH documentation and food safety plan; fermented foods have addit...
POPULATION	13,484	27,043	35,771

State context — Illinois cottage food law

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

STATUTE

410 ILCS 625/4 (Food Handling Regulation Enforcement Act, §4)

ANNUAL SALES CAP

—

REGISTRATION REQUIRED

Yes

FOOD HANDLER CERT

Yes (specific course)

KITCHEN INSPECTION

Upon-complaint

DIRECT SALES ONLY

Yes

INDIRECT SALES

No — Illinois prohibits sales to restaurants, retail stores, and wholesale; direct in-state sales are allowed anywhere including home, online, farmers markets, events, and roadside stands; non-perishable items may be shipped within Illinois only.

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

STATE-LEVEL REFERENCES

State statute: <https://www.ilga.gov/legislation/ilcs/ilcs3.asp?ActID=2625&ChapterID=35>

State dept cottage food page: <https://dph.illinois.gov/topics-services/food-safety/cottage-food.html>

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

Questions about Ford 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/illinois/ford-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 Ford County, Illinois. 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/illinois/ford-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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