

## COTTAGE FOOD LAW REPORT

# Wells County

Indiana · Bluffton · FIPS 18179 · Population 28,798 · Crosodo Index #1929\*

STATE BASELINE

Ind. Code §16-42-5.3

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

Wells County, Indiana — 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 pet restriction in state cottage food law; good sanitary practices required.**

### BEFORE YOU SELL FROM THIS ADDRESS

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

### CONTINUE ONLINE

[Open the live county page →](#)

[Indiana label one-pager →](#)

[Local notes & questions →](#)

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

## INDIANA: WELLS COUNTY

CROSODO INDEX #1929\* · FIPS 18179 · Bluffton

## Wells County

Population 28,798 · State baseline: Ind. Code §16-42-5.3 · MEDIUM

## QUICK VIEW FOR BAKERS IN THIS COUNTY

## HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED?

Yes (Indiana home-based vendor law (IC 16-42-5.3, amended 2022 via HEA 1149) allows sales of non-TCS foods from primary residence. No routine inspection. State law preempts local food licensing and inspection ordinances. Local zoning for home-based business may still apply — contact Wells County Plan Commission.)

## SEPARATE KITCHEN REQUIRED?

No

## PETS ALLOWED?

No specific pet restriction in state cottage food law; good sanitary practices required.

## HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT?

Varies (State HBV law preempts local food licensing and inspection requirements. However, local zoning ordinances for home occupations may apply. Contact Wells County Plan Commission (Bluffton) to verify any home occupation permit requirements for a home-based food business.)

## ON-SITE / PORCH PICKUP?

Yes

## INSPECTION REQUIRED?

Upon-complaint (Indiana Department of Health may inspect upon complaint or food safety concern; local health department enforces.)

## Home kitchen rules

|                            |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
|----------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED       | Yes — Indiana home-based vendor law (IC 16-42-5.3, amended 2022 via HEA 1149) allows sales of non-TCS foods from primary residence. No routine inspection. State law preempts local food licensing and inspection ordinances. Local zoning for home-based business may still apply — contact Wells County Plan Commission. |
| SEPARATE DEDICATED KITCHEN | No                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| PET RESTRICTIONS           | No specific pet restriction in state cottage food law; good sanitary practices required.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| WATER SUPPLY               | No specific water testing requirement under state HBV law.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| HANDWASHING                | Proper handwashing required as part of sanitary procedures per IC 16-42-5.3.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| FOOD STORAGE               | Non-TCS (shelf-stable) foods only; proper sanitary storage required.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |

## Inspection &amp; permitting

|                        |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
|------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| INSPECTION REQUIRED    | Upon-complaint — Indiana Department of Health may inspect upon complaint or food safety concern; local health department enforces.                                                                                                                                                   |
| HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT | Varies — State HBV law preempts local food licensing and inspection requirements. However, local zoning ordinances for home occupations may apply. Contact Wells County Plan Commission (Bluffton) to verify any home occupation permit requirements for a home-based food business. |
| LOCAL BUSINESS LICENSE | Varies                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |

**Customer-facing rules**

|                         |                                                                                                                                                                       |
|-------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| ON-SITE CUSTOMER PICKUP | Yes                                                                                                                                                                   |
| ON-SITE SIGNAGE         | Conditional                                                                                                                                                           |
| DELIVERY / PICKUP RULES | Direct-to-consumer only. Sales allowed in person, by phone, online, or via third-party carrier within Indiana. No interstate shipping. No wholesale or retail resale. |
| MAX EMPLOYEES IN HOME   | Not specified in state statute.                                                                                                                                       |

**Relevant county code**

No specific Wells County cottage food ordinance identified. State law (IC 16-42-5.3) preempts local food licensing. Local zoning may apply.

**RESEARCH NOTES**

Indiana IC 16-42-5.3 (HEA 1149, 2022) governs statewide. State law explicitly preempts local food licensing and inspection ordinances (Sec. 12). Food handler certificate (ANSI-accredited) required. No sales cap. Wells County is a northeast Indiana county; no county-specific cottage food ordinance identified. Local zoning home occupation rules may still apply.

**SOURCES VERIFIED AT RESEARCH TIME**

<https://www.wellscounty.gov>

[https://www.in.gov/health/food-protection/home-based-vendor-\(cottage-foods\)/](https://www.in.gov/health/food-protection/home-based-vendor-(cottage-foods)/)

<https://www.in.gov/health/food-protection/files/Indiana-Home-Based-Vendor-Handbook-2.pdf>

**Questions about this county?** Local notes and a place to leave a question: [crosodo.com/nb/indiana/wells-county-discuss](https://crosodo.com/nb/indiana/wells-county-discuss)

## Bordering counties — cottage food law

| Regulation                 | Wells County                                                                                                                                   | Adams County | Blackford County |
|----------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|------------------|
| HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED       | Yes                                                                                                                                            | —            | —                |
| SEPARATE DEDICATED KITCHEN | No                                                                                                                                             | —            | —                |
| PETS ALLOWED               | No specific pet restriction in state cottage food law; good sanitary practices required.                                                       | —            | —                |
| INSPECTION REQUIRED        | Upon-complaint                                                                                                                                 | —            | —                |
| ON-SITE CUSTOMER PICKUP    | Yes                                                                                                                                            | —            | —                |
| ON-SITE SIGNAGE            | Conditional                                                                                                                                    | —            | —                |
| DELIVERY / PICKUP          | Direct-to-consumer only. Sales allowed in person, by phone, online, or via third-party carrier within Indiana. No interstate shipping. No w... | —            | —                |
| HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT     | Varies                                                                                                                                         | —            | —                |
| LOCAL BUSINESS LICENSE     | Varies                                                                                                                                         | —            | —                |
| RESTRICTIONS               | Indiana home-based vendor law (IC 16-42-5.3, amended 2022 via HEA 1149) allows sales of non-TCS foods from primary residence. No routine in... | —            | —                |
| FOOD STORAGE               | Non-TCS (shelf-stable) foods only; proper sanitary storage required.                                                                           | —            | —                |
| POPULATION                 | 28,167                                                                                                                                         | 35,827       | 12,074           |

## State context — Indiana cottage food law

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

### STATUTE

Ind. Code §16-42-5.2

### ANNUAL SALES CAP

—

### REGISTRATION REQUIRED

No

### FOOD HANDLER CERT

Yes (specific course)

### KITCHEN INSPECTION

Upon-complaint

### DIRECT SALES ONLY

Yes

### INDIRECT SALES

No — Sales to restaurants, retail stores, and wholesale are prohibited; producers may sell at events, farmers markets, home, online, and roadside stands only.

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

### STATE-LEVEL REFERENCES

State statute: <http://iga.in.gov/laws/2022/ic/titles/016/articles/042/chapters/005.2>

State dept cottage food page: [https://www.in.gov/health/food-protection/home-based-vendor-\(cottage-foods\)/](https://www.in.gov/health/food-protection/home-based-vendor-(cottage-foods)/)

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

**Questions about Wells 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/indiana/wells-county-discuss](https://crosodo.com/nb/indiana/wells-county-discuss)

## Classifieds

Resources for cottage food & home bakers · [crosodo.com/advertise](https://crosodo.com/advertise)

### NATIONAL

#### SUPPLIES

##### Advertise here — Supplies

Reach home bakers across the country. [crosodo.com/advertise](https://crosodo.com/advertise)

#### COURSES

##### Advertise here — Courses

Reach home bakers across the country. [crosodo.com/advertise](https://crosodo.com/advertise)

#### INSURANCE

##### Advertise here — Insurance

Reach home bakers across the country. [crosodo.com/advertise](https://crosodo.com/advertise)

### LOCAL

#### Advertise here

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

[crosodo.com/advertise](https://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/indiana/wells-county-discuss](https://crosodo.com/nb/indiana/wells-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.

Ads are paid placements. Crosodo does not endorse listed vendors. Verify all information independently. · To advertise: [crosodo.com/advertise](https://crosodo.com/advertise)