

COTTAGE FOOD LAW REPORT

Dubuque County

Iowa · Dubuque · FIPS 19061 · Population 98,812 · Crosodo
Index #225*

STATE BASELINE

Iowa Code §137F.1 / §137F.20

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

Dubuque County, Iowa — permit, pickup, and label steps before the full county rules.

HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED?

Yes

STATE SALES CAP

—

HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT?

No

ON-SITE / PORCH PICKUP?

Yes

INSPECTION

No

PETS

No specific restriction under Iowa cottage food exemption.

BEFORE YOU SELL FROM THIS ADDRESS

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

CONTINUE ONLINE

[Open the live county page →](#)

[Iowa label one-pager →](#)

[Local notes & questions →](#)

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

IOWA: DUBUQUE COUNTY

CROSODO INDEX #225* · FIPS 19061 · Dubuque

Dubuque County

Population 98,812 · State baseline: Iowa Code §137F.1 / §137F.20 · MEDIUM

QUICK VIEW FOR BAKERS IN THIS COUNTY

HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED?

Yes (Iowa cottage food exemption (§137F.20) requires no license, no cap, no registration. Direct sales only to end consumers. Most non-TCS foods allowed, including pH-tested acidified foods (pH ≤4.6 per batch). Local government expressly prohibited from adding restrictions per §137F.20(1).)

SEPARATE KITCHEN REQUIRED?

No

PETS ALLOWED?

No specific restriction under Iowa cottage food exemption.

HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT?

No (Iowa §137F.20(1) expressly preempts local government restrictions on cottage food operations. No home occupation permit required for cottage food.)

ON-SITE / PORCH PICKUP?

Yes

INSPECTION REQUIRED?

No (No inspection authority for Iowa cottage food operations under §137F.20.)

Home kitchen rules

HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED

Yes — Iowa cottage food exemption (§137F.20) requires no license, no cap, no registration. Direct sales only to end consumers. Most non-TCS foods allowed, including pH-tested acidified foods (pH ≤4.6 per batch). Local government expressly prohibited from adding restrictions per §137F.20(1).

SEPARATE DEDICATED KITCHEN

No

PET RESTRICTIONS

No specific restriction under Iowa cottage food exemption.

WATER SUPPLY

No specific requirement for Iowa cottage food operations.

HANDWASHING

No specific statutory requirement; good manufacturing practices recommended.

FOOD STORAGE

Non-TCS shelf-stable foods; acidified foods must be pH-tested per batch; production date must be on label.

Inspection & permitting

INSPECTION REQUIRED

No — No inspection authority for Iowa cottage food operations under §137F.20.

HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT

No — Iowa §137F.20(1) expressly preempts local government restrictions on cottage food operations. No home occupation permit required for cottage food.

LOCAL BUSINESS LICENSE

No

Customer-facing rules

ON-SITE CUSTOMER PICKUP

Yes

ON-SITE SIGNAGE

Conditional

DELIVERY / PICKUP RULES

Direct sales only to end consumers. Sales allowed from home, at farmers markets, events. Indirect sales not permitted under cottage food exemption (separate Home Food Processing Establishment license pathway allows broader distribution).

MAX EMPLOYEES IN HOME

No employee limit specified for Iowa cottage food exemption; typically operated by single producer.

Relevant county code

No Dubuque County-specific cottage food code section; state preemption applies.

RESEARCH NOTES

No Dubuque County-specific cottage food rules found. Iowa §137F.20(1) explicitly prohibits local governments from adding restrictions, making this one of the more operator-friendly state frameworks. Dubuque County is in eastern Iowa; city of Dubuque may have business license requirements unrelated to cottage food. Iowa reorganized its food safety agency as Iowa Department of Inspections, Appeals, and Licensing (DIAL) in 2023.

SOURCES VERIFIED AT RESEARCH TIME

<https://www.dubuqucounty.gov>

<https://dia.iowa.gov/food-safety/home-food-establishment>

<https://www.legis.iowa.gov/docs/code/137F.pdf>

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

Bordering counties — cottage food law

Regulation	Dubuque County	Clayton County	Delaware County
HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED	Yes	Yes	Yes
SEPARATE DEDICATED KITCHEN	No	No	No
PETS ALLOWED	No specific restriction under Iowa cottage food exemption.	No state or county-specific rule found; good practice is to exclude pets from food prep areas.	No state or county-specific rule found; good practice is to exclude pets from food prep areas.
INSPECTION REQUIRED	No	No	No
ON-SITE CUSTOMER PICKUP	Yes	Yes	Yes
ON-SITE SIGNAGE	Conditional	Conditional	Conditional
DELIVERY / PICKUP	Direct sales only to end consumers. Sales allowed from home, at farmers markets, events. Indirect sales not permitted under cottage food ex...	Direct-to-consumer sales only under the cottage food exemption. Customers may pick up at home, or operator may sell at farmers markets, roa...	Direct-to-consumer sales only under the cottage food exemption. Customers may pick up at home, or operator may sell at farmers markets, roa...
HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT	No	Conditional	Conditional
LOCAL BUSINESS LICENSE	No	No	No
RESTRICTIONS	Iowa cottage food exemption (§137F.20) requires no license, no cap, no registration. Direct sales only to end consumers. Most non-TCS foods...	No license, registration, or inspection required under Iowa cottage food exemption (Iowa Code §137F.20). Allowed non-TCS foods include bake...	No license, registration, or inspection required under Iowa cottage food exemption (Iowa Code §137F.20). Allowed non-TCS foods include bake...
FOOD STORAGE	Non-TCS shelf-stable foods; acidified foods must be pH-tested per batch; production date must be on label.	Cottage food products must be stored to prevent contamination; TCS foods not permitted under the cottage food exemption.	Cottage food products must be stored to prevent contamination; TCS foods not permitted under the cottage food exemption.
POPULATION	98,812	17,549	17,258

State context — Iowa cottage food law

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

STATUTE	ANNUAL SALES CAP
Iowa Code §137F.1 / §137F.20	—
REGISTRATION REQUIRED	FOOD HANDLER CERT
No	No
KITCHEN INSPECTION	DIRECT SALES ONLY
No	Yes
INDIRECT SALES	
Limited (see notes) — Cottage food direct-to-consumer sales only; however, a separate Home Food Processing Establishment (HFPE) license allows indirect retail and wholesale sales of almost any food including perishables.	

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

STATE-LEVEL REFERENCES

State statute: <https://www.legis.iowa.gov/docs/code/137F.pdf>

State dept cottage food page: <https://dia.iowa.gov/food-safety/home-food-establishment>

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

Questions about Dubuque 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/iowa/dubuque-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 Dubuque County, Iowa. 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/iowa/dubuque-county-discuss

Free ad space available

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