COTTAGE FOOD LAW REPORT

Caroline County

Maryland · Denton · FIPS 24011 · Population 34,248 · Crosodo Index #2450*

STATE BASELINE	STATE TIER	ANNUAL SALES CAP (STATE)	CONFIDENCE
MD COMAR 10.15.03.27	Good	50000	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

Caroline County, Maryland — permit, pickup, and label steps before the full county rules.

HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED?	STATE SALES CAP
Yes	50000
HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT?	ON-SITE / PORCH PICKUP?
Varies	Yes
INSPECTION	PETS
Upon-complaint	Local health department standards apply; typically animals must be excluded from food prep areas.

BEFORE YOU SELL FROM THIS ADDRESS

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

CONTINUE ONLINE

Open the live county page →

Maryland label one-pager →

Local notes & questions →

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

MARYLAND: CAROLINE COUNTY

CROSODO INDEX #2450* · FIPS 24011 · Denton

Caroline County

Population 34,248 · State baseline: MD COMAR 10.15.03.27 · MEDIUM

QUICK VIEW FOR BAKERS IN THIS COUNTY

HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED?

Yes (Annual gross sales capped at $50,000. Must produce in residential kitchen in Maryland. Must comply with all applicable county and municipal laws. Sales allowed directly to consumers (from home, farmers markets, public events, personal delivery, mail delivery) and to retail food stores (with prior MDH review and written approval). Interstate sales prohibited.)

SEPARATE KITCHEN REQUIRED?

No

PETS ALLOWED?

Local health department standards apply; typically animals must be excluded from food prep areas.

HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT?

Varies (Caroline County (Eastern Shore) requires compliance with all applicable county and municipal laws per Md. Code Health-Gen. §21-330.1(e). Contact Caroline County planning/zoning for home occupation permit requirements. No county-specific cottage food ordinance identified beyond the state mandate.)

ON-SITE / PORCH PICKUP?

Yes

INSPECTION REQUIRED?

Upon-complaint (No routine pre-operational inspection required for standard direct-to-consumer sales. MDH may inspect upon complaint. Retail store sales require MDH plan review and written approval before sales begin.)

Home kitchen rules

HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED	Yes — Annual gross sales capped at $50,000. Must produce in residential kitchen in Maryland. Must comply with all applicable county and municipal laws. Sales allowed directly to consumers (from home, farmers markets, public events, personal delivery, mail delivery) and to retail food stores (with prior MDH review and written approval). Interstate sales prohibited.
SEPARATE DEDICATED KITCHEN	No
PET RESTRICTIONS	Local health department standards apply; typically animals must be excluded from food prep areas.
WATER SUPPLY	Potable water required.
HANDWASHING	Required per Maryland food safety standards.
FOOD STORAGE	Products must be stored on premises of the cottage food business. Shelf-stable non-potentially hazardous foods only.

Inspection & permitting

INSPECTION REQUIRED	Upon-complaint — No routine pre-operational inspection required for standard direct-to-consumer sales. MDH may inspect upon complaint. Retail store sales require MDH plan review and written approval before sales begin.
HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT	Varies — Caroline County (Eastern Shore) requires compliance with all applicable county and municipal laws per Md. Code Health-Gen. §21-330.1(e). Contact Caroline County planning/zoning for home occupation permit requirements. No county-specific cottage food ordinance identified beyond the state mandate.
LOCAL BUSINESS LICENSE	Varies

Customer-facing rules

ON-SITE CUSTOMER PICKUP	Yes
ON-SITE SIGNAGE	Conditional
DELIVERY / PICKUP RULES	Direct-to-consumer sales permitted. Retail store sales require prior MDH approval. Food safety training recommended but not required for standard sales; required for retail store channel.
MAX EMPLOYEES IN HOME	Residential kitchen framework; outside employees not contemplated.

Relevant county code

MD COMAR 10.15.03.27; Md. Code Health-Gen. §21-330.1; Caroline County zoning ordinance (contact county for specifics).

RESEARCH NOTES

Maryland state baseline applied: COMAR 10.15.03.27, $50,000 cap, no license required but must comply with county/municipal laws per Md. Code Health-Gen. §21-330.1(e). Caroline County is a small Eastern Shore county. The MDH guidelines (Updated_CF_Guidelines_2025.pdf) confirm cottage food businesses must contact local permits, licensing, and zoning departments. No Caroline County-specific cottage food ordinance identified; state baseline governs. Confidence medium.

SOURCES VERIFIED AT RESEARCH TIME

https://www.carolinecounty.gov
https://health.maryland.gov/phpa/OEHFP/OFPCHS/pages/cottagefoods.aspx
http://nationalaglawcenter.org/wp-content/uploads/assets/cottagefood/Maryland.pdf

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

Bordering counties — cottage food law

Regulation	Caroline County	Dorchester County	Talbot County
HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED	**Yes**	Yes	Yes
SEPARATE DEDICATED KITCHEN	**No**	No	No
PETS ALLOWED	**Local health department standards apply; typically animals must be excluded from food prep areas.**	Local health department standards apply; typically animals must be excluded from food prep areas.	Local health department standards apply; typically animals must be excluded from food prep areas.
INSPECTION REQUIRED	**Upon-complaint**	Upon-complaint	Upon-complaint
ON-SITE CUSTOMER PICKUP	**Yes**	Yes	Yes
ON-SITE SIGNAGE	**Conditional**	Conditional	Conditional
DELIVERY / PICKUP	**Direct-to-consumer sales permitted. Retail store sales require prior MDH approval. Food safety training recommended but not required for st...**	Direct-to-consumer sales permitted. Retail store sales require prior MDH approval. Food safety training recommended but not required for st...	Direct-to-consumer sales permitted. Retail store sales require prior MDH approval.
HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT	**Varies**	Varies	Varies
LOCAL BUSINESS LICENSE	**Varies**	Varies	Varies
RESTRICTIONS	**Annual gross sales capped at $50,000. Must produce in residential kitchen in Maryland. Must comply with all applicable county and municipal...**	Annual gross sales capped at $50,000. Must produce in residential kitchen in Maryland. Must comply with all applicable county and municipal...	Annual gross sales capped at $50,000. Must produce in residential kitchen in Maryland. Must comply with all applicable county and municipal...
FOOD STORAGE	**Products must be stored on premises of the cottage food business. Shelf-stable non-potentially hazardous foods only.**	Products must be stored on premises of the cottage food business. Shelf-stable non-potentially hazardous foods only.	Products must be stored on premises of the cottage food business. Shelf-stable non-potentially hazardous foods only.
POPULATION	**33,320**	32,557	37,663

State context — Maryland cottage food law

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

STATUTE
MD COMAR 10.15.03.27

REGISTRATION REQUIRED
Depends

KITCHEN INSPECTION
Upon-complaint

INDIRECT SALES
Limited (see notes) — Sales at retail food stores (indirect) are allowed but require prior submission of labels and documentation of ANSI-accredited food safety course completion to the Maryland Department of Health before any retail sales can commence. The Department must notify the producer in writing that requirements are met before retail sales begin.

ANNUAL SALES CAP
50000

FOOD HANDLER CERT
Recommended

DIRECT SALES ONLY
No

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

STATE-LEVEL REFERENCES

State statute: https://regs.maryland.gov/us/md/exec/comar/10.15.03.27

State dept cottage food page: https://health.maryland.gov/phpa/OEHFP/OFPCHS/Pages/Cottage-Food.aspx

Forrager.com: https://forrager.com/law/maryland/

Questions about Caroline 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/maryland/caroline-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 Caroline County, Maryland. 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/maryland/caroline-county-discuss

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