

COTTAGE FOOD LAW REPORT

Dorchester County

Maryland · Cambridge · FIPS 24019 · Population 33,138 ·
Crosodo Index #2449*

STATE BASELINE

MD COMAR 10.15.03.27

STATE TIER

Good

ANNUAL SALES CAP (STATE)

50000

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

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

HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED?

Yes

STATE SALES CAP

50000

HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT?

Varies

ON-SITE / PORCH PICKUP?

Yes

INSPECTION

Upon-complaint

PETS

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: DORCHESTER COUNTY

CROSODO INDEX #2449* · FIPS 24019 · Cambridge

Dorchester County

Population 33,138 · 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 (Dorchester County (Eastern Shore) requires compliance with all applicable county and municipal laws per Md. Code Health-Gen. §21-330.1(e). Contact Dorchester County planning/permits for home occupation 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 — Dorchester County (Eastern Shore) requires compliance with all applicable county and municipal laws per Md. Code Health-Gen. §21-330.1(e). Contact Dorchester County planning/permits for home occupation 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.
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; Dorchester County zoning ordinance.

RESEARCH NOTES

Maryland state baseline applied: COMAR 10.15.03.27, \$50,000 cap, must comply with county/municipal laws. Dorchester County is a rural Eastern Shore county. No Dorchester County-specific cottage food ordinance identified; state baseline governs. Confidence medium.

SOURCES VERIFIED AT RESEARCH TIME

<https://www.dorchestercounty.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/dorchester-county-discuss

Bordering counties — cottage food law

Regulation	Dorchester County	Caroline County	Somerset 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	32,557	33,320	24,672

State context — Maryland cottage food law

Dorchester 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	ANNUAL SALES CAP
MD COMAR 10.15.03.27	50000
REGISTRATION REQUIRED	FOOD HANDLER CERT
Depends	Recommended
KITCHEN INSPECTION	DIRECT SALES ONLY
Upon-complaint	No
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.	

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 Dorchester 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/dorchester-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 Dorchester 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/dorchester-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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