

COTTAGE FOOD LAW REPORT

Missoula County

Montana · Missoula · FIPS 30063 · Population 118,541 ·
Crosodo Index #1004*

STATE BASELINE

Mont. Code §§50-50-116/117 (standard cottage food); Mont. Code §§50-49-201 et seq. (Local Food Choice Act); no sales cap; registration with local health authority required (standard track); direct sales only

STATE TIER	ANNUAL SALES CAP (STATE)	CONFIDENCE	LAST VERIFIED
Freedom	—	HIGH	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

Missoula County, Montana — permit, pickup, and label steps before the full county rules.

HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED?

Yes

STATE SALES CAP

—

HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT?

Conditional

ON-SITE / PORCH PICKUP?

Conditional

INSPECTION

Upon-complaint

PETS

No specific prohibition; standard food safety sanitation practices. Eating or drinking establishments are prohibited as home occupations under Missoula County Zoning §5.17(D)(6).

BEFORE YOU SELL FROM THIS ADDRESS

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

CONTINUE ONLINE

[Open the live county page →](#)

[Montana label one-pager →](#)

Local notes & questions →

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

MONTANA: MISSOULA COUNTY

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Population 118,541 · State baseline: Mont. Code §§50-50-116/117 (standard cottage food); Mont. Code §§50-49-201 et seq. (Local Food Choice Act); no sales cap; registration with local health authority required (standard track); direct sales only · **HIGH**

QUICK VIEW FOR BAKERS IN THIS COUNTY

HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED?

Yes (Montana has two tracks: (1) Standard cottage food: requires registration with local health authority (Missoula City-County Health Department), non-PHF foods, no consignment; (2) Montana Local Food Choice Act: broad exemption for direct producer-to-consumer including PHF foods, no licensing/inspection. Home occupation also governed by Missoula County Zoning §5.17.)

SEPARATE KITCHEN REQUIRED?

No

PETS ALLOWED?

No specific prohibition; standard food safety sanitation practices. Eating or drinking establishments are prohibited as home occupations under Missoula County Zoning §5.17(D)(6).

HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT?

Conditional (Missoula County Zoning §5.17 governs home occupations. Key standards: operator must reside on property; max 1 non-resident employee/associate on-site; up to 3 clients/customers at one time on-site; all activities within enclosed building; no excessive noise/odors/traffic. NOTE: Section §5.17(D)(6) expressly prohibits 'eating or drinking establishments' as home occupations. This may require careful interpretation for cottage food (direct sales vs. eating establishment). Building Division may need to determine if change-of-use permit is required. Consult Missoula County Public Works Department Building Division.)

ON-SITE / PORCH PICKUP?

Conditional

INSPECTION REQUIRED?

Upon-complaint (Standard track: registration may involve Missoula City-County Health Department review; complaints investigated. MLFCA track: no inspection required.)

Home kitchen rules

HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED

Yes — Montana has two tracks: (1) Standard cottage food: requires registration with local health authority (Missoula City-County Health Department), non-PHF foods, no consignment; (2) Montana Local Food Choice Act: broad exemption for direct producer-to-consumer including PHF foods, no licensing/inspection. Home occupation also governed by Missoula County Zoning §5.17.

SEPARATE DEDICATED KITCHEN

No

PET RESTRICTIONS

No specific prohibition; standard food safety sanitation practices. Eating or drinking establishments are prohibited as home occupations under Missoula County Zoning §5.17(D)(6).

WATER SUPPLY

Potable water required per Montana Food Code and Missoula City-County Health standards.

HANDWASHING

Standard food safety practices; no mandatory certification under either MT track.

FOOD STORAGE

Standard track: non-PHF shelf-stable products. MLFCA track: any homemade food; producer must disclose unlicensed/uninspected status.

Inspection & permitting

INSPECTION REQUIRED	Upon-complaint — Standard track: registration may involve Missoula City-County Health Department review; complaints investigated. MLFCA track: no inspection required.
HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT	Conditional — Missoula County Zoning §5.17 governs home occupations. Key standards: operator must reside on property; max 1 non-resident employee/associate on-site; up to 3 clients/customers at one time on-site; all activities within enclosed building; no excessive noise/odors/traffic. NOTE: Section §5.17(D)(6) expressly prohibits 'eating or drinking establishments' as home occupations. This may require careful interpretation for cottage food (direct sales vs. eating establishment). Building Division may need to determine if change-of-use permit is required. Consult Missoula County Public Works Department Building Division.
LOCAL BUSINESS LICENSE	Varies

Customer-facing rules

ON-SITE CUSTOMER PICKUP	Conditional
ON-SITE SIGNAGE	No
DELIVERY / PICKUP RULES	Deliveries/pickups associated with home occupation allowed 8 AM–7 PM per Missoula County Zoning §5.17. No semi-tractor trailers. Montana standard track: direct sales only; MLFCA: direct producer-to-consumer only.
MAX EMPLOYEES IN HOME	Maximum 1 non-resident employee or associate on-site at any time per Missoula County Zoning §5.17.

Relevant county code

Missoula County Zoning Regulations Chapter 5, §5.17 (Home Occupations); Mont. Code §§50-50-116/117; Mont. Code §§50-49-201 et seq.

RESEARCH NOTES

County-specific data confirmed from official Missoula County government sources. Missoula County Zoning §5.17 directly retrieved and summarized from official PDF (missoulacounty.gov/media). Missoula City-County Health Department has a dedicated Cottage Food Operations section. The prohibition on 'eating or drinking establishments' as home occupations in §5.17(D)(6) is a notable county-specific provision that cottage food operators should clarify with the county. MLFCA provides an alternative track. Confidence high.

SOURCES VERIFIED AT RESEARCH TIME

<https://www.missoulacounty.us/government/health/health-department/food-lodging-body-art-child-care/food-services>

<https://missoulacounty.us/departments/planning-development-and-sustainability/development-review/zoning-regulations>

<https://www.missoulacounty.us>

<https://www.missoulacounty.gov/media/yvnpunrs/chapter-five-use-standards-and-conditions.pdf>

<https://missoulacounty.us/departments/planning-development-and-sustainability/development-review/zoning-regulations>

<https://www.missoulacounty.us/government/health/health-department/food-lodging-body-art-child-care/food-services>

<https://dphhs.mt.gov/publichealth/fcs/foodsafety/cottagefoods>

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

Bordering counties — cottage food law

Regulation	Missoula County	Flathead County	Granite County
HOME KITCHEN ALLOWED	Yes	Yes	Yes
SEPARATE DEDICATED KITCHEN	No	No	No
PETS ALLOWED	No specific prohibition; standard food safety sanitation practices. Eating or drinking establishments are prohibited as home occupations un...	No specific state restriction for cottage food operations.	Not specified in state cottage food law; individual county health departments may have additional requirements.
INSPECTION REQUIRED	Upon-complaint	Upon-complaint	Upon-complaint
ON-SITE CUSTOMER PICKUP	Conditional	Yes	Yes
ON-SITE SIGNAGE	No	Conditional	Conditional
DELIVERY / PICKUP	Deliveries/pickups associated with home occupation allowed 8 AM–7 PM per Missoula County Zoning §5.17. No semi-tractor trailers. Montana st...	Standard cottage food: direct-to-consumer sales at farmers markets, events, from home. No consignment. Local Food Choice Act: any direct pr...	Direct-to-consumer sales permitted at farmers markets, events, and from home. Under standard cottage food (§50-50-116), no consignment, ret...
HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT	Conditional	Conditional	Conditional
LOCAL BUSINESS LICENSE	Varies	Varies	Varies
RESTRICTIONS	Montana has two tracks: (1) Standard cottage food: requires registration with local health authority (Missoula City-County Health Departmen...	Montana has two tracks: (1) Standard cottage food (§50-50-116): Non-potentially hazardous foods prepared in domestic residence, local healt...	Cottage food operations must register with local health authority under Mont. Code §50-50-117. Non-potentially-hazardous foods only under s...
FOOD STORAGE	Standard track: non-PHF shelf-stable products. MLFCA track: any homemade food; producer must disclose unlicensed/uninspected status.	Standard cottage food: non-potentially hazardous foods only. Local Food Choice Act: allows potentially hazardous foods in direct producer-t...	Products must be non-potentially hazardous (standard cottage food track) or properly disclosed as unlicensed/uninspected (MLFCA track). Pro...
POPULATION	118,541	105,950	3,368

State context — Montana cottage food law

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

STATUTE	ANNUAL SALES CAP
Mont. Code §50-50-116 and §50-50-117 (cottage food); Mont. Code §§50-49-201 et seq. (Local Food Choice Act)	—
REGISTRATION REQUIRED	FOOD HANDLER CERT
Yes	No
KITCHEN INSPECTION	DIRECT SALES ONLY
Upon-complaint	Yes
INDIRECT SALES	
No — Consignment sales at retail food establishments or through wholesale establishments are explicitly prohibited under §50-50-116(3). The Montana Local Food Choice Act also requires direct producer-to-informed-end-consumer transactions only; retail locations require a wholesale food license.	

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

STATE-LEVEL REFERENCES

State statute: https://leg.mt.gov/bills/mca/title_0500/chapter_0500/part_0010/section_0160/0500-0500-0010-0160.html

State dept cottage food page: <https://dphhs.mt.gov/publichealth/fcs/foodsafety/cottagefoods>

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

Questions about Missoula 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/montana/missoula-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 Missoula County, Montana. 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/montana/missoula-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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